

The Women of Waterford, Virginia:  
Gender, Unionism, Quakerism and Identity in the American Civil War

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Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in  
partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Masters of Arts  
In  
History

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Keywords: Civil War; Women; Gender; Waterford, Virginia; identity; southern unionism;  
Quaker; Society of Friends; newspaper; journalism

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

Over the course of the Civil War the small community of Waterford, Virginia maintained loyalty to the United States rather than support the Confederate cause. These sentiments were rooted in patriotism to the United States, their exclusion from southern culture, and their Quaker faith. Women of this community were extremely vocal with their anger over Confederate occupation. In the last year of the Civil War they made the choice to publicly assert their convictions with their newspaper *The Waterford News*. The experience of this community, particularly that of its female residents, was influenced by the variety of identities that they held.

The women of Waterford were Quakers, female, southern, unionist and editors/producers of a newspaper. The community of Waterford, Virginia was excluded from the rest of Virginian society because of their Quaker faith. The Civil War was a traumatic historical event where communities like Waterford experienced it differently than the majority around them. By studying the identities of these women as newspaper producers, as citizens of different groups, and within their interpersonal relationships the reality of how war is lived is revealed. All of these factors reveal how war is lived.

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ABSTRACT

Over the course of the Civil War the small community of Waterford, Virginia maintained Unionist sentiments regardless of being a part of the Confederate States of America. These sentiments were rooted in loyalty to the United States, their ostracization from southern culture, and their Quaker faith. In particular, the women of this community became exceptionally vocal with their displeasure with the Confederacy. In the last year of the Civil War they made the deliberate choice to publicly assert their Unionist convictions with their newspaper *The Waterford News*. The experience of this community, particularly that of its female residents, was influenced by the variety of identities that they held.

The women of Waterford were Quakers, female, southern, unionist and editors/producers of a newspaper. The community of Waterford, Virginia was placed in the margins of Southern society because of the cultural differences rooted in their Quaker faith. The Civil War created a chaotic historical moment where those on the margins of society experienced it differently than those around them. By examining their identities as newspaper producers, as citizens of different groups, and within their interpersonal relationships the reality of how war is lived is brought to light. All of these factors reveal how war is lived, and how lives are manipulated to fit within times of chaos. Motivation matters.

## *Acknowledgments*

My first thanks are to my incredible committee. Through their comments, questions and belief in my capabilities this project became a greater piece of scholarship than I had ever imagined it could be. The mentorship of Dr. Paul Quigley, Dr. Melanie Kiechle, and Dr. Monique Dufour went beyond the scope of this project. No one can accurately describe the emotional and mental strain of graduate school until you are under the pressure of it. With the support of my committee I am able to leave graduate school not only as a stronger scholar, but also as a stronger woman. For that I am forever thankful. I would also like to thank Dr. Jessica Taylor for her mentorship over the public history project I did in conjunction with this thesis. Thank you for helping me get the work I am so proud of in this thesis into the hands of the general public.

My success in graduate school would have been far more difficult if it wasn't for the support of those around me. To my cohort: thank you for being incredible scholars who made me better and for being an incredible group of friends for a girl who was far away from home. To my Dad, Mom, Nana, Josh, and Robbie: you have always seen my potential and have ensured my success in every possible step. Thank you for making this immense transition possible. To my best friends: your faith in me kept me motivated. Lastly, a thank you to my incredible Californian mentors Mrs. Terri Brown and Dr. Ryan Keating. You entered my life in different phases as I transformed into a historian. You both saw the capabilities I had at 17 and 22, ensuring my success in every stage. Thank you for maintaining the mentor role I asked of you.

Finally, thank you for The Waterford Foundation, particularly John and Bronwen Souders. Your assistance with the archival materials made this project possible. Thank you for introducing me to the incredible women who occupied Waterford, Virginia in the Civil War. I

have drawn much inspiration from them. This thesis is dedicated to Lizzie Dutton, Lida Dutton, and Sarah Steer. Thank you for demanding your space in history. I am happy to remember you.

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## *Introduction*

Six decades after the Civil War Emma Conrow wrote a newspaper article for the *Baltimore American* reflecting on her grandmother's experience during the war. She described looking through thin and stained brown volumes that contained *The Waterford News*, a Unionist paper written by three young women in borderland territory. Conrow described what this newspaper meant with affectionate language, "Not only from the mountain tops did freedom unfurl her banner to the air back in those days of civil strife over fifty years ago, for from the little town of Waterford, nestled in a valley in the northern corner of Loudoun County, Virginia, came as patriotic and liberty loving a little sheet as ever showed its colors."<sup>1</sup> Conrow's grandmother Emma (Lida) Dutton, alongside sister Elizabeth (Lizzie) and friend Sarah Steer, wrote and published a newspaper for the lost country they loved so deeply, the United States. Despite the chaotic war around them, three young women found a way to assert themselves.

In 1864 these young women became frustrated with the abuses of Confederate soldiers towards their small Quaker community of Waterford, Virginia. Waterford was being raided by Confederate guerillas, and their fathers, brothers and sweethearts had fled to Maryland. But above all they felt subjugated by the Confederate rebellion, isolated from the country they called home. Sarah Steer, Lizzie Dutton, and Lida Dutton were daughters of prominent community members and published *The Waterford News* as a way to raise money for the US Sanitary Commission during the last two years of the war and to inform their loved ones of the what was happening in their community. *The Waterford News* became a public assertion of these female Quaker Unionists' convictions.

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<sup>1</sup> Emma Conrow, "Girls Published Civil War Newspaper," *Baltimore American*, February 5, 1922.

Waterford was located in the Confederate stronghold of Loudoun County, Virginia, but most Waterford residents maintained allegiance to the United States. Waterford was a small town: of Loudoun County's 16,000 only 429 called Waterford home. The Quakers of Loudoun were ostracized for their doctrine in regards to slavery, women's rights and pacifism' and for not supporting the elitist slave economy of the South. The women of Waterford were exceptionally active public Unionists and influenced the reality of the war in Loudoun. As Quakers, these women enjoyed a larger degree of liberty and self-expression than other women in the South and held greater protections because of their whiteness. The lives of these women expose the importance of self and how it influence the way women asserted themselves publicly during the mid nineteenth century. This thesis will address these questions: What was the experience of womanhood like in the Confederate South for women who maintained strong Unionist convictions? How did religious pacifists form Unionist sentiments in Virginia? What maintained and what changed in Waterford womanhood during the Civil War? How was wartime experience relayed in a public forum like a newspaper? How did a woman's identity inform her experience of a chaotic and deadly war?

Motivation matters. A study of Southern Unionism focused on the female experience reveals the realities of women in the war and how they contributed differently to life on the homefront and the political atmosphere. Examination of women's Unionist patriotism in a Confederate state complicates the female Confederate experience. Women were not passive during the war and did not provide blind allegiance to the Union or Confederacy because of their locality. They allied with their own convictions and those of their communities and families. Unionism has been examined for a variety of angles but there has not been enough attention to either gender or theological influence on the creation of that loyalty. The examination of the



female experience in a religious sect that did not adhere to the cultural norms complicates the standard narrative of southern women in the Civil War. The Quaker denomination of Protestant Christianity promoted a greater degree of agency and liberation in their doctrine for their female members in the nineteenth century. It is clear that women experienced the Civil War differently and asserted their Unionist beliefs differently than their male counterparts. Womanhood allowed for certain protections in addition to certain harassments.

The young women of Waterford have been forgotten in the larger historical narrative, relegated to local community libraries and societies. The stories of the Dutton and Steer women do not fit comfortably into the traditional story of the Confederacy or women's history. Their most notable appearance in historical literature is in Glenn Crothers' *Quakers in the Lion's Mouth: The Society of Friends in Northern Virginia, 1730-1865*. Crothers gives very little attention to the experience of the women of Waterford and argues that the war allowed for the subversion of gender roles. Crothers asserts that because of, "the era's gendered language and conventions to provide themselves [the editors of *The Waterford News*] with a measure of protection."<sup>2</sup> However this discounts the autonomy allowed by their religious faith and assumes these women would have been meek southern wives if it was not for the Civil War.

The women of Waterford are not only significant because they identified as female or Southern or Quaker or Unionist. All of these labels informed the social, local and political experience for these women during the Civil War. Therefore these identities must be studied intersectionally. When war is framed as the total cause of a woman's experience it discounts the personalities of these women and removes their agency with the assumption that they were

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<sup>2</sup> Glenn Crothers, *Quakers Living in the Lion's Mouth: The Society of Friends in Northern Virginia, 1730-1865* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012), 261.

reactive rather than proactive.<sup>3</sup> Before the war the women of Waterford were given the education and support from their families to assert themselves and be active participants of the community. Therefore as the war began they simply extended themselves onto a national stage but remained true to the convictions they had held their entire life. The Civil War may have provided an arena for these women to gain a national presence but these women were significant on their own terms and because of the identities they held for themselves.

The Society of Friends, commonly known as Quakers, were always a small denomination in the larger realm of Christianity. Although Quakers gained more prominence above the Mason-Dixon line, there was a small faction in Northern Virginia establishing their church in the 1730s that gained influence after the French and Indian War.<sup>4</sup> The Shenandoah establishment of the Quaker church modeled the larger Quaker faith. Glenn Crothers examines how the Northern Virginia Quakers allied to the three core beliefs of the Society of Friends: human spiritual equality, uniformly plain cultural expression and a lack of religious hierarchy.<sup>5</sup> In Virginia these beliefs faced greater scrutiny as, “the racial and gender hierarchies of the domestic sphere, in short, served as the foundation of planter authority.”<sup>6</sup> Quakers maintained pacifistic beliefs and in addition to their moral abhorrence of slavery, they maintained small plots of land and never required the peculiar institution to maintain economic stability.

By the mid 1700’s Quakers had established an anti-slavery platform.<sup>7</sup> Quakers believed God granted a spiritual equality that existed beyond race. The peculiar institution promoted strict hierarchies and decadent wealth that was forged on the backs of an oppressed group, conflicting

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<sup>3</sup> Crothers, *Quakers Living in the Lion’s Mouth*, 262.

<sup>4</sup> Crothers, *Quakers Living in the Lion’s Mouth*, 15.

<sup>5</sup> Crothers, *Quakers Living in the Lion’s Mouth*, 19.

<sup>6</sup> Crothers, *Quakers Living in the Lion’s Mouth*, 24.

<sup>7</sup> Jean Soderland, *Quakers and Slavery: A Divided Spirit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

with Quaker beliefs.<sup>8</sup> Quakers, including its female members, were at the center of the Abolitionist movement in the North throughout the 19th century; “many women activists were Quakers, for progressive and evangelical Quaker culture encouraged participation in charitable work, the promotion of Christian values and sympathy with the slave.”<sup>9</sup> Quaker women around the western world were publishing abolitionist texts emphasizing the evils of slavery according to the Christian doctrine.<sup>10</sup> Abraham Lincoln even noticed the activist work of Quaker women. During his administration Lincoln met with several Quaker women and heard their perspectives on abolition and spirituality.<sup>11</sup> Women were at the center of social movements that promoted equality for themselves and others.

Women of the Quaker faith maintained a different understanding of their gender role in society because of their understanding of God’s purpose for women. Faith was not something to be left in the church building after worship and religious meetings. Quaker women were also able to enter the religious order and to speak in front of a male and female audience, something not allowed in other Christian denominations. Religion affected their daily lives and permeated their roles as mothers, wives and members of society. It declared how marriages functioned in addition to emphasizing the type of counsel women were expected to provide for denomination members in addition to their family network.<sup>12</sup> Nationally Quaker women were major players in the 1848 Seneca Falls convention, the earliest and most notable gathering of women advocating

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<sup>8</sup> Abbie Rogers, “Confederates and Quakers: The Shared Wartime Experience,” *Quaker History* 99, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 4.

<sup>9</sup> Anna Vaughan Kett, “Quaker Women and Anti-Slavery Activism: Eleanor Clark and the Free Labour Cotton Depot in Street,” *Quaker Studies* 19, no. 1 (2014): 140.

<sup>10</sup> Margaret Bacon, *Mothers of Feminism: The Story of Quaker Women in America* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986) 101.

<sup>11</sup> Bacon, *Mothers of Feminism*, 122.

<sup>12</sup> Neva Jean Specht, “Women of One or Many Bonnets?: Quaker Women and the Role of Religion in Trans-Appalachian Settlement,” *NWSA Journal* 15, no. 2 (Summer 2003) 27, 31-32.

for equal rights regardless of sex.<sup>13</sup> Within church meetings women approved memberships and marriages. Quaker women could also become traveling representatives or even traveling ministers.<sup>14</sup>

White women of the South had a strict role within Southern society.<sup>15</sup> Socioeconomic status fueled the perception of what a Southern woman was, maintaining the rich white mistress of a plantation as the default. This immediately ostracized the abolitionist Quaker woman, who opposed slavery, had autonomy separate from men, and had a modest income. The women of Waterford did not attempt to fit within these barriers, like many other women at the time who readily challenged and manipulated the barriers given to them.<sup>16</sup> Despite being in a southern and more conservative region, as Quakers they still experienced greater autonomy than most women in the area. The expected roles of women did not stop women in Waterford from advocating for equality to their greatest extent. Despite the autonomy given by Quakerism women were still restrained by the heavily patriarchal system of the slave south. Nina Silber in *Gender and the Sectional Conflict* argues that, “women’s independent patriotism was further limited in the South by the parameters of Confederate ideology. Confederate thinking rested so strongly on the intertwining of nation and home.”<sup>17</sup> Despite this, Quaker women manipulated the Southern female roles they were given and subverted it to rebel against the Confederacy they were expected to follow.

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<sup>13</sup> Bacon, *Mothers of Feminism*, 118.

<sup>14</sup> Specht, “Women of One or Many Bonnets?,” 30.

<sup>15</sup> For more information on how southern women were expected to function within 19th century society see, Victoria E. Bynum, *Unruly Women: The Politics of Social and Sexual Control of the Old South* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1992); Drew Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Sarah Gardner, *Blood & Irony: Southern White Women’s Narratives of the Civil War, 1861- 1937* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); George Rable, *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989).

<sup>16</sup> Bynum, *Unruly Women*, 14.

<sup>17</sup> Nina Silber, *Gender and the Sectional Conflict* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 41.

In most of Civil War historiography of the twentieth century there has been a tendency to generalize the North and the South with the assumption that the general population mirrored the governments of the region. Studies of southern unionism challenge the assumption of a unified Confederate sentiment in the south. Female, religious, and Unionist aspects of the Civil War have typically been studied separately in Civil War unionism literature; combining them allows for a new contribution to a variety of scholarships. Civil War gender historian Nina Silber encouraged a study that would take these ideas into consideration because scholarship has not focused on “the war and gender relations among southern Unionists.”<sup>18</sup> This study focusing on gender’s influence on Unionist sentiments fulfills Silber’s call.

Unionists in the South resisted Confederate authorities in a variety of ways.<sup>19</sup> When the historiography began it was framed as rebellion towards the Confederacy, rather than as loyalty to the United States.<sup>20</sup> Unionism, particularly in Virginia history, has been framed as something unique to the secession crisis which ended when the Civil War began.<sup>21</sup> For Virginia, and many

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<sup>18</sup> Nina Silber, *Gender and the Sectional Conflict*, xx.

<sup>19</sup> For more studies on Unionism see, Victoria Bynum, *The Free State of Jones: Mississippi’s Longest Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016); Victoria Bynum, *The Long Shadow of the Civil War: Southern Dissent and its Legacies* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Catherine Clinton, *Southern Families at War: Loyalty and Conflict in the Civil War South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Carl Degler, *The Other South: Southern Dissenters in the Nineteenth Century* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1974); Lawrence Denton, *Unionists in Virginia: Politics, Secession and Their Plan to Prevent Civil War* (Charleston: History Press, 2014); Thomas Dyer, *The Union Circle in Confederate Atlanta* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999); Robert McKenzie, *Lincolmites and Rebels: A Divided Town in the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Brian McKnight, *Contested Borderland: The Civil War in Appalachian Kentucky and Virginia* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2006); Barton Myers, *Rebels Against the Confederacy: North Carolina’s Unionists* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Margaret Storey, *Loyalty and Loss: Alabama’s Unionists in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004); Daniel Sutherland, *Guerrillas, Unionists, and Violence and the Confederate Home Front* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1999); Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict: The Decisive Role of Guerrillas in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); David Williams, *Bitterly Divided: The South’s Inner Civil War* (New York: New Press, 2008).

<sup>20</sup> Georgia Tatum, *Disloyalty in the Confederacy*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1934).

<sup>21</sup> Daniel Crofts, *Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989); Lawrence Denton, *Unionists in Virginia: Politics, Secession and Their Plan to Prevent Civil War* (Charleston, History Press, 2014); James Head, *History and Comprehensive Description of Loudoun County Virginia* (Washington D.C.: Park View Press, 1908).

other states, groups who were unionist maintained those convictions after the conflict began. There has been some discussion of Unionism as a cultural and societal feeling inspired by a combination of poverty, abolitionism and patriotism for the United States.<sup>22</sup> John Inscoe and Robert Kenzer's *Enemies of the Country: New Perspectives on Unionists in the Civil War South* showed how unionism differed based on geographic location and familial ties. These micro studies reveal the "parameters of Unionism."<sup>23</sup> These parameters, however, are limited to familial and geographic aspects and do not consider *personal* identity, particularly in regards to womanhood and religious affiliation.

Gender and Women's studies have reexamined the role of women in the Civil War. George Rable in his 1989 monograph *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Nationalism* and Drew Gilpin Faust in her "Altars of Sacrifice: Confederate Women and the Narratives of War" examine the role of Confederate women on the homefront and their effect on Southern morale in the war. Faust argues, "the passage of women's history beyond its earlier celebratory phase and the adoption of more critical and analytic approaches to female experience may enable us at last to see the story as the fiction it largely is."<sup>24</sup> Faust and Rable expose the inaccuracies of previous historiographies by drawing attention to the change of homefront morale and that the Confederacy did not succeed because, "so many women did not want it to."<sup>25</sup> By framing female actions in these conflicts as autonomous and self-driven the facade of the homefront is stripped away to reveal a more accurate depiction of the horror that results from such conflicts.

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<sup>22</sup> These monographs are listed in footnote 19.

<sup>23</sup> John C. Inscoe and Robert C. Kenzer, eds., *Enemies of the Country: New Perspectives on Unionists in the Civil War South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001), 13.

<sup>24</sup> Drew Gilpin Faust, "Altars of Sacrifice: Confederate Women and the Narratives of War," *The Journal of American History* 76, no. 4 (1990): 1204; Rable, *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism*.

<sup>25</sup> Faust, "Altars of Sacrifice," 1228.

Scholarship has also acknowledged how war, in this case the American Civil War, disrupts gender and sexuality norms.<sup>26</sup> Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber have produced two collections of essays *Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War* and *Battle Scars: Gender and Sexuality in the American Civil War* which examine the war experiences from a female perspective on topics such as sexuality, religion, and nationalism. These essays highlight how women created new opportunities to assert their worth and capabilities as women during the war period. Nina Silber continues the gender conversation and examined how,

Both Unionists and Confederates frequently gave women a central place in the way they portrayed wartime objectives, often as a way to lend an immediate and emotional appeal to abstract, political causes: but also that Unionists and Confederates spoke about gender considerations in very different ways when they talked about their respective ‘causes.’<sup>27</sup>

Silber’s idea does not need to be limited to women who held strong convictions to their local government. Unionist women in the South utilized their gender as a way to establish and promote the convictions of themselves and their community. Gender is utilized within a variety of spheres to put forward ideals.

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<sup>26</sup>Bynum, *Unruly Women*; Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber, *Battle Scars: Gender and Sexuality in the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber, *Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Drew Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Sarah Gardner, *Blood & Irony*; Thalvia Glymph, “I’m a Radical Black Girl: Black Women Unionists and the Politics of the Civil War,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 8, no. 3 (Sept. 2018): 380; Elizabeth Leonard, *Yankee Women: Gender Battles in the Civil War* (WW Norton: New York, 1994); Alecia Long and LeeAnn Whites, *Occupied Women: Gender, Military Occupation, and the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009); Mary Elizabeth Massey, *Bonnet Brigades* (New York: Knopf, 1966); Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010); Virginia Ott, *Confederate Daughters: Coming of Age in the Civil War* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008); Nina Silber, *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War* (Cambridge: University of Massachusetts, 2005); Nina Silber, *Gender and the Sectional Conflict* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Elizabeth Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy: The True Story of Elizabeth Van Lew* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); LeAnn Whites, *Gender Matters: Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Making of the New South* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

<sup>27</sup> Silber, *Gender and the Sectional Conflict*, xiii.

Historians such as Elizabeth Varon, Stephanie McCurry and Thelvia Glymph do acknowledge gender in Unionism to certain degrees. McCurry notes that Confederate forces saw female unionists as, “women members of Unionist dissenter bands, operating as enemy collaborators.”<sup>28</sup> McCurry references unionism in regards to female Confederate identity but does not keep it at the center of the narrative. Varon adds to the conversation of women who have been rejected from the southern cause because of their frustration with the Confederate government. Varon adds the story of Elizabeth Van Lew and reframes her work as a one of unionist loyalty as opposed to confederate betrayal.<sup>29</sup> For Thelvia Glymph she specifically focuses on how freedwomen of the south understood their identity as citizens of the United States in the Civil War as an aspect of hope.<sup>30</sup> Glymph recognizes how gender and race fuel one another in times of conflict. The idea of gender as a useful framework way to examine unionism has clear potential and should be utilized by historians more.

A combination of these historiographies allows for compelling research and provides the ability to interject in a historiography not considered. Women's history need to expand past the traditional stories told about Civil War women and look at smaller communities and how their stories both disrupt and flesh out the common narrative. What occurred in Waterford, Virginia is not representative of the typical experience of southern women, Quakers or Unionists. Waterford’s individuality revealed its significance. These communities experienced the war differently because of a combination of sentiments, geography, religiosity and gender therefore they should be studied on their own terms.

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<sup>28</sup> McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*, 86-87.

<sup>29</sup> Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy*.

<sup>30</sup> Glymph, “I’m a Radical Black Girl.”



*The Waterford News* was a newspaper written by three women who refused to be shackled to the Confederate government.<sup>31</sup> The newspaper included a variety of columns addressing the cultural, social, economic and political realities of the community during the war. *The Waterford News*, released eight times over May 1864 to April 1865, covers a variety of issues and ideas of the Waterford community including physical needs and local updates. Each newspaper has a section dedicated to Abraham Lincoln, communications, the needs of the community and other regional social reports. The newspaper was read by those refugee community members, visiting soldiers (some of which maintained subscriptions after marching through the town), as well as United States citizens who came across the newspaper. A friendship between the Dutton girl's father and the owner of *The Baltimore American* fostered the opportunity for the paper to be published and distributed after being smuggled into Maryland.

The content of the newspaper reveals the true isolation felt by this small group of Unionists and a religious minority surrounded by secessionists. This antagonism by secessionists within a highly contested region of Virginia during the war led to a disruption of social life different to the rest of the South. These women were vocal about their community needs, often speaking on behalf of it, showing the true persistence and strength of women during war time. With their words readers can learn about this unique persecution and see how the Quaker faith motivated these women to be so vocal. This newspaper will be the central focus of the study informing all chapters on the daily lives of the women of Waterford. *The Waterford News* creates a window into the world of this small Northern Virginia community. Each column, aside and joke was purposefully written to communicate what this world was like. The newspaper's

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<sup>31</sup> Taylor M. Chamberlin, Bronwen C. Sounders, John M. Sounders, eds., *The Waterford News: An Underground Union Newspaper Published by Three Quaker Maidens in Confederate Virginia 1864-1865* (Waterford: Waterford Foundation Inc, 1999).

audience was consistently considered by the editors and shaped their decision making in their choice of rhetoric.

The editors of this newspaper were not the only members of the community who maintained Unionist convictions. From the Waterford archives there are diaries and letters from Mary (Mollie) Frances Dutton Steer, sister of two of the newspaper writers, where we see how unionism was spoken about by a woman who was reportedly less extroverted than her sisters.<sup>32</sup> There are also collections from other community members like John Dutton, father of the Dutton women, and Rebecca Williams, a fellow Quaker Unionist, that reveal the reality they faced and the day-to-day persecution experienced by Unionist sympathizing Confederate residents. While the newspaper was a public examination of Unionism, these journals and letters reflect a more private frustration with the Confederacy.

Each personal identity that these women had held meaning to them. The identities held complimented and contradicted each other forcing the women of Waterford to construct their sense of self. To be southern and to be Quaker meant reconciling a unique view point on things like slavery, women's rights and culture. To be in the South but to also maintain loyalty to the northern government meant being at odds with the society around your community. Examination of how these identities existed both with and against each other provides a deeper understanding for how the culture of a society in war is formed at an individual level.

Unionism for these women was influenced by the variety of identities that they held and was asserted in the different spheres they were placed in. Each chapter will focus on how the labels "Southern," "Unionist," "Quaker," and "woman" influenced their experience as editors of their newspaper, as community members and in interpersonal relationships. These women did

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<sup>32</sup>John E. Divine, Bronwen C. Sounders, and John M. Sounders, eds., *"To Talk is Treason": Quakers of Waterford, Virginia on Life, Love, Death and War in the Southern Confederacy* (Waterford: Waterford Foundation Inc, 1996).

not just publish a newspaper; they waved their Union flags as a form of resistance against the Confederacy and as support for the passing Union soldiers. However, the newspaper highlights the variety of identities and roles that the women of Waterford maintained during the Civil War. To best examine this the thesis will be broken into three chapters and will maintain *The Waterford News* as the central component of the narrative.

Chapter One focuses on the work of the women as journalists and editors with attention to the narratives of the newspaper and the practicalities of publishing a newspaper. The newspaper was a public declaration of Unionism and discontent for their community's treatment by the rebels. It also had the practical function of documenting what was happening within Waterford's small borders. The women thought of this newspaper as a form of activism and wartime involvement. I choose to refer to the women who published *The Waterford News* as editors without the qualification of them being female. The editors of *The Waterford News* should not have their work qualified by their gender unlike their male counterparts across the country. The editors became public figures for the community's Unionist beliefs and this chapter will highlight how these women were able to have that power.

Chapter Two focuses on their expressions of Unionism as Waterford residents, Virginians and citizens of the United States. *The Waterford News* provides a window into the female understanding of patriotism; women took pride in their citizenship at these different levels. Columns in the newspaper include poems of adoration for Lincoln, despair of a lost Virginian patriotism and pride in their community's actions in response to Confederate abuses. The attachment to these loyalties were often interwoven and influenced the status of these affiliations. Comprehension of womanhood, religion and regionalism allows for a deeper understanding of these loyalties.

Chapter Three will focus on the personal relationships of these women as daughters, sisters and sweethearts. *The Waterford News* houses personal columns in which there are familial updates, marriage notices or visits from family who were refugees in Maryland. The diaries and letters maintained by these women also reveal a focus on how the relationships held between individuals had to be altered because of the conflict that surrounded them. Beyond that, however, we also see how women refused to compromise themselves and what they valued most. It is in these small interactions between individuals, whether between the community members of Waterford or visiting soldiers, that the true selves of these women is revealed.

These three women made a choice to put themselves, and in turn their community, on the national stage by actively speaking out against the government that controlled their community. Womanhood and identity is a personal thing, and the stories of the Dutton and Steer women expose how the labels of Patriot, Daughter, Sister, Quaker, Virginian and Editor *together* motivated them to enter the public stage with *The Waterford News*. Examination of this is essential to understand what the actual Civil War experience was for these women. Historical actors make deliberate and courageous decisions based on their own personal convictions. Lizzie Dutton, Lida Dutton and Sarah Steer's decisions reveal how womanhood was truly lived.

## Chapter I:

### “The news is small in size, but large in its loyalty:” Editors of *The Waterford News*

Unionism was at the core of Lizzie Dutton, Lida Dutton and Sarah Steer’s lives as their world was disrupted throughout the Civil War. In 1864 these women realized waving flags and providing refuge to United States soldiers was not enough. These three women began publishing *The Waterford News* in May 1864 and released eight issues over the war’s last eleven months. The authors/editors of *The Waterford News* never explicitly state why they chose May 1864 to begin publishing their newspaper. Colonel Mosby was consuming their county with guerilla warfare. President Abraham Lincoln, a man deeply admired by these three women, was also up for reelection. 1864 was a deciding year in the Civil War conflict both politically and militarily. All of these factors inspired these three women to publicly assert their deep felt beliefs.

The editors advanced impactful Unionist sentiments, and utilized the public platform of the newspaper to spread their convictions. In their first edition the three editors announced the purpose of the newspaper,

We present to our readers this week the first edition of our little paper, with many hopes and fears. We hope it may meet the approbation of our friends; that they uphold us in our hazardous undertaking, and we fear nothing so much as their disapproval. We wish and expect it to meet the *condemnation* of our enemies, for they are averse to truth, and that this sheet will contain.<sup>33</sup>

The women knew what they were doing was dangerous, especially considering they were under Confederate occupation during its publication. However, the greater goal of the paper outweighed the potential persecution it could provoke. The newspaper hosted a variety of work styles and prompts and featured the writings of both men and women who wrote into the paper

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<sup>33</sup> Dutton, Dutton and Steer, Editorial, *The Waterford News*, May 28, 1864, 1-2.

that took the form of letters. Humor was a recurring theme in the paper as well.<sup>34</sup> These columns and asides the personalities of the editors, as well as their values.

Newspapers were the tools of mass communication during the Civil War. Historian David Sachsman has edited several volumes of essays that examine how newspapers and journalists created and disrupted political thought during the war.<sup>35</sup> These collections of essays emphasize the art of journalism and journalism's connections with large historical trends and events of the day. Historians are more interested in how the press influenced public opinion as opposed to how a small paper can reveal the lives of its writers and readers.

The finality of the Civil War was the most significant factor in the creation of a "united" United States. Print culture was one of the key aspects that allowed this to succeed.<sup>36</sup> A new nation, less than one hundred years old, fell apart when the southern states seceded. The editors of *The Waterford News* saw the fractured country, and utilized their skills to print a piece of print and material culture to further promote the idea of a united nation. The newspaper reflected trends of other newspapers of the era. Value was put on concretely writing down the beliefs held and then spreading those ideas throughout the readership.

As the war continued women utilized the disrupted social norms to turn the largely white male dominated press into an arena where they could form their own public identity and vocalize

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<sup>34</sup>An example being "What kind of key will it take to unlock the Southern ports? A Yankey," Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Conundrums, *The Waterford News*, November 26, 1864, 6-4.

<sup>35</sup> David B Sachsman, S. Kittrell Rushing and Roy Morris Jr., eds., *Words at War: The Civil War and American Journalism*, (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2008), David Sachsman, ed., *A Press Divided: Newspaper Coverage During the Civil War*, (Abingdon: Routledge Press, 2017), David Sachsman, S. Kittrell Rushing, and Debra Reddin van Tuyll, ed., *The Civil War and the Press*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000).

<sup>36</sup> For more on 19th century print culture see Gross, Robert and Mary Kelley, ed, *A History of the Book in America: Volume 2: An Extensive Republic: Print, Culture, and Society in the New Nation, 1790-1840*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Loughran, Trish, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770-1870* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); Santin, Bryan, Daniel Murphy, Matthew Wilkins, "Is or Are: The 'United States' in Nineteenth-Century Print Culture," *American Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (2016): 101-124.

their needs.<sup>37</sup> Sachsman was also involved with the publication of *Seeking a Voice: Images of Race and Gender in the 19th Century Press*, which frames journalism through the eyes of gender and race. While many of the essays provide important studies on how women of color utilize the public forum of newspapers to critique the racial disparity of 19th century America, circumstances like those of the women of Waterford continued to be forgotten. The essays that do focus on the lives of white women put an emphasis on ladies magazines/newspapers and again overlook the experience of intimate communities.

Examination of the text and the goals behind *The Waterford News* exposes what these women valued enough to risk their safety and put into print. Historically in times of conflict women are allowed to embark on the public stage in greater and socially acceptable ways.<sup>38</sup> In *Yankee Women: Gender Battles in the Civil War* Elizabeth Leonard explains, “wars produce abrupt, conscious and concentrated adjustments in the behaviors considered appropriate for men and women and allow for some crossing of gender lines.”<sup>39</sup> While this is generally true it removes context and agency from communities in which those gender lines were already more abstract and flexible, such as Quakers. For women of the South the Civil War did provide the opportunity to expand past traditional roles, however for the editors of *The Waterford News* many of these barriers were not in place because of their religion.

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<sup>37</sup> Janet Cramer, “For Women and the War: A Cultural Analysis of the *Mayflower*, 1861-1864” in *The Civil War and the Press*, ed. David B. Sachsman, S. Kittrell Rushing, Debra Reddin Van Tuyl (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 209-226. David Sachsman, S. Rushing and Roy Morris Jr. *Seeking a Voice: Images of Race and Gender in the 19th Century Press* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2009).

<sup>38</sup> Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber, *Battle Scars*; Faust, “Altars of Sacrifice,” Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010); Silber, *Daughters of the Union*; Silber, *Gender and the Sectional Conflict*; Lyde Cullen Sizer, *The Political Work of Northern Women Writers and the Civil War, 1850-1872* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000). LeAnn Whites, *Occupied Women*; Elizabeth Young, *Disarming the Nation: Women’s Writing and the American Civil War*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

<sup>39</sup> Leonard, *Yankee Women*, xxi.

The newspaper was more than a public assertion of Unionism. Lizzie, Lida and Sarah utilized their platform to actively contribute to the United States war effort. The paper raised funds for the US Sanitary Commission and provided encouragement to United States soldiers. The paper also informed refugee male relatives in Maryland about activities in the community. For these women the separation from the United States could have implied a separation from the United States war effort. Yet their sheer drive made it possible for them to create their own way to involve themselves with the war. Nina Silber defines female sacrifice in war as, “to put aside what was assumed to be their domestic focus and give their support to men’s public and political obligations.”<sup>40</sup> While this paper was primarily to inform male relatives and encourage United States soldiers the convictions held by these women were rooted in their own beliefs. Exemplifying this is the mockery of the men of the Confederacy, who according to physical boundaries alone, Waterford’s women were expected to respect and support. Lizzie, Lida and Sarah used the paper to assert their goals and convictions along the lines with the men they felt earned the admiration and respect.

*The Waterford News* is also a female centric creation for a male and female audience. Women wrote, edited, published and smuggled the newspaper. The only aspect that men were involved in was being featured in columns, its printing in Maryland and some of the distribution. These women also wrote in support of a cause that their neighbors did not appreciate. To Waterford’s surrounding communities these women were considered hostiles and were therefore not afforded the same support and protections given to other women who were expanding past their approved social standing. The way these ideals coexist in a public forum shows us how a

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<sup>40</sup> Silber, *Gender and the Sectional Conflict*, 39.



small community accepted and sometimes rejected their role within a conflict that redefined a nation.

### **Day to Day Life in *The Waterford News***

General war narratives put war and conflict at the center of the story of that time period. The ability to create a new sense of normalcy, or a different everyday life, is not studied as often. The newspaper's coverage of local matters revealed the social lives and inner workings of the citizens of Waterford and its community. In 1864/1865 this informed refugee community members on how the community was surviving the conflict. "Want" columns would range from shortages of food, town maintenance and lost items. Some of these contained bits of humor like the first ever wanted column, "WANTED- A Few Stores, with Dry-Goods, Molasses Candy and other stationary, suited to the tastes of the community. Young and handsome clerks not objectionable."<sup>41</sup> The women also maintained a personal ad where they announced the safe return of their refugee fathers to Maryland after short visits back into Waterford.<sup>42</sup> Others included updates on religious meetings and communication with their Northern neighbors in Maryland. These columns expose the way the war impacted the lives of these women.

Excerpts from *The Waterford News* expose the realities of the editors' lives and how they maintained their wit during the war.<sup>43</sup> The marriage column, as one example, became a repeated location for jabs at the local male population. The editors were frustrated with the lack of

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<sup>41</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Wanted, *The Waterford News*, May 28, 1864, 1-4.

<sup>42</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Personal, *The Waterford News*, May 28, 1864, 1-3.

<sup>43</sup> Historian Cameron Nickels examines the way humor is utilized in the conflict in *Civil War Humor* but spends little time on Southern production, as well as small producers. Margaret Stetz has attempted to rectify some of this absence with her article "The 'Transatlantic' and Late-Nineteenth Century American Women's Humor," by spending a devoted time on gender specific humor. Stetz focuses on the work of literary humorists, which still leaves women who utilized the press out of the historiography.

marriage proposals, regardless of the war around them. In the first edition of the paper they write, “Young men, will you see this ‘should be interesting’ place vacant, when you could so easily remedy it?”<sup>44</sup> After several columns of frustration the editors wrote of changing sentiments, “after the marriage column was closed, the young gentlemen became very patriotic, volunteering to serve a lifetime and proposals numerous flocked in. *We will make them feel that delays are dangerous.*”<sup>45</sup> The humor elicits a laugh from their audience but it also reminds the reader of genuine concerns these women held. Victoria Ott in *Confederate Daughters: Coming of Age in the Civil War* argues, “young women reoriented their relationships to suit their wartime disruptions.”<sup>46</sup> The marriage column is an example of one of these reorientations. Before the war these women may not have published their annoyances with courtships in a public forum, but chose to do this because it was necessary.

The humor related to rare marriages was not limited to this column. A joke in a later issue remarks, “Why are the Rebel ranks like our Marriage Column? Because there is little probability of their ever being filled.”<sup>47</sup> This column was not ignored by their male readers. An anonymous Bachelor wrote in,

I notice throughout your writings that as a general thing, you, like most of your sex, have very little patience with that class of beings styled Bachelors, of which- Patience Ladies- I am so *unfortunate* as to be one... My object in writing this is to know, if after this humble confession you think there is still *hope* for me, still one being who could forgive the waste of years, and take upon herself the task of guiding one unhappy being unto a Paradise on Earth.<sup>48</sup>

Marriage is a key life event, and in the nineteenth century it was necessary for a woman to feel secure within their station of life, for fear of becoming an old maid. Marriage was critical in a

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<sup>44</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Marriages, *The Waterford News*, May 28, 1864, 1-3.

<sup>45</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Marriages, *The Waterford News*, August 20, 1864, 4-4.

<sup>46</sup> Ott, *Confederate Daughters*, 6.

<sup>47</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, *The Waterford News* November 11, 1864, 6-1.

<sup>48</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Communication, *The Waterford News*, April 3, 1865, 8-1.

nineteenth century woman's life, even in the midst of a civil war.<sup>49</sup> The bachelor, despite the language used, appears content in his lifestyle, a comfort these women were not privy to.<sup>50</sup> It would take the attention of one of the patient ladies to rescue him. There was no true consequence for him to remain in his unfortunate class.

Humor was interwoven in the rest of the newspaper. Immediately following an update on some town maintenance the women took the opportunity to poke fun of themselves, "Wanted- a straight jacket for the Editor who was bent on having her own way."<sup>51</sup> Humor was also utilized to show the confidence these women had in their own newspaper as stated in a want ad in the fourth issue, "WANTED- a carrier to distribute copies of the *Waterford News*. No compensation offered, as the pleasure is expected to repay the trouble."<sup>52</sup> The choices to have these small quips intermixed with the serious business of war and also town updates reminds readers that the priority of some people was to find a way to enjoy life despite the chaos around them. Humor was a tool utilized to provide commentary on nineteenth century life.

The editors also dabbled in the gender politics of the time within the newspaper. Aside from the humorous Marriage Column the women took different aims at the local men who stayed behind. In the first edition they wrote of a community road issue. "The young ladies of Waterford, Loudoun Co, Va., are hereby notified to meet the first opportunity and lend their mutual aid in filling a large mudhole... Being fearful the gentlemen will get their feet muddy, the ladies will try and remedy it."<sup>53</sup> The women, as noted previously with the marriage column, were

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<sup>49</sup> The influence of Southern society is clear in this aspect of the editors lives. Marriage was a central component to Southern womanhood in the mid 19th century. Giselle Roberts, *The Confederate Belle* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003), 16-18.

<sup>50</sup> For more information on how men used gender and humor as a way to grapple with their identity see John Mayfield, *Counterfeit Gentlemen: Manhood and Humor in the Old South* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009).

<sup>51</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Wants, *The Waterford News*, November 11, 1864, 6-3.

<sup>52</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Wanted, *The Waterford News*, August 20, 1864, 4-4.

<sup>53</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer. *The Waterford News*, Pop-Gun, May 28, 1864, 1-4.

not afraid to be direct with their frustrations with the men who resided in the town. This humor comments on the common social understanding of chivalrous men who should maintain the physical construction of the town. It also emphasizes the barriers commonly put on women that they were willing to work against. These women were not passive, even in small actions like local road maintenance. They took a stand whenever necessary to fully speak for themselves and their needs.

Some of the updates directly involved the skirmishes with the Confederate troops and either marching United States troops or the Loudoun Rangers, a band of local men who set aside their pacifist beliefs and defended the small community.<sup>54</sup> The editors wrote in the first edition about an encounter with the “Rebels” and the attack on the Loudoun Rangers. The women wrote, “they were shot after they had surrendered by the inhuman rebels. They got all together, five prisoners and from eight to ten horses... we have not seen them [The Confederates] since, and would like to be able to say the same all the days of our lives, and live to a good old age at that.”<sup>55</sup> Murder after surrender is something difficult to verify after a skirmish like this one.<sup>56</sup> However, with examination of the language alone, it is clear that the women had a sense of fear and contempt for these Confederate soldiers. They did not view them as respectable soldiers. They were men who would, by any means necessary, oppress their community.

### **The Waterford News on National Issues**

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<sup>54</sup> The Loudoun Rangers was a militia group of Loudoun men who stayed in the area to protect the community from CSA soldiers. Further discussion on this division, their activities, and their motivations will be discussed in Chapter Two.

<sup>55</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, *The News*, *The Waterford News*, May 28, 1864, 1-3.

<sup>56</sup> Confederates were rumored to shoot after surrender when the opposition represented a slight to their cause of war. For example the Fort Pillow Massacre in which Confederate troops murdered USCT troops after the end of battle.

The *Waterford News* was the most notable piece of public unionism that the women of Waterford produced. In this paper they centered Unionist goals and provided commentary on what was occurring throughout the nation in both the war and political landscape. The editors also wrote on community activities, social updates as well and the role of the community in the larger war framework. *The Waterford News* was unique in regards to other newspapers in the country because it maintained a priority on communal news over journalism on the larger war front. The editors were unable to dispatch journalists to the frontlines of battles to cover how battles were progressing.<sup>57</sup>

The first edition of the newspaper held the first of many poems written by the editors. It included the words, “But, courage, be our purpose true;/ Stand for the Union- never falter;/ We yet shall see our glorious Flag/ Enshrined in peace on Freedom’s alter.”<sup>58</sup> This, through a more creative outlet, showed the readers of the paper the primary goal of the publication was and the hopes of these editors. It connected them to the United States war effort and situated their love for their country in the first page of their first edition.

Morale in Waterford differed from other neighboring regions. The women commented on the *Baltimore American*’s coverage of the fall of 1864. The Maryland newspaper wrote of dark days ahead as the summer ends and winter approaches. The women disagree with this outlook for their community. They wrote, “already we feel that the dawn of a brighter day is upon us, and we earnestly hope that the time is not far distant, when our present trials and sufferings will be remembered as among the things that were.”<sup>59</sup> The authors of the *Baltimore American*, like many

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<sup>57</sup> Christopher Daly in *Covering America: A Narrative History of a Nation’s Journalism* examines the role of evolving correspondents in their coverage of the battles as well as how they evolved the craft of new journalism in an era of war.

<sup>58</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, For President Abraham Lincoln, *The Waterford News*, May 28, 1864, 1-1.

<sup>59</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Editorial, *The Waterford News*, October 15, 1864, 5-2.

in the North, were able to disassociate from some of the harsher realities of war homefront. For these editors, “melancholy days” were the ones in which they were being abused by Confederate guerillas.<sup>60</sup> Despite this happening in the present, the editors hoped for the reelection of Lincoln and the prospect of the end of the war provided necessary hope. The discrepancy between these two papers, regardless of geographical closeness, raises the question of how these three women, and their community, experienced the conflict.

The editors also provided commentary on different historical themes unrelated to the Civil War that were being discussed within the country, like prohibition and female suffrage. In the seventh edition of the paper the women gave their opinion on the prohibition of liquor,

We have long been of the opinion that the manufacture of liquor should have been stopped in our country. But since the burning of so much grain and the probable want of bread we think the subject demands the prompt attention of our military authorities. The suppression of all Distilleries will gratify the moral sentiment of the Country.<sup>61</sup>

Quakers throughout the country were supporters of the temperance movement.<sup>62</sup> The writing of these women emphasizes the combination of religious/moral beliefs in addition to practicalities. They argued that bread was needed more than a fermented beverage in this time period. This also shows the intuitiveness of these women who were astute in their ability to find opportunities to forward their agenda when the time was most appropriate.

Involvement with gender politics went beyond commenting on the gender norms of the time. Lizzie, Lida, and Sarah referenced another social movement many Quakers were involved

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<sup>60</sup> 1864 was the year in which Colonel Mosby’s tactics begin to shred the Northern Virginia area apart. For more information on Mosby’s tactics see: Virginia Carrington Jones, *Ranger Mosby* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944); Hugh Keen, *43rd Battalion, Virginia Cavalry, Mosby’s Command* (Lynchburg: H.E. Howard, 1993); James Ramage, *Gray Ghost: The Life of Col. Jon Singleton Mosby* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986).

<sup>61</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Editorial, *The Waterford News*, January 28, 1865, 7-2.

<sup>62</sup> Glenn Crothers cites the beginning of the Northern Virginia temperance movement at the beginning of the nations founding, showing the deep roots this community had in the ideology. Crothers, *Quakers Living in the Lion’s Mouth*, 36.

in: women's suffrage. In the issue of *The Waterford News* in which they cover the reelection of Abraham Lincoln the editors write, “We are not believers in women’s rights, literally speaking, but we feel a great interest in the affairs of our country, and we shall with *our* humble ability advocate the union of *States* and *freedom* of person as well as opinion.”<sup>63</sup> For these women, political involvement was not rooted solely in the ability to vote. These ideas are rooted in both Southern womanhood as well as Republican Motherhood.<sup>64</sup> Republican Motherhood asserts that women of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century should be well versed in the political spectrum as a way to best communicate the proper ideals to their children as well as be a partner to their husband and “inform” his vote. The above quote also emphasizes something that was valued by Lizzie, Lida and Sarah: regardless of “rights” they would still hold and advocate their beliefs, in this case the reunification of the country.

The mission of the newspaper by the three Quaker women was to support their Union soldiers. In the second edition of the paper they women stated,

We hoped, when all our readers know that its mission is to cheer the weary soldier, and render material aid to the sick and wounded, they will not hesitate to lend a helping hand... again we send our little paper forth with the hope and prayer that it may fulfill its mission by assuring our soldiers of our thankfulness to them.<sup>65</sup>

Lida, Lizzie, and Sarah saw the influence their “little sheet” could have on Union soldiers despite the target brought upon their community. They felt tremendous admiration for the northern soldiers and felt as if they owed them a debt for their protection. Later in the same edition of the paper that announced their mission they later state, “Living, as we do, in Virginia, we have no

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<sup>63</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Editorial, *The Waterford News*, November, 26, 1864, 6-2.

<sup>64</sup> Elizabeth Varon, *We Mean to be Counted: White Women and Politics in Antebellum Virginia* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 1998), Lucia McMahon, *So Material a Change: Revisiting Republican Motherhood* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 2012).

<sup>65</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Editorial, *The Waterford News*, June 11, 1864, 2-2.

right to expect help from them unless they choose. ‘Tis nothing to them if we lose our lives and property; no self-interest in the case, and yet they are suffering untold agony for us.’<sup>66</sup> This understanding emphasizes the division felt between this unionist community and the country they maintained their allegiance to.

The newspaper went beyond actual news reporting, whether of the war or the community. The editors wrote various columns that simply contained words of encouragement. Different forms of writing were used to inspire the soldiers they sought to encourage. One of these styles was poetry as highlighted in this poem from the paper’s seventh issue, “Then all hail to Sons of Freedom!/ Be they on sea or land,/ And God grant a happy future/ To that great and glorious band/ Every wayside cottage radiant,/ With pure thoughts of loved ones gone,/ To uphold our Starry Banner,/ With our Nation’s armor on.”<sup>67</sup> For the women who often referred to themselves as “slaves” to the Confederate States, the idea of these soldiers providing the deliverance of freedom is clear in this poem.<sup>68</sup> The goal of the newspaper did not dissipate as the paper continued to be produced. In the seventh issue, encouragement of US soldiers was still as important as it was in its first.

The editors of the newspaper received reassurance of their goals. One editor wrote of an interaction with one of the soldiers who marched through Waterford. She reminisced in the fourth edition of the paper about interacting with a group of soldiers and one came to tell her he recognized her from a previous march through the region. She then reflected, “the remembrance

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<sup>66</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Editorial, *The Waterford News*, June 11, 1864, 2-2.

<sup>67</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Original, *The Waterford News*, January 28, 1865, 7-1. This is not the only occasion that armor as something divine to wear as protection. The metaphor of divine armour is covered with other forms in Chapter three.

<sup>68</sup> Elizabeth Varon, *Appomattox: Victory, Defeat, and Freedom at the End of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014). Varon examines the theme of freedom and its meaning to those who lived through it capitalizing on this idea of deliverance.



of some little attention bestowed, and which I had forgotten, notwithstanding time, long marches, and hard-fought battles had intervened, was still gratefully cherished in their heart of the recipient of the favor.”<sup>69</sup> This proves that encouragement from these Unionist women provided a different type of morale boost for these northern soldiers. It also gave reassurance, as noted by this editor, that the newspaper was doing something for the war effort.

Humor arrived to elicit a chuckle from soldiers at the expense of unpopular Union leaders. One joke was addressed towards the former US general, “Of all the glorious nations, in the east or in the west, McClellan’s resignation is the greatest and the best.”<sup>70</sup> This was written in the same issue of the paper that discusses reelection in November of 1864; the resignation spoken of is his from the election. The reelection of Lincoln was not guaranteed; even Lincoln himself believed it was likely that McClellan would end up being President in the finale of the Civil War.<sup>71</sup> The editors’ decision to mock McClellan and support Lincoln as their leader throughout the entirety of the conflict reveals to us that while much of the United States did falter away from Lincoln, it was not the case for these women. In their writing they were not afraid to mock the leaders they disliked as much as they praised the ones that they respected. The thankfulness of the editors for these soldier’s sacrifice was further emphasized with financial support.

Proceeds of the newspaper went to the U.S. Sanitary Commission, a female-led Union organization. The money given to the commission would go towards the medical relief of northern soldiers. Judith Giesberg in her study *Civil War Sisterhood: The U.S. Sanitary Commission and Women’s Politics in Transition* examines how fundraising is a political act for

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<sup>69</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, A Communication, *The Waterford News*, August 20, 1864, 4-1.

<sup>70</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, *The Waterford News* November 11, 1864, 6-2.

<sup>71</sup> James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 771.

upper/middle class women in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>72</sup> The women of Waterford reveal that the effort of fundraising for the war effort as political act did not stop at the Mason-Dixon line. As previously mentioned the editors of *The Waterford News* did not support typical women's rights movements, but this shows they did see themselves as political beings.

Other writers featured in the *Waterford News* mentioned the work of the Sanitary Commission, furthering the justification that this was the proper organization to send funds. A woman known only as Jipsie states, "the Christian and Sanitary Commissions are doing their work nobly, and I for one have cause to bless their kind hearts many, many times."<sup>73</sup> The choice to raise money for the Sanitary Commission, as opposed to another charity, reemphasizes values held by these women. The commission directly benefited the soldiers these women loved. It could also be inferred that this was done as a sign of solidarity with Union women. The newspaper was so successful that it raised \$1000 with the first two issues.<sup>74</sup>

The cause of the Civil War was clear to the editors of *The Waterford News*. The Confederates, frequently referred to as the rebels, received the brunt of the women's frustration and anger with the reality they had been thrust into. In the below quote we see the emphasis on this idea of the rebellion being "tyranny."

We know the time is long; we know we have suffered, and are likely to suffer more, but we also know some other things, viz: that the traitors of the South are the cause of the suffering, and that they cannot succeed... we cannot see how any one can be so utterly devoid of reason as to style the cause of the rebellion holy! Was it holy at first to break a sacred oath to their government, because absolute power and the right to tyrannize over all was denied them?<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> For further information on the U.S. Sanitary Commission and its role with gender and the Civil War see, Judith Giesberg, *Civil War Sisterhood: The U.S. Sanitary Commission and Women's Politics in Transition* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000).

<sup>73</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Communication, *The Waterford News*, August 20, 1864, 4-4.

<sup>74</sup> Crothers, *Quakers Living in the Lion's Mouth*, 262.

<sup>75</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Editorial, *The Waterford News*, July 2, 1864, 3-2.

Sarah, Lizzie and Lida were completely aware of the rebellion, what it symbolized, as well as what it was being fought for.<sup>76</sup> Secession from the United States was unforgivable, and the women saw both the leaders of the Confederacy, as well as its supporters, to be deluded beyond the point of reason. The idea of supporting the CSA was incomprehensible to these women.

The coverage of war news reminds us of the reality these women lived in while also reflecting their own individual perspectives. Because these editors did not have a correspondent at the warfront they were forced to reflect on the conflict based on the writings of other papers. The editors never revealed which Confederate newspapers they received their information from. So, rather than putting in a true citation, they offered a new name for those papers, “Rumors Afloat.” For these women language and rhetoric was the core aspect of *The Waterford News*. Even when deep journalism was not involved in certain columns, there was still a reflection on the attitudes and experiences of the war.

The editors were reliant on other news sources for information on the war’s progression and with this comes some discrepancy, or confusion, in some of the news reporting. The discrepancy in news reporting is shown in this column, “From ‘Rumors Afloat’ our real-lie-able Southern sheet, we cull the following consoling morsels... The ‘Yankees’ have burned to ashes the town of Martinsburg. We are most happy to state that ‘Unconditional Surrender Grant’ has taken up his headquarters in ‘Libby.’”<sup>77</sup> The specific remarks in utilizing the word “lie” shows both the humor of the editors and also the issues in reporting conflicts that were frequently changing. Martinsburg, WV was a town that was constantly fluctuating between the US and

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<sup>76</sup> The writings of Waterford citizens, both male and female, allude very little to slavery. This is the most direct reference to the Society of Friend’s opposition to the institution in Northern Virginia.

<sup>77</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Southern News, *The Waterford News*, July 2, 1864, 3-2.

CSA.<sup>78</sup> This story reported the victory of General Grant allowing for further contempt of the Confederate war effort as the women concluded the article with, “*The above needs no comment.*”<sup>79</sup> The believed failures of the Confederate army were enough for these women to feel vindicated in their support of the northern army. *The Waterford News* held significance with its local audience as well as with their northern neighbors.

### **The *Waterford News* on the National Scale**

The ultimate desire of *The Waterford News*’ editor’s ultimate desire was to use their words to support the war effort of the country they had been stripped away from. They succeeded. *The Waterford News* expanded beyond its regional significance. It spread throughout Loudoun County, into Maryland and further into the Union by friends of the paper. Some United States soldiers also maintained subscriptions to the paper after marching through Waterford and shared copies of the paper with fellow soldiers. With this, the paper became a louder piece of anti-Confederate propaganda. Examination of the broader reception of the newspaper provides a better analysis of the impact the newspaper had beyond its effect on the local population.

The most frequently referenced and supportive friend to *The Waterford News* was *The Baltimore American*. The friendship between the father of the two Dutton women and the publisher of the *Baltimore American* made the publication of the paper possible. After being smuggled into Maryland the paper would be printed and distributed originally from *The Baltimore American*’s headquarters.<sup>80</sup> The Maryland paper also highlighted the small piece of

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<sup>78</sup>Jonathan Noyales, “Martinsburg During the Civil War,” Encyclopedia Virginia, October 27, 2015, [https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Martinsburg\\_Virginia\\_During\\_the\\_Civil\\_War#start\\_entry](https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Martinsburg_Virginia_During_the_Civil_War#start_entry)

<sup>79</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Southern News, *The Waterford News*, July 2, 1864, 3-2.

<sup>80</sup> Crothers, *Quakers Living in the Lion’s Mouth*, 261.

journalism, and was called “the tried and true friend of the loyal people of Loudoun.”<sup>81</sup> The *Baltimore American* wrote of *The Waterford News*, “The News is small in size, but large in its loyalty and devotion to the old flag. Its editors, ‘Sarah, Lizzie and Lida’ are brave, warm-hearted Union girls, and the contents of the little sheet, all original, show considerable talent, and are varied and piquant. The News is a production that loyal old Loudoun may be proud of.”<sup>82</sup> By communicating the goals of *The Waterford News* to a larger audience the editors’ words were spread above the secession line. *The Baltimore American* was not the only paper to highlight the small communal paper. The women also mentioned the *Virginia State Journal* and *Bucks County Intelligencer* endorsing their paper.<sup>83</sup> As this newspaper became renowned within and outside of Northern Virginia it exposes the deeper impact of not just how the Waterford community endorsed this unionism, but how it was accepted and praised in other areas of the country.

An anonymous writer wrote into *The Waterford News* from Alexandria, VA on the impact of the newspaper in other areas of the state. The author, a volunteer at local hospitals, told of the newspaper’s influence on the morale of the United States soldiers he came into contact with, “the name of your loyal town is sweet to many a Union soldier; and I have found when visiting the hospitals, where lay side by side upon their narrow cots... many whose thoughts reverted to the kindly welcome that greeted them when tired and hungry they halted to rest; and a tear of gratitude would sparkle neath the drooping eyelid.”<sup>84</sup> Loyalty received from southern women, whose support was unexpected, provided a sense of relief and joy to exhausted soldiers.

Another anonymous writer from Pennsylvania, a civilian, revealed the impact of the editors writing. He stated,

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<sup>81</sup> Dutton, Dutton and Steer, *The Waterford News*, August 20, 1864, 4-3.

<sup>82</sup> Dutton, Dutton and Steer, *The Waterford News*, August 20, 1864, 4-3.

<sup>83</sup> Dutton, Dutton, and Steer, Thanks, *The Waterford News*, August 20, 1864, 4-2.

<sup>84</sup> Dutton, Dutton, and Steer, Communication, *The Waterford News*, October 15, 1864, 5-3.

your neat, interesting, and loyal little paper has just reached me, and affords me much pleasure to know the Old Dominion has produced three young ladies, who are thus fearless as well as so fully capable to advocate the principles so near and dear to all good, loyal people, and this, too, within reach of the torch of the rebel incendiary. All this requires a nerve not common to your sex.<sup>85</sup>

Despite its clear sexist language, the final sentence provides a further window into the way these women transcended typical gender norms. Lizzie, Lida and Sarah were exempt, to some extent, from this soldier's understanding of women. The soldier sees women as weak and passive, but the work of *The Waterford News* complicates his understanding of southern women. Sarah, Lizzie and Lida's choice to utilize their gifts and publish this newspaper showed the true ability of women otherwise ignored by this soldier.

## Conclusion

The ability to write, edit and export a newspaper is a difficult task for anyone, let alone for three women in their twenties within a country that was going through a Civil War. These women, while in a loving community, were not wealthy and were not privileged to the elite education of their traditionally southern wealthier neighbors. They were constantly othered for their beliefs rooted in religious differences. The women were ostracized before the Civil War, and even more once they began to publish a Unionist newspaper. Regardless of all of these difficulties the newspaper still exists. That alone is significant.

The text of *The Waterford News* provides a window into the lives of citizens in ostracized communities. Micro/local newspapers like *The Waterford News* are not examined in either Civil War journalism, humor and gender studies. But focusing on this paper for what it was, as well as what it was not, provides greater clarity as to what was valued by small communities, in this case

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<sup>85</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Communication, *The Waterford News*, January 28, 1865, 7-3.

Waterford, Virginia. In their educations, religion and circumstances Lida, Lizzie and Sarah were provided with tools that made the production of this news possible. The Civil War created an arena for *The Waterford News* but it was Lizzie, Lida and Sarah who chose to utilize the tools they possessed.

The newspaper provides a public lens into what was valued by these women. The examination of how this newspaper and its contents were fostered by community and identity will be further explored in the next two chapters. Lizzie, Lida, and Sarah were just three women of the larger community who held passionate unionist sentiments. Loyalty for the United States, as well as grappling with their personal understanding of what it meant to be a Virginian in the CSA forced these women to reevaluate their personal identities. The attack Waterford found itself under strengthened the loyalty the women already held for their small community. Examination of how the idea of being from Waterford, from Virginia, and the from United States influenced the way these women experienced the Civil War, as well as how that loyalty fluctuated, will be discussed in the following chapter.

## Chapter II:

### “The Once Proud ‘Old Dominion:’” The Women of Waterford, Virginia and the United States

When Virginia seceded from the United States and joined the Confederacy the women of Waterford came into their new reality as hostages of a government that they did not respect or feel any loyalty to. The loss of the United States forced them to reevaluate where their loyalty lied. Allegiances strengthened, continued, or weakened. Historians tend to examine the people they study with an emphasis on one aspect of the their identity or association. Further examination into what these separate affiliations are, in addition to how they interact with each other, improves the historical understanding of each individual.

Because the residents of Waterford were ostracized in the greater Northern Virginia community, they become insular and self-sustaining. In his study of Northern Virginia Quakers Glenn Crothers describes this isolation in this way,

Friends faced censure and repression as white northern Virginians closed ranks in defense of their cultural and social traditions. White Virginians’ changing attitudes toward local Friends provides one measure of the process by which white northern Virginians became ‘southern’... white Virginians came to see once tolerated and even respected Friends as pariahs who threatened their racial and cultural solidarity.<sup>86</sup>

In other words, the members of this community were forced to create a unique identity. The affiliations these women hold, and the degree to which they exert attachment to them, will be at the core of this chapter.

When eleven southern states seceded from the United States and created the Confederate States of America these women rejected the new Confederate nationalism. Historians, have

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<sup>86</sup> Crothers, *Quakers Living in the Lion’s Mouth*, 5.



studied how this Confederate nationalism was established and fostered during the conflict.<sup>87</sup> Some focus on how insular communities rejected the Confederate identity thrust upon them.<sup>88</sup> Yet there has been little scholarship on how different identities influenced one other.

The only examination of Southern Quaker women, taking into consideration gender and religion's role on unionist sentiment, is a chapter in Victoria Bynum's *The Long Shadow of the Civil War: Southern Dissent and its Legacies*. Bynum notes gender and religious views but focuses on military occupation and violence by Confederates during the Civil War.<sup>89</sup> Bynum examines the violent results of resistance for Quaker women in the North Carolina belt. While important, this frames Quaker women as reactive to violence rather than proactive in asserting their unionist affiliations. Due to the violence perpetrated against these women there was also less opportunity for these North Carolina women to enter the national stage through a public forum like a newspaper.

Citizenship and pride in the United States, in Virginia and in Waterford affiliations are clear in the writing of these Northern Virginia women. Loyalty was not just a topic for the consumption of others; it was a topic of frequent discussion amongst the individuals in both letters and diaries. These affiliations were not separated. Each affiliation influenced another. The understanding of one's adherence to this aspect of identity shifts as the war progresses. As the

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<sup>87</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983); William Blair, *Virginia's Private War: Feeding Body and Soul in the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Judkin Browning, *Shifting Loyalties: The Union Occupation of Eastern North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: the University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Drew Gilpin Faust *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism*; David Potter, "The Historian's Use of Nationalism and Vice-Versa," *American Historian Review* 67: 924-950; Paul Quigley, *Shifting Grounds: Nationalism and the American South, 1848-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Aaron Sheehan-Dean, *Why Confederates Fought: Family and Nation in Civil War Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

<sup>88</sup> Bynum, *The Free State of Jones*, Bynum, *The Long Shadow of the Civil War*, Dyer, *The Union Circle in Confederate Atlanta*, McKenzie, *Lincolmites and Rebels*, McKnight, *Contested Borderland*, Myers, *Rebels Against the Confederacy*, Storey, *Loyalty and Loss*, Sutherland, *Guerrillas, Unionists, and Violence and the Confederate Home Front*.

<sup>89</sup> Bynum, *The Long Shadow of the Civil War*, 37.

Civil War progressed we see when these women became Americans more than Virginians. Examining what each of these allegiances were and why they were important is essential in understanding how the women experienced the Civil War.

### **United States Citizens**

Loyalty to the United States superseded convictions to a new government in the CSA or the home state of Virginia for the women of Waterford. Unionism was the core of the *Waterford News* and played a role in much of the personal writing between the members of the small town. The newspaper editors, as well as other community members, saw themselves as prisoners or “slaves”<sup>90</sup> to the Confederate government. This idea influenced the language used in all writings as women expressed their frustration with the Confederacy and their loss of home in the United States. The United States was at the center of their lives. In the first edition of *The Waterford News* the women penned, “Our yards are very showy now,/ With flowers of every hue;/ But, best of all, we love to blend/ The Red, the White, the Blue- UNION.”<sup>91</sup> Love of the United States was at the core of their wartime experience.

Abraham Lincoln was a key feature of every edition of *The Waterford News* and became the editor’s personification of the United States. In the first column the editors penned a poem to the beloved president, “The one who lets not foul deceit/ Him from his honor swerve;/ Or Treason’s dark unseemly form/ Affect his steady nerve/... The fathers, brothers, give your aid/ To him, our country’s pride, And show the world an *honest* man/ is still to be our guide.”<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> In many newspaper articles, diaries and letters the use of the term slave is directly applied to the citizens of Waterford. The editors do not use it as hyperbole. The use of it appears to be reflective of their genuine feelings.

<sup>91</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Gem, *The Waterford News*, May 28, 1864, 1-1.

<sup>92</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Original, *The Waterford News*, June 11, 1864, 2-1. The honest line emphasized the reputation Abraham Lincoln had as being honest Abe.

Lincoln was not just an emancipation figure to African Americans and the enslaved of Virginia, but also those who felt enslaved by the Confederacy due to their Unionist sentiment.<sup>93</sup>

Lida Dutton wrote to President Lincoln in April of 1864, one month before the publication of *The Waterford News*. She wrote to her President as a way to both assert her loyalty to the United States and ask for help for her damaged community. She begins by explaining to the President how much he is loved by her, “Will it be deemed presumption for a Dixie Girl (Dixie by name never by nature) to address a letter to one you respect and honor nearly as much as her loving parents?” In her opening lines she wants to demonstrate her loyalty to the man and with strong and genuine language to explain to her hero how much he means to her. She concluded the letter again, reasserting to *her* president where her family’s loyalties lay, “I am glad to say they hate him [John Dutton] cordially. There are many ‘Friends’ in our neighborhood, but the organ of combativeness is pretty strongly developed in us all, particularly in my Father’s daughter.”<sup>94</sup> Lida holds a sense of pride in being hated by the Confederacy and uses that as a way to remind Lincoln that there were loyal citizens even within the Confederate borders.

The letter to Lincoln had a larger goal beyond convincing Lincoln of her community’s loyalties. She explained to the president what was happening to loyal US citizens just 45 miles from his capital,

I just felt that if thee knew the people of Loudoun County generally and Waterford-particularly- how true and unwavering they have ever been in their love for their Country and the dear old flag; how cruelly they have been treated by the Rebels because of that devotion thee would not let them suffer still more by what they feel assured is a mistake.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Varon, *Appomattox: Victory, Defeat and Freedom*.

<sup>94</sup> Lida Dutton to Abraham Lincoln, April 14, 1864, John B Dutton collection, Waterford Foundation Archives, Waterford, VA.

<sup>95</sup> Lida Dutton to Abraham Lincoln, April 14, 1864.

Lincoln had just put in place a blockade between Loudoun County and the nearby Maryland border cutting off the people of Waterford from the supplies in their guerilla war zone. Lida and the people of Waterford believed the conditions they were in during the war could be rectified from their former government.

The love of Lincoln was perhaps hereditary as shown through a letter from John Dutton, father of Lizzie and Lida. John wrote to the youngest Dutton daughter Anna, “the reelection of Lincoln will show the people of the South that we intend to put down the rebellion; to be one country. No division is the watchword- The Union- the whole Union, and nothing but the Union is the determination of the people.”<sup>96</sup> For John Dutton, and many others, the end of the Civil War was largely integrated into the reelection of the President.<sup>97</sup> John Dutton later elaborated on his appreciation of the president, “I was not in favor of the elevation of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency four years ago. I thought him a man of very ordinary qualifications; I have changed my opinion & now think he is the most suitable man to push on the great work of crushing this rebellion.”<sup>98</sup> Lincoln was a man who gained the respect of the Dutton family. While this family supported the United States from the outset of the war, this reflects how war intensified preexisting sentiments. The rebellion had to be squashed, and the loss of the leader they had grown to love would have meant a loss of the war.

*The Waterford News* also intended to uplift Lincoln’s morale. The women endorsed the reelection of Lincoln in their October edition of the paper pleading to their Northern friends to

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<sup>96</sup> John Dutton to Anna Dutton, October 25, 1864, in “*To Talk is Treason*”: *Quakers of Waterford, Virginia on Life, Love, Death & War in the Southern Confederacy*, ed. Divine, Sounders, Sounders (Waterford, Waterford Foundation Inc, 1996) 88.

<sup>97</sup> For more on the 1864 election see David Johnson, *Decided on the Battlefield: Grant, Sherman, Lincoln and the Election of 1864* (Amherst: Prometheus Book, 2012); John Waugh, *Reelecting Lincoln: The Battle for the 1864 Presidency* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1997).

<sup>98</sup> John Dutton to Anna Dutton, October 25, 1864, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 88.

vote for him, “We have heard some say, ‘he *may* be a good man, but he is with the *wrong* party,’ and we hope that our friends and readers will take care and at the coming election cast their votes for the *one* whom we are sure is with the *right* party and the *right Platform*.”<sup>99</sup> To these women, those who were not trapped within the border of the Confederate States had an obligation to reelect the president.

The joy of Lincoln’s reelection appeared in the next edition of *The Waterford News*, “The president of our choice having been triumphantly elected... we hope soon to see our state relieved from the oppression that now enthrals her, and that she with her unequalled resources, may be made to take her place proper among the states of the Union.”<sup>100</sup> The latter half of 1864 predicted an end to the war of Confederate surrender, so long as Lincoln was at the helm of the United States. Lincoln became the embodiment of the Union which the editors missed so deeply. They saw Virginia as a clear part of the United States that had been abducted by a rival government. The reunification of the United States those in Waterford meant the defeat of their Southern neighbors.

As the end of the war drew near the editors wrote, “we cannot help but think the good time is *almost here*, when we can once again be under the protection of *the best Government in the world*, which we always loved, but never sufficiently appreciated until we were deprived of its protecting influences by the hands of traitors.”<sup>101</sup> Despite the approach of the end of the war Unionist sentiments were always at the center of the newspaper’s goals. The loyalty these women felt towards the United States was maintained throughout the entirety of the war, but as the conflict progressed we can see the attachment to “the best government in the world” grow.

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<sup>99</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Editorial, *The Waterford News*, October 14, 1864, 5-2. The 1864 election was tumultuous as former Union General George McClellan ran against Lincoln as mentioned earlier in the column by the editors.

<sup>100</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Editorial, *The Waterford News* November 11, 1864, 6-2.

<sup>101</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Editorial, *The Waterford News*, April 3, 1865, 8-2.

The Confederate surrender at Appomattox should have brought relief to the Unionists of Waterford. The events that followed a few days later, however, broke the morale of the small community. Rebecca Williams in her April 16th 1865 diary entry revealed the painful contradictory feelings brought by the end of the war,

The war has gone on- the blood of many thousands shed on many a battlefield- and we earnestly hoped that peace would be restored... this morning the astounding news of the assassination of our President- the Nation's idol. Tremendous is the blow to our distracted country and what the consequence will be no eye can see. Ten days ago on account of Lee's surrender every countenance was joyous, today all looks shrouded in gloom.<sup>102</sup>

The raw emotionality of this entry emphasizes the difficulty of peace that was brought on with the death of Lincoln. The death of Lincoln remained on the mind of Rebecca for some time. She wrote a week later on the 23rd of April, "no event of the war has shaken the heart of the people to such extent as Lincoln's death. Like Moses he had led the country through much difficulty & man7 trials & was permitted even a glimpse of that promised land, but not to reach it."<sup>103</sup>

Lincoln was a symbol of deliverance, like that of Moses, to those in Waterford who suffered.

The death of Lincoln turned the celebration of the war's end into a time of extended horror and suffering.<sup>104</sup>

Lida Dutton had a unique connection to the death of Lincoln. Her future husband, John Hutchinson a Union soldier, wrote her nine days after the assassination. "We have lost our beloved and honored President... In one short night the whole country was mourning the loss of its most honored patriot, and the second father of his country. And what was the cause of of this

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<sup>102</sup> Rebecca Williams, diary entry, April 16, 1865, in "*To Talk is Treason*," 98.

<sup>103</sup> Rebecca Williams, diary entry, April 23, 1865, in "*To Talk is Treason*." Lincoln was often attributed to religious figures after his death, especially due to his death on Good Friday.

<sup>104</sup> The reaction of Rebecca Williams expands the common knowledge of how people mourned Lincoln, and adds a fuller understanding to how some in the South processed this grief. For more information on how individuals processed the death of Lincoln see Martha Hodes, *Mourning Lincoln*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016).

unholy and foul deed. For my part I cannot see how any man could murder such a good man as Abraham Lincoln.”<sup>105</sup> The assassination of Lincoln was more personal to Hutchinson than just being in Washington DC that fateful night. He claims to have been in Ford’s Theatre and witnessed the President’s death.

I was at the theater the night of the assassination with a friend, a captain in my reg’nt. I saw the President when he came in the house was one continuous roar for several minutes. He turned and bowed to the audience. I saw the assassin when he jumped on the stage. I would know him if I ever saw him again. Everybody was so completely surprised that the assassin was allowed to escape.<sup>106</sup>

The helplessness and anger comes through Hutchinson’s reflection on the event. He saw Booth as a man who disrupted the entire country and destroyed the idea of peace. He also exposes the confusion felt by all in the country; no one knew how to bring the country back together without the assistance of their leader.

The small town of Waterford, despite the loss of their beloved leader, was still required to move on. Rebecca Williams explained how the community was choosing to reestablish their autonomy: “there was a meeting of the Loyal Men of Loudoun in our meeting house- about 300- to organize some system whereby civil law might be established again in our disorderly community.”<sup>107</sup> Those who maintained loyalty to the United States were heavily involved with their assimilation back into the country. Williams’ diary ends with her reflection on the American flag raised and stores being reopened, “The Flag was raised in our town as an emblem of peace and safety. A pleasant sight... it seems like the good old times before the war.”<sup>108</sup> The

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<sup>105</sup> John Hutchinson to Lida Dutton, April 24, 1865, John Dutton Collection, Waterford Foundation Archives, Waterford, VA.

<sup>106</sup> John Hutchinson to Lida Dutton, April 24, 1865, John Dutton Collection.

<sup>107</sup> Rebecca Williams, diary entry, April 30, 1865, in *“To Talk is Treason,”* 98.

<sup>108</sup> Rebecca Williams, diary entry, May 14, 1865, *“To Talk is Treason,”* 98. Her choice to capitalize the “F” in flag emphasizes her decision to view the United States as the only true flag.

ability to raise a United States flag without fear of assault allowed Waterford to accept a new peace in the region. The small town could now feel secure in their returned home.

### **The Virginian**

Despite the secession of Virginia into the Confederacy women maintained an allegiance to what they thought the “true Virginia” was. There was mourning over the loss of their home state and its new allegiances emphasizing the emotional state of Southern Unionists and the loss of “home.” Virginia did not join the first wave of secession along with the deeper South. After secession of the first seven lower south states Virginia held a secession convention to debate the direction Virginia would take in terms of joining the Confederacy or remaining in the Union. The election of 1860 revealed that Loudoun County maintained its Whig roots which were divided between Republicans and Democrats after the war began. Northern Virginia, particularly its Quaker regions, voted against the secession of the state into the Confederacy.<sup>109</sup> Votes against secession were not received well by those who deeply supported the Confederacy. Historian Daniel Crofts revived the story of one young man from Loudoun who was devout to the United States and refused to vote for secession. After casting his ballot Amasa Hough swam across the Potomac as a refugee fearful of the punishment that he may have been given.<sup>110</sup> He realized he would be punished for his loyalty to the United States.

In an ad written by Steer and Schooley, two prominent businessmen of Waterford, they expressed frustration with the political leaders of Virginia and call upon the citizens of the state, “The unfortunate state of affairs that now exists in the country demands the serious consideration

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<sup>109</sup> This idea is further enforced in Crothers *Quakers Living in the Lion's Mouth* and he illustrates how Unionist sentiments in the secession convention were rooted in Quaker communities, 243.

<sup>110</sup> Crofts, *Reluctant Confederates*, 347.



of the people of Virginia how they can best restore peace to the country, and stay the effusion of blood... Let us unite- not only to maintain the honor, but the industrial pursuits of Virginia.”<sup>111</sup>

The idea of honor was a theme in the ideals of both Unionists and Confederates as they remember the role of Virginia in the history of the country. For Confederate sympathizers like General Robert Lee loyalty to Virginia superseded loyalty to the United States.<sup>112</sup> Steer and Schooley exposed that this was not the universal way of thinking: being a Virginian and being a member of the United States were intertwined. Saving the state from death and destruction was in the best interest of the state as a whole.

In their newspaper The women framed the loss of Virginia as a death they were forced to mourn. The loss of Virginia was both of home and of neighbors, “No! And our banner, once the pride/And boast of every true Virginian,/ Now trampled under the feet that bear./ The impress of Old Jeff’s dominion.”<sup>113</sup> Regardless of their ostracization there was still a great deal of sadness attributed to the loss of their Virginian neighbors. Lizzie, Lida, and Sarah held their neighbors accountable for the state of their community and its misfortune. With anger they penned, “Can we forget the ones whose hearts/ are blackened by those deeds of madness-/ once cherished as our neighbors-now/ the cause of all this gloom and sadness?”<sup>114</sup> To the women of Waterford, reunification of the country was the only realistic ending to the war. And with that they found themselves thinking about something few had considered at this point in history: what was the reconciliation of the country going to look like?

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<sup>111</sup> James Steer and Reuben Schooley, advertisement, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 25.

<sup>112</sup> McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 281.

<sup>113</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Original, *The Waterford News*, May 28 1864, 1-1.

<sup>114</sup> Dutton, Dutton Steer, Original, *The Waterford News*, May 28 1864, 1-1.

Anger with their neighbors was expressed in many forms of writing. Mollie Dutton wrote her sweetheart Frank Steer, one of the Waterford men who found refuge in Maryland, on the current state of affairs of Waterford in the Spring of 1862.

Oh! These Virginians worse by far than the South Carolinians themselves- and the Mississippian soldiers have expressed astonishment for their behavior. They come they say to protect and do nothing but destroy. Oh? Deliver me from this Southern Confederacy! We are the sorriest slaves that have ever trod the earth. To talk is Treason. To act, Rebellion, our every movement watched by the villian set- mean, contemptible men. Thee knows who I mean, dear Frank, and they might kill me if they would before I would sympathize in their cause.<sup>115</sup>

The women of Waterford, despite the clear differences between themselves and the elite Virginians surrounding them, felt a deeper sense of betrayal from their former neighbors. These women considered themselves slaves to this rebel government, and as they were trapped within that government they only became further rooted in their convictions. In 1862 Mollie saw Virginians as the enemy; they were no longer lost neighbors. These soldiers did not bring the deliverance they claimed, only destruction for Waterford.

The eighth and final edition of *The Waterford News* included the most passionate writings of the editors as they reflected on the state that they had loved so much. In one column an anonymous author writes into the newspaper under “Union Lover” describing the physical toll that the state of Virginia was under due to the conflict. “Union Lover” wrote of a federal soldier who mourned the lost beauty of Virginia.

“Might not the war have been over had our old State stood firmly by the Union?... Think of the destruction of noble forests, and of fields of grain-the necessary food of man and beast. Even the lofty and bold mountains are in many localities somewhat changed, their beauty consequently marred. The Potomac rolls on as majestically as ever, but no doubt some of the smaller streams have been made less beautiful. How painful the contemplation of this is.”<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Mollie Dutton to Frank Steer, March 1862, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 37.

<sup>116</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, “It Comes Pretty Near Destroying Nature,” *The Waterford News*, April 3, 1865, 8-2.

The imagery in this writing reflects the physical beauty of Loudoun county which is just on the outskirts of the Appalachian Mountains. The Civil War was devastating to Virginia's landscape.<sup>117</sup> This destruction created an additional physical reminder of the death these women processed in the loss of their home state to their enemy neighbors.

Virginia as "home" changed as the war progressed. In the last issue the end of the war showed the final culmination of the editors sentiments: they were no longer Virginians, but Americans. Just six days before General Lee surrendered to Grant a women wrote into the newspaper exclaiming,

'The Old Dominion!' how my heart once thrilled at the sound of her name, and I was proud to say I am a Virginian, for where could be found such genuine and freely offered hospitality, or where beat warmer, truer and more patriotic hearts than this, our once great and noble State, could boast; this once the hot-bed of loyalty, from wic have been transplanted many of the great men of the nation. But alas! For her greatness, it seems to have departed forever.<sup>118</sup>

The editors saw the Virginia they had loved was gone. To these editors, Virginia, a place of American pride, was kidnapped by traitors who rejected the true greatness of the state and it could not be revived. The primary goal of the Unionist "little sheet" was solidified; the women would be Unionists first.

Lizzie Dutton wrote a poem to her sister and fellow editor Lida after the surrender of General Lee. Lizzie sends wishes to Lida, wishing Lida could join her in Maryland to celebrate the unification of the Union. Lizzie teases her sister, exposing a contempt for their Virginian identity. "But I really think you'd rather,/ save your old "Virginia pride."/ Instead of coming here to shout,/ Have me at 'Sunnyside'<sup>119</sup>/ To sing and laugh and comment/ as much as e'er we

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<sup>117</sup> For more information on the physical toil of the Civil War on the country see Megan Kate Nelson, *Ruin a Nation: Destruction and the American Civil War*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012).

<sup>118</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Virginia, *The Waterford News*, April 3, 1865, 8-3.

<sup>119</sup> Sunnyside was the affectionate name given to the home of the Dutton's.

please/ Upon the last brave exploit/ of our gallant F.F.V.'s.[First Families of Virginia]”<sup>120</sup> Lizzie is clearly ecstatic over the defeat of their neighbors, turned enemies. To the Dutton sisters, the defeat of these families was warranted, because of their betrayal of the country that these women held so dear. Virginia pride was no longer something the sisters held with affection, but rather something they mocked and denied.

### **Waterford Community Members**

Waterford’s insular nature from the greater Loudoun County the community as a whole truly represented home to these women. As mentioned previously, one of the central goals of the *Waterford News* was to record what was happening in the community of Waterford as it experienced the war in order to preserve its war history and send this information to refugee community members. These women exerted a level of pride for being a part of this ostracized community.

Waterford, named after the home of its Irish founders, was a small settlement in Loudoun County, only forty-five miles from Washington D.C.<sup>121</sup> Waterford was not the only Quaker community in this area of Northern Virginia, with Goose Creek only 10 miles to the southwest. The Quakers of Waterford were the first to settle the Loudoun region of Northern Virginia yet thrived as a community despite their isolation from other major communities. The exceptional farmland led to further competition between the Quakers and their Anglican neighbors.<sup>122</sup> Northern Virginia Quakers experienced their own religious civil war in 1828. The Society of

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<sup>120</sup> Lizzie Dutton to Lida Dutton, April 12 1865, Waterford Foundation Archives, Waterford, VA. The “gallant FFV’s” were the First Families of Virginia, the richest and most invested in the Confederate States.

<sup>121</sup> Head, *History and Comprehensive Description of Loudoun County Virginia*, 73. While this monograph is not fully reliable due to its clear Lost Cause rhetoric it is useful for basic understanding of simple facts.

<sup>122</sup> Crothers, *Quakers in the Lion’s Mouth*, 11.

Friends faced trouble as a dissatisfied leader felt Quakers had lost allegiance to the true tenants of their beliefs. Dispute over slavery and embracing abolition resulted in a split between the Orthodox Quakers and the Hicksites.<sup>123</sup> Many Northern Virginia Quakers left the region after this split which disrupted the previous cohesion and relationships among the Northern Virginian quaker communities.<sup>124</sup> This was the Waterford, Virginia that Lizzie Dutton, Lida Dutton and Sarah Steer were born into, and that shaped their lives.

The Waterford area of Loudoun maintained its loyalty to the Union despite the massive support for the Confederacy after secession in Loudoun County. The loyalty to the Union was not isolated to just the Quakers but also to strongholds of German immigrants.<sup>125</sup> Rebecca Williams of Waterford wrote on April 25th in her diary her disapproval of the secession convention and the withdrawal from the Union: “rainy morning in a state of feverish excitement on account of the deplorable condition of our beloved country with every prospect of war and its horrors- disruption of the Union- too terrible to think of.”<sup>126</sup> As secession grew closer on May 12th she wrote, “the unhappy state of the country absorbs our thoughts and feelings. No prospect of settlement without suffering and loss of life- No unity.”<sup>127</sup> Issues of secession and the loss of the United States stayed on the mind of Rebecca Williams as she realized her community was about to be further ostracized. She wrote of the fresh division of Northern Virginia, “A large majority in the precinct for the Union but in other parts whole bodies of troops have been taken to the polls to vote for disunion and Union men have been intimidated & many have left the

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<sup>123</sup> For further information on the Hicksite divide see H. Larry Ingle’s *Quakers in Conflict: The Hicksite Reformation* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1986).

<sup>124</sup> Crothers *Quakers Living in the Lion’s Mouth*, 170.

<sup>125</sup> Head, *History and Comprehensive Description of Loudoun County Virginia*, 73.

<sup>126</sup> Rebecca Williams, diary entry, April 25, 1861, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 24.

<sup>127</sup> Rebecca Williams, diary entry, May 12, 1861, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 24.

state. How long will such tyranny & anarchy prevail?"<sup>128</sup> To Rebecca's dismay, this anarchy would consume the next four years of her community's life.

The women of Waterford took an artistic approach to their sense of home. Mary Dutton Steer reflected on her home in her old age, "Dear little town of Waterford/ Among the hills it lies-/ the mountains blue- ever in view/ Just match the changing skies/ ... But later on, our father built/ A 'Yankee Cottage' small./ It was indeed a happy home,/ And dearly prized by all."<sup>129</sup> The word choice in this poem clearly reflects the moods and understanding that these women knew of their cultural isolation, despite being Virginians they were grouped with the "yankees." This was written when Mary was in the twilight years of her life as she reexamined her time as a young adult in Waterford. What we do know from this is what she deemed worth remembering and reflecting on.

Female and male reaction to this secession within the community came in different forms. Two residents of Waterford, James Steer and Reuben Schooley, penned their frustrations in regards to their businesses:

We much desire that agriculturists may not let the excitement that now prevails deter them from having their implements of husbandry put in order for service. We are prepared and will do it, so long as the people of Virginia will sustain us. (Providence permitting) That peace and prosperity may speedily be restored, to our now distracted country, is our most ardent desire.<sup>130</sup>

Secession did not just mean the loss of their home to what was, in their eyes, a foreign country, but also had implications for the livelihoods of these prominent community members as business owners.<sup>131</sup> Waterford was set apart from the slaveholding culture of the rest of Virginia because

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<sup>128</sup> Rebecca Williams, diary entry, May 20, 1861, in "*To Talk is Treason*," 24.

<sup>129</sup> Mary Dutton Steer, "Early Memories," 1928, in *The Poetry of Mary Dutton Steer and Family (1836-1928) Collection*, The Waterford Foundation Archives, Waterford, VA.

<sup>130</sup> James Steer and Reuben Schooley, advertisement, in "*To Talk is Treason*," 25.

<sup>131</sup> James Steer, father of Sarah Steer one of the editors of the *The Waterford News* was a blacksmith and Reuben Schooley was a wheelwright and they owned a business together in Waterford. Divine, Souders, Souders, ed. *To*

of their abolitionist doctrine and did not see the appeal of treason to the larger United States in order to protect the institution.

The trials of Loudoun County spread beyond the communities it directly affected. The *Baltimore American* relayed the trials of the nearby county, “The reign of terror in Loudoun County is at its height. Notices of a militia muster for to-day were given on Saturday when citizens were told to be ready to be drafted into the militia.”<sup>132</sup> The article further elaborates on the escape of men from the community in addition to the desire to stop them by Confederate forces. While it is important to understand what was happening to this intimate and insular community it is also necessary to understand how it was perceived by its northern neighbors.

The Dutton family as a whole made the community of Waterford notable to those passing through. A United States soldier from Michigan relayed his experience entering the “blue” region of the enemy South. He remembered his experience years later in a memoir, “Waterford was the home of Capt. Means... also a very home indeed to us blue coats, especially at the hospitable home of John B Dutton, with his happy greeting, his estimable wife, (now dead), his sprightly and loveable daughters, all married now and doing well, and his manly son, James, who was in the army, Quaker as he was.”<sup>133</sup> United States soldiers acknowledged the convictions traditionally held by Quakers when it came to pacifism, and respected them for their willingness to compromise for the greater good of the United States.

Despite the pacifism inherent in the Society of Friends, male citizens had a variety of perspectives on the situation. Pacifism and exodus were not the only options for the male

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*Talk is Treason*, 25. Waterford, along with the surrounding Loudoun County, did not participate heavily in the slave institution and so these businesses were a core aspect of the community’s success.

<sup>132</sup> Divine, Sounders, Sounders, *To Talk is Treason*, 26.

<sup>133</sup> Albert S Hunter of First Maryland Potomac Home Brigade Company C, John B Dutton Collection, Waterford Foundation Archives, Waterford, VA.

Quakers of Waterford. For some peace was compromised to take the Unionist sentiments to a more radical extent. Frustrated with the climate they were forced into, some Quaker men, along with their German and Scots-Irish cohorts, compromised their pacifism and formed a federal regiment, Company B. The company was ill-trained due to its Ranger status and was unable to do much beyond defend its small community and supply intelligence to official Union armies. The company never recruited very successfully but exposes that deeply felt Unionist sentiments overcame a religious doctrine.<sup>134</sup> Lida Dutton in her letter to Abraham Lincoln, previously mentioned, mentioned the service of her brother in the Loudoun Rangers. She reasserted that these men were United Soldiers in their heart, if unable to join an official Union regiment.

Loudoun County's proximity to the United States, regardless of being in the Confederacy, affected the interactions with soldiers of either affiliation. From 1863 to the end of the conflict Loudoun was a region dominated by guerilla warfare, beginning with the occupation of Colonel Mosby, a hero to the Confederacy and enemy of the Unionists.<sup>135</sup> While a thorn in the side of the Quakers in the beginning, it only became worse. *The Waterford News* reflects on the impact of Colonel Mosby's tactics on the community.

Many threats have been made about burning our houses over our devoted heads; but Waterford is still standing, and we trust it may stand long in the future to remind other generations that in its-time honored walls once dwelt as true lovers of the their country as every breathed the breath of life-long-suffering but *faithful to the end*.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Crothers, *Quakers Living in the Lion's Mouth*, and Head, *History and Comprehensive Description of Loudoun County Virginia*, 252-326.

<sup>135</sup> Crothers, *Quakers Living in the Lion's Mouth*, 252. More works on Colonel Mosby and his role as a guerilla in Northern Virginia are listed in footnote 55.

<sup>136</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, New Column, *The Waterford News*, July 2, 1864, 3-3. The editors of the *Waterford News* were right, and Waterford continues to stand tall. Waterford, VA is a historically preserved town and maintains protection.



To the editors of *The Waterford News* it was clear as to why their community was being harassed; because they were loyal to the United States. The pillaging of Waterford went beyond confiscation of food and supplies that the Confederate troops found necessary. It was intensified to destruction of the Union citizens property, emphasizing the hatred between the community and the country they felt occupied by.

### **Conclusion**

When Virginia officially seceded from the United States and war began the lives of Waterford citizens were disrupted. There would be moments of peace but largely a new life and understanding of themselves that had to be reconciled as they experienced this new “slavery” to the Confederate States of America. Attachments to the United States, Virginian and Waterford were deeply felt and analyzed by those who held them. As the war progressed understanding of what these convictions were transformed. To be a citizen of the United States became a label of pride for the women. To be a Virginian became a point of contempt that must be overcome and begins to be drenched with shame. Throughout the war these women had to reconcile what these identities were as they interacted with more personal aspects of themselves.

How Lizzie, Lida and Sarah understood themselves as Americans, Virginians, and as patriots of their small town influenced the way they experienced the Civil War. All three of these aspects of themselves existed before the war began and were transformed as the conflict continued. Unionism was not something created out of the secession of Virginia, it just became something dangerous to attach oneself to. The community they lived in had always been set apart by their neighbors. In the war acceptance, and later pride in this ostracization, intensified.

The destruction of the country created a new way of living within the United States. For these women, while they maintained their convictions in their own beliefs, the war forced them to reevaluate and adjust the interpersonal relationships they held. The interpersonal relationships had within the community and visiting soldiers were adjusted to fit within the wartime environment. In these relationships the roots of the affiliations these women had to their larger communities, as well as their capabilities as editors, are further explored and understood.

### Chapter III:

#### “Hurrah for the girl who hurrahs for the Union:” The Daughter, Sister and Sweetheart

The community of Waterford was a small group of 400 people, set apart as alien to the greater Virginian culture due to its religious beliefs. This in turn created a tight knit community that experienced the American Civil War drastically different than neighboring communities. Rebecca Williams wrote of the imminent secession and she showed the intrinsic ties between the issues of the nation and the lives of these community members. She wrote of secession, “the unhappy state of the country absorbs our thoughts & feelings. No prospect of settlement without suffering & loss of life- No unity,” and immediately transitioned to community updates, “Emma Dutton and John to tea. Rachel French gave birth to twins.”<sup>137</sup> Both the national and the personal merited equal value for Waterford citizens. To best understand how this insular community lived their Civil War experience there needs to be an understanding of these types of relationships. As the women of Waterford navigated their lives amid the disruption of chaotic war their relationships expose what is both changed and maintained. These women maintained life as they saw fit, regardless of the war around them.

The women of Waterford were in a symbiotic relationship in their community with its residents and visitors. It is important to focus on this idea of symbiosis while examining these women and the men around them. As mentioned previously Civil War narratives have a focus on “war first” and with what followed as reactionary. A similar fallacy could be applied to gender history in an examination like this where the historian examines how men influenced the women around them, framing women as reactionary. Rather I choose to follow fellow historians who

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<sup>137</sup> Rebecca Williams, diary entry, in *“To Talk is Treason,”* May 12, 1861, 24.

examine how women faced these interactions and used that experience to shape their own world around them.<sup>138</sup>

The residents of Waterford were both Quaker, a group typically studied under Northern parameters, and southern. Historian Abbie Rogers has examined a group of North Carolinian Quakers (a group of Southern Quakers who were far more populous than those in Northern Virginia) and notes Quakers below the Mason-Dixon line must grapple with “these dual identities and the places where Southern Friends and Confederates found common ground.”<sup>139</sup> By adding other identities this chapter will show how groups grapple with multiple, often contradictory, identities and how it influenced the experience of historical moments.

These women had multiple relationships that built upon one another and formed these women in a variety of ways. Relationships and daily life with their parents, siblings, other Waterford citizens, and visiting soldiers shaped the way these young women experienced the Civil War, unionism, and their daily life over this tumultuous period. This chapter’s examination of individual relationships will be studied in four parts. To first understand why these relationships matter I will examine the disruption to traditional life with the significant removal of the local male presence in the community. Men were removed from the community in a way that was much different than the rest of the country. Most Waterford men in the Civil War era were forced to take refuge in neighboring Maryland to avoid conscription into the Confederate army or were imprisoned for their pacifism. I will then delve further into the individual relationships these women maintained with their family members, community members and their sweethearts. Further study into the childhoods of these women and the influence their families

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<sup>138</sup> Victoria Bynum, *Unruly Women*, Clinton and Silber, *Divided Houses*, Drew Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, Leonard, *Yankee Women*, Long and Whites, *Occupied Women*, McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*, Silber, *Daughters of the Union*, Silber, *Gender and the Sectional Conflict*, Whites, *Gender Matters*.

<sup>139</sup> Abbie Rogers, “Confederates and Quakers: The Shared Wartime Experience,” 2.

and community had will also reveal where they gained their base beliefs. I will conclude this chapter with the interactions these women had with soldiers, both United States and Confederate. Concluding with the interactions these women had with soldiers, both Confederate and United States, we can better understand how women exerted their wartime convictions in daily interactions with strangers. Examination of individual relationships and the role that they play in the formation of human identity and the expression of that identity is essential in understanding how people experience traumatic historical moments.

### **A Man's Presence through Absence**

In 1861 when the war began the pacifist Quakers of Northern Virginia were forced to decide what role they would play in the conflict. After Virginia joined the Confederate States of America the Society of Friends exerted their Unionist beliefs.<sup>140</sup> The rejection of the Confederate movement set the community apart, creating a tumultuous atmosphere during the next four years of the war. Waterford's male and female residents entered the war with particular and strong passions. For many women in Waterford, Unionist sentiments were intensified with the goal of reclaiming these lost relationships with fathers, brothers and their sweethearts who had been forced to abandon the small community. The proximity of these men to Maryland allowed them to find protection. The *Baltimore American* wrote, "All the Union men of Waterford determined to escape. Twelve fled from their homes night before last, and evaded the Confederate pickets for nine miles, arriving at the ford at Point of Rocks."<sup>141</sup> As soon as the war began the Quaker men of Northern Virginia realized the target on their back and found refuge.

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<sup>140</sup> For more on the secession crisis in Virginia see the introduction of this thesis or Daniel Crofts, *Reluctant Confederates*, and Lawrence Denton, *Unionists in Virginia*.

<sup>141</sup> *The Baltimore American* July 15, 1861, in "To Talk is Treason," 26.

Governments traditionally permit exemption of military service if the subject is a member of a religion that practices pacifism. Jefferson Davis and the Confederate States of America announced officially in 1862 that members of the Quaker faith, and other religious pacifists, could pay a fine to avoid conscription in the military.<sup>142</sup> However, the Quaker men of Waterford were not given the same courtesy; their refusal to enter into the Confederate army led to them fleeing into Point of Rocks, Maryland to avoid imprisonment.<sup>143</sup> As Rebecca Williams said with beautiful simplicity in her diary, “so many husbands in Maryland & wives here.”<sup>144</sup> The men who were unable to take refuge in Maryland found themselves as prisoners of war in Confederate POW camps.<sup>145</sup>

John Dutton found this fate and was arrested in the summer of 1861. Rebecca Williams notes in her diary, “a troop of rebel soldiers came through from Lovettsville and took John Dutton prisoner to Leesburg. Hard rain in evening- went to see Emma [his wife]- found them in great distress- no charges made against him.”<sup>146</sup> One week later Rebecca updated her diary on the situation, “Emma [Dutton] went to Leesburg to see him [John Dutton]... perhaps the last she may see of him. Tis’ shocking- this tearing men from their families guilty of no crime.”<sup>147</sup> The abduction of their father greatly affected the Dutton sisters. Mollie in the spring of 1862 wrote to her fiance Frank and explained how the loss of their father disrupted their lives, “Sister [Lizzie]

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<sup>142</sup>Jefferson Davis, Exemption Act of 1862, October 11, 1862, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/csstat62/csstat62.html> .

<sup>143</sup> There aren’t any records as to why Quakers were not respected for their pacifist beliefs. However it can be inferred because the Quakers were not quiet about their support to the Union their convictions were not respected.

<sup>144</sup> Rebecca Williams, Diary entry, September 1, 1861, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 34.

<sup>145</sup> Waterford, VA was not the only instance of violent oppression of Quaker pacifism during the Civil War. Victoria Bynum in her essay “Occupied at Home: Women Confront Confederate Forces in North Carolina’s Quaker Belt,” in *Occupied Women: Gender Military Occupation and the American Civil War*, writes of forced conscription, and even cases of kidnapping fighting age boys in the North Carolina Quaker belt. The difference between these two cases is an example of Waterford’s proximity to the North affecting their interactions with soldiers.

<sup>146</sup> Rebecca Williams, diary entry, August 12, 1861, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 28.

<sup>147</sup> Rebecca Williams, Diary entry, August 18, 1861, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 28.

again started for Leesburg to endeavor by every means in her power to effect his release.”<sup>148</sup>

After Dutton’s release he immediately sought refuge in Maryland to avoid further imprisonment.

John Dutton wrote of his experience, “For the past nine or ten months a refugee from my home and family. That in consequence of my well-known Union sentiments, I have suffered much from the rebels, both in person and property.”<sup>149</sup> To Dutton there was no mystery as to why he was abused by his Confederate neighbors.

John Dutton was not the only man whose absence disrupted the lives of the Dutton women. In a letter to Colonel Piatt in Baltimore John wrote of his son’s own condition of being a refugee, “my only son was driven from my house more than two years ago, by their [Confederate] threats of conscripting him into the rebel army... there by leaving my wife and daughters without any protection.”<sup>150</sup> Being in a POW camp was not the only negative impact left from absent male relatives. Their absence alone was dangerous. Men did their best to maintain relationships with the women of Waterford while facing this harassment and visited when able despite the risk. Frank Steer, Mollie Dutton’s husband and Sarah Steer’s brother, would visit Waterford but had to hide from Confederate soldiers who searched for him because of his refusal to enlist in the CSA army.<sup>151</sup>

1863 had an increase of imprisoned Waterford citizens. The men of Waterford were a bargaining tool for the CSA as they demanded the United States release some of their prisoners.<sup>152</sup> Rebecca Williams wrote of the attempt to recover the male Friends’ members,

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<sup>148</sup> Mollie Dutton to Frank Steer, March 1862, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 35.

<sup>149</sup> John Dutton to Colonel Donn Piatt, August 3rd 1863, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 50.

<sup>150</sup> John Dutton to Colonel Donn Piatt, August 3rd 1863, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 50.

<sup>151</sup> Rebecca Williams Diary, April 17, 1864, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 77.

<sup>152</sup> Many studies have been done on the experiences of Civil War POW’s. This thesis is more focused on the effect of non-soldiers being placed in these POW camps on others rather than the harsh reality of POW life. For more on the politics and function of POW camps see Charles Sanders, *While in the Hands of the Enemy: Military Prisons of the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), Roger Pickenpaugh, *Captives in Blue: The*

William Williams and Robert Hollingsworth. It required a trip to Abraham Lincoln as Rebecca reflected, “it was an arduous undertaking. So many forms to go through- were pleased with the President. O- That we could hear from them. Not a word. Not a word since they left them with the rebels.”<sup>153</sup> William Williams wrote a memoir of his experience and the conditions of his imprisonment. He reflected at the end of the memoir how this experience affected his faith, “I believe that this experience was needed to strengthen my faith in Him and to teach me the lesson of Charity and Forbearance toward those who differed from me in opinion. Looking at it in this light, I hope the suffering has not been without its use.”<sup>154</sup> The Civil War challenged the faith of the Quakers of Waterford, but their faith was often reinforced in spite of the challenges that faced them.

The imprisonment and refuge seeking of these men became a repeated theme in the writing of the *Waterford News*. In one issue the editors wrote, “Fathers and sons have bade you adieu to flee the base conscription, while others have been confined within the loathsome dungeons of ‘Secessia,’ because they loved too well the dear old Flag.”<sup>155</sup> Further reinforcing the ideas held by William Williams and John Dutton, the women of Waterford’s animosity towards the Confederacy was reinforced with the abuses they saw towards their loved ones. The *Waterford News* comments on this imprisonment in their July 1864 issue, “can we think of the horrible treatment of our soldiers and state prisoners in Richmond and throughout the South; of the persecution of Union citizens everywhere under their dominion.”<sup>156</sup> Local men contributed to

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*Civil War Prisons of the Confederacy* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2013); Francis Casstevens, “*Out of the Mouth of Hell*”: *Civil War Prisons and Escapes* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2005).

<sup>153</sup> Rebecca Williams, Diary entry, April 10, 1863, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 60.

<sup>154</sup> William Williams, memoir, 1888, in “*To Talk is Treason*,” 75.

<sup>155</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Communication, *The Waterford News*, October 15, 1864, 5-3.

<sup>156</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Editorial, *The Waterford News*, July 2, 1864, 3-2.



the female experience of war, but in this case through absence. As the war progressed the women of Waterford manipulated these relationships to accommodate this new reality.

### **Relationships with Parents**

To understand how the Dutton women experienced the Civil War there will be some focus on the influence of their parents. The childhoods and parental encouragement of a female education forged the independent intellectual possibility of writing and publishing a newspaper that was otherwise not afforded to most Southern women.<sup>157</sup> Virginia Ott describes the goal of southern female education as to “presumably instill good character in the student and give her the intellectual capabilities to fulfill her future roles as a wife and mother.”<sup>158</sup> While these goals were still important in the education of the Waterford women, they were still southern regardless of the ostracization. Education received by these women was expected to help them forge an independent character.

The Society of Friends was and is a Protestant denomination that promotes and encourages education and independence in female members.<sup>159</sup> Education varied from region to region and family to family. John Dutton was a father who was heavily invested in the education of all of his children and put value on education for all, complementing his religious roots. John Dutton encouraged his daughters’ educations and complimented them when he saw them excel. In an 1864 letter to his daughter Anna who was twelve at the time he states,

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<sup>157</sup> Catherine Clinton, *The Other Civil War: American Women in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1984); Christie Anne Farnham, *The Education of the Southern Belle: Higher Education and Student Socialization in the Antebellum South* (New York: New York University Press, 1994); Walter Fraser, R Frank Saunders, John Wakelyn, ed, *The Web of Southern Social Relations: Women, Family and Education* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985); Ott, *Confederate Daughters*; Roberts, *The Confederate Belle*.

<sup>158</sup> Ott, *Confederate Daughters*, 17.

<sup>159</sup> See Margaret Bacon, *Mothers of Feminism* and Sandra Holton, *Quaker Women: Personal Life, Memory and Radicalism and the Lives of Women Friends, 1780-1930* (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2007) for more information on the lives of female Quakers.

I am much pleas'd with the prospect of thy writing a good hand. I take great pride in my children's writing I want each to exert themselves in this particular branch of learning and now the time whilst they little are limber before work has caused them to be stiff and hard & at the same time I want thee to be able to write thy views on all subjects that may be brought before they mind... don't conclude that things are right just because the mass of the people say so. Fix in thy own mind some rule of thought.<sup>160</sup>

In this letter we don't just see encouragement of education but also individual thought. The Duttons were a part of this ostracized community, and all took pride within that. Their ostracization became proof that they were not part of the Confederate masses, but rather forgers of their own ideas. John Dutton also wrote of his business he tells his daughter Anne to ask her eldest sister for clarity, "Sis Lizzie is sharp & will understand a business term"<sup>161</sup> Dutton had trust in his daughters and their abilities to maintain the family in spite of the tumultuous period.

The Dutton children were not the only individuals to whom John expressed the need for education. He valued the idea of education for all. Later in the same letter to Anna her father states,

"I hope to see the day when the first object of the Legislators of Virginia will be to educate every child within its limits for with it they are enabled to fill the purpose of their creation- without it they are the poor contemptible tools of ambitious and bad men. How many poor men have been led into this rebellion because they were ignorant & could not the consequences of such a step? Yet I trust in the wisdom of our Creator that good may yet be brought out of all."<sup>162</sup>

Historians have acknowledged the idea of the "rich man's war" and the elite's manipulation of the lower classes during the Civil War in other Unionist groups.<sup>163</sup> The above quote further proves that this is not just an idea forged from historical hindsight, but was something apparent

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<sup>160</sup> John Dutton to Anna Dutton, October 25, 1864, Mollie Dutton Collection, Waterford Foundation Archives, Waterford, VA, 30.

<sup>161</sup> John Dutton to Anna Dutton, October 25, 1864, Mollie Dutton Collection, 32.

<sup>162</sup> John Dutton to Anna Dutton, October 25, 1864, Mollie Dutton Collection, 31.

<sup>163</sup> See Victoria Bynum's *Free State of Jones*.

to these historical actors. Dutton believed that if the poorer classes in the Confederacy were educated they would be able to criticize and disregard the Confederate government. Whether or not this is the case is obviously up for debate.

John Dutton was a vocal supporter of his daughters' education, but their mother shows values in literacy and self expression in her own writing. In poems written about her daughters' Emma Schooley Dutton described her children and revealed innate personality which transformed into their individual Civil War experiences. On Elizabeth (Lizzie) she states "a little lively active sprite-/ With a happy heart and spirits light/ Observing with an Eagle's eye./ Each passing scene and passer by./ Each circumstance quick to relate./ with certainly an air of state."<sup>164</sup> Written years before the Civil War, these words allow historians to see Lizzie Dutton, editor of the *Waterford News*, in this description by her mother. The tenacity and confidence being described of this child shows the roots of the editor in the making. The Dutton father also credited his wife in the education of his children, writing to his youngest daughter Anna, "I believe thee has inherited a good mind from they mother."<sup>165</sup> He respected his wife and credited her with the work she did to raise and foster their children's educations. Emma Dutton does not have as many written records as her husband but in these small appearances we are given a glimpse of how this couple encouraged their daughters to fulfill their intellectual capabilities.

For Sarah Steer and Lizzie and Lida Dutton their parents also influenced and encouraged their Unionists sentiments. In a letter to Anna Dutton, who was twelve at the time, John Dutton in 1864 stated "this rebellion is certainly drawing to a close- the reelection of Lincoln will show to the people of the South that we intend to put down the rebellion; to be one country. No

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<sup>164</sup> Emma Schooley, "Our Children's Portraits," The Poetry of Mary Dutton Steer and Family (1836-1928) Collection, The Waterford Foundation Archives, Waterford, VA, 10

<sup>165</sup> John Dutton to Anna Dutton, October 25, 1864, Mollie Dutton Collection, 30.

division is the watch word- The Union. The whole Union and nothing but the Union is the determination of the people.”<sup>166</sup> John Dutton emphasized this idea of unity being the only true solution to the end of the war. As unionists they were grouped within the United States, emphasizing his use of “we.” Regardless of physically being separated from the United States, he never lost sight of where his loyalties were.

### **Relationships with Local Men**

Despite the absence of men, relationships were updated to the new environment of war and women maintained relationships with those around them. These women refused to compromise these relationships as the war around them was in upheaval. Aspirations for love and marriage were maintained out of desire and cultural expectations. Analysis of their relationships with men also illuminate the sense of humor these women had, regardless of the terror surrounding them. As mentioned previously the editors of *The Waterford News* utilized their public forum as a way to maintain the cultural norms of the day like chivalry and marriage. In both private and public the way these women lived through these relationships affected their wartime experience.

As sweethearts, brothers, and fathers fled, the women left behind did not fare better. The war added stress to relationships. This can be examined in the relationship between Mollie Dutton and her fiance Frank Steer. In this absence Mollie Dutton wrote to Frank, “we girls are becoming so used to your absence, we won’t know how to treat you when you come home- I expect we will make all manner of mistakes such as kissing and squeezing and telling you things

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<sup>166</sup> John Dutton to Anne Dutton, October 25, 1864, Mollie Dutton Collection, 31.

you ought not to hear.”<sup>167</sup> The typically reserved Mollie Dutton, was prepared to remove the typical boundaries set between men and women because of how deeply she missed Frank. They were married on May 22nd 1862. The separation between the two, sadly, did not end and they would spend much of the war apart.

Moments of humor and life announcements reveal the reality of war and how communities functioned with the reality of war. While the community was under occupation and some male members were imprisoned or in Maryland, life continued. As reflected in these diaries there are still moments of gathering for tea and the attempt to reestablish a sense of normalcy in the chaotic war. An example of this being marriage, in this case between Mollie Dutton and Frank Steer who took advantage of the reprieve of Confederate occupation in 1862.<sup>168</sup> Historians like Glenn Crothers have explained things like *The Waterford News* and other changes as a gender role expansion as allowed by a wartime experience. However, items like the marriage columns and marriages during the war show that life continues to move with values that were present before the start of conflict.

### **Relationships with Soldiers**

Loudoun County experienced occupation by both the army of the United States and the Confederate States. The women of Waterford had a positive relationship with their own citizens and visiting United States soldiers. It was based on mutual admiration as well as respect. However an inverse of this relationship is found in their communications with the “Rebel”<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Mollie Dutton to Frank Steer, July 7 1861, Mollie Dutton Collection, Waterford Foundation Archives, Waterford, VA, 20.

<sup>168</sup> Rebecca Williams, diary entry, May 22, 1862, in *“To Talk is Treason,”* 41.

<sup>169</sup> In both personal correspondence as well as the formal *Waterford News* the residents of Waterford refer to CSA soldiers as “rebels” emphasizing the lack of respect and toleration for the secession of Virginia and the rest of the South.

soldiers. The *Waterford News* was the most public form of both support for Union soldiers and condemnation of the Rebel soldiers. These sentiments were not limited to the newspaper. Both women and men interacted with all soldiers and emphasized their convictions in other ways. Actions taken when confronted with soldiers differed based on gender and at different moments of the war. United States soldiers had an overwhelmingly loving perspective on these women. Despite the general protection provided by gender these women still faced harassments from Confederate soldiers appalled by their Unionist sentiments. What created admiration from United States soldiers created conflict with Confederate soldiers.

The young women of Waterford did not just see the United States soldiers as young men passing through but as men deserving of their admiration in as many forms as possible. Lizzie Dutton began corresponding with two soldiers of the 7th Indiana Regiment. She maintained herself as an intimate pen pal, later becoming engaged, to Lt. David Holmes who sadly was killed in the assault on Petersburg. After his death a fellow soldier, Joseph Dunlap, wrote to Lizzie expressing his condolences on Holmes' passing.<sup>170</sup> Lizzie was not the only young lady to maintain this kind of contact.

Lida Dutton received similar adoration from a Union soldier. A Massachusetts soldier John Norton wrote to Lida,

I cannot resist the temptation of addressing you a few lines, selfishly hoping they will elicit a reply from one whose kindness and hospitality, so gracefully bestowed, endeared her to every Union soldiers heart... It is true as I informed you when conversing together, that you beautiful village is the only one, during my two years campaign in this devastated State, that has earned such a cordial sympathy with our cause, may the blessings of peace and prosperity be vouchsafed to you and yours among the first "when this cruel war is over."<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Divine, Sounders, Sounders, *To Talk is Treason*, 53. Lizzie Dutton eventually married Joseph Dunlap in 1882. This relationship will be further expanded on in the conclusion of this thesis.

<sup>171</sup> John Norton to Lida Dutton, July 27, 1863, in *To Talk is Treason*, 54. Lida Dutton would eventually marry another Union soldier Lt John William Hutchinson, their story will be continued in the conclusion.

In Norton's letter we see the profound impact on morale that the young women of Waterford had on the Union cause for soldiers passing through. The interaction this young man had with Lida bolstered his spirit to carry on during the war.<sup>172</sup> The women of Waterford exposed the need or desire that some with Confederate borders had to be reintegrated into the United States.

In 1862 United States troops took hold of the Waterford region capturing it from the Confederate army. The coming of the Union soldiers represented a form of salvation from oppression. A soldier of the 1st Michigan reflected, "The people were up when we came in and cheered us and waved their handkerchiefs, give us a good supper and a good place to sleep. You just ought to have seen how glad to see us Yankees, as they called us."<sup>173</sup> Lida Dutton reflected in her journal on the day the United States troops marched through Waterford. She told of her sister Mollie, said to be the most timid of all the sisters, shouting "Hurrah for the Union," as soldiers passed through and was met with the compliments of a federal soldier who replied, "hurrah for the girl who hurrahs for the Union."<sup>174</sup> For these passing through soldiers a new form of morale was found beyond encouragement of the women back in the United States.

The *Waterford News* also focuses on the interactions of the women and United States soldiers. The editors of the newspaper had a fellow female Unionist, who signed the article "union lover," describe her experience with a United States soldier at a meal her family provided for passing soldiers in 1864. She writes with high emotionality in interacting with the soldiers they supported after the reoccupation of the enemy. She invokes a high degree of religious language while writing of the soldiers, "I said to myself, truly this soldier is a Christian... the

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<sup>172</sup> Historians have focused on the impact women have had on soldiers' morale, such as Drew Gilpin's "Altars of Sacrifice" but little attention has been given to the impact of a Unionist women's support in Confederate states on Union soldiers morale.

<sup>173</sup> James Brady, memoir, in "*To Talk is Treason*", 39.

<sup>174</sup> Divine, Sounders, Sounders, *To Talk is Treason*, 39

best Christian makes the best soldier. Hear me soldiers, one and all! While you fight under the ‘Stars and Stripes,’ you can also fight under the banner of Christ. With the weapon of war in your hand you can still receive into your heart the gospel of peace.”<sup>175</sup> The author also invokes the symbolism of the “armor of God” scripture emphasizing the religious nature of the United States cause and the men who in turn fought for it. She states, “I do believe there are many of both rank and file who have put on the whole armor of God , the breastplate of righteousness , the shield of faith, the sword of the spirit, the helmet of salvation, ‘and whose feet are are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”<sup>176</sup> Each piece of this “armor” reflects what these women valued in the United States soldiers and reveals the connection between religion and the worldview of these women. The United States soldiers were righteous men to these women, but their counterparts received condemnation in equal parts.

Disgust was mutual between the Confederate soldiers and the women of Waterford. Confederate soldiers were not patient with their United States patriotism. Due to the public nature of the newspaper there were specific harassments faced by the editors of the *Waterford News*. For example, the newspaper subscription created a target for robbery. The editors in an edition of the newspaper reflected on being robbed by a Confederate soldier, “now this chivalric son of the South, who *wages no war against women*, appropriated the money to his own use.”<sup>177</sup> They point out the clear hypocrisy exemplified by their interactions with these southern men. Throughout the newspaper they consciously use the term “chivalry” and use it with irony and mockery to focus on the contradictions of the Confederate soldiers. This use of humor became a tool of transgression and a way to draw attention to the hypocrisy of the Southern soldiers. The

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<sup>175</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, “Soldiers Comin,” *The Waterford News*, November 26, 1864, 6-4.

<sup>176</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, “Soldiers Comin,” *The Waterford News*, November 26, 1864, 6-4.

<sup>177</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Robbery, *The Waterford News*, August 20, 1864, 4-2.



humor directed at the “chivalric” Southerners became a choice of transgression on multiple fronts. The *Waterford News* mocked their Southern female neighbors in the second edition of their newspaper, “we think it well to forewarn all young ladies of other neighborhoods not to let their heart’s devotion rest on young men who are so lost to the spirit of chivalry once the boast of Virginia’s sons.”<sup>178</sup> These women in their mockery also hint at their mourning for the lost men of the South, reflecting their fathers’ opinion on these young men mentioned earlier in the chapter.

Tales of female rebellion against occupying Confederate soldiers went beyond the writing of this newspaper and was not just done with words but with actions. Some altercations became a form of lore in the community. In Frank Moore’s 1880 *The Civil War in Song and Story, 1860-1865* he writes of Rachel Means’ efforts to stop a Confederate attack of Waterford as the community transitioned into United States territory in 1862. He wrote the tale of “a noble-hearted Quaker woman, whose husband has been chased from his home by the rebels some months before, besought a gentlemen of her faith to hasten over to Colonel Geary’s camp... thus this pretty little village was saved from conflagration by the resolute conduct of this Quaker lady.”<sup>179</sup> Whether this account is literal or exaggerated account it emphasizes the kind of power and strength women of this community were believed to have had.<sup>180</sup>

## Conclusion

The women of Waterford knew their experiences were unique. In the sixth edition of the *Waterford News* they put special attention on their Northern Union female counterpart and plead that they remember the kind of privilege they possessed when it came to the Union cause

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<sup>178</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Pop-Gun, *The Waterford News*, June 11, 1864, 2-4.

<sup>179</sup> Frank Moore, *The Civil War in Song and Story, 1860-1865*, in “To Talk is Treason”, 38

<sup>180</sup> This also harkens to earlier themes of the kind of encouragement that also came to United States soldiers as a result of these kinds of actions.

highlighting something as simple as a Thanksgiving dinner. They plead to Northern women to feed the male United States soldiers, “Hope that our Union Sisters, who are free to follow their inclinations, may be cheering them with kind words and a bountiful repast.”<sup>181</sup> The way these women manipulated the new reality of their relationships to best benefit themselves and the men in their lives a new kind of normalcy was created.

For women of the North and South who upheld the beliefs of their overarching country there came a sense of peace or patriotism even in the destruction. But for women who lost male friends and family came a different bitterness. Men were not absent because they were fighting for a righteous cause but because of an apparent persecution they felt by the new country they found themselves to be a part of. The absence of men, both familial and romantic, in their lives forged particular animosities towards the Confederacy. In addition to this the interactions with soldiers provided encouragement and validity to their Unionist sentiments and the production of *The Waterford News*. United States soldiers praised the women for maintaining these ideals and in turn they faced persecution from Confederate soldiers, proving their animosities to be valid. The way these interactions took place provide a glimpse into the true reality of war in a community like Waterford. These small communities should be examined on their own terms rather than being grouped in the larger story because they expose how general citizens experienced the war. War was significant, and while it did create a new reality for these women, life did continue to move forward.

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<sup>181</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, *The Waterford News*, November 26, 1864, 6-4.

## *Conclusion*

Waterford and the rest of the country had to face the reality of a reunified country in 1865. Reunification was not always completely welcomed in Waterford by some unionists and former Confederates. Rebecca Williams wrote in her diary after the initial shock of Lincoln's assassination and Lee's surrender, "it does seem as though we have peace once more. All quiet here for some time, parol'd rebels walk the streets unarmed. They and the Federal soldiers mingle together- reminds one of the Lion and the Lamb lying down together- if we could only see anything lamb-like in either."<sup>182</sup> The returned neighbor had been a predator on the well being of the community and its destruction of the last four years could not be forgotten.

Divisions between former Confederates and Unionists remained and sometimes even strengthened. Frank Myers, a Confederate sympathizer in the region, did not lose his bitterness as the town continued to be reintegrated within the United States years later. He wrote of his new reality, "suppose I'll have to register tomorrow. Oh! How I do hate it. I hate the Yankees and the US more than I ever did."<sup>183</sup> Myers did register the next day as a US citizen but with even greater disdain, "After dinner went to Waterford. Yes! And I was registered before the grand high priest of Loudoun- John B Dutton. Awful bitter and I felt like choking, but I didn't quite do it. Except I felt like choking John B Dutton"<sup>184</sup> The reunification of the country was not going to bring together a region divided for nearly a century.

Identity and attachment to one's convictions shaped the lives and decisions of Lida, Lizzie and Sarah during the Civil War. In the postwar actions of these community members we see the continuation of the identities and convictions that shaped their lives before and during the

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<sup>182</sup> Rebecca Williams, diary entry, April 30, 1865, in *"To Talk is Treason,"* 98.

<sup>183</sup> Frank Myers, diary entry, June 25 1867, in *"To Talk is Treason,"* 99.

<sup>184</sup> Frank Myers, diary entry, June 26 1867, in *"To Talk is Treason,"* 99.

war on this new stage. War narratives, as previously stated, push the decisions of many as reactive to the tumultuous time period. The convictions of these women were not reactive which is further proved with examination of their postwar life.

Throughout the duration of the war Lida Dutton was sought out by several visiting soldiers, as mentioned in chapter three. Lida would find the love of her life in the heart of Union soldier, John Hutchinson. The story of their meeting evolved into a family legend. Hutchinson arrived in Waterford asking for a drink of water, and was asked of his loyalties. In a quip Lida stated, “if you're a rebel I hate you; but if you're a Northerner I love you.”<sup>185</sup> Rebecca Williams wrote of Lida's marriage, “like the looks of her intended very much and do hope they know the blessings of preservation from evil and be an ornament to Society.” For this community and Lida's peers, the loss of a young woman to the North was worth the cost. It was better for this young loyal woman to marry a Unionist and move to New York than marry a man of the South. Fifty years later in celebration of their anniversary the *Friends Intelligencer* revived the love story and its place in the Civil War lore. “Though the fortunes of war kept them apart for a time, shortly after peace was declared Lieutenant Hutchinson returned to Virginia and began his suit for her hand,” with the rest of the article highlighting their interaction with the Civil War.<sup>186</sup> In the fifty year marriage between these two Unionists, the Civil War and their involvement with it became the defining aspect of their life.

Lizzie, like her sister Lida, found love in the arms of a Union soldier. During the war she married Lieutenant David Holmes of Indiana ,who (sadly) died near Petersburg in the summer of 1864. After the loss of her first husband, she found love with another Union soldier. After the death of Holmes one of his fellow soldiers, Joseph Dunlap, wrote Lizzie Dutton to inform her of

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<sup>185</sup> Chamberlin, Sounders, and Sounders, ed. “*To Talk is Treason*,” 84.

<sup>186</sup> *Friends Intelligencer*, Philadelphia, January 6, 1917.

her husband's death. They developed a correspondence and subsequent letters followed as they discussed a variety of subjects creating a deep connection. Dunlap was engaged to a woman from his town and returned home to marry her at the end of the war. His wife passed away not too long after the war's end. A few years later Dunlap found himself in Point of Rocks, Maryland igniting his curiosity about Lizzie Dutton. After more exchanges and a short visit, the two married in 1882.<sup>187</sup> The wedding was reported by local newspapers of the bride and groom. Journalists retell their love story furthering the importance of this tale of a loyal southern woman and a gallant Union veteran.

Sarah Steer never married as a way to maintain the conviction she held as an editor of *The Waterford News* in regards to education. Along with her fellow editors, Sarah wrote after Lincoln's election, "we hope to see a proper system of Public Education in our state, regarding it as the forerunner of all moral as well as political improvements."<sup>188</sup> Sarah Steer was the first teacher of the Freedmen's School "Second Street School" in Loudoun County, established in 1870. Steer was the only white teacher, as later instructors were all from within the African American community. Her assistance in forming the pivotal school and education was a significant beginning for African American learning in Loudoun County.<sup>189</sup> These three women entered the reconstruction era and maintained the convictions fortified during the Civil War. These lives, however, were lost in long historical narratives.

The Lost Cause took control of the early histories of the Civil War, particularly when it came to Southern women. Its rhetoric required that women of the South were loyal to the cause of the Confederacy. The Lost Cause removed women like Mollie, Lizzie and Lida Dutton, Sarah

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<sup>187</sup> Chamberlin, Sounders, and Sounders, ed. "To Talk is Treason," 53.

<sup>188</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Editorial, *The Waterford News* November 11, 1864, 6-2.

<sup>189</sup> Crothers, *Quakers in the Lion's Mouth*, 263.

Steer and Rebecca Williams from the story of the Civil War. The oversimplification of the Confederate female experience also negates the real impact that women had on the men around them. These women provided inspiration to Union soldiers through cheering, an action that was seen as a nuisance by Confederate Colonel Mosby and his companions. Women like the Duttons, Steers, and Williams formed their own sense of reality and normalcy during the catastrophic Civil War. And while it did have these impacts on the men around them, the decisions were made due to the convictions of the women themselves.

The sentiments of these women did not just affect the soldiers around them, however, as some Southern Unionist historiography has suggested. They maintained their own hope and spirit during the war. Each factor of their identity fueled their private correspondence, public identities and personal experiences. The editors of *The Waterford News* expressed not just their own priorities but also those of their tiny and isolated community. In the final edition of the paper editors Lizzie, Lida, and Sarah reemphasized the goal of their modest paper and their tiny community as the war's end was near,

Though the clouds may blow over the horizon which now seems so bright, yet will our faith in our good and wise President, our true and noble Generals, and our brave, heroic Soldiers remain forever. They are entitled so justly to the honor and respect of the Nation' public, and we as a very small part, tender them ours, from our Union-loving hearts.<sup>190</sup>

The women of Waterford created a newspaper, maintained journal entries and wrote impassioned letters to their lovers out of frustration with the country they did not recognize as being legitimate.

Participation in a public arena, even in times of chaos, is not always a guarantee. There was an active choice these women made to make a Unionist newspaper, which put a target on

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<sup>190</sup> Dutton, Dutton, Steer, Editorial, *The Waterford News*, April 3, 1865, 8-2.

their community. These women chose to utilize their unique religious upbringing with an in depth education which made writing a newspaper possible. Friendship with a Maryland newspaper also made its printing possible. All of these small aspects of these women were combined to create a historical moment worth remembering. The newspaper became a piece of unionism that deserves to be remembered.

The identities held by the women of Waterford went beyond cultural signifiers like gender and religious affiliation. These women felt attachment to their town, state, and larger country. These loyalties all mattered to these women. In both personal writings and their work on *The Waterford News* historians can see what truly mattered to these women and how their priorities changed. Examination of all three of these affiliations showed what these women felt to be the most important while also showing how they evolved off of each other. Together they created the women of Waterford, of Virginia and of the United States.

Interactions between these women, their community, their family and visiting soldiers were just as important as the actions they made in a larger sphere with the newspaper. The way these women communicated with others, and the way it was reciprocated, shows what these women prioritized. The sphere of influence these women had expanded during the war, but they chose to embrace its expansion. All three of these chapters and themes expose the need to look at historical actors as who they were, and not based solely off of a label that is the most convenient for a historical study.

The work of these women has been ignored in the larger historical narrative, but their work was remembered for a time by those around them. The Philadelphia *Friends Intelligencer* reported of a Friends member going through his “relics of the Civil War,” and discovering his copy of *The Waterford News*. The fellow Friends remembered the “editors Sarah, Lizzie and

Lida; the motto was ‘The Union Forever.’”<sup>191</sup> The legacy of these women and their efforts to maintain loyalty to the United States was something that lasted among these small groups that interacted with these women. It mattered to the Friends’ community as a whole, not just the small Southern groups.

As mentioned in the introduction, granddaughter of Emma Dutton, Emma Conrow, wrote an article for the sesquicentennial of the ending of the war.

Fifty years ago and the flame of these girls’ love of country burns bright as we read the faded pages. Sarah Steer died several years ago. Lida Dutton Hutchinson followed her soldier husband within the last year [February 28, 1921], and only Lizzie lives- Mrs. Joseph Dunlap of Franklin, Indiana. The bitterness of war is over, we pray, forever.<sup>192</sup>

The legend of these women and their choices to make public declarations of Unionism lived on in the public consciousness for a short time. However, as years have passed, these women and their fearlessness was lost in the blue versus grey narrative. Stories like those of Lida, Lizzie, and Sarah remind us that those living on the fringes of society also impacted historical events. The women and other citizens of Waterford should not be relegated to the supporting cast of General Grant and General Lee’s blockbuster.

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<sup>191</sup> Thaddeus Kenderdine, *Friends Intelligencer*, 1912, John Dutton Collection, Waterford Foundation Archives, Waterford, VA, 11.

<sup>192</sup> Emma Conrow, “Girls Published Civil War Newspaper,” *Baltimore American*, February 5, 1922.



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