The General
Brock University Undergraduate Journal of History

Volume II
April 2017
ISSN 2371-8048

Brock University, St. Catharines Ontario, Canada
The General Brock University Undergraduate Journal of History

Editors-in-Chief
Emily Byrne and Danielle Whitter

Editorial Board
Amanda Balyk
Sumeet Brar
Rebecca Nickerson
Kathy Powell
Vince Savoia
Courtney Svab

Cover Design
Brianne Casey

Special Thanks
The Brock University History Department
The Brock University Historical Society
Brock University Printing and Digital Services
Dr. Jessica Clark, Assistant Professor
Dr. Renée Lafferty-Salhany, Associate Professor
Tim Ribaric, Digital Services Librarian
Dr. Daniel Samson, Associate Professor and Chair
James A. Gibson Library Special Collections and Archives
Contents

Foreword 5
   By Dr. Renée Lafferty-Salhany

Introduction 7
   By Emily Byrne and Danielle Whitter

Defying Notions of Nineteenth Century Masculine Honour in the War of 1812: The Case of the American Burning of Newark, December 1813 8
   By Amanda Balyk

For Fate and Fortune: American Privateers in the War of 1812 18
   By Brandon Harrison

William Bartram: A Maker and Painter of America’s Image in its Enlightenment 30
   By Matthew Jagas

A Post-World War II Tragedy: The Expulsion of the Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia, 1945-49 38
   By Erica Lamontagne

Visualizing the Victorian Christmas: Evolving Iconography and Symbolism in the Wake of Nineteenth-Century Commercialism 48
   By Hilary Raats

Walrus Ivory and a History of Trade: Greenland Trade Networks in the North Atlantic 60
   By Courtney Svab

Dealing with the Dead and Wounded: Field Medicine and the American Civil War 74
   By Mathew Thivierge

‘Malleable Minds’: Women of the Mau Mau 85
   By Rachel Urovitz

Nationalism, Suffrage, and Maternal Feminism: Race, Gender, and Religion 97
   By Michael Wielink

Women in Italian Renaissance Art: Representation, Societal Ideals, and Identity 106
   By Eva Zhao
Foreword

The campus at Brock can be bewildering. This was the first impression it made upon me as an undergraduate in the mid-1990s. When I returned here to teach, I continued to think this way, continued to get lost in the confounding maze of corridors and hallways as I looked for the offices and classrooms to which I was assigned and sent.

Like many institutions, the physical space at Brock is dependent upon its walls and its divisions, its closed doors and sheltered corridors. These barriers make it possible to invent a timetable. They create the opportunity for discussion and the space for concentrating on that daunting stack of seminar readings or the essay that needs to be finished yesterday. There are landmarks and signposts, too, meant to guide people to their destination and help them from getting lost.

Sometimes, though, these maps and walls and corridors also seem intent on ensuring that people stay put or don’t wander into spots they’re not welcome to enter. They convince people there are places they cannot go, places where they are neither welcome nor capable of being. They are divisions reinforced by the honey-combed disciplines that organize academic life, and they stymie our ability to stumble into new and sometimes wonderful places. Then they become physical reminders of divisions that exist without walls, too — barriers drawn by politics, ideology, and culture.

These kinds of divisions have seemed somehow worse in the past year. All around us are pictures of intensified, impenetrable walls, built precisely to identify and sort people, to keep them separated according to differences which we’re supposed to accept as factual, normal expressions of modern life. It’s rather like living in an amateur Victorian naturalist’s cabinet of curiosities — a decidedly sinister one — each of us assigned a drawer with a neatly scripted label that makes us administratively legible to someone (surely not ourselves).

History offers us the opportunity to undermine this trend toward divisiveness in unexpected ways. Study of our past — in its moments of tumult and rebellion, as well as those of celebration and creation — uncovers the mechanisms by which differences are created and walls built. Whether this happens between men and women, or between differing ethnic groups, nationalities, religions, classes, or folks of differing political orientations, history navigates the pathways by which differences come to seem normal and ‘natural.’ It simultaneously reinforces the importance of understanding the sources of difference-creation, particularly when those differences are harmful and limiting. History may well demonstrate that some differences are worth maintaining and perhaps even celebrating, but it also exposes the clockwork mechanisms of prejudice, racism and social dislocation. As a result, it offers all of us the spanner we need to throw into the works. As much as history is about story-telling and fact-checking, about drafting and editing and building plausible bibliographies, it’s also about disrupting and de-centring narratives and institutions whose power depends on reinforcing dangerous and harmful partitions between people.

History exposes us to lives which are at once familiar and foreign and it invites us to get lost in corridors and start opening doors (figuratively speaking, of course). Even the most cursory glance at the content of this impressive, second edition of The General demonstrates how actively and impressively this goes on in the convoluted corridors at Brock. Here there are stories
of innovation, exploration, hope, and daring defiance; stories that explore beauty and terror, creation and destruction; stories that tell us how people have deliberately and sometimes violently divided themselves, but also how they sought companionship and celebration, how they purposefully built connections on a global scale. They explore scientific and artistic ingenuity, daring, cowardice and small-mindedness, agency, honour, and power.

Above all, while showcasing the extraordinary talent of Brock’s undergraduate history students, they also showcase how these historians actively make vulnerable the parts of our past that make division easy.

Dr. Renée Lafferty-Salhany, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of History
Brock University
Introduction

“The historian without his facts is rootless and futile; the facts without their historian are dead and meaningless.” — E. H. Carr

Carr’s words lie at the root of what history means to us. We have all been shaped by history, and, as such, we will continue to shape the histories of the future. As the quote suggests, the details of any particular historical event cannot be retold and interpreted without the insight of a historian. Conversely, the work of a historian ceases to exist without the interplay between historical actors and the unfolding of historical events. In this second edition of The General our hope is to continue to build this history, so that we as historians may ourselves continue to grow, influence the future in a positive way, and create a legacy for The General that the Brock community will be proud of.

We would like to dedicate this issue, first and foremost, to the students; to those whose work may be lost in files stacked under mountains of papers or hidden in the depths of your computer files. Every history has a story that needs to be told, and The General aims to share what we, the undergraduate history students of Brock University, have to say. This issue is a tribute to and celebration of every history student’s hard work and dedication.

We extend our thanks to the Brock University Historical Society for all of their help along this journey. We thank everyone who assisted us on the editorial board; your help was essential in bringing this publication to fruition. We would like to thank Professor Lafferty-Salhany for writing the foreword. We would like to thank Brianne Casey for designing the cover art for the 2017 edition; your eye for detail is simply beautiful. A big thanks goes out to the history department, including Professor Samson, Chair of the department, for the opportunity to work on this special project. We thank the James A. Gibson Library Special Collections and Archives for showcasing our final product, as well as Brock University Printing and Digital Services for bringing this issue to life. Another thanks goes out to Tim Ribaric for facilitating our work with the Online Journal System for the publication this year. We would especially like to thank the authors, without whom we would not have this collection of research to showcase. Your hard work and talent in writing offered true inspiration to us both in our own work. Furthermore, we would like to thank Professor Clark for her guidance throughout this process, without whom we could not have hoped to accomplish all that we did.

For The General in its second year, we aimed to further represent what Brock undergraduate students truly had to offer. We were astounded by the impressive papers we received for submission this year. For the publication, we selected a variety of topics over a wide range of subjects and classes in order to best exhibit the array of talent we saw. To our readers, we hope that you are as pleased as we are with the final product.

Danielle Whitter & Emily Byrne
Co-Editors-in-Chief
April 2017
Defying Notions of Nineteenth Century Masculine Honour in the War of 1812: The Case of the American Burning of Newark, December 1813

By Amanda Balyk

Lieutenant William MacEwan wrote to his wife upon visiting Fort George in March of 1814 after seeing the aftermath of the burning of Newark that occurred on December 10th, 1813. He wrote, “The whole place is a ruin, nothing to be seen but brick chimneys standing, what the fire could not destroy, of the once beautiful town of Newark.” Before that fateful winter night, in the summer of 1813, in the second year of the War of 1812 between the Americans and British/Canadians, Americans had gained serious momentum in the Niagara region by capturing the British Fort George. However, by December, winter was threatening the American position at Fort George, so American General George McClure decided that it would be best to abandon their post and return to the American Fort Niagara across the Niagara River. As historian George Sheppard notes, earlier in the year the American Secretary of State John Armstrong told McClure that “a successful defence of Fort George might require the destruction of the town of Niagara” and if McClure thought that destruction was necessary, that he would need to “apprise its inhabitants of these plans, giving them ample time to remove themselves and their belongings to a place of safety.”

However, when it came time to leave Fort George, this is not what occurred. On December 10th, McClure decided to abandon his post but decided burn the town down anyway and gave Col. Joseph Willcocks the responsibility of setting Newark ablaze. Although Armstrong had mentioned that burning Newark may be a necessary source of defence, on December 10th McClure acted without direct orders to burn the town. In the previous month, General Harrison, in a letter to McClure, referred to Canadian turncoat Colonel Willcocks as an asset for the Americans in Niagara due his “zeal, activity and local knowledge.” Subsequently under the leadership of Col. Willcocks, the town’s population of 400 people were given half an hour to gather their belongings before 300 homes were set alight. Although the burning of Newark is noteworthy as it had serious implications for the displaced civilians, the burning was of further significance as it clearly challenged contemporary notions of masculine honour that were made clear in the War of 1812. Masculine honour cannot be described as a fixed concept as it was, and still is, constantly changing. However, there were specific rules of war that were expected of men, and the Newark case clearly set American men outside of these honourable
norms. This paper evaluates the ways in which the Americans’ burning of Newark challenged nineteenth-century notions of masculine honour in the War by first evaluating the expectations of men in war. Comparing these notions to reactions to the burning in contemporary print and communications between General McClure and Secretary Armstrong reveals a dichotomy between expectations of honour and the practice of “honour” as seen in the burning. Finally, this paper evaluates war losses claims to demonstrate the implications for civilians impacted by the burnings itself in order to further prove that the burning of Newark challenged nineteenth-century notions of masculine honour for soldiers in the War.

Some historians have attempted to construct a cohesive understanding of what masculinity and honour meant during the War of 1812. Beginning with Robin Fabel’s publication on the laws of the War of 1812, he claims there is a clear similarity between American and British codes of law in regards to how one should conduct himself in wartime. There is a clear onus on protection as a means for defining proper manly conduct. Fabel writes from a largely American perspective and notably mentions that the British committed various outrages in their conduct during the war, which included burning private houses. If this was considered an “outrage in conduct” when done by the British, of course, it should similarly be viewed as an outrage in conduct when done by Americans in Newark. He further notes that there was an understanding that “as soon as your enemy has laid down his arms and surrendered his person, you have no further rights over his life.” By this standard, civilians should be implicitly synonymous with an enemy with no weapon as they were in no way attempting to threaten the other side and thus required some sense of protection. Indeed, that would mean that they had no rights over civilian life, which places the burning of Newark and the consequent displacement of over 400 people outside of the American laws of war during 1812.

This disobeying of laws of war brings up an important question. How does this relate to masculinity, and, specifically, despite the burning of Newark bringing up obvious moral questions, how does the burning of Newark challenge masculine honour? Leo Braudy claims that in the nineteenth century “the chivalric code had emphasized the vulnerable female body as an object for which men were ready to fight as part of their defence of civilized virtue.” This suggestion of a chivalric code relying on protecting the vulnerable woman is seen in rhetoric used in recruitment advertisements in the war. This includes an advertisement in the Kingston Gazette in 1813, which stated “Sharp Shooters. Volunteers. Wanted for the Glengary Light
Infantry Fencibles. – Brave and loyal young men of good character, who wish to defend their lives and property, their mothers and sisters from insult, their country from invasion and dishonour. “9 This advertisement attempts to recruit men who wish to fulfil masculine notions and expectations of protecting women (mothers and sisters) and thus confirms the chivalric code that Braudy suggests. This code once again suggests that the burning of Newark challenged contemporary notions of masculinity and honour, as Prevost suggests that most of the 400 victims who lost their livelihood in the fire were women and children. Thus, the American soldiers effectively defied notions of masculine honour in that they did not protect females in the way that nineteenth-century chivalry suggested they should. Overall, Braudy’s notion of nineteenth-century masculinity and honour acts as the basis for the ideals of masculine honour presented in this paper.

When there is a clear understanding of masculine and honourable expectations of soldiers during the war, the ways in which the burning of Newark challenged these masculine expectations can become stronger, especially when notions of masculine honour and the act itself are compared with the American response to the burnings. In the 31 May 1813 edition of The War, a published letter from McClure to Armstrong claimed:

the village of Newark is now in flames – the few remaining inhabitants in it, having been notified of our intention, were enable to remove their property. The houses were generally vacant long before. This step has not been take without council, and is in conformity with the views of your excellency, disclosed to me in former communication.

In his subsequent letter, McClure claimed, “every building in Newark is reduced to ashes.”10 This rhetoric was meant to boast to Armstrong about events in Newark. McClure assures Armstrong that he acted in accordance to Armstrong’s orders as they were outlined in his previous communications. He further ensures him that the “few remaining inhabitants” were notified with enough time to leave. He reiterates this in an address to the public attempting to justify his actions as defensive by claiming that it would be:

madness in the extreme to attempt to hold [Fort George], and recommended its evacuation immediately, as the enemy’s advance was then within eight miles … and ordered the town of Newark to be burnt. This act, however distressing to the inhabitants and my feelings, was by order of the Secretary at war, and I believe at the same time proper. The inhabitants
had twelve hours’ notice to remove their effects, and such as chose to come across the river were provided with all the necessaries of life.\textsuperscript{11}

Again, McClure attempts to justify his actions by claiming they complied with honourable actions of men in war. He claims the burning was a response to the British approach on Fort George and that they followed the protocol to warn civilians before burning their homes. Therefore, McClure suggests that there was still a level of protection in his action in that he ensured that civilians were told of the plans with more than enough time to leave and seek shelter.

Interestingly, as mentioned, Sheppard points to contemporary documentation which claims that civilians were only given thirty minutes to get out of their homes,\textsuperscript{12} which suggests that McClure’s claim of twelve hours was an attempt to justify his actions and make himself seem more honourable in the situation. McClure further positions Armstrong as the key decision maker behind the burning, attempting once again to justify his actions and offset the blame. If McClure’s statement was considered alone, it could be assumed that the burning of Newark did not defy notions of honour in the war as he followed protocol that was outlined by his superior. However, when his statements are considered in relation to other documents, a clear contradiction emerges that suggests that McClure was not justified in his actions and worked distinctly outside of nineteenth-century notions of wartime masculinity and honour.

Armstrong himself addressed the burning of Newark in a letter to the Governor of New York Daniel Tompkins. He spoke to McClure’s claims that he was behind the decision to burn Newark, completely discrediting them. He wrote, “McClure had not, (as you seem to suppose,) authority for doing anything he did … He hints that Newark was burnt by my orders. This is a great error. My orders were to burn it if necessary to the defence of Fort George, not otherwise. But he does not defend Fort George, then burns Newark.”\textsuperscript{13} This statement is significant as this clearly contrasts McClure’s defense of the burning and discredits his statements claiming that he acted on the request of Armstrong himself. This statement coming from McClure’s superior is significant as he clearly does not defend McClure’s actions, and therefore, this suggests that the burning of Newark existed outside of the expectations that the American government had for its soldiers. What’s more, by discrediting McClure, Armstrong effectively asserts a masculine hierarchy that becomes clear during wartime. Men largely answer to other men in times of war, and, therefore, this hierarchal system is important to consider. In Armstrong’s statement, it
becomes clear that by his orders, McClure was only meant to burn the town if it was necessary to defend the fort. However, by claiming that he did not defend Fort George and proceeded to burn the town anyway, he insinuates that he did not follow orders and was thus working outside of government expectations and therein defied the set masculine honourable code of war. This claim is further significant as Armstrong attempted to defend his own honour and thereby his manhood in a similar way that McClure did in his first communication about the burning.

Both McClure and Armstrong’s testimonies were largely meant for a very specific, small audience, which makes it important to also consider popular American responses to the burning of Newark. This response becomes clear in evaluating how American newspapers reported on the incident. Generally, one might assume that American newspapers during wartimes would use nationalistic rhetoric that supported one side while clearly opposing the other. However, this was not always the case in reports on the burning of Newark, especially in *The War*. *The War* was a newspaper that was published in New York City during the War of 1812. Interestingly, the newspaper aimed to provide an all-encompassing scope of the war, including documents, speeches and letters from British, Canadians, and Americans alike. The 1 February 1813 edition of the paper included an excerpt written by George Prevost, the Governor-in-Chief of British North America at the outbreak of the war and the commander of the forces of North America during the war. In a letter meant for “the inhabitants of his majesty’s provinces in North America” he brings up “the miseries which the unfortunate inhabitants of Newark had been made to suffer upon the evacuation of Fort George.”

He goes on to condemn the actions of the Americans claiming:

> it was certainly matter of just and reasonable expectation, that the humane and liberal course of conduct pursued by his excellency on those different occasions, would have had its due weight on the American government, and would have led it to have abstained … from any acts of wantonness or violence, which could only tend unnecessarily to add to its ordinary calamities, and to bring down upon their unoffending citizens a retaliation, which, though distant, they must have known would await and certainly follow such conduct.

This is significant as publications discussing subsequent British burnings of Lewiston, Buffalo, and Black Rock were brought up frequently in newspapers – seemingly more so than the burning of Newark. However, they discuss how the British burnings were merely retaliation, a point that will be addressed further in this paper.
Prevost further goes on to condemn the burning of Newark as it “burned and destroyed the farm house and buildings of many respectable and peaceable inhabitants of the neighbourhood.” But most significantly, Prevost directly questions the morality, honour, and masculinity of the American troops as he claims:

It will hardly be credited by those who shall hereafter read it in the page of history, that in the enlightened era of the 19th century, and in the inclemency of Canadian winter, the troops of a nation calling itself civilized and Christian, had wantonly, and without the shadow of a pretexted, forced 400 helpless women and children to quit their dwellings and to be the mournful spectators of the conflagration and total destruction of all that belonged to them.

This excerpt speaks to the chivalric code cited by Braudy, which suggests that chivalry and honour depended on the protection of the vulnerable female and their defense of civilized virtue; Prevost made clear that he felt that the burning of Newark placed American soldiers outside expectations of masculine honour. Prevost continues to speak to Braudy’s nineteenth-century notions of honour by claiming that the act was “of inhumanity disgraceful [as they] set fire to upwards of 150 houses … leaving without covering or shelter those ‘innocent, unfortunate and distressed inhabitations’ whom [McClure], by his proclamation, had previously engaged to protect.” Prevost explicitly questioned American soldiers’ honour and morality in this letter. Of course, the letter was written for a Canadian audience, but its publication in The War broadened the audience significantly, and therefore this could have been widely read by American consumers.

Nearly two weeks later, the Portsmouth Oracle’s 12 February 1814 publication included Mr. Webster’s Speech, delivered in the House of Representatives of the United States in January 1814, which suggested a bill to encourage enlistments in the regular army. Interestingly, without directly mentioning the burning of Newark, he implicitly criticized scorched earth warfare. He claimed “It is too true that the frontier is invaded; that the war, with all its horrors, ordinary and extraordinary, is brought within our own territories; and that the inhabitants, near the country of the enemy are compelled to [sic], lighted by the fires of their own homes, or to stay and meet the foe, unprotected by any adequate aid of government” and furthermore attempted to persuade the House that the frontiers needed protecting. However, the nature of Webster’s speech suggests that the burnings of American towns meant that more protection was needed on the frontier, as
the burning of their homes had provoked British-Canadian troops. This speech is significant as it calls once again for men to enlist into the American army to protect the vulnerable frontier from the British. However, he does not suggest that it was the burning of Newark that caused the British burnings. Although not mentioned by Webster, interestingly the same edition of the *Oracle* condemned the British for their burnings of American land and homes by claiming that a full British settlement had never been burned except Newark, and it was not even the whole settlement that destroyed there.¹⁹ The *Oracle* example equates notions of manly honour with protection, which once again suggests that the burning of Newark defied masculine notions as the Americans left the innocent Newark inhabitants completely defenseless. The *Oracle* articles furthermore attempt to vilify British acts while simultaneously defending similar American acts which makes the importance of maintaining masculine honour clear.

In order to understand the state in which Americans left Newark on the night of December 10th, it is useful to evaluate Newark residents’ claims as war losses in the years after the Treaty of Ghent. Evaluating war losses is useful as it underlines the scope of destruction and thereby the extent of the violation of codes of manly honour. In 1812, the Loyal and Patriotic Society of Upper Canada was founded as an association attempting to alleviate distress in Upper Canada caused by the war. In 1817 they published a report with minutes, accounts and other records from 1812-1816. This 400-page document contains hundreds of war loss claims that make direct reference to the burnings at Newark. On 18 February 1814, a meeting of Directors of the Society saw various cases of victims of the burning of Newark. A sample of resolved cases reveals who was displaced and what was lost on December 10th.

A resolved case brought to the Society, for example, claimed that fifty dollars be given to Mrs. Hannah Frey who lost her husband to the war, her crops to an encampment of troops and Indians, and her home to enemy fire which “has reduced her to great distress.”²⁰ A second resolved case claims that one hundred dollars be given to Mrs. Elizabeth Lawe whose husband served as a Captain in the 1st Regiment of the Lincoln Militia who was wounded and subsequently taken as a prisoner of war when enemies took Fort George. When the Fort was abandoned Mrs. Lawe’s home and barn was burnt and she, along with two children, was left without any support during his absence.²¹ A third resolved case granted one hundred dollars to Mrs. Elizabeth McLelan, a widow whose house and barn was burnt which left her with a family of small children with no income to support them.²² These three cases support Prevost’s claim...
that those most affected by the burning of Newark were women and children. Frey, Lawe, and McLelan all lost their husbands due to the war either by death or capture which already compromised their livelihood and then subsequently lost their homes in December of 1813, leaving them with no way to provide for themselves or their families. These three cases prove once again the burning of Newark challenged understandings of masculine and honourable expectations in war as troops did not protect vulnerable women, but rather their burning of civilian homes effectively displaced the women and children they were meant to protect.

Finally, Elizabeth Campbell’s war loss claim and subsequent request for fuel and candles exemplify immense loss from which people suffered with the burning of Newark. Her war loss claim outlines everything lost: the house and barn, a walnut dining table, one cow, and calf, thirteen chairs, one four post bedstead, kitchen supplies, etc. Campbell, a widow living in Newark at the time of the burning, claimed £778.13 worth of losses directly following the attack. She was defenseless and left to fend for herself in the ensuing winter months. Her desperation was clear, as her request to receive fuel and candles was authorized and ready for distribution in a 19 February 1814 memo. Prevost referred to the barbarity of the Americans displacing women and children out of their homes in the winter months, and Campbell’s case exemplifies such hardships faced by inhabitants following the burning of Newark. The Campbell case once again goes against the notion that nineteenth-century honour meant protecting weak females and the defenseless more generally.

In conclusion, the December 1813 burning of Newark in the War of 1812 defied nineteenth-century wartime notions of masculine honour that regulated expectations of soldiers. This defiance is clear as it was expected that men would fight in war for women and protect them from harm and distress, as they were vulnerable and weak. However, the burning of Newark saw American men under George McClure and Joseph Willcocks placing women and children directly in harm’s way by burning down the civilian town of Newark when abandoning Fort George. Following the incident, McClure clearly sought to justify his actions in numerous ways. He placed the blame on Secretary of State Armstrong, claimed that they were defending the Fort as the British drew near, and insisted that they gave inhabitants adequate timing to remove themselves and their things from their homes. His justifications suggest that it was imperative that his masculine honour be maintained when questioned. In reality, Armstrong told McClure that he could burn Newark if, and only if, they were defending the Fort – which was not the case.
as he burnt the town as they were abandoning the Fort, not defending it. The British were not within miles of the Fort when it occurred, but merely abandoning it due to lack of provisions. Finally, Americans gave inhabitants a mere thirty minutes to remove themselves and their families from their homes and seek shelter on a winter’s night. Thus, by placing these innocent civilians’ lives at risk, including women and children, the American army’s departure from Fort George on the night of December 10th, 1813 and subsequent burning of Newark effectively challenged wartime expectations of nineteenth-century masculine honour amongst American soldiers during the War of 1812.

Appendix

Figure I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elizabeth Campbell's War Loss claim - December 1813</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dwelling House, Barn £600 s0 2 Pair Tongs and Shovels £2 s0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Silver Table Spoons 10 0 1 Pair Dog Irons 2 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Dessert Spoons 6 5 1 Large Iron Oven 1 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Tea Spoons 5 10 1 Large Wash Kettle 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Silver Soup Ladle 3 0 1 Bell Metal Wash Kettle 1 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Salt &amp; Mustard Spoons 1 0 2 iron Pots, Frying Pan 1 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Silver Cups, large 12 0 1 Large Copper Tea Kettle 1 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Chestdrawers 5 0 6 Dozen Table Plates 2 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Complete Set. 4 15 2 “ Dishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Glass Tumblers 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walnut Dining Table 6 0 12 Wine Glasses 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Four Post Bedstead 4 0 2 Dressing Glasses 2 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Travelling “ 3 10 1 Piece White Cotton 2 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Camp “ 5 0 1 Wrapper Coat 4 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Small “ 2 0 1 Barrel Pork 5 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Washstand 1 0 1 “ Beef 4 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Small Tables 2 10 1 Handsome Fowling Piece 5 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cow and Calf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Mare, two year old, &amp; yearling 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 Tea Tray, 4 doz. Cups and Saucers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Wood Saw, 2 Spades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Canadian Stoves 25 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£778 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTES


6 Ibid., 204.

7 Ibid., 205.


11 General McClure to the Public in Cruikshank Vol IX, 48-50.


13 The Secretary of War to Governor Hopkins, December 26th 1813 in Cruikshank Vol IX, 54.

14 George Prevost, "From Canada," *The War*, February 1, 1814.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

17 Braudy, *Chivalry to Terrorism*, 283.

18 Charles Turrell, "Mr. Webster's Speech," *Portsmouth Oracle*, February 12, 1814.

19 Ibid.


21 Ibid., 101.

22 Ibid., 102.

23 See Appendix Figure I

For Fate and Fortune: American Privateers in the War of 1812

By Brandon Harrison

The Wolf and the Pike
(sung to the tune of "The Cobbler")

A Wolf once met a Pike,
And vow'd that he would eat her,
Did you e'er dream the like;
That little Pike should beat her;
Says Wolf I'm tir'd of beef and veal,
And fish is finer feeding,
But little Pike with fins of steel,
Set her great mouth a bleeding.

When Wolf first felt her wound,
She scamper'd up from the table,
And ran upon dry ground,
As fast as she was able;
Says she this was a cursed dish,
For Wolf to think of ever,
And Pike from this day is a fish
I ne'er will taste - no never.

But Pike, who from the deep,
With scorn beheld her canting;
Now feigns to be asleep,
And for more sport is panting.
If ugly Wolf invade her bed of water,
The pretty Pike will strike her dead,
Unless she cry for quarter.¹

Compared to the British Royal Navy, the Americans in the War of 1812 appeared to have no hope of victory. Yet, just like the Pike, American privateers and letter-of-marques sent the British away, battered and bruised. During the War of 1812, these privately armed vessels (totaling five hundred and twenty-six by the end of the war) managed to capture between 1,175-2,300 enemy ships - doing over forty million dollars worth of damage to British commerce and bringing a total of $10,676,793.50 into the American economy.² Unfortunately, this success did not come without cost. Countless men lost life and fortune by taking to the sea as privateers and letter-of-marques.³ Therefore, the question arises as to why these men would engage in such a perilous activity? For historians, the idea of patriotism—serving to protect one's beloved country—has often been proposed as the answer to this question. This paper, however, revisits this motivation. It demonstrates that patriotism only speaks to a select few aboard America's
privately armed vessels. Instead, money—the idea of becoming rich—proves to be the true motivation behind the vast majority of these men.

Over the years, many historians have debated the motivations propelling privateers and letter-of-marques to engage in these potentially life-threatening wartime activities. Some, according to Andrew Lambert, attempt to portray privateers as patriotic men, whose deep love for their country motivated them to take up arms against the British.\textsuperscript{4} This is a fair conclusion considering the amount of romanticism that surrounds the topic. Republicans long portrayed a rather patriotic image of these men, dubbing them "the militia of the sea."\textsuperscript{5} Occasionally, men did in fact prove to be motivated by their patriotism. Men like Joshua Barney, for example, a veteran of the American Revolution, eagerly answered the call to arms as a patriot, ready to once again serve his beloved country.\textsuperscript{6} Yet, although men like Barney did exist, not all men could claim such patriotic motivations. Many privateers committed crimes against the United States, often in the form of illegal trade with Britain.\textsuperscript{7} Thus, one cannot say that all men found themselves motivated by patriotism. Instead, one must look to a far simpler answer: money. Although privateering offered men a chance to contribute to America's war effort, it was first and foremost a business venture. Privateering offered men the chance to make fortunes, and this proved to be a powerful motivator by the time war broke out in 1812.\textsuperscript{8} Even Thomas Jefferson, after suggesting the need to encourage privateering in the United States commented, "We have tens of thousands of seamen that without it would be destitute of the means to support [themselves], and useless to their country."\textsuperscript{9}

By the time war broke out in 1812, privateering was no new concept. For centuries, countries used the commission to control merchantmen seeking revenge for damaged or stolen property. It offered these men a chance to take action, at their own expense of course, against the nation or individual who had wronged them.\textsuperscript{10} The role of a privateer evolved in Elizabethan England. During the fabled ‘Age of Exploration,’ privateers not only became the major financiers of New World exploration, they became the primary agents of it as well.\textsuperscript{11} Men like Sir Francis Drake and Sir Walter Raleigh are just some of the most famous Elizabethan privateers. These men are remembered for their spectacular adventures on the high seas.\textsuperscript{12} Even for the young American government, privateering was no new concept. During the American Revolution, the infant government enlisted the support of approximately seven hundred privately owned and armed vessels. They represented a fundamental part of the American naval effort with Benjamin Franklin even going so far as to recruit the added support of French privateers.\textsuperscript{13}
Not only did they provide a steady and fairly effective threat to enemy commerce, they also provided a steady influx of British prisoners. These prisoners could then be ransomed for American ones as needed.\textsuperscript{14}

After playing such a critical role in the American Revolution, it is understandable that the American government once again eagerly employed privateers at the start of the War of 1812. Following the declaration of war against Great Britain, President Madison wasted little time enlisting the help of privateers and letter-of-marques. The President placed little faith in the American navy. After all, it only consisted of twenty man-o-wars, seven of which, including the famous \textit{USS Chesapeake}, could be found sitting in American ports undergoing extensive repairs.\textsuperscript{15} In comparison, the Royal Navy boasted a force in excess of a thousand ships, six hundred of which could be found at sea at any given time.\textsuperscript{16} Now admittedly, many of the Royal Navy's ships found themselves engaged in activities in and around Europe, but even the Halifax fleet posed a formidable force. With a sixty-four gun man-o-war (sometimes referred to as ship-of-the-line), five frigates, eleven sloops, and a mixture of six miscellaneous smaller vessels, the Halifax fleet represented a far more formidable force than anything the United States Navy could muster.\textsuperscript{17} Fortunately for the American government, men would eagerly step forth as privateers and letter-of-marques.

When news of an impending war reached the ears of James De Wolf, a leading merchant in the town of Bristol, he wasted little time outfitting a ship to be used as a privateer.\textsuperscript{18} De Wolf was just one of a number of merchantmen who suffered losses at the hands of the British. Thus, when the declaration of war between the United States and Great Britain became official, he quickly requested a commission:

\begin{quote}
Bristol, R. I., June 30, 1812.

The Honorable William Eustis,  
Secretary of War:—

Sir; I have purchased and now ready for sea, an armed brig, (one of the most suitable in this country for a privateer) of one hundred and sixty tons burden, mounting eighteen guns, and carries one hundred and twenty men, called the \textit{Yankee}, commanded by Oliver Wilson. Being desirous that she should be on her cruise as soon as possible, I beg that you will cause a commission to be forwarded as soon as practicable to the Collector of the District, that this vessel may not be detained.

I am very respectfully, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
James De Wolf\textsuperscript{19}
\end{quote}
As President Madison predicted, hundreds of men like De Wolf turned out at the start of the war to eagerly offer their services as privateers. Like De Wolf, these men brought an array of powerful ships and an abundance of valuable resources. Although Madison was eager to accept their offers, he was not ready to give them the freedom to operate however they wished. Instead, he set about implementing a strict set of rules and regulations.

During the American Revolution, privateers gained commissions from their home states and operated with little, if any control. Madison refused to see this pattern play out in the War of 1812 and demanded the strict regulation of all American privateers and letter-of-marques. Thus, unlike pirates, privateers and letter-of-marques found themselves bound by a strict set of wartime rules and regulations. Any ship owner could apply for a commission, provided that he was an American citizen. He simply had to provide two sureties - individuals willing to sign a five to ten thousand dollar bond ensuring that the new privateer would follow all regulations set forth by the American government. Regardless of the commission, these regulations all shared the same features. Sailors needed "to proceed, in exercising the rights of war, with all the justice and humanity which characterize the nation." Moreover, they could not, unless given due reason to suspect involvement with the enemy, 'molest' the vessels of a neutral power. Accepting these conditions, ship-owners would submit their applications to the secretary of state and wait for Congress (and President Madison as his signature was required on each commission) to grant their request. Any privateers or letter-of-marques found operating without such a document would be treated, along with their crews, as pirates subject to the full extent of the capturing country's law - in most cases this meant death by hanging.

Once granted a commission, owners accepted all the costs and risks associated with the venture. This included the outfitting of ships with guns and supplies. Fully outfitted, the average ship cost anywhere from $20,000 to $40,000. In addition, owners would have to feed crews of about 100 to 150 men for the duration of the voyage. They did not, however, have to pay the men any set salary. Instead, men received payment based on the prizes captured by the ship and how much revenue they brought at auction. In the case of failure, these men could spend months at sea without receiving a penny for their efforts. Moreover, in the case of a particularly catastrophic voyage, these men could find themselves imprisoned while the owners found themselves at a complete loss, both of ship and profit. With such great costs, why would anyone, ship owner or sailor alike, want to risk engaging in such a dangerous activity?
By the time war broke out in 1812, the United States found itself in the midst of a crippling depression. Despite their neutrality, the United States failed to avoid the repercussions of Napoleon's war in Europe. When it began, American merchantmen made handsome profits trading to both sides. By 1807 however, this took a drastic turn. The United States government began issuing a series of laws aimed at damaging British and French trade. Unfortunately for the Americans, they grossly miscalculated the effect such laws would have on their own economy. By December, American merchantmen found themselves under a complete non-exportation law. Domestic ships, as well as merchandise, were prohibited from leaving home ports. Luckily for American merchantmen, this early policy was riddled with loopholes just waiting to be exploited. Despite the restrictions, many merchant vessels continued work abroad. They managed to sneak out of port just prior to the law, and they had no intentions of returning home. Instead, they stayed at sea, trading between foreign ports and giving their owners a steady supply of profit.

In 1809, this quasi-legal trade came to an abrupt halt. Tired of smuggling and still believing it could cripple European economies, Congress gave customs officials absolute power over all merchant shipping. Now, customs officials could use America's military forces (both on land and at sea) to enforce the embargo. For Americans, this came as unwelcomed news. Prices were already at an all-time low as farmers could find no way, legally or illegally, of selling surplus crops to foreign markets. At the same time, merchants watched as their ships rotted in port, and American exports plummeted from 108 million dollars in 1807 to less than 22 million dollars in 1809.

Realizing the dire state of their country's economy, Congress quickly repealed the embargo by March of 1809. They then replaced it with one directed specifically at British and French commerce. This came as a welcomed reprieve for Americans as merchants could once again trade (albeit illegally) with their British partners. Baltimore itself became a major business hub for both legal and illegal activities. Despite the persistence of a small group of patriotic merchants, almost all of the city's merchant ship-owners began trading grain products illegally with the British. Even after Madison's 1811 non-importation law against Great Britain, Baltimore merchants, like many others, continued to supply the British - effectively turning a potentially prosperous trade route into an exclusive accumulation of material wealth in Great Britain. In the end, it is evident that treasonous behaviour became something of a norm amongst American merchantmen wishing to earn profits. As a result, it is of little surprise that
patriotism must be seriously questioned as the motivation propelling men to engage in privateering.

With America in the midst of a crippling economic depression, merchant ship-owners found themselves with few options when the War of 1812 broke out. On the one hand, they could do nothing and watch their ships once again rot in port while they slowly descended into complete bankruptcy. On the other hand, however, they could be proactive. Ship-owners could outfit their ship(s) with the necessary armaments and make good use of the legal framework of war. They could become privateers or letter-of-marques and possibly make fortunes at sea. Considering the overall lack of alternative ventures, the prospects of a prize and the profit it offered proved more than enough for most would-be privateers. This was especially true considering ship owners earned approximately half of whatever the ship's prize sold for at auction (if a ship had multiple owners, as was common, then this sum would be divided amongst them).

As the war dragged on, profit became increasingly important for ship-owners and investors alike. Not only was it their motivation for enrolling in the increasingly dangerous activity, it was also their motivation for remaining in it. As a result, privateers like John Ferguson and John Lawrence quickly began petitioning Congress to improve the profitability of the activity by reducing costs such as customs duties.

At the start of the war, customs duties varied for each prize. Generally, they amounted to approximately half the total value of a prize once sold. These duties would go towards a number of different expenses including court costs, lawyers, and even benevolent funds such as the Seamen's Hospital Fund. The amount left over was the privateer's profit. In the case of the privateer Teazer and its prize Venus, the prize sold at auction for a respectable $17,637.68. Duties on this prize amounted to a staggering $8,287.63, or 47% of the total value, leaving only $9,350.05 to be divvied up between owners and crew. With such a drastic cut out of their profit, it is of little wonder why money-minded privateers began to protest. The owners of the Teazer even went so far as to inform Congress that failure to reduce the crippling duties would see them remove their vessel from active service. Luckily for them, Congress did eventually decide to reduce the customs duties on 27 July 1813. The vote came just five days after Congress reviewed a letter written by Hugh Nelson, Chairman of the Naval Committee. Originally addressed to William Jones, the acting Secretary of the Treasury, the letter reviewed
the case in favour of granting privateers a reprieve from heavy taxation. In it, Nelson explained the situation quite plainly:

The fact is, that, from causes that occupy the present discussion, privateering is nearly at an end; and, from the best observation I have been enabled to make, it is more from the deficiency of remuneration in the net proceeds of their prizes, than from the vigilance and success of the enemy in recapturing.53

Realizing the truth in Nelson's words, Congress voted sixty-nine to thirty-seven in favour of reducing the duties placed on captured prizes. This, they hoped, would provide privateers with the monetary encouragement they demanded to continue their fight against British commerce.54

Although it is evident that ship-owners and investors alike gravitated towards privateering for the sake of money, they were not the only ones. Average sailors from across the country flocked towards privateers and letter-of-marques as they offered the chance to earn a much-needed income.55 Many of these men found themselves bearing the full brunt of the economic depression. Noah Jones (or Johnson), the man often associated with the pen name "A Wanderer," understood this situation all too well. In his second journal aboard the privateer Yankee, he reflects on the economic state of America in October of 1812 - admitting that he, like many of his shipmates, could not afford to waste an opportunity for profit, especially with the coming of winter.56 John Lord, the man whose experiences are recorded in the Yarn of a Yankee Privateer, expressed a similar sentiment after watching countless young men, one after the other, board privateers, drawn by the allure of money. Lord even recounted how his own crewmates eagerly looked on as they approached a potential prize, avariciously trying to determine the potential value of their own share(s).57 According to Lord, the division of these shares could be broken down like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crewmember's Rank</th>
<th>Standard division of Prize Shares</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>8 – 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieutenants, Sailing Master(s)</td>
<td>5 – 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prize Master, Master's Mates</td>
<td>3 – 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat Swain, Gunner, Carpenter</td>
<td>2 1/2 – 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able Seamen</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landsmen, Boys</td>
<td>1/2 - ¾</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Browne, The Yarn of a Yankee Privateer, 48.
Although the division of shares obviously favoured the upper echelon of a ship's crew, even the lowliest members stood to gain a profit in the event of a successful capture. As a result, it is understandable that many men would find such prospects both appealing and motivating. Yet, understanding share quantities is not enough. One must also look to the value of such shares, and for this, one must analyze individual ships like the Yankee.

Owned by James De Wolf and John Smith, the privateer Yankee is one of the most renowned privateers of the War of 1812. Its career beautifully illustrates the power money possessed to motivate these men to engage in such a dangerous activity. On 15 October 1812, the Yankee made its maiden voyage out of Bristol with 18 guns and a crew of ninety-five 'prime fellows.' After 146 days at sea, the ship returned to harbour with each individual share amounting to approximately $700.00. Hearing word of the astonishing fortune made by the men of this first voyage, sailors could hardly wait for the Yankee to set sail again. When the time came, men practically fought one another for a place onboard its deck. Although the second voyage did not bring the same fantastical results, each share still amounted to a remarkable $338.40. Shares from the third voyages declined further, dropping to $173.54 per share. Unfortunately, though, the Yankee's fourth voyage failed to reap such results. With only two minuscule prizes able to safely reach port without being recaptured, each share amounted to a meagre $17.29 - still a profit, but nowhere near the profit men had seen on previous voyages. As the value of shares declined, so too did the number of eager sailors hungry for profit. As the Yankee prepared for its fifth voyage, most sailors believed the trip would be a bust. Unlike its previous voyages, men could easily find space aboard the aging privateer. Some men, foreseeing an unrewarding voyage, even decided to jump-ship as the privateer made its way out of port. Ironically, this voyage proved to be the most profitable for the Yankee. Not only did the ship's owners receive an incredible $223,313.10, but its lowliest crewmember, a sailor of colour, received $738.19. As for the rest of the crew, they cleared profits in excess of $1,100.00 with the Captain earning a staggering $15,789.69. As one can imagine, tale of such profits was more than enough to ensure an ample crew for the sixth and final voyage of the Yankee. The case of the Yankee itself beautifully illustrates just how motivational money could be for would-be privateers. In saying this, however, the Yankee was but one privateer amongst many. To better understand the situation, one must understand the profitability of this perilous activity.

When scouring through newspapers like the Boston Patriot, a plethora of notices can be found relating to the prizes and auctions of privateers. Unfortunately, many of these articles fail
to state the actual value of these prizes. Despite this omission, these articles can still provide valuable information concerning the number of vessels returning to American harbours, as well as the products they contained. On 24 October 1812, the 260-ton ship named Guyana appeared in the Boston Patriot. The vessel boasted eight cannons and a cargo consisting of salt (250 tons), coal (30 tons), and 160 crates of miscellaneous wares. Although the article fails to mention a value, it is evident simply by the ship and its contents that profit was to be made. Yet, such an assumption does little to satisfy the quantitatively-minded historian, thus one must dig further - combing newspapers with ship's logs and journals.

When discussing profit, one is inclined to go specifically, and often exclusively, to the privateer Yankee. This, however, was not the only privately armed ship that proved profitable. In 1813, a letter-of-marque by the name of Argus managed to return to its home port of Boston with a prize ship laden with 16,000 hides, valued at $160,000. It also carried $20,000 worth of merchandise within its own hull, which it promptly sold after returning home. In 1814, upon completing its third voyage, the America recorded 12 prizes bringing its grand total to 26, amounting to a value of approximately $1,100,000. Even when things went wrong, profit could still be made. In 1813, while patrolling the English shipping lines, the Leo, a letter-of-marque captained by Captain T. Lewis managed to capture a British East India ship valued at approximately £500,000 sterling. Although the English eventually recaptured the ship while it sailed for American shores, Captain Lewis still managed to make a profit of approximately $60,000 after having transferred the prize's most valuable cargo over to his own ship. On average, privateers in the War of 1812 took two to three ships. This meant that on a typical cruise, a sailor, regardless of his status onboard the ship, could earn a profit in the neighborhood of three hundred dollars. For three months (or less) worth of work, not only was this three to four times greater than the average sailor's pay, it was also an enticing reason to engage in this activity.

Despite the profitable nature of privateering, one must understand that not all voyages ended in success. Numerous voyages ended with ships returning to port without a prize despite previous success. Over the course of the war, approximately seven hundred and fifty American prizes failed to arrive at American ports after being recaptured, often by British warships. Others however, like the Bona and the Blockade, failed to capture any vessel at all. Ships like these are part of a larger group, comprising 42% of privateers and letter-of-maraques - who, despite their valiant attempts, failed to make profits exceeding $50,000. Despite the chance of
failure, the possibility of earning a fortune proved to be more than enough motivation for these men. Even after the war, many men chose to continue their operations in hopes of making a greater fortune at sea.

After the war, many men chose to return to their agrarian lifestyles, once again diligently working the land to earn a living. Some men, however, could not turn their backs to the sea or the profitability of privateering. Few professions, both on land and at sea, could compare to the money one could make as a privateer. Unfortunately, though, peace meant that the United States no longer required privateers or letter-of-marques. Once again motivated by the prospect of wealth, former privateers quickly became pirates despite the risk it posed to one's life if arrested. Most of these men made their way to the Caribbean where they began looting unsuspecting vessels. Although the risk was death if caught, the prizes could potentially be far greater as they no longer had customs duties or owners to pay.

In the end, it becomes apparent that American privateers found motivation in the wealth this occupation appeared to offer. With the United States in the midst of an economic depression, privateering offered these men the potential to earn a living. Moreover, it offered the potential for an individual, if he was willing to accept the risks, to earn an income three to four times greater than that of any labourer. In some of the most extraordinary cases, men could make anywhere from $700.00 to $15,000 in a single voyage. Thus, it is of little wonder why they eagerly applied for employment aboard these ships. Even when the war ended and the activity became known as the illegal act of piracy, men still found motivation in the fortunes it offered. For all privateers, both owners and crew, motivation could be summarized in the simple adieu of the Yankee's 'Wander,' "Farewell, ye tranquil pleasures of social life! I sacrifice ye all at the imperious calls of Fate and Fortune."

---

NOTES

3 Although this paper will be discussing privateers and letter-of-marques simultaneously, it should be understood that the two are different from one another. Privateers are privately armed vessels designed specifically for privateering work. While at sea, a privateer's sole responsibility is to attack enemy commerce. Letter-of-marques on the other hand are former merchant ships equipped with arms so that they may take an enemy vessel if the opportunity presents itself. They, however, remain primarily merchant vessels and continue to


5 Budiansky, *Perilous Fight*, 286.


7 Ibid., 199-200.

8 Leiner, "Privateers and Profit in the War of 1812," 1225, 1230.

9 George Coggeshall, *History of the American privateers, and letters-of-Marque, during our war with England in the years 1812, '13, and '14, interspersed with several naval battles between American and British ships-of-war* (New York: Published by and for the Author, 1856), xliv.

10 Tabarrok, "The Rise, Fall and Rise Again of Privateers."

11 Ibid., 566.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid., 567.

14 Ibid.


16 Ibid., 39.

17 Ibid., 40.


21 Ibid.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid.


26 Ibid.


28 Ibid.


31 Ibid., 288-289.


36 Ibid.

37 Ibid., 19.

38 Ibid., 20.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.


48 Ibid., 1232.

49 Ibid., 1235.
50 Ibid.
51 Ibid., 1235-1236.
52 Ibid., 1245-1247; Annals of Congress, 13th Congress, 1st Session: 479.
55 Lambert, The Challenge, 200; Budiansky, Perilous Fight, 287.
57 Browne, The Yarn of a Yankee Privateer, 3-5.
58 Munro, "The Most Successful American Privateer," 19.
59 Ibid., 59, 16.
60 Ibid., 16.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid., 17.
63 Ibid.
64 Ibid., 17-18
65 Ibid., 18.
67 Coggeshall, History of the American Privateers, 149-150.
68 Ibid., 227.
69 Ibid., 147.
70 Ibid.
71 Budiansky, Perilous Fight, 289.
72 Ibid.
74 Ibid., 205.
77 Ibid.
78 Ibid.
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid.
William Bartram: A Maker and Painter of America’s Image in its Enlightenment

By Matthew Jagas

One of the more interesting, yet lesser-known figures of the eighteenth-century American Enlightenment is the naturalist William Bartram. Despite his relative obscurity as an important enlightened American, being overshadowed by more prominent figures such as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, Bartram is revered, according to historian Judith Magee, as “the most influential single figure in natural history in pre-revolutionary America.”¹ His significant botanical observations and discoveries contributed greatly to the universal body of natural history. Yet, a far more significant aspect of Bartram is the role his science played in the development of America in the Age of Enlightenment. Bartram’s work helped to place American science in the world of European science, showing to Europe that American nature was by no means inferior to its own. As well, Bartram’s primary work, Travels through North & South Carolina, etc, along with the scientific works of men such as Thomas Jefferson, helped to show America’s ability to act independently of Britain.² His accounting, classifying and describing of American nature, along with his abundant artwork, also had a significant role in resolving the issue of European supremacy in natural history. They showed to the world an image of America that was at once wild and new yet capable and civilized. An analysis of William Bartram, specifically of his Travels and its influence, will show the difficulties facing American science in the Age of Enlightenment and the quest of the new nation to develop its image.

Before examining the significance of Bartram’s work in America, it will first be useful for further analysis to provide some important biographical information. William Bartram was born in Kingsessing, Philadelphia in 1739 to Ann and John Bartram. John was also a highly-respected naturalist in America as well as an influential figure in the American Enlightenment, playing an important role in the natural scientific exchange between the Old World and the New. He is also most famously known for having helped found the American Philosophical Society with Benjamin Franklin in 1743.³ At a young age, William would often accompany his father on his botanical expeditions where he developed his passion for investigating nature and especially for illustrating his observations. He received an enlightened and classical education at the Philadelphia Academy, where he was introduced to the works of such prominent Enlightenment figures as Locke, Pope, Newton, Bacon, and Hutcheson.⁴
After having failed in his first career attempt as a merchant, and then again in his second as a rice planter, Bartram managed to gain the patronage of a prominent English doctor. Dr. John Fothergill, a botanist friend of his father, agreed to fund him in his surveying expedition of the American South. Bartram set out on this expedition in 1773, travelling for four years through Georgia, Florida then North and South Carolina, in which places he documented his findings and described his travels. After having returned to Philadelphia in 1777, he wrote his famous Travels, for which he gained much of his fame. When Travels circulated throughout Europe, for example, as Magee notes, he was considered there to be “one of the greatest American naturalists during his lifetime.” Later, Bartram settled in his family home where he tended the famous Bartram Garden to his death in 1823.

Bartram’s Travels was first published in 1791, but it is not his only work. In 1774, he wrote a “Report to Dr. John Fothergill” in which he records the observations of his journey up to that time. Nevertheless, Travels is his principal public work and the work for which he was most known throughout the scientific community. It is also the work through which historians may observe the impact of Bartram on the American Enlightenment and American science. However, while his report to Fothergill parallels events in Travels, as historian Thomas Slaughter notes in his book, The Natures of John and William Bartram, it “offers a strikingly different account of William’s journey.” In general, his report aims for more “scientific credibility” than does his Travels. For example, in Travels, there is a notable lack of dates and many of the dates it does contain are inaccurate, whereas the dating in the report is much more accurate. While it is indeed curious to see this difference between his public and private works, and while the relatively unscientific nature of Travels may have, as Slaughter argues, been calculated for “literary effect,” the purpose and significance of Travels seems to be in much more than the simple coming of age story, which Slaughter suggests. Neither is its significance mainly due to its influence on the Romantic writers of the early nineteenth century, as other historians have suggested; it is rather in its purpose of responding to a particular problem in American natural science.

Bartram came upon the world of Enlightenment science as American science continued to experience a major issue. As Magee explains, since “contact with Europe was the key to all scientific development,” America struggled to act independently of Europe, just as it had in its pre-revolutionary politics. One event in the Bartrams’ early travels to the South presents an
exemplary case of this issue. In 1765, they made an important discovery of a new species of plant, which they named the Franklin tree (Franklinia alatamaha) after their friend “the illustrious Dr. Benjamin Franklin.” In 1783 after his own travels, William wrote to the celebrated Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus in order to present Franklinia as a new discovery and establish it as a new genus. However, Linnaeus having passed away before his authority might settle the matter, a dispute arose between American and European botanists about the plant’s proper genus. European authorities eventually rejected the claim of it being new, leading one current American authority on Franklinia, Joel Fry, to remark that it was likely done with the intention of enforcing “European supremacy in botanical nomenclature.” Having so recently asserted its political independence from Britain and having shown itself to the Old World as a new nation, America yet struggled to show itself to be a capable nation in its science. This struggle, Bartram, together with men like Thomas Jefferson, would have a significant role in resolving.

This European supremacy in natural history was due mainly to the belief among Europeans that in general, American species were inferior to their own. Many Europeans scientists promulgated this theory, most notably the renowned French naturalist the Comte de Buffon, in his Histoire Naturelle. Buffon argued, according to historian Keith Thomson that the species of the New World “were always smaller and weaker” than their European counterparts, European livestock exported to America often became “stunted” and in general they had fewer variety of species. Such degeneracy, Buffon continued, had to do mainly with climate and could not fail to effectively degenerate the human population as well, as he argued to have been the case with Native Americans. The major problem with such accusations was not simply the issue of their authenticity, but rather as Thomson notes, that anything which “lessened public opinion of America… had political significance.” The deplorable conception of America’s nature in the mind of Europeans, in short, damaged its overall image and added to its overall inferiority as a nation.

Clearly, the issue facing American natural history reached far deeper than a simple scientific dispute: it was about forming its own image as well as asserting its equality and independence among all nations, as it had done in the Declaration of Independence. Thomas Jefferson clearly understood this and thus, in his Notes on the State of Virginia, he spends pages in describing the natural environment of Virginia, listing its species in the manner of a naturalist
and devoting almost an entire chapter to refuting Buffon and the European conception of America’s nature.\textsuperscript{17} This has led one historian, Susan Manning, to see Jefferson’s work not simply as a geographical description of Virginia, but as “an intellectual and patriotic discovery of the emergent nation.”\textsuperscript{18} It is similarly as a response to the issue of this misunderstood European conception that Bartram, like Jefferson, holds special scientific significance. According to Magee, Bartram would “[corroborate] Jefferson’s arguments,” helping to display a proper image of America and “demonstrate that American flora and fauna were comparable to those of Europe.”\textsuperscript{19}

The most evident way in which Bartram begins the repairing of America’s scientific image is through his classification of the various species he comes across in his \textit{Travels}. Before doing this, however, Bartram seems to introduce the problem of European supremacy in his introduction. In the \textit{vegetable kingdom}, he notes: “it is difficult to pronounce which division of the earth, within the polar circles, produces the greatest variety [of species].”\textsuperscript{20} He then proceeds, as though he was about to refute the Europeans’ claims, to list the various species which inhabit different parts of the earth: those in the “tropical division” and those in the “temperate zone.”\textsuperscript{21} Then coming to the animal, he names and extols the varieties of species found among this kingdom.\textsuperscript{22} In this way, Bartram’s work, as much as Jefferson’s “attempts to counteract prevailing myths about America with ‘facts,’” according to Manning, also refutes the “myth” of European supremacy.\textsuperscript{23}

Bartram further places American species into equality with those of Europe by his employment of Linnaeus’ standardized and universal names of species in his many descriptions; the same way that Jefferson had done in his \textit{Notes}. While his documentation of species are usually scattered throughout the narrative of his journey, beginning his descriptions as he comes upon new places, many times he breaks the narrative to fully document and classify a species.\textsuperscript{24} On one most exemplary occasion, Bartram fully breaks from the book’s narrative to describe and classify several species of snakes, but continues his classification into a long list of all of the species he encounters on his journey.\textsuperscript{25} This particular list is remarkably comparable to those in Linnaeus’ \textit{Systema Naturae} as well as those in Jefferson’s \textit{Notes}.\textsuperscript{26} The use of the universal names of species would have then allowed European naturalists to recognize the species he encounters and scientifically construct the world around him. One early British review of
Bartram’s *Travels*, published in the *Monthly Review*, for example, states: “the naturalist will be gratified by lists of such peculiar plants and trees as Mr. Bartram observed.”

As much as his extensive descriptions aid naturalists, they also serve to help the reader accurately construct an image of the American landscape. Reading through his *Travels*, one is able to follow Bartram through field, marsh, forest, and river and see that America is not entirely different from Europe. In a particularly descriptive passage, Bartram constructs for his readers the great Alachua Savanna, which presents “unlimited, varied, and truly astonishing native wild scenes.” Also, his many excursions in nature, such as his long and exciting encounter with crocodiles on the St. John’s River in East Florida, show the wildness of an America yet to be tamed, while his civilized encounters with Native Indians shows an America able to be tamed. That these two types of encounters were subjects of the mentioned review article, and that, as Magee observes, *Travels* received wide acclaim in Europe, shows that Europeans were indeed attentive to Bartram’s illustration of America. His descriptions together with his classifications of nature, helped to thus repair the scientific image of America, showing that it was not only equal, but indeed, newer and more robust than Europe.

Bartram’s writings certainly began to construct the image of America in the minds of Europeans. However, according to Magee, “the scientific listings, descriptions, and observations… were viewed as secondary” to his work’s other elements. Specifically, as an early twentieth-century historian Nathan Fagin explains, Bartram ultimately “saw nature with the eyes of a painter.” Therefore, just as his descriptions of nature helped to equalize American species with those of Europe, so too did his illustrations. While in the catalogue of his various illustrations provided by Magee in her book, one finds many intensely accurate drawings of perfectly ordinary species, such as a mallard or a warmouth fish, one also finds some very peculiar drawings. One, for example, depicts a standing cardinal beside an Atlantic croaker, seeming to float in the air. The purpose, as historian Michael Gaudio suggests, of this juxtaposition is to show that the bird and the fish have “a similar elliptical form,” and to emphasize the particular as well as the universal. Yet, such emphasis is typical of Bartram’s art and serves to encourage the viewer not only to regard the differences of nature but also the similarities. In doing so, Bartram tacitly suggests to his readers that though species differ from place to place, they are nonetheless comparable and worthy of praise; that their differences are
not a question of superiority, but all equally manifest the “wisdom and beneficence of the Supreme Creator.”

The full significance of Bartram’s artwork, however, to American science and thus the full significance of his whole work in general can be more fully realized if one considers the importance of visual representation in early Enlightenment science. In the Age of Enlightenment, according to historian Martin Rudwick, visuals, stuffed specimen, samples and especially “making pictures of the natural world,” were “essential part[s] of the practice of natural history.” Observing and collecting in the field was considered secondary to “the concentration of species in one place,” which allowed species to be “compared with others from elsewhere, and so be identified and classified.” Consequently, while his classification of species in his descriptions of nature first gave readers a partial view of America, it was mainly through his artwork that Bartram allowed Europeans to observe more fully American nature for themselves and ultimately contributed to the painting of America’s scientific portrait.

After his travels into the American South, Bartram planted many of the species he gathered on his journey in his family garden that soon became a famous site for naturalists to travel to. Although his work was over, his influence did not diminish. As Magee explains, years after his *Travels*, “naturalists, travelers, and politicians, including Jefferson and Washington,” all made their way to the Bartram home. Jefferson, for a time, even lived across the river from the house. All sought Bartram for his “encouragement, friendship and above all generosity in sharing his knowledge of natural history with them” and eventually Bartram would become a key figure in shaping latter important naturalists such as Alexander Wilson, who would be called, as Magee notes, “the father of American ornithology.” By his interaction with such men as came to visit him, he shared through his knowledge of nature gathered during his travels, his “vision for the future of the nation” and encouraged them to continue to form America’s image.

Although he is not well known among the prominent men of eighteenth-century America, William Bartram, his life and his works, was certainly no less significant. At a time when American science struggled to assert itself in the increasingly scientific world of the Enlightenment, being belittled in the European scientific community by its supposed “degenerate” and “lesser” natural world, Bartram’s work, primarily his *Travels*, served to help dispel such myths about the new nation. Along with Thomas Jefferson’s *Notes on the State of Virginia*, *Travels*, through its many descriptions and classifications of species, effectively
presented American species as being equivalent to those of Europe. As well, accompanied by his abundant illustrations of American wildlife, Bartram’s work helped to form the image of America as at once a new and wild nation but one that was yet familiar, by no means inferior, and one that was furthermore, as it now was in its politics, independent.

NOTES

4 Ibid., 37.
5 Ibid., 133.
8 Ibid., 190.
9 Ibid.
12 Ibid., 64, Bartram, Travels, 467.
16 Ibid.
17 Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia, 68-111.
20 Bartram, Travels, xiv.
21 Ibid., xiv-xxi.
22 Ibid., xxi-xxii.
23 Manning, “Naming of Parts; or, the Comforts of Classification,” 358.
24 Bartram, Travels, 170-180.
25 Ibid., 264-302.
28 Bartram, Travels, 187-190.
29 Ibid., 117-130, 20-23.
31 Ibid., 123.
33 Magee does not provide the titles of the art pieces, only their descriptions. I will, therefore, only provide their depictions and page numbers: “Mallard,” “Warmouth,” “Cardinal and Atlantic Croaker,” as depicted in Magee, The Art and Science of William Bartram, 89, 148, 92.
35 Bartram, Travels, xxiii.
39 Ibid., 158-159.
40 Ibid., 123.
By the end of the Second World War millions of ethnic Germans were living in both Poland and the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia. A large number of the ethnic Germans who lived in these countries had roots there extending back many generations and truly believed it was their home. There were around nine million Germans living within the pre-war Polish borders. In Upper Silesia, a region in Poland, the German population was largely rural and between 1944 and 1949 about 1.3 million Germans left the area.\(^1\) By the end of the war and after the Potsdam Conference in 1945, about half of these nine million Germans fled, and many were deported and murdered.\(^2\) Similar events occurred in the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia (also referred to as North Bohemia) - between 1945 and 1946 about 1.2 million ethnic Germans were expelled from the region and thousands more killed in labour camps and deportations.\(^3\) This paper will examine the nature of the expulsions from both Poland and the Sudetenland and the expelled Germans’ integration into the Soviet and Western zones of Germany. It will also briefly examine various explanations for these expulsions after World War II. Already a war-torn country trying to recover from the devastating effects of Nazism, Germany now had to incorporate millions of poor, sick, and homeless people into its cities. By examining the expulsion of ethnic Germans from both Poland and Czechoslovakia this essay will show that the cruel, inhumane, and rapid way in which the Germans were expelled had a negative impact on their integration into Germany. It will also show that the expulsion of ethnic Germans negatively affected Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Germany.

The expulsion of ethnic Germans from Poland began immediately after the end of the war. Many Germans were replaced by Poles from other parts of Poland and the Soviet Union.\(^4\) The nature in which the Germans were expelled, the so-called “wild expulsions,”\(^5\) and the later expulsions after the Potsdam conference in 1945 help to explain why ethnic Germans had a difficult time re-integrating into West and East German society. The nature of the expulsion also helps to explain the crisis that followed World War II in Poland.\(^6\) In the article “Reinterpreting the Expulsion of the Germans from Poland, 1945-49,” Hugo Service analyzes a case study of ethnic Germans from the Jelenia Gora District in Lower Silesia after World War II. Service notes that the expulsions began immediately following the end of World War II and were carried out
by Polish soldiers and militia, not by the government. The cruelty and disorganization of these summer expulsions showed that they were marked by revenge motives. The expulsion of the ethnic Germans in the Jelenia Gora District was facilitated by the movement of Poles to Western Poland from the central and former East-Polish territories. In order to make room for the migrating Poles, soldiers and militiamen removed ethnic Germans from their homes and placed them in old concentration camps and ghetto-like areas.7

The expulsion of ethnic Germans by Polish citizens, militia, and soldiers is what historian R.M. Douglas has called the “wild expulsions.” In his book, Orderly and Humane: The Expulsion of the Germans after the Second World War, Douglas asserts that although the allied powers stated their support for the expulsions of ethnic Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia at the end of the war, Czechoslovaks and Poles were wary of trusting the great powers because of pre-war experiences.8 In an attempt to take matters into their own hands, what resulted was the “wild expulsions,” forced labour, and mass murders of ethnic Germans. To control the “wild expulsions,” the Big Three (Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union) initiated the Potsdam Conference in July and August 1945, which called for the “orderly and humane” transfer of population. At this conference it was decided that Poland’s western border would be moved to the Oder-Nieβe line giving Poland back the western territory that was lost to Germany during the war.9 Poles were also told at the conference that they had to temporarily stop expelling Germans because the Western and Soviet zones of Germany were having a difficult time keeping up with the influx of ethnic German refugees.10 As a result, in the autumn of 1946, Polish officials created assembly camps to accommodate expellees for several days before their departure. Expelled Germans often lived in these camps for weeks or months because with millions of Germans being expelled at once, the infrastructure became overwhelmed. This resulted in the Germans often struggling to survive for lack of food, warm clothes, and housing.11

After the Potsdam Conference in 1945 when Poles were told to temporarily stop expelling Germans so Germany could better prepare for the influx of refugees, Polish officials in the Jelenia Gora District began to take measures to compel Germans to leave ‘voluntarily.’ These measures resembled Nazi policy towards Jewish people during the Third Reich and caused ethnic Germans to undergo “collective pauperization.” Ethnic Germans were forced to pay higher prices for fuel, food and housing, paid lower wages or no wages at all for work, were not
allowed to access their savings in German banks, forced to wear white armbands to distinguish
themselves as German, and were subjected to forced labour, harassment, violence, and robbery. It is possible the measures taken against the Germans in the Jelenia Gora District were also applied in other regions of Western Poland with large German populations.

As stated previously, the expulsion of ethnic Germans from Western Poland was facilitated by the migration of Poles from Eastern and Central Poland at the end of the war. Although Poland still faced a crisis as a result of the expulsions, the country was able to recover more quickly because of the replacement of Germans with Poles. In Philip Ther’s article, “The Integration of Expellees in Germany and Poland after World War II: A Historical Reassessment,” he describes the statistics of Poles returning or migrating to Western Poland at the end of the war. At least 2.1 million Poles from Eastern Europe and eastern Poland who had been deported to Siberia during Soviet occupation had been returned to Poland by 1948. Also, 2.2 million Poles moved from Western Europe back to Poland at the end of the war. Poles moving from the east to replace ethnic Germans being deported were allowed to bring two tonnes of belongings per family and some of their cattle and horses (compared to expelled Germans only being allowed 1 piece of luggage per person). Despite the large amounts of belongings allowed, many things were lost or damaged during the trip. Ther explains that by May 1946, only 30% of horses and 50% of cows that were supposed to be transported from Eastern Poland to Silesia arrived there. This made newly arriving Poles very impoverished - many were rural farmers, and they struggled for food, barely surviving let alone thriving in a new region without their cattle.

Another reason why Poland fared somewhat better than Czechoslovakia and Germany after the expulsions was because they kept skilled German labourers back until equally skilled Polish labourers arrived. This helped to prevent the collapse of industry in Poland. Polish authorities also kept back Germans who worked on state farms because the farms relied heavily on German workers and the majority of new Polish settlers did not want to work on them. Through not expelling ethnic Germans who were vital to the stability and continuation of the Polish economy, Poland fared better in the long run than Czechoslovakia. Poland’s Three Year Recovery Plan shows the effects of the expulsion and the replacement of Germans with Poles in the Western territories. By 1950, coal production rose to 80 million tons, over one million peopled entered industries, and about three million Poles had been settled in Western Poland.
Despite Poland’s quick recovery from the expulsions, the immediate effects were quite negative. At the beginning of the expulsions when German towns were rapidly cleared of their residents, all essential services also were cleared away. These services included a local council, police force, municipal administrators, as well as farmers, factory workers, and business owners. This no doubt caused chaos and instability in many local economies in Poland immediately following the war and until Poles came to the West as replacements.

The expulsions in Czechoslovakia were far more violent and cruel in nature than the expulsions in Poland and were carried out in a far less organized manner. The disorganization and cruelty of the expulsions in Czechoslovakia sheds light on why the expulsions had such a negative impact on the country’s economy in the 1950’s and 1960’s. The expulsion of ethnic Germans from the Sudetenland was clearly tainted with hatred and motives for revenge against the Germans. At the end of the war, when the rest of Europe was celebrating, members of the Waffen-SS in Czechoslovakia continued to fight and staged vicious counter-attacks against the Czechoslovaks. As a result, when the Germans finally capitulated, Czechoslovaks sought revenge through violence. Many Germans were hanged and lit on fire, and mobs went through hospitals to look for easy German targets to kill. On 19 June 1945, decree no. 16 was ratified which called for the internment of Sudeten German craftsmen, businessmen, and professionals. Hundreds of thousands of Sudeten Germans were put into labour camps and old Nazi concentration camps where they were held until arrangements were made for their deportation. The majority of inmates in these camps were women and children because many of the men still had not returned from the war. Regulations that exempted the young, the old, pregnant women, and the disabled from being placed in these camps were almost entirely ignored.

The extent of the violence and disregard for ethnic German rights in Czechoslovakia can be seen in two accounts of experiences at the time. One account is by Hubert Schütz, a businessman and former town councillor in the town of Jägerndorf in Czechoslovakia. Published in 1947, Schütz gives an account of his experiences upon returning to Jägerndorf in June 1945 after the fighting had ceased. He stated that when he and other ethnic Germans returned on 4 June 1945 they “immediately sensed the completely changed atmosphere.” Many of their homes were now occupied by Czechs, and Schütz’s home specifically was occupied by the Czech food office. After finally gaining access to his home, Schütz and his wife found many of their belongings and furniture damaged or stolen, but regardless of this, he stated that they were
still happy to be back home.\textsuperscript{20} Despite the destruction of their home and the changed atmosphere in the Sudetenland, it was clear that Schütz still had trust in the Czechoslovaks and truly believed that the Sudetenland was his home. This can be seen when he states, “we were in fear and anxiety, but still, we did not expect the worst because we somehow felt comparatively safe at home and amongst our own people.”\textsuperscript{21} This phrase “our own people” demonstrates that many ethnic Germans living in the Sudetenland did not view themselves as part of former Nazi Germany, but as citizens of Czechoslovakia. This view contrasts how Czechoslovaks saw ethnic Germans: as collaborators of the former Nazi regime. It is clear the Czechoslovaks blamed ethnic Germans in the Sudetenland for the atrocities the Nazi regime carried out. When Schütz was taken prisoner he was beaten and forced to say in Czech, “we thank our Fuhrer Adolf Hitler, the Chachar, that we are here.” Schütz explains that he and other prisoners were marched to an internment camp for Germans where thousands were already being held prisoner.\textsuperscript{22} Within the account that Schütz tells of his experience in the Sudetenland at the end of the war, it is evident that his unjustified removal from his home and the treatment he received from his Czechoslovak neighbours caused much grief and confusion which would have negatively affected his eventual resettlement into Germany.

Another account that shows the extent of the violence and the disregard for ethnic German well-being in the Sudetenland at the end of the war is that of E. Wollmann, who was a government inspector of German descent. He discusses his expulsion from Friedland in June 1945 and states that he was warned to be at the railway station at 2am to be expelled. Wollmann explains that he “hated the Nazi regime from the very beginning” and did not feel the “slightest bit guilty”\textsuperscript{23} for what they had done because he did not see himself as a supporter of the Nazis. Wollmann describes his experience upon arriving at the train station. All people and their possessions were subject to a search and all cash, documents, watches, and things that could be used as a weapon were confiscated. All new or fairly new articles of clothing were also taken away.\textsuperscript{24} Confiscation of valuable goods, documents, and many articles of clothing forced many ethnic Germans to arrive in East or West Germany with virtually nothing to their names, which made their integration increasingly difficult. Wollmann then goes on to describe his arrival on German soil, on the fields of Gorlitz, where hundreds of thousands of expelled Germans spent their first few months as refugees. He describes the hunger that all of the expelled Germans experienced, as well as the rapid spread of diseases such as dysentery and typhus.\textsuperscript{25} These
accounts display the violence, disorganization, and rapid population loss that Czechoslovakia experienced as a result of the expulsions. In both accounts, it is clear that this was the period of “wild expulsions” that were carried out by militia, soldiers, and citizens that Douglas describes in his book. Both experiences occurred before the Potsdam Conference in July and August 1945, and both men describe their experiences as being violent and cruel.

The expulsion of ethnic Germans from the Sudetenland had a more negative long-term impact on the economy of Czechoslovakia compared to the effects of the expulsion in Poland. In his article, “Ethnic Cleansing, Communism and Environmental Devastation in Czechoslovakia’s Borderland’s, 1945-1989,” Eagle Glassheim argues that North Bohemia’s deterioration and the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans are connected. Immediately following the expulsion of the Germans, Czechoslovakia found itself with a crisis regarding shortages of workers in mining and glass production. Like the replacement of Germans in Poland by Poles from the East, Germans in the Sudetenland were replaced by migrating Czechs and Slovaks; but unlike the Poles, the resettled Czechs and Slovaks did not come immediately after the Germans were expelled and did not respond as well to their new land and surroundings. Glassheim states that in the 1960’s communist officials were complaining about “the local population’s ‘indifference’ to their surroundings.” This “indifference” was a result of the alienation felt by Czechs and Slovaks who were living in the Sudetenland and since they were unfamiliar with the landscape they neglected the land and surrounding industry. A major difference between Poland and Czechoslovakia regarding the expulsions was that Poland took more organizational measures to ensure their industry and economy would not collapse after the ethnic Germans had left. In the case of Czechoslovakia, it was hatred and violence fuelling the expulsion of the Germans and they took less care in ensuring stability in the aftermath. In the Sudetenland, as was seen in Schütz’s account, many Germans felt attached to their homes and cared about their homeland which is what kept stability in the region. When Czechs and Slovaks migrated after the expulsion, they cared little for the land they were moving to and so allowed the region to spiral into chaos. In Germany, on the other hand, measures were taken in an attempt to prevent the chaos that would occur with an influx of German refugees.

The expulsions of ethnic Germans from both Poland and Czechoslovakia had negative impacts on the Western and Soviet zones of Germany. The allied powers initiated the expulsion of the Germans and believed that Germany should bear the costs that came with resettlement.
An International Population Transfer Commission was established to represent the Big Three, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. This commission had sole authority in determining the timing and circumstances of the expulsion in order to prevent an economic collapse in Germany. The commission knew that Poland and Czechoslovakia would want to speed up the expulsions and this would be detrimental to the German economy. Between 1944 and 1949 about 4.3 million expellees (24.2% of the East German population) settled in the Soviet Zone in Germany (the German Democratic Republic after 1949). By 1950, up to eight million expellees (about 17% of the West German population) came to West Germany. The “collective pauperization” of ethnic Germans in Poland that Hugo Service describes in his article negatively impacted the integration of ethnic Germans in both the Western and Soviet zones. One of the major problems that came with the expellees was how to properly settle them. Germany was already facing a housing problem as a result of the bombing in the war, and now they faced the additional burden of supplying millions of meals, beds, and homes to the expellees. Expellees were mainly settled in rural areas because there was more space, however, availability of work for them was not considered. Due to overpopulation, diseases caused by malnutrition and poor sanitary conditions spread rapidly. In order to get a proper picture of the effects of the expulsion on Germany, the Western zones and Soviet zone must be analyzed separately because they handled the situation very differently.

In the years immediately following the expulsion, the Western zones of Germany dealt with the expellees through a policy of containment. Newly settled German refugees were not allowed to organize themselves into interest and political groups because having organizations for new settlers would “disturb the process of assimilation.” This policy created difficulties for the expellees to survive in a market economy. The struggle for survival also came with psychological impacts for the expellees. Many were experiencing homesickness and were working only to secure their immediate needs. This was a lasting effect of the violence and quick uprooting from their homes the expellees experienced. By 1948, authorities in West Germany realized their containment policy towards expellees was not working and they switched to an active and supportive policy. Acknowledging that the expellees had suffered great losses, new laws were created in West Germany for the care of expellees with the intent to help them carry the burden of their expulsion. Although West Germany slowly recovered from the influx
of expellees, the rapid and careless way in which Poland and Czechoslovakia expelled ethnic Germans made it very difficult for authorities to control the situation.

In the Soviet zone of Germany, and later the GDR, authorities did more for expellees up until 1948 than the West German authorities did in West Germany. Soviet authorities issued a redistribution policy in an attempt to integrate the expellees into society and make their lives easier. Apartments and rooms of former Nazis were seized and given to people in need and land was also redistributed. Although the reforms made in East Germany for the benefit of expellees seemed to be going well, by 1948 the policy had reached its limits. Nothing was left to redistribute and redistribution was costing too much money. Farms were also not sustainable because of a lack of livestock and technical equipment. Despite initial efforts on the part of East German authorities to assist the expellees, in the long-term expellees suffered more than in West Germany. Having run out of solutions to the growing problem, authorities in East Germany began to suppress it. Authorities accused expellees of being responsible for the rise of Nazism, and expression of Silesian or Sudeten culture and identity was forbidden and prosecuted. Expellees had an especially hard time rising to high levels in the Communist party in the GDR and many careers in industry ended at middle levels. In East Germany it seemed as though expellees were being punished for something they had no control over. The problems they faced upon integration into Germany were a result of their quick expulsion from Poland and Czechoslovakia and their pauperization along the way.

On the whole, the rapid, violent, and disorganized way in which ethnic Germans were expelled from Poland and the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia impacted Poland and Czechoslovakia after the expulsion. The “wild expulsions” that occurred before the Potsdam conference in the summer of 1945 were carried out by militia and soldiers from both Poland and Czechoslovakia and caused millions of ethnic Germans to flood into Germany. After the expulsions, Poland fared better than Czechoslovakia because of migrations of Poles from Eastern and Central Poland to the west to settle the land that the Germans had previously lived on. The Sudetenland experienced far more economic difficulties because ethnic Germans were not replaced by Czechs and Slovaks immediately following the expulsion and so the economy destabilized as a result of a lack of workers. Even when Czechs and Slovaks had settled in the Sudetenland they did not feel an attachment to it like the previous German residents did and this resulted in a decrease in industrial output and a lack of labour. The expulsion also had a negative
impact on the expellees’ integration into West and East Germany. The violence and pauperization that the expellees underwent before they were deported left them with next to nothing upon their arrival in Germany. Both Western and Eastern German authorities had to face the problem of housing, food, and job shortages with the influx of millions of German refugees. Western Germany had better long-term results because of an active and supportive policy towards expellees. On the other hand, East Germany had poorer long-term results because of the failure of redistribution and a failure to find a new solution to the expellee problem. Further research could be done on this topic to answer why the Poles and Czechoslovaks were so violent and disorganized in expelling ethnic Germans from their countries, and this might open a new perspective regarding the after-effects of the expulsion.

NOTES

2 Ibid., 78.
5 This will be explained in the next few pages.
6 Although it should be noted that Poland had recovered from the expulsions and the affects of World War II much quicker than Czechoslovakia and Germany.
9 Ibid., 78, 93.
11 Douglas, Orderly and Humane, 178.
12 Service, “Reinterpreting the Expulsion,” 539.
14 Service, “Reinterpreting the Expulsion,” 544-545.
16 Douglas, Orderly and Humane, 256.
17 Ibid., 95.
18 Ibid., 135, 137.
20 Ibid., 410.
21 Ibid., 411.
22 Ibid., 411-412.
24 Ibid., 462-463.
25 Ibid., 463.
26 Douglas, Orderly and Humane, 93.
28 Ibid., 85.
29 Ibid., 66, 70.
30 Douglas, Orderly and Humane, 77-78.
31 Ther, “The Integration of Expellees,” 779.
33 Ther, “The Integration of Expellees,” 788-89.
34 Ibid., 790.
35 Ibid., 791.
36 Ibid., 791.
37 Ibid., 793-795.
38 Ibid., 795-96.
Visualizing the Victorian Christmas: Evolving Iconography and Symbolism in the Wake of Nineteenth-Century Commercialism

By Hilary Raats

The aesthetic of the Victorian Christmas is one that has enjoyed an enduring popularity well into the twenty-first century. Not only does it continue to enchant the celebrants of Christmas in their domestic lives, dictating certain traditions and styles of decoration, but it has left a continuing legacy in the commercial world. In 1989 when Lord & Taylor, the oldest luxury department store in North America, decided on a Victorian theme for their holiday decorations, the vice president of visual merchandising Alan Petersen explained, “It has to do with nostalgia, with people wanting nice times. It also suggests a sense of quality craftsmanship: something that will last.” The popularity of the Victorian Christmas is one thing that certainly has lasted, which then begs the question: why? Is, as Petersen suggests, the connection between Victoriana and Christmas a matter of nostalgia? If that is the case, then how and why is the nineteenth century still so accessible to the twenty-first century audience as to warrant such a sense of nostalgia? Perhaps the endurance of the Victorian Christmas in our collective memory can be partially attributed to the surviving imagery that the Victorians themselves produced through print media. This standardized imagery, which was produced as a direct result of commercialism, not only preserves the idealized Victorian Christmas in the minds of the twenty-first century audience, but helped to revolutionize the traditions and celebration of Christmas in England in the first place.

The English Victorian Christmas is responsible for lending many of the now quintessential traditions and practices to the modern twenty-first century Christmas celebration. Very much reflective of the rapid social and economic changes of the nineteenth century, the Victorian Christmas developed quite suddenly, within the span of about fifty years, and revolutionized the holiday. However, merely recognizing that the celebration of Christmas underwent a rapid transformation in Victorian England does not help illuminate the major imperatives for such a significant shift. So, why did the English Victorians begin to celebrate Christmas differently? To answer this question, this essay will explore a particular facet of the Victorian Christmas, and that is the commercialization of the holiday. One consequence of nineteenth-century industrialism was the widespread availability of commercial products, which were marketed to consumers through seasonal advertisements at Christmastime. These advertisements, whether in print or in attractive display windows, capitalized on the “season of
giving” by persuading the public to participate in the holiday by making material purchases. The practices of gift giving, feasting, and visiting friends and family at Christmas certainly existed in one form or another prior to the 1830s, but staples of the modern Christmas such as sending Christmas cards, bringing children to “Santa’s Grottoes” in shopping centres, or even purchasing commercially available gifts, emerged only in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Many aspects of Christmas that are now considered traditional were actually products of Victorian modernity. As a consequence of commercialization, some English traditions and customs, specifically the way in which Christmas was privately and publicly celebrated, changed. It is the thesis of this essay that the evolution of Christmas festivities can largely be attributed to the marketing of the holiday to the Victorian audience. In other words, because of the materialistic representation of Christmas put forth by nineteenth-century advertisers, concepts of celebration gradually began to evolve, giving rise to the quintessential Victorian Christmas.

The English Christmas celebrations of the early nineteenth century lacked many conventions that are now standard in the English-speaking west. There were no Christmas cards, no Christmas trees, and there was no collective effort to decorate public space. While the private home might be decked with boughs of evergreen, the shopping districts would have looked much the same as the rest of the year, reflecting no effort to appeal to a market of Christmas shoppers that did not yet exist. That being said, there were certainly continuities of past Christmas celebrations that are important to keep in mind. However, many of the pre-existing elements of the early nineteenth-century Christmas were not actually English, and consequently, the Victorians cannot rightly take credit for their popularization. For example, although there was an expansion of seasonal charity in the nineteenth-century, perhaps best exemplified in Dickens’ Christmas Carol, Christmastime had a longstanding tradition of almsgiving associated with Christian morality outside of England. Even pagan traditions influenced certain festive practices and beliefs. The very date on which Christmas is celebrated, December 25, was instituted by Pope Julius I in 350 AD in order to align with the birth of the Roman-Syrian sun god Mithras. The pragmatic Victorians also adapted the Scandinavian mid-winter tradition of the Yule Log, burning it for 12 hours rather than the grueling full 12 days. Even the ostensibly English practice of wassailing, a mode of reciprocal carolling with alcohol, predates the Norman Conquest and etymologically implies that it is of Saxon origin, and so cannot be confidently attributed to the English. As this essay will go on to discuss, the Christmas Tree, which was so
well-loved by the Victorians, was in fact a German import popularized by Prince Albert and the royal family in the 1830s. Ultimately, the Victorians cannot take full credit for many of the practices and beliefs associated with Christmas, importing most traditions from the continent and from pre-existing religious beliefs, which begs the question: what exactly makes the English Victorian Christmas so iconic?

The celebration of Christmas in nineteenth-century England undoubtedly incorporated many foreign and religious elements imbued over the course of centuries. It might be argued, then, that until the Victorian period, Christmas as a cultural practice was one which England had merely imported and subsumed. One of the most well known diarists in English history, Samuel Pepys, recounted his 1664 Christmas Day, reporting, “Up (my wife’s eye being ill still of the blow I did in a passion give her on Monday last) to church alone, where Mr. Mills, a good sermon. To dinner at home, where very pleasant with my wife and family [sic].” Following dinner, Pepys went to visit a Sir W. Batten and then to another church service, finally returning home, “…looking over and setting in order my papers and books, and so to supper, and then to prayers and to bed.” Elements of the modern Christmas are here in Pepys’ account: attending church, enjoying a family meal, and visiting friends. However, Pepys fails to represent any excitement or particular pleasure associated with modern incarnations of the holiday, and the account all but neglects his children, focusing rather on adult joviality. He clearly observes the prescribed Christmas traditions, but it is a muted, mundane affair compared to later Victorian expectations of Christmas Day. It seems no coincidence that the English only really began to express enthusiasm for Christmas when it began to appear more and more frequently in print. In other words, when those in control of print media, particularly advertisers, began to use Christmas as a way to boost retail by producing a particular image of the holiday, they veritably changed the perception of what Christmas was supposed to look like and how it should feel. Commercialism revolutionized the aesthetic of the English Christmas.

One of the most iconic symbols of the Victorian Christmas, the Christmas tree, was one of the many traditions imported from the continent. Famous authority on the Victorian Christmas, Charles Dickens, once described the Christmas tree as “that pretty German toy.” The fashion of the Christmas tree was one that had crept into England in the very early nineteenth-century, but which was primarily reserved by the elite. As early as 1800 Dr. John Watkins, a biographer of German-born Queen Charlotte, observed a yew tree at Windsor during a Christmas
party, as it was customary for the wealthy to host and feed the poor at Christmas. The yew tree was reportedly decorated with dried fruit and almonds and lit candles. However, the popularity of the Christmas tree would not spread for nearly half a century. Despite clearly being present in England in 1800s thanks to Queen Charlotte, it was only after an illustration of the royal family gathered around their Christmas tree was released in the December 1848 issue of the Illustrated London News that the trend caught fire.

The impact of the illustrated Christmas Tree on English celebrations was significant and, as a result of its influence, the English began to construct a new Christmas narrative for themselves. Two years after the release of the famous illustration of the royal family, Charles Dickens published a short story titled “A Christmas Tree” which follows the nostalgic narrative of an elderly man reminiscing about the Christmases of his childhood. In the story, a Christmas tree fancifully appears in the home of the nameless narrator, and between the boughs of evergreen branches, he sees several childhood memories, of toys he received and stories he heard at Christmas, which he proceeds to thoughtfully examine. The story concludes with the departure of the tree. The narrator adds, as one of his final thoughts, “Encircled by the social thoughts of Christmas time, still let the benignant figure of my childhood stand unchanged!” This is a charming story, but there is a glaring problem with it: the tradition of the Christmas tree had entered the public consciousness no more than two years before its publication due to the illustration of the tree at Windsor Castle, so there is an obvious discrepancy between the old age of the narrator and the new popularity of the tree. Either Dickens is rewriting the history of English Christmas to accommodate the tree, or, he is predicting the future significance of the tree within the experiences and memories of Victorians. Either way, Dickens touches upon a thought provoking theme, which is the widespread and visceral acceptance of the Christmas hype propagated through print media.

As iconography from the Victorian period shows, Christmas was not only a time to celebrate the birth of Christ, but also a time of good-humour and secular gaiety. It is the nineteenth-century invention of the Christmas card that perhaps best exemplifies the significance of visuals to the Victorian Christmas. A feature of Christmas that is now often taken for granted, the reciprocal practice of sending Christmas cards only became accessible beyond high society with the technological innovation of chromolithographic printing and with modern reforms to the postal service, namely the Uniform Penny Post. The Victorians quickly took advantage of these
new Christmas cards, relying on the decorative illustrations to communicate ideas with the recipient as much as they relied upon the personal inscription within the card. As historian Neil Armstrong explains, “From the 1870s, Christmas cards played an important role in the evolution of the modern signifiers of Christmas for the English, though during the nineteenth-century the thematic range of images displayed on the cards was indicative of an unstable and unsettled iconography in the process of negotiation in a new mass commercial age.” Before the 1840s, England lacked a standardized visual representation of Christmas, so the Victorians were essentially experimenting with imagery, selecting the iconography that would serve to represent their collective conceptualization of Christmastime.

Although many cards bore the type of imagery we still associate with Christmas, such as evergreen wreaths, sprigs of holly and mistletoe, and Christian scenes, an intriguingly large sample of Victorian cards lack “traditional” and religious themes. One blurb advertising the sale of Christmas cards found in an 1877 issue of the Illustrated London News reads:

Our page Engraving, from drawings by Mr. George Cruikshank, junior, exhibits a collection of grotesque and humorous devices, bearing reference to the customs of this festive season, and suitable by the form and size of the drawings, if not by their spirit and character, to appear on these missives of personal greeting which people send by post to their acquaintance in the last week of the year.

The Mr. George Cruikshank (1792-1878) mentioned here was a Victorian caricaturist, and his art is stylistically not what one might associate with the type of sentimental Christmas cards that are in vogue today. The Victorians of the 1870s were clearly using Christmas cards as a way to engage in forms of friendly exchange, but the iconography of these cards was not necessarily “Christmassy.” The provocative title of one BBC News article, “Frog Murder and Boiled Children: ‘Merry Christmas’ Victorian Style,” does not disappoint, treating readers to several Victorian Christmas cards preserved by the Library of Birmingham that feature a number of scenes probably unfamiliar to the modern audience. The illustrations include, but are certainly not limited to, an anthropomorphic frog stabbing and robbing another frog, a child wishing the reader a “Christmas Greeting with Love” with a facial expression contorted from the pain of being submerged in a pot of boiling tea, and even a mouse riding a lobster steed. Another illustration, which bears the image of a monkey painting the portrait of a dog, begs the question: what were these types of Christmas cards trying to say? What messages were being sent?
Stephanie Boydell, the curator of special collections at Manchester Metropolitan, argues, “The Victorians had a different idea to what Christmas was about – not particularly Christian, but a time of good humour.” This explanation speaks for the secularization of Christmas. The Christmas card, which was only made available to the mass market through commercialism, in itself began to proliferate secular and non-traditional themes through visual imagery.

Often the subject of Christmas card illustrations themselves – both in the sentimental and satirical styles – children also experienced a newfound connection to the holiday during the Victorian period. The developing concept of “childhood” in the nineteenth-century is perhaps partially responsible for the association between children and Christmas, and the motivation behind the popularization of store-bought toys. Certainly to some degree, children became symbols of the Christmas season. In Dickens’ Christmas Carol, the reader is meant to form an emotional connection with Tiny Tim, and the personifications of charity (Ignorance and Want) are notably depicted as beggar children. At the same time, however, advertisers were reinforcing the importance of Christmas to the child in order to capitalize on such emotional connections. As one writer states, “As Dickens had recognized in his Christmas Books, children were effective ploys for getting the public’s attention. But they could consume only by proxy.”

Certainly before the nineteenth-century, Christmas centred on religious observances and adult socialization, as the earlier account from Pepys illustrates. The later appearance of children in seasonal advertisements therefore should not be attributed to an innate connection between children and Christmas, but rather as the result of an emotional marketing technique aimed at parents to promote spending on seasonal gifts.

Even before the nineteenth-century, gift giving had always been an important aspect of the Christmas season. Commonly, however, much of the gift giving was directed towards the poor as a part of the prescribed Christian charity. And while the rise of print media, specifically newspapers, illustrated the culture of gift-giving at Christmas, before the nineteenth-century, it was often not with the intention of boosting sales, but instead publicising acts of elite generosity. During the Christmas of 1742 The Daily Advertise printed a thank you from the “poor prisoners of the Common side of his Majesty’s prison of the fleet” to a benefactor who sent three “chaldrons” of coal. Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, a social and cultural historian of early modern England, analyses this article, arguing, “…emerging newspapers played a special role in offering novel venues for promulgating and publicizing the prestige and esteem of those engaged in
benevolent acts.” As early as the eighteenth-century, newspapers were clearly printing articles that focused on the gift-aspect of Christmas, but as Krausman illustrates, it was done to honour and pamper the prestige of the gift-giver. In the next century, however, the idea of the Christmas gift was publicised in print media for an ulterior motive: to promote consumerism.

As late as the 1840s, the “Christmas advertisements” were primarily those for tickets to theatrical performances. Advertisements for dramas like Lyceum and various pantomimes abound in newspapers from the day. One blurb from an 1844 issue of the Illustrated London News states:

The approach of Christmas brings with it a temporary quiet in theatrical proceedings; that is to say, as regards the productions of new pieces, for, behind the curtain, every member of the establishment for the time being, from the authors down to the carpenters, is fully employed, in order that everything may be ready by ‘Boxing Day.’ And getting up a pantomime or fairy burlesque is no joke....

Forms of Christmas entertainment were widely popular during the Victorian period, and may even be viewed as a type of conspicuous consumption. It is hardly surprising that the middling classes, with the increasing emergence of disposable incomes in family homes, might indulge in a few extra luxuries at Christmas. By validating their economic statuses through participation in the fashionable activities advertised in the newspapers, the middling classes engaged with and shaped popular culture. Even today, pantomimes enjoy an enduring popularity in England, and the image of brightly painted wooden soldiers with big white teeth have become a staple of the modern Christmas tradition as every major ballet company annually puts on a production of the Nutcracker. It should not be surprising, then, that even as late as the 1850s Christmas advertisements focused on social aspects of the season, especially buying tickets to various forms of public entertainment. In the following decades, however, the wealth of advertisements in the newspaper would shift to the promotion of commercial goods. A marked increase in the number of advertisements explicitly promoting goods as “Christmas gifts” suggests that it was during the later Victorian period that advertisers began to realize the marketability of the season.

By the 1870s, it was fairly standard for brief textual advertisements to advertise certain goods as being particularly suited for Christmas gifts. For example, in the Christmas 1877 issue of the Illustrated London News, Parkins & Cotto’s placed a textual advertisement boasting “10,000 Christmas Presents,” which proceeded to list a number (falling quite short of 10,000) of
gifts available for purchase, including dressing-cases, electro-plated goods, music boxes, magic lanterns (with slides), ivory paper knives, books for “juveniles,” graphoscopes, and family bibles. Not many advertisements offered such a detailed description of their goods, but even this detailed Parkins & Cotto’s ad lacks one striking feature: illustrations. By the late 1880s, however, Christmas advertisements were spread thickly across the Illustrated London News and many, though not all, included illustrations. In 1888, the Illustrated London News featured a spread of “Mappin & Webb’s Artistic and Useful Christmas Presents,” filled with illustrations of fine spoons, a set of ornate nut-crackers and picks, a sugar bowl with tongs, and many other pieces of silver tableware. Advertisement of “Negretti & Zambra’s Christmas Presents” included “useful and ornamental” ivory opera glasses for ladies and leather-bound field glasses for gentlemen, accompanied by the image of a pair of binoculars. The image of a finely dressed woman stands under the header “Fashions for the Season” placed by the Peter Robinson department store chain. A selection of ornately drawn pocket watches advertised by Benson’s, including “£10 lever watches,” promised Christmas shoppers that “Purchasers in all Parts of the World using these Watches testify to their Strictly Accurate Timekeeping Qualities.”

Why retail businesses decided to start adding illustrations to their advertisements in the 1880s probably has to do more with innovations in printing technology rather than anything, but that line of inquiry is not terribly relevant. What is relevant is the impact that these visually-based advertisements had on the public at Christmas. By exciting retail with their visually stimulating advertisements, print media merged notions of celebration and commercialism, producing a collective understanding of Christmas in England that was based on materialism in addition to pre-existing notions of charity and merriment.

It is important to recognize that not all Christmas advertisements took place in print. Especially with the relatively recent advent of the department store, the Victorian period witnessed the liberation of Christmas decorations trapped within the domestic space as they spread into the public space. These decorations provided a seasonal incentive to visit shopping districts and, consequently, to spend money. In other words, the shopkeepers and department store owners created a spectacle out of Christmas in order to encourage business. This invasion of the public space was not without controversy, however. In 1875 William Whiteley, founder of London’s first department store, Whiteleys, placed a Christmas flag in Westbourne Grove. In response, Henry Walker, an editor of the Bayswater Chronicle, criticized the flag’s presence.
One historian describes the conflict, saying, “Walker charged that Whiteley’s flag inhibited the ‘liberties’ of public thoroughfares and that such vulgarities, ‘typical of Broadway in New York,’ were inappropriate adornments for English streets. Walker patriotically… hailed the flag’s removal as a national victory and asserted, ‘We don’t want to Americanize the Grove.’”

Innocuous as they may seem to the modern audience, Christmas decorations of the nineteenth-century became a visual representation of the internal conflicts resulting from the rapidly evolving consumer culture in England. Ultimately, by the end of the Victorian period, Christmas represented a pinnacle of the retail year as much as an eminent date within the Christian calendar.

Even with all advances to modern retail, the Christmas experience was not uniform for all Victorians. In contrast to the commercial spectacle of Christmas in the urban space, for example, those living in rural areas were more likely to decorate their homes with hand crafts and locally-sourced evergreen. If natural resources were not as accessible to city-dwellers as they were to the rural folk, other commercially available goods made up for it. One advertisement from an issue of the 1853 *Lady’s Newspaper and Pictorial Times* offered its London customers the opportunity to send fish from the city to “any part of the Kingdom,” using the slogan, “To the lovers of fish. Christmas Presents for country friends.” This pleasantly peculiar advertisement implicitly tells the reader that Christmas fare was not accessible to all people in all areas. Such limitations to trade and retail undoubtedly imparted some degree of regionalism to the English Christmas celebration that is often forgotten in the retrospective imagination.

Purchasing power and the availability of specific goods or imported ingredients became very important to the concept of the Victorian Christmas. Even certain foods that bore long-standing associations with Christmas developed deeper symbolic values due to the appearance of Christmas in popular culture. During the Christmas of 1860, Charles Edward Smith, a surgeon employed on a whaling vessel, recorded how eager he had been for his Christmas dinner to end, despite being treated to the traditional Christmas fare of plum pudding in addition to the usual ration of boiled salt beef and a portion of tripe. According to Smith, “We ate our Christmas dinner almost in silence, each man’s mind being occupied with gloomy thoughts of home, families, and friends,” adding, “… I was glad when ‘twas over, it seemed such a horrible mockery of the spirit of an English Christmas.” These sailors, far from home, demonstrate a clear notion of what defined the “spirit of an English Christmas,” although their attempt to
replicate the Christmas dinner ultimately fails without their families. Still, the fact that these sailors centred their dinner around a plum pudding suggests a collective understanding of Christmas symbolism. Due to the preservative properties of plum pudding (and the fact that – much to the benefit of sailors and the predominantly stove-less middle classes alike – this type of pudding does not require being cooked in an oven), it is actually quite a practical dessert to store on a ship, but it hardly seems likely that Smith and his companions chose to pair their Christmas meal with plum pudding because of its practical qualities. Rather, Smith and his companion sailors demonstrate a sentimental relationship with their meager Christmas dinner. Various recipes for plum pudding date back to the medieval period, but the stodgy dessert became reinvigorated by the Victorians and their importation of sugar and dried fruits from the far-reaches of the empire. In 1845, Eliza Acton became the first known person to record the recipe as “Christmas Pudding” in her bestseller Modern Cookery for Private Families. An element of Victorian playfulness was also added to nineteenth-century plum pudding recipes, which began to include certain tokens with symbolic values. One historian explains, “After the family had all participated in stirring the batter, the mother would secretly drop in a thimble (for spinsterhood), a ring (for marriage), a coin (for wealth), a miniature horse (for good luck), and various other items to be found by the diners during the Christmas feast itself.” When Smith expressed dissatisfaction with the Christmas dinner, it was not due to the meagreness of the fare itself, but due rather to the melancholy caused by the complex symbolic value of the dining experience on a personal level.

Not only were the goods and ingredients necessary to produce the perfect Victorian Christmas not geographically available to everyone, but the socio-economic disparity in nineteenth-century England also greatly influenced and in fact limited the Victorian Christmas celebrations, which made it impossible for everyone to attain the idealistic holiday perpetuated through contemporary imagery. Extra seasonal purchases were not something that were necessary to the celebration of Christmas, and yet people from all levels of society chose to partake in the increasing materialism of the holiday to the best of their economic ability. Whereas the elite dined on peacock and swan, the relatively inexpensive American turkey became a seasonal staple of the middle-class Christmas meal. As Victorian sensation Mrs. Beeton wrote, “A Christmas dinner with the middle classes of this empire, would scarcely be a Christmas dinner without its turkey; and we can hardly imagine an object of greater envy than is
presented by a respected portly *pater familias* carving, at the season devoted to good cheer and genial charity, his own fat turkey, and carving it well. Roast turkey was not just a seasonal indulgence for the Victorians, but a visceral component of the Christmas celebration. They attached to the turkey notions of frivolity, abundance, good cheer, and family. As with other forms of holiday shopping, buying a turkey at Christmas was not just purchasing a meal, rather it was buying into and perpetuating an idealized version of the holiday, which the Victorians themselves had created.

As strange as it may seem, the Victorian Christmas was not really a traditional affair at all. Certainly, Christian beliefs and newly imported European practices culminated in what many in the western world now consider the “traditional” Christmas celebration, but in the Victorian period, many of these “traditional” practices were in fact novel innovations. It is no coincidence that the emergence of the Victorian Christmas coincided with the second Industrial Revolution. The expansion of commercialism during the nineteenth-century bled into aspects of culture and celebration, producing a new conceptualization of Christmas that was steeped in both tradition and Victorian modernity. Due to the success of its colonies and industries, mid-to-late nineteenth-century England enjoyed a healthy economy which in turn produced a bankable mass market. The middle class finally had disposable income to spend on frivolity, and commercial goods were more accessible than ever. It can perhaps be considered a stroke of advertising genius that Christmas became a way to encourage consumers to spend some extra money once a year. As a direct result of commercialism, the *look* of Christmas in the secular sphere began to evolve as new iconography emerged, as Christmas advertisements became more prevalent, and as shops began to draw customers in with seasonal decorations. Christmas was no longer relegated to purely domestic or religious spheres, but was advertised for public consumption and consequently was able to develop new symbolic and iconographical meanings within England’s secular domain. Within its capacity as a product of the consumer spectacle, the Victorian Christmas produced an aesthetic with resonating symbolic value, which endures within public consciousness to this day.

---

**NOTES**


7 Ibid.


12 Ibid.


20 Ibid, 667.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid, 693.


Walrus Ivory and a History of Trade: Greenland Trade Networks in the North Atlantic

By Courtney Svab

Norse settlement in Greenland represents the far westward reach of Norse influence. Despite being a considerable distance from other settlements, the Greenland colony was not nearly as isolated as it appeared. The Greenland Norse were involved in extensive trade networks which linked the North Atlantic Norse world. These networks allowed for the exchange of communication and commodities for hundreds of years, creating a system that was imperative to the success of the Greenland settlements. The trade routes connecting Greenland to the rest of the North Atlantic provide an interconnected understanding of the relations between Norse settlements in the North Atlantic. Understanding the economic connections of the North Atlantic presents a new way to interpret the political organization of Norse society and the motivations that pushed its expansion to the west. This understanding allows for the interactions between Greenland and the rest of the North Atlantic to be examined for their significance and the economic benefits that supported the Greenland settlement. The paper will first examine how trade in Scandinavia prior to expansion to Greenland developed. This includes focusing on the commodities being traded, the key areas of trade, and the development of social trade norms. By examining the existence of trade, motivations for the settlement of Greenland can then be re-evaluated through the opportunity for economic expansion. Next, the goods available from Greenland and Norway will be examined to evaluate the value of trade across the North Atlantic. This involves examining not only the commodities available, focusing primarily on walrus, but also examining the vessels of trade that fueled the North Atlantic trade network. Finally, in order to evaluate the practical applications of the trade network, a case study will be examined. The case study that will be highlighted will be of the Lewis Chessmen. Key sources to determine early Norse economic interests include the Voyage of Ohthere, as well as archaeological evidence of trade such as walrus tusks and the Lewis Chessmen.

Trade existed as a way to connect Scandinavia and Europe for hundreds of years before Vikings settled Greenland. Prior to the settlements, the development of trade began with the exchange of tribute collected by the Norse from the Sami in northern Norway. This interaction is first recounted in the Voyage of Ohthere, where a traveller by the name of Ohthere describes his voyages in the north to the Anglo-Saxon King Alfred in the late ninth-century. Ohthere is a
traveller from Hålogaland, which was the furthest north any Northmen, or Norwegians, lived.\textsuperscript{1} Ohthere’s account serves as a survey of the land of northern Norway and the possible commodities available there. In his voyage, Ohthere makes note of the importance of the wild animals, such as walrus and reindeer, as commodity.\textsuperscript{2} Following the identification of commodities to be found in the North, Ohthere draws the connection between the importance of taxation and tribute extracted from the Sami as the primary source of wealth for the Norwegians through discussing the origins of his wealth. He tells King Alfred that he does not possess a great number of cattle or sheep and therefore supplements his wealth through interaction with the Sami. The tax collected by the Norse was dependant on social rank and consisted mostly of wild animals’ products such as animal skins, bird feathers, whale bones, or rope made from whale or seal hide.\textsuperscript{3} Ohthere then finishes his account with a description of the sailing trip from the north of Norway to the trading town of Hedeby in Denmark. This exchange of tribute through tax is significant in understanding the development of trade in Scandinavia due to it representing the beginning of the movement of goods from one culture to another. These were goods the Norwegians required and were able to extract from the Sami. The evidence of the important sailing routes to Hedeby as outlined by Ohthere provided further evidence of the relevance of trade for the Norwegians and the importance of animal goods. By recounting the voyage to Hedeby, Ohthere is showing the role the trading centre played in early medieval life as it is a voyage he had undergone numerous times in order to describe the sailing directions to King Alfred. The importance of the connections with the Sami and the trading centre of Hedeby is shown through the way that he chooses these particular voyages to tell King Alfred about as well as why they were recorded at the court of the King.

The political organization of early Scandinavia that allowed for the tribute given to the Norwegians serves to provide further understanding of Ohthere’s voyages and the society that developed. The Voyage of Ohthere provides a way for historians to analyze the early political organization of Scandinavia through the way that Ohthere encounters the different lands to which he travelled. Stefan Brink suggests that the way Ohthere describes the land of the Northmen suggests that though they were not organized into one set kingdom, Ohthere presents a sense of unity among the different regions of Norway.\textsuperscript{4} This interpretation of the political structure of early Norway can be used to explain why it was the Sami that were required to pay tribute rather than the other regions of Norway despite the absence of a king. By presenting a sort of unity among regions, the social structure of the early Scandinavians left the Sami as the
outsiders from whom they could collect tribute. The lands discussed through Ohthere’s voyages also shed light on the wider political situation of early Scandinavia. The Danish are presented as a key empire with whom it was important to be allied in order to gain access to the trading centres. By being a united force, Denmark is able to monopolize the key trading areas and the Norse interactions with Denmark reveal the politics of neighbouring lands. Through this, Denmark is able to possess economic, political, and cultural power over the area in the ninth-century. For example, there is a lord at Hedeby, but there is not one mentioned at Skiringssalr. Brink takes this as a sign that the lord at Skiringssalr was possibly not under Danish control, and therefore Ohthere does not mention him. This points to the Danish as being the important players in early Scandinavian trade.

The early trade as recorded by Ohthere was not just an exchange between a couple settlements; it was a vast network connecting Northern Europe. This vast trade network was conducted by a series of professional traders who were independent from any one place of trade. These traders had the ability to travel across Europe with their goods to interact with numerous cultures. The traders are mentioned in a number of sources, primarily annals such as the *Annales regni Francorum* and are commonly referred to in relation to the actions of the rulers. One example of this is the Danish King Sigfred who attempted to achieve a special peace with the Saxons in 873 that would allow for the safety of tradesmen pursuing business. Accounts such as that of King Sigfred demonstrate that the evidence of thriving trade as early as the ninth-century is found through primarily legal documents. The fact that in all the accounts, such as the annals or Ohthere’s voyages, trade is such an important focus confirms that trade routes between regions had an important societal role and was already well developed prior to the recording of these sources in order to have such a prominent place in the sources. Trade served to connect nations, and the rulers of different kingdoms kept the wellbeing of trade in mind through various policies. The trade networks benefited not only the merchants, but also the rulers through the revenue they collected. From the outset of this trade, the rulers were interested in the traders and sought to strengthen their own positions through the exchange of valuable goods. This created a relationship wherein the traders sought the protection and favour of the king, and the ruler found it useful to keep the merchants close to them in order to collect taxes from the trades. The tradition of trade portrays the Scandinavians as traders despite their later reputation as sea-faring raiders. It is interesting to note that the Vikings may have known where to raid due to their knowledge of trading ports, however, trade across Northern Europe was not disrupted due to the
raiding activities of the Vikings. This could have indeed led to the expansion of trade networks as new lands were conquered. The evidence of this early trade supports the formation of a Scandinavia that valued the long-standing tradition of trade, laying the ground work for a North Atlantic trade network.

The Scandinavian trade network, though spread across Northern Europe, was strongest in the North Sea area. This involved trade with Frisia, which linked the North Sea with the Kingdom of the Franks and is best traced through the development of coinage. Frisia, located in the modern Netherlands, was settled primarily near the coast, connecting it directly with Scandinavia. Trade between the two cultures formed out of necessity. The Frisians faced poor agricultural prospects, causing a dependence on trade that arose in the seventh-century. The reliance of the Frisians on trade sparked the movement of people and goods across the North Sea in the seventh-century. In the eighth-century the Frisians were well established as the crossroads between the Franks and the Scandinavians. Primarily traded were the required goods from Scandinavia with goods from the Rhine area of Northern Europe. The goods traded through the North Sea network included raw materials such as salt, honey, beeswax, furs and leathers, whale bone, and walrus tusks from the Scandinavians in exchange for luxury goods from the Rhine, such as ceramics and glassware, as well as slaves.

The increase in trade in the North Sea area led to the development of blank silver coins called *sceattas* that were not issued by a particular ruler, but were used to facilitate trade. These coins allow for trade to be traced throughout the North Sea area by tracking the movements of traders through the types of coins that are found at trading sites and in hoards. With the rise of the Carolingian empire in the late eighth-century, the nature of trade changed once again. The Carolingians introduced a new silver coin called the *denarius* in order to bring the minting of currency under central control as well as to provide a currency that would aid in facilitating long-distance trade. This represents the growing interest in trade and economics by the rulers involved in this North Sea trade route. Further, the coins developed by Charlemagne rose in popularity following the succession of Louis the Pious. The Frisian trading town of Dorestad minted the coins, solidifying it as a key centre of commerce in Northern Europe. The presence of coins in Scandinavia, as well as Europe support the theory of ongoing active trade that connected Europe. It is important to understand these connections with Northern Europe in order to track the development of trade across a North Atlantic network.
Coins present a way to track Scandinavian trade and the way it developed across Europe. Prior to trade, the Viking society of the eighth-century that formed at the outbreak of raiding had little experience with coins. Indeed at the start of the period of raiding, Charlemagne had not yet centralized the production of the denarius. By the early eleventh-century, Scandinavian rulers across the Viking world had adopted the use of coins into their economies. The change from weighed amounts of silver, which had been used to facilitate trade, to coins can be traced archaeologically through the evidence found in hoards. By the second half of the tenth-century, coins became more predominant in Viking hoards and by the early eleventh century, the number of coins found in archaeological sites had overcome the amount of silver artifacts found. This shows the growing involvement of the Scandinavians in fostering trade with other cultures despite the ongoing presence of Viking raiding. Particularly influential in the development of Viking coins was the Anglo-Saxon model. Vikings in England began making their own coins by 890 CE, influenced by the proximity to an abundance of German coins. The influence of the growth in the use of coinage elsewhere allowed for the Scandinavian trade networks to expand and adopt the use of coinage.

The trade networks that emerged included local and long-distance trade. It is crucial to understand how this trade was facilitated in order to determine the prerequisite that existed for trade across the North Atlantic. The shift in the ninth-century towards the development of trading centres, such as Hedeby, and the widespread distribution of coins across Northern Europe led to the formation of the economic centers of early Scandinavia. The trade connections that fostered the building of these vast networks in the eighth and ninth centuries gave way to fortified trading centres, the increased popularity of coins, and innovations in ship technology in the tenth-century. This led to an evolution in trade and exchange networks that allowed for the growth and development of commerce in the Viking world. These changes were important in the development of long-distance trade networks used by the Norse in later periods. The earlier manifestations of trade networks are important to study as part of a developing process of trade that spread across the Scandinavian world.

Meanwhile, long-distance trade occurred through a series of specific locations where large bulks of materials were loaded or unloaded from the ships. The sites that facilitated long-distance trade varied from those that were purely for local trade. The archaeological record shows that the sites that facilitated long-distance trade frequently have large deposits of raw material, such as bronze casting. The same few sites would have served as primarily long-
distance trading centres as they presented popular and reputable places for merchants to congregate. This presents trade as a way to foster relations between different cultures as they were trading in the same few locations across Europe and Scandinavia. With the introduction of the North Atlantic trade routes, the networks connecting Europe with the rest of the Norse world expanded.

The Norse society that formed these vast networks of trade developed a trading network dependent on mutual trust to ensure its efficiency. This was due to the inability of the early Vikings to read or write, meaning that the laws of trade were not codified in a documentary source. This meant that they relied on a series of social conducts and trust to carry out trade. This type of trading put specific emphasis on the weight of a man’s word and his honour. The value of a man’s word and honour was connected to his credibility and social worth. The word of a Scandinavian man was what gave him his credibility as a trader and allowed for him to participate in the exchange of material and culture. The importance of honour in the Norse society is seen through their language and the sheer number of times that the early word for honour virðing appears in documentary sources. This word appears numerous times in sources, pointing to its relevance in society. Through the development of a social culture dependent on mutual trust, a unique type of trade was built in the Norse world that affected the way trade was conducted.

In order to understand the significance of the trade routes that stretched across the North Atlantic, connecting Norway and Greenland, the motivations for the settlement of Greenland need to be evaluated. Recently, Christian Keller proposed that the settlement of Greenland was motivated primarily due to the economic opportunity for trade. Keller proposes that, having only been settled in the 870s, there was no way that Iceland was overpopulated by 1000 CE. This means that the traditional view of motivation based purely on settlement of Greenland is not supported. Keller breaks apart the theory of settlement for land that has dominated the way the settlement of Greenland is interpreted by further pointing out the futility of relying on pastoral living in the arctic. Instead, Keller looks at the commodities available in Greenland coupled with the existing networks of trade that dominated the Norse world as more viable motivations for settlement. The economic motivations for settlement in Greenland present a new interpretation of the nature of the settlement as well as the Norse purpose for westward expansion. Unlike Iceland, Greenland was home to a plethora of exportable goods. The particular goods that inspired trade were primarily walrus ivory, furs, and fish. These were
considered luxury goods on the European market. The Norse expansion into Greenland is reminiscent of the Norse expansion into the Sami territory as seen through the Voyage of Ohthere.\textsuperscript{34} The goods collected through the trade with the Sami are reminiscent of the goods that were exported from Greenland. This shows that the Norse were aware of the luxury goods available and sought additional resources in order to continue to facilitate trade with the rest of Europe. While looking at economic motivations for settlement in Greenland, Keller also proposes economic reasons for the abandonment of the Greenland settlement. His theory is that the outbreak of the Black Plague in Europe coupled with the end of the Medieval Warm Period and the resulting dangerous seas saw the fall of the North Atlantic trade routes.\textsuperscript{35} The Plague and the change in weather served as factors leading to the end of trade via Greenland, leading to the loss of an economic system and the subsequent abandonment of the Greenland settlement. This theory supports the economic motivations of the settlement while also addressing economics as the main purpose of the colony due to its abandonment following the cessation of economic use.

The documentary sources dealing with Norse expansion into the North Atlantic are primarily Icelandic saga texts. However, sagas have come under scrutiny by historians due to the composition of sagas dating to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries while the events described took place hundreds of years earlier. Settlers in Iceland followed an oral tradition in passing along stories despite that the use of literacy arrived in Iceland along with conversion to Christianity.\textsuperscript{36} The saga concerning the settlement of Greenland is the Greenlanders’ Saga. Coupled with archaeology, there is ample evidence of the settlement patterns of those who went to Greenland with Eirik the Red. Settlement in Greenland relied on the adoption of the Scandinavian pastoral farm method, wherein the amount of land signified wealth and animals were grazed on an in-field/out-field method.\textsuperscript{37} The earliest evidence is found at what is thought to be the site of Eirik’s farm, Brattahlíð, which contained an early church built by his wife Thjodhild.\textsuperscript{38} The artifacts found here, along with the skeletons buried at the early church, place earliest settlement from the end of the tenth-century and spanning into the early eleventh.\textsuperscript{39} This evidence is not the only way that the conditions for the Norse settlers are determined. Studies of cores drilled from the Greenland icecap provide further information about the conditions that dictated the Greenland settlement. The ice cores revealed that the temperature began to rise in the 860s, leading to the favourable phenomenon referred to as the Medieval Warm Period.\textsuperscript{40} The end of the Medieval Warm period is also represented in the ice cores and the weather can be seen
decreasing by the middle of the thirteenth-century. These sources allow historians to understand the factors that affected the settlers in Greenland and their daily lives.

The key export from Greenland was walrus ivory. Walrus ivory was used to create intricately carved figures, while the rest of the walrus could be used for fashioning strong rope used on ships. The walrus ivory especially was featured in the luxury goods trade on the European market. Prior to the discovery of Iceland, and later Greenland, walrus ivory was an important commodity that could only be obtained from Northern Norway and the Sami. This familiarity with walrus ivory shows that the Norse were accustomed to working with and aware of the use of walrus ivory, supporting Keller’s theory that the Norse settled Greenland for economic reasons. In order to hunt for walrus, the Norse often ventured to Northern hunting grounds referred to as Nordseta. This hunting ground is in the northern Disko Bay area of Greenland and was often accessed by the Norse during the summer months. The northern location of the Nordseta places it in the same northern environment as the earlier exploitation of the Sami. This further supports the theory that the settlement of Greenland was economically motivated as the walrus hunts would have taken place over the summer months when agriculture is at its height as the hunt took away from other priorities, such as farming, that would have taken precedence had the settlement been primarily land-based. This leads to the theory that the Greenland settlement worked together as a community to not only ensure the agriculture was taken care of, but also to butcher the walrus. The nature of the walrus trade itself also points to a cooperative network wherein the trade of walrus tusks was highly organized and the ivory would have passed through numerous hands before arriving at its final destination. This is supported from the find of walrus bones in numerous farms in both the East and West Settlements of Greenland. This is supported by the existence of small settlements in Greenland and the evidence of scheduling conflicts that arose during peak times of the year such as the summer.

Walrus ivory was popular in Europe, resulting in an economic trade between Norway and Greenland. It was especially popular after the mid-ninth-century when elephant ivory became more difficult to obtain. Prior to the mid-ninth-century, elephant ivory had been more popular than walrus ivory due to the size of the elephant tusks versus that of the walrus. Walrus ivory had been used before the loss of access to elephant ivory, however not to the same extent or popularity. It was common to bring the whole skull of the walrus back to the settlement after hunting in order to properly remove the tusks so as not to damage the ivory. The extraction of the walrus ivory was completed by skilled hunters in order to avoid any damage. After killing the
walrus, the frontal bones were discarded in order to maximize the space in the boats for the journey back to the settlements. The remains would then be stored to ensure a slight decay. This process would take place over the winter so that the tusks were ready to be traded the following summer. Evidence of skull fragments in Greenland settlement sites supports the theory that the tusks were removed from the skulls while at the farms in order to ensure that the tusks were ready for the market and were of a high quality. In contrast, some walrus skulls have been found in Europe as well, suggesting that occasionally the skull and tusks would be used for exotic display. These would have been gifts for important chieftains or leaders as a way to show off these figures to show off their wealth. However, the settlement was dependent on the demand for walrus ivory. Elephant tusks once again became more readily available and therefore more popular in the thirteenth-century. There was also a period around 1400 CE where all types of ivory fell out of fashion. This directly relates to the fall of the Greenland settlement due to the economic reliance of the colony on the trade network. With walrus ivory no longer in demand on the European market, there was a lack of demand for the main export from Greenland. Greenland was also very dependent on goods imported from Europe, and without this trade to further the economic exchange the settlement faced more difficulties. Combining this with the end of the Medieval Warm Period and the plague that swept across Europe, and Greenland was suddenly an undesirable location.

The Greenland settlement represents the trade model of supply and demand in both imports and exports. Greenland, though not self-sufficient, was able to provide some basic materials to allow for survival. This included large herds of cattle and sheep, the availability of walrus, the growth of some grain, homespun cloth, and the manufacture of items from local soapstone. These items ensured the day-to-day survival of the settlement. In addition to the primary export of walrus ivory, another important export were Greenland falcons, which were rare outside of Greenland and became a luxury export to the European market. The colony was reliant on the importation of goods, primarily timber and iron. Trade with Scandinavia was primarily across the North Atlantic, skipping from Greenland to Iceland to Norway. This was a way to connect the North Atlantic world through the economics of trade. Norwegian merchants would sail to Greenland one summer, then sail back to Norway the next. This allowed for the familiarization of merchants and settlers, and fostered the growth in relations between Norse settlements. Trade not only allowed for the exchange of goods, but also the exchange of culture. When the merchant ships would land at the settlements, there was often a gathering to examine
the goods as well as to exchange news. This shows that though the settlement was dependent on trade for survival, the existence of this North Atlantic network was critical for maintaining an interconnected Norse empire.

In order to foster this North Atlantic connection, there was a critical change made in the type of boat used to transport goods across the sea. The late tenth century provides a number of finds that show an increased specialization of ship type, reflective of the growing centralization of power and the rise of commercial trading. The long ship that was a key feature of the Viking raids began to give way to a sturdier cargo ship. The ship evolved into a model that could be manned by a smaller crew, had a large holding capacity and was propelled primarily by sail. This change in ship type is significant in facilitating the change from raiders to traders and marks the change in society. The earliest ship found of this new cargo type is the Klåstad ship. It was built near the end of the tenth century and sunk near the trading center of Kaupang. Further evolutions in ship design, such as the Norwegian built Skuldelev I, allowed for the improvement in long-distance sea going vessels. The Skuldelev I had a capacity of 24 tons and could be manned by a crew of five to seven. This allowed for the increase of cargo required for long distance trade while reforming the standard Viking ship from a vessel of terror to a vessel of trade. It is likely that the evolution in ships came about earlier than the archaeological record shows. The change in ship type is significant for the North Atlantic trade route through the new vessels’ ability to transport greater numbers of people and animals across the vast distances of the sea. The specialization of ship type is also representative of the change in social structure. It represents the growing stratification of society resulting in the rise of commercial enterprise. The political organization required for this stratification reveals that by the tenth-century, power in the Viking world was centralized and trade had become an important factor in reinforcing this system.

An important case study for the exchange network between Greenland and the rest of the North Atlantic is the case of the Lewis Chessmen. The Lewis Chessmen represent the trade networks that connected the North Atlantic because the chessmen are carved from walrus ivory from Greenland but were found on the Isle of Lewis in the Hebrides of Scotland. The Lewis Chessmen may have originally been coloured over top of the ivory, which would have increased their economic value. The surface of the Chessmen can be analyzed to reveal physical information about the Chessmen. In her analysis of the facial features of the Chessmen, Caroline Wilkinson grouped the figurines into groups of five distinct features. She concluded that these
groupings point to the work of at least five workmen carving the Chessmen in the same workshop. This is evidence of the increased development of an exchange network that involved the labour of not only hunters and traders responsible for the movement of the walrus itself, but that the society supported specialized artisans who could carve the raw material of walrus ivory into finished goods. It is agreed upon that the Chessmen were likely carved in Norway at one of the trading centers. By further analyzing the surface, the materials used for the Chessmen can be examined. While most of the Chessmen are made using walrus ivory, five of the Chessmen were made using whale teeth. This is significant in understanding the process of trade and walrus hunting and the way the Chessmen were carved through the prominence of walrus ivory from Greenland as a material over the use of whale teeth. The tool marks on the Chessmen also show the practices of the medieval workmen. In addition to carving marks, several of the pieces had multiple small horizontal lines along the sides, signifying they may have been held in clamps during the carving process. This expands the knowledge of the practices of the medieval workmen and the processes of the artistic work carried out as a part of this exchange network.

The Lewis Chessmen also present an interesting look at how the North Atlantic was connected through various North Atlantic kingdoms. The Kingdom of the Isles and Man included the Isle of Man and the islands off the west coast of Scotland. The Kingdom was of Scandinavian origin and developed into a maritime kingdom based in the Irish Sea. This included the Isle of Lewis where the Chessmen were found. This begs the question of to what extent were the Manx kings involved in the Lewis Chessmen. The presence of many high ranking officials based in the Outer Hebrides at the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries extends the possibility that perhaps one of the Manx rulers was in possession of the chess pieces. Regardless of who owned the chess pieces, the pieces are representative of a stratified society that developed vast trade networks. The possessor of the Chessmen was likely a wealthy leader who would have participated in this trade in order to possess luxury goods that would reflect his or her level in society. The Lewis Chessmen are representative of the North Atlantic trade and the ways that different settlements were able to maintain contact and exchange throughout the tenth to thirteenth centuries. The Lewis Chessmen were made of primarily walrus ivory from Greenland, and the manufacturing marks left behind by the skilled craftsmen indicate different levels of exchange from raw materials to a finished product to be traded for other goods or gifted to a wealthy ruler, demonstrating the different stages of trade that took place across the North Atlantic. The markings on the Chessmen and the way they were carved place them in
Norway before they ultimately ended up in Scotland, emphasizing the movement of goods. The process through which the Lewis Chessmen came to the Isle of Lewis is an example of the processes that linked the North Atlantic, forming a type of Norse Empire.

The North Atlantic trade routes are significant in the development of an interconnected understanding of Norse settlement and activities in the North Atlantic. Greenland was not an isolated settlement that struggled with arctic conditions during its lifetime. Greenland instead represents the culmination of a widespread economic society with enough of a centralized political organization to present an intricate trade network that spanned thousands of kilometers. In order to understand the development of the North Atlantic the development of trade in Scandinavia must be traced. The development of trade norms revealed the established trade networks and the focus on the goods provided by walrus such as hides or ivory. This shows that there was a development of trade networks and a shift in society to an economic focus that shaped future expansion towards the west. Recent scholarship has proposed that the establishment of a trading society in Scandinavia motivated the settlement of Greenland with primarily economic concerns. This indicates a change in the nature of the settlement in Greenland and the way that the process of settlement and travel to North America should be studied. The economic purposes of the Greenland settlement focused on the exportation of walrus ivory to the European luxury market. This trade motivated the development of a network connecting Greenland with the rest of the Norse world. The case of the Lewis Chessmen provides a way to examine the movements of trade goods across the North Atlantic. Made with walrus ivory in Greenland, they were likely carved in Norway before moving to the Isle of Lewis in the Hebrides. This provides an example of the highly-organized system of trade that required the cooperation and interaction of many groups spanning across the North Atlantic. The settlement of Greenland and the North Atlantic trade routes are significant in understanding how these different elements of trade, survival, and commerce connect the North Atlantic.

NOTES

2 Ibid., 45-46.
3 Ibid., 46.


Arneborg, “The Norse Settlements in Greenland,” 566.


Frei, et al., “Was it for Walrus?” 446.

Roesdahl, “Demand, Supply, Workshops, and Greenland,” 184.

Ibid.


Roesdahl, “Demand, supply, workshops, and Greenland,” 187.

Ibid.

Ibid., 184.

Ibid.


Ibid.


Ibid., 176.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Tate, Reiche and Pinzari, “What Can Examination of the Surfaces Tell Us?” 13.

Ibid., 19.

McDonald, “Is There a Manx Context for the Lewis Chessmen?” 98.

Ibid., 109.

Ibid., 96.
Dealing with the Dead and Wounded: Field Medicine and the American Civil War

By Mathew Thivierge

The spring of 1861 in the United States saw the culmination of many legal, geographical, and social issues erupt into a massive civil war that separated the United States into the Union and Confederacy. Over the course of the next five years, Americans would attempt to solve many of these issues on the battlefield. This conflict would become the bloodiest war in United States history and remains so to this day. The war would ultimately see the death of over 600,000 soldiers, fundamentally changing the structure of American society. The enumeration of the dead was seen as important in understanding the unanticipated scale and destructiveness of the war. However, not all of these deaths were the direct result of combat itself. Over two-thirds of these deaths were the result of disease for a multitude of reasons, including the lack of medicine and the use of archaic medical procedures. There was a general understanding, especially in the Union, that medicine was in need of a desperate change to keep up with ever-advancing military technology. The Civil War provided this opportunity and led to one of the greatest transformations in American medical history, which saw the complete overhaul of American field medicine and brought changes to civilian medicine. Ultimately, the destruction of the American Civil War forced a fundamental shift in medical care to deal with the degeneration and stagnation of medical infrastructure, medical competency, and its ability to efficiently operate in war in relation to the increasing deadliness of war itself.

One of the most important aspects in changing the operation of American field medicine and the understanding of disease was to develop an infrastructure that could support and withstand the massive changes implemented to medicine. In changing the operations of field medicine during the course of the Civil War, the Union Army was challenged by its understandings of various diseases, treatments, and other war-related medical problems. This resulted in the creation of the Army Medical Museum and the development of Circular No. 2 by the federal government in 1862 in order to assemble an early framework for disease and its treatment during the Civil War. Under the direction of William A. Hammond, Surgeon General of the United States, the Army Medical Museum was to “serve as an educational endeavor to improve medical and surgical care.” In order to create this museum, Hammond issued Circular No. 2 which stated that: “[m]edical officers are directed diligently to collect, and to forward to
the office of the Surgeon General, all specimens of morbid anatomy, surgical or medical, which may be regarded as valuable; together with projectiles and foreign bodies removed, and such other matters as may prove of interest in the study of military medicine or surgery.” This document was the first step in establishing the framework for research required to gain a better understanding of the human body and disease in war. Medical specimens were sent to a central location in Washington where they were studied to improve the efficiency of American medicine both during and after the Civil War. These specimens included the right leg of Major General Daniel Sickles and the skull of a soldier killed by a canister shot at Fort Wagner. These specimens would be used to study the effects of a cannon ball on both muscle and bone. As a result, the participation in and the experience of the Civil War presented the American medical community the opportunity to establish a strong foundation for the development of an infrastructure and framework for medical research.

At the time of the publication of Circular No. 2, the Medical Department actually needed bodies to develop scientific medicine, which had become a primary objective. Circular No. 2 served to solve this problem that the Union Army faced during the war. A central medical infrastructure had been created for the first time, much different from the previous, antebellum Medical Bureau, which was seen to be “little, rickety, [and] antiquated.” This fundamental change in the infrastructure of American medicine allowed for proper medical treatment and study to be achieved over the course of the Civil War and fundamentally change how disease and the body was examined as a whole. With the appointment of William Hammond as Surgeon General, and his creation of the Army Medical Museum, the combat capabilities of the Union Army had greatly increased. In comparison, the Confederacy did not have anything comparable to Union medical infrastructure throughout the war.

In developing the proper framework for research and practice, it was important that the appropriate people were in the appropriate positions and had the right responsibilities. The introduction of the Wilson Bill (1862) sought to increase the efficiency of the Medical Department and was one of the ways the government worked to establish a proper medical framework. This led to the search for the “best men” to assume its leadership. This meant that the old and established physicians of the medical hierarchy could no longer assume they would automatically be appointed the next surgeon general upon the retirement of their senior, as if it were a hereditary monarchy. The best men were those who had the most experience, implicitly
defining military medicine as a specialty on the basis of administrative expertise. \textsuperscript{8} Professional standards had thus been established and would guide the further development of American medicine.

At the same time as the development of the Medical Department and the Army Medical Museum, the United States Sanitary Commission (USSC) played a leading role in the development of health care for troops as disease was a large issue in many of the camps. A major issue during the Civil War was that few men knew why wounds became infected or what caused disease. \textsuperscript{9} At the outbreak of the Civil War, doctors had discovered some correlation between cleanliness of camp and sickness, but the idea of sanitation was very rudimentary. \textsuperscript{10} It was thus understood that something needed to be done in order to combat the rampant spread of disease in camp that was, at times, more deadly than the war itself. Sanitation and public hygiene was finally added to combat the problems that disease created in the Civil War and helped to establish future ways to research and understand disease. For example:

The Army of the Potomac mandated that camps had to be pitched on new ground and drained by ditches 18 inches deep; tents had to be struck twice a week to sun their floors, cooking had to be done only by company cooks, all refuse had to be burned or buried daily, soldiers had to bathe twice a week and change clothing at least once a week, and latrines had to be 8 feet deep and covered by 6 inches of dirt daily. \textsuperscript{11}

These simple, yet very important tasks were aimed not only at combating disease, but also at preventing it. It was finally beginning to be understood that disease was just as deadly as the war itself. These changes were only made possible by the strict military discipline employed by the Medical Department, which allowed them to transcend many of the civilian limitations of medical work. \textsuperscript{12} Controlling camp cleanliness was ultimately an important early step and a significant factor in the development of a strong framework for the institutionalization of medicine that further allowed American medicine to undergo a fundamental shift. Ultimately the institutions developed out of the experiences of the Civil War and the experiences of doctors themselves in the war would fundamentally change the established medical research field in America, and work to create more modern medical institutions.

In the process of developing a framework for medical research during the Civil War, the foundations had been laid for standardization of medicine to occur at the end of the war. The lack of medical infrastructure was one of the largest problems both armies faced in attempting to
standardize the medical field. This lack of infrastructure was indicative of the underdeveloped field of military medicine in the nineteenth-century. This problem was highly noted in the Union Army, especially by Dr. Maj. Jonathan Letterman, Medical Director of the Army of the Potomac, who wrote that during the Battle of Gettysburg the lack of proper support from military command effectively deprived the medical department of “appliances necessary for the proper care of the wounded, without which it is as impossible to have them properly attended to as it is to fight a battle without ammunition.” Letterman’s notion of the lack of medical infrastructure can also be noted in other battles of the Civil War, including Second Bull Run where three thousand men where left on the field several days after the battle because of the lack of ambulances. However, the Union Army was not alone in this problem, the Confederate Army experienced similar problems.

The lack of infrastructure posed an even larger problem for the Confederacy because the problem was manifested in the overall lack of medical personnel. Not only was the lack of medical personnel a problem, but the lack of physician experience was also a huge problem. In the Confederate Army, only 27/3000 (0.009%) surgeons actually had field experience. As a result of this, physicians, especially surgeons, were required to find their medical necessities on their own. Confederate Surgeon, Dr. Hunter McGuire, was responsible for development of camp sanitation policies, the requisition of medicine, instruments, and supplies; and during the course of the war, transportation of medical equipment, selection of field hospital sites, and evacuation systems. The experiences of McGuire exemplifies the challenges faced by the Confederate medical staff during the Civil War, highlighting the poor Confederate operations and the impact that having fully trained and highly experienced medical men on the field might have had on the performance of medical procedures.

As a result of the many issues discovered by medical personnel during the early years of the war, and in order to develop some semblance of standardization in military medicine, there was a realization that uniform standards were required. This led to the implementation of mandatory multipart medical entrance exams for surgeons, consisting of a written exam, two oral exams, a clinical medical, a surgical examination at a hospital, an examination on a cadaver, the performance of surgical operations, and an essay, in order to join the war effort. However, the idea of standardization of medicine in the war through the use of examinations was something completely foreign to surgeons and even had to be explained to those who would be
administering the exams. Pamphlets were published that helped potential surgeon by providing guidelines to the physical examination of patients. Henry M. Farr, a Civil War surgeon from Iowa received a copy of the twenty year old guidelines, which had not changed much stating that “they [Surgeons and Assistant Surgeons] will be particularly attentive in the examination of recruits, and will cause each recruit to be stripped of all his clothes… in order to ascertain which may render him unfit for the active duties of a soldier, or be the means of introducing disease into the army.” The medical guidelines for Union physicians established in 1861 were quite similar and stated that:

In passing a recruit the medical officer is to examine him stripped; to see that he has free use of all his limbs; that his chest is ample; that his hearing, vision, and speech are perfect; that he has no tumors, or ulcerated or extensively cicatrized legs; no rupture or chronic cutaneous affection; that he has not received any contusion, or wound of the head, that may impair his faculties; that he is not a drunkard; is not subject to convulsions; and has no infectious disorder, nor any other that may unfit him for military service.

With the implementation of these modified guidelines, it was quite clear that standardization was a big focus of the Medical Department. To solve the issues of standardization, the Medical Department resorted to the implementation of mandatory entrance exams in the hopes of ensuring that the “best men” were chosen for surgeon positions and had the appropriate medical knowledge to perform on the battlefield. As a result, most of the surgeons who became members of the medical department were usually from small communities because of the hands-on experience they would gain across a variety of specialties in medicine. These men were those who had the most experience in a particular field; making specialization a more visible medical and social category. The aim was to eliminate the incompetent surgeons within the current Medical Department, and standardization would allow for surgeons across the Union to be posted anywhere with the knowledge, in theory, that a wound would be treated the same in each hospital established by the Union Army.

With the introduction of standard medical methods during the American Civil War, the expediency and efficiency of medical care rose during the war. This increased the relatively low success rates that surgeons faced during the war. One of the largest and most complex innovations was the creation of a series of hospitals. These hospitals were part of an echeloned
system that saw the provision of a centralized location for medical care. Field hospitals would first be constructed and were highly mobile. Hospitals in major cities were also constructed in order to deal with more complex cases, especially those that required surgery. In order to get these soldiers from the field hospitals to permanent hospitals in the city, ambulances were needed to allow for rapid and efficient transportation of wounded soldiers. Introduced by Dr. Maj Jonathan Letterman, ambulances moved with each individual corps using medical wagons allowing for easy access of medication and transportation. The effectiveness of this new system is noted in Letterman’s “Gettysburg Report” where he quotes Surgeon John McNulty, commenting on the use of ambulances, “it is with extreme satisfaction that I can assure you that it enable me to remove the wounded from the field, shelter, feed them, and dress their wounds within six hours after battle ended, and to have every capital operation performed within twenty-four hours after the injury was received.” In previous situations where ambulances had not been used, or there was an insufficient number, soldiers were often left on the battlefield for days. Medicine moved to a stage where a sense of urgency was required, but was organized in a way for the chaos of urgency to be removed by efficient medical work, allowing for other advances in the treatment of soldiers that would not be possible if they did not make it off the battlefield.

Standardization did not only apply to medical practice itself, but also to what surgeons and physicians used in practice to treat illness and disease. This included the medications used in the war and the manufacture of the drugs themselves. The standardization of medication also led to the standardization of medical kits and supply wagons. This standardization was one of the greatest fundamental changes of American medicine during the Civil War because it allowed for uniformity to be established within the medical community across the entire North United States and wherever the Union Army was fighting. Ultimately, the lack of infrastructure was one of the great inhibitors to the development of standard medical models during the war. It was not until after the war that standardization actually gained a foothold in medicine, however, it was still fundamental in changing medical care during the war.

Specialization was one of the greatest achievements in the Civil War because of the mass amounts of knowledge that it allowed physicians to produce in the process of their work. Much of the specialization undertaken during the war was out of a genuine interest in certain areas of the body. It is these studied diseases and other conditions of the Civil War that helped to
crystallize the debates about the cause of various diseases. Specialization was a way for physicians to develop these better understandings and provided a promise of innovation through medical research. Specialization thus expanded to enhance the development of a research and theory framework established during the Civil War. In treating patients, specialized hospitals were constructed that encouraged increased ventilation and separation of patients according to disease or infection. Other hospitals were also built that focused on treating specific diseases of infection or focused on specific injuries that soldiers sustained in battle. Turner’s Lane Hospital in Philadelphia, one such specialized hospital, was the first hospital established in the Civil War designed to specifically study neurological injuries. Many of the discoveries made at this hospital had profound impacts on American medicine that are still seen to this day. Physicians S. Weir Mitchell, W. W. Keen, and George Morehouse led medicine in neurological specialization and were the first to observe the phenomenon known as “phantom limb,” the experience of any sensations that could be felt in the portion of the amputated limb that could be experienced before amputation. W.W. Keen’s *Gunshot Wounds and Other Injuries of the Nerves* would become the foundation for modern neurosurgery. This was the beginning of clinical specialization in American medicine that would also play a large role in the study of the human body. In conjunction with the establishment of written records, hospitals were also established that focused on the specialized study of “injuries of the eye, the nerves, ‘soldier’s heart,’ and other alike… This facilitated the rise of clinical specialism… as a scientific form of practice and research.” The Army Medical Museum played a fundamental role in the facilitation of the diffusion of medical knowledge because it required medical officers to collect and forward specimens for further study, which would ultimately allow for the development and proliferation of standardized techniques and practices.

However, as mentioned previously, specialization did not become the centrepiece of the medical community during the war itself. It took advances such as germ theory posed by Louis Pasteur and the further development of bacteriology by Robert Koch for surgery and medicine to drastically change. While not contributing to massive medical discoveries during the war, specialization allowed for the creation of the *Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion (1870-1888)*, which was the official medical history of the war. This text was extremely important to the development of medicine all over the world as it became the definitive repository of military medical knowledge and was widely acknowledged by European
medical authorities at the end of the nineteenth-century.\textsuperscript{32} The Civil War had shown what American medicine was capable of doing when faced with such a challenge. It was able to adapt to the changing nature of warfare and alter the structure of medicine in order to best suit the needs of the soldiers that it served. Specialization served as one of the avenues that allowed American medicine to flourish during the Civil War.

The death of Confederate Lieutenant General Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson provides an excellent case study into the expediency and efficiency of medical care in the Civil War. Jackson was one of the greatest generals in the Civil War, and was considered to be the right-hand of General Robert E. Lee. On the night of 2 May 1863, Jackson was accidentally shot by soldiers of his own corps after a small engagement with Union troops when his party was mistaken for the enemy as he returned to the front line. Jackson had his left arm amputated two inches below the shoulder by Dr. McGuire, Medical Director of the Confederate Army, who was assisted by three other surgeons.\textsuperscript{33} Had this operation been for a regular soldier, McGuire or a subordinate surgeon would perform the surgery alone. However, this surgery highlights the importance placed on senior military commanders and their health as well as the general complexity and danger of field medicine. Prior to being transported to a field hospital, Jackson was tended to in the complete darkness and under heavy fire.\textsuperscript{34} This begs the question of whether or not the exemplary care received by Jackson was simply a result of his rank and importance in the Confederate Army, and if this were any other soldier, would the attending surgeon have just bandaged the injured soldier and hoped for the best. Ultimately, the care extended to Gen. Jackson exceeds what would be expected of any medical man during the Civil War and is an example of the prejudiced care that Civil War surgeons would perform on senior officers.

While soldiers were removed from the threat of combat by being placed in hospitals, there were still many medical problems that soldiers faced. The deadliest problem soldiers experienced was infection and disease while recuperating in hospitals. Disease, referred to as the “Third Army” by Jeffrey Sartin was one of the biggest problems in the hospital and was the reason why amputations were performed to prevent disease rather than infection.\textsuperscript{35} Three out of every four surgical procedures performed during the war were amputations.\textsuperscript{36} Even with the massive number of surgeries to prevent disease, soldiers still faced a 40% fatality rate from infection while in the hospital.\textsuperscript{37} Gangrene and erysipelas posed two of the greatest threats of disease to soldiers during the Civil War. In efforts to combat the deadliness of the infection and
disease, doctors began to search for methods to reduce its effects on the soldiers. This resulted in the use of the clinical trial within the context of the American Medical Museum and allowed for potential treatments to be developed. Managing these two diseases was a large challenge and ultimately contributed to the physician’s role as producer of medical knowledge. Disease posed a large challenge to Civil War physicians because of its destructive and deadly nature, but determining how to actually fight it posed just as big a problem.

The lack of disinfectant posed another problem for disease transmission. Surgery during the Civil War was considered to be an assembly-line procedure with surgeons using the same bloody instrument surgery after surgery. Sponges used to soak up blood were even used on other patients after only being soaked or compressed in water. It was within the framework of research established by the American Medical Museum and other research methods that Joseph Lister was able to develop an anti-septic technique that would forever change the military medical field. Lister had learned to prevent surgical infection by killing living airborne germs before reaching the open wound, effectively transforming wound care. This small triumph over disease was an important step in the understanding of disease. While actually slowing down the treatment of soldiers, this small but important step would have a massive impact on the development of the field of surgery and American medicine both during and after the war, contributing to its increased success.

Overall, the American Civil War provided the opportunity for the necessary and crucial expansion of American medicine. Newly developed institutions and legislation, including the American Medical Museum and Circular No. 2 provided the basic infrastructure required for the implementation of these new policies and practices in medicine. These changes also showed the power and interest of the American government in changing its medical community and paying a debt to soldiers for performing a duty to the nation. These changes also resulted in an unprecedented focus on disease and patients, growing into objective medical study. American medicine was now on a new, rapidly advancing path due to the destruction caused by the Civil War. The Civil War made known the importance of hands on experience and training in medicine; best shown by the government’s new policy of the “best man” to lead the Medical Department. Standardization of medicine also played a large role by simplifying the established medical model, allowing any surgeon with experience to perform at any hospital in the country. However, while expediency certainly improved over the course of the war, it remained an issue.
American soldiers had performed their duty to the nation, and the Civil War itself did the same by revolutionizing the field of medicine.

NOTES

1 Drew Gilpin Faust, “‘Numbers on Top of Numbers’: Counting the Civil War Dead,” The Journal of Military History 70, no. 4 (October 2006): 995.
3 William A. Hammond, “Circular No. 2” (United States Army Medical Department, May 21, 1862).
5 Freemon, “Lincoln Finds a Surgeon General.”
6 Devine, Learning From the Wounded, 267.
8 Ibid., 32.
10 Ibid.
11 Robert F. Reilly M.D., “Medical and Surgical Care during the American Civil War, 1861-1865,” Baylor University Medical Proceedings 29, no. 2 (2016): 141.
12 Blustein, “‘To Increase the Efficiency of the Medical Department,’” 24.
16 Ibid.
17 Devine, Learning From the Wounded, 17.
18 Blustein, “‘To Increase the Efficiency of the Medical Department,’” 36.
21 Devine, Learning From the Wounded, 150.
23 Letterman, “Dr. Letterman’s Gettysburg Report.”
25 Ibid., 15.
26 Devine, Learning From the Wounded, 71.
27 Ibid., 150.
30 Devine, Learning From the Wounded, 257.
31 Blustein, “‘To Increase the Efficiency of the Medical Department,’” 26.
34 Ibid., 649.
36 Reilly, “Medical and Surgical Care during the American Civil War, 1861-1865,” 140.
37 Devine, Learning From the Wounded, 206.
38 Ibid., 101.
39 Gilchrist, “Disease and Infection in the American Civil War,” 259.
40 Devine, Learning From the Wounded, 243.
41 Ibid., 270.
‘Malleable Minds’: Women of the Mau Mau

By Rachel Urovitz

In the mid-twentieth century, Britain experienced the beginnings of decolonization and heightened nationalistic movements in many of its colonial holdings and protectorate territories. Specifically, in 1952 the Mau Mau Uprising in Kenya highlighted colonial desires to be independent and exiled from the Empire. Simultaneously, the case study of the Mau Mau shows the British government attempting to preserve the spirit of empire. Continuing to demonstrate their motivations and purpose as the leading global imperial power in Kenya, the British exhibited their self-imposed paternalistic ‘duty,’ as civilizing initiatives persisted. Critically analyzing the roles of female Mau Mau members in the rebellion demonstrates the cultural and ideological discrepancies between British and Kenyan conceptions of traditional gender roles. Furthermore, it demonstrates how British notions of gender provided an opportunity for Mau Mau women to exhibit significant political influence and agency that arguably contributed to the end of the rebellion (1956) and the eventual independence of Kenya (1963). Ultimately, women’s roles “were as multi-faceted as the revolt it-self” as they held military, political, and domestic positions that challenged traditional British gender roles.

Studying Mau Mau women is pivotal in understanding the role of empire. The Mau Mau demonstrates the reality of colonial rule, investigating differing gender conceptions and treating mobilization of African peoples as a nationalist revolution that had grave influence on Kenya’s independence. However, there are serious limitations to studying the Mau Mau Uprising and, more so, women’s role in the rebellion. First, the major actors in this study are the Kikuyu people, who made up the majority of the Mau Mau, and the nature of their culture and approach to remembering history clashes with Western systems. The Mau Mau exercise oral history traditions of passing on stories through generations. Western discourse has prioritized written records of history, suggesting histories from oral societies are not valid. Thus, not only do western historians neglect oral histories, but there is also a lack of available sources that are not easily accessible. Additionally, the Mau Mau Rebellion is a violent example of the British Empire purposely exterminating thousands of people, and therefore Britain has held valuable files and archives pertaining to the Mau Mau in attempts to protect its global image. Lastly, many historians who do show interest in the Mau Mau do not prioritize women’s involvement in the crisis. However, recent scholarship from historians such as Cora Ann Presley (1988), Marina E Santou (1996), Caroline Elkins (2005) Amanda Elizabeth Lewis (2007), and Katherine Bruce-
Lockhart (2014) is attempting to fill the gaps and uncover the realities of the Mau Mau Rebellion. Especially notable is Elkins, who specialized in looking at the shifting roles of women under colonialism and travelled to Kenya, interviewing surviving Mau Mau members, as well as visiting the national archives in Nairobi.

Established as a colony in 1920, British colonial presence predates the proclamation claiming Kenya as a protectorate in 1895. Britain’s interest in Kenya followed the general objective of empire building in expanding territorial holdings, but more specifically exploiting the potential of the land, as Kenya had quality soil for agricultural development.3 The Report of the East Africa Commission of 1925 stated “the high average fertility of the soil and the favorable elements of climate was an assurance of productivity” indicating the prospective value of the land.4 Colonists aimed to make Kenya a white settlement area and established European systems that clashed with how Africans had been living pre-contact. Africans already had techniques for aggregating labour forces and cultivating land using cooperative family labour projects.5 Losing land to white settlers, particularly the land they were cultivating, became an “agricultural proletariat for European farmers,” who benefited from the uprooting of African people.6 Thus, with the establishment of colonial rule, native resistance emerged in the early years of British rule, creating bitter and hostile attitudes that would unfold in the Mau Mau Rebellion. Moreover, tension was fostered in early British-African relations due to economic necessity. The time in which British settlers arrived in the Kenyan highlands was a difficult time for the three inhabiting African peoples of the Massai, Kamba, and Kikuyu.7 A combination of cattle diseases, human epidemics and famines motivated people to convert to Christianity, as individuals took refuge and sought assistance from missionaries in order to survive.8 Though some natives willingly converted and others out of desperation, acceptance of British religion validated the civilizing mission of the empire. Demonstrating how initial British-African tensions focused on land loss and cultural assimilation sets up pivotal underlying issues that become apparent in the rebellion.

The Mau Mau fighters were composed mainly of the ethnic group Kikuyu, who were the dominant Kenyan culture, having more than a million members by the early 1950’s. The Kikuyu were economically marginalized, as they had been losing their land to white settlers since colonization.9 Nationalistic movements had been developing prior to the uprising and notable nationalists such as Jomo Kenyatta of the Kenyan African Union (KAU) had been addressing the British government, advocating for political rights and reforms that sought to increase
independence and regain land in the Highlands. In 1952 Kikuyu fighters became more radical and began attacking political opposition, as well as ransacking white settler farms and slaughtering livestock. By October, events had escalated and the British declared a state of emergency and sent British troops to Kenya. Revolting against colonial rule, the uprising lasted until 1960, leading to Kenya’s independence. An important aspect of the uprising that the British found extremely problematic was the ceremonial oaths in which Mau Mau members participated. The Kikuyu, often through intimidation and threats of death, implemented oath-taking to commit people to the Mau Mau cause. Mass oathing spread as means of organizing the people, gaining support from African politicians, Kikuyu schools and churches.

The scale of the oathing campaign, which began before the British declared a state of emergency, drew significant attention to the Mau Mau movement and furthermore contributed to colonial officials’ perception that the Mau Mau were a unified force. In reality, like other instances in history of rebellion or revolution, the Mau Mau had internal divides, which are reflected in the different oaths taken. Though oaths differed in the deepness of the pledge, particularly in the severity of violence the pledger was willing to commit, and often influenced by how radical the oath administrator was, common characteristics of the oath included denouncing the ‘enemy’ and the clear indication that disobedience of the oath should be punishable by death. Some of the most popular pledges were: “If I know of any enemy of our organization and fail to kill him, may this oath kill me” and “If I reveal this oath to any European, may this oath kill me,” demonstrating the severity and commitment of the oath. As the movement progressed, Mau Mau leaders created seven levels of oaths, each demonstrating a further commitment to the movement. The first level of oath, referred to as the oath of unity, was estimated to have been pledged by 1.5 million of the Kikuyu people, representing almost 90% of the population. The activity of oath-taking represented not only the commitment of the African people’s fight against colonial power but also the form of this resistance, demonstrated by practice of this cultural tradition. Oathing became an indication of Kenyan nationalism. Alternatively, colonial government and settlers understood oathing as a backward practice, further playing into the savage conception of Mau Mau and providing the British with reason to civilize. Thus, at the root of the rebellion, the British realized the significance of Mau Mau oaths and their contribution to mobilization.

Women’s relationship to oaths is debated because of limited sources and lack of focus on women as active participants in the uprising. District officials in the Central Province felt it was
Mau Mau men taking advantage of women’s naivety and malleability, hoping they would not question the violent actions the oaths necessitated. This perception parallels British ideals of gender roles, as they negated the possibility that women, like men, could promote these oaths with intention. Furthermore, this suggests that women exercised political agency that contributed to commitment of the movement. The way in which women were connected to the practice of oath-taking is indicative of the depicted image women had in the rebellion.

In scholarship, women have been seen as either victims of the Mau Mau or as activists who consciously contributed to the success of the Mau Mau. While, as mentioned, women are hardly included in official colonial documents, brief appearances present them as victims of physical and psychological abuse. Instances recorded in two different commissioner reports in 1952 describe women being forced to partake in oath ceremonies when they were physically beaten, stripped naked and forced to drink blood. Further, colonial administrators had difficulty defining the female enemy because of their notions that women were weak and passive. Colonial documents, although beneficial in working towards gaining a complete understanding of altering perceptions of the oaths, must be read with caution as they are produced by colonial officials for a British audience. As Presley argues, “while the rebellion was in progress, a popular British tactic was to portray women as Mau Mau victims,” projecting their passiveness and fitting into British gendered stereotypes. Thus, there are examples of females falling victim to physical and sexual abuse, but generalizing that women as a whole were passive in the movement as naïve Mau Mau members would overlook their desire to be politically active in Kenya. Although initially it was believed that men were administering the oaths, the Kiambu District Commissioner (1950) observed women had taken over oath-giving, signifying a shift in Kikuyu tradition. Women’s involvement in oathing campaigns not only signaled their acceptance of the movement, but also a significant evolution in Kikuyu culture, as it was the first time men and women were taking the same oaths. In addition, the *African Affairs Report in 1953* indicates that women participated in oath giving, demonstrating that via nationalistic ideology of the Mau Mau movement, women were defying British gender roles. The report specified “The part played by women to aid the terrorists was considerable” suggesting women’s involvement was recognizable. In 1954, in another report to the Colonial Office from Thomas Askwith, who was the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of African Affairs, similar conclusions were indicated. Askwith stated, “There is evidence that wives have in many cases persuaded their husbands to take the oath,” further exemplifying the shifting British
perceptions of Mau Mau women. Though it was initially believed that men persuaded women to take the oath, as the Mau Mau crisis continued more evidence emerged that debunked the British colonial stereotype that women were politically passive.

In addition to having roles in oath-taking, Kikuyu women also were active members of nationalistic associations in Kenya before and during the rebellion. Muthoni wa Gachie and Wagara Wainana, who identify as Mau Mau leaders, described voluntarily taking oaths and joining to become politicians, demonstrating the Mau Mau Uprising featured women in political roles. Gachie was a part of the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) and Kenyan African Union (KAU) in the 1940’s, exemplifying how women were active in politics before the rebellion; therefore nationalistic organizations did not emerge from the Mau Mau but rather the rebellion drew more attention to female political participation.

As suggested, the actual oath and actions of the oathing campaign were central to the Mau Mau movement and once the British realized this they devised a plan to rectify the damage of the oath. Taking a closer look at British detention programs, the system that came to be known as the pipeline, demonstrates that the British believed the appropriate response to the Mau Mau crisis was rehabilitation. Central to the program was classifying detainees as white, grey, or black, which represented the respective level of severity. Moving through the pipeline reflected how cooperative the detainee was and their willingness to confess the Mau Mau oath. By deporting every African bearing any connection to the Mau Mau, almost the entire Kikuyu population was detained by the British, amounting to approximately 1.5 million people. Specifically focusing on the Kamiti Detention Camp, which was the main location for female incarceration, and Gitamayu, which was created closer to end of the rebellion (1958) explicitly to handle hardcore female detainees, reveals how the British understood female deviancy and how they justified treatment of Mau Mau women.

Women’s punishment in these detention camps proved to be similar to that of male detainees. Punishment and treatment, like that of males, were increasingly severe depending on the person’s position on the pipeline. Though women shared the aspects of violence and inhumane treatment that men experienced, due to British ideas of gender, it was believed women could be more easily rehabilitated. Gendered stereotypes influenced the treatment of female detainees, in that the colonial government’s idea that women were malleable meant rehabilitation could be achieved, discouraging them from participating in the Mau Mau movement. Kamiti was distinctive in that it operated as a self-contained pipeline, encompassing women of all
The rehabilitation program set up for Kamiti was heavily influenced by British conceptions that women had gendered domestic roles. Rather than considering the possibility that women’s involvement could be self-motivated, colonizers continued to believe that women were malleable. Therefore plans for rehabilitation centred on restoring women’s roles as mothers and wives. This British notion that emphasized women’s role as mothers transferred from the metropole to its colonies. Continuing to protect and promote ideas of empire, the British government attempted to gender metropolitan and colonial women in similar fashions, emphasizing a woman’s role or duty to the empire should be as a mother above anything else. Suggesting motherhood and childbearing as the priority of Kikuyu women would thus deter them from possessing political positions. Rehabilitation programs claimed to focus on domestic training that included instruction and practice relating to “hygiene, embroidery, gardening, cooking, and child welfare” that would assist with becoming good mothers. However, the initiatives of this program were paradoxical due to the conditions of the camp. Many women who were detained brought their children with them to the camp, or if pregnant, gave birth to children in the camps. Based on the camp official’s estimates in 1955, about 600 hundred children were in Kamiti.

Ideally, if it was Britain’s aim to rehabilitate female detainees as effective mothers, having a considerable amount of infants and children living in the camps would have provided opportunity for experiential training and education. However, the realities of living in these camps with children were often dire, as survival and providing basic needs were extremely difficult for mothers to achieve; not only were the women and children exposed to infectious and nutritional diseases, but lack of clothing and food made for low survival rates. Mothers themselves were so malnourished their bodies could not produce breast milk, which directly resulted in their infants’ poor health. In addition, having to work long hours in different work details left children abandoned in the camps or susceptible to unsafe environments. Kimiti in particular had four jobs: digging murrum (clay-like material), cleaning toilet buckets, maintaining the grass and vegetable garden, and transporting and burying dead bodies. Colonial officials claimed the high amount of child deaths were due to neglect. By placing blame on the Kikuyu women, it further emphasized the British notion that African women needed rehabilitation to be good mothers. However, it was the colonial exercise of power and punishment that left African women unable to provide for their children.
The conditions and treatment of women in the camps transformed their physical appearances. Subjected to violence, sexual abuse, and the aforementioned health issues affected their appearance so drastically that they personified the undomesticated Mau Mau savages that colonial administrators such as Evelyn Baring were propagating in Britain and the international community. Britain used photographs of the female detainees to purposely show them as savages which arguably allowed them to justify the use of these detention camps for rehabilitation, validating the British paternalistic duty of civilizing. Though the British used propaganda to export ideas about an inferior people that needed civilizing, it was in fact the colonial programs and policy that produced the images that people around the world perceived as realities of the Kikuyu culture. Since many Kikuyu women realized the realities of both the survival of their children and themselves in the detention camps, many denounced their Mau Mau oaths to escape. Kimiti had regular visits from missionaries attempting to spread the Christian faith, contributing to the civilizing mission of the empire. Though the true reasons for conversion and denouncing their oaths were not unified, Elkin’s accounts reveal that many women expressed that they tolerated preachers because it relieved them from work and even aided with their release. The aforementioned motivations for women embracing Christianity, whether genuine in embracing religion or a sacrifice for survival, provided the desired example that the British rehabilitation was producing success stories.

Particularly, press reports of Katherine Warren-Gash, the screening officer at Kamiti, indicated that female detainees were entering the camp “sullen” and “unpleasant” but leaving “really pretty” and “rehabilitated.” Warren-Gash’s role as an officer presents an interesting parallel that it was not just Kikuyu women who assumed different roles during the rebellion. Though Warren-Gash was a female British settler, not a Mau Mau woman, she too symbolized how females outside the British metropole assumed a different position that fell outside the projected primary role of a woman as a mother of the empire. Warren-Gash’s reports, among other stories, were featured in British press during the state of emergency. Furthermore, the role of official propaganda and censorship was heightened during World War II. Thus, the portrayal of the Mau Mau to British audiences was controlled and effectively influenced the narrative of violent savages. The Mau Mau were well known in the metropole. Parents would threaten children with ideas of the savage Mau Mau coming to get them if they misbehaved and even some MPs compared their disorderly behaviour in the Commons to the incivility of the Mau Mau. Racist images and savagery were perpetuated into popular beliefs by the British public.
that led to continued support of colonial presence and control in Kenya. The \textit{Daily Mail} newspaper, from October 21, 1952 included headings such as “Navy Joins Mau Mau Fight” and “Mau Mau Terrorist is charged.”\textsuperscript{39} Accompanied by photos that emulated British wartime heroism, the press in Britain endorsed the barbaric society of the Mau Mau, suggesting British political and military presence was needed to tame the savage. Therefore popular press like the \textit{Daily Mail} supported the emergency policies issued by the government and sympathized with the settlers and colonial officers, rather than the Mau Mau.\textsuperscript{40} This evidence suggests the press was able to manipulate the public’s perception of Mau Mau Crisis and more broadly, the actions of colonial rule that affected the treatment and ideological basis for rehabilitation of Mau Mau women in the detention camps. Similarly, positive rhetoric that celebrated rehabilitation was seen in official colonial documents. In the recovered files from the East African Department, such as a document on the “Advancement of African Women in Kenya” from 1954-1956 “the impressive work of rehabilitation of Mau Mau adherents” is acknowledged.\textsuperscript{41} Further, the document states that progress is notable in the conversion of women, praising the work camp programs.\textsuperscript{42} Both metropolitan British newspapers and exported colonial documents from Africa demonstrate the dominating narrative of the early Mau Mau Rebellion, in that colonial presence and programs in Kenya were presented as beneficial.

Metropolitan views of incarcerated Mau Mau women therefore influenced how they were treated and disciplined within the camps. Kamiti contained female detainees who the British felt could progress through the pipeline system and whose association with the Mau Mau were understood as passive and therefore likely reversible. Women who were classified as ‘Hard Core’ were isolated and sent to Gitamayu. Treatment of women detainees was more severe and violent in this facility but also demonstrated shifting perceptions of how the British defined Mau Mau women. As highlighted in examples of detainees and the rehabilitation program at Kamiti, the British saw Mau Mau women as malleable but policies enforced at Gitamayu suggested a changing discourse that categorized females as mad or mentally insane.\textsuperscript{43} Gendered assumptions showed that the British were uneasy about how to punish resistant women, and although hardcore women were deterring views of malleability, they were still seen as more redeemable than male detainees.\textsuperscript{44} Influential in this shift in thinking was Warren-Gash’s work at Kamiti, in which she commented hardcore women “were not in a reasonable state of mind.”\textsuperscript{45} Gitamayu, in its isolation of hardcore women, approached detainment differently, signifying the British acceptance that not all female detainees were redeemable.\textsuperscript{46} Also significant was that Gitamayu
detainees were no longer required to denounce their Mau Mau oath, as the British realized it would most likely not be genuine but rather in hopes of being released. By labeling deviant women insane, the British again attempted to justify the violent treatment of the Mau Mau. Colonial stereotypes of gender suggested women were nonviolent by nature. Thus, in order to rationalize women who did demonstrate extreme violence, the British argued they must be mentally unstable. Designating women detainees as mad further exhibits the colonial power relationship at play, demonstrating that white males had the authority to define women and that the colonial response in itself was gendered. Deeming a Mau Mau woman insane reduced her to be less human which allowed the repressive structure colonialism depended on. By understanding how ideas of gender roles influenced the treatment of women in Kamiti and Gitamayu it becomes clear “the discourses of ‘otherness’ separating the Mau Mau women from the British were variously expressed along the fault lines of race, gender, power, ‘sanity,’ and freedom.” By looking at some of the women who were detained in detention camps it becomes evident that the notion of British gender roles impacted their treatment.

Shifra Wametumi and Helen Macharia were two Mau Mau women classified as hardcore. Arrested together, among 12 other men, their stories exemplify how British gender conceptions dictated their treatment. Though Wametumi and Macharia were detained with men for similar suspicion that they were significant, organizing members of the grassroots movement in the Fort Hall District, their punishment was very different. All detained at the Kahuro camp, the British officer ordered the men to be gathered together, shot, and buried in a pit, exhibiting typical protocol for their level of commitment to the Mau Mau movement. Conversely, the two women known to have similar, if not stronger ties to the Mau Mau were spared and instead detained for five years. Wametumi was the leader of a local African independent church and, because of the location, was central to Mau Mau activities in the area. As Elkins conducted her own interviews with former Mau Mau members, in her conversation with Wametumi she confirmed that she “directed the oathing, collected funds, and prepared ourselves for war.” Wametumi’s treatment demonstrates that gender was a critical factor in British colonial decisions for the severity of punishment. Though the British considered what Wametumi did punishable by death, as demonstrated by the execution of the 12 men convicted of similar crimes, since she was female, her punishment was less severe. Wametumi, among several thousand other Mau Mau women classified as hardcore and subjected to harsh treatment and exploitation by colonial power, ultimately survived because of her gender.
Women also demonstrated examples of direct military involvement, which contradicted traditional British gender roles. The presence of women in military camps differed from Britain, who for the most part in the twentieth century saw women’s place in war as on the home front or in supporting roles. Though even in Kikuyu culture women had not traditionally had active roles in warfare, the Mau Mau Rebellion demonstrated that a substantial amount of women emerged in the military sphere. Records show that many military camps had women, as many as 450. While some women continued their traditional domestic roles of cooking, cleaning, and caring for the men, others transcended the demands of domesticity and wanted to have what the British understood as male roles. Kikuyu women instead joined their men in military training and participated in combat proving to be warriors, not just wives. For example, Wamuyu Gakurur, who joined the Mau Mau movement in 1951, became a full-fledged female Mau Mau freedom fighter. Gakurur served in the “Nyandarua and Mount Kenya battalion under the command of General China” indicating she physically devoted herself to the Mau Mau nationalistic movement, voluntarily placing herself in dangerous situations. More commonly, women’s presence in the forests and military camps was outside combat. One of the most significant roles women provided to the Mau Mau movement was linking fighters in the forest to the ‘passive wing.’ The passive wing was the support and contributions from people outside the forest to the militant wing. The most crucial activities carried out by women within the passive wing were farming crops to secure a steady food supply and then delivering the supply to the camps. In addition, females of the passive wing provided intelligence, weapons, clothing and other supplies forest fighters required. Whether passive or active participants in the military effort of the freedom fighters, the importance of women’s roles surprised the British, as they again challenged gendered stereotypes that characterized women as secondary support subjected to male commands. Mau Mau women in combat and domestic positions showed they were active members of the movement, able to express agency and direction for the cause.

In conclusion, the Mau Mau Rebellion was an event that marked the weakening control of the British Empire, as the colony of Kenya demonstrated its direct condemning of empire, fighting to become an independent nation. The case of the Mau Mau further illustrates strategies to preserve the essence of empire. The British government's motivations were clear, indicating it was crucial to maintain their colonial holdings in order to remain an imperialistic global power. By inflicting paternalistic ideologies, executed through the civilizing rehabilitation mission, the British attempted to continue their superior, governing role. Though the rebellion was multi-
faceted and can be analyzed for a plethora of historical narratives, focusing specifically on the roles of female Mau Mau members in the rebellion demonstrates clashing British and Kikuyu conceptions of gender. British conventions of traditional gender roles depicted women as passive and malleable, thus when the state of emergency was declared, British colonial officers did not consider that the Mau Mau women would play active roles in the rebellion. Mau Mau women demonstrated that they had significant political influence that contributed to the success of the rebellion, were pivotal in the execution of the oathing process and showed their aspirations to be politically active. Women also showed they were willing to fight in combat and support military camps, as well as proving themselves to be conscious and active in the nationalist movement. Studying the Mau Mau women emphasizes the importance of considering women's roles in history as they factor into broader ideologies of race, politics, and culture, while also showing the shift in western historical approaches that are validating oral histories.

NOTES
1 HIST 3P01, Brock University, Lecture 12.
6 Ibid., 4.
7 Ibid., 7.
8 Ibid.
9 Tignor, 5.
10 Ibid., 11.
12 Elkins, 25.
13 Ibid., 26.
14 Ibid., 27.
15 Ibid.
17 Presley, 505.
19 Presley, 505.
21 Santoru, 256.
22 Presley, 507.
23 Elkins, 222.
24 Presley, 510.
25 Ibid.

95
27 Elkins, 220.
28 Bruce-Lockhart, 594.
29 Bruce-Lockhart, 594.
31 Bruce-Lockhart, 594.
32 Elkins, 225.
33 Ibid., 224.
34 Ibid., 227.
35 Ibid., 221.
36 Elkins, 229.
37 Ibid., 228-229.
39 Ibid., 234.
40 Ibid., 246.
41 East African Department, 9.
43 Bruce-Lockhart, 597.
44 Bruce-Lockhart, 596.
45 Ibid., 597.
46 Bruce-Lockhart, 597.
47 Ibid.
48 Bruce-Lockhart, 603.
49 Ibid.
50 Elkins, 219.
51 Elkins, 219.
52 Edgerton, 118.
53 Ibid.
54 Gachihi, 173.
56 Santoru, 256.
58 Elkins, 38 and 219.
Nationalism, Suffrage, and Maternal Feminism: Race, Gender, and Religion

By Michael Wielink

The late twentieth and early twenty-first century was a transformative period in the history of the young Dominion of Canada. Confederation had granted Canada a level of independence, but a majority of people remained committed to a future identity, which maintained continuity with an imperial British “civilizing force.” Canadian national identity and patriotism were dynamic forces inextricably linked to the evolution of the women’s suffragist movement. Many political men, such as John Dryden and James Hughes, and suffrage groups, like the National Council of Women (NCM) and Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WTCU), remained staunchly committed to the idea of a “White Anglo-Saxon Protestant” nation, which would only be enhanced by women’s ability to garner the vote. Primary documents derived from politicians, suffragist organizations, women’s organizations, and books reveal that the Canadian suffragist movement appealed to ideals of race, gender, and religion, which were permeated with fervent patriotic and nationalistic rhetoric in order to unite with Canada’s “imagined community.”

Canada’s suffragist movements, linked with ideas of nationalistic sentiments, became entwined with “maternal feminism” which emerged as a dominant force to not only enfranchise women, but served as a force to marginalize immigrants and minorities.

Nationalism is perhaps an ambiguous concept, even more so with such a young Dominion of Canada, which was only just creating its own identity, but yet remained strongly linked to the British motherland. Benedict Anderson’s book, Imagined Communities, written in 1983, provides significant clarity on the idea of nation and nationalism, specifically his concept of nations as “imagined communities,” both politically and culturally. National identities are imagined as both intrinsically limited and sovereign. The nation is imagined as limited because, no matter the size or scope, it is finite in its inclusion and there is always “others” beyond its borders. The nation is imagined as sovereign because it dismantled previous social constructs of hierarchy and dynastic power prior to the Enlightenment and French Revolution. Finally, it is imagined as a community because, even the inclusion of blatant discrimination and exploitation, the nation is a perceived camaraderie. Fundamentally, this fraternity is what drives people to die for their imagined communities or nations. Nation or nationalism is able to create allegiance by differentiating between those who “belong” and those who are “excluded.”

Anderson’s
“imagined communities” is vital to exploring and understanding la Fin-de-siècle Canada’s identity. Therefore, nationalism, as an ideology, is key to understanding its reciprocal effect on the Canadian suffragist movement. The suffragist movement was universally nationalistic yet not all nationalistic people envisioned women in their “imagined communities.”

Certainly, the best starting point is an “imagined community,” which does not include the enfranchisement of women, propagating the detrimental effects it will have on the nation and women. John Dryden, Minister of Agriculture, delivered a speech to the Ontario Legislature on May 10th 1893 regarding suffrage. It is immediately evident Dryden sees this as a much larger issue, one which involves gender roles, religion and race. Dryden’s Baptist-Protestant foundation keeps him firmly embedded in his interpretation of scripture, referring to God as the only standard of right and wrong. Dryden states “Man’s appearance indicates force, authority, self-assertion, while that of a woman show exactly the opposite, and indicates instead trust, dependence, grace, and beauty.” Dryden’s use of scripture to enforce clearly delineated gender roles is key to maintaining the structure of the family, which he views as the building block of the nation. He believes that without a strong family unit, you will not have a strong imperial British-Canadian civilizing force in the world. Ultimately, Dryden employs fear tactics, advocating the idea that the effects would take numerous years to be felt but clearly states “…in the end the result would be evil, and evil alone.” Here, Dryden encourages the Canadian public and his fellow politicians to believe suffrage would be an irreversible degenerating force upon the “White Anglo-Saxon” race. However, Dryden presents no real evidence other than opinion, religious interpretation, and social custom as support for his position. Dryden’s speech clearly illustrates the need for the suffragist movement to appeal to a strong sense of Canadian nationalism to be successful. However, the suffragist movement was not a divided movement between men and women, as many prominent men supported the suffragist movement.

James Laughlin Hughes wrote a tract entitled Equal Rights in 1895, espousing nationalism in his unequivocal support of women’s suffrage. The key to understanding his “imagined community” is to briefly understand Hughes and his background. Hughes was an ardent member of the Orange Order, a fraternal organization structured along the ethno-religious guidelines: “White Anglo-Saxon Protestant.” Orangemen were fully integrated into the echelons of political power; with their political epicenter focused in Toronto. Hughes’ steadfast membership in the Orange Order of Canada and support for suffragists provided the ideal vision
of a great homogenous united Canada. For Hughes, women’s suffrage in Britain and Canada indicated that “England had led the nations in Christian civilization, and she will live up to her glorious record if she is the first great nation to admit women to her Parliament.” For Hughes, Canada’s nationalism and patriotism is inextricably tied to the imperial destiny of the British Empire as the preeminent transmitter of “true” civilization. Hughes extensively utilizes Protestant and/or British sources to support the enfranchisement of women. For Hughes, the English White Protestant society must naturally continue to lead the world to a better future. Hughes states “Enlightened Christian civilizations attempts no reply, but recognizes that all injustice should be remedied, not defended.” Juxtaposed to Dryden, Hughes envisions an improved society and enhanced “imagined community” for the future of Canada in which French Catholics and other minorities become assimilated into a “White Anglo-Saxon Protestant” Canada. While Hughes is an ardent supporter of female enfranchisement, he does not express an entirely egalitarian equality of the sexes. Hughes, like Dryden, believes the female gender has a unique social responsibility in building a strong nation.

Hughes envisions an enhanced role for women in the social and political arena, yet not so liberal in which men and women are perceived as absolutely equal. Hughes would agree with Dryden in that motherhood remained a key role and of primary importance for women. Hughes’ glaring omission of key resources, like the French philosophe Condorcet, who wrote On the Admission of Women to the Rights of Citizenship during the French Revolution in 1790, indicates his predisposition to a shared maintenance of traditional gender constructs of female motherhood. Hughes states that “Voting will ennoble womanhood, and qualify women for truer motherhood.” While espousing egalitarian motivations for suffrage, perhaps Hughes has a more practical rationale to meet his future vision for Canada. Female suffrage would cause an immediate “doubling” electoral base, which would support a homogeneous vision for Canada. The evidence points to the fulfillment of Hughes’ ideal “imagined community” in which French Catholics and other ethnic and religious minorities would get assimilated into a “White Anglo-Saxon Protestant” Canada. Dryden and Hughes, albeit on extreme ends of the spectrum of support for suffrage, not only illustrate the importance of the suffragist movement to display a “maternal feminism,” but also one that would build a glorious Canadian “imagined community.” “Maternal feminism” is a form of first-wave feminism infused with the language of domesticity,
which called upon women to define a public role for themselves as women, sisters and mothers to improve society, and particularly to alleviate the suffering of women and children.

Underpinning much of the Canadian suffrage movement was women’s conviction that their inability to influence alcohol laws was a crucial demonstration of the need for enfranchisement and some level of political equality, hence “maternal feminism.” Mrs. Letitia Youmans embodies this understanding, as a woman who understood the need to evolve and move beyond just pushing for temperance, along with the need to vote as being absolutely necessary. Youmans was a teacher, of Methodist background, who participated in a meeting of Christian educationalists at Chautauqua, New York in 1874, which initiated a chain of events that catapulted her into public prominence. Inspired by what she experienced and learned, she returned to Ontario and founded the second Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) organization in Canada in 1874. In *Campaign Echoes: The Autobiography of Mrs. Letitia Youmans*, written in 1893, Youmans shows her perceptiveness of being conscious about socially accepted gender roles and the need to garner the vote in order to achieve temperance. She astutely states “I saw, in this respect, the necessity of being as wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove. I was firm in the conviction it was my duty to appeal to the men, the natural protectors of the home to use the power that was in their hand to protect those homes, and this could only be done at the ballot box.” Youmans fosters and promotes the idea of “maternal feminism” by being perceived as “harmless as a dove” and not challenging prevailing social norms of masculinity, with men being the “protectors of the home.” Youmans’ autobiography was written by the request of the WCTU and served as a source of inspiration, with Youmans personifying the “maternal feminist,” which tirelessly worked towards an improved “White Anglo-Saxon Protestant” nation. Youmans’ leadership, by not challenging gender roles, was instrumental in the WCTU becoming a major force in the suffrage movement and providing a regenerated British-Canadian “imagined community.”

Youmans was cognizant of her social and political reality. With men like Dryden and Hughes in political power, she needed to appeal to a strong sense of nationalist and imperial British-Canadian civilizing force in the world, intertwined with a Protestant religious social redeeming quality. Youmans, after gaining the municipal vote, declares “This circumstance impressed me more forcibly than anything else of the injustice of excluding women from the ballot box, and now that women of Ontario have the municipal vote, the duty is imperative to use
that vote for the country’s good. It is, in my mind, as much of a duty to vote as to pray. While the one is done, the other should not be left undone.”

Youmans’ goal, along with the Canadian WCTU, was social reform to ensure the “White Anglo-Saxon Protestant” society would continue to be a beacon of light and model civilization to “others” who were still outside the Canadian “imagined community.”

When Canada entered the First World War, there was an immense effect on the Canadian suffrage movement. The war was a catalyst for women to advocate ideas of “maternal feminism” and the positive effects it would have on the Canadian “imagined community.” Nellie McClung wrote In Times Like These, in 1915, which is an articulate expression of “maternal feminism” just prior to women receiving the vote. Nellie McClung, with Methodist roots, moved to Winnipeg at the age of sixteen and received an education to become a teacher. She relocated to Manitou to teach in 1890, where she boarded with the family of the Rev James and Annie McClung. Annie McClung, who was an ardent champion of women’s rights, suffrage, and president of the Manitou chapter of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, profoundly influenced Nellie. Nellie McClung, in her book, conveys her sentiments on war: “War is not of God’s making. War is a crime committed by men and, therefore, when people say it shall not be, it cannot be. This will not happen until women are allowed to say what they think of war. Up to the present time women have had nothing to say about war, expect pay the price of war – this privilege has been theirs always.”

Nellie McClung views war as an unnecessary evil, which results in the death of healthy “White Anglo-Saxon” young men, therefore weakening the nation. She champions the idea that “women are naturally guardians of the race…” and feminine qualities would positively impact the political realm thus creating a great nation, protecting the “White Anglo-Saxon Protestant” foundation. McClung clearly appeals to concepts of race, gender, and religion to appeal to the wider public to advocate a Canadian “imagined community” of trust, patience, and ultimately peace. McClung envisioned the enfranchised “maternal feminist” creating a bright future for the nation of Canada.

For women of “maternal feminism,” there was no contradiction between the traditional role of women at home and participation in public life. These women projected their maternal role beyond the confines of their own family life; they felt that as wives, sisters and mothers, they could introduce into politics, via the ballot, a unique perspective that emanated from the realities of women's lives, including the hardships wrought by poverty, abuse and alcoholism.
The National Council of Women of Canada (NCW) was founded in 1893, in Ottawa with a focus on women’s suffrage, immigration, and health care. The NCW published *The Year Book of The National Council of Women of Canada: 1917-1918*, in which the President’s address clearly illustrates a merging of “maternal feminism” with nationalism, race and religion for their ideal “imagined community” now that the vote was achieved:

> The future of Canada lies in the home. The victory won on the battlefield must be followed by a realization of the power of consecrated motherhood…Upon woman rests the responsibility, in a great measure, of the development of higher civilization… I am convinced that the solving of many of the social problem, which we are facing will come through the spiritual touch-our being in touch with the Infinite.\(^{12}\)

The NCW, now enfranchised, could concentrate on social and moral reform issues in Canada like poverty and crime, much of which was often attributed to the low character, alcoholism and poor parenting of the immigrant and other minorities. Suffrage organization, needing to refocus with the vote in hand, turned towards solving the “racial” problems in order to ensure a vision of a homogenous Canada, and ultimately, a “higher civilization.” However, organizations like the NCW saw poverty and crime more as a racial problem than an economic problem. The NCW published their yearbooks for anyone to purchase, but it was predominately middle and upper class audience, which would have had the time and acumen to buy and read this type of literature.

The National Council of Women of Canada was a “national organization,” yet when the membership of 1917 is analyzed it reveals vital information regarding its composition. There were only four delegates, out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one, from the province of Quebec. From the Quebec four, only one was from Quebec City and three from Montreal, of which only two indicate francophone names: Dandurand and Leblanc. There is no record of any representation from other minority or marginalized groups. This information can lead us to deduce two realities with certainty: that a mere 1.6% of the membership in the NCM was from French Canada; and the remaining vast majority of women were of “White Anglo-Saxon” middle and upper class origin. Yet this quote is taken directly from their annual yearbook:

> The War has emphasized our greater need of uniting in "Prevention of Waste” effort. Our Councils may be centres of work to this end by bringing together women of different
classes, races and creeds, urban and rural, and impressing them with the need of instilling this lesson in the minds of the rising generation. Thus, by uniting in effort towards high ideals and in community of spirit, our faces are turned towards a better Canadian citizenship and a Canada where right shall be might.”

The quote, at first glance, would seem to suggest that the NCW is an egalitarian association, which invites all “classes, races, and creeds” together to be a more efficient society by continuing the lessons learned through the First World War. However, the evidence of membership indicates a much different intent and meaning to the quote, suggesting that the emphasis be placed on the racist phrase “turned toward a better Canadian citizenship,” where immigrants of different races be assimilated into the “advanced” civilization of the Imperial British Empire.

Suffrage supporters, even before women were enfranchised, had no issue with denigrating race in order to further the female suffrage cause. For many, the ideal of a united “White Anglo-Saxon Protestant” race took a much higher precedent than the inclusion of any race or immigrant. James Hughes, who, as explained previously, was a huge proponent of female suffrage, states “The injustice of refusing the suffrage to a sex is much greater than refusing it to a race or class.” Hughes does not leave much room for interpretation; his “imagined community” would most certainly enfranchise and share political power with women of the same race rather than someone from another race. He would sacrifice any racial or minority enfranchisement to ensure female suffrage. Women emphasized assimilation, but yet this very group, who were marginalized and denied the vote, would use their voting power to marginalize or denigrate different races to ensure their “imagined community” of Canada.

“Maternal feminism” was an ideology ready to ensure a homogenous “White Anglo-Saxon Protestant” Canada, which did not have room or toleration of other cultures or races. The Year Book of The National Council of Women of Canada: 1921 paints a vivid picture of their position in regards to immigration and different races. Canada had passed new immigration legislation in 1919 after the First World War to significantly limit immigration. The NCW provides some very clear insight as to their stance on the new legislations: “The Act was amended in 1919 to again further guard and protect both Canada and her role as citizen. In the long list of prohibited classes we aim to keep out as far as humanly possible those persons who presumable may become undesirable citizens by reason of mental, moral, physical, social,
educational, or industrial disability.” The NCM shows its unconditional support for this legislation when they state: “we aim.” This includes women, now active citizens with the right to vote and voice their opinion on issues of the Dominion of Canada. Immigrants were stereotyped to be poor, illiterate, diseased, morally lax, politically corrupt and religiously deficient. The alleged tendency of central and southern Europeans to turn to drink, violence and crime made them less than ideal for a “White Anglo-Saxon Protestant” Canada.

“Maternal feminism” would at times “mother” different marginalized and minority groups in order to aid or assimilate them. Many immigrants and natives were seen as “problems,” which the state had to find solutions for. They were viewed as “others” outside of the Canadian “imagined community,” yet they lived within the borders of the Dominion of Canada. The NCW consistently discussed the immigrant “situation” stating in *The Year Book of The National Council of Women of Canada: 1917-1918:* “Discussion followed on the difficulty of bringing immigrant women into assimilation with Canadian life.” The solutions range from community centers to literature so they know “what to do and where to go.” The WTCU made attempts to deal with the “Indian Problem” because they were seen as diseased and racially inferior compared to the “White Anglo-Saxon” race. Tuberculosis and other diseases combined with severely inadequate healthcare led the WCTU to arrange training for a few “Indian” girls to become nurses. However, the “WTCU emphasized that Indian women should train as nurses primarily for the betterment of their own community.” “Indian” girls did not receive training under the auspices of egalitarian equality, but as solutions to send back to sick “Indian” reserves. “Maternal feminists” made attempts to deal with social problems, which were often boiled down to oversimplified “racial problems” of “others.”

Overall, Canada’s *la Fin-de-siècle* identity was being transformed and molded; yet there remained a majority of people who remained committed to a future identity, which maintained continuity with an imperial British “civilizing force.” The social construct of a “White Anglo-Saxon Protestant” character contained inherently racist ideals of race, gender, and religion. The women’s suffragist movement and “maternal feminism,” intertwined with nationalism, created a reciprocal effect, which established an “imagined community” that included those who belonged and “others” who clearly did not. Men like Hughes, and women like Youmans and McClung, with broader support from organizations like the WCTU and the NCM ultimately garnered the vote for women. However, they used this newfound political power to enforce assimilation, find
“motherly” social solutions, or support outright restrictive legislation that would keep Canada from accepting people of “degenerating” races or religions. The question remains: aside from nationalism and “imagined community,” what other factors affected the suffrage movement, and consequent “maternal feminism,” which caused women to marginalize “others” once they received political power, even though they themselves had been “others” for centuries?

NOTES

2 Ibid., 6.
6 Ibid., 8.
7 Ibid., 40.
9 Ibid., 210.
11 Ibid., 25.
13 Ibid., 36.
16 Ibid., 61.
17 Ibid., 62.
Women in Italian Renaissance Art: Representation, Societal Ideals, and Identity

By Eva Zhao

A central theme within the discussion on the lives of Renaissance women rests on that of subjugation; a woman was denied all political rights and considered the legal ‘object’ of her father or husband. However, the Renaissance is characterized as a period of rebirth, cultural development, and intellectual growth. The proliferation of art and art forms coming out of Renaissance Italian urban society embodied a growing appreciation for culture as a whole. As a result of this, Renaissance artwork came to define and symbolize society and culture—believed to act as mirrors that reflect the realities of Italy at the time. Despite this, the Renaissance was also a period that was characterized by a search for an ideal within nature and ultimately within society. Only through idealization and selecting “the best” from nature could one disqualify the imperfections of reality. As Leon Battista Alberti, a humanist, writer, painter, and architect, wrote in his treatise, “The Painter is concerned solely with representing what can be seen” where paintings were representative of what is seen within the light. In other words, paintings were reflective of the societal values and ideas at the time rather than the norms and realities. Women were the subject matter of most Renaissance artwork. With this in mind the question that arises is, are these paintings the direct representations of reality and what the painters saw? Or, is the portrayal of women in Renaissance artwork reflective of a standard ideal that all women were meant to adhere to? Until 1970, scholars did not assess the representations of women or had conducted little research on women in Italian Renaissance paintings. However, it is difficult to discredit the notion that women were completely excluded from the cultural revival of the Renaissance. Alternatively, women were able to participate within their limited social positions, but also in the ways that others portrayed them and their emergence into the public sphere through their presence within Renaissance art. Ultimately, women were a part of the Renaissance—the only difference was in the way that they did so, and in the ways they experienced it. Therefore, this paper hopes to discuss the representations of women in Renaissance art and the ways that various art forms reflect the society of Renaissance Italy. Areas of focus will include: the notions of nakedness and nudity; representations of women in furniture art forms and the development of individualism; the inclusion and exclusion of women from artistic genius in the pursuit of becoming a painter; and the standards of beauty. These areas will be centered on the role of gender and the ways that masculinity and femininity interact to
create this *ideal*. Thus, this paper hopes to demonstrate that images of women are neither the
direct representations of reality, nor of what painters saw—instead they are the embodiment of
particular sets of aesthetic and social ideals and values, which are shared by the artists and
patrons who commissioned the artwork.

The representation of the nude figure is central to most, if not all Renaissance art. The
nude woman embodied not only lust and erotic pleasure, but also of the antique past in recreating
Greece and Rome, the platonic ideals of goodness and perfection, and the appreciation of
surfaces and colors of paintings and artwork.³ Key examples of female nudes in Renaissance art
are attributed to Titian and the portrayal of ‘Venus’ as the ideal woman, such as the so-called
*Sacred and Profane Love*, which represents both platonic and sensual love as values that should
be held.⁴ For artists, the best way for them to demonstrate their ability to improve upon nature
was to show perfection in the body of the nude woman.⁵ This means that the skill of the artist
was dependent on the depictions of well proportioned, graceful, slightly animated, and pleasingly
coloured figures.⁶ As such, because portrayals of nude women were reflective of artistic talent, it
helps to explain the proliferation of female nudity within Renaissance art. Clothing itself was a
victim to the whims of stylistic fashion trends; but the artifice of nature and essentially
nakedness was timeless.⁷ This meant that artwork was not subjected to period fashions, but could
remain ‘in style’ and popular throughout time. Rather than reflective of societal values
emphasizing public nudity, depictions of the female nude was a demonstration of artistic talent
and their ability to select and create the best of nature as a means of invalidating the problems of
the society at the time.

Depictions of nudity were especially prominent during periods of exploration and the
discoveries and tales of natives. Within traveler accounts are revelations of the attitudes towards
nakedness whereby all narratives speak of the ways almost all natives were naked.⁸ Unmarried
women were said to go naked, giving no signs of shame; yet once they have known a man,
would cover themselves. This notion is further reflective of Renaissance ideals regarding
marriage whereby paintings depict nude single women, which shifts to clothed or covered
married women based on societal values. In terms of the racialized ‘other,’ nudity was the mark
of bestial passions of violence and sexual recklessness and presented not as an idealized nude,
but in terms of an exotic animal.⁹ Nudity in Renaissance art in this sense was not only about
covering the body, but also the implied lack of entre social systems relative to Renaissance
Italy—whether or not they were physically clothed, natives were considered ‘naked.’¹⁰ This
conveyed the loss of individuality as humans in the depictions of nudity with exotic natives as the subjects. However, depictions of nudity also indicated childlike innocence in terms of the lack of shame and pretension. Even in terms of the representation of Italian women such as Correggio’s *Danae*, there is an undertone of innocence evoked by the nude figure. Ultimately, nakedness in Renaissance art signified the potential for the subjects to be clothed and, in turn, civilized. Images of the nude could be seen as a blank tablet that was waiting to be inscribed with meaning—a marker of something yet to come. For exotic natives, this meant the civilizing efforts of Italian society whereas for women, this meant ingraining her with the societal values of the period.

Nakedness and nudity symbolized the purity in spirituality—ultimately attributed to the nature of women’s roles within a marriage, but also indicative of civilization and society as a whole. The image of Venus acted as an epitome of the values and virtues of marriage, symbolizing not only love itself, but also the physical aspects as a metaphor for sexual intercourse. As such, this becomes the reason that nude paintings containing depictions of Venus were created primarily for the occasions of marriage. The nude Venus symbolized values of purity and chastity for women while at the same time, represented their roles as wives of virtue. It depicts the ways that women were considered to be naked, pure, and desirable before marriage, before becoming clothed in modesty as a virtuous wife. In essence, this was the reason why nude paintings were commissioned in a way to represent the period before marriage in celebration of the impending union. Venus herself personified aspects of love within marriage, hence why the location of these representations of the naked body tended to be within buildings dedicated to pleasure and relaxation. However, this does not mean that portrayals of the female body through the personifications of classical mythology resided in nude depictions. Instead, the inclusion of characters from classical mythology in Renaissance art were used to create a narrative to present the notion of the ‘ideal’ woman that did not solely come in the form of paintings or marble busts.

Alternatively, a proliferation of painting narratives embellished furnishings whereby feminine ideals did not exist in isolation, but as counterparts to male ideas in society. In other words, furniture paintings must be understood within a feminine frame of reference and seen through the female experience in marriage and the ways that their virtuous behavior was not separate from men. Generally, Renaissance classical mythology served as pretext for erotic painting and usually linked with male collectors or the humanistic language of art. These
classical images depicted the adventures of ancient heroes offering examples to males along with the sacrifices of ancient heroines as a way to provide admonition to females.\textsuperscript{19} With the growth of painted narratives on private furniture, the key theme was the emphasis on female suffering. Ultimately, these images portrayed the idealized female body as a counterpart of quiet suffering. The women represented in these art forms were defined in terms of external physical desirability as well as internal emotional turmoil. For example, in the narrative of Eurydice, she is depicted as a character with idealized physical appearance and gentle character juxtaposed with the ferocious nature of the serpent attack that kills her.\textsuperscript{20} As such, furniture painting embodies the ideal of the ability to endure internal suffering as a feminine virtue, utilizing ancient mythology as a basis to provide exemplars for both men and women in terms of marriage.\textsuperscript{21} In this sense, the idealized behavior for women was the way that loyalty to conjugal bonds was not a moral duty, but an opportunity for women to enact a heroic choice as mythical heroines had done.

Furniture art demonstrates an overlap between the private life and domestic activities most fully experienced by women who were already excluded from participation in civic life.\textsuperscript{22} With the changing family dynamics, women became increasingly restricted from more formal and public societal exchanges. Simultaneously, however, this meant that women had greater exposures with furniture painting within the home and through this medium, continued to experience the cultural developments in art. Furniture art was a part of an experience located within private domestic spaces, undifferentiated from other household practices and exchanges, and unmediated by emergent humanist discourse that explicitly defined it as an experience of art.\textsuperscript{23} Women were constantly surrounded by depictions of a womanly ideal in the form of everyday furniture. Through their exposure to these painted images of womanly ideals, women were also exposed to societal values regarding their own identity. This meant that furniture within the home was decorated with painted stories—narratives that presented ideal models of behaviour for women who were limited only within the private sphere.\textsuperscript{24} However, it is important to note that because women were generally confined to the private spheres—even within the home—this meant that women had the greatest exposure to furniture art. Furniture paintings help to make sense of the aspirations of the society, ideals, and attitudes towards the place of the family and the roles of men and women within marriage.

With the changing family relations of the urban elite, particularly with regards to marriage transaction and rituals, the roles of urban elite women also shifted in terms of the overall deterioration of legal rights and social autonomy. The shift to a centralized state meant
that women’s position in the practical exercise of power changed in terms of the ways that the
state eroded the military and political powers of aristocratic families.25 The commodification of
private leisure was central to the changes in family relations and particularly crucial for women
whose status was primarily within the family unit.26 As the result of these changing
circumstances for upper-class women, this not only meant a lesser role in the public sphere, but
at times within the private realm as well. Ultimately, it was only through furniture art that
women could continue to interact with the socio-cultural period of the Renaissance and the
development of art.27 It is within these constant exposures to furniture art that an adherence to
chastity and the institution of marriage can be seen as primary societal ideals and values are
depicted. Furniture art presented and represented women in the image of the submissive, virtuous
wife but also in terms of the seductive, haughty unmarried woman.28 These traits were seen as
areas that society valued in women, but also set the standard for the ideal that women had to
meet. At the same time, however, these contrasting images reasserted the regulation of female
sexuality around marriage priorities in the same ways that nudity in Renaissance art had.29

The Renaissance was a cultural revolution that strove to revive the greatness of Greece
and Rome, particularly within the areas of art and literature. As classical art was known to
encapsulate beauty, it comes as no surprise that Italian Renaissance art sought to do the same.
For women especially, Renaissance paintings depicted a specific standard of beauty. However,
the question then becomes how much of this portrayal of female elegance was the reality and
how much was an ideal for women. Ultimately, however, the beauty of women was glorified as
the physical evidence of spiritual perfection, since the body was believed to be the mirror to the
soul.30 It is in this sense that the portrayal of women in Renaissance art can be said to represent
the search for perfection within nature and the ways that this reflected the ideals of the society.
Therefore this perception of beauty was based on the artists’ philosophical environments, their
visual experience, the requests of the patrons, and the attempts at boosting their professional
status as ‘creators.’

The physical aspects of female beauty were developed for the purpose of being
represented in profile portraits. Painters focused, emphasized, and at times fabricated physical
representations of beauty in their portrayal of women. This meant that within Renaissance art,
particular physical attributes repeatedly idealized portraits of women as a ‘standard of beauty’ to
be met.31 Women were depicted in having the same slender body structures, hair pushed back to
her neck to reveal a domed forehead, and the elegance of the sitter in terms of her clothes,
ornaments, and jewelry. The standard of beauty Renaissance portrait paintings depicted for a woman’s facial appearance rested on having a high, round forehead and plucked eyebrows along with defined structures in her cheek and jaw. Beauty was prescribed as hair gleaming like gold, white skin similar to snow, marble, alabaster, or milk, with cheeks like lilies and roses and eyes like the sun and stars, lips to rubies, teeth to pearls, and breasts to apples. Although some individual peculiarities and unique qualities of women were given attention in order to distinguish one painting from another, these characteristics remained. For example, in the works by Pisanello and Alessio Baldovinetti, the qualities of having a slender build and facial features are near-identical. However, in Pisanello’s depiction, the woman has her hair tied up fashionably high, a slim downward nose, and wearing no jewelry, but sleeves embroidered with a vase richly decorated with pearls to portray her high-class status. In Alessio Baldovinetti’s painting, the woman is shown to have a distinctive crooked nose, lively, loose locks of hair falling from a scraped back style, more pronounced chin, an abundance of jewelry and puffed sleeves to indicate her social status.

A portrait illustrated the public face of one’s identity—one that was moulded by the ideals and values of the society in which the individual resided. As a result of this, portraits of “real” women still appeared through a screen of ideals from the society that they were produced in. This ultimately meant that portraits of women during the Italian Renaissance representing the invented ideal beautiful woman differed from portraits of actual individuals in terms of appearance, behaviour, and display. The characteristics of profile portraits in particular are seen as the embodiment of creating a representation of an ideal republican citizen controlled by reason and guided by moderation. Therefore for women, this meant the societal values of being virtuous, silent wives to republican citizens; but at the same time, desirable and cultured. For example, it is unknown whether the highly recognized portrait by Leonardo da Vinci, the Mona Lisa, is a portrait of an individual or the representation of an ideal for women. However, despite the ways that the painting depicts eyes that seemingly engage the viewer to elicit an emotional response without a voice, it lacks identifying characteristics that represent individual women. Instead, the portrait contains seemingly animated features and emotions that appear to imply impending change—potentially for the society in which they belong to. Within Italian Renaissance art, the beauty of women was ultimately the aspect that society deemed to be the ideal and valued. However, although this female ideal was something that could only be fully accomplished by a wealthy minority, all women were constrained by it.
The physical ideal for women was an area that could still be met and controlled by many women in order to meet the values of the society around them. Nevertheless, the notion of beauty during the Renaissance period was not solely in terms of physical beauty, but also in terms of women’s social status and behaviors. According to Renaissance author and Italian courtier Castiglione, a women should in no way resemble a man in regards to her ways, manners, words, gestures, and bearing. Instead, he states that it was well for a woman to have a certain delicate tenderness, with an air of feminine sweetness in her every movement—essentially in her behaviors and the ways that she were to conduct herself in public and in private. This ultimately demonstrates the ways that ‘beauty’ was defined during the Renaissance period. The notion of what it meant to be a ‘beautiful woman’ was both a woman’s physical attributes as well as the way she conducted herself in terms of behaviors, mannerisms, words, and air; all of which reflected a societal ideal for women in terms of what they were expected to do and what could be considered as ‘beauty.’ A prime example of this is the bust of Marietta Strozzi by the sculptor Desiderio da Settignano. Strozzi was considered the most beautiful woman in fifteenth-century Florence whose beauty was immortalized in a marble bust. In the same way that Renaissance paintings portrayed women with hair scraped back to expose a high forehead, plucked eyebrows, and well-defined cheeks and jaw, sculptures were no different, and depicted the standard of beauty for Florence women. A biographical portrait of Strozzi’s life accompanies this marble bust: born to an elite family, becoming a notable young woman, and subjected to multiple marriage offers, Strozzi was the epitome of a high-class woman. She was first admired for her great physical beauty; but subsequently became synonymous with societal values of the ways that women should conduct themselves. With Strozzi being considered the most beautiful woman, it demonstrates the ways that her physical features were those that were valued by the society she belonged to, but also in terms of the way she presented herself and her social standing. ‘Beauty’ was not something that was purely physical, but in the ways that women fit the societal ideal of Renaissance Italy.

Within the ideological and social-structural context of the fifteenth century, women could not be considered as ‘artistic geniuses’ and were not recorded as painters until the sixteenth century. It was believed that female intellectual capacities were inferior to that of men and therefore, women were ill suited to overcome the difficulties of painting. Instead, some upper-class women may be educated to appreciate the products and to patronize artists as opposed to actually practicing it themselves. Despite this, Italian historian, writer, and painter Vasari praises
female artists as a ‘marvel of nature,’ remarking that women succeeded in all areas where talent and skill were required. Still, women were limited in their artistic pursuit to painting acceptable female topics in the form of religious paintings, portraits, and self-portraiture. It was through this self-portraiture of the sixteenth century that the representation of women in art came to emphasize her occupation and presented her as an educated nobil donna. For example, a notable female artist, Sofonisba Anguissola, portrayed herself in a self-portrait with the austerity of clothes and severity of her hairstyle as a way to highlight her role as an exceptional woman. Through such a portrayal, Anguissola stressed her education and noble birth, presenting her intellectual power as a painter in the patriarchal society.

Women could portray themselves as painters, musicians, cultured women, and also as collectors of art. This portrayal as collectors emphasized the importance of studying ancient works of art as a means of achieving fame as a painter. For example, Lavinia Fontana was a famous female painter trained by her father Prospero and the first female to be accepted at the old Roman Accademia di San Luca. Her artistic recognition documents her prolific career as a painter and manifests in her commitment to excel as an artist. In a self-portrait, Fontana depicts herself with cast collections in the background in a way that not only presents her as a collector, but also among great artists. Ultimately, her use of models and casts as a source for her paintings reveals her resourcefulness in coping with the artistic training of female painters at the time. Because women were not permitted to attend art classes or have access to nude models, their study was dependent on what their fathers taught them. However, Fontana was able to overcome this limitation by collecting casts and virtually learning from ancient artists. It is also through Fontana’s self-portraiture that it is possible to see the ways that female artists represented themselves in Renaissance art. Although still reflective of societal values regarding the place of women, female artists such as Anguissola and Fontana were able to use self-portraiture engrained with symbolism to create a new feminine identity. In Fontana’s case, endowed in her self-portrait are images of Venus and Mercury as a way to symbolize intellectual and physical power. Whereas Venus reflected Fontana’s beauty in her own realm, Mercury represented her intellectual powers as an artist.

The Renaissance was a period characterized by cultural development—in particular, within the areas of literature and art. However, women are believed to have not participated in the Renaissance. Despite this, women were the common subjects within Renaissance art forms. In this sense, it can be said that women both influenced and were influenced by the ideals that
were set in place within Renaissance artwork. Due to the ways that Renaissance art personified society and culture, it reflected the realities of Italy in a philosophical sense as opposed to a literal sense. This means that paintings and other art forms did not reflect the realities of Italian society, but mirrored the societal ideals and what was being valued at the time. Ultimately, the image of Renaissance women being represented in artwork is that of a virtuous, submissive wife with childlike innocence, yet at the same time, a desirable object. These images of women created an ideal in terms of behaviors and the physical attributes that women should have in order to be considered as beautiful enough to be immortalized. This paper focused on the key themes of nudity, representation in furniture art, notions of beauty, and the ways that female painters represented themselves in Renaissance paintings. Through this discussion, it can be said that women did participate in the Renaissance and had their own experiences in relation to it, albeit in different manners than the conventional understanding. Ultimately, this paper demonstrated that the portrayal of women in Renaissance art reflected idealism rather than realism. The representation of women in Italian Renaissance artwork served as an embodiment of particular sets of societal values shared by artists and the patrons who commissioned them, which mirrored the ideals within the society in which they belonged.

NOTES

5 Tinagli, *Women in Italian Renaissance Art*, 140.
6 Ibid.
7 Jill Burke, "Nakedness and Other Peoples: Rethinking the Italian Renaissance Nude," *Art History* 36, no. 4 (September 2013): 719.
8 Ibid., 724.
9 Ibid., 729.
10 Ibid., 726.
11 Ibid., 734.
13 Burke, “Nakedness and Other Peoples,” 720.
14 Ibid., 735.
17 Ibid., 35 – 6.
19 Ibid.
21 San Juan, “Myth of Eurydice,” 139.
22 Ibid., 133.
23 Ibid., 127.
24 Tinagli, Women in Italian Renaissance Art, 3.
26 San Juan, “Myth of Eurydice,” 128.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid., 135.
30 Tinagli, Women in Italian Renaissance Art, 50.
33 Tinagli, Women in Italian Renaissance Art, 50.
34 Ibid., 85 – 6.
37 Tinagli, Women in Italian Renaissance Art, 48.
38 Ibid., 4.
39 Ibid., 49.
41 Coonin " Most Elusive Woman in Renaissance Art,” 49.
42 Sydie, “Question of Women's Artistic Genius,” 177.
45 Coonin " Most Elusive Woman in Renaissance Art," 41.
46 Ibid., 44 – 5.
47 Sydie, "Question of Women's Artistic Genius," 199.
48 Tinagli, Women in Italian Renaissance Art, 12.
54 Ibid., 36.
55 Ibid.
56 Ibid., 42.