

Fort Sumter and Military Mobilization



This is the way the North receives it.

THE PRESIDENT'S INAUGURAL.

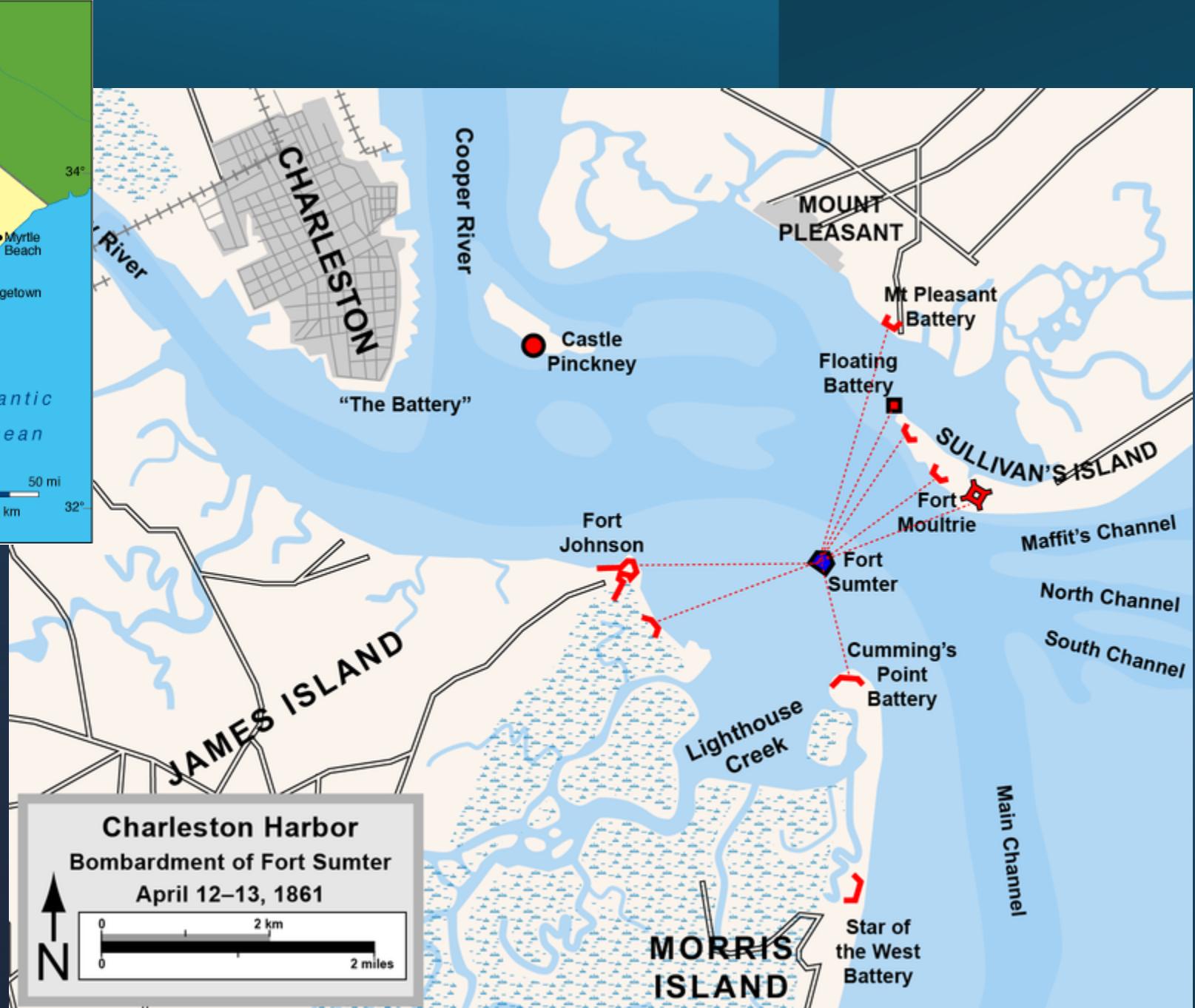
And



This is the way the South receives it.

Fort Sumter

- Lincoln immediately confronted with the dire situation at Fort Sumter
- After South Carolina had seceded; US Army troops under Maj. Robert Anderson had stealthily relocated troops from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter
- SC refused to allow an unarmed ship to provision Fort Sumter; seized all other federal property in region
- April 8: Lincoln announced he would send supplies on an **unarmed** ship
 - April 4: Virginia had voted not to secede
- Confederate leaders interpreted this as an act of aggression
- April 12-14: intense bombardment
- Union surrendered; incredibly, no casualties





BOMBARDMENT OF FORT SUMTER BY THE BATTERIES OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES, APRIL 12, 1861.—[SEE PAGE 237.]



Immediate Aftermath

- April 15: Lincoln called on states to supply 75,000 militiamen for 90 days to suppress the rebellion
- Gov. John Letcher immediately refuses:
 - *Your object is to subjugate the Southern States, and a requisition made upon me for such an object – an object, in my judgment, not within the purview of the Constitution or the act of 1795 – will not be complied with. You have chosen to inaugurate civil war....*
- Virginia secedes
- Quickly followed by Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee

Fear of standing armies

- Powerful strain of anti-militarism dating back to the colonial era
 - Associated with high taxes and mistreatment of civilians
 - Professional militaries viewed as threats to liberty
- Almost universal opposition to standing armies
- Colonies instead relied on militias
 - All able-bodied men required to participate
 - Not paid, had to provide their own weapons/horses
 - Critical social/political institutions in the colonies
 - Militia days
 - Men elected their own officers

American Revolution

- Heightened hostility toward standing armies
 - Quartering of British troops in private homes
- Revolution was won by professional armies
 - George Washington's Continental Army
 - French military
- BUT a myth developed that it had been won by volunteer militias
- Post-Revolution: Organization of armed forces
 - US allowed for only a very small regular Army and Navy
 - States maintained volunteer militia forces for emergencies
- Militia tradition enshrined in the Constitution
 - Second Amendment: "*A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.*"



The Nation's Bulwark, 1829

Building up arms

- U.S. Army ill-prepared for war in 1860
 - Just 16,000 men were serving in the “Regulars”
 - Most stationed in the Western territories
 - General-in-Chief Winfield Scott was 74 years old
- Situation even worse in the Confederacy
 - Some key military leaders resigned from the federal Army to join the Confederacy
 - But the Army (and Navy) had to be built from scratch
 - There was, however, a strong military tradition in the South
 - Majority of the nation’s military colleges located in southern states

Winfield Scott, “Old Fuss and Feathers”



Volunteerism in the Civil War

- March 1861: Confederate Congress had already called for 100,000 volunteers to serve for 12 months
- Both sides looked to the states to raise troops
 - Chaotic, non-standardized system
 - Hodgepodge of uniform styles and outdated equipment
- But the popular response was initially overwhelming on both sides
- Central governments totally unable to manage the task; relying on states and wealthy private individuals

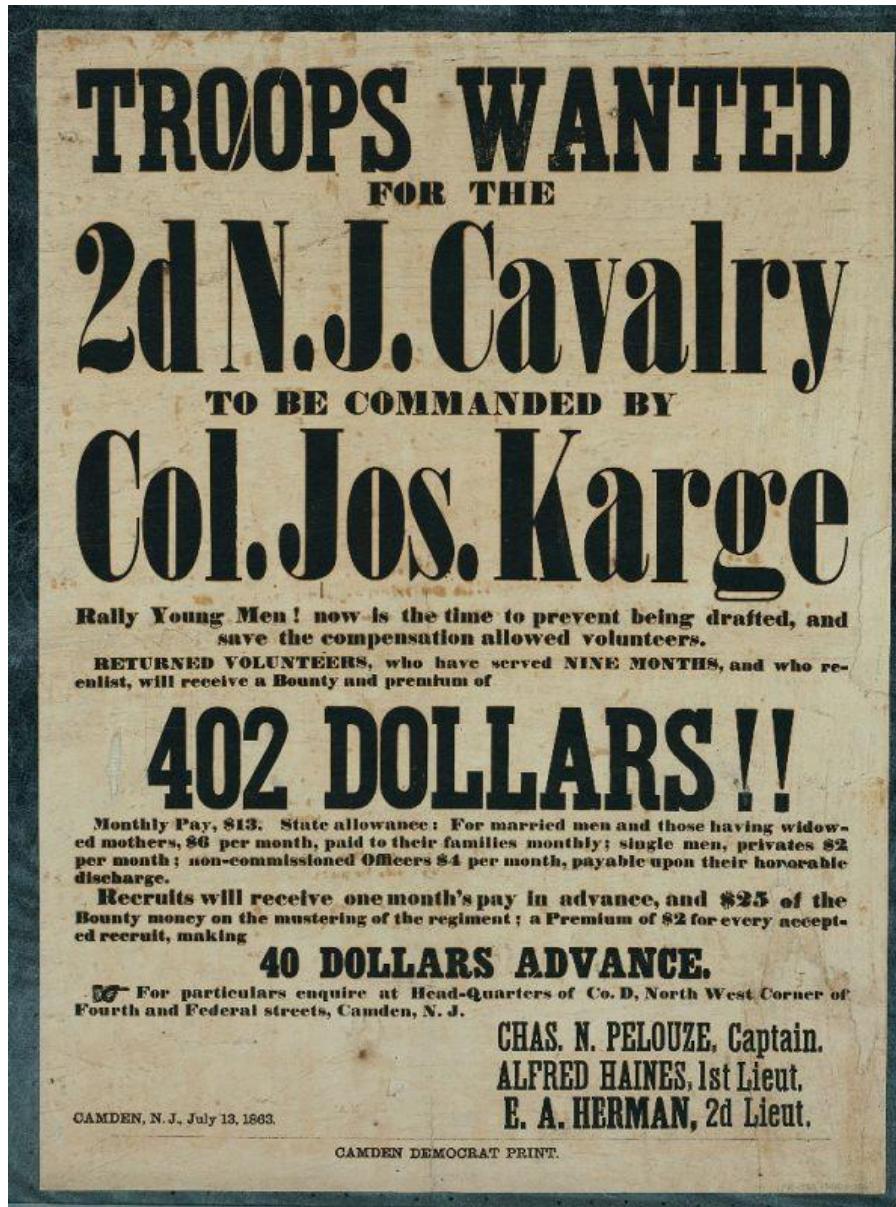
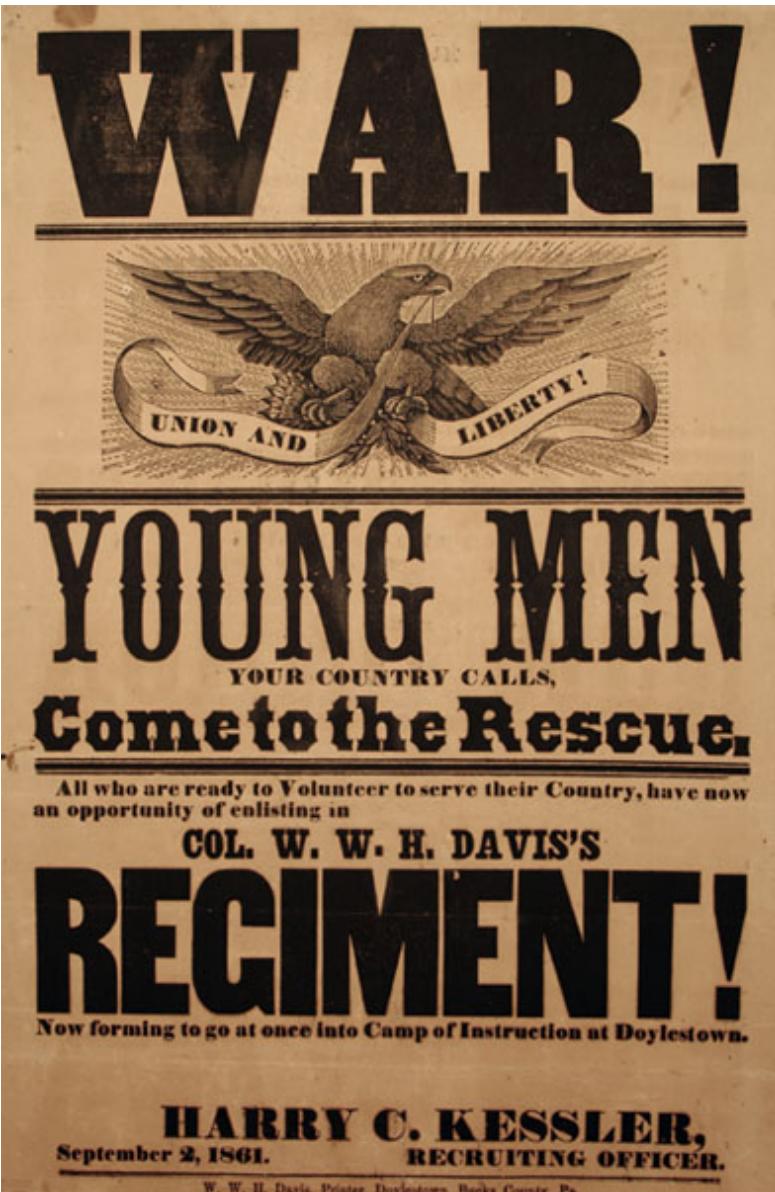
“War Fever”

- Swept through communities, including schools
 - Southern military academies
 - Common schools in the North
 - Used for community meetings and drilling grounds
 - Students too young to enlist formed drill companies
- Especially in the war’s early days, it was very easy to enlist, regardless of age or condition of health
 - Later, age restrictions and medical exams became somewhat more standardized, especially in the U.S.

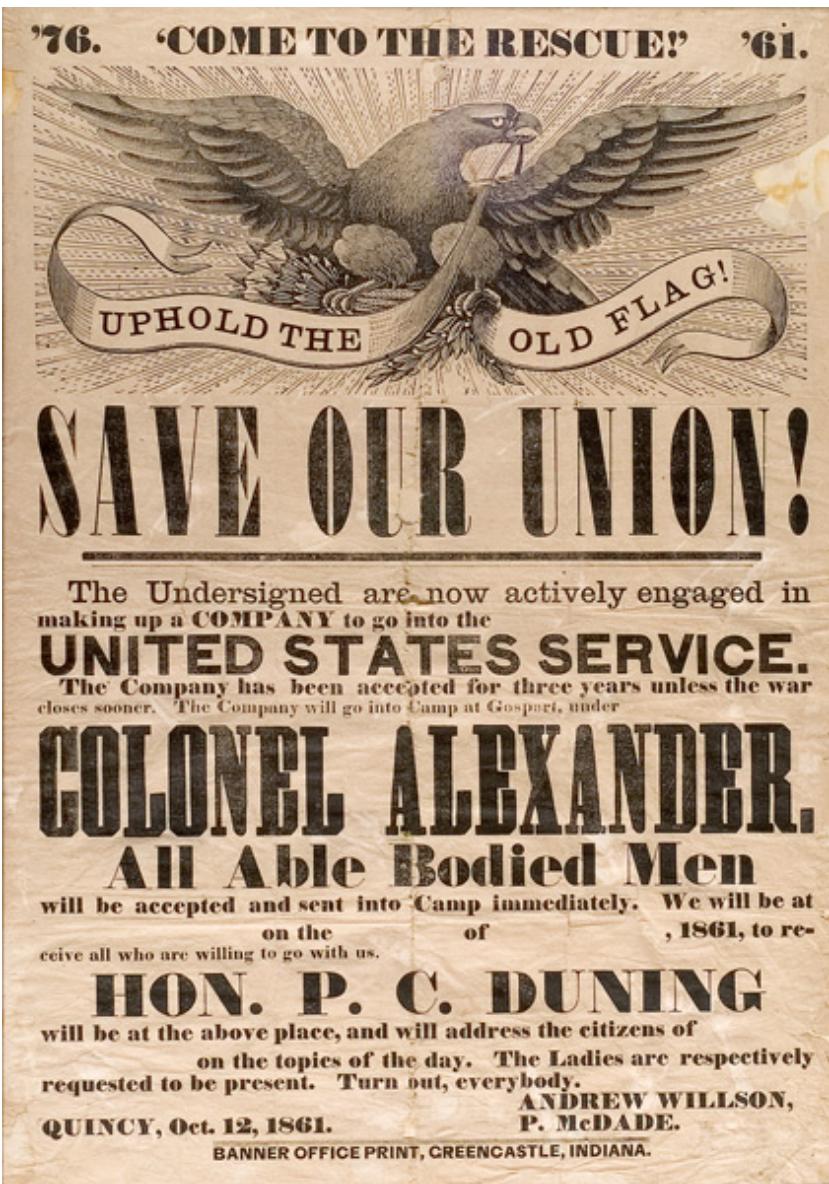
Enlistment

- Recruitment often occurred at the local courthouse, with the community present
- Posters would be put up around the community
- Men would come forward to enroll and be applauded
 - Would then elect their own officers
- Or a group would present themselves to be enlisted, on the condition that their leader be appointed as captain
- Community leaders and wealthy men often paid to outfit companies or regiments
 - Many expected in return to be made officers
 - But most had virtually no military training; led to real problems
 - By 1863, election of officers was mainly a thing of the past

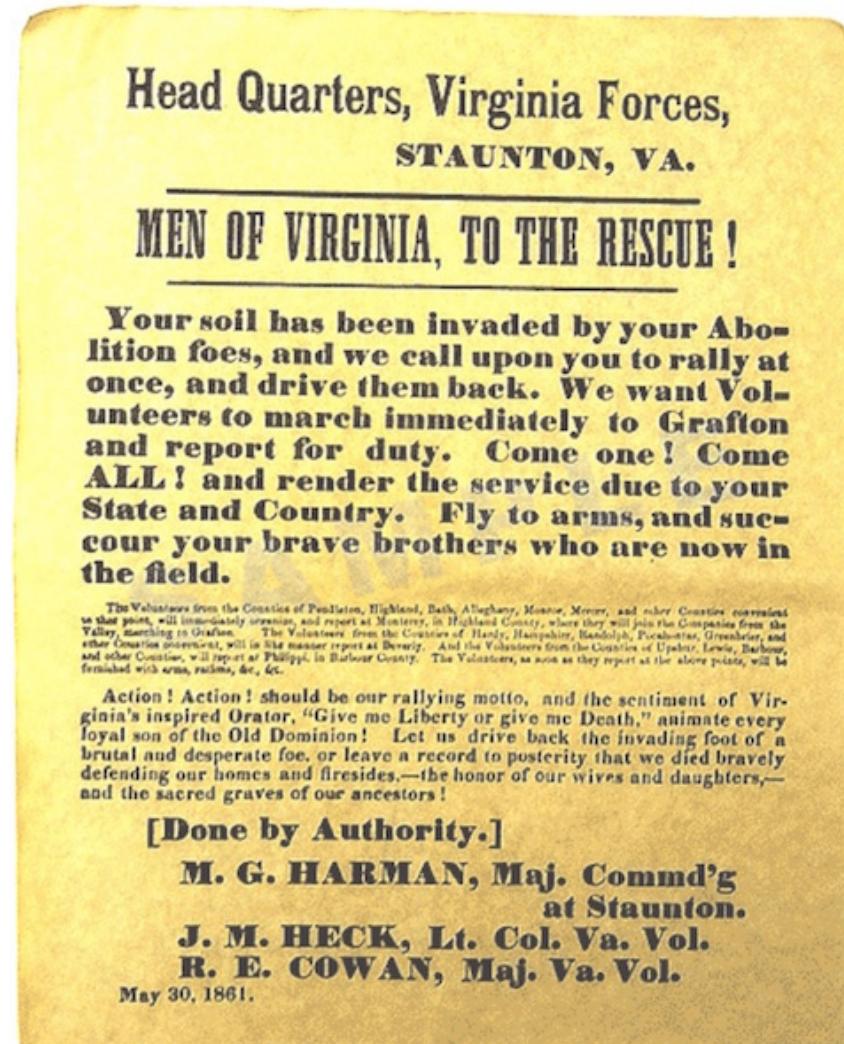
Compare Union recruiting broadsides: 1861 v. 1863



1861 v. 1864



Confederate recruiting broadsides



Civil War armies

- Mostly volunteer units, but also Regulars and state militia units
 - Artillery, infantry, cavalry
 - Vast majority (nearly 75-80%) serve in the infantry
 - Artillery (no more than 5%)
 - Cavalry (around 20%)
 - Volunteer regiments identified by a state name and number
 - e.g. 64th New York Infantry Volunteers
 - Regulars identified by “U.S.” in regiment name
 - e.g. 5th U.S. Infantry Regiment
 - USCT = United States Colored Troops (after 1863)
- Problem with Confederate governors

Implications of volunteerism

- Division between battlefield and home front not sharp
 - No complete transformation from soldier to civilian
 - Ideal of the “citizen soldier”
 - Soldiers did not go through process of military socialization that distanced them from home communities
 - Did not leave behind civilian identities
 - *Communities* sent men off to war
 - Example of regimental flags
 - Surveillance: Thousands of letters being sent back home
 - Civilians in the “war zone”
 - Family members went to find sons/husbands when wounded or killed
 - Officers’ wives and kids often stayed with them in camp



1st Vermont Cavalry

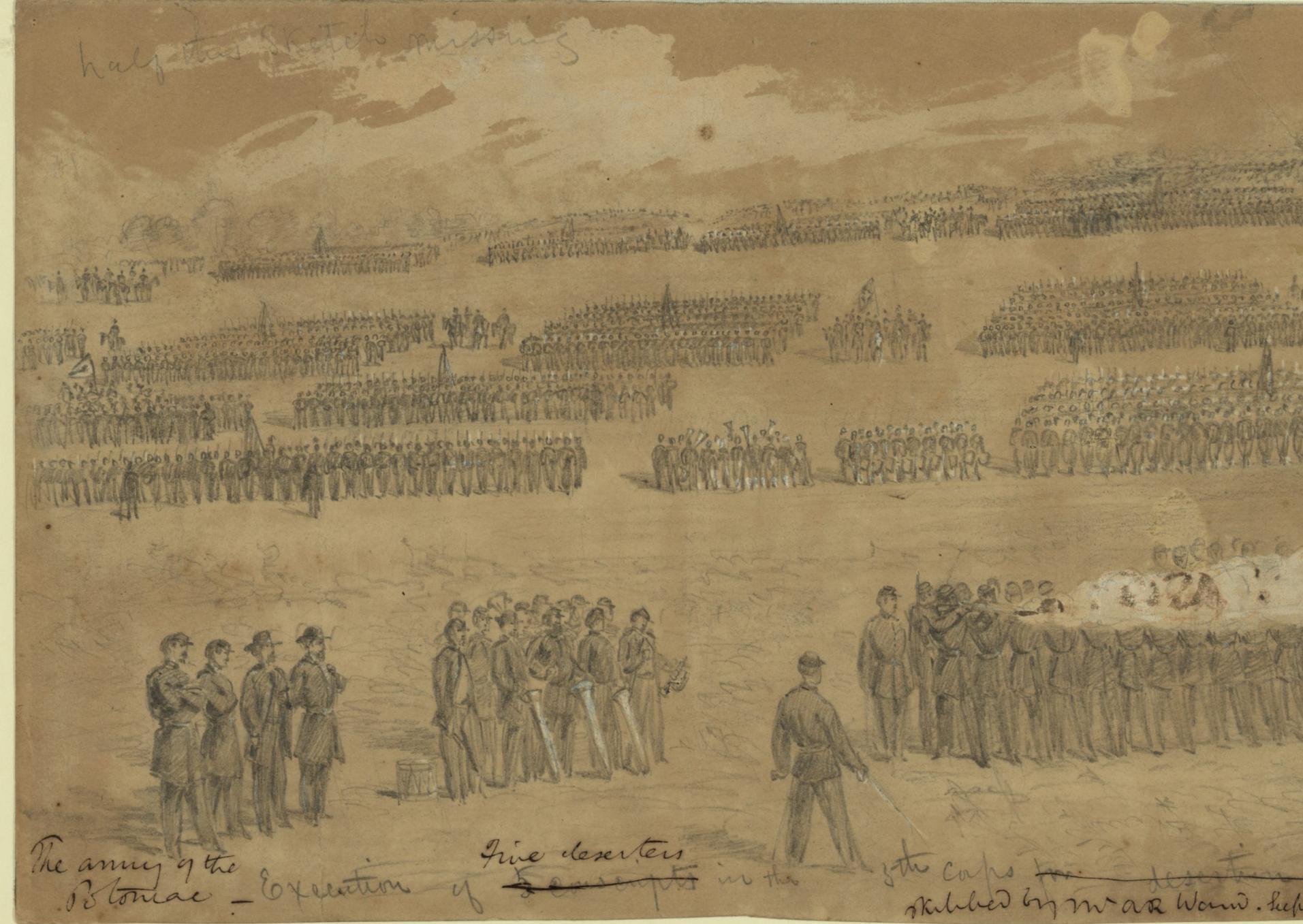


Question of discipline

- Historians have traditionally argued that discipline in the Civil War was lax
 - Claim that men would not submit to regular military discipline
 - Much drinking, high rates of desertion, etc.
 - Cases of men running unpopular officers out of camp
- Yet there were many examples of discipline that today look quite shocking
 - More men executed in the Civil War than all other US wars combined
 - These executions were highly public, ritualized affairs
 - And corporal punishment – even what we would consider torture – not at all unusual



half this sketch missing



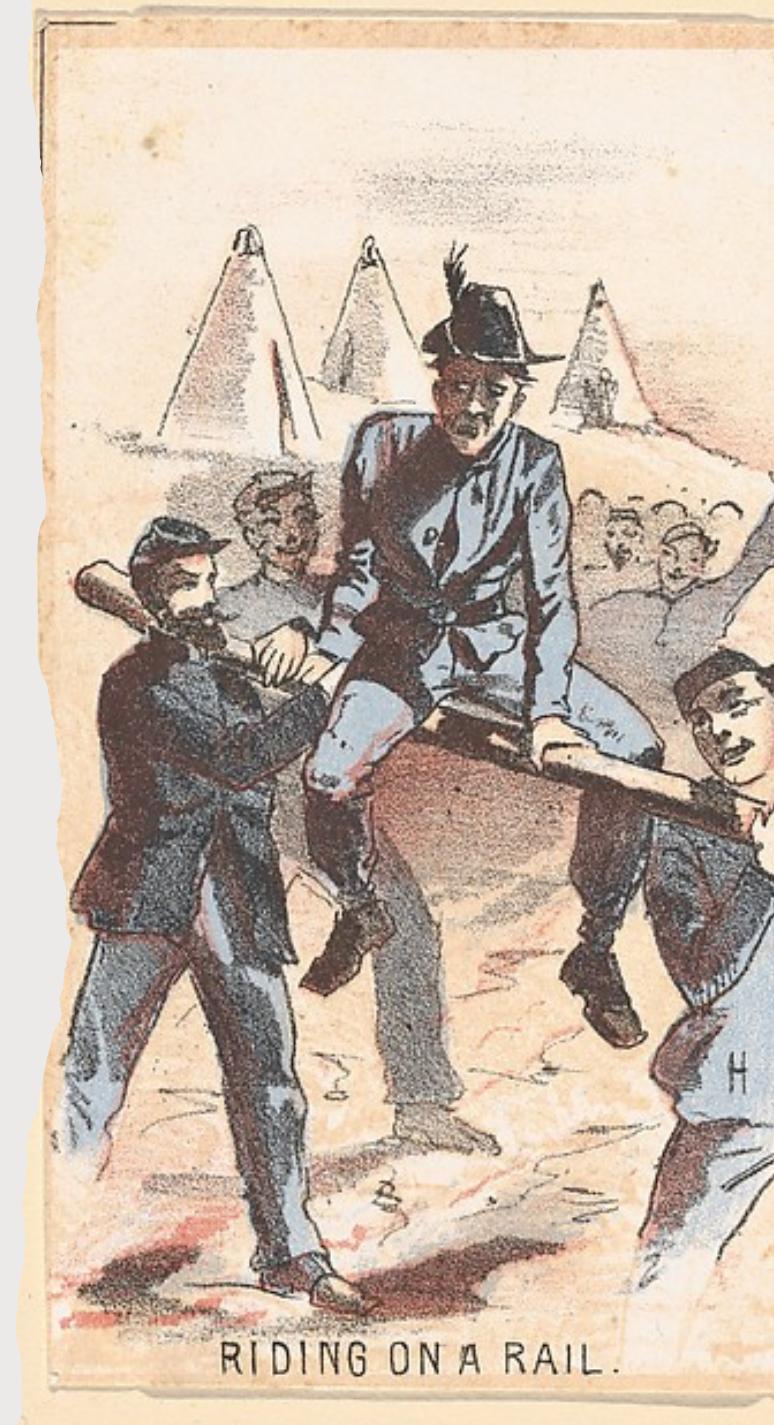
The army of the
Potomac - Execution of ~~5~~ deserters in the
gth corps for desertion
stabbed by m[an]k Wm. Lef

Corporal punishment

- Flogging banned by U.S. in August 1861 and by the Confederates in 1862
 - Had already been banned in the Navy since 1850
- Branding (“D” for desertion) also banned
- But other corporal punishments widespread
 - Hanging by thumbs
 - Bucking and gagging
 - “Riding the rail”
 - Many punishments were primarily designed to shame
 - Putting people in barrels, shaving their heads; drumming them out of camp



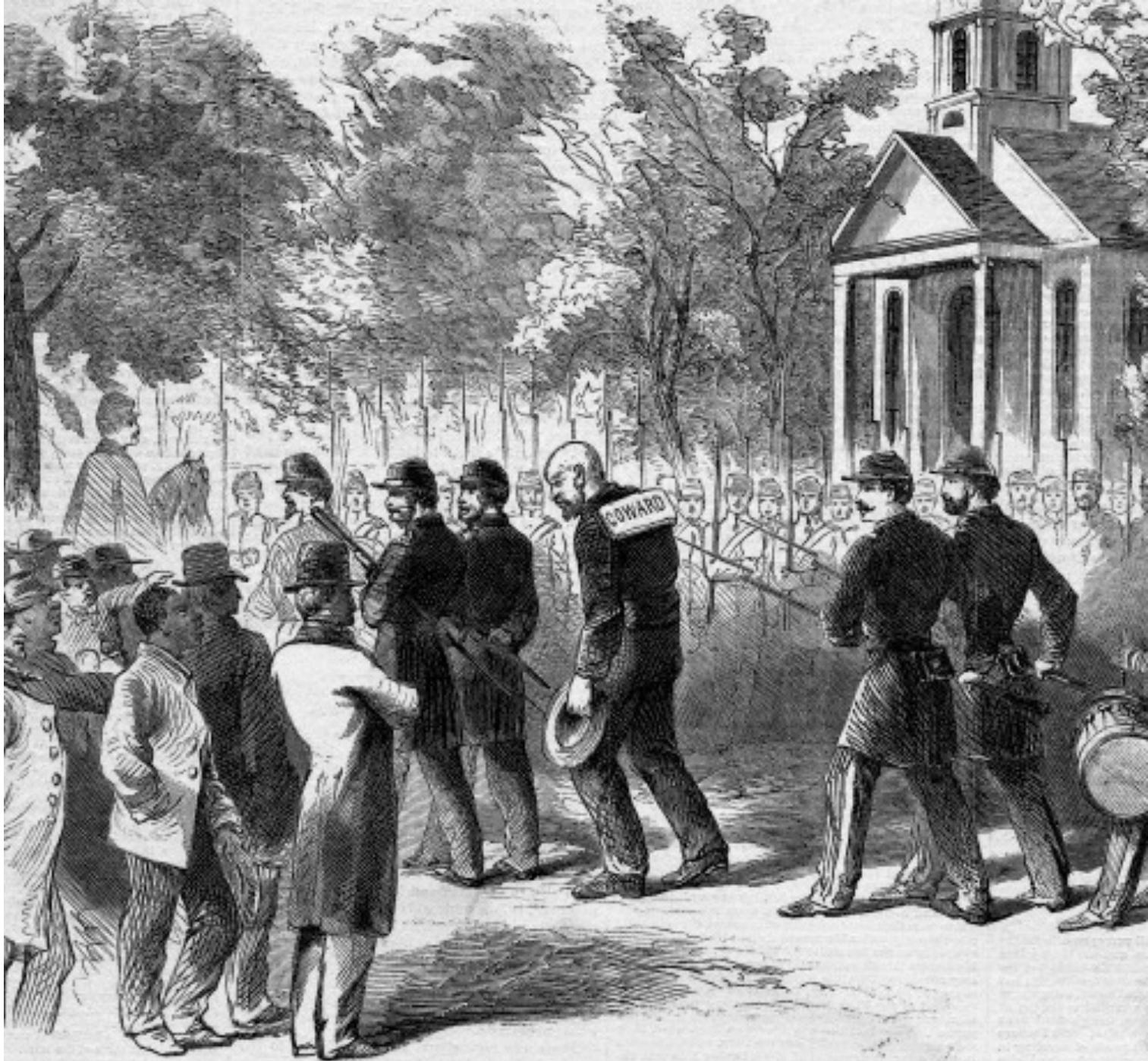
Riding the “rail,”
the “wooden horse,”
or the “sawhorse”





“Camp Punishments,” *Harper’s Weekly*, June 28, 1863

• “One of the pictures represents the DRUMMING OF A COWARD FROM GENERAL BURNSIDE’S ARMY. The fellow was marched through the lines between a file of soldiers, with his head cropped, and a large placard ‘coward’ affixed to his back, while the band played the ‘Rogue’s March.’”



CAMP PUNISHMENTS—DRUMMING A COWARD OUT OF THE RANKS.—SCENE IN THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.—[SEE PAGE 4]