

Norwich University and the Civil War

1864: Some Suffer So Much



Armory Square Hospital
(Library of Congress)

The Fourth in a Series of Exhibitions Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War

By the spring of 1864, the Civil War had entered its third year. Relentless Union campaigns sought to overwhelm the Confederacy. Successive battles such as the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, and Cold Harbor and the lengthy sieges at Petersburg and Atlanta produced staggering numbers of casualties. Norwich University alumni were engaged in all of these battles.

The title of this exhibition, "Some Suffer So Much," comes from a line by the American poet Walt Whitman. During the Civil War, Whitman served as a volunteer nurse in military hospitals. In his poem, "The Wound-Dresser," Whitman recalled the experience of tending to so many young soldiers wounded in both body and spirit.

*Thus in silence in dreams' projections,
Returning, resuming, I thread my way through the hospitals,
The hurt and wounded I pacify with soothing hand,
I sit by the restless all the dark night, some are so young,
Some suffer so much, I recall the experience sweet and sad,
(Many a soldier's loving arms about this neck have cross'd and rested,
Many a soldier's kiss dwells on these bearded lips.)*

(fourth stanza from "The Wound-Dresser," by Walt Whitman)



Medicine Bottle, ca. Late 19th century
(Sullivan Museum & History Center)

Despite the medical advances made during the war, Civil War veterans were exposed to horrific carnage and the effects often stayed with veterans long after the fighting subsided. This exhibition will also examine the history of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.



Pocket Surgical Kit, ca. Late 19th century
(Sullivan Museum & History Center)



Sullivan Museum & History Center
Norwich University
158 Harmon Drive
Northfield, VT 05663
www.norwich.edu/museum

January 13th– December 19th, 2014

Regimental Medical Staff

Each Civil War regiment was assigned a surgeon (with the rank of major), an assistant surgeon (with a rank of captain) and a hospital steward (with a rank of sergeant). The regiment was supplied with a medical wagon and stretchers.



A staged photograph of a Civil War ambulance crew, 1862
(Library of Congress)

In Camp

The Medical Staff's first responsibility each day was the morning "Sick Call". Soldiers who complained of illness reported to the surgeons. The hospital steward would record the diagnosis for the regimental report. The surgeons had to be on the lookout for soldiers feigning illness to get out of duty.



Edwin Forbes, (detail) "Fall in for Soup," 1876
(Sullivan Museum and History Center)

To prevent disease, the surgeons inspected the camp daily. They made sure the camp was dry and clean and that the "sinks" or latrines were covered with fresh dirt or ash. They also ensured that the food was of good quality and carefully cooked.

In Battle

The regimental surgeon was often detailed to operate at the Division field hospital behind the lines, while the assistant surgeon usually remained with the regiment.

The assistant surgeon established an aid station close to the firing line, and organized stretcher bearers to collect the wounded. Assistant surgeons of several regiments often worked together, so that they could help and advise one another. The hospital steward worked with the assistant surgeon, carrying a surgical knapsack with basic medical supplies including bandages, tourniquets and water.



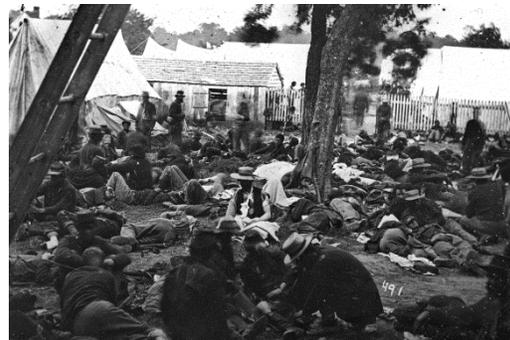
Medical Case, 1864 (Sullivan Museum & History Center)

The assistant surgeon tried to stabilize wounded soldiers until they could be transported to the Division field hospital further behind the lines. The Division field hospital would be set up in an area out of the line of fire. Along with the other surgeons from his Division, the regimental surgeon would evaluate the severity of the wounds and determine which needed immediate operations. He would perform these operations, often including amputations, as quickly as possible, using ether or chloroform as anesthesia.

Soldiers who survived these field operations would then be transported in ambulances or by train to a General Military Hospital, where they would receive ongoing medical care from doctors, nurses and civilian volunteers.



Bloodletting knife & cover
ca. Late 19th century
(Sullivan Museum & History Center)



Union Field Hospital, 1862
(Library of Congress)

By 1864, an efficient Union Medical Corps sought to ease the suffering of the sick and wounded troops. A network of battlefield aid stations and general hospitals in the North improved wounded soldiers' chances of survival. A number of Norwich alumni served as surgeons during the Civil War.

Norwich Alumni who served as surgeons during the Civil War

Jedediah H. Baxter (1854) Surgeon, 12th MA, in charge of hospitals in Washington, DC, Chief Medical Officer of Provost Marshal's Office



Granville P. Conn
(Vermont Historical Society)

Granville P. Conn (1856) Surgeon, 12th VT

Daniel Darling (1834) Contract Surgeon at Lincoln Hospital, Washington, DC

Frederick Drew (1848) Post Surgeon at Ft. Riley, KS

William H. Ensign (1854) Surgeon, 12th MA

George P. Greeley (1850) Surgeon, 4th NH, NH Brigade Surgeon

George C. Jarvis (1852) Surgeon, 7th CT, Division Surgeon

Gilman Kimball (1824) Brigade Surgeon, Ft. Monroe, VA, established military hospitals

Francis M. Lincoln (1850) 9th MA, 35th MA, In charge of hospitals in Washington DC and Baltimore

John Q. A. McCollister (1853) 6th MA, 53rd MA

Edward E. Phelps (1823) U.S. Army Surgeon, VT Brigade Surgeon, in charge of Smith General Hospital, Brattleboro, VT



Henry A. Robbins
(Norwich Archives)

Henry A. Robbins (1861) Surgeon, 2nd WS

Jedediah H. Baxter (Class of 1860)

Born: 1837 (Strafford, VT)
Died: 1890 (Washington, DC)

-Surgeon of the 12th MA Infantry

-In Charge of Hospitals in Washington D.C.

-Chief Medical Officer of Provost Marshall's Office

-Surgeon General of the Army

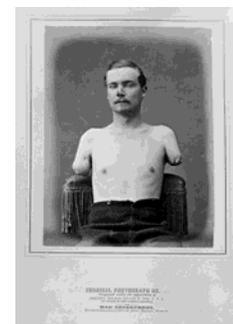


Robert G. Hardie, *Portrait of Brigadier General Jedediah Hyde Baxter, 1891*
(Vermont Historical Society)

Jedediah Baxter, the son of Vermont Congressman Portus Baxter (Class of 1824), served as a surgeon during the Civil War. Baxter spent three years at Norwich University, before graduating from the University of Vermont with a medical degree in 1860. He worked as a doctor in Vermont until the Civil War broke out.

In 1861, Jedediah Baxter served as surgeon of the 12th Massachusetts Regiment. He was later commissioned a brigade surgeon and served on General McClellan's staff during the 1862 Peninsula Campaign. He was often under fire, establishing field hospitals and organizing ambulances and supplies for the Army of the Potomac. From 1862 to 1864 Baxter was the head of Judiciary Square and Campbell General Hospitals in Washington, DC.

In early 1864, Jedediah Baxter was transferred to the Provost Marshall's office in Washington, DC. As Chief Medical Officer, he compiled the records of over one million men who had been examined by Army doctors during the Civil War.



Documentary photos of Wounded Union Soldiers, ca. 1860-1870
(Library of Congress)



Campbell Hospital, Washington, D.C., 1864
(Library of Congress)

After the war, Jedediah Baxter remained in the regular army and went on to serve as Surgeon General of the U.S. Army. He was the family physician of President James A. Garfield, but was away at the time of Garfield's 1881 assassination.

Lemuel A. Abbott (Class of 1864)

Born: 1842 (Barre, VT)

Died: 1911 (Aberdeen, WA)

*-Captain, 10th VT
Infantry*

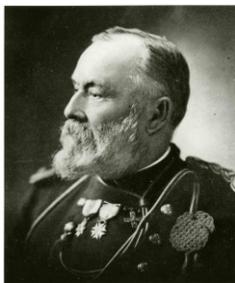
*-Wounded at the Third
Battle of Winchester,
1864*

*-Served in U.S. Army in
the West until 1885*



Lemuel A. Abbott
(Vermont Historical Society)

Lemuel Abbott attended The Barre Academy before entering Norwich University in 1860. He left Norwich in July 1862 to join the Union Army. He enlisted in the 10th Vermont Infantry Regiment and was quickly promoted from First Sergeant to Lieutenant. He eventually became a captain in the 10th VT.



(Norwich Archives)

In the spring of 1864 Abbott was engaged in the battles of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania. He participated in the siege of Petersburg before his regiment was ordered to join Gen. Philip Sheridan's Shenandoah Valley Campaign. In the Union victory at the Third Battle

of Winchester, Abbott was severely wounded in the face. He came home to Vermont to recover and eventually returned to duty in Virginia.

After the war, Abbott was commissioned as an officer in the Regular U.S. Army, first in the 97th U.S. Colored Infantry and then in the 6th U.S. Cavalry. He campaigned for years on the western frontier, and was actively engaged during the Indian Wars. While in this service, he produced a report recommending that Indians should be educated in special schools under the administration of the U.S. Government. He retired from active duty in 1885 due to his old wounds and general disability.

Excerpts from Abbott's Diary Regarding his Injuries and Recovery

Sept. 19th, 1864 [Third Battle of Winchester in the Shenandoah Valley, VA]

"My first wound was from the butt end of an exploding shell in the breast which maimed and knocked me down and simultaneously as I fell a minie ball fired but a rod away in my front just grazed my forehead, tore through my upper lip crushing both jaws and carrying away eleven teeth, the most painless dentistry I ever had done; but Oh! the shock it gave my system and the misery I suffered that night!"



Wounded Union Soldiers, 1864
(Library of Congress)

"...One of my regimental surgeons, came running, [and] hastily examining my wounds, bade me sit on the ground, ran for his instrument case, placed my head upturned between his knees, sewed in place a triangular piece of flesh extending from the lower right corner of my nose down hanging at the right corner by a slight shred of flesh, which I had held in place from the battlefield with my fingers, and that job for the time being was done, but Oh! my aching head, jaws and chest, as well as the extreme feeling of lassitude for the balance of the day."



Interior of Armory Square Hospital Ward, 1864
(Library of Congress)

Sunday Sept. 25th, 1864

[Hospital in Harper's Ferry, VA]

"I did not sleep last night my wounds were so very painful. I removed some of the old fractures or splinters of teeth and jaws that were left, about 3 a.m. with my fingers, and after that my face was easier and I rested some."

October 18th, 1864

"In Montpelier, visited several Tenth Vermont men in the afternoon at the hospital."

October 25th, 1864 [In Burlington]

"Went to see Dr. Thayer about getting my leave extended; found him at his house but cranky; would not, to my surprise, give me a certificate for extension of my leave. My wound is not yet fully healed, the stitches are still in, it's sensitive, inflamed and sore, can't eat solid food, am not fit to go to the front... All I need is a reasonable time for my wounds to mend. A man with a part of his head shot away can't be expected to be fit for duty a month after... Shall go up and call professionally on Dr. Janes in the morning; he'll give me a certificate."

October 26th, 1864 [In Montpelier]

"Dr. Janes gave me a certificate for thirty-days extension of sick leave."

November 28th, 1864 [In Annapolis, MD to visit the Board of Medical Examiners]

"Examiners made my mouth wound of so much interest it embarrassed me; I felt as though I was being lionized... The first one who looked at my wound expressed great surprise at my "unusually interesting mouth wound", as he termed it, and called for the doctors in the adjoining rooms to come and see one of the most interesting wounds that had come before the board. They all came, each in turn examining it... indignantly inquiring why the Vermont doctors had sent me back to the front with jaws in such a condition as to render it impossible for me to chew solid food when it was known that hard bread and meats were the principle article of food for troops in the field and with the stitches still in my lip and not solidly healed. In reply, I gave them my experience with Dr. Thayer of Burlington, Vt. and said I had not gone to the hospital several times during the war because of my pride and fear of inconsiderate treatment, although I ought to have gone twice before when wounded, but feared I might be criticized if I did. They continued to examine the wound for some time expressing astonishment that it should have healed as much as it had so soon and would leave so little trace or scar externally in the end as it would. They finally drew aside for consultation, and when the examiner who had charge of the case returned and said that I could have my choice, take my discharge or return to the front, I was delighted, and chose the latter. He seemed surprised, and after hesitating a little looking steadily at me, said I had better consider the matter well, but I told him I had, that I could soak my hard bread in water, fry it with salt pork, which would make it both soft and nutritious, and that I could get along. Seeing that I really wanted to return, he let me go."

go.

-from Lemuel A. Abbott "Personal Recollection and Civil War Diary, 1864" Burlington Free Press, Co., 1908.

Vermont's Civil War Hospitals

In 1862, Vermont Governor Frederick Holbrook helped to convince President Abraham Lincoln and Secretary of War Edwin Stanton that Union soldiers would recover more quickly at hospitals located in their home states. Three general hospitals were located in Vermont during the Civil War.

Baxter General Hospital, Burlington

Vermont's first wartime hospital was named in honor of Vermont Congressman Portus Baxter (*Class of 1825*). Baxter had been one of Capt. Partridge's first students at the American Literary, Scientific and Military Academy in Norwich, VT. This hospital was located near the present day intersection of Routes 7 and 189 in South Burlington.



Baxter Hospital, 1862
(Vermont Historical Society)

Smith General Hospital, Brattleboro

Vermont's second hospital was administered by Dr. Edward E. Phelps (*Class of 1823*). Speaking of the men under his care, Dr. Phelps wrote:

"The gun-shot wounds have been numerous, forming at least one-third of the whole number received into the hospital. Thus far, every case has either recovered, or bids fair to do so at an early period. Thus it may safely be said that the enterprise of bringing men from the Southern Hospitals to the State has been a successful one."

Sloan General Hospital, Montpelier

The third Civil War hospital in Vermont opened in 1864. It was named for William J. Sloan, Medical Director for the Army's Department of the East. Some of the buildings of Sloan General Hospital were eventually incorporated into the Montpelier Seminary, which in turn became Vermont College. Vermont College was owned and operated by Norwich University from 1972 until 2001.



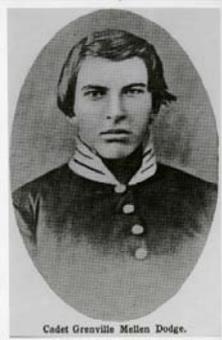
Sloan Hospital, 1862

(Special Collections, University of Vermont Libraries)

Grenville Mellen Dodge (Class of 1851)

Born: 1831, Danvers, MA

Died: 1916, Council Bluffs, IA



(Norwich Archives)

-Colonel, 4th Iowa Infantry, 1861-1862

-Wounded at the Battle of Pea Ridge, 1862

-Brigadier General & Engineer of Military Railroads, 1863

-Attended Norwich 1848

Grenville Dodge was born into a family of modest means and when he was fourteen years old, worked on the large farm of Frederick W. Lander (*Class of 1841*). Dodge entered Norwich in 1848, but had trouble adapting to the discipline of the military institution. He was often defiant, getting into fights and sneaking away from the campus to visit young women.

Dodge graduated in 1851, moved west, and found employment in the railroad industry. Dodge's engineering background allowed him to quickly become a leading surveyor for new railroad routes.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, Grenville Dodge was commissioned Colonel of the 4th Iowa Infantry Regiment. He led Union troops in a series of small engagements in Missouri. In March of 1862, Dodge commanded a brigade in the Battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas, where he was wounded. His performance earned him a promotion to brigadier general.

After recovering from his wound, Dodge was placed in charge of rebuilding railroads that had been destroyed by the Confederate army. With his engineering skill, Dodge organized his soldiers into a proficient railroad construction crew. The speed and efficiency of these railroads kept the Union armies supplied. His performance earned him the respect and friendship of Union Generals Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman.

The Atlanta Campaign, 1864

In May 1864, the Union Army of the Tennessee, under the command of Gen. Sherman, began the campaign to capture Atlanta. Grenville Dodge was given field command of the 16th Corps, and promoted to major general. At the Battle of Atlanta on July 22nd, Dodge's 16th Corps held back a massive Confederate attack.

During the ensuing Union siege of the city of Atlanta, Dodge inspected the Union entrenchments. On August 19th, Dodge looked through a peephole towards the Confederate lines. A Rebel sharpshooter fired a bullet that pierced his hat, and peeled off a layer of skin on his scalp, exposing his skull. He was knocked unconscious with a severe concussion, but soon regained his senses. Dodge collected the bullet and wore it on his watch chain for the remainder of his life.



Grenville Dodge Bullet Watch FOB, 1864
(Sullivan Museum and History Center)

Return to the West, 1864-1866

In the late autumn of 1864, Dodge was given command of the District of Missouri. In St. Louis, Dodge was responsible for pacifying the divided state. He planned to deport Confederate sympathizers from the border state and threatened to execute Southern guerillas. In early 1865, Dodge was reassigned to command the Department of Kansas, which included Kansas, Colorado, Utah, Nebraska, Wyoming and Montana. There had been Indian uprisings in these territories, and both the national government and the Western railroad promoters recognized they needed someone with both military and engineering experience to neutralize the hostile actions of these Native Americans.

As the Civil War drew to a close, Gen. Dodge launched a hard campaign against the Plains Indians. Using a network of spies and retraining U.S. Cavalry, Dodge forced the Native Americans from the land of the proposed railroads. In the spring of 1866, Dodge resigned from the Army and took the position of chief engineer of the Union Pacific Railroad. The 1867 completion of the Transcontinental Railroad cemented Dodge's reputation and supported his subsequent career in railroads, business and politics.

Norwich Men Serving in the United States Colored Troops



African American Soldiers of the 4th U.S. Colored Infantry, 1865
(Library of Congress)

Abraham Lincoln's 1863 Emancipation Proclamation called for the enlistment of African American soldiers to serve in combat regiments. These black soldiers served in segregated units, designated U.S. Colored Troops. Many Union officers were skeptical of the fighting ability of these untested troops. Adequate equipment and medical care was often withheld from the African American units.

By 1864, tens of thousands of African American soldiers were serving in the Colored Regiments. These units were led by white officers. Most of these officers were already veterans who had served as junior officers in white regiments. Nearly twenty Norwich alumni were commissioned as officers in the Colored Troops. Many of these alumni served in the military occupation of the deep South. Others fought alongside their African American comrades in the deadly battles of 1864-1865.



White Officers of the 4th U.S. Colored Infantry, 1865
2nd LT Lewis Kimball (Class of 1862) is likely among this group.
(Library of Congress)

Abbott Allen Shattuck (Class of 1864)



(Norwich Archives)

-served in 6th MA Infantry regiment

-drill instructor, Adjutant of the Corps of Cadets in 1863

-Captain of the 25th U.S. Colored Infantry & led his men in the attack on Mobile, AL.

Edward Bancroft Williston (Class of 1856)

Born: 1836 (Norwich, VT)

Died: 1920 (Portland, OR)



(Norwich Archives)

-1st Lieutenant, Battery D, 2nd U.S. Artillery

-awarded Medal of Honor in 1892 for service at Battle of Trevilian Station 1865

-Brigadier General, Spanish American War 1898

Edward Williston was the son of A.L.S. & M.A. professor Ebenezer Williston (Class of 1823) and Almira Partridge, a relative of Norwich founder Alden Partridge. He attended Norwich University for four years, and practiced artillery drills on the school's six-pounder cannons. Williston then moved to California.

When the Civil War broke out he sought a commission in the Regular Army. Eager to take an active part in the fighting, Williston sailed for the East Coast, arriving in November 1861. He was assigned to the 2nd U.S. Artillery. He led his battery through hard fighting at Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. Williston was nearly killed several times during the war.

In 1863, Williston's artillery battery was transferred to the Cavalry Corps. The fast-moving "Horse Artillery" took part in many engagements during 1864. During the Battle of Trevilian Station, Williston personally placed one of his cannons in an advanced position where his gun crew repeatedly repulsed enemy attacks. In 1892 he was awarded the Medal of Honor for this action.

Edward B. Williston fought in nearly sixty skirmishes and battles during the Civil War. He was wounded several times and had a horse killed under him in 1864. His favorite horse, "Pony", survived the war. Williston later recalled:

"My horse "Pony" was a pure Morgan born in Vermont. I got him in Washington, DC in Dec. 1861 and rode him all through the war...Pony was wounded several times and several musket balls worked themselves under his skin and were cut out after the war ended. He was a fine saddle horse, afraid of nothing. I had several other saddle horses but I love Pony the best. He knew more than some people, was full of fun, would shake hands and several other things."



Edward Williston & "Pony"
(Norwich Archives)

The St. Albans Raid

October 19, 1864

On the same day as the Union victory at the Battle of Cedar Creek, around twenty Confederate agents launched a raid on the northern Vermont village of St. Albans. The raiders were Confederate soldiers who slipped across the border from Canada. Canada, still a British territory, was sympathetic to the Confederate cause.



Confederate Raiders robbing a St. Albans Bank, 1864
(Vermont Historical Society)

The raiders robbed three banks in St. Albans, stealing more than \$200,000. During their getaway, they shot and killed one citizen and wounded two others. After wreaking havoc, the Confederates escaped back across the border to Canada. They were eventually arrested, but Canada refused to extradite the raiders to the United States.



Photograph of the Confederate raiders in Montreal, 1864
(Vermont Historical Society)

Panic spread across Vermont and other border states. In response, the governor of Vermont called upon the Norwich University Corps of Cadets to defend the border. The St. Albans raid proved to be an isolated incident. However, it served as a reminder that the effects of the war were not confined to the battlefield. The terror experienced by the citizens of Vermont would have been familiar to the residents of the South.

Norwich Cadets Respond to the St. Albans Raid "The Lake Memphremagog Campaign"

Following the Confederate raid on St. Albans, the citizens of northern Vermont were alarmed by the prospect of more attacks from Canada. Since the Vermont Militia had been mobilized into combat



Alonzo Jackman
(Norwich Archives)

regiments and sent South, there was no standing military force to protect the Northern border. The Governor of Vermont telegraphed Brigadier General Alonzo Jackman in Norwich for help.

Jackman was the head of the Vermont Militia as well as professor at Norwich University. Under his command, the entire Norwich University Corps of Cadets volunteered for emergency service to the State of Vermont. The

Cadets were armed with Springfield muskets and ordered to go by train to the city of Newport, on the shores of Lake Memphremagog.



Norwich University during the Civil War, 1860
(Norwich Archives)

The force of 47 Norwich Cadets was led by Captain Charles N. Kent (*Class of 1864*). The company of Cadets arrived at Newport and deployed along the lakeside wharf. A rumor circulated that Confederate raiders would be arriving by steamship from Canada. As a boat appeared, the cadets fixed bayonets and held their loaded muskets at the ready. Luckily, the disciplined Norwich cadets held their fire, as the ship contained only innocent passengers. The cadets posted guards and the next day continued their march to the border town of Derby Line. At Derby, the Corps of Cadets briefly entered Canada, but found no evidence of Confederates. With the crisis over, the Cadets returned by train to Norwich.