

University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire

Freely Bleed and Even Die:
The Story of a Civil War Soldier

History 489

A Senior Thesis Submitted to the Department of History

At

The University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire

Dr. Kate Lang, Professor

Cooperating Professor: Dr. James Oberly

By Peter J. DeCarlo

Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Fall Semester 2009

**Copyright for this work is owned by the author. This digital version is published by McIntyre Library,
University of Wisconsin Eau Claire with the consent of the author.**

Abstract

This paper tells the story of Adam Marty, a Union soldier who fought in the Civil War from 1861-1864. Marty was a member of the First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment. He was a resident of Stillwater, Minnesota and volunteered for three years to fight for his country. Marty fought in major battles such as Bull Run, Fair Oaks, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg amongst others. Yet, much more than battles permeate this paper. Marty's intimate writings to his famous cousin Samuel Bloomer are analyzed and set within their historical context. In general this paper is about the experience of the Civil War soldier. Large portions are dedicated to camp life, marching, politics of the time, and life in a Civil War Hospital. This paper is also about psychological issues Civil War Soldiers faced such as death and suffering, religion, battle, shock, being wounded, romance, manhood, and living up to Victorian ideals. This is how one man experienced the Civil War and it sheds a revealing light on the era and the lives of Civil War soldiers. The paper is written as an analytical narrative.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Camp Stone (August 16-October 20, 1861).....	4
The Battle of Balls Bluff (October 21, 1861).....	8
Back to Camp Stone (October 23-February 26, 1861-1862).....	10
The Shenandoah Campaign (February 25-March 26, 1862).....	14
To the Peninsula (March 26-April 3, 1862).....	17
The Peninsula Campaign (April 5-August 26, 1862).....	18
The Battle of Antietam (September 17, 1862).....	20
After Antietam (September 18-22, 1862).....	23
Return to Harper’s Ferry (September 22-October 16, 1862).....	24
The Loudoun Valley (October 17-November 8, 1862).....	26
From Warrenton to Fredericksburg (November 9-December 11, 1862).....	27
The Battle of Fredericksburg (December 11-15, 1862).....	29
Camp Falmouth (December 16, 1862-May 1, 1863).....	32
The Battle of Chancellorsville (April 27-May 5, 1863).....	51
Back in Camp Opposite Fredericksburg (May 6-June 5, 1863).....	52
The Road to Gettysburg (June 6-July 1, 1863).....	54
The Battle of Gettysburg (July 1-3, 1863).....	56
South Street Hospital (July 8-March 17, 1864).....	59
Going Home (March 17-May 5, 1864).....	68
After the War.....	69
Conclusion.....	72
Bibliography and Acknowledgements.....	73

The Cousins



Figure 1. Adam Marty 10/10/1863. Minnesota Historical Society.



Figure 2. Samuel Bloomer, circa 1862. Washington County Historical Society.

Introduction

In American history there is no event more captivating than the Civil War. It was the cataclysm that tested our experimental nation, and it defines our country in many ways today. For more than four years Americans fought and killed each other. Approximately 620,000 Americans died during the War; more than in all other American Wars combined. It was a uniquely American experience and perhaps that is why so many people are drawn to its stories.

When looking back upon this event it is easy to forget that each and every soldier was an entire person. In a war that saw over three million men in uniform it becomes habitual (even for historians) to disregard the name of one man. Yet, it is through the stories of men who served during this time period that we can learn the most. At the time, Civil War soldiers were the most literate of any to date, and being so, many diaries and letters were written. Countless letters and diaries have been published, but few have been interpreted on an individual basis. This is an attempt to tell one of those lost stories, and examine it in detail.

This paper is about Adam Marty, a resident of Stillwater, Minnesota who fought for the Union as a member of the famous First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment. In many ways his experience typifies that of the common Union soldier but in more numerous ways it is exceptional. In order to understand Adam's experience better it is necessary to view it through several different lenses that point directly to one facet of his experience. Throughout the years several authors have written about the life of the enlisted Civil War soldier.

Since the war ended former soldiers and historians have written about the experience of the enlisted man. Some soldiers published memoirs while other published their letters. The first account of army life was *Hardtack and Coffee* written by veteran John D. Billings in 1881. Billings was not a professional historian but his writing was factual. Drawing upon his experiences and those of other veterans he created a book about the Civil War soldier's common experience. Billings did not write to analyze, merely to present the facts of a soldier's life. In 1943 Bell Irvin Wiley published *The Life of Johnny Reb* and in 1952 he followed it with *The Life of Billy Yank*. This was the first historical and

scholarly attempt to interpret the life of Civil War soldiers. Wiley's work, though dated, is where all historians must begin when writing about a soldier's life. He defined what aspects of a soldier's life were important and presented his arguments based upon solid research.

For decades Wiley's works stood alone and very little literature was added to the field. The lives of soldiers became buried underneath broad surveys of the war. In the 1980's scholars began focusing on the lives of soldiers again. Author Michael Barton produced a work in 1981 called *Goodmen: The Character of Civil War Soldiers*. This was the first work in which a scholar studied soldiers using an analytical method. Barton based his work on hundreds of Civil War letter collections asking several distinct questions during his reading such as: Why did men fight? What was their character like? What were their values? Through this method Barton created tables, diagrams, and percentages concerning these questions. Though he engaged the soldiers themselves, Barton's focus was broad and hence the soldiers were eventually reduced to numbers resulting in a conclusion. In 1988 Reid Mitchell published his definitive work *Civil War Soldiers*. Mitchell asked many of the same questions Barton did but he also proposed new ones. Most importantly he examined the psychology of a Civil War soldier. In doing so he brought new issues to light and in an overarching theme argued that these men were human.

In 1997 preeminent Civil War historian James McPherson published his analysis of the Civil War soldier entitled *For Cause and Comrades*. McPherson's work was a modern, comprehensive work on the subject. McPherson's most important contribution to the field was the study of camaraderie and the psychological effects it had. The most recent and most comprehensive work on Civil War soldiers was published in 2002. Michael Barton and Larry M. Logue compiled essays written by various authors about various aspects of a soldier's life. This collection titled *The Civil War Soldier* included essays by Wiley, McPherson, Mitchell and others. Most intriguing were two essays by Drew Gilpin Faust who focused on an aspect of soldier life that had not been written on directly: suffering. All of the analytical scholarship on Civil War soldiers has come to drown out the stories behind it.

Historians have approached the life of the Civil War soldier in all but one way: a narrative interpretation. This paper is meant to bridge the gap between two approaches of historical writing:

narrative and analytical. This paper is Adam Marty's story as he experienced it. There are no subject headings, no lenses to compartmentalize this soldier's experience. Instead, analysis was generated by the narrative. Adam's story has been set within the historical study of the soldier in a natural way that informs and interprets as it is told. The overall purpose of this paper is twofold: 1) It is meant to tell Adam's story and 2) analyze it within the experience of the common Union Soldier. The blending of these two approaches will give the reader a greater insight into the world of a Civil War soldier than individually published diaries, or analysis focused monographs have in the past.

The primary sources for this paper were letters written by Adam to his cousin Samuel Bloomer during the war. Letters are tricky sources to interpret. Aside from the date a letter is written, its content is not bound by place or time.¹ For instance, a letter written by Adam in February of 1863 can reference events that occurred in October of 1861. Sam was Adam's best friend and confidant in life and therefore the letters are very revealing. Sam was also a member of the First Minnesota until he was seriously wounded at the Battle of Antietam. It is after this battle that the cousins' correspondence begins. Adam stated himself, "I would not live if I could not write."² The letters do not cover the entirety of Adam's service for several reasons. Undoubtedly, many letters have been lost, and therefore his personal experience remains a mystery for quite some time. He did not write with any regularity until Sam was wounded and returned home to Stillwater. There are periods of about a month when Adam did not write at all. This silence was normally due to a very active campaign and participation in a battle. The periods in which Adam wrote no letters are reflected in this paper. Yet, it is important to mention, in a necessarily broader way the things that Adam went through, even if he did not write about them.

The logs of the regiment were used to obtain a broader understanding of Adam's experience. These logs were used for roll call, medical records, and accounting for casualties. Regimental records are also integral to determining whether a soldier was actually present during a campaign, battle or other

¹ The letters this paper is based upon are housed at the Minnesota Historical Society. During research the author transcribed the letters and created a manuscript collection. This collection is kept by the Washington County Historical Society in Stillwater Minnesota.

² Letter to Mr. Henry A. Jackman & Family. Camp Stone. November 17, 1861. *Adam Marty Correspondence*. Minnesota Historical Society.

event. Though a regiment may have engaged in battle any number of men could have been sick, on furlough or detached service at the time. In addition to the logs the author obtained Adam Marty's "Comprehensive Military Service Record" from the National Archives. This source is a compilation of government documents pertaining to Adam's service. These official records were very useful in determining exact dates and information regarding Adam's movements and condition. Census data was used in order to learn more about Stillwater, Minnesota and its residents during the time period.

For the reader this paper will prove an invaluable resource and window into the life of a volunteer soldier. It is the author's hope that the reader will understand this soldier after reading and know him intimately. Within the broad expanse of Civil War studies is this one man; his hopes, dreams, spirituality, sadness, suffering, hatred and love, as well as his unwavering devotion to friends, brothers in arms, and the cause in which he believed. The author would call him a hero but receive the response, "I will never be anything else other than plain old Adam M. to anybody."³

Camp Stone (August 16-October 20, 1861)

In the middle of August 1861 Adam Marty found himself in camp on the Potomac River. It had only been five months since his enlistment in the Union Army but he was now, most definitely, a soldier. On July 21, 1861 he had been in the thick of the Battle of Bull Run, and finally seen the true nature of combat and tasted defeat. Yet on that battlefield Adam and his regiment, the First Minnesota Volunteers, distinguished themselves. While nearly every other Union regiment turned tail, they steadily retreated under the heavy fire of Stonewall Jackson and his men. Ever after the Minnesota men enjoyed a reputation as one of the best regiments in the army. But they had paid for it, suffering the highest casualty rate of any regiment, north or south, in the battle: 142 men dead or wounded. After the battle, the Union Army withdrew across the Potomac River. The two armies had set up camp on either side of the river content to watch each other for a time.

³ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. February 20, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers. Minnesota Historical Society.*

Before Bull Run Adam identified himself as a productive citizen and useful member of society. He had been an apprentice to a painter named Mort Webster in Stillwater,⁴ Minnesota and a member of the Stillwater guards, the local militia group. Though estranged from his father who lived south of Stillwater, Adam did have a family. A farmer by the name of Henry Jackman became somewhat of an adoptive father for both Adam and his cousin Sam. The cousins worked as farmhands for “Old Man Jackman” and settled in as part of his family. Adam corresponded with the Jackmans throughout the war.



Figure 3. Henry Jackman. Minnesota Historical Society.

When the call came to enlist, Adam and the majority of the Stillwater Guards, answered. These men formed Company B of the First Minnesota, one of ten companies, each from a distinctive area of the state. Company B became Adam’s family for the next three years of his life. He came to love some of the men and despise others. At the time Adam was twenty-four years old, a little over five and a half feet tall with a ruddy complexion.⁵ His eyes were blue and deeply set within a harsh face framed by a thick head of brown hair and a well trimmed goatee.

After enlisting, training, moving across the country, and surviving his first battle Adam went into camp and wrote his surrogate father Henry. In a previous letter Henry had complimented Adam on his service. Adam said the praise was an “undeserved compliment” and that he was only doing his duty. A sense of duty was prevalent in Victorian America. It was not only intertwined with citizenship but service as well. Many felt that during a time of great need citizens should reciprocate for all of the freedoms America granted them. “One had the duty to defend the flag under whose protection one had lived.”⁶ Adam declared his devotion to his country:

⁴ Manuscript Census, City of Stillwater, Washington County, Minnesota, U.S. Census of Population, 1860. p.83, line 26. Ancestry.com, (Accessed 6/14/2009).

⁵ Records of the First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry. 1861-1865. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁶ McPherson, James, *For Cause and Comrades* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 23.

[I will] fight for her, in this her dire extremity, and freely bleed, and even die for her if needs be. Who would not fight for such a country, such blessings and such privileges!⁷

Adam possessed a particular devotion to his country because he was an immigrant. At the age of twelve Adam, along with his cousin Sam and other relatives, emigrated from Switzerland to America. Having “lived under the iron rule of European Monarchys” Adam could “justly appreciate” life in America. His understanding of life under tyranny only added to his patriotism:

I have done nothing more than that duty which I owe to my adopted country, which has sheltered me when young and given me all the libertys and privileges which I enjoy, and which are dear to ever foreigner as well as American.⁸

It is notable that even after the reversal at Bull Run Adam’s convictions were still very strong. However, there were those back at home in Minnesota that were speaking out against the war. When Adam learned of this it pained him greatly. He condemned those in opposition to war as “miserable wretches” who “love to go about enlarging on the greatness and strength of the so called Southern Confederacy.”⁹ For Adam and his fellow soldiers there was no greater betrayal than people at home speaking negatively about the very cause that engaged them. Soldiers accepted criticism of the war effort amongst each other, for they were the ones doing the job and suffering. There was a belief that civilians did not comprehend battle but were actually working “in opposition to soldier interests.”¹⁰ Adam and other Union soldiers felt those back home were ignorant and resented them for judging something they could not understand.¹¹ Adam made his views on such people extremely clear when writing Old Man Jackman:

They ought to be transferred South in the blackest part of Niggerdom, where they could worship their duty to Jeff Davis to their hearts content.¹²

The soldiers in Adam’s regiment were beginning to grumble about the conduct of the war and he was among them. In Adam’s mind their questioning of the administration was respectful and completely legitimate, unlike that of people at home. After the battle of Bull Run inaction had gripped Washington,

⁷ Letter to Mr. H.A. Jackman Esq. October 10, [1861]. *Adam Marty Correspondence*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Linderman, Gerald F., *Embattled Courage* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 220.

¹¹ Mitchell, Reid, *Civil War Soldier* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1988), 66-67.

¹² Letter to Mr. H.A. Jackman Esq. October 10, [1861]. *Adam Marty Correspondence*. Minnesota Historical Society.

an inaction that Adam was feeling sitting in camp and fulfilling on picket duty. He noted “some are losing confidence in the administration and admitted that there were “some gleaming and not-to-be covered up facts which cannot be denied.” He could not understand why the administration seemed so “slow and lenient” in quelling the rebellion. His only guess was that they were “afraid that, Devine Institution Slavery might get hurt or suffer in consequence.”¹³

As opinions swirled in camp and at home the First Minnesota entered the tedium of camp life on the Potomac. Adam’s life was that of the everyday soldier: roll call, drill, latrine duty, picket duty along the river, and boredom. As he made the transition from civilian to soldier, Adam began to feel dehumanized. The treatment he received from his officers was very demoralizing. Since recruitment the regiment’s colonel had been Willis A. Gorman. Gorman had been the Territorial Governor of Minnesota and won the post of colonel with his political ties. He was not a professional soldier and treated the men “like so many cattle.” Adam and the men disdained him but he eventually changed his ways:

He treats us now like men and as soldiers, some of whom have been his equal in Minnesota, and when he drills us he explains to us the meaning of every movement, and explains the whole art of war[.]¹⁴

In the beginning of the war there was always tension between volunteer soldiers and their officers. The First Minnesota was a prime example of this. All of the officers under Colonel Gorman had been civilians only months before and the captain of each company was well known by his men before the war even started. Thus when officers attempted to assert control or military competence they were often ridiculed.¹⁵ Adam’s Company B was no exception and he observed his company’s commander saying “Capt. Downie is a good officer, only he is a little proud, a



Figure 4. Willis Gorman, 1861.
Minnesota Historical Society

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Shannon, Fred A, “The Life of the Common Soldier in the Union Army, 1861-1865,” in *The Civil War Soldier*, ed. Michael Barton and Larry M. Logue. (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 93.

little above his station.”¹⁶ On top of being arrogant, Mark Downie used his men to his own ends. During the night Adam and Company B were awakened and ordered to drill. A young married couple Captain Downie knew had arrived in camp to visit and he wanted show off the “glory of command and its awful importance.”¹⁷ Downie was an imposing man, handsome and over 6’2”. He had boundless ambition and viewed the war as a chance to advance himself. Yet, before the war he had been a cashier and a bookkeeper along with serving in the Stillwater Guards, just as Adam had. Adam had no confidence in his “home spun”¹⁸ captain. Eventually Adam and the determined Mark Downie would come to hate each other.

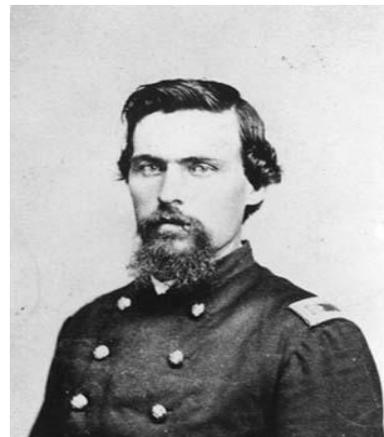


Figure 5. Captain Mark Downie, circa 1863. Minnesota Historical Society.

There was more to Company B than Captain Downie. As it was with most Volunteer regiments Adam had enlisted with men he knew and came to rely on them. Being from the town of Stillwater many of Company B’s members were lumberman and laborers. They took pride in being the toughest company in the regiment. The company continued to stand out when Colonel Gorman tried to recruit men to build boats but received no volunteers. “So he got mad and sayed he’d go over to the St. Croix Boys, they could turn out men for anything.”¹⁹ The company gave Gorman all the men he needed. The pride of a soldier was always bound up in his state, regiment, and friends. For Adam that commitment was about to be tested.

The Battle of Ball’s Bluff (October 21, 1861)

General McClellan, commanding all Union forces decided to clear the opposite bank of the Potomac of Rebels. This would not only test his men but make his eventual advance on Richmond somewhat easier. Gorman was ordered to use his forces to demonstrate against the enemy while the main attack took place further up the river. At 1:30 A.M. Adam and his comrades crossed the Potomac in

¹⁶ Letter to Mr. H.A. Jackman Esq. October 10, [1861]. *Adam Marty Correspondence*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ It was common for soldiers to refer to civilian officers as “home spun,” likening them to home spun clothing. In other words, the officers were not professionally trained.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

flatboats that the Stillwater men had helped to construct. For the next several hours troops crossed the river, eventually encountering rebel forces. Sharp skirmishing began and lasted all day, but Adam remained confident in his regiment, though they seemed heavily outnumbered:

We had about 5000 (thousand) troops over there and the wind being high we could not get any more over[.] The Rebels were concentrating all their forces, preparatory to an attack, we had however a pretty strong position and could have beaten back double our numbers, with the help of the cannon planted on the hills.²⁰

Later the next morning Adam had “the pleasure” to see General McClellan himself ride up to the regiment. Upon observing the situation the young General felt a retreat across the river was in order. With the wind blowing so strongly it would be a very dangerous affair. Adam proudly declared, “in this crises Minnesota was looked to for succor.” The Minnesotan’s division²¹ commander General Banks told Gorman “get your sturdy lumberman to work for it’s evident amongst them we might look for boatmen, can you rely on them?” McClellan himself pushed the point further saying, “get the Minnesotans to work for they are our only salvation.”²²

Suddenly Captain Downie had orders from General McClellan himself. Twenty-two men of Company B including Adam, Sam, and their closest friends were awakened and charged with saving the entire Union force. The rest of the First Minnesota was to act as rear guard during the retreat. Adam and the other Minnesota boatmen spent “all night” ferrying troops back across the river, under pressure from the advancing enemy and the weather. Through sheer skill and courage the former residents of Stillwater “had all [the] troops over...before daylight.” Despite the dangers Adam faced on the river he was miserable with fear for the rest of his regiment. He was not alone as he noticed “Gorman almost cried for fear they might be attacked.”²³ Adam was proud when everything went well:

²⁰ Letter to Mr. Henry A. Jackman. Camp Stone. November 9, 1861. *Adam Marty Correspondence*. Minnesota Historical Society.

²¹ Though the organization of the Union Army changed with every commander it had, all unit and command structures were basically the same throughout the war. Corps: 20,000-30,000 men; Division: 10,000-15,000 men; Brigade: 3,000-5,000 men; Regiment: 1,000 men; Company: 100 men. These numbers could fluctuate greatly and were constantly reduced by casualties.

²² Letter to Mr. Henry A. Jackman. Camp Stone. November 9, 1861. *Adam Marty Correspondence*. Minnesota Historical Society.

²³ *Ibid.*

Our Regt. meanwhile were on picket and covered the retreat of the others, and were the last to leave the soil of Old Virginia. To add to the gloom...it was so muddy, if we had not scraped our shoes off we would have brought over a whole county of the sacred soil.²⁴

Though the battle ended in a withdrawal the First Minnesota came out of the confrontation with a stronger reputation. Soldiers in good regiments were very sensitive when it came to their reputation, both personal and regimental. A soldier's identification with his state, regiment, and friends has been referred to by modern historians as "primary group cohesion."²⁵ All of these tiers of commitment were "groups." The most important group to Adam, like many other soldiers, was his company and his friends within it. During the battle of Balls Bluff it was this all important group that ferried the threatened Union forces across the river. All ten companies were close knit and together they formed a cohesive regiment. This "primary group cohesion" built upon itself on all levels of command forming the worth of a regiment. As the war continued the First Minnesota's reputation would only grow, but for the time being they returned to camp.

Back to Camp Stone (October 23-February 26, 1861-1862)

After Balls Bluff the Union forces returned to camp as General McClellan reassessed the situation. Even after the terrifying experience across the river Adam was "well and in excellent spirits, thanks to a kind providence." Adam wrote Old Man

Jackman about camp life assuring him all was well:

We get enough to eat of good rations...we have good works and Co. B have the name of living the best of any company in the Regt. We are provided for with clothing, in fact much better than any other Regt. I have seen yet, each man having as much as he wants.²⁶

When in camp the regiment was paid for the first time. Though Adam, was very committed to the

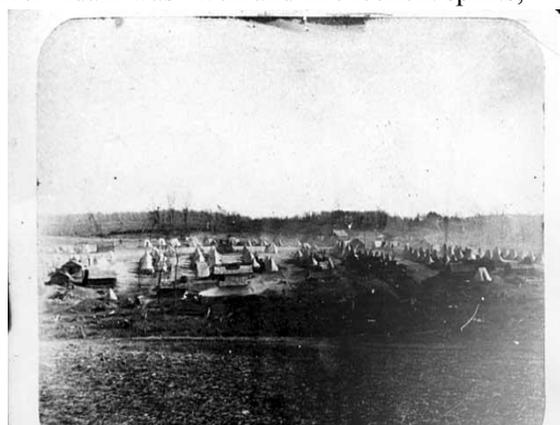


Figure 6. First Minnesota at Camp Stone, 1861. Minnesota Historical Society.

Union cause, on a basic level being a soldier was a job. Pay day was something the men always looked

²⁴ Ibid. At the time Virginia was referred to as "The Old Dominion" and thought of as the most honored state because it had produced many of the nation's founding fathers and embodied American revolutionary ideals.

²⁵ McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 84-85.

²⁶ Letter to Mr. Henry A. Jackman. November 9, 1861. *Adam Marty Correspondence*. Minnesota Historical Society.

forward to. Money could be spent on indulgent food at the sutler's tent, or on whiskey amongst other things. Adam however, was a prudent man and sent the majority of his pay home. He sent money to his fellow painter and close friend Will Webster, son of master painter Mort Webster. As a result Adam received an angry letter from his father Sebastian regarding his pay. It was the practice at the time for a soldier to send his pay to those he trusted most, and whom he wished to possess it if he died.

By sending his pay to Will Webster, Adam had made a clear statement concerning his loyalties. He lamented that his father was "a little gritty towards me because I sent some money to Will Webster when he thought I ought to have sent it to him." But Adam stood by his actions saying "I have my own opinion about it, and think I am old enough to judge for myself, and have my own way, concerning my own effects." He felt that Will Webster and Henry Jackman were more deserving of his confidence and love than "any of [his] blood relations."²⁷

At Camp Stone Adam's primary duty was picketing. He spent many days on the banks of the Potomac watching the enemy on the opposite bank who were doing the same. The nature of picket duty varied from dangerous to very quiet and relaxing. Sometimes "an alarm would [come] into camp from the river...that a large Rebel force were crossing." On several occasions Adam would rush to the Ferry with the rest of his company. The majority of the time "the alarms turned out to be nothing but false."²⁸ Even though there was little danger from the enemy during picket duty men still got injured including Oscar Cornman, a close friend of Adam and Sam's:

Oscar met with an accident and had to return [to camp], he and I were wrestling together when we both fell sideways, he catching his foot under him and spraining his ankle. We thought he would not be able to walk for some time, but I am happy to say he is much better, and able to be about again.²⁹

While on picket the company would divide into squads of about fifteen men. These squads contained the same men month after month and it was here that Adam formed deep friendships. His squad was commanded by Lieutenant Louis Muller who became Adam's main ally amongst the

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Letter to Mr. Henry A. Jackman & Family November 17, 1861. *Adam Marty Correspondence*. Minnesota Historical Society.

²⁹ Ibid.

regiment's officers. Rufus Blanchard, John Densmore, Oscar Cornman, and of course Sam were always along with him. Adam called it "a good jolly crew." This was the core of his "primary group." Their post was near a "cornfield, about 30 acres."³⁰ Adam and his friends built huts out of cornstalks but also used them for another purpose:

We had a regular pitched battle with corn in our post Friday, in which our Lieut. joined as well as Sergeant Sinclair, and everyone relished the fun and attracted the attention of the Rebels who wanted to know what we were doing. There was nobody hurt!³¹

Wrestling with Oscar and participating in the corn fight are occurrences very illustrative of Adam and his psychological frame of mind at the time. It is important to remember that the average age of the enlisted man was twenty years old. At twenty-four Adam was a bit older, but still very young. He understood the magnitude of the situation he was in, but in times of respite, wrestling and goofing off in general were some of his favorite pastimes. On rare occasions officers would engage in the horseplay as Lieutenant Louis Muller did with his men. This exemplifies the closeness Adam and his primary group felt for one another including their officer. Like Captain Downie, Muller was a native of Stillwater and well known by his men. Only twenty-six years old, he was young, and because of these facts the men



Figure 7. Lieutenant Louis Muller. First Minnesota, Jorgenson.

could relate to him. Muller was a rare example of the "home-spun" officer who had gained the respect of his men. Adam and his compatriots were soldiers but on some level they were still boys on a great adventure.

Adam and his "jolly crew" got to know their enemy while picketing on the Potomac. Quite often informal ceasefires were called between the soldiers and they interacted with each other, despite the fact that it was against orders. Across the Potomac was a post of Rebels who "appeared very friendly and

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

talkative...jolly and lively.” The Confederate soldiers began singing Dixie in challenge to the blue-clad Minnesotans. Adam and his friends returned the compliment “by singing the Star Spangled Banner.” A general conversation began between the two sides:

They...asked several questions, wanted us to come play cards with them and offered to treat &c. It was at this point that 2 of the 34th N.Y. visited them and returned again after having a friendly time.³²

Like almost every man in both armies Adam found himself relating to his foe. While picketing on the Potomac the men on the other shore never quite seemed like the enemy. Though nobody wanted to break the friendly truce, at times officers would order them to do so if only to remind the men that they were enemies. Adam recounted such an event:

Last week they fired over on some of our posts killing one man, upon which a lot of sharpshooters were sent up, which picked off 4 of them. They gave in and told our boys they would stop firing if we did, to which all partys agreed.³³

Adam and the other men at Camp Stone stayed inactive throughout the winter simply going on picket and watching the enemy across the river. During their monotonous routine Adam and Sam spent a good deal of time together, in camp and on picket. For four days at a time the cousins were stationed at a look-out where they “had no shelter but a straw hut that leaked like a sieve” and mud that was half a foot deep. In a war that brought forth the most terrible battles the world had witnessed it is easy to overlook the harshness of every day camp life. Union soldiers endured strict discipline, monotonous diets, chronic diarrhea among other diseases, exposure to the elements and long hours on guard. By any standards every day was a hardship for Adam. Though living in these conditions, Adam seemed to fulfill his duty with barely a second thought:

Such is a soldier’s life. He suffers considerable, but it is soon forgotten and he is ready to go through the same scenes with cheerfulness, when called on to do so. There is a peculiar charm about it.³⁴

By mid February the snow melted and the new campaigning season neared. The Union forces gained great victories in the Western theater which inspired Adam and made him anxious for things to

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

commence in the East. Even the slow moving government seemed poised to move forward with the war on all fronts. “The administration...[and] their congressmen...are ready to commence operations in earnest.” It seemed to Adam that all signs were pointing towards an inevitable advance. Having been through battle before he no doubt felt great anxiety and anticipation, but Camp Stone only seemed to provide tedium and Adam was ready for some action. “I have no doubt but we will also make an advance on Mann. As soon as the roads get dry enough and Burnside gets a force in the rear of Richmond.”³⁵ Adam had an uncanny ability to understand the wider strategic goings-on. He was always concerned with the war as a whole and constantly read newspapers to keep himself informed. There would be an advance, but not to Manassas as before. Adam would be marching into the Shenandoah Valley, bread basket of the Confederacy, where Stonewall Jackson was lurking.

The Shenandoah Campaign (February 25-March 26, 1862)

By late February the Division containing the First Minnesota was on the march. The objective of the campaign was to force General Jackson out of the valley and destroy his army. In addition to having Jackson destroyed General McClellan wanted the town of Harpers Ferry secured. With its arsenal Harpers Ferry was one of the most militarily important towns in Virginia. The Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers met there and it was also a vital railroad junction, with many bridges essential to military operations.

When the regiment reached Harper’s Ferry there was no enemy to be seen. However, Jackson had been there recently and had ensured the Yankees would find no supplies. That night they camped in the ruins of the Federal Arsenal where the famous abolitionist John Brown had made his stand. Being a Union man, Adam saw John Brown as a hero and stopped by the cell where he was imprisoned before being executed. It was “a small cell with no other windows or other outlets excepting two doors...of iron” with walls “three feet thick.” He concluded that it must have been a “dark and dismal place” for

³⁵ Letter to Henry. February 21, [1862]. *Adam Marty Correspondence*. Minnesota Historical Society. In September of 1861 Union General Ambrose Burnside had landed a force on the coast of North Carolina. As the campaigning season of 1862 began there were hopes he could advance on Richmond while McClellan came south. The result would be a total envelopment of the Confederate capital of Richmond.

Brown. Adam considered sending Henry a brick as a relic, but decided against it as it would not “pay postage.” Adam found the ruined arsenal in which he camped to be a very curious bivouac and described it in detail. His description is worth quoting at length for it was the first time he came upon an image of urban destruction, making him realize that the war was no longer confined to soldiers on battlefields:

[We] worked up our abode in the principle armory building, It was of brick about 600 feet long and large enough to hold our entire Regt. It was however a very dirty place, although it protected us from the rain without. I h[ear] [there] are 13 of these buildings which were used for the manufacture of arms, but they are all in ruins as everything was burned that could work them leaving nothing but the bare brick walls and some of the iron window frames standing. The machinery also is either destroyed or carried to Richmond by the Rebels.³⁶

Like the arsenal, the rest of the town showed signs of war. The vast majority of the homes in town were “more or less injured” and deserted. “The splendid rail road bridge over the Potomac, as well as the one over the Shenandoah” had been burned. Adam lamented, “the entire damage must be million[s] of dollars, and presents a picture of Ruin and Desolation painful to behold.”³⁷

After staying in the town for two days the troops moved up onto the heights to make camp and occupy a more formidable position should the enemy attack. Yet, as so often happened in the Army of the Potomac, supplies had not reached the First Minnesota yet and so they were without tents. Company B, always an industrious group, solved their problem quite easily:

We (Co. B) found and took possession of a splendid 2 story brick home. It seemed odd to us to live in a house again after living in tents 7 months. We kept house a good deal like a band of Indians or gipseys, tore a fence down chopped wood on the parlor floor, danced, wrestled, and reared Cain generally.³⁸

While living in the brick house Adam took time to survey the surrounding country and he found Harpers Ferry to be “the prettiest place I have seen in America.” In fact he felt that other than Minnesota it was the only place he could live and “roam over the wild and mossy banks among murmuring rivulets, and admire nature’s beauty & the works of God, in peace and quietness.”³⁹ For Adam, and Victorian Americans in general, nature held a “spiritual tranquility” and “religious awe.” Adam lived in a time

³⁶ Letter to Henry. March 3, [1862]. *Adam Marty Correspondence*. Minnesota Historical Society.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

when religion was being influenced by nature and science. Victorians began to seek out nature more deliberately than ever in hopes of finding some kind of peace.⁴⁰ It is no surprise that Adam found heavenly power in the natural beauty of Harper's Ferry.

The tents soon arrived and along with them a vast amount of supplies and men. From his camp on Bolivar Heights, a suburb of Harpers Ferry, Adam saw the town below fill with soldiers and implements of war. He noted, "there are about 30,000 men here" and "an awful amount of provision and stores being brought over." Pontoon bridges were put in place and the rail road lines were repaired within a week. Adam was witnessing the industrial power of the North focused in one advance and was amazed. At the head of the movement was General McClellan whom Adam and the rest of the men adored:

I had the pleasure of seeing Little Mac several times. Mac's presence here has inspired the men with confidence in the advance, let it be what it may, one thing is certain if he was not sure of success he would not transport any more stores over than is necessary for the sustenance of the men.⁴¹

The First Minnesota men were aware that their old foe from Bull Run, Stonewall Jackson, was waiting for them further up the Shenandoah, but with McClellan leading them in a "sure but slow advance." Adam declared he had "no fears as to the result" of the campaign.



Figure 8. General George McClellan, 1862. Minnesota Historical Society.

Over the next two weeks General Bank's Corps, which included the First Minnesota, advanced steadily up the valley occupying town after town. However, they never encountered Stonewall Jackson who always kept one day's march ahead of them. The advance was slow and steady as Adam predicted but there was no result. The Union troops returned to their camp on Bolivar Heights overlooking Harpers Ferry and stayed there for another week.⁴² While camped, their Colonel Napoleon Jackson Tecumseh

⁴⁰ Rose, Anne C., *Victorian America and the Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 112.

⁴¹ Letter to Henry. March 3, [1862]. *Adam Marty Correspondence*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁴² While the Shenandoah Campaign was a failure for the Union Army it was a great success for the Confederate army under General Stonewall Jackson. He defeated several Union forces through fast maneuver and superior strategy. It was this campaign that solidified his reputation and that of his "foot cavalry."

Dana was promoted and replaced by Colonel Alfred Sully.⁴³ Sully would become the best commander the men ever had. Adam, always one to admire dignity, honor, and military ability came to idolize Sully.

On March 22, the regiment recrossed the Potomac and took the Baltimore & Ohio Rail Road back to Washington. McClellan left a holding force in the valley and began gathering his army around Washington. The regiment remained in the capital for three days. They were then conveyed by railroad to Alexandria, Virginia which they reached by midnight. Due to some logistical problem, Adam and the rest of his comrades stood in a pouring rain until daylight when they were marched to the camp ground they had occupied just before Bull Run. Several of the men dug up a barrel of whiskey which they had cached there the year before. Adam did not drink because he had already wasted much of his life in saloons back home. He was using army life to purge himself of all base qualities. Surely he had his mind on the future and was attempting to guess where he, Sam, Rufus, John and the rest of the boys were going.

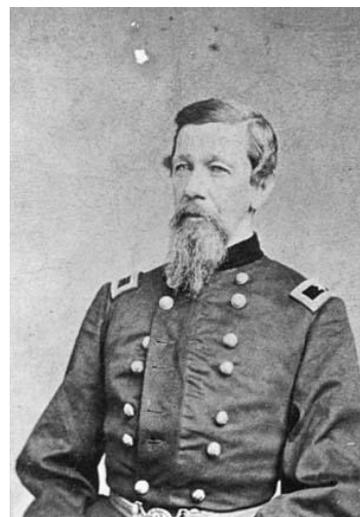


Figure 9. Colonel Alfred H. Sully, 1862. Minnesota Historical Society.

To the Peninsula (March 26-April 3, 1862)

General McClellan had devised what he thought to be a masterful plan; which ultimately came to be called the Peninsula Campaign. He planned to leave some 30,000 troops in front of Washington and then in a huge sweep land some 120,000 more on the Virginia Peninsula which jutted out into Chesapeake Bay. From there he would have a straight march to Richmond. Adam and the First Minnesota would go with McClellan to flank the rebel capital:

We left Alexandria on a small steamer (The Golden Gate) on a rainy and snowy day after being obliged to wait in the street in the rain most all day waiting for our turn to go on board. We go on about 5 o'clock and laid anchor all night & departed next morning. There were 450 of us packed on the boat. We had mean weather during the trip or I should have enjoyed it.⁴⁴

⁴³ Colonel Gorman had been promoted to Brigadier General after the First Minnesota's performance at the Battle of Balls Bluff.

⁴⁴ Letter to Henry. April 3, 1862. *Adam Marty Correspondence*. Minnesota Historical Society.

The steamer reached Fortress Monroe and the Peninsula on April 2nd but the troops were not allowed to disembark. Many soldiers died on steamboats while being transported. Some were jostled overboard and others simply suffocated or were trampled. It was a dehumanizing experience for all as a regiment and its entire equipage were packed onto one vessel.⁴⁵ Adam spent “another miserable night on board sleeping or rather dosing setting down or standing up.” The ship was packed with men and there was no room to lie down. The next morning the First Minnesota got off their steamer at Hampton and went into camp with tens of thousands of other troops. Out in Chesapeake Bay Adam saw a “vast amount of shipping...all engaged carrying troops.” Anchored in the bay was the new age ironclad warship the *Monitor*. Just weeks before it had battled the Confederate ironclad *Merrimack*. It was one of the greatest technological innovations of the war and made all other navy craft obsolete in battle. Adam described it as a “black Yankee cheese box on a raft” and called it a “finer looking craft.”⁴⁶

Adam wrote Henry concerning the coming campaign, “I suppose that this is a flank movement and we will march for Richmond by way of Yorktown &c.” He was completely right. He added “we are well & hearty, notwithstanding all the exposure and privation we have had to undergo since we left Camp Stone.” Adam also sent Henry some poetry which he had copied, some of which was “very good.” In the coming months Adam would have little time to admire poetry.

The Peninsula Campaign (April 5-August 26, 1862)

It is here, on the eve of a great campaign that Adam’s correspondence ceases for a period of approximately five months. For the researcher it is a painful fact, but not unexpected. The Peninsula Campaign was a very active period in which Adam was constantly in enemy territory. Whenever camp was established it was not permanent and he rarely stayed in one place for any great amount of time. In addition, while on active campaign sending and receiving mail was very difficult for the average soldier as his location was always changing. To add to the mundane confusion of constant movement the Peninsula Campaign was filled with constant battle. Fifteen major battles were fought up and down the

⁴⁵ Shannon, “The Life of the Common Soldier in the Union Army, 1861-1865,” in *The Civil War Soldier*, 100-101.

⁴⁶ Letter to Henry. April 3, 1862. *Adam Marty Correspondence*. Minnesota Historical Society.

Peninsula. Adam and the First Minnesota participated in four of them: The Battle of Fair Oaks, The Battle of Savage Station, and The Battle of Malvern Hill.⁴⁷

A few occurrences, other than the sweeping battles that occurred during the campaign, are integral to Adam's story. Throughout the campaign Colonel Alfred Sully solidified his leadership. He quickly became the most militaristic colonel the First Minnesota would ever have and was beloved by the men. After the Battle of Fair Oaks Captain Downie left the regiment and returned to Stillwater. His official reason for leaving was sickness, but there were many in the Company B that did not believe it, Adam among them. Downie did not return until



Figure 10. First Minnesota Soldiers after the Battle of Fair Oaks. Minnesota Historical Society.

February of 1863 when the regiment was snugly in camp again, which added to the men's distrust of him. During the Battle of Savage Station Adam's cousin Sam, picked up the regimental colors after the Color Guard was killed. He and the rest of the Color Guard were separated from the regiment for five hours but eventually returned. For his bravery Sam was made the regiment's Color Guard Sergeant.⁴⁸

Since no letters from Adam exist during this time it is difficult to determine the effects the campaign had on him. Through later letters, the accounts of his comrades, and reports from his commanders it is possible to discern the overall influence the campaign had. There is no doubt this campaign hardened the regiment, made it a more effective fighting force and polished its reputation. The battles of the Peninsula were the first true combat experiences the regiment had faced since the Battle of Bull Run in July of 1861. As a whole the regiment proved itself, and so did Adam. After this campaign there were few cowards left in the ranks. The Minnesotans also saw military action on a vast scale. The

⁴⁷ Adam's presence during this campaign has been confirmed by the author through regimental records and Adam's mentioning of the campaign in subsequent letters.

⁴⁸ Samuel Bloomer's Scrapbook, "How the Colors Were Saved." p.94. Stillwater Public Library, Stillwater, Minnesota.

Union Army numbered over 120,000 at the time and each battle Adam participated in made Bull Run look like a skirmish.

Though Adam had faced harsh weather and disease during his months at Camp Stone it was on the Peninsula that he witnessed their true power. At times Adam slept on battlefields amongst the dead or in camps flooded with water and mud. One camp was so terrible the men dubbed it “Camp Misery.” Adam also faced the deadly power of marching and labor. On the Peninsula he was force marched for the first time over a long distance and spent weeks constructing roads and bridges. All of these factors numbed Adam’s feeling towards the reality of death. He would always be moved by the destruction the war wrought but after this campaign he accepted it.



Figure 11. Sick and wounded after the Battle of Savage’s Station, Minnesota men among them. Minnesota Historical Society

The Peninsula campaign presented the powerful experience of defeat. Though the numerous battles of the Peninsula were mostly draws, the Federal Army always retreated. Union General McClellan was pushed off Virginia soil by the new Confederate commander Robert E. Lee. After months of extreme conditions Adam and the First Minnesota boarded a steamer for Alexandria, Maryland, the same port they had left to begin the campaign.⁴⁹

The Battle of Antietam (September 17, 1862)⁵⁰

Adam received no respite after arriving in Alexandria. Following his defeat of McClellan on the Peninsula Lee rushed his army north and defeated another Union force under General Pope at the Second Battle of Bull Run. The Confederate General then made a bold push north developing his victory into an invasion. McClellan moved his forces north to meet the Rebel Army as quickly as possible. After acting

⁴⁹ For a broader account of the campaign consult one of the regimental histories.

⁵⁰ For a map of the regiment’s movement during the battle consult Moe’s regimental history.

as a rear guard for Pope's retreating army and marching over South Mountain⁵¹ the First Minnesota reached high ground overlooking the Antietam Creek and the small town of Sharpsburg.

On the morning of the 17th the two great armies faced each other across the Antietam Creek. McClellan had gathered his forces and began his attack on Lee's army early in the morning. By 7:00 a.m. two Union Corps had already crossed the creek and been repulsed with extremely heavy losses. The fighting had been more terrible than any yet seen in the war. From the opposite side of the creek Adam watched his fellow soldiers advance upon the Confederate positions through woods and a cornfield, shells sending body parts and cornstalks into the air. Sumner was ordered to advance his Corp into the maelstrom. Adam and his regiment were part of the front line of the second assault. Out front Sam was carrying the colors and he recounted what happened next:

Forded Antietam Creek marched about 1 mile, formed in line of battle & advanced through fields, woods & over fences & over the field where the battle commenced early in the morning which field was covered with the dead & wounded of both sides. At last we halted at the edge of a cornfield by a rail fence[,] had not been at the fence more than 5 minutes before a most terrible fire was pouring into the left of our brigade from the rear & front & which fire came...down the line to the right where we were. The firing was very terrible.⁵²

The day was young but it was already bloody. Entire divisions of both armies lay dead and wounded on the field. The Battle of Antietam was the single bloodiest day in American history. With fresh Confederate units advancing, the First Minnesota faced a tremendous test. They stood their ground exchanging volleys with the gray clad infantry. In battle each man relied on the other, and not one of them wanted to be a coward. Adam was a proud man and did not want to let the regiment, his state, or his comrades down. He stood firm and fired as quickly as he could. In the center of the regiment Sam leaned the colors against the fence. It was here that a musket ball shattered his right knee and he fell. Sam passed the colors to another member of the Color Guard, Corporal E.P. Perkins, and began crawling into

⁵¹ During their rear guard action the Regiment engaged in two small skirmishes at Vienna and Flint Hill. At one point they were attacked by their own cavalry and lost five men in the confused fire fight. At South Mountain the Minnesotans participated in the tail end of a small battle. They spent an evening sleeping amongst the dead before continuing their march to Sharpsburg.

⁵² Samuel Bloomer's Diary, Volume 3, *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

the nearby woods.⁵³ Before reaching safety Sam saw his “pardner” Oscar Conman, with whom Adam had wrestled on the banks of the Potomac, fall dead, a bullet passing through his skull.⁵⁴ In the chaos of battle Adam had no idea what had happened to his cousin and closest friend.

After crossing the fences the regiment passed through another small wood and came upon more of the enemy. The fighting here was the “deadliest fire” General Gorman had ever witnessed. For almost an hour the two lines of infantry sent volleys at one another. The rebels starting falling back and Adam surely felt the day was almost done, but the worst was yet to come. On the left of the Union line a fresh Confederate assault poured through a gap, flanking the First Minnesota. Soon the majority of the Federal troops went running for the rear but Colonel Sully kept the First Minnesota men retreating in good order. At times Adam and his regiment received enemy fire from three sides. Union dead lay thick around them and broken regiments ran past as the Confederate juggernaut came on. Sully kept his men in line, turned them about, and ordered them to fire. Adam leveled his musket and when the order came 300 musket balls poured into the advancing enemy staggering them.

Colonel Sully stated, “Retiring in line of battle, we halted again outside the woods, to hold the enemy in check while the rest were retiring. We were soon again engaged with the enemy, but seeing as the enemy were turning my right, I ordered the line to fall back in line of battle.” The retreat continued, men falling the whole way. Eventually the regiment made a stand behind a stone fence. The rebels, as exhausted as their opponents, did not push their luck and retired. Sully ordered his men to withdraw and they went into camp that night in Poffenberger’s fields, just north of the battlefield. Sully reported

⁵³ It is here that Color Sgt. Samuel Bloomer supposedly tore the colors from their staff, stuffing them into his shirt and prevented their capture. The primary evidence supporting this occurrence has not been found by the author. The official regimental history published in 1917 mentions his “adventure” (p 221-222) but not the “saving of the colors.” Later in life Sam wrote an article which he entitled “How the Colors were Saved” (which can be found in Bloomer’s Scrapbook p.94). In this article Sam describes how he saved the colors at the battle of Savage Station, *not* the battle of Antietam. He himself writes that when wounded at the battle of Antietam he passed the Colors to Corporal E.P. Perkins and then crawled into the woods. He does *not* mention anything about tearing the colors from the staff. More importantly Sam does not mention “saving the colors” in his own war diary. Within this diary is an entry explaining his experience in battle on the 17th of September, 1862. He himself states that he simply crawled into the nearby woods. All information found by the author supporting his famous deed at Antietam has been secondary (either a later regimental history or newspaper article). Even Bloomer’s enormous gravesite statue says nothing of his deed at Antietam. Therefore it has not been included in this paper as it may not be based on actual fact. It is the informed opinion of the author that Samuel Bloomer’s saving of the regimental colors never occurred.

⁵⁴ Samuel Bloomer’s Diary, Volume 3, *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

casualties for the regiment: 15 dead, 79 wounded, and 24 missing. Sam was among them. Afterwards Adam reflected on the battle saying, “I saw more of the horrors of war...around Antietam than I ever want to witness again. Oh! Who can tell the tales of human misery & suffering borne then[?]”⁵⁵

After Antietam (September 18-22, 1862)

After battle surviving soldiers had a subsequent task to endure: burying the dead. For two days following the battle both armies did just that in addition to gathering the wounded. In the era of the Civil War society’s values concerning the dead were tested in the extreme. In the Victorian age “redemption and resurrection of the body were understood as physical, not just metaphysical, realities, and therefore the body, even in death and dissolution, preserved a ““surviving identity.”⁵⁶” For the Christian soldier in the Civil War dealing with death and burial was a trying moral experience. The average soldier was used to dealing with death on an individual basis, and with great attention to respect and religion.

On a battlefield these societal rules could not always be followed. Bodies were buried in shallow graves and trenches. When only body parts could be found they were gathered and buried as decently as possible. For the individual soldier, finding one’s missing friends was of the greatest importance. Each man felt a duty to give his close comrades a respectful burial if they fell. For two days Adam buried the dead of Antietam and agonized over the fate of his cousin. It seems no one had found Sam or knew whether he was dead.

After the battle ended Sam lay in the woods for two days. The cousin’s close friend Oscar lay dead within his sight the entire time. Eventually he was picked up by a Confederate squad and brought to a barn where wounded were being treated. He stayed there until the 19th of September. The Confederate Army, reeling from their losses, retreated south and Sam fell into the hands of his countrymen. Finally that evening, Sam’s “dear cousin” Adam found him lying by the barn.⁵⁷ Adam, his duty fulfilled, returned to camp and wrote the Jackmans. He reported Sam’s condition, and that he would survive. Sam

⁵⁵ Letter to Sam. Camp First Minnesota. February 6, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁵⁶ Faust, Drew Gilpin. *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008), 62.

⁵⁷ Samuel Bloomer’s Diary, Volume 3, *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

would survive but not before losing his leg. On the 20th Sam was moved to Smoketown Field Hospital where the regimental surgeon Dr. Edmund G. Pugsley amputated his right leg above the knee. It was a day Sam would “long remember.”⁵⁸ As the months wore on Sam would discover Pugsley had done a terrible job.

Upon hearing the news Adam and his close friend Myron Shepard took “a tramp to find” Sam but “Dr. Pugsley showed [them] the wrong direction so that [they] could not find” him. The pair searched more than “5 hospitals.”⁵⁹ Adam became desperate to find his cousin until his friend George Hooker reported Sam’s location. Under marching orders, Adam was unable to visit him and so he wrote:

I just heard from Oliver that you have lost your leg for which I am very sorry, but hope it will not disable you entirely. I should have been down to see you but I did not know where you was until a short time ago, then we were under marching orders, we were liable to march any moment. I am sorry I did not know this morning where you was, I could then have seen you. I sincerely hope you will soon recover at least so that you can rejoin your friends in Minnesota.⁶⁰

Return to Harper’s Ferry (September 22-October 16, 1862)

After burying the dead of Antietam, Adam and his regiment marched south to their old camp at Bolivar Heights overlooking Harpers Ferry. Before the Battle of Antietam the town had been retaken by Confederate General Stonewall Jackson who captured 12,000 Union troops in the process. McClellan and his superiors were determined not to lose the vital junction again. The regiment and the rest of the Second Corps stayed in Camp there for six weeks. During that time they received new clothes, their pay and a visit from McClellan and Lincoln who reviewed them on dress parade. Colonel Sully was promoted and was replaced by Colonel George Morgan.

In mid October Adam was granted a pass to visit Sam in Smoketown Hospital near the site of the late battle. When Sam laid eyes on his closest friend in the world he gave “a conscious cry.” Adam wept seeing his cousin’s “tearful, joyful look.” Both of them knew Sam would be going home to Stillwater as soon as he was well enough. They knew they might not see each other for years and perhaps never again.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Letter to Sam. Around October, 19 [1862]. (Ruth Ellen Bauer transcription). *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁶⁰ Letter to Sam. September, [1862]. (Ruth Ellen Bauer transcription). *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

Adam's pass was only for a day so he was forced to leave Sam's side. Both promised to write as often as possible. Adam later wrote Sam about his feelings that day:

Oh that was a meeting I shall never forget. Often when I returned to camp the next day would the tears spring to my eyes, as my thoughts wandered back to the poor Boy I had just seen, for one short day and then left in that hospital. May I never be compelled to see another dear friend in such a situation Sam!⁶¹

Back at camp things went on as usual. Adam was relieved of picket duty for a few days due to exhaustion and his friend Rufus Blanchard fell ill. Promotions in the regiment began again, as they always did after a battle. True to tradition, Corporal E.P. Perkins who had carried the colors after Sam fell was promoted to Color Sergeant. Sergeant Shepard recommended Adam be promoted to Corporal but the position was filled by another. Adam told Sam "it don't make no difference to me, I just as leave remain a private and only wish I could soon be a citizen." It was here that Adam's ambition for soldiering began to take a turn. After being a soldier for over a year and a half the excitement had worn off. He longed to reenter society again but, having enlisted for three years, his term of service was only half over.

After Sam was wounded Adam's spirits sank. Adam's primary group which had helped him through the war thus far had begun to disappear. Sam was wounded and would never return to the regiment. Oscar Cornman was dead, and Rufus Blanchard was sick. Adam was disillusioned with the war. He had borne the shocks of battle, discipline, death and destruction.⁶² Now he was alone. Though dealing with his own loneliness Adam realized he needed to console his cousin. By late October Sam had spent weeks laying in a field hospital dealing with terrible surroundings and mind numbing hours. Upon receiving a morose letter from Sam, Adam responded with a sympathetic note:

I can easily imagine how irksome the hours are to you and how you long to be among those dear friends in Minnesota. And I should very much like to see you there, surrounded once more by kind friends and comforts of home.⁶³

⁶¹ Letter to Sam. Camp First Minnesota. February 6, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁶² For an in depth analysis of Civil War soldiers' disillusionment, see Linderman's *Embattled Courage*, 240.

⁶³ Letter to Sam. Bolivar Heights, October 30, [1862]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

Adam told Sam he would like nothing more than to be at his side but that he had to “be dutiful with [his] lonely lot” and finish his term of service without Sam’s “dear company.”⁶⁴

With the destruction of his group of friends Adam faced the rest of his soldiering with a determined resolve. Soldiering became primarily about one thing for Adam: work. In America during the mid to late 19th century people defined themselves through their work and its value to society. Victorians relied “on the psychic stability of...work...in which something was always produced, no matter what quality.”⁶⁵ Though soldiering had become Adam’s adversary he did what he could to relieve his sadness. He poured himself into becoming a professional and filled all of his leisure time with reading or writing letters. After writing Sam the consolatory letter Adam was on the march again and would be doing a lot more work.

The Loudoun Valley (October 17-November 8, 1862)

The First Minnesota became part of a second attempt to push Confederate forces out of the Shenandoah Valley area. They advanced into the smaller Loudoun Valley while another Union force, commanded by General Burnside, attempted to trap the rebels as they fell back. Adam and his regiment saw very little of the enemy until they reached Upperville and began skirmishing with their rear guard. The brigade was deployed in line of battle and was about to advance “when an order came from Gen. Couch (Our Corps Commander)⁶⁶ for us to halt which we had to do, at this the enemy got off with but little loss.”⁶⁷ For the next few days they marched further up the valley, reconnoitering here and camping there without encountering the enemy. General McClellan himself came forward with the regiment to survey the country but the rebels were a long ways off. Adam spent the rest of October on picket duty guarding gaps in the Mountains and camped in the town of Paris until November 8th. Throughout this

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Rose, *Victorian America and the Civil War*, 79.

⁶⁶ While in camp at Bolivar General Sumner was granted a leave of absence. He was ill and in need of rest being the oldest commander in either army. General Darius Couch took command of the 2nd Corps of which the First Minnesota was a part. General Sedgwick (the division commander) having received mortal wounds at Antietam was replaced by Gorman, who in turn was replaced by Sully. This left the colonelcy of the First Minnesota open and hence Colonel Morgan took command.

⁶⁷ Letter to Sam. Warrentown Va. November 10, [1862]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

short campaign filled with marching, Adam and his comrades took to foraging. The Shenandoah Valley was the breadbasket of Virginia. Farms were everywhere and the men took advantage of the plentiful country they were in:

We stole everything we could lay hands on, such as apples, potatoes, sheep, & chickens which we cooked with their rails. The best thief fared the best. At Uppersville everyone in our Co. & almost in the Regt. had a chicken or a piece of hog or mutton, and cooking was going on almost all night. Shep & I each had a piece of ram & a chicken.⁶⁸

“Much of the foraging was done by regularly appointed groups led by an officer.”⁶⁹ Adam took part in one of these groups which were usually required to pay civilians. They had an interesting encounter with a local farmer:

We came across an old Secesh, who had a big orchard and a brick house, we tried to buy some apples of[f] him but the old cuss would not take our money. So we tried him with counterfeit Secesh money which the old fool took readily. A fellow of Co. E who had a \$100 bill tried to buy a whole flock of sheep with it, but the old fellow would not part with them though he was offered a good price. I guess he will curse the Yankees some by & by.⁷⁰

From Warrenton to Fredericksburg (November 9-December 11, 1862)

By mid November of 1862 the Federal army began concentrating at Warrenton, Virginia in preparation for another push towards Richmond. More promotions were granted in the Company. Adam’s close friend John Densmore was placed in the color guard. The boys took to calling him the Company Monkey (a racial slur against African Americans) or the Colored Gent because he guarded the regimental colors. Captain Mark Downie had been gone a long while and Adam prayed Lieutenant Muller, whom he was friends with, would be given command of the company. “We lived to get Muller in Downie’s place but could not succeed, as D is said to come back again, (hope he won’t).”⁷¹

While Adam’s company commanders were changing an even greater change took place. Convinced that McClellan did not have the backbone to attack Lee and advance on Richmond, Lincoln

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Wiley, Bell Irvin. *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union*. (New York: Charter Books, 1952), 234.

⁷⁰ Letter to Sam. Warrentown Va. November 10, [1862]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁷¹ Ibid. In many of his letters Adam refers to Captain Mark Downie simply as “D.”

relieved him of command for the second time and replaced him with General Ambrose Burnside.⁷² The entire Army of the Potomac loved McClellan. Adam considered himself a McClellan man and took the news very hard. His sense of duty, work, and pride were tied to the commander he had followed for over a year. He felt it was a grave mistake and had a great deal to say about it:

Gen. McClellan has been superseded by Burnside, which is no doubt true as we were today drawn up near the road to bid him farewell, and see him for the last time as commander, we gave him a rousing cheer, when he passed though most of us felt more like crying. It was a sad day this and you can imagine the feelings of the army and the effect it will have. There we stood in line to see him our beloved Gen. for the last time and old veterans who had followed him the past year and never quailed before an enemy [or] cannon & musketry sadly stood and stared at him while the tears coursed down their bearded faces. I could cry like a child when I think of it. It is a discharge for [us] & the country, and will be worth more to the Rebs than a great victory.⁷³



Figure 12. General Ambrose Burnside, 1862. Minnesota Historical Society.

Under Burnside the army soon marched for Fredericksburg. Now a veteran of many campaigns, Adam could tell a battle was on the horizon. He wrote to Sam expressing his hope that his cousin would soon be able to return to Stillwater. Towards the end of his letter he told Sam of his great loneliness. On the eve of battle Adam wanted nothing more than to be alongside his old friends and with his “primary group:”

I often think of you and Oscar when we [had many] little joys, and every time I hear singing it puts me in mind of our loud choir and how sadly it was broken up and then tears will spring to my eyes in spite of me, when I think of the once happy & cheerful companions I once had. I don't know what fate has in here for me yet, but whether good or bad, I pray you to be cheerful and enjoy yourself when you get home, and give yourself no uneasiness on my account, and I hope we will see each other again.⁷⁴

Just as Adam predicted, the army broke camp on November 15th and marched for Fredericksburg reaching the heights of Falmouth on the 17th. When they reached the vicinity of the town they were not

⁷² After his failure on the Peninsula McClellan had been relieved of command and General Pope had command of all Union forces. However, Pope was soundly defeated at the Battle of Second Manassas and McClellan was reinstated. At this time he was permanently relieved of command. He ran against Lincoln in the 1864 on the Democratic ticket.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

allowed to cross the Rappahannock River. Burnside wanted his entire army concentrated so it could advance as one unstoppable force. Adam received word from Sergeant Shepard, who was in Washington, that the patients at Smoketown Hospital were being moved. Not knowing where Sam was, and being on the move, Adam could not write to his confidant for some time. Finally after receiving a letter from Sam he learned his cousin remained at Smoketown. He replied, “well my old hero, did you begin to think that I had forgotten you. If you had any thoughts you are rather mistaken. I have thought of you every day...[and I hope] you have not been doubting my love to you.”⁷⁵

In a time when manhood was highly valued it is surprising to find one man declaring his love to another as openly as Adam does. Correspondence during the war gave voice to many soldier’s deepest emotions, some so private “that they found expression only on paper.”⁷⁶ The fact that Adam wrote this, even in an extreme condition, is very telling. He and his cousin were extremely close and given Adam’s family situation they were like brothers.

Adam assured Sam that he was in “good health & spirits” but had only Fritz Marty⁷⁷ to keep him company as Rufus Blanchard was still in the hospital at Harpers Ferry. Adam knew the Union army was gathering and he could see the Confederates across the river occupying the town of Fredericksburg and the heights beyond it. He prayed to God that he could “only have good health and be as fortunate in battle as [he had] hither to been.” He closed his letter declaring to Sam, “I remain until death your affectionate cousin Adam.”⁷⁸ Within a week he would be in battle once more.

The Battle of Fredericksburg (December 11-15, 1862)⁷⁹

On December 11, 1862 Union artillery massed on Stafford Heights opposite Fredericksburg began shelling the town. Afterwards infantry crossed the river on pontoon bridges and cleared the

⁷⁵ Letter to Sam. Camp near Falmouth Opp. Fredericksburg. December 4, [1862]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁷⁶ Rose, *Victorian America and the Civil War*, 128.

⁷⁷ Fridolin (Fritz) Marty was not related to Adam. Many Swiss families lived in the Stillwater area and “Marti” or “Marty” was a very common name.

⁷⁸ Letter to Sam. Camp near Falmouth Opp. Fredericksburg. December 4, [1862]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁷⁹ Adam wrote a detailed account of the battle to his adoptive father Henry Jackman. It was not found by the author and may no longer exist.

Confederates out of the town in brutal street fighting. At sundown Fredericksburg was all but secured and the First Minnesota crossed over the river. When they entered the town their eyes feasted on an interesting sight. The Union troops assigned to hold the town were looting it instead. Some of the First Minnesota men took part in the ransacking which lasted into the night.

The entire day of the 12th consisted of looting and feasting. Adam did his share, though he stole things the common soldier would not have found valuable. It is amazing that even during this time of pandemonium Adam stole things that would improve his character:

We got lots of things over there but could not carry much with us. I got a beautiful little [book] formerly belonging to Miss Lucy Mellford. I also got an Atlas, but after keeping it strapped to my back for 24 hours I had to leave it. I saw the handsomest parlors there I ever saw in my life. Furnished with paintings & library &c. The soldiers ran the institution themselves without the help of City Council or Mayor drumming on the pianos &c.⁸⁰

That night the regiment was moved to the outskirts of Fredericksburg and assigned to a cold night of picket duty. On the morning of December 13, 1862 Burnside ordered the Union forces to assault the entrenched Confederate troops occupying Marye's Heights. Fortunately the First Minnesota was marched to the extreme right of the battlefield and held in reserve. Although they came under severe artillery fire, they did not take part in the most terrible one sided slaughter of the war.

Wave after wave of blue clad troops were sent at the Confederate army, which was dug in behind stone walls and had the entire open field covered by their cannon.⁸¹ Throughout the day nine grand assaults were made, each being beaten back with enormous casualties. A member of the regiment later wrote, "It was murder to attempt such an assault...but the orders were imperative, and were obeyed."⁸² The other two brigades in the Minnesotan's division charged and were slaughtered. Sully was ordered to advance his brigade as well but he refused. Sully was quoted as saying, "They might court martial me

⁸⁰ Letter to Sam. Fredericksburg VA. January 12, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁸¹ When General Lee asked his artillery commander, Colonel Alexander Porter, if his cannon were deployed adequately the colonel replied "A chicken couldn't live on that field."

⁸² Moe, Richard. *The Last Full Measure* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1993), 213.

and be damned, I was not going to murder my men, and it would be nothing less than murder to have sent them there.”⁸³

Adam spent that night sleeping on a sidewalk in Fredericksburg. The next morning all was quiet except for a few Confederate shells sweeping down the streets. The men spent the day dodging artillery rounds and were ordered forward onto the open field of carnage that evening. During the night Colonel Morgan provided them with shovels and picks to dig rifle pits. He did not want his men caught out in the open when morning came. For the next two days (the 14th and 15th) Adam took cover in a hastily dug rifle pit. Shells rained down on the front line of Union troops and Confederate sharpshooters took a dreadful toll. Several other regiments fled back to town shirking their front line duty. On the night of the 14th a natural phenomenon occurred. In the skies above Fredericksburg the Northern Lights began to shine. They were rarely seen so far south. Being out on the battlefield amongst thousands of dead and dying, there can be little doubt Adam looked up with wonder. Above on Marye’s Heights General Lee felt God was blessing the Confederate cause.

All day on the 15th the men hunkered down in their rifle pits exchanging fire with Confederate snipers. Enemy cannon continued to pound the Union positions and several other regiments of Sully’s brigade broke and ran. The First Minnesota held firm and never wavered. On the night of the 15th the regiment withdrew to the town where they encountered demoralized Union troops. Upon their return Adam and the regiment came upon the 34th New York, another regiment in their brigade. Regular Army troops had been telling the New Yorkers that the First Minnesota had broke and ran earlier in the day. “The 34th Boys could not stand it but jumped up and told them they had, and that [the First Minnesota] could lick all the regulars in the U.S.”

Adam recounted the scene of his regiment’s meeting with the 34th Boys:

In the evening when we came in, they rushed up to us and secured our hands & asked us, you didn’t run did you. & on recovering a negative reply they could scarcely hide their joy or

⁸³ Ibid.

emotions while some actually shed tears, and then cheered for us. I tell you it won't be safe for anyone to say anything against us in their hearing.⁸⁴

This encounter shows just how good a regiment the First Minnesota was. The pride of other Union units was tied to the First's reputation. It was a great honor to be a member of the First Minnesota Volunteers and other soldiers looked to them for leadership. After allaying the fears of their sister regiment Adam and his comrades crossed back over the Rappahannock River. Upon seeing General Sully, division commander General Howard congratulated him saying, "Sully, your First Minnesota doesn't run!" Sully declared in calm voice, "General the First Minnesota never runs."⁸⁵

Camp Falmouth (December 16, 1862-May 1, 1863)

Following the Battle of Fredericksburg both armies settled into winter camp and once again tedium set in. Drilling began, the construction of winter huts, picket duty along a river, and army politics. While Adam had been in the deadly crucible of Fredericksburg and going into camp, Sam was doing something completely different. Having been pronounced well enough by the doctors at Smoketown Hospital he went home to Stillwater, minus one leg.

The *Pioneer Newspaper* reported on the arrival of the gallant color bearer. Friends and family were there to meet him when he got off a steamer at Stillwater. He began living with "Father Jackman" and his wife Sivy who attended to Sam's every need. The town celebrated him and, though he had one leg, it seems the girls began to croon over him. "Wounds offered opportunities to demonstrate a courage transcending even that of the battlefield." Sam's awesome wound was proof of what was called "hospital courage." This kind of courage meant "staying calm and not complaining, even to the point of death."⁸⁶ It was a true test of manhood and Sam was respected for his triumph.

Sam visited some of his friends in St. Paul, as well as Captain Downie among them. By this time Downie was under investigation for his long absence from the regiment. He argued he was sick for a time and then had attempted to recruit new volunteers for the First Minnesota's decimated ranks. This may

⁸⁴ Letter to Sam. Fredericksburg VA. January 12, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁸⁵ Moe, *The Last Full Measure*, 215-216.

⁸⁶ Linderman, *Embattled Courage*, 30.

have been true, but many construed his absence as cowardice and his reputation had suffered. Getting on the good side of Sam, a great war hero of the regiment, could only do Downie good. Adam was instantly suspicious of Downie writing, “How did our illustrious Capt. treat you? I suppose from a knowledge of his character and circumstances that he would be very anxious to make a good impression on you.” Other than Sam’s meeting with Downie, Adam only had words of gladness for his cousin:

I heard from the Pioneer of your arrival there, and to tell you that I was extremely happy to hear it would but feebly express my joy at reading such welcome news and the knowledge that you had been able to leave a bed of suffering, and was now once more in that sweet place ‘Home.’⁸⁷

Adam could not help marking the contrast in their lives. He told his cousin, “to state to you that I now wish myself at your side would be nothing more than human. But I am thankful at least you are there.”⁸⁸

Always trying to look on the bright side of things, Adam accepted his life as a soldier and prayed he would go home after doing his duty honorably:

While I have to stay I will do my duty, lonesome as it is without you & cheer myself with the thoughts & sweet consolation that I have friends at home who pray for me whenever I go on duty may lead me and that there’s ‘One’ above to take care of us everywhere.⁸⁹

Though nestled in a cozy hut with his messmate Myron Shepard, who had been recently promoted to Lieutenant, and safely in winter camp, there was a gloom upon Adam, and the whole army. Every soldier knew they had been mismanaged at Fredericksburg and they had long days in camp to mull it over in their heads:

It is so awful dull in camp now since we came back from town. The army has lost a great deal of confidence in that sad failure, and all wish Little Mac. would come back again. They have no faith in Burnside...and are a good deal disgusted with the conduct of the war, the administration at Washington, and their incessant quarrelling & want of unity which threatens to ruin the Country if it has not done so already.⁹⁰

With the beginning of the month of January Adam would have something to be glad about as the tedium of camp life was broken.

⁸⁷ Letter to Sam. Fredericksburg VA. December 29, [1862]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid. Fredericksburg was a battle in which even the enlisted man could understand the blatant lack of command. Burnside had ordered nine frontal assaults in all and attempted to lead the last one personally as tears streamed down his face. Nearly 13,000 Union soldiers fell before the Confederate held heights.

The usual routine of promotion after battle began again. After the Loudoun Valley campaign, Fredericksburg, battlefield promotions, and a bout of sickness the Company was down to about thirty men. Due to his steady service Adam was promoted to Corporal. Happy, but modest as always, he informed Sam of his appointment:

I have only to say that it was entirely unexpected on my part, for as you well know, I never made any efforts or flattery as some did to get promoted which is quite a mental satisfaction for me. There is probably not a man in the Co. that is envious of my luck, or jealous of me. But all say I deserved it by steadily pursuing my duties through thick & thin with the rest of them.⁹¹

Though Adam had volunteered for some very selfless reasons, he also did it for others: personal gain and advancement in society. In Adam's world men were defined by their career and standing in society. A profession not only gave one a purpose but a place. Having been an apprentice to a painter before the war Adam could only move up in society. The war was a unique phenomenon in which men could attempt to fulfill their ambition and even exceed their own expectations. However, Victorian Culture contested selfish ambition at every point. Men had to juggle advancement of the self with the advancement of communal well being. By risking one's life for America, one's "vigorous personal enterprise" could be overlooked and even applauded.⁹² Even though he was only a Corporal, the rank would give Adam a higher standing in his community back home, provided he survived the war.

Adam refused to let Sam address him as Corporal in their correspondence, saying he would always be the same old Adam. He was the Adam that everyone in the Company had always known. Unless on picket, he spent most of his time writing by the fire in his mess' 7x13 hut. He wrote so much that that Company B gave him the nickname "Scribendi."⁹³ His messmates Myron Shepard or "Shep," Sam Nickerson, and Albert Davis were of like mind. "No playing cards or gambling is allowed,



Figure 13. Albert S. Davis, 1862. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁹¹ Letter to Sam. Fredericksburg VA. January 12, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁹² Rose, *Victorian America and the Civil War*, 101.

⁹³ Adam tells Sam about this nickname he earned. He signs several of his letters "Scribendi."

but we amuse ourselves with writing or something useful.”⁹⁴ Adam read the book he had stolen at Fredericksburg telling Sam that while looting the town “I saw lots of things I should like to have sent you, among others a book called the Farmers & Mechanics Architect with designs for Barns & Cottages &c.”⁹⁵ but I could not mail it.”⁹⁶

While sitting by the fire writing, he updated Sam on other occurrences during the first two weeks of the New Year. In such close quarters men inevitably began to annoy one another. Company B was no exception. Their friend David Lord had been made orderly. Lord was the most energetic man in the company, barely able to sit down for five minutes. Adam found great amusement in Lord’s promotion to a position that required attention to detail writing, “He is about as well fitted for that station as Satan is for a preacher.”⁹⁷ As Lord ran about the camp conveying orders, Dr. Pugsley, who had amputated Sam’s leg at Antietam, visited every mess to the men’s annoyance. Pugsley was the man in the regiment that everyone avoided at all costs. In every company there was one man dubbed a “Jonah.” This was the man that meant well, but by his very nature annoyed everyone he spoke to.⁹⁸ Pugsley was nose-y and interrogated anyone holding a letter. “Scribendi” had to deal with him a considerable amount:

So Pugsley is still here but is ridiculed by everybody for his old Granny ways. He comes in here to see us sometimes and always has a lot of questions to ask, if any of us has got any letters he wants to know who wrote it when & where & what was in it, which is perfectly disgusting to hear. I got a letter one day and he wanted to know all about it, & I plainly told him it was none of his business.⁹⁹

On that same day Pugsley annoyed Adam again for another reason.

Due to his promotion Myron Shepard was going to leave the Company soon and hence leave Adam without a messmate. Adam cringed when Pugsley “tried to come in our mess as my partner,” and flatly told him “I would rather take my blanket and sleep outdoors than have him for a partner.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ Letter to Sam. Fredericksburg VA. January 12, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁹⁵ The book that Adam refers to is likely *The Farmer’s and Mechanic’s Practical Handbook and Guide in Rural Economy*, written by James H. Hammond in 1858. Before the war Samuel Bloomer was employed by the County Treasurer as a carpenter and probably would have enjoyed this book.

⁹⁶ Letter to Sam. Fredericksburg VA. January 12, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Billings, John D. *Hartack and Coffee*. (Boston: George M. Smith & Co., 1887), 92-94.

⁹⁹ Letter to Sam. Fredericksburg VA. January 12, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

Pugsley would not be as fun a messmate as the company clown “Shep,” and for quite some time Adam was in an awkward situation. Luckily, by the time “Shep” left Adam’s mess a few weeks later, Rufus Blanchard, or “Old Ironsides” as the boys called him, who had been sick since Harpers Ferry returned. Adam was very glad to “hitch horses” with Rufus and “take him for [his] partner.” When Pugsley found out he “left in disgust” and walked over to the regiment’s drill ground on the Rappahannock. Adam noted that “nobody cried” when he left as everyone hated him.¹⁰¹

On January 1, 1863 the Emancipation Proclamation officially went into effect. The Proclamation had been issued immediately after the Battle of Antietam. The men had scarcely had a chance to form an opinion of it. Now in camp and reminded of its existence Adam outlined his views in a letter to Sam. They were not those of modern society’s mythologized Union soldier:

The good of [it] as a war measure has not been proved yet, it may be for the best, though it seems somewhat ludicrous to proclaim Negroes free when we have no power over them. I am as much in favor of abolishing slavery as anybody provided it can be done consistently and without sacrificing everything, Blood, Lives, & Treasure for the Almighty Nigger, or to make him equal to the white man. For I don’t want any of them around me.¹⁰²

Adam justified his feelings towards Negroes saying, “I used to be partial to them, but since I have been in the army & seen them treated better than a white man...when sick soldiers were walking alongside...I lost all my love for the Colored Gentlemen.”¹⁰³ He was not alone in his feelings. Very few soldiers had volunteered to “free the slaves” and viewed the proclamation as an act which had yet to prove its consequences.

For many soldiers the reasons for fighting two years into the war were many. The youthful exuberance of adventure was gone and had been replaced by a somber acceptance of war’s deadly realities. Yet patriotism, duty, manliness, honor, and holiness remained. These values often became

¹⁰¹ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. February 18, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society. Dr. Edmund G. Pugsley would stay with the regiment through the Battle of Gettysburg. On August 15, 1863 he was dismissed from the service for stealing a horse conduct unbecoming an officer. However, on January 19, 1864 President Lincoln personally revoked the charges because all of the evidence had been “circumstantial.” Pugsley joined the 9th Minnesota Infantry Volunteers and served with them until they were discharged on August 24, 1865.

¹⁰² Letter to Sam. Fredericksburg VA. January 30, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

inseparable from one another and combined to form a soldier's determination.¹⁰⁴ Adam possessed all of these values. In addition, he had used the strict life of a soldier to reform his behavior. There were two main versions of manhood in Victorian America: "the hard drinking, gambling, whoring two-fisted man" and the "somber, responsible, dutiful" man.¹⁰⁵ Adam had transformed himself from one into the other:

With regard to my morals I would state that I have always & always shall lead as [good] a Christian life as a soldier can, and always put my trust in God. I have led a better life in the Army than I did out of it. I have left of swearing & drinking & abhor gambling above all things. I read the bible more or less every day. Still strictly speaking I am not a religious man but intend to live a good moral life, so that my friends need not be ashamed of me when I come back to them. And be prepared to meet death if God so wills it.¹⁰⁶

For Adam, the war had become a crusade of spirituality. He was a Protestant who practiced his religion internally, reading the Bible and praying. To Yankee Protestants of the age, the Republic was a moral triumph of Christianity. The center of government was in the Protestant North and thus civilization's progress was thought to flow from there. Adam saw his fellow northern Protestants as God's chosen people. They were destined to expand west and stand as a political example to the world. The Rebellion threatened the great Protestant nation and all wondered "if the chosen light should fail, how great would be the darkness[?]"¹⁰⁷ If the American Republic was destroyed, so too would be the hopes of people aspiring to freedom across the globe. Like many Yankee soldiers, Adam's religious beliefs enforced his patriotism and kept him dedicated to the cause even if it cost him his life. Northern soldiers looked at themselves as "God's chosen instruments for saving the Union" and they hoped to fulfill the "republican ideal of a virtuous citizenry willing to sacrifice for self government."¹⁰⁸

Adam was ever mindful of death, as those who lived in his time inevitably were. Yet, he was probably the furthest from death he had been since Camp Stone. Adam reported to Sam, "I now weigh 156 which is the most I ever weighed. All the boys here are in good health, many getting fat." Along

¹⁰⁴ Linderman, Gerald F., "Embattled Courage," in *The Civil War Soldier*, ed. Michael Barton and Larry M. Logue. New York: New York University Press. p.438-441.

¹⁰⁵ McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 26.

¹⁰⁶ Letter to Sam. Fredericksburg VA. January 12, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁰⁷ Moorhead, James H., *American Apocalypse* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978), 55.

¹⁰⁸ Costa Dora L. and Kahn, Matthew E., *Heroes & Cowards: the Social Face of War* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), 162.

with watching his weight Adam was planning a surprise for somebody back in Stillwater. Valentine's Day was approaching and he had not forgotten the young beauty Emma Prescott who had given him her picture before he left Stillwater. She was now nearly eighteen and old enough to be courted, which Adam would try to do from hundreds of miles away. Adam let Sam in on his plan and began a confidential correspondence with him labeling the letters "private business:"

Enclosed in this you find a letter or Valentine for Emma Prescott which I wish you would put in the post office for me, on the 14th of Feb. or if you cannot go yourself you send it by some trusty person, Henry will do. But don't let anybody else see it. As you will probably hear from it and know who it is from you can have a heap of fun with her about it. When you write let me know all about it will you!¹⁰⁹

Sam was also doing well. He sent his photograph to Adam, who showed it to all the boys and officers. They were all surprised he was looking so well. Adam was so impressed with the photograph that he sent Sam one of himself in his next letter lamenting, "it is a very poor production for the artist was a botch...and a one horse concern generally."¹¹⁰ He added, "by the way I forgot to ask Henry in his letter that I wish as a particular favor, that he could send me his picture, with Alice, Ad & Sivy if he can."¹¹¹

Sam informed his cousin that he had been out on a ride recently with a mysterious "companion," one that Adam wished to know more about. He had also been associating more with Captain Downie. The estranged captain was doing all he could to gain Sam's favor, going so far as to bake him a cake. It almost seemed to be working when Sam asked Adam why he disliked Downie so much. Adam had more than enough to say but limited himself to one reason in particular:

The principle reason I am down on him is, on account of his abusive crusade against McClellan & other Generals. You may have altered your opinions since leaving the army, but you know you was as much a McClellan man on the Peninsula as I was.¹¹²

Along with being anti-McClellan, Downie had published an attack against the regimental color bearer, Ellet P. Perkins, in an attempt to make himself look better. Adam declared that the regiment all hoped Downie would be "dismissed or cashiered for that cowardly attack on Perkins." In the end Adam

¹⁰⁹ Letter to Sam. Fredericksburg VA. January 27, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹¹⁰ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. February 2, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹¹¹ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. February 18, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society. (The Jackman family that Adam and Sam spent so much time with consisted of Henry, his wife Saviah or Sivy, and their two daughters Addie and Alice.)

¹¹² Letter to Sam. Fredericksburg VA. January 30, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

sarcastically admitted to Sam that he would be partial to him “if he also gave me a big cake. I am pretty sure I would like him as long as the cake lasted.”¹¹³

When not corresponding with Sam and avoiding Dr. Pugsley, Adam was doing picket duty on the banks of the Rappahannock. During the winter of 1862-1863 the armies were in a situation similar to their previous encampment on the Potomac. As before, they conversed with one another; even went over to the opposite bank to play cards or trade coffee for tobacco. A year after Camp Stone the two armies had come to know each other much better. They had killed each other in the Shenandoah Valley, all along the Peninsula, around the small Bull Run Creek a second time, again at Antietam, and most recently in the cold inferno of Fredericksburg. They were bitter enemies but there was an undeniable camaraderie between the two armies; a sense that they were all still countrymen. Adam talked with a “Johnny Reb” many times. He wrote to Sam about it in mid February:

The river is about as wide as the Potomac...and the picketing is about as dangerous either party lounging about looking over at each other without guns. Sometimes talking with each other. They asked me what Regt. we belonged to, I told them, and then they shouted Bully for you. We are old acquaintances 4th Alabama. You are the chaps that lay in their rifle pits ain't you. I told him yes. [He responded,] we thought there was some good Regt. there for we could not chase you out. Did you have any killed that day? No I replied. H—I say he and there the confab stopped.¹¹⁴

Other than talking with rebel pickets when guarding the shore of the Rappahannock there was not much to do in the snow covered landscape. Adam was so bored on picket and in camp that he tried to live another life back in Stillwater. He had already sent a Valentine to Emma Prescott, which he hoped Sam had delivered per his orders, but while waiting for a response he was also keeping an eye on a young girl whom he simply called “M.”¹¹⁵ In reality Sam was observing “M.,” acting as Adam’s spy in Stillwater and he was doing his job well. He went and had dinner with M. and her family which was headed by her oppressive and overprotective father. Adam was delighted with the progress but wanted a more detailed account asking,

¹¹³ Letter to Sam. Camp First Minnesota. February 6, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹¹⁴ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. February 18, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹¹⁵ Later in his correspondence Adam calls her “Margt.” or Margret. It seems she was related to someone named Klasy who lived in Stillwater. At one point it is inferred that she merely boards in the house of a man named Klasy while her father lives elsewhere.

How is the show there? Is the enemy's position strong? Or can I easily take them? How is the old man? Ready to parley &c. capitulate? Or is he still in force? I want you to throw your skirmishers in that direction.¹¹⁶

Sam enjoyed spying for his cousin, but he was a busy man in his own right when it came to the ladies. Things with his riding "companion" were developing. In Adam and Sam's correspondence her name was "A.C.," nothing more. The two were very careful about writing the names of the girls they were pursuing; always afraid someone else might read their letters. Plus, the initials added to the covert nature of the operations they were engaged in. The two seemed to revel in the fun of it like little school boys. Unbeknownst to A.C. Sam was planning on proposing to her. Back from the war and a local celebrity, he had great confidence. Upon hearing the progress Sam was making in his courtship Adam declared playfully, "a man with only one leg makes the best show." He was very pleased, believing that A.C. would make a "wonderful wife." But he warned Sam to never let her get the better of him:

I presume your principal drill now is Present & Support arms and storming Breastworks, and going scouting. Do they ever drive your pickets in...and make you surrender...I hope you will never retreat! But keep up your reputation at home as well as you did in the field.¹¹⁷

Later that month Adam took to the drill field. Everyone in the army, from privates to generals, could see that the men were getting lethargic and apathetic. Rufus, who had recovered from his illness only weeks ago, was a prime example. He weighed 170 lbs, had a very good appetite and was beginning to get "fleshy around the body." His face remained the same however and Adam felt it "would deceive anybody as to his weight."¹¹⁸ General Hooker ordered all regiments to begin drilling on a regular basis.

¹¹⁹ Lt. Colonel Colville of Winona Minnesota took command of the regiment because Colonel Morgan was on furlough. Colville led the regiment out onto the drilling field with his Corps Commander General Howard looking on. He had never drilled the regiment himself and made a complete mess of it, everyone ending up completely out of place. Adam found it hilarious:

¹¹⁶ Letter to Sam. Private Business. [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. February 20, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹¹⁹ General Joseph Hooker "Fighting Joe" replaced Ambrose Burnside on January 26, 1863 as commander of the Army of the Potomac.

Well we did drill once, and such a tangle footed battalion drill I never saw. The men became so confused that they did not know their name and the sergeants did not know their places under the new order, the officers laughing & some mad (Louis Muller in particular). The men all laughing...and Colville sat on his horse grazing like an unruly cow. Oh it was as good as a show. The old fool half the time did not see his mistakes.¹²⁰

Soon after drilling, another letter arrived from “Sam the spy” full of information. He had successfully delivered Adam’s Valentine to Emma Prescott, but she seemed to be on intimate terms with another young man named Armstrong. Though things with Emma



Figure 14. Lt. Colonel Colville.
First Minnesota, Jorgenson

did not seem so promising, Adam never really let it go. She found out he had sent the valentine and began corresponding with him. Sam described the M. situation in a better light. She was still of the same good “reserved & moderate” temperament and “entirely different from the rest of them.”¹²¹ The likeliness of a “capture” seemed good. Sam himself was spending more and more time with A.C., who seemed enamored with his heroic deeds and personality. Most importantly to Sam, she was able to look past the fact that he had one leg. Life in Stillwater went on, and Adam was constantly wishing he could be there reveling in domestic bliss with some beautiful young woman amongst his friends.

As he was falling in love; Sam was still a little restless. Other than spending time with A.C. he did very little. The excitement of his arrival had worn off and he found himself sitting around quite a bit due to his leg. The former color bearer wished to be in the army again and thought there had to be some position he was suited for, even with his debilitating wound. Adam did his best to calm him down:

You say you think of taking up arms and go into the army again. But I advise you to stay at home, and let others go, that are at home yet, and have not done anything. No Sam just stay quietly at home now, and take care of yourself. And—should advise you if you want to take up arms to take a pair of white dimpled ones...on the sea of matrimony, [and study] household strategy.¹²²

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Letter to Sam. Private Business. “burn this as soon as read.” [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹²² Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. February 22, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

Sam's restlessness would soon be allayed because he was going to travel to Philadelphia to procure a cork leg. The Government would provide him with it for free, but for some reason would not ship it.

Adam was missing Sam terribly but there was one person still in Minnesota that he hoped would stay there: Captain Mark Downie. As the army had been in camp for some months many members of the First Minnesota had gone home on furloughs. Downie was always there to greet them and explain his long absence. Adam wrote Sam, "I have no doubts but what he treats all returned members of Co. B with great kindness for motives of his own." One of Company B who had gone home was Private Harlow McIntyre. He had not been with the regiment since before Bull Run. Since May of 1861 he had been laying in a convalescent camp due to some terrible illness. He was released in the early days of January, 1863 and traveled straight home. It was there that he ran into Captain Downie who found him an easily manipulated man.

Downie convinced McIntyre to write an article that would help him recover his lost reputation. McIntyre went along with it for one reason or another. Sam read the article while at home and sent it on to Adam. Though Downie had been gone for months Adam's hatred of him still burned bright. Adam was sure McIntyre had never written the article and only signed it with his name. Downie had probably bribed him with a "Lieutenancy in that new battery." Soon Adam would be dealing with his despised enemy first hand. Downie was said to be returning to the regiment and Adam could hardly wait. "I presume we will soon have the honor of seeing his Majesty down here. He may be showed around by the whiskey drinkers of Co. B but by no others [with] principle or self respect left."¹²³

There were men, other than Downie, that Adam feared to have by his side. In mid January President Lincoln had issued a call for 300,000 troops to be raised to defend the Union. For the first time black men were eligible for recruitment. It quickly became the most talked about subject in camp. Many soldiers said if they found themselves on the same field as a black soldier they would shoot him the first chance they got. Adam did not feel that strongly about it, but he certainly didn't want to fight alongside any black troops:

¹²³ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. February 22, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

I have no objections as I said before to use the nigger in any way advantageous to us & to weaken the enemy, and even to arm him, place a musket in his hands, and tell him to go in & fight for his freedom. But...placing them alongside us is preposterous and unsettling to our reputation & fame, insulting to us as free white men.¹²⁴

He had a hard time believing that “we 19 million whites cannot crush the power & efforts of 7 million or smaller.” But he told Sam if it could not be done without “the Nigger” then they should be armed immediately but “organized separately! By all means.”¹²⁵

A late winter blizzard blew through camp in the last week of February and the boys took advantage of it while it lasted. All military seriousness ebbed on picket duty. Both sides knew they had nothing to fear from the other. Even officers began to relax and allowed their men to have some fun on duty. While on picket Adam took part in a huge snowball fight, his company against another. The battle commenced in earnest each side employing “the strategy & arts of war.” Shouts of “charge” and “victory” were called. The fighting was fierce but there were only two casualties “that got snowballs in their eyes.” On the other side of the Rappahannock the Confederate troops had a “snow war.”¹²⁶ Adam “could clearly see at least a whole brigade of them and could clearly hear their yells like so many school boys.”¹²⁷

Late that night of February 25th a tall elegant man rode into camp and dismounted from his horse. It was Captain Downie. When he came upon Adam, and Sam’s other old friends, he told them of all he had done for their old heroic comrade. While in St. Paul Downie had taken up a “subscription” for Sam and raised over \$100. Adam doubted it was true, and if it was he felt sure Downie had done it to make himself look better.

The manipulative captain brought other news regarding Sam. When he left Minnesota it seemed a foregone conclusion that Sam and A.C. were going to get married. Adam had a hard time thinking it was true. Surely Sam would have written if he was getting married. Once again he took up his pen and

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Robertson, James I. Jr., “Fun Frolics and Firewater,” in *The Civil War Soldier*, ed. Michael Barton and Larry M. Logue. (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 127-128.

¹²⁷ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. February 27, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

wrote his cousin a confidential letter but this time to scold Sam for not informing him first. Adam had wanted to be the first to know. After writing, Adam relented and was only happy for Sam. As Sam's closest friend he felt it was only right. He gave his dear cousin some practical advice regarding the situation:

But laying all jokes aside although I should like to be present at that important event, I should advise you to pitch in, make sure of your bird & get in a cage as soon as possible. The sooner the better for you. Don't let her pine away in love indefinitely. So go in Sam as soon as you get ready & don't stop for etiquette or French. But make hay while the sun shines, take her while she is warm and before the excitement dies.¹²⁸

Sam was close to proposing to A.C. and it seemed he was also doing well in his spying for Adam. He had recently gone to a ball with A.C. and Adam's girl M. had been there. Oh! How Adam wished he could have been there too and "s[hook] his foot with her to the Cotillion."¹²⁹ Sam, not being able to dance sat on the side lines and had a good view of all the couples. Adam could not contain his questions and was happy to know M. was enjoying herself (as long as she kept good company). Had she "improved in looks and deportment" he asked. Perhaps encouraged by Sam's success he asked his cousin a very serious and frank question regarding M.: "Would you advise me to propose to M. by letter before I get home or wait until I return?"¹³⁰ At this point it seemed Adam wanted to be in two places at once.

Within the Company, several things were happening that made Adam fairly angry. Men had been going on furloughs for some time but were abusing the privilege, not returning when their furlough had ended. When they did not return no other furloughs could be granted. Those who did return late faced a court martial. Throughout the months spent in camp at Falmouth, hundreds of soldiers went to Washington to face courts of inquiry. The other two reasons for Adam's displeasure had to do with none other than Captain Downie.

Alonzo Capron was a sergeant in Company B, but had not been with the regiment since Bull Run where he was wounded. After recovering; he had taken a position as clerk at a hospital. Though not with the regiment, and never intending to come back, he was still drawing a sergeant's pay on the company

¹²⁸ Letter to Sam. Private Business. [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹²⁹ A patterned social dance.

¹³⁰ Letter to Sam. Private Business. [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

rolls. This was not an uncommon occurrence, especially when an army had been in camp for some time. When soldiers left the regiment for any reason there were good odds they would become sidetracked, some on purpose as Capron had.

Downie, filled with Victorian ambition, could always sniff an opportunity to gain favor with anyone who had rich or influential parents back home. America in the 19th century was still a place in which your father's reputation mattered a great deal.¹³¹ Capron's father Edmund¹³² had a reputation and Downie did not want to be at odds with the man. Captain Downie wanted Capron to resign his position and promote someone of his choosing into it. He devised a manipulative plan. Only one person stood in his way and that was Adam:

Capt. D wanted the Co. to request Capron to resign his post as Sergt. so as to give room to more competent men, which is all just enough and according to the wishes of the Co. He then wanted me to write to Capron in the name of the Co. which I declined doing but said I would consult all the members, and if they were willing to sign their names to a request I would draw up the paper for them.¹³³

It seemed that Captain Downie's request only made sense but Adam, always observant (especially of his covert enemy), could see through the ruse:

Now it was clear to me that he wanted Capron to resign in favor of Oliver, but did not want to bear the blame or arouse the censure of Capron & his friends in Stillwater & thus wanted the Co. to bear the blame & make me as them tools for the purpose.¹³⁴

Adam quickly went around to all the members of the company and informed them of Downie's plan which they all agreed was true. They unanimously concurred that unless they could control the election and resignation of all such positions they would have nothing to do with it. Downie, not willing to give up his power to appoint men to posts, did not pursue the matter. Though the men had controlled such things before, (Downie let them as a gesture of good will) he had vetoed their previous appointments and taken the power of promotion back. Power struggles like this between soldiers and their officers were

¹³¹ Rose, *Victorian America and the Civil War*, 84.

¹³² Manuscript Census, City of Stillwater, Washington County, Minnesota, U.S. Census of Population, 1860. p. 92 line 2. Ancestry.com. (Accessed 9/28/2009).

¹³³ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. March 6, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*.

rare and far between, especially during the third year of the war. This only articulates the fact that Downie was not very well liked by any of the men.

Adam had destroyed one of Downie's plans and was going to pay for it. During the Captain's nine month absence, First Lieutenant Thomas Sinclair had been in command of Company B. He was well loved by the men as he was a fair officer. He had promoted Adam to corporal back in January, but as of March Adam had not been confirmed. This meant that he could be demoted by the officer in command at any time. When Downie arrived back in camp Lieutenant Sinclair left on furlough for Stillwater and the balance of power shifted against Adam:

S left and D arrived who don't like me & consequently he went to work & appointed Hospice a Lance Corp. Probably because he has rich influential folks which I have none. It is very likely Hospice will get in over me, and I probably not at all, if [D] can decently help it by hook or crook. I can plainly see the drift of his scheming. If he leaves it to the Co. as already stated I am alright, for I have not a single enemy among them.¹³⁵

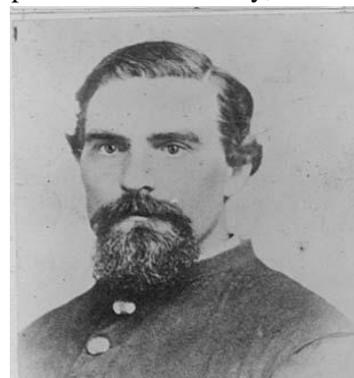


Figure 15. Lieutenant Thomas Sinclair, 1864. Minnesota Historical Society.



Figure 16. Adolphus C. Hospes. Washington County Historical Society.

Adam was aggravated but Downie was his commanding officer and so he said nothing. He did not want the Captain to know how much he hated him. Ultimately he had to serve under him and Downie could make his life a living hell. The only person he really expressed his true feeling to was Sam:

[D] tramples down all right & justice to gain his ends, but let him do as he pleases, but one thing I can say, that I will never be a tool of him, never smile & fawn to him for favors, never lick his hand like a dog for anything in his power. I will always as I have done, do my duty, treat him respectfully, but further than that he has no claims on my soul or body.¹³⁶

Within a few days Downie was gone; summoned to Washington to present himself to an investigative committee to answer for his long absence from the regiment. Adam heard rumors here and

¹³⁵ Ibid. "Hospice" was Adolphus C. Hospes, a member of Company B from Stillwater, Minnesota. Adam frequently sent Sam, Hospes' regards at the end of letters indicating they were close.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

there about him. “It is said D don’t succeed as well as he wishes or that he wears a very long face around town.” By March 10th Lieutenant Sinclair was due back and Adam’s close friend Lieutenant Muller was in Stillwater calling on Sam at Henry Jackman’s farm. Adam guessed he was better received than Captain Downie for Muller was “a true soldier & as unlike D as an Eagle to a Turkey Buzzard.”¹³⁷ There was a rumor that the regiment may soon be in Minnesota themselves. New regiments were being raised back home and one of them was possibly going to come east and relieve the First Minnesota of their frontline duty.¹³⁸ To enforce the rumor some reported that Governor Ramsey was in Washington.

While Downie and the rest of the commanders of Company B were away the new campaigning season was opening. Fresh regiments were arriving adding to the Union Army’s strength. These green troops started upsetting the friendly picket relations on the Rappahannock. To newly recruited troops the rebels were the enemy, and were to be captured or killed at every opportunity. For seasoned soldiers, killing the enemy was a business conducted on the impersonal battlefield. One aimed at a mass of the enemy and pulled the trigger. Attempting to kill an individual on picket duty was likened to murder because a man had to deliberately aim at and kill a fellow human and soldier.¹³⁹

Adam heard the rebels yell from across the river that they “hate[d] the soft bread or new troops, and sw[ore] they [would] shoot at every [one] they [saw].” At one point some of the new 19th Maine regiment invited some Confederates over to play cards with them. When they arrived on the Yankee side of the bank they were promptly taken prisoner. Adam looked down on such occurrences as none of the veteran regiments would do such a thing. He had gotten to know the rebel pickets opposite his post very well and got “considerable information from them.”¹⁴⁰

The snows began fading away and the men of Company B were able to become active again. Adam and the boys started to pass the time playing the fashionable game of baseball. Adam told his

¹³⁷ Letter to Sam. March 21, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹³⁸ The Dakota Uprising which took place in Minnesota in 1862 had occupied Minnesota troops for some time. With the execution of Dakota leaders on December 26, 1862 it was thought that the uprising had ended and troops could move east and replace the First. However, the conflict sputtered on and the First Minnesota remained on the front line of the Civil War.

¹³⁹ Hess, Earl J., *The Union Soldier in Battle* (Lawrence Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 106-107.

¹⁴⁰ Letter to Sam. March 10, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

cousin that, “the Boys all relish and pursue [it] with glee & with often making as much noise as a pack of school boys.” Getting out of his log hut again Adam found himself missing Sam all the more:

Oh how often such times here I wished for your company. You know how I used to come to your tent & share all my little joys with you...and I cannot now enjoy anything without wishing I could share it with you & my other dear friends. I have Rufus & a few other cherished comrades left, whose presence is dear to me.¹⁴¹

As Adam and the men amused themselves with baseball, General Hooker and the other high ranking officers of the army began horse racing for sport. Hooker won \$100 racing his new Noble Grey, but Adam felt “it was pretty low business for a commanding general to engage in.” He did not see why the high command was not busy commanding. “This horse racing may be a very fine thing for New York Snobs and Pennsylvania Dandy’s but it won’t crush the Rebellion.”¹⁴² Adam did not have a very high opinion of Hooker and had “but little confidence in him.” At his point Adam was like most other men in the army. He was disgusted with the use of the troops so far and did not hold out much hope for a change.



Figure 17. General Joseph Hooker, 1864. Minnesota Historical Society

On March 20th both Lieutenant Sinclair and Captain Downie returned to camp. Sinclair had a pleasant stay in Minnesota, but how much Downie enjoyed Washington and his court martial was not clear as he kept “pretty still about it.” All Adam had to say upon seeing him was that Downie “is the same old treacherous...scheming, nabob that he always was, which is all that can be said of him.” Adam could barely stand the sight of Downie let alone hear him speak. But the next night Downie appeared at the entrance of Adam’s hut. He announced that he had cleared himself and all charges against him had been dropped.¹⁴³ Adam had probably hoped Downie would not be able to talk himself out of the jam but there were other confidential matters bothering the young soldier.

¹⁴¹ Letter to Sam. Confidential. March 21, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁴² Letter to Sam. March 21, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

His hopes for romance with the woman called M. seemed to have fallen through. M. had asked Adam to send her his picture while in Camp Stone, which he did. Afterwards at Yorktown on the Peninsula he had received hers and “kept it in [his] heart” ever since. This was equal to a promise that she would wait for him to return. But Sam reported M. had allowed a child to use Adam’s photograph as a “play thing.” In addition, she appeared to have been seeing another man. Not knowing what she was up to, Adam sent M her old picture and requested a new one. Now he would quite possibly never get one. He had hoped she had not sent it under the illusion that he and the regiment would be home soon. According to Sam this was not so.

Adam was of course devastated that M. seemed to have forsaken him. He wrote to Sam about his despair but assured his cousin it would not destroy him:

You well know that when I love somebody it is with my whole heart & soul, & all the ardor of my nature and I do not believe that she will ever find anybody so faithful to her as I have been, sticking to her through thick & thin. God knows it will cause a sever struggle for me to try to forget her. But I shall try to forget her concerning my passion like a man.¹⁴⁴

He decided he would wait for M. to write him again if she felt like it. If she did he would bring her immediately to the point and force her to make a decision. By not writing he hoped it would make her fear for his safety and prompt her to send him a letter. If she did not write he would not write to her and leave the matter behind. Like other young men, Adam knew courtship and romance was a dangerous undertaking. It was one of the few situations that gave women the ability to threaten manhood. Adam decided that “stubborn emotional restraint” was his best defense.¹⁴⁵

In the last week of March Adam’s old friend Dr. Puglsey returned to the regiment. He had been working at the Division Hospital for some time. While there he had been negligent with patients and was thus ordered back to his original post. When he returned nobody greeted him. Adam noted, “He is like a dog without a master, gets pushed & knocked about all over the country.” He began harassing Adam again, always asking about his personal letters. But this time Pugsley got the point. Knowing that almost the entire regiment despised him he attempted to get a transfer home, or to some other Minnesota

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Rotundo, Anthony E., *American Manhood* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 113.

regiment. For the time being, Captain Downie seemed out of schemes, though he had written to Sergeant Capron himself and was waiting for a response.¹⁴⁶ In the meantime Sam was preparing to travel to Philadelphia in order to pick up his government issue cork leg.

On April 2, 1863 Governor Ramsey came from Washington to visit the men and stayed for a couple of days. He made a speech to the men when he arrived but made no mention of them going home which left the men feeling a little dissatisfied. On April 3rd he presented a new battle flag to the regiment. General Sully formed the men on dress parade and Adam described the scene in detail:

We were at the center of the line and after the Generals had passed, and the ranks closed again the flag was brought out which the governor presented to us, with a neat little speech in the name of the citizens of St. Paul. After Ramsey was through Lt. Col. Colville replied to the Gov. in a pertinent, appropriate, little speech, which however we could not hear, the wind blowing too much[.] The Color Guard then stepped forward & Coflin who acted as the Color Bearer received the flag.¹⁴⁷

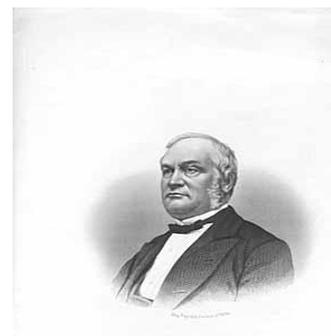


Figure 18. Governor Ramsey. Minnesota Historical Society.

Later that night, General Sully escorted the Governor around the camp.

He stopped to shake hands and converse with the men of the regiment and then retired to the General's tent for dinner. The men had still not received any information about whether they would be relieved and return to Minnesota. So they took matters into their own hands. Company B sent a delegation to the Governor who received it. They asked him cordially whether or not the regiment would return home. Ramsey said he had discussed the issue with Secretary of War Stanton who had stated that as soon as they could be relieved by another Minnesota regiment they would go home. However there was a catch; each commanding general over the First Minnesota had to consent. Hooker and Sully had both done so, which left Pope.¹⁴⁸ Adam saw this as a load of red tape created to

¹⁴⁶ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. March 29, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁴⁷ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. April 5, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁴⁸ After being defeated at the Second Battle of Manassas in late August of 1862, General John Pope was reassigned to the Northwest Department and stationed in Minnesota to deal with the Dakota war. His approval was needed to move troops within his jurisdiction. Therefore, he had power over the First Minnesota's return to the state.

keep the First Minnesota just where it was. He told Sam, "I have but little hopes of getting home & have made up my mind to be content to stay another year."¹⁴⁹

Adam resigned himself to the fact that he would not be home anytime soon to see his cousin. It was apparent the government wanted the veteran regiment to stay where it was. In addition the furlough system was beginning to wind down. The army would be moving soon and it needed every man. Back in Stillwater Sam wanted Adam to come home in the worst way. His amputated leg began causing him great pain. It was not healing up correctly and Sam could tell Dr. Pugsley had not done the operation correctly. He became inactive again and commenced drawing to amuse himself. Though Sam had received an exceptional welcome upon his return, he was now confined to the Jackman's home. Sam wrote Adam, who was his closest friend in the world and would certainly have kind words for him.

In Virginia, Adam and the regiment had been under marching orders as of a week. Troops were beginning to move, and as always, Adam guessed the commanding general's strategy. General Hooker intended to march a large portion of his army up the river, cross behind Lee's army and thus threaten his flank. In addition he would leave a holding force in Lee's front at Fredericksburg. If all went according to plan; Hooker would have Lee surrounded by the end of April and crush him in one decisive battle. Though a conflict was looming Adam found time to reply to his cousin:

I am very sorry that your leg has not healed up yet and still troubles you. And I can curse old "Pug" with a will for the miserable manner in which he has amputated you limb...such a miserable butcher had ought to be kicked out of the army. Oh how many valuable lives are lost by the ignorance and cupidity of such men as Pugsley.¹⁵⁰

Adam's kind words did little to alleviate Sam's sorrow. Even though he had been elected Justice of the Peace in Stillwater he began to slip into a depression and his desire to leave Stillwater for a time began to grow. Very soon both Adam and Sam would be on the move.

The Battle of Chancellorsville (April 27-May 5, 1863)

On April 27, 1863 vast numbers of troops began moving out of camp. The Minnesotans had been given eight days of rations for the advance; so much they could scarcely carry their muskets. Though

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. April 19, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

Union forces were moving north and south, the First Minnesota and the entire Second Corps stayed in front of Fredericksburg. Their camp was in plain sight of the enemy and therefore Hooker kept them in place, to hold the enemy where they were and to screen his moving troops. From April 27th to the 30th Hooker moved his army up behind Lee.

Sitting in camp for three days the Minnesotans wondered what was happening. It was during this time of waiting that a mutiny occurred in the First Minnesota's brigade. The 34th New York, due to some technicality, believed their term of service was up. General Sully quelled the mutiny "by kindness preferring that to harsh measures, well knowing it [was] a good Regt."¹⁵¹ Little did Sully know he would lose his command for being so kind.

Suddenly on May 1st they heard the sounds of a large action taking place beyond Marye's heights. For the next two days Lee pushed Hooker's vastly superior force back towards the river which it had just crossed. Lee's attacks were tactically brilliant and General "Fighting Joe" Hooker fell back before him having lost confidence in himself.

On May 4th General Sedgwick, who was in command of the Union holding force, advanced on Marye's Heights in an attempt to lessen the pressure on Hooker's front. The First Minnesota and the rest of Sedgwick's command crossed the river, marched through Fredericksburg, and toward the heights. Adam and his regiment did not take part in the actual assault. They were deployed as skirmishers and supported the troops assaulting the rebel works. There were very few Confederate troops defending the heights as most of them were off fighting Hooker. Adam described the action very simply saying, "we (1st Minn.) had 8 men wounded by shell but not engaged, only supported Sedgwick's Corps, and after the heights were stormed we were sent back to guard the trains & R.R. Depot."¹⁵²

Back in Camp opposite Fredericksburg (May 6-June 5, 1863)

After the battle Adam and the boys were marched to a new camp which was open to the sun and far worse than the previous:

¹⁵¹ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. May 11, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁵² *Ibid*.

Now it is clear & pretty hot. Our camping ground will be a hot one if we stay here and the air is not very pure owing to the dead horses laying around. And I am afraid both together will generate some sickness. The water however is good & pure one redeemable trait.¹⁵³

Disease and illness were the most influential facts of a Civil War soldier's life. Battle was deadly, but 63% of Union fatalities were due to disease.¹⁵⁴ Most volunteer soldiers came from rural areas and were, for the first time in their lives, crowded together with thousands of other men. Their immune systems were not able to deal with the diseases that permeated camp life. Adam seems to have been lucky in this regard. There is no doubt he was sick from time to time, but he was never severely ill.¹⁵⁵ Disease was a silent impersonal killer, and for the Civil War soldier, the intense excitement of battle dissipated "under the load of fever, diarrhea, maggots, blood, dysentery, blindness, pain, pus, and putrefaction."¹⁵⁶

As soon as the troops returned to camp the beloved General Sully was relieved of command. His superiors had deemed his handling of the 34th New York's mutiny not harsh enough "because he didn't shoot some of them."¹⁵⁷ He was to be sent to Minnesota to take command of the regiments there and help maintain order in the wake of the Dakota Uprising. Sully had mixed feelings. He was glad to be going home, but he always thought when he did so it would be with his First Minnesota boys. It was a sad affair for Sully and his old First Minnesota:

We are all very sorry to lose Sully and he hates to leave us too. The other day he came down to the river's edge where the brigade lay who was as quick as they saw him cheered him which started the tears in the Old Man's eyes.¹⁵⁸ The day he left us we all turned out to bid him goodbye. He made an address thanking us for the fidelity...[and] bravery...with which we had always served him. Said it was hard for him to part from us, and wished we could go with him. (So did we!)¹⁵⁹

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Gilchrist, "Michael R. Disease & Infection in the American Civil War," *The America Biology Teacher* Vol. 60, No. 4 (1998): 258.

¹⁵⁵ Within his letters Adam never mentions contracting a disease. He does write about having Shingles (a virus unrelated to warfare), which was probably caused by a weakening of his immune system. There is however no doubt he was ill at some points. Most soldiers were ill on average three times a year.

¹⁵⁶ Freemon, Frank R, *Gangrene and Glory* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 13.

¹⁵⁷ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. May 11, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. May 16, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

During the Chancellorsville Campaign and Sully's farewell Sam had journeyed to Philadelphia to relieve his boredom. His trip to Philadelphia was a short one. He had picked up his Government Issue cork leg, visited a few friends, gotten his picture taken, and then returned home. Adam was pleased to hear he was doing better and had a safe trip home through Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Fort Madison.

Along with Sully's departure Colonel Morgan resigned. Lieutenant Colonel Colville was promoted to command of the regiment, which set off another string of promotions. Captain Downie, being the senior Captain in the regiment was promoted to Major. Adam was happy about Downie's success because the promotion got "rid of him" as he was no longer Company B's immediate commander. Thomas Sinclair was then promoted in his stead. The rest of the army was also in flux by the middle of May. Many two year regiments were leaving and the army was rather "cut up" after the great defeat at Battle of Chancellorsville.

The Road to Gettysburg (June 6-July 1, 1863)

As June began, General Hooker commenced improving the discipline of his army in preparation for a campaign. Adam observed, "the discipline is the same as we had at Camp Stone, only that we have more reviews." Along with drilling Adam and the rest of the boys were keeping an eye the Confederates across the river. "Their movements have been very mysterious lately. At first they made a great display of their force &c. Then yesterday morning we could see no one and the town appeared deserted."¹⁶⁰

The movement of Lee's army was mysterious for a reason. Fresh from his victory at Chancellorsville the Southern general began another invasion of the north. He started marching his army north screened by the Blue Ridge Mountains, and soon Hooker began to follow. Just before Adam marched with his comrades he received a letter from Sam, who upon returning home had slipped back into his depression. He was beginning to be pessimistic regarding his lot in life. He was unable to make a living at his judgeship and was starting to feel worthless. The full effect of having only one leg hit him very hard. Sam dreamed of starting a business in town but had no capital to do so and the hills of Stillwater were proving hard for a man with a cork leg. His relationship with A.C. continued but seemed

¹⁶⁰ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. June 6, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

to be bottoming out. Just before leaving camp Adam wrote to his melancholy cousin. "I am well aware of your sensitive nature and your present feelings...and that you long to make your own living and not be a burden to your kind & true friends."¹⁶¹ After writing Adam began the march north with his comrades, Rufus, John Densmore, Captain Sinclair, the beloved Lieutenant Muller, and the hated Major Downie.

By June 18th Adam was almost fifty miles north of Fredericksburg at Sangster's Station, just north of where he had fought two years ago at the First Battle of Bull Run. Seeing the same place again made him realize just how much time had passed and how many good men had been lost:

Remnants of our old camp was still to be seen. On seeing all these things so plainly I could not help reflecting on the great change which took place since then in our Regt. How many noble fellows then with us are missing now.¹⁶²

The march had been the most strenuous the men had ever endured. All along the way many fell by the roadside due to sunstroke. Adam saw at least three men of his regiment drop dead from the heat. He marched next to Rufus who "staid it like a horse" though his ankle "troubled him a little." "The troops were dusty, the water scarce & poor at that. The heat was oppressive." Adam was exhausted, "I have never give out yet though my turn may soon come." Marching was central to the experience of Civil War soldiers and caused permanent disability in some cases.¹⁶³ In addition to the dreadful summer march Adam and the boys had no idea where the rebels were and expected a battle at any moment.¹⁶⁴

Throughout the next week the march north went on. The regiment passed through the town of Hay Market which had been burned to the ground the previous year. They then turned west taking a turnpike for Gainesville and Thoroughfare Gap. Lee's army was behind the Blue Ridge Mountains. Hooker was determined to locate it position the Army of the Potomac between the rebels and Washington. On June 24th Adam wrote Sam. His words were spirited and full of optimism. Though he knew a battle was coming soon he had no idea where. The country he had recently marched through had been beautiful and fertile. He had even stopped to pick black berries while on the march. At

¹⁶¹ Letter to Sam. Camp 1st Minnesota. June 7, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁶² Letter to Sam. Sangster's Station. June 18, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁶³ Dean, Eric T., "Dangled Over Hell," in *The Civil War Soldier*, ed. Michael Barton and Larry M. Logue. (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 398.

¹⁶⁴ Letter to Sam. Sangster's Station. June 18, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

Thoroughfare Gap the men were allowed a short rest before they started north again in pursuit of Lee. It was the last letter Adam would write Sam prior to the greatest battle of the entire war.

The Battle of Gettysburg (July 1-3, 1863)



Figure 19. General George Meade, 1863. Minnesota Historical Society.

On June 28, 1863 President Lincoln put General George Meade in command of the Union army. Meade began to concentrate his forces and headed straight for Lee. When Lee heard of the Union Army's concentration he also brought all of his forces together. On July 1st advance elements of the two armies clashed at Gettysburg. As the day progressed the scrape turned into a full fledged battle with each side bringing reinforcements up as quickly as possible. That day the First Minnesota heard news of the engagement at Gettysburg. They knew a battle was imminent and everyone became very anxious. That night as

the regiment slept they were awoken and ordered to fall in several times but never marched. Adam needed the sleep badly. They had been on the march for fourteen days, with only three days of rest.

At 3:00 AM on July 2nd, 1863 he and the rest of the regiment were awoken and began to march toward Gettysburg which they reached at 5:40 AM. An order came from General Gibbon which was read to the men. It stated there was to be a great battle and any man who fled his post would be put to death. For the majority of the day things were quiet and the regiment lay in reserve behind the main Union line. But in the late afternoon a great Confederate assault began. The shells began to fly over the Minnesotan's heads and the field in front of them erupted into a great chaotic battle.¹⁶⁵

Union general Daniel Sickles had advanced his corps far out in front of the main Union line leaving a huge gap behind him. Soon his corps was receiving the full brunt of a massive Confederate attack. The fighting was like none the Minnesotans had ever witnessed. One First Minnesota man said of the battle that it was simply "huge in the extreme."¹⁶⁶ After horrendous fighting Sickles' Corps was

¹⁶⁵ Moe, *The Last Full Measure*, 261-264.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 265.

overpowered by the gray tide and began falling back in disorder. The rebels came on with their piercing yell. Union General Winfield Scott Hancock was doing all he could to fill the gap Sickles had left in the line as retreating troops poured through it. This was a dire situation; if the rebel advance came through the gap the whole union army could be destroyed in detail from the rear.

Hancock placed the First Minnesota in the gap with no other Union troops near to support them. Adam and his fellow Minnesotans lay down in front of a battery and continued to watch Sickles corps retreat. The fighting was brutal, shell and shot flying thick, and men clashing in hand to hand combat. Every man of the First Minnesota knew they were about to face a terrible trial. Finally Sickle's Corps broke completely and the men ran passed the Minnesota as Confederate volleys tore through their ranks. Adam and the Minnesota boys did all they could to rally their comrades but none responded. Soon the First Minnesota and its supporting battery stood alone. Some dozen Confederate regiments began marching towards them. At his point the regiment only numbered 262 men due to the two years of war they had seen. In addition, companies C and F were assigned to other duties. It became apparent that the small First Minnesota would have to face thousands of Confederates alone.¹⁶⁷

General Hancock rode up to the regiment and ordered them to, "Charge those lines!" Every man in the regiment knew what the order meant: death or wounds to every one of them. Colonel Colville stepped to the front of the regiment and asked if they would go with him. Adam and every other man hollered they would. Then the order came to charge. 262 brave Minnesotans with bayonets fixed headed toward the enemy over 1,600 strong. The musket balls flew thick and artillery shells began to burst amongst the Minnesota men.¹⁶⁸

Adam ran forward, his bayonet leveled and death raining all around him. As he charged his comrades fell in vast numbers. Colonel Colville fell out in front as a piece of shrapnel entered his back. Major Downie, also out in front, fell struck three times by musket fire. Down the line Louis Muller, Adam's closest friend amongst the officers, took a musket ball in the head and died instantly. The Color

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 266-268.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 269.

Guard leading the charge then began to fall. Ellet Perkins, whom Sam had handed the colors to at Antietam, was struck by a bullet in his leg. When he fell Adam's good friend John Densmore picked up the colors. He took only a few steps forward before he too was wounded. John took a bullet through the chest, another in the thigh, while a third tore off one of his thumbs. Adam watched his friend fall as a final bullet passed through his jaw and lodged in his throat while an additional three bullets tore into his body.¹⁶⁹ Adam's close friend, Rufus Blanchard ("old Ironsides") was wounded in the side by a piece of shrapnel. Samuel Nickerson fell dead as the ranks of the regiment began to dwindle.¹⁷⁰ Adam was wounded in the upper right thigh. A musket ball slashed his leg open in a wide gash.¹⁷¹ Out of 262 men who charged that day 215 were killed or wounded. Of the 36 men in Adam's company all but six lay on the battlefield. It was the highest casualty rate of any regiment in the entire war: 82%

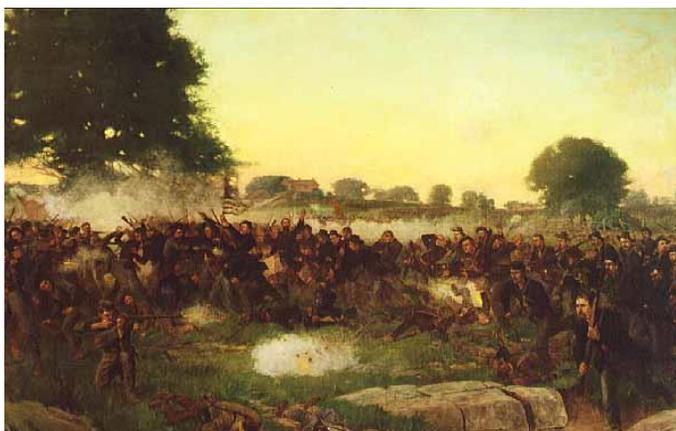


Figure 20. *The Battle of Gettysburg* by Rufus F. Zogbaum. Minnesota Historical Society.

The fighting continued after the First Minnesota charged the rebel lines. Like the majority of his regiment Adam lay on the battleground amongst his wounded comrades in agony. Around him, men he had known for more than two years, or from Stillwater, lay dead and dying. Eventually more Union troops came forward and held the rebel assault in check until it ended as the light of day faded away. When darkness covered the field those still unwounded began carrying their dead and wounded back into the Union lines.

¹⁶⁹ Though Wounded seven times John Densmore survived the war and married Sarah J. Palmer of Hudson, Wisconsin and returned to work as a Lumberman. *St. Croix Valley Old Settlers' Association, Association Records, 1877-1922*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁷⁰ Jorgenson, Wayne. *First Minnesota Infantry Regiment*. <http://www.1stminnesota.net/SearchResults.php3?ID=0195>.

¹⁷¹ Comprehensive Military Service Record, National Archives, Washington D.C.

South Street Hospital (July 8-March 17, 1864)

After treatment in a field hospital for some days, Adam was sent north to a permanent hospital. On July 8, 1863 he was mustered in at South Street Hospital in Philadelphia, a city which became home to thousands of wounded soldiers.¹⁷² South Street Hospital was small compared to most, having only 253 beds. Adam may have been sent there since his wound was to an extremity. The hospital had a reputation for amputations and was nicknamed the “stump hospital.”¹⁷³ Sam and everyone else in Stillwater were fearful that none of their boys had survived. Several of them had not but Adam was one of the lucky ones. It was not until the middle of August that Adam was able to write home and assure Sam that he was still alive. By the 30th of August Adam was finally reading his dear cousin’s letters again. They were filled with joy and happiness. It was an amazing relief for Sam to know Adam was alive. He only wanted to know why Adam could not have written sooner and Adam answered candidly.

You reproach me for not writing when I [was] bed bound. I shall gladly have done such, tried it several times but my hand trembled so that I could not make a legible letter. And you cannot imagine the misery I felt while laying there knowing how anxiously [you] was & I not able to relieve your anxiety.¹⁷⁴

Adam seemed to have been suffering from the shock of his wound and the horrendous battle he had just gone through. Many soldiers experienced what is now called Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.¹⁷⁵ For a time Adam was a psychiatric casualty of the war. He did not write of his nervous condition in any detail because to do so would show weakness. The courage of the battlefield “extended to the hospital and in many ways intensified there.”¹⁷⁶ Sam had endured the deadly hardship of Smoketown Hospital. Adam had a lesser wound and was in a much better hospital than Sam had ever been. He could show no weakness, especially to Sam.

Adam’s wound was healing but Gangrene had set in making it “so much larger than it originally was” and proved a “much more serious affair” than he had anticipated. Gangrene was common and

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Taylor, Frank H., *Philadelphia in the Civil War 1861-1865* (Philadelphia: Published by the City, 1913), 226,229.

¹⁷⁴ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. August 30, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁷⁵ Dean, “Dangled Over Hell,” in *The Civil War Soldier*, 410.

¹⁷⁶ Linderman, *Embattled Courage*, 28.

occurred when flesh surrounding a wound no longer received its blood supply.¹⁷⁷ The flesh rotted and could lead to more deadly infections. Luckily Adam's doctors identified his case and began treatment. Adam's leg was stiff and the wound was running due to the Linseed Poultice¹⁷⁸ which the doctors had been applying to it. He was being treated much better than Sam had been at Smoketown Hospital after Antietam.

Sam's leg seemed to finally be improving and he was able to wear his cork leg. Furthermore, he had gotten a lieutenant's commission in the Invalid Corps¹⁷⁹ and was bound for Kentucky and the command of a company there. Sam's seeking a position in the Invalid Corps was probably due in part to boredom but the main reason had to do with his companion A.C. While out of touch with Adam he had asked A.C. to marry him. To his astonishment she refused, explaining to Sam that her love for him was like that of a caring sister. The nature of courtship was such "that women could thwart men's dreams, frustrate their plans, and leave them feeling unworthy, and embarrassed."¹⁸⁰ Sam declared to his cousin that A.C. was a coquette. Sam's confidence and manhood had been destroyed. Unable to face the humiliation he found a way to leave Stillwater and that was the Invalid Corps. Adam was deeply worried about his cousin. Sam had invested all his hope in A.C. and Adam was afraid he would do something rash:

You have been very misfortunate, first in losing your leg. 2nd in being refused by the girl you love so well & deeply. It makes me miserable to see you so unhappy & I not be able to help you. I beg of you dear Sam for my sake not to give way to bitter despair & embitter & shorten your life or throw it away recklessly.¹⁸¹

Sam arrived at his Invalid Corps post in early September and wrote Adam to let him know he had gotten there safely. He was in Evansville, Indiana across the Ohio River from Kentucky. He complained to Adam of all the paperwork. His loving cousin assured him all would be well and training his new

¹⁷⁷ Shryock, Richard H. "A Medical Perspective of the Civil War," *American Quarterly*, Vol. 14, No 2. (1962), 163.

¹⁷⁸ A moist paste of Linseed was applied to wounds in order to alleviate pain. However the heat and absence of air it caused could easily lead to a bacterial infection.

¹⁷⁹ In April of 1863 the War Department created the Invalid Corps for disabled soldiers who had served in the army. They were used for light garrison duty, clerical positions, and hospital staff.

¹⁸⁰ Rotundo, *American Manhood*, 112.

¹⁸¹ Letter to Sam. Private. August 31, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

company would come naturally. After all, he was a product of the finest volunteer regiment in the Union Army.

In a few weeks Adam was able to get around on crutches. “I have not any pain in it, only while they were burning the shanks of false flesh of[f] with caustic—but this is over now. Walking don’t appear to hurt it in the least...for on crutches it don’t jar it any.” On September 10th Adam hobbled down to a photograph studio called Keclus, the very same one Sam had gone to when he was in Philadelphia. He had several photographs taken and picked up some of Sam which had been left there. He sent Sam his photograph with the news he was trying his hardest to get a furlough. Along with sitting for a photographer Adam went out to visit Sam’s good friend Rodgers who was a young man with wealthy parents. He gladly received Adam and inquired after Sam. They sat and talked for hours over soda water and lager beer. Rodgers had been drafted but his parents were going to pay the \$300 fee so he would not have to serve. Adam showed Rodgers Sam’s picture and he exclaimed, “Yes! That’s him to a T. I should like to see him again.”¹⁸² As well as visiting Rodgers he saw other members of the First Minnesota as often as possible. Many of the other wounded boys were in the city at other hospitals.

Every night Adam returned to the hospital, and being prudent he spent many days there hoping his wound would soon heal. Life got very monotonous at times but he spent his time reading and writing, always improving himself. The number one thing he hated about hospital life was drunkenness. Every night drunken soldiers would come in from the city and make a commotion. “And in a hospital it is ten times worse for a decent man can’t avoid the evil thereof but must come in contact with its foul breath & listen to their confounded jargon.”¹⁸³

The annoying and lonesome time Adam spent in the hospital was made much better by an elderly lady named Mrs. Goodyear. She was one of many women in Philadelphia who visited wounded soldiers in the hospital, bringing them little gifts and keeping them company:

¹⁸² Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. September 12, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

She is a fine elderly woman a true Christian & very kind to soldiers, no matter where from. Treating them like sons she visits two or three hospitals & comes here quite often, bringing a full basket every time. She is so motherly in her manners...none can help liking her.¹⁸⁴

Adam became close with Mrs. Goodyear and visited her often. Her husband owned a drug store on the corner of 17th and Pine and Adam became very familiar with him. The greatest solace to Adam's loneliness was letters. He had received two from Emma Prescott, who, now that Adam was gloriously wounded, had taken an interest in him again. But, he had still received none from M. Emma requested his picture which he sent and he asked for hers in return. Emma was like most other women of the era. She expected courage,¹⁸⁵ and Adam's wound was proof of it.

Meanwhile, Sam had decided to never return to Minnesota. A.C. had torn his heart out and he felt he could never go back. Adam sympathized but felt he was sacrificing too much for one woman. In fact Adam had a better idea that he felt would help Sam get over A.C. He asked Sam why he could not look for some nice girl in Evansville. He advised Sam to marry "as soon as you find one that suits you."¹⁸⁶ While worrying about Sam, Adam was also worrying about his reputation in Stillwater. His painting boss back at home, Mort Webster had written him about a rumor circulating about town. It was reported that the end of Adam's "penis" had been shot off. Adam admitted he had a pretty "narrow escape" but his penis was totally fine. He wrote to his cousin, "I think if I get home I will show some of them whether my penis is shot off or not."¹⁸⁷

While in Philadelphia Adam was faced with leisure time he had not had during his front line duty. He had no soldierly duties and was able to explore a vast city. Adam enjoyed reading and writing but like many Victorian Americans he sought the company of his fellow humans. Adam had spent little time in the past years with civilians. He longed for "the emotional reward of human contact pursued in the free space of unstructured time."¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁴ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. September 25, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁸⁵ Linderman, *Embattled Courage*, 87.

¹⁸⁶ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. September 19, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ Rose, *Victorian America and the Civil War*, 123.

In October Adam continued to make friends amongst the people of Philadelphia. He was invited to church by a young lady named Ms. White and also went to dinner with a very accomplished woman named Mrs. Baird. Adam dined with her and then spent the whole night in her husband's library. Mr. Baird was a publisher of note. He showed Adam his collection which was one of the finest in the country containing rare writings by Washington and other Revolutionary War heroes. Adam enjoyed himself very much and could not have asked for better "society:"

I tell you it was a rare treat to me to converse with such a man. He appears however to be very deficient in his knowledge of Minnesota & I gave him a good deal of information in turn about that & the western territories, which pleased him very much. He gave me liberty to take and read any book he had.¹⁸⁹

October 13th, 1863 was Election Day and things got a little rowdy within the city. Adam stayed in the hospital "for fear of getting hit with a brick bat."¹⁹⁰ Governors from all over the country came to Philadelphia and made speeches. The Unionists had rallies, and at night formed a vast parade that was over three miles long. Union General Sigel¹⁹¹ also arrived in the city and made a speech to the German population.

Adam spent a great amount of time touring the city as his wound healed. He stopped at Independence Hall and surveyed the Navy yards. He frequently took rides to other hospitals to see his friends. One day he decided to visit the industrial section of the city. There he came upon a house of refuge for children. Adam was very much pleased to see the "little shavers...making shoes, matchboxes, brushes &c." All the little girls were sewing and stared at Adam "as though they had never seen a soldier before."¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. October 13, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Union General Franz Sigel was a German immigrant and the most successful German military leader of the war. He had held various commands, including the XI Corps which he left in February of 1863. He was relieved after Gettysburg for unknown reasons. He may have submitted his own resignation. General Oliver Howard was the other ranking German General within the Union Army. Howard replaced Sigel as commander of the predominantly German XI Corps. The Corps performed poorly at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg marring Howard's reputation.

¹⁹² Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. October 13, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

By the end of October Adam was in a bit of an awkward position. He was well enough to walk around but not yet well enough to do any work. He was afraid of being sent back to the regiment for he knew winter marching would lame him. At the hospital he had been called on to scrub floors, but knew he was incapable of bending over to do so. He refused to do any nursing, having seen enough blood and death to last him a lifetime. Trying to make himself useful he sat up nights with many sick men keeping them company through the long hours. He also spent a lot of time in the soldiers reading room gaining knowledge to his heart's content.¹⁹³

Adam was examined by the head surgeon, Dr. Shippen, in November. He told the doctor he did not want to be put in the Invalid Corps but would rather return to the regiment. The doctor refused to let him do so and assigned him to light duties around the hospital. He was to remain part of the regiment on "detached service."¹⁹⁴ Meanwhile it seemed Sam had actually taken Adam's advice to heart. He began associating with the "fairer sex" and trying to put the memory of A.C. behind him. Adam was all too glad to hear it:

[I could see] by your letter that your spirits were slowly improving as the result of you new acquaintances & hope to hear still better news in your next. Oh! Sam I will tell you that it makes me feel happy to see you emerge from the gloom.¹⁹⁵ Thank God you have at last broken the dreadful spell which has so long oppressed you and are on the right course.¹⁹⁶

Sam even went so far as to start visiting Hoosier girls in the countryside. One in particular caught his eye.

Someone had been catching Adam's eye too. He had gone to dinner at a friend name John Shearer's house for Thanksgiving. There were three young girls there who were "fun & full of mischief & good singers." One of the girls with black curls and a beautiful face was very friendly towards Adam. He told Sam she was so handsome "I could not help looking at her occasionally on the sly & every time I did so I met her eyes looking at me."¹⁹⁷

¹⁹³ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. October 31, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁹⁴ Letter to Henry. South Street Hospital. November 8, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁹⁵ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. November 22, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁹⁶ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. November 29, [1863]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

By December of 1863 the two cousins had made even more progress with the fairer sex but Adam's had nothing to do with the handsome Philadelphia lady. Back home in Stillwater another rumor about Adam had gone around town, this one not regarding his penis, but his entire person. People were saying he had died in the hospital. Normally Adam would not have approved of such a rumor, but the way one person reacted to it pleased him. That person was M. who had "thrown him off" nearly a year ago:

Her actions on hearing the report that I was dead pleased me considerable for I did not expect that she took as much interest in me. It appears that the story was started by Mort Juebler's wife who told it to the tinker's wife who happened to be in town & she brought the news to M. who came crying to Fritz with the news.¹⁹⁸

Even Adam's father noticed how much she cared about his son. "For he took her for Godfather" to Adam's "little brother." M. began writing Adam again.

Sam had even better news: he was getting married. Her name was Matilda J. Burns, a young country girl who lived outside of Evansville. Sam, being lonely and on the rebound, was moving fast and she had been totally smitten by him. When Adam received the news it made him happier than he had been in a long time. It was the best letter he could ask for:

You cannot imagine the joy & happiness it brought me & how thankful I felt that my prayers were at last answered & [I] truly congratulate you on the possession of such a worthy girl, who will make you a happy man once more. Will make the world look brighter again. I lay awake a long while last night just thinking over your sudden good turn of fortune.¹⁹⁹

Adam told Sam he could not wait for the day when the two of them were settled in Stillwater with wives and families.

But Sam's happiness was short lived. When he asked Matilda's father for his blessing and permission the man adamantly refused. After all Sam had barely courted his daughter and he had no idea who this one legged man was. Plus, she had been widowed recently-her husband having been killed in battle.²⁰⁰ When Adam heard of this sudden change of affairs he hastened to aid his beloved cousin. He

¹⁹⁸ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. December 3, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. December 13, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

drew up a testimony attesting to the infallible character of Sam. He then went around to all the hospitals in Philadelphia getting wounded members of the First Minnesota to sign it. He also encouraged Sam's friends back in Stillwater to do the same. He told Sam, "I will write her a letter...as will place your respectability beyond doubt." Adam continued, "if she truly loves you she will not forsake you or be forced into marriage with anybody else."²⁰¹

While waiting to see if his testimony would do Sam any good Adam kept exploring Philadelphia. Having now established a circle of friends he began going out to theaters and operas. He saw the Germania Band which surpassed any music he had ever heard in Minnesota. They played "operas of the highest order." He also went to a circus and several other shows.

Adam had a very "satisfactory" Christmas. After having a turkey dinner in the hospital he went out and visited the Wiggins girls who had been at John Shearer's house for Thanksgiving. That night he and John visited numerous people around town and went back to his house for the night. New Years Day Adam stayed in the Hospital. The extreme cold and made pains shoot through his leg. He spent the next two days with the Bairds and Mrs. Goodyear. Most importantly he secured a fifteen day furlough and planned to go see Sam in Evansville.²⁰² Before leaving to visit Sam he received wonderful news from his cousin. Sam was now "a happy husband." Adam's prayers were finally answered and now he would be able to visit his cousin and hard fought for wife.²⁰³

Adam spent the latter half of January in Evansville with his cousin. They had not seen each other for more than a year. At the time Sam was living in a boarding house in Evansville. He and Matilda, or "Tillie," were looking for a house in town. Adam made a good impression and Tillie liked him very much. Other than awkwardly watching Sam and Tillie quarrel as lovers a few times the trip went very well.²⁰⁴ When Adam arrived back in Philadelphia he learned some of his lady friends had done him a

²⁰¹ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. December 8, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

²⁰² Letter to Sam. Government Tavern. January 4, [1864]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

²⁰³ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. December 18, 1863. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

²⁰⁴ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. February 21, [1864]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

favor. They had secured him a position in a school where he could study tactics and become the commanding officer of a black regiment. But, not wanting to associate with black people he respectfully declined.

By February 15th Adam was back in Philadelphia spending time with John Shearer and his other friends. He continued to go out almost every night listening to opera and attending plays. Life was good and all Adam wanted now was to go home. The rest of the First Minnesota boys were already there. Finally relieved of their almost constant frontline duty the soldiers were spending the last two and a half months of their enlistment at Fort Snelling. When they arrived in St. Paul they went on parade through the streets past a sea of Union



Figure 21. Fort Snelling, 1867. Minnesota Historical Society.

flags and cheering citizens. Adam wished he could have been there and was itching to leave even though it was winter and the trip would be a hard one. He wrote Sam about all the factors to consider:

My friends here are making every effort to put me in Ward Master and if they succeed I would stay at least until navigation opened. But to tell you the truth hospital life has become very irksome to me. Since I have enjoyed the sweets of liberty while out with you.²⁰⁵

He desperately hoped he would get discharged so he could go home the way he chose. That way he could stop at Evansville and the two cousins could go home together. Adam knew Sam could not leave Evansville without being transferred to an Invalid Corps post in Minnesota. Trying to make the plan work perfectly, Adam spoke with the regimental Chaplain Neill, ex-Colonel Morgan, and Governor Ramsey, who was now a senator in Washington. The three men said they would pull all the strings they could for the two veteran cousins.

²⁰⁵ Letter to Sam. South Street Government Boarding House. February 15, 18, 1864. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

Adam wanted to get home for another very important reason. He had received a letter from M. stating that her father was attempting to force her into marriage. In essence he was selling her to the highest bidder. An old Dutchman had already offered twenty acres of farmland for the girl. Adam wanted to get home as quickly as possible to save the girl he loved:

Now knowing such to be the case I should like to return home to punish Klashy & his bitch for their treachery & stop their schemes & save her from their traps. Even if I did not marry her myself she is worthy of a good husband and she shall never be sold as a heifer if I can help it.²⁰⁶

A week after writing Sam about his plans, Adam received another desperate letter from his cousin. Tillie had left him. The newlyweds had gotten into a terrible fight and she had walked out on him. Adam could not believe it:

What information has so suddenly seized on her[?] Has she got divorced that she does not love you, or does she think she can do better[?] Oh I did not think things would come to this. When I first saw you again, when all was smiles & sunshine. [I] Did not think she would be so false and thus forsake you. Oh! Your lot does indeed seem a hard one.

But Adam also thought Tillie would quite possibly come back. He commented that woman were emotional creatures and normally relent at some point. The problem was even deeper than Adam thought. Sam told him that Tillie was probably pregnant. Sam had taken little time to consummate the marriage. Still Adam hoped all would be well:

She can hardly realize what she is doing or what she is going to do. Cast adrift by her own will, probably left to her fate by her parents losing a great measure that respect which all had for her. Likely to become a mother in a few months what is she going to do? If she loves you she will come back a repentant and better woman. And if so I beg you to forgive her and treat her kindly.²⁰⁷

By March Tillie had not yet returned but Adam was probably not thinking much about her.

Going Home (March 17-May 5, 1864)

On March 17, 1864 Adam wrote Sam his very last letter. He was finally leaving for home and hoped his cousin could come with him.

We are going to be paid this afternoon and as I am all ready to go home[.] I shall start either next Saturday or Monday...for I want to see all my friends before I leave this place for good. I have got to go by way of Alex. or convalescent camp where they may discharge me in which case I

²⁰⁶ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. February 21, [1864]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

will come via Evansville. But if not, than by whatever route the powers that be choose to send me. I am well and in good spirits as you may suppose.²⁰⁸

When Adam returned to Minnesota he joined the regiment at Fort Snelling. There he was mustered out with the rest of the boys on May 5, 1864. Adam Marty's Civil War story had ended.

After the War

When Adam Marty returned to Stillwater he had been gone a full three years. Civil War veterans tended to continue their lives in three general ways. Though seldom studied or acknowledged many veterans succumbed to the strains of what they had been through. Like their future counterparts some Civil War veterans could not adjust to civilian life.²⁰⁹ They were psychological casualties of the war. Other reentered civilian life easily, putting the war behind them. Others, like Adam and Sam, used their war experience to their benefit obtaining political positions within their communities.

Nothing ever came of his long distance romance with M. He continued his profession as a painter. In 1867 he and other surviving members formed "The Last Man's Club" which was the first of its kind in the nation.²¹⁰ He married Miss Otilie Hoffman on May 17, 1869. In September of 1870 she and their daughter died during childbirth. Along with painting, Adam became commander of the local GAR post. He and the other Union Army veterans named the post after Lieutenant Louis Muller who had fallen at Gettysburg.

In the 1880's Adam helped to form the Stillwater Fire Department and served in it for some time. In 1884 he married Miss Augusta Burrow and they had four healthy children. He was elected County Sheriff in 1890 and held the position for two terms. Adam spent the later years of his life going to reunions of the First Minnesota and keeping the records of Muller Post. His wife died in 1922 and he

²⁰⁸ Letter to Sam. South Street Hospital. March 17, [1864]. *Samuel Bloomer Papers*. Minnesota Historical Society.

²⁰⁹ Dean, *Shook Over Hell*, 94-103.

²¹⁰ For more information on the "Last Man's Club" and GAR records contact the Washington County Historical Society.

then moved to his daughter's home in St. Paul. Adam Marty passed away on February 7, 1923 at the age of 85. He was buried in Fairview Cemetery in Stillwater near his cousin Sam.²¹¹



Figure 22. Adam Marty in his firefighter uniform. Washington County Historical Society



Figure 23. Adam Marty in his GAR uniform, 1887. Minnesota Historical Society.



Figure 24. Adam Marty, 1887. Washington County Historical Society.



Figure 25. Adam Marty wearing GAR badge, 1887. Minnesota Historical Society

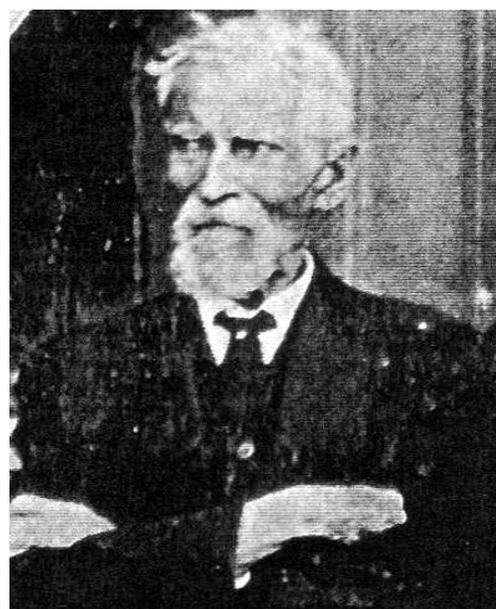


Figure 26. Adam Marty at a meeting of the "Last Man's Club," 1917. Washington County Historical Society.

²¹¹ Adam's grave at Fairview Cemetery in Stillwater was lost for decades. It was not until the 1980's that his plot was rediscovered and the deceased soldier was honored with a new headstone. On the other hand Sam's grave is marked by an enormous statue of him holding the American Flag. Other members of Company B buried in Fairview Cemetery include Thomas Sinclair and Louis Muller. Muller was disinterred at Gettysburg and reburied in Stillwater. While Sam's deeds were heroic he has overshadowed his comrades in death.

Sam eventually moved back to Stillwater with Tillie and they had four children. He served in the Invalid Corps until 1866. He held various jobs as a merchant of sewing machines, and as an insurance agent. Eventually he became a guard at the Stillwater prison where Henry Jackman, his adoptive father was warden. Sam was elected justice of the peace in the 2nd Ward of Stillwater on April 7, 1874. Tillie's erratic behavior at the beginning of their marriage should have been a warning to Sam for in 1875 he caught her committing adultery. The couple divorced and Sam received custody of the children. But Sam found love again and married Eleen (Nellie) Presnell on Oct. 7, 1882.



Figure 27. Samuel Bloomer wearing GAR badge, 1875. Washington County Historical Society.

He was deeply involved in GAR affairs as well. He was appointed Assistant Adjutant General of the Minnesota department by Adam who headed the department. Sam was also a member of the Last



Figure 28. Samuel Bloomer with canes, 1902. First Minnesota Jorgenson.

Man's club. Rising in station, he became the County Treasurer in 1888 and served for three terms. It was ironic, for he had labored for the County Treasurer before his war years. In June of 1905 he had the honor of carrying the battle scarred colors of the First Minnesota from the old capitol building to the new one. He also headed the effort to erect a soldier's monument in Stillwater. He succeeded and in April of 1914 it was put in place and can still be seen today. By 1915 he was almost completely incapacitated needing two canes to walk. Samuel Bloomer died on Thursday, Oct 4, 1917 at his home in Mahtomedi Minnesota.²¹²

²¹² Jorgenson, *First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment*. <http://www.1stminnesota.net/SearchChoice.html> (accessed March-July 2009).

The two cousins stayed close throughout their post war years. Their friendship had been solidified through war and the sharing of each other's hardships during those three bloody, heart wrenching years. Adam was revered the rest of his life as were the rest of the First Minnesota veterans.

Conclusion

Until the writing of this paper, Adam Marty's story had never been told. Samuel Bloomer's war experience took on mythic proportions in Stillwater and the entirety of Minnesota, overshadowing his cousin's equally commendable service. It is the author's hope that this paper will help to rectify that injustice. Adam's story is unique to him but it is also iconic of the period. His experiences with war, suffering, religion, romance, and manhood are illustrative of his individualism and the character of the age in which he lived. His experience sheds light on the life of the Civil War soldier and men of the war era. By combining narrative and analysis when studying history one comes to realize that subjects like Marty can be valuable historical resources, but, at the same time-he was living once. Bringing people back to life is one of the historian's unattainable but pursued goals, and it is something rarely attempted within the realm of Civil War studies. The Civil War is the most written about subject in U.S. history. The stories of individuals are rarely unearthed from a mountain of literature which continues to grow. It is the author's intention that this paper will retrieve one of those stories, present the reader with a new approach to the Civil War soldier, and provide valuable information about Adam and the Civil War era.

Bibliography-Primary Sources

Bloomer, Samuel, Samuel Bloomer Papers, 1861-1920, Minnesota Historical Society Library, St. Paul, MN.

Bloomer, Samuel, Scrapbook, 1890-1920, Stillwater Public Library St. Croix Room, Stillwater, MN.

Comprehensive Military Service Record, National Archives, Washington D.C.

Grand Army of the Republic. Department of Minnesota, Post Records, 1866-1945, Minnesota Historical Society Library, St. Paul MN.

Grand Army of the Republic, Muller Post Records, Washington County Historical Society, Stillwater MN.

Manuscript Census, City of Stillwater, Washington County, Minnesota, U.S. Census of Population, 1860. Ancestry.com, (Accessed 6/14/2009).

Marty, Adam, Correspondence, 1861-1919, Minnesota Historical Society Library, St. Paul, MN.

Minnesota. Office of the Adjutant General, Records of the First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, 1861-1865, Minnesota Historical Society Library, St. Paul, MN.

Shepard, Myron, Diaries, 1862-1864, Minnesota Historical Society Library, St. Paul MN.

St. Croix Valley Old Settlers' Association, Association Records, 1877-1922, Minnesota Historical Society Library, St. Paul, MN.

Bibliography-Secondary Sources

- Ackermann, Gertrude W. "Volunteer Guards in Minnesota." *Minnesota History*, 1935: 166-177.
- Adams, George W. *Doctors in Blue*. New York: Henry Schuman Inc., 1952.
- Atkins, Annette. *Creating Minnesota*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 2007.
- Barton, Michael and Logue, Larry M. *The Civil War Soldier*. New York: New York University Press, 2002.
- Barton, Michael. *Goodmen: The Character of Civil War Soldiers*. University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1981.
- Billings, John D. *Hartack and Coffee*. Boston: George M. Smith & Co., 1887.
- Brooks, Stewart. *Civil War Medicine*. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1966.
- Carley, Kenneth. *Minnesota in the Civil War*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1961, 2000.
- Commissioners, Board of. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*. St. Paul: Pioneer Press Company, 1890.
- Costa Dora L. and Kahn, Matthew E. *Heroes & Cowards: The Social Face of War*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008.
- Dean, Eric T. Jr. *Shook Over Hell: Post-Traumatic Stress, Vietnam and the Civil War*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Faust, Drew Gilpin. *This Republic of Suffering*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008.
- Freemon, Frank E. *Gangrene and Glory*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001.
- Gilchrist, Michael R. "Disease & Infection in the American Civil War." *The American Biology Teacher*, 1998: 258-262.
- Grinkor, Roy R. and Spiegel, John P. *Men Under Stress*. Philadelphia: Blakiston, 1945.
- Hage, Anne A. "The Battle of Gettysburg as Seen by Minnesota Soldiers." *Minnesota History*, 1963: 245-257.
- Heck, Frank H. *The Civil War Veteran in Minnesota Politics*. Oxford, Ohio: Mississippi Valley Press, 1941.
- Hess, Earl J. *The Union Soldier in Battle*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997.
- Holcombe, Return I. *History of the First Regiment Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, 1861-1864*. St. Paul: St. Croix Valley Civil War Round Table, 2006.
- Imholte, John Quinn. *The First Volunteers*. Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, Inc., 1963.

- Jorgenson, Wayne. *First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment*.
<http://www.1stminnesota.net/SearchChoice.html> (accessed March-July 2009).
- Leehan, Brian. *Pale Horse at Plum Run*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 2002.
- Linderman, Gerald F. *Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat in the American Civil War*. New York: Free Press, 1987.
- McPherson, James M. *For Cause & Comrades*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Mitchell, Reid. *Civil War Soldiers*. New York: Viking Penguin Inc., 1988.
- Moe, Richard. *The Last Full Measure*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1993.
- Moorhead, James H. *American Apocalypse: Yankee Protestants and the Civil War 1860-1869*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978.
- Morgan, Wayne M. *Victorian Culture in America, 1865-1914*. Itasca IL: F.E. Peacock Publishers Inc., 1973.
- Nelson, Scott Reynolds and Sheriff, Carol. *A People at War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Newson, Mary Jeannette. "Memories of Fort Snelling in Civil War Days." *Minnesota History*, 1934: 395-404.
- Reid, Mitchell. *Civil War Soldiers*. New York: Viking, 1988.
- Robertson, James I. Jr. *Soldiers Blue and Gray*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988.
- Rose, Anne C. *Victorian America and the Civil War*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Rotundo, Anthony E. *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era*. New York: Basic Books, 1993.
- Sartin, Jeffrey S. "Infectious Diseases During the Civil War: The Triumph of the "Third Army"." *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, 1993: 580-584.
- Saum, Lewis O. "Death in the Popular Mind of Pre-Civil War America." *American Quarterly*, 1974: 477-495.
- Schantz, Mark S. *Awaiting the Heavenly Country*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008.
- Searles, Jasper N. and Taylor, Matthew F. *History of the First Regiment Minnesota Volunteer Infantry*. Stillwater: Easton & Masterson, 1916.
- Shryock, Richard H. "A Medical Perspective On the Civil War." *American Quarterly*, 1962: 161-173.
- Taylor, Frank H. *Philadelphia in the Civil War*. Philadelphia: The City of Philadelphia, 1913.

Vinovskis, Maris A. "Have Social Historians Lost the Civil War? Some Preliminary Demographic Speculations." *The Journal of American History*, 1989: 34-58.

Wiley, Bell Irvin. *The Common Soldier of the Civil War*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973.

—. *The Life of Billy Yank*. New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1952.

Woodworth, Steven E. *While God is Marching On*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001.

Acknowledgements

This paper is the product of over six months of research. It would not have been possible without the help of several people and organizations. I offer my thanks to them.

Thanks to the Washington County Historical Society for giving me the opportunity to begin this research. Special thanks to Executive Director Brent Peterson for sharing my enthusiasm and guiding me in the early stages of my research. Also, special thanks to Kirsta Benson Sanchez for editing the original draft.

I would like to thank the Minnesota Historical Society for the help and advice they gave as I poured over collections. Their research facility was efficient and smoothly run which made my work enjoyable.

Love and thanks to my mother Mary Lynn for helping with transcriptions, always being curious, and having confidence in my abilities. No one else read a greater amount of my writing or loved my subject more.

To my girlfriend Pung, for her patience with me as I spent countless hours with Adam Marty.

Many thanks to Dr. Katherine Lang and my classmates. Their critiques, suggestions, opinions, and questions made this a much better paper.

My thanks to Dr. James Oberly for applying his great knowledge of the Civil War to my paper. It is much more accurate and concise because of his close reading.