

# TORN IN TWO:

## 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE *Civil War*

An Exhibition Originating at the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center,  
Boston Public Library ~ [maps.bpl.org](http://maps.bpl.org)

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The Civil War, from 1861 to 1865, is the centerpiece of our nation's story. It looms large, not merely because of its brutality and scope but because of its place in the course of American history. The seeds of war were planted long before 1861 and the conflict remains part of our national memory.

Geography has helped shape this narrative. The physical landscape influenced economic differences between the regions, the desire to expand into new territories, the execution of the conflict both in the field and on the home front, and the ways in which our recollections have been shaped.

Maps enable us to present the complex strands that, when woven together provide a detailed account of the causes and conduct of the war. These visual images remain a salient aspect of our memory. Photographs, prints, diaries, songs and letters from the richness of the Boston Public Library's many holdings enhance our ability to tell this story, when our nation, as a Currier & Ives cartoon depicts, was "Torn in Two."

### 1. BEFORE THE WAR: RISING TENSIONS

Most Civil War timelines begin in April 1861 with the Confederate firing on Fort Sumter, a federal facility in South Carolina which had seceded five months earlier. Those shots were the technical start of the war but the underlying causes had been present for decades. Diversity had been the hallmark of the individual thirteen colonies, but becoming a nation took more than merely declaring independence.

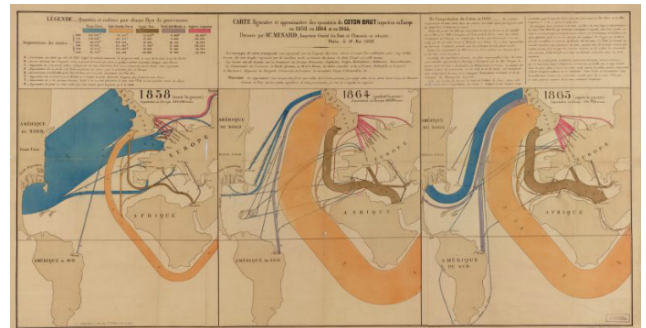
These fledglings shared a common purpose. Hard work would result in the virtue and dignity necessary to participate in a republic. Yet tensions did not ebb as the founders had hoped, nor could compromise and political balance serve as a safeguard against increasing differences of economics, politics and moral sensibilities as the nation expanded physically and demographically.

Each side, South and North, slave and free, believed that it was the legitimate heir to fulfill the nation's destiny but they became so incompatible that the differences threatened to truly "tear the nation in two."



### 1A. ONE COUNTRY, TWO CULTURES

By 1861, life was very different north and south of the Mason Dixon line. Although neither was monolithic, the North was characterized by industry, reliable transportation and a wage labor force that had been bolstered by internal and transatlantic migration. A burgeoning middle class arose and a new Republican Party promised that the free soil of western territories would enable all men to participate in fulfilling the founding vision.



Southern politicians also wanted to expand the nation but in service to an agricultural system built on slave labor. Limited rail transportation and few urban areas were not a problem for the realm where cotton was 'king'. The small farmer could aspire to enter the planter aristocracy, as long as the new territories would allow slavery.

[1] Currier & Ives. Reproduction of *The True Issue or "That's Whats the Matter."* New York: Currier & Ives, 1864. Lithograph.

[2] James T. Lloyd. *Lloyd's Map of the Lower Mississippi River from St. Louis to the Gulf of Mexico...* New York: J.T. Lloyd, 1862. Hand-colored lithograph.

[3] Edwin Hergesheimer. *Map Showing the Distribution of the Slave Population of the Southern States of the United States Compiled from the Census of 1860.* Washington, DC: Henry S. Graham, 1861. Lithograph.

[4] Charles Joseph Minard. Reproduction of *Carte Figurative et Approximative des Quantités de Coton Brut Importées en Europe en 1858, en 1864, et en 1865.* Paris, 1866. Lithograph.

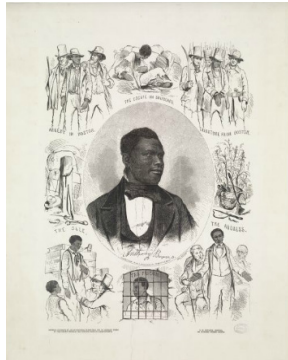
[5] Edward Atkinson. *The Cotton Kingdom.* Boston: Edward Atkinson, 1863. Lithograph.

[6] Henry P. Moore. Reproduction of *Hilton Head, Drayton's Plantation, Sorting Cotton.* Ca. 1862. Albumen print.

## 1B. ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENT

Many southerners defended slavery as a “great moral, social, and political blessing” --far superior to the wage “slavery” of the North. Yet there was increasing opposition. Some decried its economic inefficiency. Others saw it an impediment to the growing republic. Slaves could go back to Africa but not into the new territories of the United States.

At the core of the opposition were those who objected to slavery on moral and humanitarian grounds. This group was an extension of other social movements of the time and an intellectual heir of the Transcendentalists. Located throughout the Northeast with a strong New England presence, proponents called for the complete abolition of slavery throughout the Union and its territories. They provided aid for those who bravely ran away, supplying guidance, resources, and safe harbor along the Underground Railroad.



[7] Federal Writers Project. Reproduction of detail from [Underground Railroad Map of the United States, ca.1838-1860]. [ca. 1941]. Pencil on paper.

[8] New England Yearly Meeting of Friends. *A Map of the Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England*. S.l., 1850. Printed map.

[9] Earl McElfresh. *Freedom's Tracks: A Map of the Underground Railroad*. Olean, NY: McElfresh Map Co., 2005. Offset print.

[10] John Andrews. Reproduction of *Anthony Burns*. Boston: R.M. Edwards, 1855. Wood engraving with letter press.

## 1C. SECTIONALISM & WESTWARD EXPANSION

While the war would pit North against South, it was the West that became the catalyst for pre-war tensions. Physical expansion, with little regard for native populations, marked the nation's first decades, beginning with the Louisiana Purchase and then other lands gained via treaty or war.

Indeed it was the nation's Manifest Destiny to expand to the Pacific Coast, but which vision would prevail in these new territories? Compromise and political balance had enabled this growth, but after the War with Mexico, the nation struggled to determine the destiny of these lands—slave or free. For a decade before Fort Sumter, Americans battled in the courts, state houses, Congress and on the land itself. Lincoln's election in 1860 led the southern states to believe that secession was their only option.



[11] G.W. Elliott. *Map of the United States, Showing by Colors the Area of Freedom and Slavery*.... New York: G.W. Elliott, 1856. Hand-colored lithograph.

[12] Winslow Homer. Reproduction of *Arguments of the Chivalry*. [Boston: J.H. Bufford's Lith., 1856]. Lithograph.

[13] Charles Magnus. *Complete Map of the Railroads and Water Courses in the United States & Canada*. New York: Charles Magnus & Co., 1859. Hand-colored lithograph.

## 2. DURING THE WAR: NATION IN CONFLICT

The Civil War was unlike any other in United States history. Fought completely on American soil, armies were most successful when they had accurate knowledge of the terrain. The South had an early advantage, not only because its troops had superior military leaders, but because most of the battles occurred on its home territory. Thus, the Confederacy needed to wage a defensive campaign only. Reliable cartographic information was limited or absent and severely hindered northern efforts, often resulting in high casualties.

The war was all encompassing and every American had a personal stake in its course. Soldiers were recruited, supplied, trained, and transported. Casualties were high and many civilians helped care for the wounded. Those on the home front raised money, provided comfort and longed for news of their loved ones. Visual images such as maps, photographs, cartoons and prints told the story as it unfolded. Traditional means such as letters, diaries and sketches also provided detailed accounts of the conflict.

### 2A. LIVING ROOM WAR

From today's perspective, many regard Vietnam as the first “living room” war, with evening television programs bringing the latest news to kitchen tables and living rooms across America. But the Civil War was really the first! Just as we go online or watch CNN for immediate updates on the current conflict, those on the Civil War home front looked to daily newspapers and weekly magazines for current news on the war. Advances in communications, transportation and technology enabled information to be spread more rapidly than ever before.



The press told this story with words and images by publishing cartoons, photographs and sketches. Theater of war and battle maps allowed viewers to follow troop progress. Traditional and more personal methods of communication, such as telegrams, soldiers' letters, and diaries, brought poignant accounts of war.

[14] L. Prang & Co. *War Telegram Marking Map*. Boston: L. Prang & Co., 1862. Lithograph.

[15] “*Diagram of the Battle of Ball’s Bluff*,” in *The New York Times*. New York, October 31, 1861. Wood engraving.

[16] L. Prang & Co. *Map of the Seat of War Containing a Map of the Vicinity of Washington, Baltimore, Harper’s Ferry and Annapolis...* Boston: L. Prang & Co., 1861. Lithograph.

[17] John Bachmann. *Panorama of the Seat of War. Bird’s Eye View of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and the District of Columbia*. New York: J. Bachmann, 1861. Lithograph.

[18] W.A. Williams. *Sketch of Charleston Harbor*. Boston, [1863]. Printed map.

[19] Solomon Bamberger. *Map of Battles on Bull Run, near Manassas* ... Richmond: West & Johnston, 1861. Lithograph.

[20] William F. Barry. “*Map to Illustrate the Battle of Bull Run, Stone Bridge, or Manassas Plains . . .*,” from *The Rebellion Record*, Vol. 2 [New York: G.P. Putnam, 1862]. Lithograph.

[21] A.T. McRae. *Map of the Battle Ground of Greenbrier River*. Richmond: A.T. McRae, [ca. 1861]. Wood engraving.

[22-23] Henry and John C. Ropes. Letters, vol. 3, with reproductions of [Sketch map of Fredericksburg, accompanying letter to John C. Ropes, December 18, 1862] and [Sketch map showing where Henry Ropes Died at Gettysburg]. Ink on paper.

[24] John Adams Whipple. Reproduction of *Lieut. Henry Ropes*. [Boston, 1862]. Carte de visite.

[25] Reproduction of James T. Hogane “*Plan of the Military Prison, Situated on the South Side of Johnson’s Island*,” in [Album of Autographs, etc., assembled by Joseph Barbaire. June 18, 1862]. Ink and water color on paper.

[26-27] Joseph F. Dean. Reproduction of [Rough Sketch Map Showing Juncture of Trent and Neuse Rivers near New Bern, North Carolina] Accompanying letter to Mrs. Harriett C. Dean, March 22, 1863. Manuscript map and letter, 5 x 8 inches.

[28] [Currier & Ives, after Frank T. Beard]. Reproduction of *Why Don’t You Take It?* New York: Currier & Ives, 1861. Lithograph.

[29] Currier & Ives. Reproduction of *The Old Bull Dog on the Right Track*. New York, 1864. Lithograph.

[30] L.H. Russell. *Map of the New Convalescent Camp, Fairfax Co., Va., Four Miles S.W. of Washington, D.C.* Philadelphia: E.J. Maddox, 1863. Lithograph.

[31] Henry C. Blair. Reproduction of *Hospital Slippers for the Sick and Wounded Soldiers of the Union*. [Philadelphia]: Jas. Dobelbower, 1861. Lithograph.

[32] Maine Regiment. Camp Beaufort Pass. Issued December 6th, 1861.

[33] Winslow Homer. “*News from the War. [Drawn by our special artist, Mr. Winslow Homer.]*” from *Harper’s Weekly*. June 14, 1862. Wood engraving.

## 2B. GEOGRAPHY OF WAR

Terrain influenced strategies and often determined outcome. Knowledge of the landscape meant victory or defeat. Except for coastal areas, there were few large-scale topographic maps of the theaters of war available to military strategists prior to engagement. These factors gave military leadership in the South an initial advantage.

The North created broad geographical strategies that would capitalize on its economic strengths, particularly the disruption of trade which included a naval blockade of southern ports, control of the Mississippi River, and destruction of supply routes. Both sides were determined to capture each other’s capital. Although Washington, DC, was threatened several times, the Confederate capital of Richmond remained an elusive goal until the war’s end.



[34] J.B. Elliott. Reproduction of *Scott’s Great Snake*. Cincinnati: J.B. Elliott, 1861. Lithograph.

[35] Henry Lindenkohl. *Historical Sketch of the Rebellion*. Washington, DC, 1864. Printed map.

[36] W. H. Forbes. *A Complete Map of Richmond and Its Fortification*. Boston: W.H. Forbes & Co., 1863. Lithograph.

## 3. AFTER THE WAR: REMEMBERING HEROES AND BATTLES

How do we remember something? What images linger? And how do these visual recollections affect our memory of events?

How we choose to tell the story of the war that almost dissolved our nation suggests its magnitude, importance, and centrality in our collective and individual memories. Visual images comprise an important part of this narrative. As technology improved during the second half of the 19th century, the ability to create and disseminate memorable images expanded greatly. What the viewer understood or remembered varied, but the presence of a common visual experience was part of the formation of a collective culture with a shared sensibility.

Yet different memories of the same events persist, leading to conflicting interpretations of the past. What is consistent is the need to remember, and to find some way to honor and thank those who, as Lincoln proclaimed, sacrificed their lives “to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion.”

### 3A. REMEMBERING THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG

Few events have loomed larger in the history of the war or our nation's memory than the three-day battle of Gettysburg in southern Pennsylvania in July 1863. But how has that turning point been remembered? We have Lincoln's few short words delivered at the dedication of the national cemetery, Matthew Brady's photographs, and as was common practice, maps drawn after the battle.

The Gettysburg battle maps were drawn under the auspices of an increasingly powerful Federal government, and subject to a pervasive call for common standards. These and many more maps, along with other artistic presentations, have shaped our collective understanding and recollection of this most important battle that illustrates and symbolizes our nation being almost "torn in two."

[37] U.S. Army, Chief of Engineers, and John B. Bachelder. Reproduction of *Map of the Battlefield of Gettysburg, July 1st, 2nd, 3rd. Second Day's Battle*. Washington, DC, and Boston, 1876. Printed map.

[38] John B. Bachelder. Reproduction of [*Bird's-Eye View of Gettysburg Battle-Field*.] Boston and New York: J. Bachelder, 1863. Lithograph.

[39] Boston Cyclorama Co. [*Panoramic View of the Gettysburg Battlefield*], from *Cyclorama of the Battle of Gettysburg by Paul Philippoteaux*. Boston: M.J. Kiley, printer, 1886. Lithograph.

[40] Mathew Brady. Reproduction of *Little Round Top, Gettysburg*. [ca. July 15, 1863]. Albumen print.

[41-42] Timothy O'Sullivan. Reproductions of *Dead Rebel Sharpshooter at Gettysburg*, and *Union Dead at Gettysburg*. [Gettysburg, PA, July 5-6, 1863]. Albumen prints.

### 3B. REMEMBERING HEROES

Given the magnitude of the war, there has been a strong desire to honor both individuals and groups that participated. Who is memorialized and the ways in which these memories are portrayed shape our understanding of the past. The war has been memorialized throughout the United States with each locality emphasizing its contribution and loss. These memorials range from elaborately decorated posters to music scores to monuments constructed of stone or bronze. They all remind us of the conflict's lingering presence and the individual loss felt by so many of the nation's families.



[43] Julia Ward Howe. *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. March 17, 1901.

[44] Winslow Homer. "The Songs of War," from *Harper's Weekly*. November 23, 1861. Wood engraving.

[45] Ensign, Bridgman & Fanning. *Our Nation's Heroes*. New York: Ensign, Bridgman & Fanning, 1863. Lithograph.

### SOLDIERS' MONUMENTS AS WAY-FINDING LANDMARKS

[A] Touring Information Bureau Maine Automobile Association. *Road Book and Pine Tree Tour of Maine and White Mts*. Portland, Maine, 1914. French Collection.

[B] F. S. Blanchard & Company. *Red Book Interstate Automobile Guide: New England 1909 Fifth Year*. Worcester, Massachusetts. Osher Collection.

[C] The Automobile Blue Book Pub. Co. *General Map of the Principal Automobile Routes in Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and Maine with Connections into the Provinces of Quebec and New Brunswick*. Vol. 2. New York. 1910. French Collection.

[D] The Automobile Club of America. *Tour Book 1909*. New York. Auletta Collection.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This exhibition was originally organized from Boston Public Library's Special Collections by Dr. Ronald E. Grim and the other staff of the BPL's Norman B. Leventhal Map Center.

The Osher Map Library is the final stop for this national traveling exhibition. It has been supplemented by a component showcasing Soldier's Monuments in Maine that was researched and compiled by Lucinda Coombs, OML Graduate Assistant and MA candidate in OML's American and New England Studies program. The illustrations of the monuments, both early and current, are selected from the collections of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. The nineteenth century photographs of forts, mustering camps, batteries and arsenals displayed in the Arcade were researched and loaned by Kenneth E. Thompson Jr. Renee Keul, OML's Outreach Coordinator, designed the layout for both the Soldiers' Monuments and the fortification displays in the flat bed case and arcade.

The Exhibition Checklist was prepared by Laura Collard, OML's Administrative Assistant. Additional technical services were provided by David Neikirk, OML's Digital Imaging Manager, and Stuart Hunter of Casco Bay Framing. The assistance of the USM staffs of the Marketing and Brand Management and Public Affairs Office is gratefully acknowledged.

Matthew Edney, Yolanda Theunissen,  
Osher Scholar Curator

The Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic education is located on the ground floor of the Albert Brenner Glickman Family Library on the Portland campus of the University of Southern Maine. In addition to the collections and reference materials, the Osher Map Library contains the Bernard and Barbro Osher Gallery, the Cohen Educational Center, a seminar room and facilities for research and study. The Osher Map Library provides access to its resources to the general public and scholars alike.

Open hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

For more information please call (207) 780-4850 / TTY 780-5646, or check OML's website at <http://www.oshermaps.org>

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