

Friendly Enemies: Soldier Fraternization throughout the American Civil War, by Lauren K. Thompson. Studies in War, Society, and the Military. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2020. xviii, 213 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$55.00 hardcover.

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Lauren K. Thompson's *Friendly Enemies: Soldier Fraternization throughout the American Civil War* argues that fraternization between Union and Confederate soldiers allowed men "to fight the war on their own terms" (10). According to Thompson, fraternization was an important method of self-preservation for soldiers who struggled with the strict military hierarchy and the harsh realities of war. As the war progressed citizen soldiers realized that military service was not a welcoming environment for individualism, which caused many soldiers to suffer an identity crisis. While soldiers struggled to maintain their individuality, many chose to test military restrictions by talking to enemy soldiers when given the chance. Even though soldiers' interactions with enemy soldiers did not fundamentally change the war or anyone's attitudes about the war, it did help sustain men as they recognized that their enemies experienced many of the same difficult conditions, daily routines, and destruction of war.

Most often fraternization between Union and Confederate soldiers occurred when armies came into close contact with one another for extended periods of time. When soldiers became frustrated with politicians and officers many resisted military life by voicing their frustrations to enemy soldiers. In doing so, volunteers learned that they were not alone in their struggles because their enemies were experiencing similar hardships such as homesickness, frustration with leadership, and hope for peace. The winter of 1862–63 was when the first widespread instance of fraternization occurred. Following the battle of Fredericksburg, both sides were under strict orders not to fire while on picket duty. This gave soldiers the opportunity to observe each other's routines and yell to one another across the Rappahannock River. Other examples of widespread fraternization include the siege at Vicksburg in 1863 and the Richmond-Peterburg campaigns of 1864–65. During these interactions soldiers refrained from serious conversations about the cause of the war, emancipation, or postwar society. Yet, by 1864 with the introduction of the United States Colored Troops (USCT) on picket duty it was not uncommon for Union soldiers to talk negatively about the black soldiers. This meant that Union and Confederate soldiers not only fraternized because of their Americanness but also because of their whiteness.

Over time these jocular conversations helped establish trade networks between Union and Confederate armies. Most frequently Confederate soldiers traded tobacco for Union coffee. During sieges soldiers also traded for food or whiskey. Through these trade networks, soldiers eventually exchanged Union and Confederate newspapers. Commanders were extremely cautious about soldiers trading newspapers because the papers frequently included troop movements, military plans, civilian attitudes about the war, and political developments. Over half of the Union court martial's charges concerning fraternization involved exchanging Union papers with Confederate soldiers.

Thompson also considers the role fraternization and fraternization anecdotes played in postwar society. Veterans wrote about interacting with the enemy in their memoirs for either closure or as a coping mechanism. These examples of friendly interactions were then used by reconciliationists as propaganda to protect white supremacy and unity.

While Thompson's analysis of Union and Confederate soldiers is not limited by army, year, or theater of war, she does limit what she considers fraternization. *Friendly Enemies* focuses only on soldier to soldier fraternization. This means that she ignores soldier and civilian interactions, fraternization between officers and privates, and relationships between prison guards and prisoners. By emphasizing only relationships that were made by choice and when both parties were on equal footing, Thompson is able to assert that fraternization played a significant role in the development of ideological motivations. Since Thompson is interested in examining relationships between equal parties an overwhelming majority of source material comes from volunteer white soldiers. Future work will need to consider the unequal relationships between Union and Confederate soldiers.

Thompson's analysis of fraternization builds on the exhaustive historiography of the common soldier during the Civil War. Like Bell Irvin Wiley, James M. McPherson, and Aaron-Sheehan Dean, Thompson's research consisted of reading the letters and diaries of both Union and Confederate soldiers. In total she examines soldiers from nineteen Union states and ten Confederate states. Even though Thompson's work does not specifically focus on Iowa regiments, she does a good job analyzing both Confederate and Union soldiers and readers will learn about midwestern soldiers' experiences with fraternization. For those interested in local or state history, they will gain a better understanding of the common Civil War volunteer. Overall, *Friendly Enemies* is a wonderful contribution to the growing literature of the common soldier and their experience during the war.