
COLOR SERGEANT ANDREW J. TOZIER, 20TH MAINE MEDAL OF HONOR WINNER

By James A. Christian

Sergeant Andrew Jackson Tozier's seizing of an abandoned rifle to defend the 20th Maine's national flag at his lone, advanced position would earn him a Medal of Honor. As Tozier left no personal diary, or personal letters written during the war, scholars must instead turn to archival military records, published regimental histories, contemporary newspaper accounts, and the diaries and letters of Tozier's regimental comrades. Using these sources, the article herein sketches a portrait of the man General Joshua Chamberlain lauded as "an example of all that was excellent as a soldier." More broadly, perhaps, it depicts the experiences of a subset of young Maine men—Tozier's contemporaries—who volunteered to go to war in the early 1860s. James Christian holds degrees from Harvard College and the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School. He resides in Montgomery County, Maryland, where he works as an occupational medicine physician, certifying the fitness and managing the injuries of public safety employees, among other duties. His frequent work with veterans has given him an appreciation for the special problems of those who have seen combat and, like Tozier, are left to struggle with war-related disabilities long after the guns have silenced. Christian credits these veterans, as well as the Civil War scholarship of historian Thomas Desjardin, for providing the inspiration for this article.¹

The Civil War and the Medal of Honor

In August 1898, Secretary of War Russell A. Alger, wrote to 20th Maine Civil War veteran Color Sergeant Andrew Jackson Tozier to inform him that President McKinley had awarded him the Medal of Honor for bravery during the Battle of Gettysburg. The official citation on the medal read as follows:

At the crisis of the engagement, this soldier, a color bearer, stood alone in an advanced position, the regiment having been borne back, and defended his colors with musket and ammunition picked up at his feet.²

To the previously unheralded, physically worn sixty-year-old veteran, the receipt of this prestigious medal was an immensely gratifying event, prompting heartfelt thanks to the President and especially to General Joshua Chamberlain, Tozier's commanding officer at Gettysburg. In his letter recommending Tozier for the Medal of Honor, Chamberlain wrote:



"Valor" by Nick Korolov. Private collection of Mr. George Rogers Jr., president of the Historical Society of Litchfield, Maine.

I have recently had occasion to examine with some care the private records of my late commands in the war for the Union. In reviewing the action of the Twentieth Regiment, Maine Volunteers at Gettysburg July 2nd. 1863, I came upon my minutes of the behavior of Color Sergeant Andrew J. Tozier who stood at the angle of the line when I found it necessary to refuse my left wing in meeting the assault of Law's Brigade of Hood's division attempting to turn my position. . . .

At a crisis of the engagement when our whole center was for a moment broken and the enemy about to overpower us, I saw, as a thick cloud of smoke lifted, Sergeant Tozier standing alone at his advanced post, - two center companies having lost nearly half their numbers, and the Color Guard entirely cut away—the color-staff rested on the ground and supported in the hollow of his shoulder, while with a musket and cartridge-box he had picked up at his feet he was defending his color; presenting a figure which seemed to have paralyzed the enemy in front

of him, who might otherwise have captured the color.³

Renowned Civil War historian Robert Krick wrote, "During the Civil War, soldiers on both sides died by the thousands around and for their flag." For the Civil War soldier, regardless of one's side of the battlefield, the flag of the regiment stood as more than a simple identifier. It was also imbued with the pride of the towns from which that regiment hailed, as leading local citizens usually presented a new flag, or set of "colors," to a new regiment during formal presentation ceremonies. The loss of such sacredly entrusted colors to an enemy would mean shame and disgrace for the entire regiment.⁴

The men within a regiment considered the color bearer post a position of honor. The position, which the commanding officer conferred upon a senior sergeant within the ranks, was purposefully unarmed. This practice was not simply a concession to the impracticality of the color bearer endeavoring to support the flagstaff upright while also loading, aiming, and firing a rifle. The positioning of the unarmed color sergeant at the center of an active firing line served as a physical representation of the regiment's pluck and confidence in battle. Meanwhile, the defense of the color sergeant and his flag fell to the color guard, the small cadre of armed color corporals, who stood abreast the color sergeant.⁵

The post of color bearer was also highly perilous, and the holder of this honor had to be one of the bravest men in the regiment. Opposing regiments particularly targeted the color bearer's position during combat. Each side perceived that killing or otherwise rendering inactive a succession of color bearers would strike at the opposing regiment's morale and willingness to continue fighting. And in the instance of a rout, men from the prevailing regiment might even rush the color sergeant's position for the supreme prize of capturing the opposing regiment's colors.⁶

Given the reverence soldiers and citizens accorded the regimental colors, it is perhaps unsurprising that Tozier picked up an abandoned rifle to defend his colors. That he undertook this defense while standing alone at an advanced position was particularly valorous and deserving of special recognition. And yet Tozier was not recommended for the Medal of Honor in the im-

mediate days or months following Gettysburg, but rather, thirty-five years later. The same was true for many hundreds of Civil War veterans, who also received Medals of Honor three decades after a cited action. This had much to do with the history of the medal itself.⁷

The Medal of Honor did not exist prior to the Civil War. It was not until the second year of the war that Congress passed legislation empowering the President to award this prestigious new medal. Congress declined to specify a standard as to which actions should qualify for the new medal, urging only that recipients should “most distinguish themselves by their gallantry in action.” During the war years, capturing a Confederate flag during a battle emerged as the most common qualifying action for army recipients of the medal. Indeed, during the war years, the nineteen recipients of the Medal of Honor for Gettysburg actions included only one soldier who had not captured a Confederate flag. Surveying all Medals of Honor awarded during the war years, seventy percent of its 370-odd army recipients had been credited with the capture of a Confederate flag.⁸

During the peaceful two decades that followed the Civil War, the War Department approved and awarded few Medals of Honor, issuing only sixty medals to army veterans from 1865 to 1885. However, beginning in the late 1880s, during the administration of Grover Cleveland, the first non-veteran President in twenty years, the pace of new Medal of Honor bestowals began to gather steam. This revival of bestowals coincided with a new mood of Unionist remembrance that swept across the nation in the mid-to-late 1880s. During these years, Union veteran groups began returning to battlefields where their regiments had fought to place memorial monuments and remember their dead. Twenty-five years after the war, the darker perceptions of the war as a scourge began to give way to romantic revisionism.⁹

Similarly reflecting this national mood or remembrance and romanticism, many hundreds of recommendations and applications for Medals of Honor poured into the War Department, and hundreds of these new recommendations were approved. Tozier would be one of 680-odd Civil War veterans who would receive the army medal in the 1890s. Given the increase in the number of new Medal of Honor recipients, the standard for what character of action

could qualify an applicant for a Medal of Honor clearly had broadened. At this time, the War Department awarded only twenty-four of these medals to veterans whose capture of a Confederate flag had been previously overlooked, bestowing half the number of medals for the relatively less courageous action of bringing a wounded soldier—not uncommonly an officer (sometimes a deceased one)—off the field.¹⁰

The War Department also faced additional challenges. Applicants, for a time, were allowed to nominate themselves, and documentation needed to credibly support an application could be lacking. Not surprisingly, politics also could play a role in designating a new medal recipient, as illustrated by the department’s decision to award a medal in 1897 to Gettysburg rascal-lion, but powerful post-war politician, Daniel Sickles.¹¹

None of these contextual considerations, however, should be taken as undermining the legitimacy of Tozier’s Medal of Honor. The gallantry required by a medal aspirant in rushing forward to capture a Confederate flag is not different from that required in standing with a flag with such a formidable profile “as to have paralyzed the enemy in front of him.” The telling point here is that, during the Civil War, the most common acknowledgement of a heroic action not involving the capture of an enemy flag was a promotion in rank. Just so, following the Battle of Gettysburg, Colonel Chamberlain received a promotion to the rank of brigadier general. And Chamberlain, in turn, set in motion a promotion of Sergeant Tozier to the rank of lieutenant (which Tozier chose to decline).¹²

What fateful series of events led Tozier, who six weeks earlier had been a grudging transferee to the 20th Maine, to then, three days prior to Gettysburg, assume the sacred trust position of regimental color bearer? Stepping back from Tozier’s heroism at Gettysburg to examine his life and his military career more fully allows one to see the remarkable breadth of Tozier’s Civil War experiences and what they cost him.

Tozier’s Early Life

Andrew Jackson Tozier was born in Monmouth, Maine, on February 11, 1838, the fifth of eight children and the third of five sons to John and Thirza Tozier. President Andrew Jackson had

completed his second term only eleven months earlier but, after leaving office, remained popular among many Americans. Interestingly, John Tozier gave his two oldest sons, Isaac and Charles, the middle name of the Roman emperor Augustus. One could therefore assume that John Tozier named Andrew in homage to the still-popular warrior and former president.¹³

The Toziers were a farming family, as were the great majority of Maine families in the early and middle nineteenth century. At some point before 1850, John Tozier gave up the farm in Monmouth and moved the family to Plymouth to operate a new farm. The United States Census for 1850 shows seven Tozier children living at home, with Andrew the fifth oldest of the group and the middle boy of the five. Not long after, Tozier family lore maintains that Andrew ran away from the Plymouth farm at thirteen years old. This event evidenced an adventuresome spirit in the young Andrew, who may have been drawn to join his brother Charles, who was then employed as a seaman. It is also possible that he was driven to escape the harshness of home life under an alcoholic father, as John Tozier's alcoholism led him in 1864 to abandon his wife and home in Plymouth. By 1880, the elder Tozier was an impoverished inmate in the Monmouth almshouse.¹⁴

Like Charles, Isaac Tozier, too, left home in the 1850s to work as a seaman. This work likely involved loading felled timber onto barges and ferrying it down the Maine coastline. In the 1860 US Census, twenty-two-year-old Andrew reported his occupation as "sailor," suggesting that his employment involved skilled seafaring work. At the time, Andrew was, at least temporarily, living in his parents' Plymouth home. Andrew's youngest brother, Ezra, aged fourteen, was his only sibling in residence at the home at that time.¹⁵

Tozier's Enlistment in the 2nd Maine Volunteer Infantry Regiment

On July 15, 1861, Andrew Tozier enlisted in the army, joining the 2nd Maine Volunteer Infantry. At enlistment, Tozier stood at six feet (four inches taller than the average Union soldier). His eyes were blue and his hair brown. At mid-July, Tozier was enlisting three months after the initial tsunami of young Maine men answering Presi-

dent Lincoln's April call for the 75,000 new soldiers he believed needed to put down the rebellion in the southern states. New volunteers, who, like Tozier, had waited until July to enlist, qualified for an incentive bonus of \$100 (purposefully payable only at end of their pledged term of service). The monthly pay for a private was \$13, dispersed by a visiting military paymaster at variable, multi-month intervals. For a Maine farm worker in 1860, the average monthly wage with board was \$14.34. Joshua Chamberlain, as a lieutenant colonel, earned \$181 each month.¹⁶

On the same day that Tozier signed his enlistment papers, Brigadier General Irvin McDowell's Army of Northeastern Virginia, encompassing the 2nd Maine Volunteers in their first division, was within one day of initiating the offensive march towards Manassas. Although the 2nd Maine was the second state infantry regiment to be organized, the regiment, on May 15, was the first to actually disembark from the state, earning it a special prize from a group of patriotic Maine women then living in California. These women (the wives of Maine investors in California pursuing opportunities in the gold market) commissioned the weaving of a large and striking new flag to be bestowed upon the first Maine regiment to depart the state. This so-called "California flag" of deep blue silk was adorned on one side by a magnificent eagle encircled by thirty-four stars and on the other side by the state seals of Maine and California. The California flag was delivered to the 2nd Maine regiment on July 20, 1861, when the entirety of McDowell's army was preparing to leave its Centerville, Virginia, encampment with battle plans for the next day. The 2nd Maine interrupted these preparations to allow Sergeant William Deane to accept the flag during a formal presentation ceremony.¹⁷

The next day, at the First Battle of Bull Run, the 2nd Maine received a shocking and brutal introduction to war. By midday, the Union battle plan began to falter when, at the direction of division commander Brigadier General Daniel Tyler, the regiment rushed forward to a position on the northern perimeter of the Bull Run battlefield. The regiment arrayed in battle alignment as they identified at a distance another line of soldiers, who, confusingly, wore the same gray uniforms. It is likely that Sergeant Deane's unfurling of the large, blue California flag re-

solved any uncertainty in the minds of the distant troops, who were in fact Confederates. The Confederate line reacted with the first volley, mortally or seriously wounding several 2nd Maine men. Deane fell to an exsanguinating throat wound, and Corporal Americus Moore, the color guard soldier to retrieve Deane's fallen flag from his side, was in the next instant felled with a fatal head wound.¹⁸

These 2nd Maine casualties, including the deaths of two color bearers, awakened the regiment, which began returning fire at the Confederates. The 2nd Maine commanding officer, Colonel Charles Jameson, led a determined advance toward enemy lines, but the regiment was unable to dislodge the Confederates. Just before receiving an order from command to retire his regiment from the field, Jameson enlisted a small cadre of volunteers, whom he led back onto the fiery field to bring in their wounded comrades.¹⁹

The 2nd Maine's ownership of its regimental flags had been brief. Yet the July 23 diary entry of 2nd Maine Corporal B. F. Sharp illustrates the powerful bond a common soldier early on could forge with his colors:

But our Brigadier General soon saw that the enemy was too strong for us. He rode to the left wing and gave the order to fall back to the woods on our left. . . . I looked about. I beheld the Stars and Stripes and my beloved Colonel on the right. I said to myself – I never will leave that flag unprotected. I rushed for it, leaving my company there. . . . We brought off all our flags in good shape. The bearer of the largest one was the first man shot.²⁰

The 2nd Maine's withdrawal from its first field of action did not conclude the regiment's service on that frightful day. After this early afternoon fighting, the regiment withdrew to a position along the east-west turnpike which led away from the battlefield. By late afternoon, a full capitulation and rout of McDowell's forces began. McDowell needed a force to resist the squads of Confederate cavalymen and infantrymen who were threatening to envelope the turnpike. As one of the few regiments maintaining discipline and cohesiveness on the field, the 2nd Maine was ordered north of the turnpike to deter the Confederate advance before

the regiment itself joined in the retreat.²¹

The 2nd Maine's active involvement in the battle was reflected in the post-action casualty report that its brigade commander, Colonel Erasmus Keyes, submitted to General Tyler. Colonel Keyes reported that, of the 640 men who went into battle, 174 were killed, wounded, captured, or missing, amounting to a 27 percent casualty rate.²²

Tozier Unites with the 2nd Maine Regiment

The situation that Private Andrew Tozier observed when he rejoined his new regiment could not have been a very encouraging one. Many of the Bull Run survivors had discarded their rifles and other equipment in the wild rush to escape the Manassas battlefield. In addition to the men killed or captured, a significant number of deserters also impacted the roll of the regiment, while others had seen enough of fighting and were petitioning for immediate discharge. In his July 22 diary entry, Private Rufus Coombs Amos recounted the chaotic state of affairs as the remnants of his 2nd Maine regiment reassembled in Alexandria the day after the battle:

It would be impossible for me to write and give any idea of the condition of the Army. As I see it last night and today, it was every one for himself. I see a number that seemed to have lost all reason. They would rush along in crowds and if a gun was discharged, as they often was in their excitement, they would sing out the Rebels are coming and away they would go until they was exhausted. A good many had thrown away their guns, hats, and most of their clothing. At sunrise there was eight of my company with me and we pushed on by deserted wagons, dead horses, and Soldiers that had gone until they could go no further and would fall down in the mud and lie as if they were dead. The first thing that brought me to my feelings was when I got in front of a house about five miles from Alexandria. There was an Ambulance run to one side of the road full of wounded. And just outside of the front fence was a woman walking back and forth, wringing her hands and begging for someone to take care of the wounded soldiers, as the horses

were cut clear and rode off by some Soldiers.²³

Following the debacle of the First Bull Run, President Lincoln turned to General George McClellan to take command of McDowell's demoralized soldiers and to transform them into a new disciplined and effective force. The reorganized army, now named the Army of the Potomac, settled into encampments around the Arlington area of northern Virginia. Through the remaining months of 1861 and into the spring of 1862, McClellan focused his energies on reequipping and training his army. In mid-October, 1861, the 2nd Maine regiment moved from its original encampment to a new site a few miles to the south. The regiment named it Camp Jameson, in honor of its Bull Run commander who was, by then, promoted and advanced in command.²⁴

Upon reporting to his new regiment, Private Tozier was assigned to Company I. He evidently adapted well to routine camp duties, army rules and pecking orders, fatigue assignments, and drill sequences. By December 1861, he earned a promotion to the rank of corporal. (Interestingly, corporals earned the same \$13 monthly pay as did privates.) Corporal Sharp, reported in his June 28, 1861, diary entry the considerations that had gone into his own promotion from private to corporal:

Last Monday morning, our Captain sent for me to appear at his quarters immediately. I went and entered. He turned and spoke thus: "Mr. Smart, you have attracted the attention of all of the officers on account of your good morals, close application to your business, soldier-like appearance, and close observance of all laws. You have hereby been appointed Corporal to fill the place of one who has been reduced to the ranks on account of unlawful conduct, which was getting drunk."²⁵

Standard Civil War protocol dictated that a regiment be composed of ten companies, each of these companies, upon initial formation, enrolling one hundred men. The one hundred men forming a new company were allotted among eight corporals who were responsible for their training and supervision. During an encampment, corporals monitored their men's compliance with army rules and regulations and over-



"Camp Jameson, 2nd Maine Infantry, Hall's Hill, Virginia," 1861. *General Samuel C. Lawrence's Civil War Photo Collection*. Courtesy of the Medford Historical Society and Museum, Medford, Massachusetts.

saw their performance of routine camp duties and any special fatigue assignments. During an active firing engagement, corporals assumed positions within the line of privates under their supervision. In these positions, the corporals acted to ensure proper performance of shouted commands as well as to aid in steadying their men in battle.²⁶

Corporal Tozier's first opportunity as a non-commissioned officer to "see the elephant," i.e., experience for the first time the endangerment of battle, came in the Battle of Hanover Courthouse, fought on May 27, 1862. This battle occurred during General McClellan's Peninsular Campaign, an offensive master plan initiated two months earlier with McClellan transporting his Army of the Potomac to the Virginian peninsula formed by the York and James Rivers. Since that landing, however, McClellan's push to reach and capture Richmond repeatedly stalled due to his tendency to overestimate Confederate troop strength and hence hesitate to move aggressively against Brigadier General Joseph Johnston's undermanned defenses.²⁷

On May 26, 1862, McClellan received a report of a large Confederate force moving towards the Hanover Courthouse area, ostensibly with the intent of threatening the right flank of his advancing army. Reacting to this report, McClellan directed Major General Fitz-John Porter to detach two divisions of his V Corps, including the 2nd Maine, and to lead these two divi-

sions to confront this threat. On the following day, Pope's forces did intercept and then quickly rout a force of Confederates south of the Hanover Courthouse area. However, in his eagerness to pursue the retreating Confederates northward up the Hanover Courthouse Road, Porter unknowingly left in his rear a sizeable contingent force of Confederates. This contingent force of Confederates was then perfectly situated to advance on the road behind the ranks of Porter's trailing regiments and launch an attack on Porter's rear.²⁸

Fortunately for Porter, one of the trailing regiments approaching the turnoff to head northward on the Hanover Courthouse Road was the 2nd Maine. Once the new 2nd Maine commander, Colonel Charles Roberts, became aware of the threat materializing from the rear, he calmly directed his men to fall into battle alignment, facing southward to await the ongoing Confederates. Not long thereafter, the Mainers observed two side-by-side Confederate regiments approaching in extended lines of battle deployment. In the course of a protracted struggle, the Mainers stood and first rebuffed the Confederates' frontal attack, then pivoted to repel a flanking attempt by one of the Confederate regiments, which had moved into a wooded area on their right. At the close of this action, all of the Confederate troops had been driven from the field. Private Ames, in his May 27 diary entry, described the culminating action of the battle:

Then our Regiment fired a volley at them when the two regiments divided one going to the left and the other to the right. The one going to our left we never see afterwards, but the one that went to our right crossed the road into the woods and got closest to us. We swung around and formed a line closest to the fence that divided the woods from the field. By that time the men to the big guns [the cannon crews] left. Our enemy was a North Carolina Regiment and numbered 1,000. . . . We numbered 350 rifles. The battle lasted until we had fired 80 rounds. Just at dark the johnies skedaddled, leaving part of their wounded and the field to us.²⁹

In this battle, the eleven companies of the 2nd Maine regiment suffered casualties of

twenty-two men killed and mortally or seriously wounded. Tozier's I Company sustained four of these most-serious casualties. At the end of the day, General Porter informed General McClellan of this critical rearguard action, resolutely performed by the 2nd Maine. And the next day, McClellan, accompanied by his staff, rode to the 2nd Maine camp so that he could personally commend Colonel Roberts and his men on their performance.³⁰

Tozier and the Battle of Gaines's Mill

The June 1, 1862, the wounding of General Joseph Johnston at the Battle of Seven Pines resulted in the Confederate president, Jefferson Davis, turning to General Robert E. Lee to assume command of the Army of Virginia. General Lee received this charge, although he had never before commanded a large army. However, Davis's choice to give command to Lee was validated by the relentlessness with which he resumed the attacks on McClellan's stalled campaign. During the Seven Days Battles, which spanned from June 26 to July 1, Lee daily sought out opportunities to aggressively attack McClellan's defensive positions.³¹

On the afternoon of June 27, Lee targeted the isolated position of Major General Fitz-John Porter's V Corps, who were entrenched along Boatswain's swamp, a wooded marsh southeast of a mill owed by a doctor named William Gaines. The 2nd Maine, within Brigadier General John Martindale's brigade, occupied a position at the left center of Porter's line.³²

In the Battle of Gaines's Mill, General Lee first sent General A. P. Hill's light division unsupported against Porter's well-defensed, two-mile front, repulsing Hill's attack with heavy Confederate casualties. Lee then turned to Major General Richard Ewell's division to attack the center of Porter's line while divisions under General James Longstreet staged a diversionary attack against Porter's left. This attack also failed as Porter's line again held, repulsing Ewell's division with heavy Confederate casualties. Following this repulse, dusk was approaching and Lee's hopes for victory were also fading.³³

The arrival at this late hour of General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson's division availed Lee the opportunity to send forward one final

grand assault against Porter's line. In this final assault of the day, Lee sent sixteen brigades from the combined divisions of Jackson, Ewell, Longstreet, and D. H. Hill to attack across Major General Porter's entire front. By thusly hurling overwhelming force against Porter's men, now fatigued from several successive hours of fighting and remaining on alert, Lee finally achieved success. Charging Confederates were able to break through at multiple points along Porter's line. Following on the heels of these breakthroughs, a general rout began along Porter's entire line. Compounding the disaster, many Union units bolted their positions before neighboring units could be made aware of the breakthroughs, resulting in the capture of hundreds of Union soldiers, including two entire regiments.³⁴

In his June 27th diary entry, Private Ames described the fighting at Gaines's Mill and the collapse at the end of the battle:

[Our 2nd Maine regiment] formed a line for battle on a line with a deep gulley, that was heavy timbered. And in front and on the other side was an open field, and sometime in the afternoon the Rebels showed themselves in front of us in two lines of Battle and made a charge. We opened fire on them and they broke and run before they got to the gulley. . . . In a short time the rebels made another advance four lines deep and during the time we had been reinforced to one more line making us two. After fighting quite a while I looked to the right of our Regiment and see our soldiers has commenced to run. I then looked to my left and they had broken. By this time our Regiment had commenced to retreat.³⁵

Corporal Tozier was one of the soldiers taken prisoner on the Gaines's Mill battlefield. At some point during the battle, Tozier was shot in the left hand just at the joint of the middle finger. During this battle, Tozier also received a lesser bullet wound, possibly by a spent bullet, to his left ankle, both injuries being referenced on a 1908 disability examination. Such a wound, if indeed sustained at Gaines's Mill, would have compromised Tozier's ability to escape during the rout.³⁶

The sudden rout of Porter's V Corps line resulted in many soldiers abandoning hundreds of

wounded and bone-wearied men to capture. Compared to the casualties sustained in any other day of the Seven Days Battle, the six hours of hard fighting at Gaines's Mill produced the highest total number of casualties for either side. As a result of Lee repeatedly attacking Porter's entrenched positions, Lee's losses of 8,000 men exceeded Porter's losses of 6,800. Of the latter, 2,800 men—or, 40 percent of Porter's total casualties—were reported missing or captured. This strikingly high percentage of missing or captured men reflects the disorder created by the battle ending in a rout.³⁷

Consistent with this overall pattern of Union losses, the 2nd Maine reported 4 enlisted men killed, 2 officers and 34 enlisted men wounded, and 5 officers and 44 enlisted men captured or missing. Hence, an even more impressive 55 percent of the 2nd Maine's 89 casualties were reported captured or missing. Of the captured 2nd Maine soldiers, none are known to have later penned accounts of the experience of being overrun and captured by Confederates crazed by the loss of so many of their comrades in the three charges. However, one might well imagine that this experience was both brutalizing and intensely terrifying. Tozier's service record indicates that he was taken prisoner at the Sarah Watts farm, which—situated a few hundred yards behind 2nd Maine position—may have served as an aid station.³⁸

The Confederates corralled the hundreds of V Corps soldiers captured at Gaines's Mill within the camp borders of General Longstreet's division for the night. The following morning, those captured soldiers who were able began a twelve-mile forced march to the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia, where imprisonment awaited them.³⁹

Tozier's Enlisted Younger Brother Captured in Louisiana

In a great wartime calamity to befall Andrew Tozier's family, his younger brother Ezra was captured by Confederates on June 28, 1862—the very next day after Andrew had been captured. Private Ezra Tozier was a soldier in the 14th Maine regiment, which at the time was campaigning in Louisiana. The 14th Maine, part of General Benjamin Butler's New Orleans Expeditionary Corps, was campaigning near

New Orleans when Ezra was taken prisoner.⁴⁰

Compounding the misfortune of his capture, Ezra at this time was only sixteen years old, having surreptitiously enlisted in the army in February at the age of fifteen. Thirza Tozier later explained that that she supported her young son in this deception to quell his persistent pleas to join the army. Tragically, Ezra Tozier would not live to see his seventeenth birthday, as he died in a Macon County, Georgia, prison camp, likely Andersonville, on October 15, 1862. Sadly, it was a full year before the Tozier family learned of Ezra's death through a notice posted in a Philadelphia newspaper.⁴¹

After the war, Thirza Tozier applied to the United States Pension Office for a dependent mother's pension based on her youngest son's death in the service. Preventing Thirza Tozier from qualifying for such a pension was the army's erroneous classification of Ezra as an army deserter. The army based this classification on an anonymous report following Ezra's disappearance that he had been seen carrying a rifle with the 7th Louisiana regiment.⁴²

The Ezra Tozier dependent-parent application file, in storage at the National Archives, identifies a succession of attorneys whom Thirza Tozier contracted over a seventeen-year period, during which she attempted to have Ezra's deserter status expunged and her dependent-parent pension request approved. None of these efforts would ever meet with success. Of interest, however, among the many documents Thirza Tozier submitted to the US Pension Office was a personal letter written by Ezra to his mother and dated only two weeks before his disappearance from his regiment. This letter suggests that Thirza Tozier possessed a hidden motivation in aiding her underage son's unlawful enlistment in the army, as it reveals that he was sending army pay home to his mother. Additionally, the 1860 US Census listed the Toziers as paupers, indicating that the family was already receiving assistance from the town of Plymouth.⁴³

At the time that he stood and fired back at Little Round Top, Andrew Tozier likely suspected that his younger brother had come to some ill end while being held captive, as he had been, by the Rebels. If Tozier was already disposed to this thinking at Gettysburg, this supposition could have only stoked a smoldering hatred of Confederates.

Tozier's Imprisonment at Belle Isle

Years after the war, captured soldiers from the Seven Days Battles would bitterly recall how the Richmond citizenry taunted them as they were marched into the city. The infamous Libby Prison was one of the initial premises commandeered by the Confederates for the housing of the hundreds of Union captives who came pouring into the city from the recent battles. Twenty years after his capture at Gaines's Mill, Sergeant John Beech, who had been a soldier with the 4th New Jersey infantry, wrote of his experiences in the *National Tribune* newspaper:

We slept at Longstreet's headquarters that night, and the next day they marched us into Richmond, amid the taunts and jeers, and up Main Street to Libby, where we were searched. . . . After washing, they took our names and we passed upstairs. The next day, Sunday, the rebs paraded with our colors and those of the 11th Pennsylvania. As they passed Libby we gathered at the windows and defiantly sang "Hail Columbia" and the "Star Spangled Banner." On Monday, the 30th, we moved out of Libby to another prison, a little further up the street, where we remained until the 15th of July, when we were marched over to Belle Isle.⁴⁴

As an evolution of cruelty practiced at the Libby Prison in later days, Confederate guards made sport of shooting Union prisoners whose curiosity as to what was going on outside led them to expose themselves as they peered outside the prison window. Two veterans of the 11th Pennsylvania Reserve infantry, a regiment that was nearly captured in its entirety at Gaines's Mill, also in later years wrote accounts of the hostile reception they received in Richmond. Sergeant George Kremer recalled "hearing some women at a window shout to us as [they] went by: "This is another way to take Richmond.'"⁴⁵ Private Aaron Kepler, in a post-war memoir, described in particular detail the taunting that the new prisoners received upon entering Richmond:

About 3:00 P.M. we landed in front of Libby Prison in Richmond, and for some time they kept us lying on the hot pavement, exposed to the rays of the sun and the mer-

ciless taunts and gibes of the people who had gathered around us. I am sorry to say, the women seemed to be the worst; some of them going so far as to spit at us in their frenzy of hate; and with bitter curses said we should be thrown into the dock or to the dogs. I believe they would have done us bodily injury had they not been held back by the guards at the point of the bayonet.⁴⁶

The influx of thousands of Union prisoners from the Seven Days battlefields would in short order overwhelm the capacity of the Libby Prison. The Richmond authorities were tasked with identifying a more expansive site. Ultimately, the decision was made to establish an open-air camp on Belle Isle, a brimmed outcropping of granite located in the middle of the James River at the foot of the city. A six-acre rectangular pen was constructed on the easternmost field on the isle. Within this pen area, a tent city was erected to accommodate the thousands of Union prisoners to be relocated there. One early problem was that there were not enough tents and the ones that were erected were of insufficient quality to adequately shelter the prisoners. However, a more imminent threat was posed by a “dead line” that demarcated the boundaries of the camp. The dead line stood in the form of a three-foot earthen barrier, patrolled outside its perimeter by Confederate guards under orders to shoot to kill any prisoner who appeared intent on crossing over.⁴⁷

These circumstances and conditions formed a new reality for the Union soldiers who only two weeks prior had been free men. Now these soldiers were captive men, quartered like animals in a large pen and lorded over by the plainly visible Confederate capitol building atop the heights of Richmond. Although this view from Belle Isle of the still-standing Virginia capitol building is today obstructed by the towering Federal Reserve Building, a modern-day visitor, who stands within the rebuilt dead line of the camp, may imagine the depths of despondency that Tozier and the other captured men must have experienced.

The first Belle Isle prisoners would be held for only a few weeks due to a prisoner exchange program. Accounts of the inhumane conditions with which these men had to contend promptly made it into newspapers following the men’s repatriation. One newspaper reporter who met

with the returning soldiers reported the men’s wretched experiences in graphic detail. As this reporter noted, the men’s disreputable treatment also included atrocities committed during their twelve-mile forced march to the prisoner exchange site:

After their arrivals at Richmond matters grew very much worse. They were first placed in a large tobacco warehouse, which had long been in use for barracks and prisoners’ quarters. The lice and vermin were as thick as to be perfectly revolting. The food consisted of a small loaf a day, which became sour unless consumed on its receipt. . . . The meat which was furnished to them was frequently tainted, fly blown and putrid. Several of them assure me that they have been offered soup in which the dead maggots were quite thick. . . . They were kept in Richmond for two weeks. . . . They were then sent down to Belle Isle, where the enemy provided barracks for them; their treatment here was similar to that received in Richmond. . . . These men are unanimous that they will not be taken again alive. . . . On the march down [for the prisoner exchange] the savage character of their guards was exhibited by killing two of our men. One of them, parched with thirst, stepped to the roadside to get a drink when an officer shot him dead. [Italics added.]⁴⁸

Another newspaper reporter, describing the detestable treatment prisoners received from Confederate guards in Richmond during the summer of 1862, similarly reported an important change in the resolve of the repatriated men never to be taken captured alive again:

The prisoners all express a determination never to be taken again, preferring death on the field to slow death by starvation and suffering in a Southern prison. They will make terrible fighters when they next go into battle. [Italics added.]⁴⁹

By mid-July, 1862, the numbers of prisoners brought into the Belle Isle camp were severely overcrowding the pen area. The total number of prisoners confined there eventually swelled to five thousand men. Some weeks later, the Richmond Confederate authorities were able to

empty the camp based on the workings of a prisoner exchange program with the North. The following year, the ending of this prisoner exchange program by the North forced Confederate authorities to once more open the camp. For Union prisoners brought subsequently to Belle Isle, the problems of scant food rations, rampant disease, and inadequate shelter experienced by the first prisoners at Belle Isle worsened as the camp was forced to serve the resource-strapped Confederacy through the end of the war. By the end of the war, the death toll on the isle would total one thousand Union prisoners.⁵⁰

According to William Tozier, the family historian, Andrew Tozier managed to bring his injured hand to the attention of a Confederate surgeon at the prison. This story presumes to compliment Tozier for his personal qualities of earnestness and forthrightness, which must have impressed the surgeon, who then obliged Tozier by performing the finger amputation. In 1865, then lieutenant colonel, George Vaney, who had been captured along with Tozier at Gaines's Mill, tendered a declaration to the US Pension Office that a Confederate soldier had performed the amputation.⁵¹

William H. White, a V Corps surgeon, was among the captured Union men at Gaines's Mill. Under normal circumstances, White would have been permitted to attend to the injuries of captured soldiers from his own corps. Whatever the case, it was White who, upon his release, reported Tozier's finger amputation to a newspaper and also provided medical status updates on a number of other injured V Corps men who had been imprisoned with him.⁵²

Upon entering the Confederate prison in Richmond, Tozier became acquainted with Private Winfield Norcross, another captured soldier from the 7th Maine infantry. The festering battle wounds of Norcross's neck, left shoulder, and left leg came to Tozier's attention.

Despite likely experiencing considerable discomfort from his own hand wound, Tozier determined to care for Norcross's wounds.⁵³ Twenty-seven years later, Tozier provided an affidavit attesting to the seriousness of Norcross's war injuries. Norcross, who despite a fully paralyzed left arm and an irregular heart condition, became a physician after the war, submitted Tozier's affidavit along with several other documents to the US Pension Office. Norcross intended these submissions to convincingly

connect his arm paralysis and heart conditions to his war injuries and thereby qualify him for a full disability pension.⁵⁴

Although this 1889 affidavit clearly appears to have been legalistically formatted by Norcross's attorney to more adroitly support the pension request, Tozier's avowed statements possess more substantive value, for our purposes, for the light they shine on Tozier's unconstrained humanity by recalling his compassion and care for a fellow wounded soldier under very trying circumstances:

I received a wound of the left hand at Gaines's Mill Va June 27th 1862 and was taken prisoner this same day and carried to Richmond, Va. I first met and became acquainted with said Winfield S. Norcross in rebel prison at Richmond Va on or about July 8th 1862, he having been taken prisoner at Savage Station Va on or about the 29th of June 1862. He was suffering when I first met him as aforesaid from a gunshot wound of neck and left shoulder and from a gunshot wound of right leg below the knee. I know of his wounds from helping take care of him. He was in a very debilitated condition from his loss of blood. I saw the wounds of neck and leg and helped him dress them many times. While we were in prison together, he also complained of a severe pain in his left side about the heart & had weak & fainting spells. I used to bring water and bathe his wounds when they were dressed, also bathed his side when he suffered from attacks of pain. We were parolled [sic] at the same time & carried to Chester U.S. Hospital and remained together until he was discharged in Oct. 1862.⁵⁵

Tozier, Norcross, and many other captured Union soldiers held at Belle Island were fortunate in that their capture occurred during the early years of the war before the North began refusing prisoner exchanges. Tozier and Norcross were held at the prison camp for only five weeks before both men were exchanged and paroled on August 3, 1862, at City Point, Virginia.⁵⁶

Following their return, Tozier and Norcross were transported to the USA General Military Hospital at Chester, Pennsylvania, where they

were admitted on August 13, 1862. Both men remained in the hospital for several weeks. As Tozier's injury was not severe, he may have been held at the hospital to perform attendant duties while Norcross was awaiting release. Whatever the case, in late October, 1862, the two men were discharged from the hospital. Private Norcross continued to experience a partial paralysis of his left arm and was compelled to apply for a disability discharge from the army. Tozier, for his part, returned to the 2nd Maine for active duty on November 1.⁵⁷

Tozier's hospitalizations spared him participation in two of the bloodiest battles of the entire war. In the 2nd Battle of Bull Run, fought August 28–30, 1862, under Lincoln's new commanding general, Major General John Pope, an undetected Confederate corps arrayed on Pope's left flank advanced and swept the dispirited northern soldiers from the field. Union casualties approached 14,000 men. The 2nd Maine, which had been in the thick of this action, sustained casualties of 95 men, including an officer and 5 enlisted men killed, 3 officers and 70 enlisted men wounded, and an additional 16 enlisted men missing.⁵⁸

In the aftermath of such a disaster, Lincoln felt that he had no choice but to dismiss General Pope and to turn again to General McClellan to take charge of the Union army. Three weeks later, on September 17, 1862, McClellan's army confronted Lee's forces at the Battle of Antietam, the Civil War's bloodiest day. Fortunately, the depleted ranks of the 2nd Maine were held in reserve during this day and therefore sustained no casualties.⁵⁹

Upon rejoining the regiment November 1, Tozier was promoted to the rank of sergeant. At this new rank, Tozier exercised supervision over a much larger number of men, including a number of corporals directly assisting him. However, his most important duty as a new sergeant would serve as a file closer in times of battle. This means that a sergeant assumed a post in the rear of a company and served to keep his men in rank, not allowing any of them to fall out of the line on any pretext. In this new role, Tozier was further charged with the responsibility of shooting any of his men who turned and attempted to run away during a battle. The monthly pay for shouldering these weighty responsibilities as sergeant was \$17.⁶⁰

The 2nd Maine Fights at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville

Within one week of Tozier rejoining his 2nd Maine regiment, the Army of the Potomac had a new commander. On November 7, President Lincoln replaced McClellan with Major General Ambrose Burnside. On December 11, Burnside oversaw the Rappahannock River crossings initiating the offensive campaign that would earn him the title "Butcher of Fredericksburg." By December 14, when Burnside ordered his troops back across the river, Union casualties of 12,600 greatly exceeded Confederate casualties of 5,300. The heaviest Union casualties were sustained in the ill-advised assaults against massed artillery and protected infantry positions atop Marye's Heights above Fredericksburg. Sent forward as part of a late-afternoon attack on these heights, the roughly 300 men of 2nd Maine sustained 52 casualties. This number initially reflected 1 enlisted man killed, 10 officers and 37 enlisted men wounded, and 4 enlisted men missing or captured.⁶¹

The inclination to sum the human cost of war primarily in terms of how many or how few men in an army or regiment were killed devalues the traumatic burden to be borne by many, if not most, of the men wounded. Shelling both from and towards Marye's Heights accounted for the preponderance of the 2nd Maine wounded at Fredericksburg. Private Ames's December 13 diary entry describes the experience of one of the 2nd Maine wounded on this battle date:

We crossed the River this forenoon on Pontoon bridge in front of the City. We had Artillery stationed on our side and they kept up a content fire over our heads. Some of their shots fell short and struck in our ranks. After we got across and in the city, we marched out of it through a gulley that was dug out for a rail road track. And the Rebels had a good chance on us until we got through into the open field. There was a number killed and wounded before we got out. Just as we got out of the cut Lieut. Downs of company E was wounded in his left arm and when he got where I was he asked me to hold on the stub and get him to the rear. I threw my gun in the hollow of my left arm and clenched my hands around the

stub and got him into the City in a house that our folks were using as a Hospital. Then I took his overcoat off and the peace of shell that had cut his arm off, excepting a small piece of flesh, dropped out. The house was full of wounded.⁶²

It is also important to note that casualty numbers were reported immediately following a battle. As days passed subsequently, some number of men initially reported wounded eventually died. Other men initially reported as missing could later be confirmed to have been killed. Interestingly, upon joining his local Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) post in 1905, Tozier reported that he received the second of the three wounds he sustained during the war on December 13 at Fredericksburg.⁶³

Subsequently, during a 1908 disability examination, Tozier explained the finding of an old rib fracture as having been caused by a grazing cannonball. The injury Tozier sustained at Fredericksburg may well have been the one caused by a grazing cannonball. However, Tozier's service file failed to document the occurrence of either an injury or a hospitalization at the time of the Fredericksburg battle. The regimental register does document that on January 1, 1863, Tozier was promoted to first sergeant and hence his monthly pay increased to \$20.⁶⁴

To add calamity to the carnage of the Burnside's Fredericksburg campaign, the general on January 20, 1863, marched his army downriver on what he planned to be a surprise crossing below the Confederate defenses. However, steady rains, which began in the evening and continued through the following day, turned the roads and fields of the planned march into a muddy quagmire. All forward troop movement subsequently bogged down in what would infamously become known as the "Mud March." Obviously, the element of surprise that Burnside had hoped to achieve was completely lost. From across the river, Confederates taunted the floundering Union soldiers with an erected sign reading "Burnside stuck in mud."⁶⁵

Ostensibly to improve the morale of his savaged army, on January 22, Burnside authorized an issuance of whiskey rations to all soldiers. The liquor had not long been flowing before raucous brawls began to break out in the ranks of numerous regiments. President Lincoln had now seen quite enough of his new general. On

January 26, Lincoln relieved Burnside of command and named Major General Joseph Hooker the new commander of the Army of the Potomac.⁶⁶

With the subsequent retirement of both armies into winter quarters, Lincoln could permit General Hooker an interval of months to ingeniously plan the Union army's next offensive move against Lee and the Confederates. This planning notwithstanding, in the subsequent Battle of Chancellorsville, fought May 1-4, 1863, a Union commanding general once again proved his abilities no match for that of Lee and his lieutenants. On May 2, Lieutenant General "Stonewall" Jackson unleashed a crushing attack against Hooker's right flank. Disastrously, Hooker's losses of 17,000 men exceeded the Burnside's losses at Fredericksburg by 5,400 men. By way of comparison, Confederate losses during the four-day battle were 13,000 men. The main involvement of the 2nd Maine was to serve as a rearguard as Howard's army retreated across the Rapidan River. Consequently, the regiment sustained few casualties in this battle.⁶⁷

Tozier and the "Three Year Men" of the 2nd Maine Regiment

Despite other indications of exemplary soldierly character, Andrew Tozier would never have won the Medal of Honor had he not been transferred along with approximately 120 other soldiers from the 2nd Maine's rolls to those of the 20th Maine just five weeks before the Battle of Gettysburg. The transfer to the 20th Maine regiment was not a happy occurrence for these men. It had been ordered following the decommissioning of the 2nd Maine regiment, when the majority of the men, having served their two-year enlistment term, were being discharged from the army. The 120-odd 2nd Maine soldiers left behind, including Tozier, had signed enlistments papers for three years; therefore, these men owed the army another year of service.⁶⁸

The 2nd Maine regiment was a veteran volunteer unit, raised a full fifteen months before the 20th Maine regiment was formed. In its two years of active duty, the 2nd Maine had distinguished itself with a proud fighting record, having performed valiantly on battlefields from the First Bull Run to Chancellorsville. However, by May 1863, the men who had seen service on

these harsh battlefields were battle worn and ready to return home. The number of 2nd Maine soldiers who had signed three-year enlistment papers argued that they had been pressured to do so. They maintained that they had been assured that the extra year was merely a contingency provision and that at the expiration of the two years, all of the men would be discharged simultaneously with the decommissioning of the regiment. An even more powerful argument for the 120-odd “three-year men” was their sentiment that they had only signed on to fight under the 2nd Maine colors. Now that these colors were returning home with the two-year men, the three-year men felt emotively that they should be allowed to return home as well.⁶⁹

Once these three-year men received final confirmation that they would be held for the third year of service and transferred to another regiment, they reacted angrily and began refusing to obey orders. Initially, Chamberlain was cheered by the prospect of a bolstered 20th Maine regiment, but his sentiments changed to dismay when he learned that the men were being transferred against their will. Even more disheartening to Chamberlain was the sight of the transferring 2nd Maine soldiers being marched to the 20th Maine encampment by bayonet-wielding guards. Chamberlain was also vexed by the orders from his V Corps commander, Brigadier General James Barnes, which authorized him to shoot any transferring soldier who persisted in refusing orders.⁷⁰

Chamberlain sympathized with the regrettable predicament in which these former 2nd Maine men found themselves. And, on May 27, 1863, he wrote to Maine governor, Abner Coburn, to ask if something could be done to appease their grievance:

The transfer of the “three year men” of the 2nd Maine has been so clumsily done, that the men were allowed to grow quite mutinous—left uncared for in their old camp after the 2d had gone for several days, & having time and provocation to work themselves up to such a pitch of mutiny that Gen Barnes had to send them to me as prisoners, liable to severe penalties for disobedience of his orders.⁷¹

In the historical record, Chamberlain is duly credited for his deft de-escalation of the crisis

posed by these potential mutineers. Chamberlain first announced to the men that he would dispense with having them watched over by guards. He then arranged for the first sustenance the men had been allowed in days and agreed to hear their complaints. He also pledged to act as their advocate in presenting their grievances to the governor. Finally, in an astute move to further lessen the likelihood of instigation, Chamberlain ordered the most dissident transferees separated and divided amongst the 20th Maine’s several companies.⁷²

Fortunately, for Chamberlain, a fresh opportunity to bond the former 2nd Maine soldiers to their new regiment presented itself shortly after the men were received into camp. The regular 20th Maine color sergeant became intoxicated and subsequently behaved insubordinately to a superior officer within the regiment. This incident resulted in the color sergeant’s arrest and created a new opening for the position. Chamberlain instinctively turned to Tozier, a ranking sergeant in the merged regiment, to assume the esteemed post of 20th Maine color sergeant and Tozier, to his great credit, accepted.⁷³

Tozier’s Medal of Honor Stand at Gettysburg

Memories of Color Sergeant Andrew Tozier’s defense of his new 20th Maine colors on Little Round Top would continue to impress decades after its occurrence. Chamberlain, many years following the war, would recall Tozier’s near-transfigured image standing alone with the flag. The opening discharges of the battle fractured the small color guard unit, and the support companies on either side of the color guard had also sustained heavy casualties. Recalling the scene then at the center of his line, Chamberlain later wrote:

I first thought some optical illusion imposed upon me. But as forms emerged through the drifting smoke, the truth came into view. The cross fire had cut keenly; the center had been almost shot away; only two of the color guard had been left, and they fighting to fill the whole space; and in the center, wreathed in battle smoke, stood the Color-Sergeant, Andrew Tozier. His color-staff planted in the ground at his side, the upper part clasped in his elbow, so holding the flag

upright, with musket and cartridges seized from the fallen comrade at his side he was defending his sacred trust in the manner of the songs of chivalry.⁷⁴

Brevet Brigadier General Ellis Spear, then a major in command of the regiment's left wing, would also recall in post-war reflections many years later Tozier's audacious defense of the 20th Maine colors at Gettysburg:

I walked to the center. It seemed to me most of the color guard were knocked out. I recall that Knight of my company was on the ground. . . . What I most distinctly remember there, besides Knight, was the Color Sergeant Tozier, who had picked up a musket dropped by one of the killed or wounded, and with his left arm about the colors, stood loading, and firing, and chewing a bit of cartridge paper.⁷⁵

A visitor to the 20th Maine's Gettysburg monument today may understandably assume that the monument marks the spot where the colors stood during the battle. This was not the case. Speaking at the 1889 dedication of the monument, Chamberlain acerbically pointed out that the colors were actually posted some yards beyond the monument on the flat plateau of the spur. A modern-day visitor might also assume, from the topography of the spur, with the abundance of boulders at its base, that the 20th Maine men formed behind these boulders. This would also be incorrect as the Maine men formed in battle alignment on the flat plateau of the hill. It was instead the Confederates who used the boulders to partially cover themselves as they fired.⁷⁶

We can only wonder at Tozier's thoughts and emotions as he stood returning fire from such an exposed position. Tozier was not seized by a maniacal rage as he fought. As noted, the recollections of both Chamberlain and Spear suggest that Tozier appeared not discomforted as he stood defending the 20th Maine colors. But how much devotion could Tozier have felt for a flag that he had only circuitously come to accept charge of three days earlier?

Could it be that Tozier's stand on Little Round Top had less to do with defending the 20th Maine's flag than with taking an intensely personal fight to the Confederates? For most of

that July 2, 1863, afternoon, the Union command had 20th Maine's brigade in reserve. Abruptly in the late afternoon, Colonel Strong Vincent, the brigade commander, about-faced the brigade to rush his men to a stony hill situated to the rear of their reserve position. Vincent would have only assigned the 20th Maine the



A 20th Maine Battle Flag, issued in 1862 and carried into numerous battles, including Gettysburg. Courtesy of the Maine State Museum, Augusta, Maine.

end position of the brigade's alignment on the hill with a few minutes to spare for a Rebel attack that was approaching. This was the battle line of the 15th Alabama infantry, which under the command of Colonel William Oates, soon cleared the forest and dense brush of the opposing Big Round Top and now stepped into the clearing between the two hills. The 20th Maine line, which had been awaiting the appearance of these Confederates, then struck these men with a volley that Oates would later describe as the "most destructive fire [he] ever saw."⁷⁷

Elijah Coan, one of Tozier's color corporals

at Gettysburg, eighteen years later would write of the murderous violence of the battle that subsequently engulfed the regiment.⁷⁸

After absorbing the 20th Maine's opening volley, the 15th Alabama responded with its own concentrated fire that particularly rocked the center of the 20th Maine line. At this center, Tozier's color guard consisted of Coan, Corporal Melvin Day, Corporal William Livermore and Corporal James Knight. Corporals Day and Knight received mortal wounds, with Knight receiving five separate bullet wounds. Coan and Livermore survived the contest unwounded. In Color Company A, to the left of the colors, two men perished and another twenty-one were wounded out of the total twenty-eight men present. Color Company F, commanded by Lieutenant Holman Melcher and situated to the right of the colors, lost ten men, and an additional thirteen of that company were wounded out of a total present of forty-three men. That, according to Coan, all forty-eight of these casualties occurred within a circular area with a diameter of less than ten yards indicates just how hot the fire around Tozier was at that time.

Neither the deadly violence focused upon Tozier's position nor the seeming abandonment of two of his assigned color guards spurred Tozier to retreat with his colors. This fact invites the speculation that Tozier's stand with the 20th Maine colors was about something more than just the sacred trust guardianship he had accepted only three days earlier. Another factor which aids in understanding the stubbornness of Tozier's stand is the probability that he had become the "terrible fighter" predicted by newspaper writers in their coverage of the prisoners (Tozier among them) released from Belle Isle. These maltreated men had returned vowing that they would prefer death to being taken alive and imprisoned. That mindset might have been exacerbated for Tozier, who perhaps perceived an opportunity to pay back the Confederates for imprisonment and possible death of his younger brother, Ezra.

Andrew Tozier revealed his extraordinary bravery in standing and fighting with the 20th Maine colors by advancing with the flag in the front rank during the famed bayonet charge. There remains an unsettled controversy as to whether Chamberlain actually did engineer a sequential action led by the regiment's bent-back

left wing or whether the charge was more spontaneously triggered by Lieutenant Melcher at the regiment's center. In either telling, the 20th Maine colors, held aloft by Tozier, would have been critical in signaling to the charging men the general direction of the charge. In his 1889 remarks at the Gettysburg monument dedication, Chamberlain stated emphatically that he was beside Tozier as the charge was made. In the competing account of the charge told at this same monument dedication, the regimental historian identified Lieutenant Melcher as the junior officer, who personally alerted by Chamberlain of his plan to order a general charge, preemptively led Tozier forward. By either account, Tozier further jeopardized both his life and his flag, in charging headlong into the nests of Confederates.⁷⁹

As the battle action ended and 20th Maine men began returning with squads of captured Confederates, some of the Mainers gathered around Tozier and his flag, regaling him with three vigorous hurrahs. For Tozier, who was then only a six-week inductee into the 20th Maine regiment, there could have been few more exhilarating moments during his military service. And coming one year and one week after his capture at Gaines's Mill, this triumph must have been particularly satisfying.⁸⁰

Tozier's V Corps Service Following Gettysburg

The usual reward for exceptional heroism in battle was a promotion in rank, rather than a recommendation for a Medal of Honor. Accordingly, Tozier was provisionally promoted to 2nd lieutenant on July 5—a promotion he would decline, preferring to remain a 1st sergeant. Whether Tozier continued to serve as the 20th Maine color sergeant as the army pursued Lee into Virginia is uncertain. However, on November 21, 1863, based on a recommendation to General Sykes, Tozier was detached to serve with the V Corps ambulance service.⁸¹

Each army corps had its own ambulance corps. A commandant at the rank of captain headed the ambulance corps, which was staffed with a first lieutenant from each division, a second lieutenant from each brigade, a sergeant from each regiment, and two privates assigned to each sergeant to serve as stretcher bearers. All

of these officers, including the sergeants, were mounted. Working closely with the medical director of the army corps, the ambulance corps was responsible for transporting wounded soldiers from the battlefield and wounded and ill soldiers to and from hospitals.⁸²

During Tozier's service with the ambulance corps, he would have directed the removal of wounded soldiers from the apocalyptic Wilderness and Spotsylvania Court House battlefields. Directing the activity of his stretcher bearers, Tozier would have had contact with many horribly wounded and suffering men. The psychological trauma of captured men being corralled within earshot of their comrades lying wounded on a vanquished battlefield was never more plaintively described than by Private Smith with reference to the Gaines's Mill battlefield:

Their pitiful and heart-rending lamentations during the long night [after the battle], as they lay on that bloody field, praying, moaning, cursing, and crying for water; others in their delirium talking of loved ones in their far-distant homes, sending messages and last farewells, or entreating someone to mercifully kill them and end their misery and suffering.⁸³

Serving with the II Corps, Private Heyward Emmell described in a diary entry the horror that his ambulance corps encountered on the Wilderness battlefield when Tozier and his stretcher bearers would have also been witnessing similar terrors on other parts of this battlefield:

May 6th. Our division gets flanked to day and falls back to some breastworks that have 2 batteries behind them. . . . We have carried wounded off all day & have not got them [all] off yet. I saw some awful scene, in a swamp dead men laying covered in mud rebel and union side by side. I saw some papers pinned to their breast with their names on, done by them as they have been dying. I could see some dying, some coaxing to be helped off having layed there since the day before. The woods have been on fire which has made it still worse for the wounded.⁸⁴

The work of rescuing the wounded from the Wilderness battlefield had its own unique hazards:

[The Wilderness battle] was a series of fierce attacks and repulses on either side, and the hostile sides swayed back and forth over a strip of ground 200 yards to a mile in width on which the severely wounded of both sides were scattered. . . . The stretcher bearers of the Ambulance Corps followed the line of battle closely, and displayed great gallantry in their efforts to bring off the wounded. Repeated efforts were made, especially at night, to bring off the wounded lying between the lines, but with very small success, it being almost impossible to find wounded men lying scattered through the dense thickets, and the enemy firing at every moving light, or even at the slightest noise.⁸⁵

On many occasions, the battling sides would agree to a truce to allow the men of the ambulance corps to venture beyond their lines to retrieve the wounded. There was always some risk to the men of the ambulance corps as they did this. Usually, the two sides allowed the ambulance corps to do its work. However, shots or shells fired over the fields where the ambulance corps was working could sometimes fall short. And so it was that, on May 26, 1864, while serving with the ambulance corps, Tozier received his final war wound. A shell fragment struck him on the left side of his head, perhaps inflicting a traumatic brain injury. This injury is suggested by a decades-long headache condition following his army discharge. Nevertheless, Tozier's service card dubiously described the injury as a "slight" shell wound to the head, likely reflecting degree of penetration into the scalp and ignoring the concussive effects of the wound. Tozier was taken to the V Corps hospital, where he remained until discharge on June 5, 1864.⁸⁶

The historical record does not disclose whether Sergeant Tozier remained out of action for the next seven weeks after his hospitalization or whether he returned to active duty at some point before mid-July. However, on July 14, 1864, Sergeant Tozier, having finally satisfied his three-year enlistment, was discharged.⁸⁷

Tozier Returns to Civilian Life and Begins Thievery

Toward the end of their terms of service, many veterans worried about a return to civilian life, fearing that they had changed too much. On returning to civilian life, Tozier may have struggled to establish a steady source of income. In June 1865, Tozier, citing his left-hand injury, applied for a veteran's disability pension. Tozier's application was promptly approved by the US Pension Office, and he began receiving quarterly payments of \$18. Tozier also found other sources of income. Maine state tax records for 1866 identify Tozier as being connected, in some fashion, with the operation of a Fairfield, Maine, bowling alley. Whatever other sources of income Tozier received in the year following his army discharge are unknown.⁸⁸

Thirteen months after his army discharge, however, Tozier was involved in a string of thefts, one of which would eventually lead to his incarceration in the Maine State Prison. The night of August 29, 1865, Tozier and his wife's brother, Lewis Cushman, broke into and robbed a Livermore Falls custom goods store. The stolen merchandise consisted of several expensive overcoats, which the pair carried off in a distinctive cart belonging to the store. The storeowner, Michael Larkin, would place the value of the stolen overcoats at \$2,000.⁸⁹

Initially, no one suspected either Tozier or Cushman of having committed the burglary. Rather, suspicion fell upon Larkin himself, and his insurers insisted on a thorough search of his home and premises for the missing merchandise. It was three years before Tozier's involvement in the Livermore Falls robbery was revealed. By that time, in 1869, criminal authorities had cause for suspecting that Tozier was a member of a small group of thieves operating around the state. Tozier's involvement in the Livermore Falls burglary was revealed, and authorities arrested him and brought him to stand trial before the Supreme Judicial Court in Androscoggin County. Here Tozier faced certain conviction, as his brother-in-law accomplice, Cushman (held in jail in Augusta for another crime), had already admitted to their mutual involvement in this crime. And Cushman stood ready to give this testimony in Tozier's trial. However, Tozier had one gambit to play. Tozier convinced his wife to travel to Augusta to visit her brother in

jail. There, Elizabeth succeeded in convincing Cushman to send word to the Androscoggin County prosecutor that he would no longer be willing to give testimony in the case against Tozier.⁹⁰

Given this development, this Tozier prosecution appeared likely to result in an acquittal. However, in a vexing turn of events, a courtroom spectator stepped forward to identify Tozier as the individual who, under the alias of Day, had sold the distinctive Livermore Falls delivery cart to one of the spectator's neighbors. Confronted by this new damning evidence, Tozier became undone and determined immediately to reverse his plea to guilty. The judge accepted the plea change and on February 7, 1870, sentenced Tozier to five years confinement with hard labor at the Maine State Prison in Thomaston.⁹¹

Criminal Incarceration and Rescue

On February 17, 1870, Tozier entered the state prison facility, leaving behind his wife and a three-year-old son, Andrew Jackson Tozier Jr. In the original 1824 prison configuration, prisoners were housed in underground cells, which prison guards sealed with a grating of iron bars. The guards lowered each prisoner into his cell at night and raised him in the morning so he could begin his designated labor assignment. Those men with hard labor sentences were put to work in the stone quarry on prison property. The cells were dug sufficiently deep so as to prevent a prisoner from reaching the iron bar grate by standing on a chair or his cot. Likely by the time Tozier entered the prison, these early, primitive housing accommodations had been replaced by holding cells housed in several long wooden structures.⁹²

That Tozier served time with criminals more serious than himself is evident in that, out of his 180-odd fellow inmates, fourteen of them were sentenced to death. There also were a number of violent incidents at Tozier's prison. During his commitment, one of the prisoners slashed the deputy warden's face with a knife. Seven years earlier, a prisoner fatally stabbed the head warden. Periodically, there also were coordinated escape attempts, which began with prisoners rushing and pummeling the prison guards.⁹³

The prison administration also embodied this

violent culture by engaging in one particularly draconian form of torture, which they reserved for the most disruptive prisoners. A forerunner of present-day “waterboarding” torture, the “shower bath” utilized a wooden upright case, just large enough to admit a man and sufficiently well-constructed to prevent him from breaking out. Once prison guards locked the offending prisoner, partly nude, within the case, they then opened a number of small faucets, completely filling the case with cold water and producing a sensation of drowning in the prisoner. As fit the seriousness of the prisoner’s offense or, alternately, the malevolent spirit of the prison guards on a particular day, these guards might subject the prisoner to a successive number of these submersions during an extended confinement.⁹⁴

Fortunately for Tozier, he was not forced to serve his protracted sentence at the Maine State Prison. He was not the incorrigible criminal that various newspapers reported him to be. And just as Tozier’s attorney had predicted during one trial, Governor Chamberlain pardoned Tozier, but only after Tozier had gotten a taste of the place during his three months and five days of incarceration.⁹⁵

Chamberlain, however, was not finished. To guard against recidivism to a life of crime, Chamberlain made Tozier’s release conditional on Tozier and his family coming to live at the Chamberlain home in Brunswick. Chamberlain also provided Tozier and his wife a steady income by employing the couple in his home as personal attendants.

Andrew, Elizabeth, and their young son began residing with the Chamberlains in 1870 and continued their residence in the Chamberlain home for at least two years. By the end of 1872, Tozier was receiving pension payments at Great Chebeague Isle (Cumberland County), where presumably he had by this time moved. When Elizabeth Tozier gave birth to the couple’s second child in 1879, the couple named the girl Grace, perhaps as homage to the Chamberlains’ saving act of charity. Grace was the name of the Chamberlains’ own daughter, who was thirteen when the Toziers first came to live in the Chamberlain home.⁹⁶

Celebratory Veteran Reunions

The “Grand Reunion of the Soldiers and Sailors of Maine,” a state-sponsored veteran reunion, took place in Portland on August 9–10, 1876. For the first time since the end of the war, former members of Maine’s army, cavalry, and navy units gathered for a statewide reunion. Forty-five veterans of the 20th Maine, including Tozier, assembled in Portland for the event. As conveyed in an August 10, 1876, article in the *Portland Press Herald*, excitement abounded as many veterans reunited with comrades for the first time since the war:

Men who had not met since their muster-out in 1865, more than 11 years, — found it difficult to recognize the comrades whose elbows they touched in those days of toil, danger, devotion and glory. . . . By degrees the comrade of bloody fields and weary marches was disclosed by the familiar voice or some feature of the face. Then the men clasped hands and frequently embraced in



Only known photograph of Tozier with family at Chamberlain House, c. 1870. Joshua L. Chamberlain Collection. Courtesy of the Pejepscot Historical Society, Maine.



"The Union prison camp at 'Belle Isle,' Richmond, Va.," 1862, by Charles R. Rees. *Civil War Photograph Collection*. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

the exuberance of their joyful meeting; indeed, the eyes of strong men were moistened and their voices quivered with emotion.⁹⁷

The Twentieth Maine veterans had never formed a regimental organization and so the veterans assembled at this reunion used the occasion to form one. Holman Melcher, who had served as the regiment's adjutant from 1863 to 1864 was elected as the first president of the 20th Maine Regimental Association. Following the association's first meeting, Andrew Tozier captained Joshua Chamberlain's private yacht and treated the veterans to an hour-long cruise around the Portland harbor.⁹⁸

Many veterans at the close of the 1876 grand reunion expressed the hope that the event would be sponsored annually by the state. However, the next grand reunion did not take place until August 23–25, 1881. Portland again served as the host city for the event, and the Deering Oaks Park (then still in existence) served as the event encampment site. Many more veterans, including 137 20th Maine veterans would attend this reunion, including Andrew Tozier.⁹⁹

The fame of the 20th Maine regiment, particularly owing to its success at Gettysburg, had spread more widely over the five years since the first reunion. As a result, its association meeting at the reunion overflowed with many curious onlookers. The highlight of the association meeting came when Doctor Elisha Coan,

Tozier's color corporal at Gettysburg, came forward onto the stage, carrying the battle-tattered flag that the regiment had fought under at Gettysburg. For some reason, Tozier, was not accorded the honor of bringing the flag before the crowd, which erupted with prolonged cheering at its presentation. Still, the experience of seeing the old flag again must have been an emotional one for Tozier.¹⁰⁰

The flag had been so shot up at Gettysburg that it had to be retired after the battle, after which the tattered banner was subsequently gifted to Brigadier General Adelbert Ames, rather than to Chamberlain. Since the regiment's organization in 1862, Ames had served as its colonel and commanding officer, and he had earned a reputation as a merciless and hard-driving disciplinarian. Ames was promoted to division-level command six weeks before Gettysburg. However, the gifting of the 20th Maine's retired flag to Ames suggests that the men credited his training methods for the tenacity they showed at Gettysburg.¹⁰¹

Although there were no subsequent state-sponsored veteran reunions, the GAR Department of Maine sponsored annual encampments within the state and invited selected groups of delegates from the numerous GAR posts. The GAR had initiated these annual encampments at the close of the war, and GAR encampments were held annually into the twentieth century.¹⁰²

Civil War veterans not selected to attend these various encampments could still find fellowship with other veterans through the meetings and activities of their local veteran posts. By 1898, Tozier had become a member of the lesser-known Union Veteran League. As differentiated from the GAR, membership in this organization required that the veteran have served at least two years in the Union army, thus disqualifying ninety-day recruits who could join the GAR. In 1898, Tozier's old Civil War comrade, Winfield Norcross, was serving as national commander of the Union Veteran League and appointed Tozier to his staff in the position of national color bearer. Although a resident of Litchfield since at least 1889, Tozier did not join the Litchfield J. Edwin Libby GAR post until April 4, 1904. Tozier may have been drawn to join the post once he learned of its involvement in seeking to erect a soldier's memorial monument at the entrance of the Litchfield Plains Cemetery. This memorial monument, erected in

1907, remains at the entrance of this cemetery today.¹⁰³

A Disabled Veteran in His Middle and Senior Years

Once discharged from the army, Tozier was not shy about applying to the US Pension Office for a disability stipend. The US Pension Office initially approved Tozier to receive a stipend of \$6 per month, paid quarterly. Over the next several years, this stipend was successively slashed to \$4 per month in September 1877 and to \$2 per month in April 1878. The next year, Congress, motivated primarily by a desire to aid War of 1812 veterans, passed new pension legislation raising the stipends of Tozier and other Civil War invalids to \$8 per month, again paid quarterly. To place this sum in some historical perspective, a New England farm laborer given board in 1880 averaged \$14 per month. Historian Steven Johnson, in studying the pension claim files of nearly one thousand Iowan Civil War veterans, observed that, “when examined as a total system and in comparison to other pension schemes, participants in the system, especially enlisted men and their families knew from experience that it was inadequate to shield disabled veterans or the dependents of the deceased from the need to work.”¹⁰⁴

The 1880 US Census shows that the Andrew Tozier was supporting his wife, son, and new eight-month-old daughter on a Cumberland County, Maine, farm, or more specifically, a Chebeague Island farm. In 1887, a tragedy befell the Tozier home. Their daughter, Grace Elizabeth, died just days after her eighth birthday. The late nineteenth century in America was an uncertain time for growing children, as over one-third of all infants born in 1870 died before they reached the age of ten. The leading causes of childhood deaths at the end of the nineteenth century were diphtheria, pneumonia, and accidental injuries. An 1887 report by the Maine State Department of Health report documented a diphtheria outbreak on Chebeague Island, which affected five individuals, with three of these individuals dying of this disease. Possibly, the Tozier daughter was one of these fatalities.¹⁰⁵

Whatever the cause of Grace’s death, the inscription on her Litchfield Corners cemetery marker today lovingly attests to the profound



Major General Daniel Butterfield’s 1896 Medal of Honor. This would have been identical to Tozier’s 1898 Medal of Honor, which was lost in a home fire. Courtesy of the Division of Political and Military History, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC..

grief experienced by the Toziers at her passing:

GRACIE E.
only daughter of
A.J. & LIZZIE TOZIER
Died Oct. 19, 1887
Aged 8 yrs. 10 das.
OUR PET

Archived Litchfield, Maine, tax records document Andrew Tozier’s relocation of his family to this town in 1888. The Toziers moved to Litchfield, as Elizabeth Tozier had grown up there and still had relatives living in the area. In Litchfield, Tozier continued to farm for income, and he continued to receive the same \$24 quarterly stipend. It would not be until 1904, or twenty-six years following the previous adjustment, that Tozier’s quarterly stipend would be increased to \$36. In that year, President Theodore Roosevelt issued Executive Order 78, which directed the US Pension Office to begin paying pensions to all veterans aged sixty-two and over, whether the veteran had a certified disability or not. The executive order directed that Tozier, as a veteran aged 65–67, would receive the quarterly payment summing \$144 annually. The purchasing power of this \$144 in 2019 dollars would be \$4075.¹⁰⁶

By the time Tozier received his Medal of Honor, the sixty-year-old veteran was already

experiencing significant physical limitations owing to a heart ailment combined with lingering war injuries. A 1902 affidavit from Mr. A. W. Plimpton, an owner of a Litchfield hoe and fork factory, attested to Tozier's severely disabled health status:

I have been personally acquainted with Andrew J. Tozier of Co. F. 2 Maine and Co. I. 20 Maine Infantry for about twelve years, he has worked for us in our hoe and fork factory on light work when he was able to do so. I have always noticed that he was troubled with shortness of breath & sometimes with chills & fever and sometime would have to go home on account of it. The Drs. called it heart trouble, chills & fever. I called on him several times in the Fall of 1900 and Winter of 1901 and found him confined to the house the most of the time with what the Dr. called Heart trouble and Chills & Fever and I do not think that he has been able to do much manual labor since, and is now unable to do any manual labor.¹⁰⁷

In 1908, at age sixty-seven, Tozier underwent a government physician's examination as part of the required process involved in seeking to have his disability pension increased. At the start of this examination, the doctor asked Tozier to make a summary statement specifying the physical ailments he attributed to injuries incurred during his army service. Tozier responded: "Gunshot wounds pains me all the time, I have headache, my left hand is weak, am lame in my ankle, heart pains me."¹⁰⁸

The physician's report gave ample evidence that Tozier's hard life, which included injuries he sustained in the army, had left him with severe disabilities. The physician noted that the old third-finger amputation on Tozier's left hand had induced tendon contractures to the adjacent two fingers, leaving Tozier unable to tightly grip an object with this hand. On the inside of Tozier's left ankle, where a scar suggested a past bullet wound, the surrounding tissue was described as "tumorified," i.e., firmly and grossly swollen. The physician also noted tenderness over the old shrapnel head wound, which Tozier associated with a chronic headache condition. The physician also documented tenderness over the site of an old left ninth rib fracture, which Tozier reported had been caused by a glancing

blow from a passing cannonball.¹⁰⁹

The physician's findings on Tozier's cardiovascular system were more ominous than those noted on his head and extremities exams. Resting his hand on the left side of Tozier's chest, the physician found Tozier's heart impulse feeble. Upon listening to Tozier's heart, he noted that its rhythm was irregular. The physician further discerned a severe regurgitant murmur, characteristic of significant heart failure. Cementing the impression of diminished cardiovascular reserve, the physician noted that Tozier's already cyanotic—or, bluish—facial complexion became more severe upon performing some exercises in the office.¹¹⁰

The physician's report submitted to the US Pension Office in support of Tozier's request for an increase in his disability stipend should have left little doubt that Tozier, at this stage in his life, was a worn and seriously ill individual. However, the office did not approve any supplemental increase in Tozier's award based on the physician's report. Tozier's disability payment remained \$36 per quarter.

Conduct Beyond What Could Have Been Expected

Andrew Jackson Tozier finally succumbed to heart failure in Litchfield, Maine, on March 28, 1910. He was seventy-two years old. Fifteen months earlier, on Christmas Eve, 1908, Tozier and his wife were in Rockland, Maine, for a dinner engagement at the home of Winfield Norcross. A reporter from the Lewiston Journal met with Tozier there to note his recollections of his stand at Gettysburg, which had earned him the Medal of Honor. Reflecting on events then forty-five years in the past, Tozier expressed mixed emotions—genuine sorrow for the loss of lives, yet levity regarding his own deliverance on that day:

We had about 500 men in our regiment when we reached the summit of Little Round Top and then commenced a tragic scene. My color guards were all shot around me in a few moments and then the smoke was so thick that I could see but a few feet away. My regiment had changed position and fell back a short distance and before I realized it I was standing entirely alone in

front of the line holding the colors with one arm and firing with the other. Of course I was the target for many bullets, but I didn't get scratched.¹¹¹

Chamberlain, in his 1898 Medal of Honor recommendation letter to Russell Alger, President McKinley's Secretary of War, stated the following about Tozier's actions that day:

This was the object which I made the rallying point for the Regiment, and the center guide for the following charge. I made no more special mention of this in my official report, as I thought then that no one there had done more than a soldier's duty, and Sergeant Tozier in that feeling declined the promotion I offered him to a lieutenancy. I feel now, however, that his conduct was somewhat beyond what could have been required and expected as a part of duty . . . and I respectfully recommend that a medal of honor be awarded to Color Sergeant Andrew J. Tozier of the Twentieth Regiment, Maine Volunteers, for distinguished personal gallantry in defending the colors of that Regiment in the battle of Gettysburg July 2nd 1863.¹¹²

Epilogue

It has not been so long ago—within the adult lifespan of one of my great grandfather, and I am sure, that of some few others—that tremendous armies of men marauded across the rivers and streams and through the fields, forests, hills, and valleys of our bounteous country, possessed of the malicious intent of shooting, maiming, and killing thousands of their fellow Americans. Meanwhile, as the inevitable consequence of the mass assemblages of young, immune-naïve men in great military camps, many thousands more would die, rather than be killed, by infectious diseases.

Within these tremendous armies were ordinary men who, seized by high exhilaration, maniacal or controlled rage, could perform extraordinarily selfless acts. Such is the nature of war that the great majority of these acts would go without receiving special recognition. The soldier was just doing what he felt to be his duty. Nevertheless, in recognition of a small percent-

age of deemed heroic acts, hundreds of Medals of Honor were bestowed at the end of the nineteenth century, not infrequently owing to either self-promotion or political connection. For the men like Andrew Tozier, who truly were due this belated recognition, these men could feel gratitude that the nation had not forgotten them and that they had survived the decades to know this. But there remained the irony insofar as many of these aging veterans could simultaneously be denied the needed monetary support to aid them in tending to their war-associated injuries and disabilities.

The Confederate infantryman has long been celebrated for his soldierly prowess and heartiness. But how much more determination and perseverance were shown by the Union infantryman who stayed the course through the debacles of generalship, which characterized the first half of the Union war effort and continued through the early engagements of Grant's Overland Campaign?

And so, we today remain bound to honor these men—to continue to tell their stories, to lay coins upon their headstones, even to recite poetry over their graves, as did Lincoln. Were it not for the hundreds of thousands of northern men who endured the horrendous generalship and attendant wasting of thousands of fellow comrades' lives, where would the nation have turned? Relatively few of these northern men enlisted out of a compelling drive to emancipate the slaves. Rather, the overwhelming majority of these men poured into the army "for the purpose of crushing this damned rebellion and to support the best government on God's footstool." For the native-born men certainly, this was the birthright bestowed on them by their revolutionary forefathers, who had fought and died to establish this Union. This narrowed focus notwithstanding, the Union soldier toted freedom for a widening swath of American society in his knapsack.¹¹³

Never before, nor since, has this government "of the people, by the people, for the people" been so threatened—with the threat emanating from within. As such, we each carry the obligation of remembrance to men such as Andrew Tozier that our revered star-spangled banner, emblematic of the states' esteemed and co-equal identities, would again wave south along with north against the clearing blue skies of a reunited republic.

1898

Litchfield Maine Sept 26

J. C. Ainsworth
 Col. U. S. Army (Ret.)
 the medal of
 honor the President
 allowed me arrived
 here to me all safe
 many thanks
 Your Humble Servt
 Andrew J. Tozier
 Late Color Bearer C
 20th Me. Vols

A letter written by Andrew Tozier acknowledging receipt of his Medal of Honor, 1898. Congressional Medal of Honor File of Sergeant Andrew J. Tozier, Company I, 20th Maine Infantry Regiment, National Archives, Washington, DC.

NOTES

1. Letter from Joshua L. Chamberlain to the US Pension Office, 10 March 1899, photocopy courtesy of George Rogers, President of the Historical Society of Litchfield, Maine (quotation). The original letter was contained within Soldier's Certificate No. 550,501, Andrew J. Tozier, Sergeant, Company I, 20th Maine Volunteer Infantry, Case Files of Approved Pension Applications of Veterans Who Served in the Army and Navy in the Civil War and later, 1860-1934: Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15, National Archives (hereafter NA), Washington, DC, but was lost in the 1960s; Thomas Desjardin, author of *Stand Firm Ye Boys from Maine: The 20th Maine and the Gettysburg Campaign*, has written extensively on General Joshua Chamberlain, and his scholarship has done much to introduce students of the Civil War to Sergeant Andrew Jackson Tozier; The author wishes here to acknowledge the love, support, and editorial assistance of his wife, Ms. Nina Medlock, and the research assistance and encouragement of Mr. George M. Rogers Jr., without either of whom this project could not have been accomplished.

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10. Analysis of Civil War Medal of Honor recipients.
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14. US Census, 1850, Plymouth, Penobscot County, Maine, digital image s.v. “Andrew Tozier,” available via subscription from Ancestry.com (hereafter referred to as ANC); Donald W. Beattie, *Andrew J. Tozier: Gettysburg Hero* (Hallowell, ME: Quality Copy, 2012), 27; This information comes from affidavits submitted by Thirza Tozier to the US Pension Office, Soldier's Application No. 115,905, Ezra N. Tozier, Private, Company B, 14th Maine Infantry: Case Files of Disapproved Pension Applications of Widows and Other Dependents of Veterans of the Army and Navy, ca. 1861–1934, Records of the Department of Veteran Affairs, Record Group 15, NA; US Census, 1880, Monmouth, Kennebec County, Maine, digital image s.v. “Andrew Tozier,” available via subscription from ANC.
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27. See Brian Swartz, "The Origin of the Phrase 'Seeing the Elephant,'" *Bangor Daily News Blog*, 10 August 2016, accessed 3 August 2019, <https://maineatwar.bangordailynews.com/2016/08/10/the-origin-of-the-phrase-seeing-the-elephant>; John T. Hubbell, "The Seven Days of George Brenton McClellan" in Gary W. Gallagher, ed., *The Richmond Campaign of 1862: The Peninsula and the Seven Days* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 30–34.
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