Neither Pro-War Nor Pro-Peace:
Sydney George Fisher, John and Leo Faller, and Their Perspectives on Civil War Pennsylvania.

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ABSTRACT
My thesis focuses on the lives of two Pennsylvanians in the Civil War. Sidney George Fisher was an aristocratic Philadelphian. He was educated at Dickinson College and originally worked as a lawyer. By the time of the war, he was retired, so he spent his time with family and friends. He also wrote books on political theory. During the Civil War, he kept a diary of his thoughts, opinions, and interactions with other people.

John and Leo Faller were two young soldiers from Carlisle, Pennsylvania. In 1861, they enlisted in the Seventh Pennsylvania Reserves. In 1862, they fought in the battles of the Seven Days, Second Bull Run, and Antietam. Leo was killed at Antietam, but John continued to serve with his regiment until he was captured in 1864. After spending time at Andersonville, he returned home in 1865. They sent many letters home about their experiences in the army.

For my thesis, I look at both of their documents. I use them as a means to examine what Pennsylvanians thought about the Civil War. Did the people in the Keystone State support the Civil War? What did they think about it? Did they want to fight in the war or not? I attempt to answer these questions and similar ones by looking at Fisher and the Fallers. More specifically, I look at what Fisher and the Fallers thought about Pennsylvania politics, the military, and humanitarian aid.

My conclusion is that Pennsylvania had a few outspoken supporters of the war, and a few people who were outspoken in opposition against the war. Such polarized people, however, were in the minority. Fisher’s diary and the Fallers’ letters suggest that many Pennsylvanians had more moderate views and fell between the two extremes of completely pro-war and completely pro-peace. Sometimes they supported the war effort and agreed with some of the Union Party’s (the pro-war party) political beliefs, but other times the same people opposed the war effort and agreed with the Copperhead Party (the pro-peace party).
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INTRODUCTION

The Civil War was one the most important events of nineteenth century Pennsylvania. Many people in the state were involved in the conflict. It sent over 300,000 men to fight for the Union, and its civilians were also active in politics and in providing humanitarian aid for the soldiers and hospitals. Pennsylvania was also the scene of some the war’s most important events. In 1862 and 1864, Confederate cavalry raided the Cumberland Valley. In the 1864 raid, they burned Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, which caused a harsh outcry in the North. Pennsylvania is most famous for the battle of Gettysburg fought in 1863, which was the largest battle of the war and the turning point of the conflict. A few months after the battle, Lincoln gave the Gettysburg Address, perhaps his most famous speech.

Gettysburg has been over studied. It receives attention in numerous books and magazine articles and is the most popular Civil War site in the nation.1 Although not ignored, the lives and opinions of the civilian population and of the individual soldiers have been significantly less studied than Gettysburg. The people of Pennsylvania were involved in the conflict but did they want to be? What were their attitudes toward the Civil War? Did they support the conflict or not?

Historians often measure people’s support of the war by looking at politics. The 1864 election is a classic example. The Democratic Party ran George B. McClellan. His party wanted to end the war as soon as possible by holding a convention to negotiate peace with the South, including the possibility of the continuation of slavery (Long 1997, 283 and Shankman 1980, 189). The Union Party Candidate was Abraham Lincoln. He promised to fight the war until the

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1 I do not have any statistical data to prove that Gettysburg is over studied. However, I have been studying the Civil War for 14 years, and I have seen more articles and books about Gettysburg than any other subject. I also have seen plenty of books and articles on the two Confederate cavalry raids.
North was victorious and would not have any negotiations with the Confederacy (Long, 279). Fifty-five percent of the electorate supported Lincoln, but forty-five percent wanted the peace candidate (Long, 258). The political situation in Pennsylvania would seem to indicate that Pennsylvanians were polarized in their support of the war. Some supported the conflict but others opposed it.

In *The Pennsylvania Anti-war Movement: 1861-1865*, Arnold Shankman says that a group of Pennsylvanian politicians formed a “strong opposition to the war” (Shankman 1980, 13). These men were mainly rooted in the Democratic Party and were called Copperheads or Peace Democrats. He argues that these Democrats were divided into two classes. Some supported peace with the South, even if it meant “permanently dividing the Union” (Ibid, 14). Other Democrats did not actually suggest a permanent dissolution of the Union, but they opposed the “radical” methods of the Lincoln Administration’s handling of the war and wanted Lincoln to adopt a more conservative method. For example, many believed that slavery should be left alone in the South, so they claimed that Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation was unnecessary (Ibid, 15). Although Shankman distinguishes between the two groups, they formed one political block. These men all voted for the same candidates, and they all believed that the war was on a disastrous course.

The Peace Democrats are exemplified by George Woodward. Although he was a public official, he privately told his friends that he believed the war should end (Shankman 1980, 123). He was a judge on the Pennsylvanian Supreme Court. In this position, he opposed many of Lincoln’s war polices. In 1863, for example, Congress legalized the draft with the conscription law. Peace Democrats believed that this was an infringement of the civil liberties guaranteed in the Constitution. On November 9, 1863, Woodward and his fellow judges ruled that this law was
unconstitutional and could not be enforced in Pennsylvania (Ibid, 151). In addition, Woodward ran for governor in 1863 against Union Party candidate Governor Andrew Curtin. Although his campaign did not officially advocate peace with the South, it did criticize Lincoln’s policies (Ibid, 123). For example, it published a pamphlet written by a bishop called *Bible View of Slavery* that claimed the Bible justified slavery (Ibid, 127-128). If slavery was justifiable, then Lincoln’s Emancipation policy was an unnecessary radical step.

In addition to the Peace Democrat Party, Pennsylvania also had a large Union Party, which was a coalition formed between the Republican Party and War Democrats. The Republicans were Lincoln’s own party and most members supported him, but they were also joined by War Democrats. These Democrats were willing to support Lincoln’s policies like emancipation and believed that attacking the administration undermined the North’s ability to win the war (Shankman 1979, 13).

One of the key figures of the Union Party in Pennsylvania was Governor Andrew Curtin. He was elected in 1860 and won again in 1863. Curtin was famous for his zeal in recruiting troops. During the first months of war, for example, the War Department set a limit on how many Pennsylvanians could enlist in the US army. The state surpassed its limit by a few thousand. Instead of disbanding the extra troops, Curtin organized them into a division at the state’s expense. This division, known as the Pennsylvania Reserves, eventually served in the army when the War Department asked for more troops (Egle 1895, 77). Curtin also was involved in rallying political support for Lincoln. In September 1862, for example, Curtin organized a conference of Northern governors that was held in Altoona, Pennsylvania. At this conference, the governors passed a resolution expressing their support for Lincoln, especially for his recently issued Emancipation Proclamation (Ibid, 318-320).
Pennsylvania had both a strong Union Party and Peace Democrat Party, and this was reflected in the polarization of the voting public. The election of 1863 was nearly evenly split between the two parties. As already noted, in the 1863 gubernatorial election, Woodward opposed the Lincoln Administration and the emancipation of slaves. Curtin ran for reelection with the promise to support Lincoln and the emancipation proclamation. Curtin won 269,496 votes to 254,171 votes, but his narrow margin of victory demonstrated the strength of the Peace Democrats (Shankman 1980, 136).

Election results and political parties did not indicate what individual Pennsylvanians actually thought. The Union and Copperhead parties both had strong and outspoken leaders like Curtin and Woodward. This, however, did not mean that all men in the party held such polarized beliefs. For example, the 1864 Union Party Presidential Platform read,

Laying aside all differences of political opinion, we pledge ourselves, as Union men, animated by a common sentiment and aiming at a common object, to do everything in our power to aid the Government in quelling by force of arms the Rebellion now raging against its authority (Long 1994, 279).

The platform acknowledged that the Union Party consisted of men with “differences of political opinion.” Members of the Union Party, for example, disagreed about the role free blacks would play in the in the post-war United States. Although they all supported emancipation, some wanted to give the former slaves complete citizen and voting rights, but others wanted to free them but not make them citizens (Fisher 2007, 246). The Union Party was not a homogenous organization but was rather a coalition formed to win the war.

In addition to the political parties, election results themselves were not convincing proof that Pennsylvanians were polarized in their attitudes toward the war. An election is a naturally polarizing event because a voter can only chose between candidate A or B. Often the propaganda and platforms of the two parties are ideologically opposed, such as in the 1863 election.
Elections force the voting public to divide into two neat groups behind ideologically opposed candidates. Consequently, people of different political opinions can vote for the same candidate.

Studying the diaries and letters of Pennsylvanians reveals what individuals actually thought about the war. Without modern forms of communication, thousands of Pennsylvanians wrote letters and others also kept diaries. These documents were private and not meant for the public eye. In them, people were free to express whatever views about the Civil War they had. Consequently, a preserved group of letters or a diary is a concrete example of what an individual Pennsylvania thought about the war.

A diary or a group of letters preserves the opinions of one person but can anything be said about the opinions of the rest of the state? Pennsylvania had three million people, so it would be necessary to look at thousands of letters and diaries to obtain a statistically significant sampling of public opinion during the war. This is not possible with the time and manuscript resource limitations of a senior thesis. Given these limitations, what is then the best way to obtain as broad an understanding as possible of Pennsylvanians’ different opinions and perspectives? It would not be a good idea to examine the diaries of two aristocratic Philadelphians. Although they might have had some different opinions, they both might have had upper-class prejudices against the poor, known the same people, and primarily been concerned with events in Philadelphia. Consequently, it is much better to look at diaries and letters of people from different socio-economic and regional backgrounds because these documents would more likely have different perspectives on the war than the diaries of two Philadelphians would.

In order to examine Pennsylvanians’ attitudes toward the war, I will look at the diary of Sydney George Fisher and the letters of John and Leo Faller. Fisher was a wealthy Philadelphian
during the Civil War. He was born in 1809 and went to Dickinson College. He later became a lawyer but was retired by the time of the war. Fisher married Elizabeth Ingersoll and had one child named Sidney. During the war, he was loyal to the Union and was a supporter of the Lincoln administration. Burdened with gout and other illnesses, Fisher was unable to join the military. Although he spent most of the war pursuing his own business, pleasure, and family matters, he also was involved in politics. Fisher showed his support for Lincoln by writing numerous newspaper articles and verbose books on political theory that supported Lincoln’s handing of the war. Throughout the Civil War, Fisher kept a diary of his experiences as a Philadelphia civilian. Fisher often wrote entries, with the exception of the first months of 1865 because he was very ill.\(^2\)

John and Leo Faller were two young brothers, ages 18 and 20 in 1861, from Carlisle, Pennsylvania. They had little formal education, so John worked in a factory, and Leo was a carpenter. At the outbreak of the Civil War in April 1861, Leo enlisted in Company A of the Seventh Pennsylvania Reserves. John enlisted and joined Company A in August. They both served with the Army of the Potomac and fought in the Seven Days’ Battles, Second Bull Run, and Antietam. Leo was killed at Antietam on September 17, 1862. After this, John stayed with his regiment throughout the next two years and fought at Fredericksburg, but he spent most of his time stationed at Washington. He fought in The Wilderness in May 1864, but he was captured and went to Andersonville until 1865. Throughout the first half of the war, the brothers sent numerous letters home. John and Leo occasionally wrote joint letters, but they often wrote separate letters. Although the surviving letters are numerous, they do not cover the entire Civil

War. Most of the letters date from the brothers’ enlistment until Leo’s death. John wrote a few letters from September 1862 until his capture in 1864.³

Studying Fisher’s and the Fallers’ writings provides concrete examples of what three Pennsylvanians actually thought about the war. Fisher’s diary was a private document that was not intended for other eyes. In it, Fisher expressed his true opinions about the war. Many of his ideas would not be fit for public viewing. For example, he often condemned some of his fellow relatives and neighbors for their opinions about the war. His diary spanned the whole war, so it is possible to track how his perspectives of the war changed. Fisher also wrote a lot down in his diary. The sheer volume means it is easy to find out what he thought about numerous issues.

The Faller brothers also expressed their opinions in their letters home. In the letters, they were not very reserved in their thoughts. For example, John wrote on July 26, 1861, “I will go down south & burn some of the Rebels” (Faller 1963, 21), and in a joint letter on May 24, 1862 they both mocked President Lincoln, saying, “(The dignitaries) consisted of old “Uncle Abe” the President of these little United states” (Ibid. 68). Given their frankness, they were undoubtably expressing their actual thoughts about the war. About thirty of these letters survive, so it is easy to get a broad sampling of their beliefs and opinions.

Fisher’s diary and the Fallers’ letters provide two different perspectives on wartime Pennsylvania. These men came from different backgrounds. Fisher was an educated Philadelphian, but the Faller brothers were uneducated soldiers from Carlisle. Consequently, they had different vantage points on the Civil War, which were reflected in their writings.

Fisher’s status as an educated aristocratic Philadelphia civilian caused him to be concerned with both local and national events but also to critically analyze these events. Because

³ The biographical information about Faller came from Dear Folks At Home, edited by Milton Flower, 1963.
he did not have to work to make a living, he had time to read newspapers and keep track of national events. He wrote about major battles, presidential elections, and the activities of Lincoln. Being upper-class and well connected, he knew all the leading men and families in Philadelphia. Consequently, his diary was filled with Fisher’s interactions and opinions of them. Fisher was also an educated man, which was reflected in his diary. Its entries were not rambling accounts, but Fisher picked a particular event or idea and focused on it. He did not take events at face value but analyzed events and so offered a critical account of them.

Coming from a different background than Fisher, the Fallers were concerned with different topics than Fisher was and lacked his analytical skills. As soldiers, they were mainly concerned about military events, so their letters have numerous references to troop movements, soldiers’ attitudes, and camp gossip. However, they often speak of events and friends back in Carlisle. In addition, the Fallers’ lack of education was very noticeable in their letters. Like most Civil War letters, the spelling and grammar were poor, and the letters were choppy and disjointed. The brothers also did not analyze their situation, but quickly formed harsh opinions about people. During the Gettysburg campaign, for example, Governor Curtin called for emergency militia. Many people did not volunteer for this. On June 25, 1863, John wrote, “The boys all feel highly indignant at the people of Pennsylvania in not responding to the call of the Governor. I think it will serve some of them right if they get their things taken from them. . . Such men are not fit to be called Americans” (Faller 1963, 105).

When Fisher and the Fallers looked at the same event, their writings’ different perspectives are clear. On October 12, 1863, Fisher wrote a detailed entry about the 1863 gubernatorial election and offered evaluations of Curtin and Woodward. He wrote,“(Curtin) has displayed energy, activity & zeal in sustaining the administration and carrying out all measures
necessary to promote the war. His moral character is, I fancy, not very good, but better than could be expected for a governor of Penna” (Fisher 2007, 205). He also wrote that Woodward “sympathizes wholly with the rebellion, its motives, passions and purposes, justifies it, advocated the right of secession and defends slavery as a divine and beneficent institution that should be fostered and extended” (Ibid. 205-206). After judging the candidates, Fisher concluded, “This election is very important.” Fisher here analyzed the situation and made a judgment. He looked at the beliefs of each candidate, and he concluded that the election would be important because the candidates had such radically different beliefs. Given his general support of the Union Party and Lincoln, Fisher undoubtedly wanted Curtin to win.

John Faller also wrote about the election on October 19, 1863. In the sentences immediately before his reference to the election, Faller wrote, “The Whiskey will do me for some time yet and if we are here by Christmas I will send home the canteens to be replenished for the winter.” He then wrote, “What do you think of the election isn’t it glorious to hear of the copperhead being defeated and old Andy reelected. Wont he make the boys tremble the next draft.” Faller went on in the next sentences, “They are bringing in the rebel prisoners every day from the point” (Faller 1963, 108). He was overjoyed that Andrew Curtin was reelected governor. However, he simply stated this in the midst of a ramble on other events.

Fisher’s diary and the Fallers’ letters provide a lens through which to examine Pennsylvanians’ attitudes about the war. They freely expressed their thoughts and opinions, so it is easy to obtain a concrete idea of what they actually believed, but they also had different perspectives on the war. Consequently, their work provides two concrete examples of what different Pennsylvanians thought about the war.
Men like Governor Andrew Curtin and his rival Justice George Woodward were polar opposites in their opinions. One supported the war and the Lincoln administration and did all in his power to raise troops, but the other denounced the Lincoln administration and believed that peace should be made with the South. Such polarized people, however, were in the minority. Fisher’s diary and the Fallers’ letters suggest that many Pennsylvanians had more moderate views and fell between the two extremes of completely pro-war and completely pro-peace. Sometimes they supported the war effort and agreed with some of the Union Party’s political beliefs, but other times the same people opposed the war effort and agreed with the Copperhead Party.

I intend to examine Pennsylvanians’ attitudes toward the Civil War in the areas of politics, the military, and humanitarian aid efforts for soldiers. I picked these three areas because much of the secondary literature focuses on them, and Fisher and the Fallers spend most of their time addressing these issues. They also involve a broad range of Pennsylvanians and activities.
ON POLITICS

Pennsylvania had both the Union and Peace Democrat Parties, but Pennsylvanians sometimes supported both parties. Fisher and the brothers were members or supporters of the Union Party, but they sometimes held similar opinions as or interacted with Copperheads and Peace Democrats. They also occasionally condemned the leaders and radical members of their own political party. Fisher, the Fallers, and many other Pennsylvanians were political moderates. Although they were more supportive of one political party, they had sympathies and ties with the other party.

As an educated Philadelphian, Fisher explored and thought about philosophy, particularly about how to be enlightened to the Truth. On May 10, 1860, he condemned members of the Democratic Presidential Convention. He wrote, “In every opinion, steadily advocated by numbers of men, there is some truth. The mistake they (the Democrats) make is in supposing their opinion to contain the whole truth, a very common error” (Faller 2007, 33). An opinion advocated by many people contains an element of the truth but not the whole truth. To obtain the whole truth, Fisher believed that a man needed to use reason and logical. He needed to reflect on and explore every possible issue connected with a certain political debate. Once a man had explored all the issues, he could synthesize them into a coherent understanding of the situation (Ibid 33).

Not all were capable of rational decision making. He wrote, “Very few, either by training or talents are capable of following out a chain of logical deduction and then surveying all parts of a subject as a whole” (Fisher 2007, 33). Educated and wise men had the ability to think clearly and pursue reason when they were making decisions. Most people, however, were not guided by reason in decision making. They were guided by “sectional, sectarian, partisan, or personal
motives or passions” (Ibid). They made decisions based on their emotions or based on their own or their groups’ interests.

Throughout the war, Fisher’s philosophical beliefs guided how he saw the political world around him. Fisher was an educated man, so he was qualified, by his own judgment, to make rational decisions about politics. He was willing to support those decisions of the Union party he considered guided by reason but opposed those that were guided by passion and self-interest. He was even willing to help Copperheads, if he believed it necessary.

Before the outbreak of the war, he opposed secessionists because he believed they were guided by their selfish desires to preserve slavery. On November 30, 1860 he wrote,

Revolution is a step which cannot be justified unless grievances be real & serious and unless all legal & peaceable means of redress have been tried & have failed. Now the fact is that at this time the country is in the enjoyment of universal & unequalled prosperity . . . To overturn a government for the sake of an interest (slavery) . . . would be folly” (Fisher 2007, 63).

The South believed that President Lincoln would destroy slavery.4 In order to protect it, they wanted to succeed from the Union. They did not care that that the United States was in the time of prosperity. Any conflict created by secession would bring an end to this prosperity. Instead of manufacturing and engaging in business, the nation would be busy fighting itself.

In addition to denouncing secessionists, Fisher criticized the 1860 Republican Party’s hatred of slavery as being dangerous for the Union. He refused to vote for Lincoln in 1860. On November 6, he wrote,

“If the spirit by which it (the Republican Party) is animated were simply to restrain slavery within its present limits, but heartily to maintain it within those limits, I would vote for Lincoln. But it is leavened largely by a different feeling, a blind, reckless

4 In the Mexican War, America captured a lot of territory in the west. Many Southerners wanted to make this new territory into slave states, but many Northerners wanted to prohibit slavery from this land. In his presidential election campaign of 1860, Lincoln promised to prohibit slavery from the territories. Although he did not say he would outlaw slavery in the South, many Southerners believed he would eventually.
enthusiastic hatred of slavery, without regard to the character of the Negro race or to the consequences of abolition” (Ibid. 56).

Fisher desired to keep slavery contained to the South and out of the Western Territories. He, however, feared the radical attitudes of some members of the Republican Party. He believed that any radical treatment of slavery like emancipation would cause “the destruction of the Union and the South” (Ibid. 57).

Despite reservations about voting for him, Fisher was a strong supporter of Lincoln because he had the moral character necessary to make proper decisions. He wrote enthusiastically on July 6, 1861, “In this hour of its trial, the country seems to have found in Mr. Lincoln a great man. I should judge that he has a clear head, a good heart, a strong will and high moral sentiment” (Fisher 2007, 102). Four years later, he retained the same opinion of Lincoln. On April 15, 1865, which was the day Lincoln died, he wrote, “He was indeed the great man of the period. . . His perfect uprightness & purity of purpose were beyond all doubt.” Lincoln’s moral character led him to make right decisions. He was guided by reason and not by his own selfish desires or passions. Fisher praised Lincoln’s ability “to comprehend all the questions before the country & to deal with them in an efficient, practical manner” (Fisher 2007, 252).

Believing that Lincoln made wise decisions, Fisher defended many of his policies throughout the war. Fisher wrote The Trial of the Constitution in order to defend Lincoln’s repealing the writ of habeas corpus. He wrote this verbose four hundred page book in 1862. In April 1861, President Lincoln suspended the writ of habeas corpus in southern Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Washington. This meant that Democrats and other people who spoke against the war could be arrested and thrown in jail without a trial. Many leading Copperheads protested Lincoln’s suspension of habeas corpus and claimed it was unconstitutional. Technically, Article I Section 9 of the Constitution gave Congress and not the President the authority to revoke the
writ (Shankman1980, 88). In *The Trial of the Constitution*, Fisher claimed that Lincoln acted constitutionally. When the Civil War broke out, many people in Maryland wanted the state to join the South. It was necessary to arrest their leaders immediately to keep the state in the Union. Lincoln repealed the writ without permission of Congress because it was not in session in April 1861. The emergency demanded immediate action, so Lincoln realized that it would have been absurd to wait for Congress to act. Lincoln repealed the writ, but he expected Congress to eventually ratify his decision (Riker 1954, 405).

Fisher also supported Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. On October 27, 1863, he wrote, “The war has changed our notions in regard to slavery and, like most others, if we are not now abolitionists in the old sense, we are now emancipationists & wish to see slavery destroyed since it has attempted to destroy the nation” (Ibid. 206). He saw slavery as a cause of the war, and he wished to see it destroyed to preserve the Union. Consequently, he believed that Lincoln was wise to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. In the 1864 election, the slavery issue was no longer a stumbling block for voting for Lincoln.\(^5\)

Despite his support for Lincoln, he condemned other members of the Union Party, whom he believed were guided by fanaticism and passion. Fisher, like most nineteenth century Americans, believed that the African Race was inferior to the Anglo-Saxon Race. For example, in *The Trial of the Constitution*, he described Africans as inferior “to the white man” and being docile (Fisher 1969, 269).\(^6\) Consequently, Fisher was never able to agree with those members of

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\(^5\) Although they were not outwardly hostile toward it, many Philadelphians were less sympathetic toward emancipation than Fisher. On January 1, 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation became law. Many of the blacks in the city celebrated but few white people did. Philadelphia Mayor Alexander Henry was inaugurated that same day. In his inaugural speech, he made no comment of the Emancipation Proclamation (Dusinberre 1965, 152-153).

\(^6\) During the 19\(^{th}\) Century, most white Americans considered blacks to be part of an inferior race. Fisher’s assumption that Africans were inferior was perfectly common in published works. In the 1857 Dred Scott case, Chief Justice Roger Taney wrote that blacks in the past had “been regarded as being an inferior order; and altogether
the Union Party who went too far, in his opinion, in the question of equality. On November 8, 1864, he wrote, “I feared the fanaticism of the abolitionists, advocates of Negro equality, Negro suffrage (among members of the Union party) (Ibid. 246). Fisher did not in any way support political equality or voting rights for the former slaves (White 2007, 12).

He also condemned the passion of pro-Union mobs because it disrupted public order. In Philadelphia and the surrounding area, pro-Union mobs often destroyed Copperhead newspapers. Writing about newspaper burnings on August 21, 1861, Fisher said,

“The people are in earnest and excited by the war and do not brook opposition. They feel outraged by the open expression of opinions which favor the enemy and look upon those who utter them as no better than the enemy. The people are right in their feelings but wrong in their violent action” (Fisher 2007, 110).

Fisher did not believe that this violence was justifiable. He had condemned the South for breaking the public peace by leaving the Union, so he also condemned Union supporters who acted violently and disrupted the public peace.

In addition to Radical Unionists, he was quick to condemn leading Copperheads because they made unwise decisions. Charles Ingersoll, his brother-in-law, made a provoking speech at a Democratic meeting in August 1862. He said, “A more corrupt Government than that which now governs us never was in the United States, and has seldom been in any European part of the world.” He claimed, “the whole object of the war . . . [has been] to free the nigger” (Dusinberre

unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations acceptable” (O’Brian 2005, 1355). Taney believed that blacks and slaves should continue to be treated as inferior as they had been in the past.

7 Throughout the war, various Copperheads created newspapers that denounced the Lincoln administration, and some newspapers even advocated support of the South. These Copperhead newspapers were periodically attacked by mobs. Philadelphia experienced its first such action in April 1861. The Palmetto Flag was started in late March to “advocate the recognition of the Southern Confederacy by the Government at Washington and by the Government elsewhere” (Shankman 1980, 57). This paper was sacked by a mob in April.
Ingersoll believed that the Constitution protected slavery, so it should not be tampered with (Fisher 2007, 220).

His speech brought out Fisher’s true opinion towards his brother-in-law’s anti-war and pro-slavery attitudes. A few days after giving the speech, Charles was arrested by the Provost Marshall for denouncing the government (Dusinberre 1965, 142-143).

On August 28, 1862, Fisher wrote about Charles’ speech, saying,

“He declares that the whole object of the war is to abolish slavery and that no government in the world is so corrupt & tyrannical as this. If he is sent to Fort Warren, I must say he will meet merited retribution. This is no time to denounce the government & to tell the people that it is not worth supporting or defending” (Fisher 2007, 163-164).

Fisher’s righteous judgment against Charles was twofold. First, Charles was excessive in calling the government “tyrannical” in its desire to abolish slavery. Fisher himself thought that slavery was a moral evil. Second, the Northern armies had just been defeated near Richmond and were in full retreat, so it was not good policy to spread discontent. Fisher came to the damning conclusion that Charles deserved to be imprisoned in Fort Warren, which was a fort in Boston Harbor.

Despite disagreeing with Charles, Fisher was willing to work for his release because he believed that the government had been unwise to arrest him. He recorded his conversation with Charles’ brother Harry about the arrest, saying, “(I told him that) I thought the arrest at this time impolitic, I was willing to do anything I considered right to get him released” (Fisher 2007, 163).

Fisher believed that Charles would use his arrest as evidence of the Government’s tyrannical ideas and gather a following of supporters. On August 25, he wrote that arresting Charles was

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8 Fisher believed that slavery was morally evil. On November 6, 1860, he wrote, “Slavery is hateful in itself. The animating principle of all our institutions, the ruling passion of our race, is liberty. How can a people at once love liberty and love slavery [?]” (Faller 2007, 57).
going “to excite passion and to give consequence to men, who, let alone, would become insignificant” (Ibid, 160). Fisher was probably afraid that Charles and other Copperheads would use his arrest as a platform to protest the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus because he had been arrested without a trial. He was also probably willing to help Charles because of his family connection. Charles’s mother Mary Ingersoll had just died: so Fisher might have been more inclined to help Charles for this reason as well.9

In addition to Fisher, the Fallers were also political moderates. They were supporters of the Union, but their political beliefs were sometimes tempered with cynicism and a lack of respect for political leaders like Lincoln. They also were not concerned with emancipation because it did not affect them.

Although the Faller brothers did not describe their political beliefs often, they both were supporters of the Union and wished to see the South crushed. In a letter on December 23, 1861, John claimed, “Uncle Sam had hired me for three years to butcher Rebels” (Faller 1963, 42). Although his statement was vulgar, it communicated his conviction to fight the rebel army. Leo expressed similar views on February 16, 1862 after he had just heard of the capture of Fort Donelson.10 He wrote, “I sent that jolly. Hip-Hip Hurrah! (sic). (i.e. He cheered because of the victory.) The Rebs will soon be played out and then we will be home” (Ibid, 57). He was glad of victory and confident of the Confederates defeat.

They never, however, explained why they supported the Union. In an August 11, 1861 letter, John mentioned that he considered it “nothing more than his duty to enlist,” and if he and

9 The Provost Marshall who arrested Charles Ingersoll had done so without authority from Washington. The government eventually ordered Charles released (Dusinberre, 142-143).

10 General Grant captured Fort Donelson, Tennessee on February 16, 1862. It was one of the first important Union victories in the war.
Leo died, they would “die in a good cause” (Faller 1963, 23-24). Later in the war, John referred to the Union cause as “this holy cause” (Ibid, 105). John was a devout Catholic and often wrote of religious matters in his letters. In March 1863, he mentioned going to Saint Patrick’s church in Washington on Sunday (Ibid, 103). He may have believed that the Union cause had a divine backing.

The Faller brothers supported the Union, so they disliked Pennsylvanians who did not support the war. In a July 8, 1861 letter from camp in West Chester, Pennsylvania, Leo wrote, “There is a Sesession (sic) paper11 in West-Chester and five men out of each company are going in to demolish the Building this afternoon. I reckon that will stop the treason of that Eiditor (sic)” (Faller 1963, Ibid 14).12 In an angry letter home on June 25, 1863, John complained about those who did not enlist in the militia to stop Lee’s invasion. He derided them, saying, “Such men are not fit to be called Americans” (Ibid, 105).

Despite being pro-Union, the Faller brothers were not always supportive of the Union Party leaders. Their regiment was often visited by political dignitaries,13 which usually they were excited to see. In a letter on August 23, 1861, Leo gave a long account of a review by Lincoln and McClellan. He wrote,

“We waited until the President was opposite us and then commenced to Cheer. I tell you it made some noise. Eight thousand men, half a dozen Brass Bands and about Fifty Drums with the Shril sound of about a many Rifles made such a noise as to send terror to the hearts of the Rebels. It was heard for miles around” (Faller 1963, 26).

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11 By “Session paper,” Leo meant a Copperhead Paper.

12 It is probable that Leo meant the pro-Southern newspaper called the Jeffersonian. This newspaper’s office and printing press was destroyed by a mob in August 1861, so it is doubtful that Leo’s scheme was actually accomplished (Shankman 1980, 73).

13 In the Civil War, many of the leading political leaders reviewed the soldiers in order to build excitement and support for the war. Lincoln and Curtin were especially famous for visiting the Army of the Potomac
Leo wrote a lot about the review because seeing a famous political leader was a new experience for him. He and his regiment were obviously excited because they cheered so loudly.

The Faller brothers’ enthusiasm for Lincoln and other dignitaries, however, was not always so strong. In a January 15, 1862 letter, Leo told of a review by numerous Pennsylvanian dignitaries, who presented flags to the Pennsylvania Reserves. He complained, “The Boys did not like it any too well for we had to stand in mud up to our ankles” (Faller 1963, 48). Being stuck in the mud would make anybody grumpy, but in a letter on May 24, 1862, John and Leo were a little cynical. They were reviewed by a few generals and by “old ‘Uncle Abe’ the President of these little United states” (Ibid, 68). Calling Lincoln “old” and the North “these little United states” suggested a slight tone of contempt for the President. It is hard to say why the Fallers disrespected the President on this occasion. They may have been discouraged because they had been in the same camp for over a month and thought they would never move toward the front (Colwell 1998, 173).

In addition to occasionally being disrespectful toward politicians, they also were indifferent toward emancipation because it did not affect them. They barely mentioned the existence of slavery in their letters, and they never made any moral judgment about it. One of the few mentions appeared in a letter of June 2, 1862. Leo described the theatrical performance of a contraband, saying, “I wish you could see the Captain’s Big Contraband shake his feet in the evening and when he pats for the others to dance he twists himself up into all kinds of shapes” (Faller 1963, 71). It was surprising that they did not show any real interest in slavery. They spent most of 1862 deep in the heart of Virginia, so they must have met many slaves, but they were not

14 In Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union, historian Bell Wiley suggests that most Union soldiers were indifferent about the slavery and emancipation issue. He writes, “It seems doubtful that one in ten (of Union soldiers) at any time during the conflict had any real interest in emancipation per se” (Wiley 1952, 40).
impressed enough to bother recording very much. Their lack of interest suggests that they were not concerned with slavery or emancipation. The Fallers’ letters were mainly focused on their practical needs and on the lives of their family and friends. This suggests that they were really only concerned with events that involved them directly and not in national events. Emancipation or the plight of slaves was not going to change their lives as soldiers.

Their indifference made the Faller brothers closer to Peace Democrats on the emancipation issue than Fisher ever was. Lincoln issued his primary Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862. Many Copperheads in Pennsylvania condemned the proclamation. The American Volunteer, Carlisle’s pro-South newspaper, called the Proclamation a “ridiculous and nonsensical notion,” and it also predicted, “All the Proclamations that may be issued for that purpose (to free the slaves) will most assuredly fail, and be as little heeded as the idle babblings of a madman” (Colwell 1998, 166). In contrast to the Copperheads, many Unionists like Fisher were in favor of emancipation. However, the Faller brothers never clearly stated such views about the slavery issue, which suggested that they did not care about it. Thus, they seemed to be in a kind of middle ground on the slavery issues between those who supported emancipation (abolitionists and moderates like Fisher) on one side and those who did not (Copperheads) on the other.

Faller and the Fishers were political moderates but so were many other Pennsylvanians. Some aspects of the Civil War only involved people from one region or economic class. Carlisle was close to the Virginia border. Consequently, it received many fugitive slaves, and the residents had to provide for them and protect their property from being ransacked (Colwell 1998, 41). A town further north did not have to deal with this issue. In addition, many upper-class males did not have to worry about the draft. Lincoln exempted men from the draft who could pay
$300 or hire a substitute to go in their place. Rich men were able to do this, but poorer people could not come up with the money, so they would be drafted.

Political moderates, however, came from different socio-economic and regional backgrounds, which indicated that they were probably wide-spread across the state. Fisher was an educated Philadelphian, and the Fallers were uneducated men from Carlisle. Despite their different backgrounds, they all were part of the Union Party, but they sometimes held similar opinions as and interacted with Copperheads and Peace Democrats. They also occasionally condemned members of their own party. The Fallers and Fisher show that moderates came from different economic and regional backgrounds. If an educated Philadelphian and two soldiers from Carlisle were moderate, why could not a middle-class man from Pittsburg and a school teacher from Scranton also be? The Fallers’ and Fishers’ case is not proof that men with such beliefs came from all across the state. However, it is suggestive that because moderates came from different socio-economic and regional backgrounds, they were probably wide-spread across the state.

The 1864 presidential election results indicated that Pennsylvania had many moderates. Neither party was powerful enough to draw a large majority of the votes. (Lincoln only won by 20,000 votes of the nearly 600,000 cast.) In the election, both parties sponsored major propaganda campaigns to win votes (Shankman 1980, 196). For example, Unionist newspapers often claimed that Copperhead Candidate George McClellan was a Southern sympathizer. Copperhead papers accused Lincoln of being too radical on the slavery issue (Ibid). This suggests that many voters were uncertain about which party to support and could go either way.

Fisher, the Fallers, and many other Pennsylvanians were political moderates because they belonged to one political party but had sympathies and ties with the other party. This means that
viewing Pennsylvania as a two-party system is not completely correct. Pennsylvania did have two established parties, but individuals did not necessarily completely support either of the parties.
ON THE MILITARY

In Pennsylvania politics, many people sometimes supported the Union Party but other times aided the Copperhead party. Similarly, many sometimes supported the war effort and other times did not. Fisher’s diary and the Fallers’ letters suggest that most Pennsylvanians did not support enlisting in the military after 1861. When the war broke in April 1861, most people were enthusiastic about enlisting and serving in the army. After 1861, many Pennsylvanians lost some, if not all, of their original excitement because they were discouraged by military defeats and long causality lists, by homesickness, and by the threat to their property.

During the first months of war, Fisher reported that many Philadelphians rushed to enlist in the military. The Civil War began on April 12, 1861 when Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. Three days later Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 volunteers to enlist for three months. On April 15, Fisher wrote,

No doubt Fort Sumter is taken and its surrender has roused the war passions of the North to a fearful pitch. From all quarters come accounts that the people are arming, and the danger now is that they will go too far. The South has sowed the wind and is likely to reap the whirlwind. The President has issued a proclamation calling for 75,000 troops. He could get ten times as many (Fisher 2007, 84).\(^{15}\)

Fisher believed that support for the war was so great that too many men would volunteer. His fear soon manifested itself. The War Department set an eleven regiment quota for Pennsylvania of three month volunteers, but Governor Andrew Curtin recruited twenty-five (Newland 2002, 214).

Early in the war, Fisher was swept away by the excitement and desired to join the home guard. On April 22, 1861, Fisher exclaimed, “The town is in a wild state of excitement.

\(^{15}\) Although women could not enlist, they were also swept up in the excitement and emotion of sending troops off to war. On June 7, 1861, Fisher told of the departure of the First City (Cavalry) Troop, saying, “It left town a few days ago and the start was quite a scene. A crowd of ladies was present with bouquets, garlands, waving handkerchiefs, tears and affectionate farewells” (Fisher 2007, 97).
Everybody is drilling. I feel that I ought not to remain inactive, but as I am never free from gout & constantly liable to serve attacks of it, I would not be an effective soldier. I could stand, however, and pull a trigger” (Fisher 2007, 86). Instead of the army, he tried to join the home guard but was refused because of his health.\(^{16}\) Fisher had to content himself with attending a meeting about the formation of a new home guard company and giving his moral support to the idea (Ibid, 87).\(^{17}\)

Philadelphians soon lost some of their enthusiasm for enlisting. On August 16, 1861, Fisher wrote, “Volunteers do not come forward so freely as they did and the feeling exhibited some weeks or months ago seems on the wane” (Fisher 2007, 108). By this time, Northern Armies had lost the Battles of Bull Run in July and Wilson’s Creek in August.\(^{18}\) Philadelphians were probably depressed at the news of the defeats, so they did not want to enlist.

The city’s support for enlisting, however, was revived during the Antietam Campaign. In September 1862, General Lee launched an invasion into Maryland, so Governor Curtin issued two orders, on September 4 and 11, calling for militia units to assemble and defend the state from possible invasion (Newland 2002, 224-225). On September 8, Fisher wrote about Philadelphia’s response, saying, “The governor has issued orders for collecting and arming troops to resist them (the rebels), the Home Guard of the city is prepared to take the field &

\(^{16}\) The Home Guard was a militia unit that would be called up to defend the city in case of invasion (Fisher 2007, 87).

\(^{17}\) Fisher was never able to enlist because of his health, but other members of the upper class did enlist. Fisher said that the First City Troop “is now composed of gentlemen, many of them rich and of the best families. It has always been prompt and efficient when needed to suppress riot and disorder at home. It is equipped with arms and horses at the expense of its members and volunteered eagerly for this war” (Fisher 2007, 97).

\(^{18}\) Union troops under General Irvin McDowell were defeated at 1st Bull Run in Virginia on July 21, 1861. This was a disgraceful defeat for the North because their troops had originally been winning the battle but then broke and ran thirty miles back to Washington. The North suffered another defeat in Missouri at Wilson’s Creek on August 10.
recruiting goes on with greatly increased activity” (Fisher 2007, 166). The city’s increased response was probably caused by fear of invasion and capture of the city. Lee’s army had just won two major victories at the Seven Days’ Battles and at Second Bull Run, so it was easy to imagine them coming to Philadelphia.\(^{19}\)

Nine months later, however, the city had a much different response. In June 1863, Lee invaded Pennsylvania,\(^{20}\) and on June 15, Curtin again issued a call for the militia (Egle 1895, 146). On June 29, Fisher described Philadelphia’s response to the invasion and call for men:

> Recruiting parties were marching about with drum & flag, followed only by a few ragged boys – recruiting offices empty, taverns and grog shops full. The people looked careless & indifferent. There was no excitement. The same street presented a very different scene in April 1861 when war broke out. Then it was fluttering with flags & filled by a crowd of agitated, earnest men. War was a novelty then; it is an old story now (Fisher 2007, 196).

The city’s apathy was so great that by late June it only raised 2,500 militia, even though it was expected to raise 10,000 militia (Dusinberre 167).

Philadelphians did not enlist during this crisis because they were unconcerned about the invasion and did not have confidence in the army. On June 16, Fisher wrote that not many people were enlisting because “no one seemed to think it possible that Philada: could be in danger (from the invasion)” (Fisher 2007, 194). Lee’s army had failed to reach the city during the Antietam Campaign, so people did not think it would reach the city now.\(^{21}\) A few days later, Fisher wrote, “There is a general want of confidence in Hooker who seems unequal to the work before him”

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\(^{19}\) The Seven Days’ Battles were fought between June 25 and July 1, 1862. The Union army under General George B. McClellan was encamped close to the Confederate capital at Richmond but was driven off by General Robert E. Lee’s forces. Lee’s army then marched north to near Washington and routed a federal army under General John Pope at Second Bull Run on August 28 to 30.

\(^{20}\) This was prior to the Battle of Gettysburg, which was fought on July 1-3, 1863.

\(^{21}\) Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia made it to Chambersburg, Pennsylvania and the western banks of the Susquehanna, but this was far from Philadelphia.
General Joseph Hooker was in command of the Union Army of the Potomac, but he had just been defeated by Lee’s army at the Battle of Chancellorsville in May. Philadelphians did not trust Hooker, so they probably were unwilling to join any militia that would fight with him. 22

Fisher’s diary revealed a declining interest in fighting and enlisting in the military among Pennsylvanians, but the Fallers’ letters also reported this. Leo commented on the large number of enlistments during the early stages of the war. On July 26, 1861, he was in Washington and claimed,

(The new regiments) are coming in at the rate of about twelve regiments every day. All the three months men are going home but the places are soon filled up. The people in Washington seem to think the Soldiers grow like Musarooms (sic) in Pennsylvania for we have a terrible lot of men here-more than any other state but still they come” (Faller 1963, 17).23

Leo was not exaggerating about the numbers of volunteers. Of the 336,444 men Pennsylvania sent to fight in the armies, over a third of these (130,594) volunteered in 1861 (Egle 1895, 247).

Civilians also felt this patriotic spirit and sent their men off to war with flag presentations and parades. On June 25, Leo described an event like this happening to one of his sister regiments at their training camp. He wrote, “A few minutes ago the Union Guards of Lancaster were presented with a handsome flag by the Citizens of Lancaster and the 1st Lieutenant of the Guards . . . was presented with a handsom (sic) sword” (Faller 1963, 11).

As enlistments declined after 1861, the Faller brothers urged men back home to enlist. In 1862, Pennsylvania sent only 71,100 new troops, and in 1863, the number dropped still further to only 43,046 troops (Egle 1895, 247). On February 2, 1862, John inquired about his brother

22 Although most white men were reluctant to enlist, Philadelphia raised its first black regiments in June 1863 (Newland 2002, 246). Fisher wrote an article entitled “Our Black Army” in June 1863, which expressed his support for black soldiers (Faller 2007, 194). All told, the state raised 8,612 black troops by the end of the war (Binder 1952, 385).

23 After Lincoln’s original call for men to volunteer for three months, he called for more soldiers to volunteer for three years. The Fallers volunteered for three years.
Gust, saying, “Ask him if the Governor accepted their company yet. Tell them (Gust and his brother Con) that I would not belong to the Home Guards” (Faller 1963, 55). He implied that instead of the home guards his brothers ought to join the real army. Leo expressed similar feelings on July 12, 1862, saying, “Tell some of those Patriotic young men in Carlisle and vicinity that now is the Appointed time and they should come accordingly. Carlisle should turn out another company from Captain to Cook” (Ibid, 85).

As Fisher did, John condemned Pennsylvanians’ reluctance to enlist during the Gettysburg campaign. As mentioned before, Governor Andrew Curtin issued a call for militia. On June 25, 1863, John declared,

The boys all feel highly indignant at the people of Pennsylvania in not responding more promptly to the call of the Governor. I think it will serve some of them right if they get their things taken from them. They have an idea that they have nothing at stake and they don’t care about risking their lives in this holy cause. Such men are not fit to be called Americans (Faller 1963, 107).

This was the most damning passage ever written in their letters. Although he used colorful language, John was correct in sensing a decline in enlistments during the Gettysburg campaign. In September 1862, 50,000 militia soldiers volunteered after Curtin’s appeal (Egle 1895, 137), but in June 1863, only 35,000 militia responded (Ibid, 254).

Some men from the Carlisle and Harrisburg area did not enlist that June because they wanted to protect their farms. John never said why people around Carlisle never enlisted, but Fisher did. On June 26, 1863, he met a Colonel who had just returned from Harrisburg. Fisher wrote,

He said the country people displayed entire indifference in relation to the invasion, saying the war was a mere quarrel between abolitionists & secessionists & that they did not care which won. They were only anxious about their farms and would be glad to have peace on any terms (Fisher 2007, 195).
The farmers' were indifferent about the political situation, but their immediate concern was their land. If they strayed from their farms, the Confederate armies would be more likely to pillage them.

Recognizing the lack of volunteering after 1861, officials decided to implement a draft. On August 4, 1862, Lincoln issued a call for 300,000 men to serve for nine months. State governors were allowed to draft men if they could not get enough volunteers to fill their quota (Snell 2002, 82). In October 1862, Governor Curtin began drafting men in Pennsylvania (Ibid, 85).

The draft had mixed results in obtaining men for the army. Being drafted was seen as a social stigma, so men wanted to avoid it (Landis 1931, 19). This compelled thousands of men to volunteer in order to avoid the draft (Murdock 1967, 7). Volunteers were seen as true patriots because they went to war by their own desire, but those drafted were regarded as less patriotic because they did not want to join up but were forced into the military. However, it was possible for Pennsylvanians to dodge the draft. For example, York County, which bordered Carlisle’s Cumberland County, had difficulty with draft dodgers. The county had many Copperhead supporters, who did not wish to support the war. In the October 1862 draft, 2,000 men were conscripted in York County. Five hundred men, who were not legally excused from the draft, never showed up to the recruiting camp. (Snell 2002, 86-87).

Having used such strong language in condemning men for not volunteering, John was happy that the draft would force men into the army. In an October 19, 1863 letter, he wrote, “What do you think of the election isn’t it glorious to hear of the copperhead being defeated and old Andy (Governor Andrew Curtin) reelected. Wont (sic) he make the boys tremble the next
draft” (Faller 1963, 108). John thought that Curtin was capable of enforcing the draft, so the draft would be something men should be afraid of.

Although his brother supported the draft, Leo believed that volunteering was better. Given that being drafted was a social stigma, Leo’s attitude was not surprising. On September 8, 1862, Leo urged the men of Carlisle to volunteer because of Lee’s invasion of Maryland. He said,

Now is the time for every one who has a Single Spark of Patriotism in him to Volunteer for if the Rebels ever get into Pennsylvania, Cumberland County\(^{24}\) will be among the first to feel the Horrors of War . . . No one that is able to stand a Campaign, should wait to be drafted but should Volunteer at once (Faller 1963, 87-88).

Pennsylvania was in immediate danger of invasion, so volunteering was the only patriotic and practical method of joining the army.

In addition to using the draft to increase manpower, officials after 1861 paid large bounties upon enlistment in order to entice men to join up. For example, Carlisle’s pro-Union paper the *American Democrat* ran an article encouraging troop enlistment on August 20, 1862. It said,

In case the old regiments are not filled up by volunteers prior to the first of September, they will be filled by draft. To drafted men no bounties or advance pay are given. But volunteers who enlist for the war will receive the $100 Government bounty and the first month’s pay in advance (Colwell 1998, 102).

The men of Carlisle had the double incentive of avoiding the draft and receiving $100 for them to enlist.

The members of John’s regiment mocked the new soldiers who received a bounty. In the fall of 1862, many veterans disliked the new soldiers who received a bounty because the veterans

\(^{24}\)Carlisle was in Cumberland County, which was very near the Mason-Dixon Line and not that far from Northern Virginia. It would be on the direct line of march between Maryland and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.
believed they came only for the money (Catton 1952, 12-14). John expressed this attitude in an October 21, 1862 letter. Each man in his regiment had just received a new set of clothes, so he wrote, “We all look like recruits and the fellows are joking among each other asking how much bounty we got” (Faller 1963, 95).

The Fallers were critical about the home front’s declining support for enlistments and interest in the military. Although they condemned others, the Fallers’ and their fellow soldiers’ enthusiasm for serving in the military soon declined after enlistment because they began to be homesick and were discouraged by military defeats and by seeing their friends killed and wounded. This suggests that the lack of interest in the military was experienced both in and out of the army.25

When the guns went off in 1861, Leo enlisted in quest of the adventure of an army life. He never mentioned any patriotic reason for his joining the army. In a June 10 letter, Leo believed that his company was going to be sworn in soon.26 Expecting this, he wrote, “The next time I write, I will [be] a real soldier” (Faller 1963, 8-9). Leo obviously thought the prospect of becoming a real soldier exciting because he closed his letter with this statement. Being a soldier was more thrilling than the being a carpenter back in Carlisle. On June 25, Leo ordered his brother to go tell his former boss that “Soldiering goes better than Carpentering” (Ibid, 12-13).

While Leo enlisted because soldiering presented an exciting new occupation, John joined the army because he was confident that it was his duty. When the war started, John was working

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25 The Fallers wrote letters home but so did thousands of other Pennsylvanians. They shared their concerns and feelings with each other. Given this constant communication, it is not surprising that men at the front sometimes thought the same way as the people back home.

26 When soldiers officially joined the Federal Army, they took an oath to faithfully fight in the military.
in a Philadelphia factory, but he decided to enlist in August (Faller 1963, 5). His mother objected
to his enlisting, so on August 11 he tried to pacify her, saying,

   Dear Mother I don’t want you to take it hard for I consider it nothing more than my duty
   (to enlist). The work that we get at the shop any child can do it and there is nothing to be
   learned. I would consider it time thrown away. If God spares me to get home when the
   war is over I may stand a chance of getting in another shop. I want you all to pray for me
   and Leo and if we die we die in good cause (Ibid, 23-24).

John saw in the war a “good cause” that was “his duty” to fight for. He never actually said what
this good cause was, but on August 4, he wrote, “I will go down south & burn some of the
Rebels” (Ibid, 20). This demonstrated his hostility toward the rebels. He probably thought that
they were his country’s enemies, and it was his duty to go fight them. As already mentioned, he
also probably believed that the Union Cause had some divine backing.

   With the onset of homesickness a few months after they enlisted, the brothers’
enthusiasm began to decline. On November 11, 1861, Leo wrote, “I wish pap and George (his
brother) would come down to see us” (Faller 1963, 37). Although he had written about his family
before, this was the first time that Leo desired for them to visit, which suggested that he missed
his family. John, however, was more homesick than Leo. He spent a large portion of a letter on
December 23, 1861 remembering past celebrations of Christmas with his family back in Carlisle
(Faller 1963, 41-45). In his next letter of January 5, 1862, John spoke of a wedding that had
taken place at home. He also inquired what his younger brothers received for Christmas (Ibid,
46). He then wrote, “You need not be alarmed about me getting homesick for there is not the
least danger and I would not leave the army until the war is over unless they would drum me out
or unless I was sick” (Ibid). John obviously was homesick because he spoke so much about
home in his letters. His claim not to be homesick seemed to be more of an attempt to convince
himself and others that he liked the army and did not miss home at all.
After experiencing their first battle in 1862, the brothers lost any desire to see another one. They fought in their first large engagement at the Seven Days’ Battles. On July 12, 1862, Leo said, “If any one tells you that the Rebels will not fight just tell them to come down to this neck of country and try them on. I suppose that some of the wounded boys of our Company are home by this time” (Faller 1963, 82). The unhappy discoveries that the enemy could fight and his friends could be wounded caused Leo to write, “That is the last of the fighting for that time and I hope the last altogether but if the Rebels are not satisfied I am willing to pitch in again” (Ibid, 85). After the reflection of a year, John expressed a similar attitude on June 25, 1863. He wrote, “Tomorrow the 26th of June is the anniversary of our first battle which occurred along the dismal swamp of the Chickahominy (sic).27 We have seen many a hard day since then and maybe we will see more before the affair is over” (Ibid, 106).

The horrors of the Seven Days lessened the Fallers’ enthusiasm for fighting, but they did not abandon their commitment to the war altogether. Leo declared that he was “willing to pitch in again” if needed in another fight. John accepted the fact that he would see more hard days before his war experience was over.

Many others soldiers, however, had even less enthusiasm for the military than the Fallers did. They lacked the brothers’ commitment, so they deserted. Fifty-eight men deserted from the brothers’ own Seventh Pennsylvania Reserves in its three year existence. The Fallers’ regiment had a little over 1,000 men (Sypher 1865, 634-647). Desertion was a more serious problem in other regiments. In the Eighty-Seventh Pennsylvania, for example, about 250 of its 1,034 soldiers deserted during 1861 (Brandt 2006, 115). Homesickness was probably a contributing

27 Part of the action in the Seven Days’ Battle occurred along the Chickahominy River near Richmond.
factor in some desertions. The Fallers missed home often, so probably other soldiers did also, but they lacked the Fallers’ discipline to stay in the army.

In addition to not deserting, the Fallers never suggested that the North was losing the war, but some other Carlisle soldiers did because of military failures in Virginia. The brothers grumbled against a few officers here and there, but this was the extent of it. In a June 19, 1862 letter, Leo described soldiers who spread false rumors about the army while on furlough in Carlisle. He complained, “I suppose some of our boys (on furlough) give a woful (sic) account of Affairs in Dixie Land but I am only beginning to get interested and like soldering as well as I did at Camp Wayne”28 (Faller 1963, 78). During this time period, the Army of Potomac had been on campaign for several months. They were trying to capture Richmond but failed to do so. The Carlisle soldiers probably were discouraged from this seeming lack of progress. Many of them spread lies, so Leo was quick to deny them by being optimistic about soldiering. His optimism would soon change after he experienced the Seven Days.

Deserters and malcontents were less committed to the military than were the Fallers, but the Veteran Volunteers never lost much of their original enthusiasm. Thousands of Pennsylvanians had enlisted in 1861 for three years, so their terms of service expired in 1864. They were given the option of reenlisting with a large bounty. Nearly 18,000 Veteran Volunteers (as reenlisting soldiers were called) chose to accept the bounty and join back up (Egle 1895, 254).

After three years, John had had enough of war and decided not to reenlist because he wanted to go home. On January 31, 1864, he wrote,

28 Camp Wayne was the Seventh Pennsylvania Reserve’s training camp near West Chester, PA.
I want you to have a room fixed up for me when I get home next summer. . . The colonel sent me over to Washington yesterday with six Veterans to get their bounty for them. I am going over again with two more on Tuesday and I expect to go over often now since the boys took it into theirs heads to reenlist (Faller 1963, 110).

He was stationed very near Washington, and as a sergeant, he was responsible for transporting soldiers to the city to reenlist. He, however, dreamed of going home in the summer and not to three more years of war. Ironically, John was captured in May 1864 and went to Andersonville, so he did not make it home until 1865.

After 1861, most Pennsylvanians lost much of their enthusiasm for enlisting and serving in the military because they were discouraged by military defeats and causality lists, by homesickness, and by the threat to their property. Of course, they lost their interest to varying degrees. The Faller brothers never deserted or denounced the war as a failure, but others did. The enthusiasm of some men like the Veteran Volunteers’ did not decline, but they were the exception to the rule. For the most part, Pennsylvanians simply lost interest in enlisting and fighting in the army.
ON HUMANITARIAN AID

As the Civil War progressed, recruitments declined and many Pennsylvanians lost interest in the military. Pennsylvania civilians were not enthusiastic about the conflict that deprived them of their friends and family, but they did not want their soldiers to suffer. The Fallers and Fisher indicated that the civilians in Carlisle and Philadelphia knew about the humanitarian needs of the soldiers, so they were motivated to amply provide for them, even late in the war.

The United States Government was not organized enough to provide adequately for the needs of its soldiers. For example, the medical department was unable to manage all the wounded and sick soldiers it received (Wiley 1952, 141). When the war started, the army did not have any large hospitals in northern cities to care for the wounded. The medical department had to convert buildings into hospitals quickly (Ibid). In addition, some of the regimental surgeons had not received proper medical education. Consequently, they could not appropriately care for the troops (Ibid, 131-132).

Recognizing the lack of governmental aid, the United States Sanitary Commission was created to fill the gap. In June 1861, a group of northern physicians formed the commission, which was a civilian agency dedicated to humanitarian relief for the soldiers. It gathered supplies and money for soldiers and hospitals from all over the North (Attie 1998, 78- 79). Members delivered the supplies to soldiers, but they also inspected camps and hospitals for cleanliness. They reported the results to the government in an effort to alert it to the needs of the men (Wiley 1952, 150). When civilians both in Carlisle and Philadelphia provided for the soldiers, they were not acting independently but were part of a national concern for humanitarian aid.
Despite being far away from the armies, Fisher and other Philadelphians knew about the
difficulty of camp life. Camp Curtin at Harrisburg was a training and organizational camp for
new troops. On May 12 1861, Fisher received word of the state of the camp from a friend. It
“was a most shocking scene of filth, discomfort, and disorder. . . . The men had scarcely
sufficient food, no comforts, and were fast becoming dissatisfied & demoralized” (Fisher 2007,
91). This angered Fisher, so he denounced Governor Curtin for his military incompetence (Ibid).

Philadelphians would also hear news of the dead and wounded soldiers on the battlefield.
After General George McClellan’s defeat at the Seven Days, Fisher claimed, “The town was in a
state of excitement and 3rd street filled with people, crowds surrounding the newspaper offices”
(Fisher 2007, 154). The newspapers brought word of the Union defeat and also long causality
lists. Fisher knew and admired several of the men. He wrote,

Geo. Meade, a brigadier general was severely wounded and on his way home He
married a daughter of John Sergeant and served with distinction in the Mexican war. . .
(I) was sorry to hear the news about (the death of) Hamilton Kuhn . . .He was the
youngest, very amiable & a sort of pet in his family, about 24 years old with a handsome
fortune (Ibid, 153-154).

Many other Pennsylvanians and Philadelphians knew men on the long casualty list. The
Pennsylvania Reserves entered the battle with about 10,000 men (Sypher 1865, 196) and
suffered about 3,000 causalities (Ibid, 209).

Knowing the needs of the wounded made Philadelphians want to help, but they were not
always able to. After seeing a doctor friend on September 16, 1862, Fisher wrote, “He is very
desirous to enlist & tried to find someone to attend to his practice in his absence, but without
success, so he cannot go” (Fisher 2007, 167). The needs of his patients could not be sacrificed

29 This was General George Gordon Meade, who would later defeat Lee at Gettysburg.
for the front. Some Philadelphians did go to the front and serve as nurses, but the experience of Fisher’s friend suggests that many others were not able to go.

However, Philadelphians were able to help wounded and sick soldiers closer to home. The city was a destination for convalescent soldiers, and by 1864, it had 26 hospitals (Brockett 1867, 593). This gave many a chance to be nurses and volunteers in the hospitals.

Fisher praised a hospital volunteer, who was motivated to work because she was concerned for her friends in the army. She died because she worked herself to death. On December 30, 1863, Fisher eulogized her, “She fell a sacrifice to her exertions for the sick & wounded soldiers. Against all advice & entreaty, she would go to the hospitals where she exerted herself in nursing the men & even in cooking for them beyond her strength” (Fisher 2007, 210). Her passion for helping started because she was concerned for soldiers she knew. Fisher wrote, “She was greatly excited by the war & knew well many young men who went to the army, some of whom were killed” (Ibid, 210).

In addition to nursing, other Philadelphians served in soldier aid societies or worked to raise money for humanitarian efforts. Many women formed aid societies to supply the soldiers’ needs (Seidman 2001, 61-62). They usually spent their time sewing or gathering supplies to send to hospitals and soldiers (Ibid, 63), or they raised donations for hospital work (Ibid, 70). As a large city, Philadelphia had numerous active societies that were effective in providing aid. For example, the Ladies’ Aid Society of Philadelphia was so developed that by 1863 it had contributed $60,000 worth of goods towards the needs of soldiers (Ibid, 63).³⁰ In addition to

³⁰ This was a vast amount of money by Civil War standards for it was the equivalent of the combined pay of 4,600 soldiers for a month.
women’s societies, the Union League of Philadelphia also helped on the humanitarian front. Although it was mainly involved in politics, it also organized public lectures to raise money for hospitals.

Fisher did humanitarian work because he was informed of soldiers’ suffering, so he believed it was his obligation to help. On March 25, 1864, he was asked by a Union League member to give a public lecture to raise money for “some ladies’ hospital society” (Fisher 2007, 216). He was troubled by this offer, and he wrote, “I have done so little & others have done so much for such objects, that I feel as if I ought to make some effort” (Ibid). Although he was not always active in humanitarian aid, Fisher believed it was a moral obligation to help soldiers. As indicated in his diary, Fisher knew about soldiers’ suffering, so this probably motivated him to help.

Other Philadelphians, however, were more involved than Fisher in humanitarian aid. Fisher spent most of the war living in luxury and idleness and not helping in humanitarian aid. On October 19, 1862, he declared, “I am leading an ideal sort of life, just such as I like. I have leisure, comfort, domestic happiness, literary occupation & the country” (Fisher 2007, 170). He expressed a similar attitude over a year later on March 2, 1864, saying, “I have more enjoyment of life than I ever had, notwithstanding the gout” (Ibid, 213). Most Philadelphians read newspapers or heard about men in the front just like Fisher did, so they all knew about soldiers’ needs. His love of leisure caused Fisher not to be active in humanitarian aid. Others, however,

31 In early 1863, leading pro-war Philadelphians formed the Union League. This was a political club designed to combat the Copperheads and raise regiments to fight in the war (Dusinberre 1965, 158).

32 Fisher agreed to give a lecture on the Crusades (Fisher 2007, 218) but never had to in the end because the Union League was not able to rent a hall (FN 8, A Philadelphia Perspective, ed. Jonathan White).
were more active in humanitarian aid by working in women’s societies or raising money for soldiers and hospitals.

Philadelphia’s greatest contribution to the soldier’s needs, however, was the Sanitary Fair of 1864. Starting in 1863, the Sanitary Commission began to organize large fairs in northern cities to raise money for their relief efforts. The Sanitary Fair came to Philadelphia from June 2 to 28, 1864, and altogether it raised one million dollars (Gallman 1990, 95-96).³³

The Sanitary Fair gave Fisher a chance to finally contribute to the needs of soldiers. In April 1864, Fisher was asked by a druggist’s wife to write a piece for a “poet’s album.” This book included pieces by various authors and was to be sold at the Fair (Fisher 2007, 217). He wrote a poem with five stanzas “of nine lines each” about “the part woman plays in this war, by nursing the sick in hospitals, by supplying clothes, delicacies, & c. to the Sanitary Commission, by stimulating & encouraging men to join the army” (Fisher 2007, 220-221). In addition, he was able to help his wife with her project for the fair. She and other women were “making up a book of autographs of the Presidents” to be sold (Ibid, 217), so Fisher obtained an autograph for her from a friend (Ibid, 222).

Even though he did donate to the Fair, other Philadelphians worked much harder than Fisher to prepare the event. The responsibility of the Fair was split up into numerous committees with each covering a different area. For example, The Wholesale Dry Goods Committee obtained dry good donations that were later sold (Gallman 1990, 97). On April 30, Fisher wrote,

³³ Fisher gave a very detailed description of the fair that is worth mentioning. On June 11, he wrote,

It is at Logan Square and is well worth seeing. The buildings are chiefly long & lofty galleries with Gothic roofs. These are very numerous. Two or three are large rotundas, the restaurant, the horticultural room, the smoking, &c., all are profusely decorated with flags & flowers & lines on each side with counters containing articles for sale & exhibition in infinite variety – dry goods, glass, china, hardware, books, engravings, army pictures, curiosities, relics, fancy work, & c., &c” (Fisher 2007, 224). Fisher went on to mention specific areas like the art displays that particularly impressed him (Ibid, 225).
“People are now universally talking about the approaching fair for the Sanitary Commission, and many very busy working for it, among them Betty (one of his relatives), who is on a committee” (Fisher 2007, 221) and gathered “a large quality of old relics, autographs, books, letters, Continental money, & c” to be sold (Ibid, 223).

Fisher believed that the work of numerous Philadelphians made the Fair a reality. He wrote,

These fairs & the Sanitary Commission are miracles of American spirit, energy & beauty. Nothing like them has ever been seen in the world before. The Sanitary Commission have spent ten millions in relieving the sick & wounded soldiers & millions are flowing into their treasury. All voluntary subscriptions, from all classes of the people, rich & poor. All the immense labor of superintending the arrangement of the innumerable things of this fair, of managing its myriad details & of selling the articles is performed by volunteers, ladies & gentlemen many of them, all of them highly respectable people (Fisher 2007, 225-226).

Fisher, of course, praised the efforts of the upper-classes, but he also praised efforts of the poor. As an aristocrat, he rarely praised this latter group, but his mentioning them stressed his belief that the Fair and the Sanitary Commission came about because of the hard work of all.34

“All classes of the people, rich & poor” were motivated to help in the Fair because they knew it would help the soldiers. Fisher wrote, “The Sanitary Commission have spent ten millions in relieving the sick & wounded soldiers & millions are flowing into their treasury.” Like Fisher, most Philadelphians knew about the humanitarian needs of the soldiers, so they were probably convinced that they had a moral obligation to help. The Sanitary Commission helped soldiers, so they were willing to serve in the fair.

34 Using Fisher’s diary and numerous other sources, historian J. Matthew Gallman concluded that the Fair was the result of the work of many Philadelphians from all classes. In his article “Voluntarism in Wartime: Philadelphia’s Great Fair,” he wrote, “The evidence of contemporary diaries suggests that nearly every Philadelphian was aware of the fair, that most visited it, and that almost all were strongly enthusiastic for it” (Gallman 1990, 103-104). He also wrote, “Most accounts of the Great Central Fair stress that all segments of Philadelphia society combined to make it a success” (Ibid, 105-106).
In his diary, Fisher suggested that Philadelphians knew of the humanitarian needs of the army, so they were convinced to help in one way or another. Philadelphians, however, were not the only ones who helped in humanitarian aid. The Fallers’ letters indicated a similar response in Carlisle. Philadelphia and Carlisle are geographically separated by over 100 miles. This suggests that civilians helping with humanitarian aid were not just limited to one specific geographical area like Philadelphia but were more widespread across the state.

The brothers were good at communicating their needs to their family in the letters. On some occasions, the Fallers had enough food and clothes to sustain them. On January 5, 1862, John wrote, “We all drew another blanket a few days ago, also shoes, stockings, and we have plenty of clothing for the winter. We have six good big blankets in our tent and I don’t think we will freeze” (Faller 1963, 46-47). Leo also suggested a similar abundance of supplies. On June 19, 1862, he wrote, “Tell George Foland (his friend) that our Bull of Fare is not quite as sumptuous as his. Ours in McClellen (sic) Tea, Biscuits Salt Pork, and Coffee”³⁵ (Faller 1963, 79). Leo complained about the bland army food, but if he did not have enough food, he would have complained about that.

The army often amply provided for its soldiers, but the Faller brothers desired auxiliary articles that the army did not provide. Union infantry were not issued boots but only shoes, which were very cheap and fell apart (Wiley 1952, 59). By November 1861, Leo realized the need for boots. He wrote, “We have to wade through so many little runs when we march that we get our feet wet and we are very apt to catch cold but. (sic) Boots will prevent that” (Faller 1963, 36-37). Because the army did not supply any, he asked his family to send them. In addition, the brothers “needed” delicacies from home because army food was bland. John once requested his

³⁵ These were standard army rations.
mother “to send about ten pounds of good butter and a whole lot of good things” (Faller 1963, 106).

The Union soldiers sometimes suffered shortages of food and clothes during campaigns. It was hard for the supply department to keep up with the moving armies (Wiley 1952, 60-61 and 225-226). While he was marching into Maryland in September 1862, Leo wrote,

Pat Maddon gave me a Clean shirt, the first clean one I had for six weeks for our knapsacks were put on a different boat from us when we left Harrisons (sic) Landing and we had not got them then but they came since, but I could [not] find mine (Faller 1963, 88-89).36

The Seventh Pennsylvania Reserves also experienced a shortage of basic necessities when it was stationed on picket duty along the Potomac River upstream from Washington in September 1861. After eating his first adequate meal in eight days, Leo wrote, “We have not had a Bite of Fresh Bred (sic) or Beef for eight days and do not expect to get any for the next ten days” (Ibid, 28-29).

The soldiers’ needs went beyond the occasional lack of supplies, and they sometimes experienced physical and emotional suffering. After the Seven Days’ Battles, Leo wrote, “I suppose that some of the wounded boys of our Company are home by this time” (Faller 1963, 82). In a September 8, 1862 letter, Leo reported a slight wound that he had received, but he stayed in the army (Ibid, 88). Not all the suffering, however, was physical. On March 29th 1863, John complained,

I received your very welcome letter yesterday evening, and was glad to hear you were all well. I had given up the idea of hearing from you any more, as I had written home the day after I arrived here and never received an answer until yesterday. I thought you had forgotten me (Faller 1963, 10).

36 Harrison’s Landing was a port on the James River near Richmond. The Army of the Potomac retreated here after being beaten during the Seven Days. The Fallers left Harrison’s Landing in August and were shipped to near Washington. They then fought in the Second Battle of Bull Run in late August, and in September, they went into Maryland.
John seemed to have been depressed and not thinking clearly. He was depressed because he wanted desperately to hear news about home, which indicated that he was homesick. This probably caused him to make the ridiculous claim that his family forgot him, even though he had received numerous letters in the past and had just returned from furlough. It never occurred to him that the mail could be delayed. In one case, it took a letter at least 10 days to travel from Carlisle to the men at Arlington, Virginia (Ibid, 87).

The Fallers had numerous needs, and the Sanitary Commission was able to provide for a few of them. Leo commented on a January 1862 visit by the Sanitary Commission, saying, “Yesterday there was two Ladies\textsuperscript{37} in Camp distributing books and papers to the soldiers and one of the members of the Sanitary Commission was inspecting the Quarters, and Cook-Houses” (Faller 1963, 49). This was the only reference to the Sanitary Commission in any of their letters, which suggests that the Fallers did not receive much aid from them. It was probably understaffed, so it could not be expected to help the thousands of Union soldiers adequately.

However, most of the Fallers’ and their friends’ needs were met by the people of Carlisle. In their letters, the Fallers mentioned specific needs and later indicated that these needs had been provided for by family and friends back home. This indicated that they knew about the humanitarian needs of their soldiers, so they were motivated to provide for them.\textsuperscript{38}

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\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{37} One of these women was Dorothea Dix, who was famous for her prison reform. She worked for the Sanitary Commission (FN 17, \textit{Dear Folks At Home}, ed. Milton Flower, 148).
  \item \textsuperscript{38} Many Carlisle citizens were active in providing humanitarian relief for the soldiers. In June 1861, the women in town formed a Volunteer Aid Society to provide for the men. They started by sending extra clothes and uniforms to all of Carlisle’s soldiers (Landis 1931, 5). In July, a company traveling through Carlisle was given provisions by the citizens. John met some of these soldiers in Philadelphia and wrote, “(The men said) that they would never forget the Ladies of Carlisle for the kindness towards them” (Faller 1963, 107). The town’s desire to help soldiers did not decline as the war progressed. In the first few months of 1864, the citizens organized two fairs (which raised $1600 combined), a concert, and a public lecture to raise money for humanitarian relief (Landis 1931, 19). This may not sound like much compared to Philadelphia’s Sanitary Fair, but Carlisle only had a population of 5,000.
\end{itemize}
In numerous letters, the brothers mention receiving a box of food or clothes from their family. On February 16, 1862, John wrote, “The box came very good and none of the eggs were broken” (Faller 1963, 58). The Fallers sometimes received larger boxes of gifts or supplies. John wrote a list of those people to thank for a Christmas crate sent in 1861. Some of those who he thanked included family members. He told his mother to thank his Aunt Betsey for “the splendid butter . . . and pickles” (Ibid, 42). However, he also told his mother to thank non-family members for their gifts. For example, he said to “tell George Foland that the cider was elegant” (Ibid, 43). In all, the brothers received 18 items in the box. Besides their immediate family, the gifts came from six other individuals. Three of whom had no relation to the brothers at all. The number of gifts and donors suggested that the Christmas box was probably the result of the collaboration of several Carlisle families.

The numerous letters from home helped encourage the Fallers. Although they complained sometimes about not getting any letters, the Fallers more often mentioned receiving letters from family members. In March 1862, John wrote, “We received your ever welcome letter the other day and were glad to hear you were all well” (Faller 1963, 57).39

Not only did the Fallers and other soldiers in Company A receive many letters, but they also received numerous visitors from Carlisle. The Seventh Pennsylvania Reserves spent much of the war in camp in Northern Virginia and Maryland, so it was easy to visit them from Carlisle. In an October 21, 1862 letter, John mentioned that his mother had just visited, but he also wrote,

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39 The other soldiers in the Fallers’ company also seemed to have received many letters from their families. In September or August 1862, John wrote, “Mike Fought requested me to tell his mother that he sent two letters, one with a check in and he has not received an answer. Tell them to write. Mr. Mulgrew sends his love and is waiting for a letter from his folks” (Faller 1964, 86). This letter was sent during a period of intense campaigning, which had probably delayed the letters for Mr. Mulgrew and Mike Fought. These soldiers, however, expected to receive letters from home, which indicated that they probably carried on a regular correspondence with their families.
“Mother, there have been five or six ladies to see their friends in our company since you left and they lived the same as you did while you were here” (Faller 1963, 95). In this same letter, John also mentioned being visited by Mr. Askew and by Mr. Bowers (Ibid, 94, 96), who seemed to have been residents of Carlisle. Besides this letter, both John and Leo mentioned many other times being visited by people from home.

The numerous visitors lifted the soldiers’ spirits, but they also served as mailmen between Carlisle and the front. After his mother’s visit, John wrote, “I was very much pleased to see you” (Faller 1963, 95). At this point, John was probably sad because Leo had just been killed, so any visit from a family member would have been encouraging. The visitors also aided the soldiers because they brought letters and packages from home and took the soldiers’ letters and packages back to Carlisle. In February 1862, the Fallers were visited by Mr. Snipe and Mr. Monyer of Carlisle. John wrote, “They gave us the letter Bella (his sister) had written. . . Dear Father, we will send you some money by Mr. Snipe, also a sample of our coffee and sugar” (Faller 1963, 53). This was a great service for the soldiers because it saved them postage. Although John and Leo sometimes sent money home, they often did not have much money. John once wrote, “Dear Mother, when you answer this letter I wish you would send me three or four dollars” (Ibid, 96).

The citizens of Philadelphia and Carlisle knew about the humanitarian needs of their soldiers and provided for them, even late in the war. However, these citizens were not always supportive of the war effort. Although they provided for their soldiers, they lost their enthusiasm for enlisting and fighting in the army, as the war progressed.
CONCLUSION

Fisher’s diary and the Fallers’ letters indicate that Pennsylvanians were not very polarized in their support of the war. Many Pennsylvanians had moderate views that fell between the two extremes of completely pro-war and completely pro-peace. They did not support the war and Union Party leaders in all areas, but they did not oppose the war or did not agree with Copperheads in all areas.

Studying Fisher’s diary and the Fallers’ letters cannot give a complete picture of what Pennsylvanians thought about the war. To obtain a statistically significant sampling of public opinion, it would be necessary to look at the diaries and letters of thousands of Pennsylvanians. For example, Bell Wiley wrote a social history about the two million Union soldiers in his *The Life of Billy Yank* (1952). With few exceptions, most historians consider Wiley’s work to be authoritative on the daily lives, the opinions, and the feelings of Union soldiers in the war. In his research, Wiley read twenty thousand letters and several hundred diaries of Union soldiers (Wiley 1952, 15). In addition, he looked at other historical material like camp newspapers and court-martial proceedings (Ibid).

Besides simply looking at numerous diaries and letters, it would also be necessary to examine perspectives from a variety of people with different backgrounds. Although Fisher and the brothers came from different backgrounds, they were all white males and supporters of the Union. Looking at diaries, letters, and other written material by committed Copperheads, women, and blacks would provide a broader view of wartime Pennsylvania. It addition, Pennsylvania had a large population of pacifists among Quakers, Amish, and Mennonites, which cannot be ignored.

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40 It is harder to locate the diaries and letters of blacks because less of them were literate.
The need for more research does not negate what Fisher or the Fallers said about the war or the conclusions drawn from their work. It rather reveals that looking at them does not provide a complete picture of wartime Pennsylvania. Fisher and the Fallers left behind rich documents, which can be mined to learn about Civil War Pennsylvania.
Primary Sources


Secondary Sources


Seidman, Rachel. “We Enlisted For the War:” Ladies’ Aid Societies and the Politics of Women’s Work During the War.” *Remaking and Making Pennsylvania’s Civil War*. Ed.


