

Memorial Poems: Civil War Literature in Context

Although Walt Whitman famously claimed that “the real war will never get into the books,” the American Civil War did in fact call forth a vast range of literary responses, in genres as diverse as poetry, popular song, novels and other prose genres. How does this literature depict the war, and how does it grapple with Whitman’s claim that there is something unrepresentable about the war’s carnage? In Fall, 2008, we explored these questions in an upper-level seminar, English 71: The Civil War in Literature (Professor Colleen Boggs), which fulfilled the “culminating experience” requirement in the English major. Students explored primary texts in the classroom and beyond: each student developed a research project that contextualized the literature we had studied by drawing on primary materials from special collections and the college archives. The work of three students -- Virginia Deaton, Nicole LaBombard, and David Schmidt -- is displayed here; it represents their original research.

The exhibition was created and installed by Virginia Deaton '09, Nicole LaBombard '09, and David Schmidt '09 and was on display in the Class of 1965 Galleries in Rauner Special Collections Library from February 3 to March 31, 2009.

Materials Included in the Exhibition

Case Title	Materials included
<p>Case 1. The Home Front: The Dartmouth Experience In the War</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A. S. Wheeler diary, April 14, 1865. Wheeler Family Papers. ML-86, Box 30, Folder 16. 2. Civil War Patriotic Envelopes. Iconography 1251. 3. Mourning Notice for Lincoln, April 17, 1865, addressed to Daniel P. Wheeler. Wheeler Family Papers. ML-86. 4. Class Day Exercises Program, Tuesday, July 19, 1864. 5. <i>The Aegis</i>. September 1862 and April 1863. Reference LD1447 .A2 1858-1866 6. Herman Melville. "On the Slain Collegians." In <i>Battle-Pieces and Aspects of War</i>. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1866. Melville 25 7. William Tecumseh Sherman, Commencement Address, Dartmouth College, July 19, 1866. Manuscript 866419 8. Asa D. Smith. "Supremacy of Righteousness," Baccalaureate Address, July 17, 1864. Alumni

	<p>S6423su</p> <p>9. David Boutelle '62 to his sister, May 19, 1861, and June 2, 1861. Manuscript 861257</p> <p>10. William Greene to Dartmouth College President Asa Smith, September 8, 1864. Manuscript 864508 .1</p>
<p>Case 2. The Empty Sleeve: Post-Civil War Reconstruction</p>	<p>1. Winslow Homer. "Our Watering Places: The Empty Sleeve at Newport." <i>Harper's Weekly</i>, 9. (August 26, 1865): 534. Available online.</p> <p>2. Edward Willett. <i>Frank Starr's Ten Cent American Novels, the Loyal Specter or the True Hearts of Atlanta</i>. New York: Frank Starr and Co. Publishers, 1876. Dime Novels 148</p> <p>3. P. A. Hannaford. <i>The Empty Sleeve: A Song with Chorus</i>. Music by J. W. Dadmun. Boston: Oliver Ditson and Co., 1866. Sheet Music SC 684</p> <p>4. <i>Memorial Poems: A Collection of Choice Gems of Poetry, Appropriate for Grand Army Gatherings</i>. Bradford NH: A. P. Howe, 1888. NH B73 1881</p> <p>5. Ethel Lynn Beers. "All Quiet on the Potomac." In <i>All Quiet on the Potomac and Other Poems</i>. Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1879. Baker-Berry 816 B392 O2 [not available in Rauner]</p> <p>6. Luke Collin. <i>Protect the Freedman: Songs and Chorus</i>. Sung by Skiff and Gaylord's Minstrels. Music by J. P. Webster. Chicago: Lyon and Healvy, 1866. Sheet Music SC 768</p> <p>7. J.R. Bagby. "The Empty Sleeve." In <i>War Poetry of the South</i>. Edited by William Gilmore Simms. New York: Richardson and Company, 1866. Val 816Si5 Y5</p>

Case 3. Remembering a New Hampshire Soldier: Private Words for the Brother and Public Texts for the Hero He Was to Become

1. · Samuel Putnam to his brother, Haldimand Sumner Putnam, 18 December 1863. [MS-742](#)
2. · Rev. Malcolm Douglass. *A Sermon Commemorative of Haldimand Sumner Putnam ... Preached on the 30th August 1863 in Trinity Church, Cornish, N. H. by the Rev. Malcolm Douglass, Rector of St. Paul's Church, Windsor, VT.* Claremont, New Hampshire: Press of the Claremont Manufacturing Company, 1863. [NH Claremont 1863](#)
3. Obituary of General Haldimand Sumner Putnam, Claremont, New Hampshire, 1863. [Possibly newspaper clippings from *A Sermon...*]
4. Elisabeth P. Spalding to Mrs. Putnam, 30 January 1864. [MS-742](#)
5. Charles Carleton Coffin. *My Days and Nights on the Battle-field: A Book for Boys.* 2nd Ed. Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1864. [1926 Coll C63](#)
6. J. Burns and C. A. Vosburgh. *Tell Mother I Die Happy: Song with Chorus.* New York City, NY: S. T. Gordon, 1864. [Sheet Music SC 791](#)
7. Lucy Putnam to her brother, Haldimand Sumner Putnam, 5 May 1863. [MS-742](#)
8. Lucy Putnam to her brother, Haldimand Sumner Putnam, 16 May 1863. [MS-742](#)
9. Belle Putnam to her brother, Haldimand Sumner Putnam, 6 May 1863. [MS-742](#)