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STUDY OF AN AMERICAN CIVIL WAR CHAPLAINCY:
HENRY CLAY TRUMBULL, 10TH CONNECTICUT VOLUNTEERS

by
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(ABSTRACT)

The Reverend Henry Clay Trumbull served as chaplain to the 10th Connecticut Volunteer Regiment from 1862 to 1865 during the American Civil War. During that time he wrote nearly 250 letters to his wife alone (he wrote hundreds more), describing his actions and experiences as he ministered to the soldiers. Along with the letters, he kept detailed diaries and a lengthy journal of a four-month experience in a Confederate prisoner-of-war camp in Columbia, S. C. Trumbull's letters therefore constitute an important collection of primary source research material. Reverend Trumbull provides us with an in-depth portrait of a highly qualified, dedicated and concerned chaplain. Because he exposed himself to the hardships and uncertainties of warfare, he earned the respect, admiration and affection of both officers and enlisted men.

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Finally, I want to thank my wife Linda, whose long suffering and dedication to my career allowed me to accomplish this effort. This small but important slice of the history of Henry Clay Trumbull is dedicated to her.

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INTRODUCTION

James M. McPherson has stated that "the Civil War is the central event in the American historical consciousness . . . this high drama of great events with its heroes and knaves, its triumph and tragedy, has produced a continuing scholarly and popular interest in the Civil War that testifies to its centrality in our historical consciousness. More books have been written about this war than about any other aspect of American history."¹

Every facet of American society during this era has been studied to one degree or another. Yet within the spectrum of Civil War histories, the role of religion in general and of chaplains in particular stand out as two areas that lack significant representation. Recently, an important collection of letters written by a chaplain during the American Civil War was found in the possession of one of his descendants. The Reverend Henry Clay Trumbull served as the chaplain to the 10th Connecticut Volunteer Regiment for three years of the war. During that span he wrote nearly 250 letters to his wife alone (he wrote hundreds more), mainly describing his actions and experiences as he ministered to

¹ James M. McPherson, Ordeal by Fire, the Civil War and Reconstruction, (New York, 1982), vii.

the soldiers.

In writing this thesis, I have chosen to concentrate on Trumbull's war-time writings and sermons. These include the letters written to his wife, his 1863 Prison Journal, 1864 Diary, and sermons published during the war. In particular, these manuscripts provide an excellent glimpse of a dedicated clergyman dealing with the issues of army life and the problems of war. Trumbull, in writing to his wife, had much to say about his aspirations as a minister, his role as a chaplain, and the success and/or failure of his ministry to the soldiers.

Bell I. Wiley, the authoritative historian on the life of the common soldier in the Civil War, has stated that the majority of chaplains on both sides in the conflict were of an inferior quality. Yet he also pointed out that the character and conduct of a large number of chaplains were above reproach, and this gained them the admiration and respect of both officers and enlisted men. Moreover, chaplains who won the highest esteem and affection from their men were those who counseled and comforted the sick and depressed, exposed themselves to fire during battle, aided the dying and wounded, and encouraged those still in the fight.² Henry Clay Trumbull was such a man. His letters

² Bell Irvin Wiley, The Life of Johnny Reb, (Baton Rouge, 1970), 347; The Life of Billy Yank, (Baton Rouge, 1977), 361; They Who Fought Here, (New York, 1959), vii, 269;

reveal him to be a chaplain who was concerned with the lives of the soldiers, one who exposed himself to the hardships and uncertainties of warfare, and consequently earned the respect of both officers and enlisted men.

"Holy Joes of the Sixties: A Study of Civil War Chaplains," in The Huntington Library Quarterly, (New York, 1969), XVI, 287-304.

CHAPTER I: BEGINNINGS: 1830-1862

Henry Clay Trumbull was born June 8, 1830, in Stonington, Conn., a small New England community located on Long Island Sound near the Rhode Island border. His father was Gurdon Trumbull, whose earliest American ancestor had been John Trumbull of Charlestown, Mass., a master mariner who came to America in 1636 from England. His mother, Sarah Ann, descended from the earliest settlers in Stonington, was related to the family of Ulysses S. Grant. Henry Clay was the sixth child in a family of nine, most of whom became prominent Connecticut citizens. His father, a self-educated man, was well-known throughout Connecticut. Gurdon had worked for his father's newspaper, read law, and drew up legal papers for the local residents. He moved in the state House of Representatives and the state Senate; he was commissioner of the School Fund for the State of Connecticut, State Postmaster, the incorporator of the first railroad in Stonington (New York and Stonington Railroad Company), and a director of Stonington's second bank. Besides these, Gurdon Trumbull was conversant with the great English classics and had a knowledge of French. He was trusted and loved by both his community and his family. His children would grow up to

emulate his success in life.³

Gurdon Trumbull named his fourth son Henry Clay because of his interest in politics in general, and for his admiration of the Senator from Kentucky. Even the charges of "Corrupt Bargain" against Clay in 1824 did not tarnish the senior Trumbull's respect for the man. He had a tongue-and-cheek answer for the question involving the origin of his son's name, saying that he "would never have named any son of his after a popular political hero."⁴

Henry Clay Trumbull would, in time, become one of the most respected men in Connecticut and an influential theological force within both the Congregational Church and the Sunday School Union. Yet he was by no means the only one of the siblings to attain such success. His oldest brother, James Hammond Trumbull, became an accomplished scholar who served in several state capacities, including State Librarian and three terms as the Secretary of State. James Trumbull was best known for his knowledge of Indian languages and was the only man in North America who could read and translate John Elliot's Indian Bible. When James died, Mark Twain said that "he was the richest man in America in the matter of

³ Phillip E. Howard, The Life Story of Henry Clay Trumbull (New York, 1906), 10, 12-13.

⁴ Ibid., 30.

knowledge" both useful and applicable.⁵

Another older brother of Henry Clay Trumbull, Charles Edward, graduated from Yale and was a distinguished orator. Thomas Swan Trumbull, the older brother closest to Henry Clay in age, graduated from Harvard Law School and served in the Civil War with the 1st Connecticut Heavy Artillery. He rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel, was chief of artillery on the staff of two corps commanders, and at one point commanded all the Federal artillery around Richmond and Petersburg.

An older sister, Annie, became a noted writer of New England stories and was an authority on entomology. Gurdon Trumbull, Jr., the youngest member of the family, became an authority on ornithology and was the foremost fishpainter for his time.⁶

Part of the reason that the Trumbull children were so intellectually adroit was the influence of their father. Gurdon Trumbull, Sr. sought always to inculcate the practice and characteristics of careful thinking. It was his wont to generate thought-provoking discussions, where he usually played the Devil's advocate. Statements and opinions of his children were not allowed to stand without sufficient reason. Even then both the opinion and the reasoning behind it were challenged in such a way as to make the children think

⁵ Ibid., 14.

⁶ Ibid., 15-18.

deeper. The long-term results of this familial intercourses were children who matured learning how to think, how to search for truth, and how to win arguments.⁷

Gurdon Trumbull, Sr.'s, interest in government and politics had an influence on his son Henry Clay and also gave him a keen sense of patriotism. Young Trumbull's lifelong heroes were the great American statesmen. In 1833, when he was just three years old, he saw Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren pass through his hometown. Seventy years later, Trumbull wrote: "To this day nothing that my eyes have ever seen in the way of natural scenery equals in impressiveness the sight of a great man and a true one . . . I have seen the Alps and the Rocky Mtns., The Yosemite, Mt. Sinai, the Mountains of Lebanon, Niagara Falls, the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Sea of Galilee, but these were as nothing in my memory compared with President Jackson, my first hero, and the other heroes who have followed him in my human gaze." In an age long before television, the young Trumbull saw John Tyler, Commodore Hull of the frigate "Constitution," made the acquaintance of John Trumbull of Washington's staff, saw John Quincy Adams shortly before he died, saw Winfield Scott, and was a boyhood friend of artist James McNeil Whistler.⁸

⁷ Ibid., 14.

⁸ Ibid., 22-27.

Trumbull had only one year of formal education beyond gradeschool, at the Williston Seminary in East Hampton, Mass. At the age of fourteen, he became so homesick that he never returned to the seminary after that initial year. During that year at Hampton he did make one trek that presaged his life's calling. It was a trip to Northampton, Mass. to visit the grave of the famous missionary David Brainerd.⁹

He was fastidiously organized. This was partly due to his nature, and partly due to an early job experience. From 1849 to 1851 Trumbull worked as a clerk for the treasurer of the Stonington and Providence Railroad, whose president, Cornelius Vanderbilt, was just entering the railroad business. The treasurer's office was on the ground floor of the railroad station, which was in turn was located near the end of a steamboat dock. Consequently, Trumbull learned to do his job as clerk in a hectic and noisy environment. Trumbull later viewed this work experience as one "of value to me to devote myself to my work, without being disturbed by noises." He added that after such training he could just as easily write an editorial sitting on a busy street curb as he could in the privacy of his study. In time, Trumbull became a prodigious writer, and his stint as a clerk also served to help him in the Civil War. He wrote lengthy letters at all times in all types of situations to a variety of

⁹ Ibid., 40-42.

people. He wrote at desks, in tents, on the floor, in the glaring sun, in the shade, even in a leaky tents during heavy rainstorms.¹⁰

The genesis of Trumbull's passion for the ministry began at the age of twenty-two. In the Autumn of 1851, he moved from Stonington to Hartford and began his clerical work for the Stonington and Providence Railroad. Trumbull could best be described at this point as an agnostic who had little if any involvement in a formal religion or denomination. The following Spring, Charles G. Finney held revival meetings in Hartford. Trumbull's close friend, Edmund D. Stanton, himself a professed convert to Christianity, urged Trumbull to attend several of Finney's revival meetings. Finney's theology by this time had a liberalizing influence in New England. Rather than emphasizing the Calvinist's view of God's arbitrary will, Finney centered on His transcendent goodness. Finney also rejected Calvinistic soteriological¹¹ limitations by preaching that salvation was for all men, not just for the elect. As a consequence, Finney laid a strong emphasis upon man to save himself by the exercising of his will-- that is to say, man was indeed an agent in bringing about individual redemption.

¹⁰ Ibid., 43-44.

¹¹ Soteriology is the theology dealing with salvation as affected by Jesus Christ.

This theology implied that that it was man's responsibility to turn to Christ, and turn to Christ Henry Clay Trumbull did. Not only was he converted, but the series of revival meetings laid the groundwork for Trumbull's view of Christianity. For Trumbull, to turn to Christ was a duty, regardless of how one felt. Obedience to God, or acting rightly, would in time bring one's emotions into agreement with one's intellectual decision to be responsible and obedient. Coupled with Trumbull's theology was his strong patriotism. Duty as a spiritual man was not too far removed from duty as a citizen or military man.¹²

Seven years passed before Trumbull entered into fulltime Christian service. Meanwhile, he dabbled in politics and a city mission society in Hartford. In April, 1852, Trumbull volunteered for the Young Men's City Mission Society which Congregational churches had organized. The Mission Society sought the establishment of local Sunday schools, prayer meetings, and other religious services. Trumbull worked at an inner-city mission situated in the midst of taverns, pawn shops, and houses of ill-repute. The mission was a difficult one, especially as the target audience was the street-wise youth.

The man who was the head of Hartford's Mission Society,

¹² Howard Quint and Milton Cantor (eds.), Men, Women, and Issues in American History, (Homewood, Ill., 1975), 120-25; Howard, Life Story, 81-92.

David Hawley, became a positive role model for Trumbull both as a Christian and as a missionary. At this point, Trumbull was filled with a youthful energy, zeal and ideology for the ministry. Hawley was a balancing influence in Trumbull's life. Charles Finney, Trumbull's initial spiritual influence, had emphasized man's duty to respond to Christ and then to follow Christ's mandate to become a fisher of men. On the other hand, Hawley characterized a spirit of encouragement, other-centeredness, outreaching brotherly love, and one who genuinely cared for the needs of others. Trumbull praised Hawley as one of the most important religious teachers in his life. Trumbull tended to be more goal/duty-oriented than people-oriented. It was Hawley's influence that helped Trumbull to be more genuinely concerned for people, as opposed to a concern motivated from duty or responsibility.¹³

In the course of his early missionary work, Trumbull came into contact with other prominent Connecticut men interested in revivals and missionary work in New England. One such gentleman was Dr. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, the famed educator of the deaf. Trumbull, through his relationship with Dr. Gallaudet, met and eventually courted Dr. Gallaudet's daughter, Alice Cogswell Gallaudet. On May 24, 1854, Henry and Alice were married and forged a loving,

¹³ Ibid., 106.

close, lifelong relationship.¹⁴

Trumbull's conversion and new-found desire for mission work did not diminish his inherited interest in politics. As a teenager he had attended political meetings, developed an intelligent understanding of the political process, and affiliated himself with the Whig Party. In the presidential election of 1852 Trumbull campaigned for the Whig Party candidate, Winfield Scott. Four years later, he was in charge of the local canvas in Hartford, was a member of the Fremont Club, and gave numerous speeches throughout Connecticut on the Republican stump. For his efforts in the 1856 election, the Fremont Club gave Trumbull an engraved sterling chalice. In 1858 Trumbull received appointment to the Central Committee of the Connecticut State Republican Committee. He evidently displayed some political acumen, for at the end of the 1858 campaign he was editor of the Hartford Evening Press with a future secretary of the navy Gideon Welles, advising him and William Faxon, future assistant secretary of the navy, as publisher.¹⁵

This stint as editor did not last long. Trumbull resigned from the street mission and the State Republican Committee to enter the vocation that he would occupy the

¹⁴ Dumas Malone (ed.), Dictionary of American Biography, (New York, 1936), IV, 111, X, 8.

¹⁵ Ibid., 137, 144.

remainder of his life. Trumbull went to work as a Sunday School missionary for the American Sunday School Union. Specifically, he was "Sabbath School Missionary" for Connecticut. His main task was to canvas the state to overview the total Sunday school programs and generate new programs if possible. It was a job that was well suited to his personality and characteristics, for it required a man with organizational talents.

A year earlier, Trumbull had accepted a personal project which had given him the vision for the Sunday School vocation. He drew up a set of statistics on Sunday School activity which was presented at the first Connecticut State Convention of Sabbath-school Teachers. When printed, his report was ninety-five pages long and included the names of every town, denomination, the number of conversions reported, average church attendance, and number of deaths. Trumbull then took his statistical report and compared it against the government census for Connecticut. As a result, Trumbull was able to deduce that roughly 65,000 children (or about half the estimated total of children in the state aged 5 to 20) in the state received no Sunday School instruction. However, Trumbull's report had only represented 34% of the state Sunday schools.

After the convention of Sabbath-school teachers in 1858, Trumbull was able to secure additional information from schools not represented in his initial report. This

additional information brought the representation percentage to a more credible eighty-six percent. Consequently, Trumbull re-evaluated his results and determined that there was a population of 115,000 children between the ages of 4 and 18 in Connecticut, 63,000 of which were not in Sunday School. After the convention of 1858, Trumbull's mission was clear to him: to bring as many of those 63,000 into new or existing Sunday schools as possible.¹⁶

Trumbull's personal statistics for that first year of missionary work were impressive. He visited 80 of the 161 towns in Connecticut, travelled more than 10,000 miles on horseback (averaging 27.4 miles a day), visited 250 Sunday schools representing 10 different denominations, wrote over a thousand letters, and made over 300 speeches. In 1859 he began writing for the American Sunday School Union's weekly paper, The Sunday School Times, which was designed to help the local Sunday school worker. Trumbull's articles were in conjunction with his missionary work, and the latter suffered somewhat from the constant writing. In 1859 he only travelled 5,000 miles, wrote 600 letters, and made 182 speeches.¹⁷

Trumbull streamlined his mission work as a result of two years of observations in the field. In essence, he

¹⁶ Ibid., 154-155, 159-163.

¹⁷ Ibid., 159-163, 167, 170.

discovered a greater moral and spiritual depravity in the rural areas of Connecticut than that of the urban areas. Trumbull viewed rural society as less structured, lax, and lonely. He saw cities as being less degenerate because life there was more active, competitive, disciplined, ordered and restrained. He also felt that the rural areas had been largely untouched by the great revivals that had swept New England during the Second Great Awakening, and that the "Burned-Over" districts were primarily urban. Consequently, Trumbull placed a greater emphasis in his missionary work on rural areas, where he could hopefully inculcate higher moral standards for family and social life.¹⁸

A typical day of missionary work for Trumbull involved traveling twenty miles, organizing two Sunday schools, attending several Sunday school services, then riding home to write several letters or an article for the Sunday School Times. This schedule never excluded Sundays, or the "Sabbath," which was the most common expression for Sunday in the 19th Century. Sundays were excellent opportunities to organize Sunday schools and to visit prospective families. From week to week, Trumbull made his "Sabbath" on Mondays. By keeping such a schedule, it is easy to understand why, at the age of thirty, Trumbull-- slender of build and of medium height-- experienced nagging ill-health. Throbbing headaches

¹⁸ Ibid., 169-70.

and chronic nosebleeds, along with periods of feeling weak, did more to inconvenience Trumbull than to debilitate him. Yet when civil war erupted in 1861, his health would prove to be a great frustration to him, and his intense patriotism caused him to long for an active role in defending the Union.¹⁹

In the spring of 1861, Trumbull's younger brother Tom quit his job as a lawyer and enlisted in a Connecticut regiment of heavy artillery. Unhappily for Henry he could not join his brother, even when the governor of Connecticut offered him a commission as a major in one of the volunteer infantry regiments. He simply considered his physical condition to be too tenuous for active campaigning. Weak from ill-health, Trumbull assumed that the first strenuous campaign march would be disastrous. Yet, for the time being, he heartily supported the war and encouraged others to enlist.²⁰

Trumbull had no reservations, spiritually or personally, about the involvement of Christians in war. This was, no doubt, buttressed by his patriotism as well as his conviction that there was a biblical basis for engaging in war under the

¹⁹ Ibid., 171-72, 180.

²⁰ Ibid., 176, 181; The Congregationalist and Christian World, LXXXIII, (1903), 938; Stephen R. Smith (ed.), Record of Service of Connecticut Men in the Army and Navy of the United States, (Hartford, 1889), 120.

command of one's government. That is not to say that Trumbull believed Christians should participate in all wars in obedience to his government simply because God had ordained the government. Trumbull's decision to go to war was not arbitrary but a selective participation in wars which were considered just. In the case of the conflict facing the United States in 1861, Trumbull considered it proper for the Christian to wage war so that the nation might be saved intact and slavery eradicated. That spring, he addressed the State Convention on Sunday Schools concerning this issue of the Christian and war: ". . . patriotism is the legitimate offspring of piety, and in this hour of our nation's peril no class are so loyal, so prompt, so brave or reliable, as Bible students and Christian men . . . even in the light of political economy alone, this work is both profitable and important."

Trumbull urged the members of the American Sunday School Union to educate their students so as to follow the Apostle Paul's admonition in the New Testament on the relation of the Christian to government: "Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God . . . Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God, and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves." Trumbull felt that one should obey his government's call to war because God has given the

authority of war to the government.²¹

From the summer of 1861 to the spring of 1862, Trumbull grew more restless as his health blocked him from military service. While speaking at a mass meeting to raise volunteers for the army, Trumbull stated that "I would go if I could," and that he was "willing to crawl into a hundred-pound Parrot gun, as a wad, and be fired off for my country." However, headaches and nosebleeds persisted, sometimes keeping him at home for twenty-four hour periods. Though restless and sick, Trumbull nonetheless remained faithful to his duties as a Sunday School missionary. If God wanted him in Connecticut rather than the front lines of the national conflict, then he would not betray his duty to his emotions. Up until the time Trumbull entered army service, he kept his grueling pace as a missionary.²²

Then, on August 11, 1862, Trumbull was asked to become chaplain of the 10th Connecticut Volunteers, which was then stationed at New Berne, N.C. He felt that this would be the means by which he could become involved in the war: he would not risk his health through more active service as a soldier, and he would not be giving up his calling as a missionary.

²¹ Howard, Life Story, 176. For a good overview of the issue of the Christian and war, and the main views expressed, see Norman L. Geisler, Ethics: Alternatives and Issues (Grand Rapids, 1971), 158-77.

²² Howard, Life Story, 176, 182.

Consequently, he accepted the post as chaplain. Four weeks later, prior to leaving for his regiment, Trumbull was ordained a minister of the Congregational Church in Hartford. As a chaplain, Trumbull now had the best of both worlds: service to God and service to country.²³

The 10th Connecticut, recruited in Connecticut during the summer of 1861, entered active service on September 30 in Hartford. There the regiment remained for a month until it was transferred to Annapolis, Md., where it became part of the first brigade of Gen. A. E. Burnside's Division. The 10th Connecticut remained in camp at Annapolis for over two months. After honing its infantry drill tactics, it took part in Burnside's North Carolina expedition. On January 2 the regiment embarked on steamers for North Carolina, but spent five full and miserable weeks aboard ship. When the troops finally disembarked on February 7, they were immediately involved in a pitched battle where they not only received their baptism of fire but distinguished themselves by suffering the highest number of casualties for regiments engaged: fifty-six killed and wounded in its first fight, including its colonel.²⁴

²³ Congregationalist and Christian World, LXXXIII, (1903), 938.

²⁴ U. S. War Dept. (comp.), War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, (Washington, 1880-1901), Ser. I, Vol. IX, 78-79, 85-88 (cited hereafter as O. R.; all

Three days later the regiment was back on board transports for another month of waiting until it disembarked for battle at New Berne, N. C. In a March 13 engagement on the Neuse River, the 10th Connecticut again distinguished itself under fire and quickly gained status as a "veteran" regiment. After being secured, New Berne became camp for the 10th Connecticut until autumn. It did take part in a few inland expeditions to Trenton and Tarboro, and it engaged Confederates three times. Yet by the time Henry Clay Trumbull reached the regiment in October, it was primarily involved in garrison duty at New Berne.²⁵

October, 1862, brought many "firsts" to the new chaplain. He preached his first sermon to the 10th Connecticut. His text was from Luke 22:27: "I am among you as he that serveth." Later that same day, he conducted a funeral service and in the evening he visited the men in camp. Trumbull's intentions in trying to create a positive and open atmosphere among those to whom he was to minister was certainly genuine. However, it would take more than a sermon and a visit to convince the soldiers of the 10th Connecticut that he was in fact genuine. A chaplain, like any new recruit, was not automatically accepted as a fellow

references will be to Ser. I unless otherwise noted); Smith, Record of Service, 394.

²⁵ Ibid., 394; O. R., IX, 203, 210, 213-15. At New Berne, the 10th Connecticut lost 7 killed and 17 wounded.

comrade. It remained to be seen how the new chaplain would react under combat conditions before the soldiers would give him their confidence. At the beginning of November, he would get his chance. For a thirty-two year old man who had always considered himself timid and shy in the face of danger, battle would be a formidable psychological and vocational challenge.²⁶

During November 1-12 the 10th Connecticut was on an expedition northward to Washington, North Carolina, then farther north to Williamston. On the morning they left Washington, the New Englanders engaged Confederate troops in a minor skirmish. It may have been minor for the regiment, but for Trumbull the first experience in battle left an indelible impression. Eighteen months later, he was able to recall vividly the experience in a letter to his wife. "All of battle, of danger, of excitement which have since been so familiar were then so strange to me. I was impressed as I can never be again. The field of bivouac with its expiring fires sending out rays of red light to be flashed back from burnished arms and hanging equipments was what I had never seen before. The order to 'load at will,' the rattle of the rammers as cartridges were driven home, the careless laugh or word, of men who might be in an hour weltering corpses,

²⁶ Henry Clay Trumbull, War Memories of an Army Chaplain, (New York, 1898), 68; Howard, Life Story, 189.

thrilled me with strange emotions, and while the first streaks of morning were shown on the eastern sky, I moved about, bewildered, wondering if this were a dream."²⁷

During the course of this fight, Trumbull attempted to perform his missionary mandate by asking a soldier if he were prepared to "meet his God." The young man replied that he did not wish to contemplate death at the very moment for fear he would lose his courage should the fighting become more dangerous. This same soldier, after the expedition, did come to talk with Trumbull about the issue of life after death, and eventually, in the words of Trumbull, he "put his trust in Jesus." Trumbull later baptized the young soldier.²⁸

Prior to his first battle, Trumbull was unsure how he would react under fire. Yet he resolved to stay with the regiment in battle. Consequently, he gave a gun to his Negro servant with orders to shoot him if he began running to the rear. The excitement of the battle caused him to ignore his fears, and he went forward with the regiment under fire. This resolve on the part of Trumbull to go into battle had a positive effect on the soldiers of the 10th Connecticut, and it went a long way to win their respect and confidence. As one soldier said to Trumbull on the march home: "You aint

²⁷ O. R., XVIII, 22, 56.

²⁸ Henry Clay Trumbull, wartime letter No. 103, Jan. 22, 1864. Cited hereafter as Trumbull Letter.

like some of your brother officers, off hunting whiskey and seeing what you can steal."²⁹

During December 11-14, the 10th Connecticut made one more foray to Goldsboro, in the interior of North Carolina. On December 14, in an attempt by the Federal forces to save a bridge on the Neuse River that was being burned by the Confederates, the Connecticut troops charged the Confederate position. They were able to save the bridge and capture a stand of colors and several prisoners. Yet they paid a heavy price, losing 90 men killed and wounded out of 340 engaged. It is fair to surmise that such courage on the part of the regiment could only have made Trumbull's ministry, especially that of giving aid to the wounded, busier and more somber.³⁰

A final item should be noted concerning Trumbull's health at the end of that year. He had assumed that the role of chaplain would be less demanding than that of the infantryman, therefore justifying his enlistment in the army. His doctors, however, were less sanguine and did not share Trumbull's optimism. They told him before he left that they expected him to live but a few weeks in army service. Paradoxically, Trumbull's resolve to remain with the troops under fire and to share their privation did not mitigate against the conditions that he and his doctors had feared

²⁹ Howard, Life Story, 189.

³⁰ O. R., XVIII, 56, 59, 83-84.

would ruin his health. Incredibly, army life did wonders for his health. At the end of the first expedition to Washington, N. C., he felt better than he did before he started. He had even gained 4 pounds! In three years of service during the Civil War, Trumbull would end up a healthier man than when he enlisted, and went on to live to an impressive old age. His improved health after military service becomes even more amazing when viewed in light of the experiences Trumbull would endure in 1863, his first full year in service.³¹

³¹ Howard, Life Story, 191.

CHAPTER II: VISIONS OF JEREMIAH

In January, 1863, the 10th Connecticut, 24th Massachusetts, 52nd and 104th Pennsylvania were united to form the Second Brigade in the First Division of the XVIII Corps. As part of the Department of the South under Maj. Gen. David Hunter, the First Division took part in a campaign in late January against Morris Island and Charleston, S. C.

Trumbull's personal accounts and letters for the first half of 1863 are, unfortunately, missing. (During those months he did manage to write a letter every two days to his wife). However, enough is known about the 10th Connecticut during this time to construct Trumbull's movements. Under Gen. John G. Foster, the First Division of the XVIII Corps disembarked in early February on Saint Helena Island, which is roughly forty miles south of Charleston. There the division camped for the winter, worked on its drill, and waited for spring and the campaigning season. On April 9, the 10th Connecticut moved up the coast to the Edisto Inlet in preparation for taking the Rebel works on Seabrook Island. The attack occurred the next day. Under the protection of a naval monitor's guns, the 10th Connecticut quickly captured the island, which became its home until the middle of

July.³²

During the military movements of the regiment in the first half of 1863, a major aspect of Trumbull's army experience was also taking place. Shortly after joining the regiment, Trumbull had begun cultivating a friendship with the regiment's adjutant, Henry Ward Camp. Trumbull had known Camp in Hartford before the war. Camp had been a law student when the war began, and in November, 1861, he accepted a commission as a second lieutenant in the 10th Connecticut. On August 5, 1862, Camp was promoted to adjutant and retained that rank until September, 1864, when he was promoted to major. When Trumbull joined the regiment, Camp had been its adjutant a little over two months.³³

The friendship that Trumbull and Camp developed is one seldom seen in the modern world. Unfortunately for our time, as C. S. Lewis stated, "it has actually become necessary . . . to rebut the theory that every firm and serious friendship is really homosexual." The relationship between these two men could best be described by the New Testament Greek words philos and hetairos. The former was an adjective used often as a noun to mean loved, dear, or friendly, and it was a term

³² Henry Clay Trumbull, The Knightly Soldier, A Biography of Major Henry Ward Camp, Tenth Connecticut Volunteers, (Boston, 1865), 119-20; Smith, Record of Service, 395; O. R., XIV, 434, 461.

³³ Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 18, 38-41, 45-7, 98-9, 294; Howard, Life Story, 195; Smith, Record of Service, 398.

of endearment. The latter is a noun meaning comrade, companion, partner, and it was used as a term of kindly address. This type of companionship described people who were doing something together or achieving a goal. In the case of Trumbull and Camp, their companionship developed from their mutual views on religion and their devotion to their country's service.³⁴

The two men held common interests, while at the same time possessed character qualities and strengths which were different but complementary, thus bringing something of a balance to their friendship. Trumbull's strengths as a minister stemmed from his many experiences in dealing with people. The well-educated Camp, on the other hand, drew mainly upon a logical and well-cultivated intellect. One man was inclined to apply logic to situations, the other tended to view the practical aspects of dealing with people as he contemplated the same situations.³⁵

The common bond in their friendship, and that which made them fast comrades, was their shared interest and devotion to the spiritual dimension of life. Camp was probably Trumbull's biggest source of encouragement and support for

³⁴ C. S. Lewis, The Four Loves. (New York, 1960), 87-127; W. E. Vine, An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, (Old Tappan, N. J., 1966), 132; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 80-82, 89-91, 110-11.

³⁵ Ibid., 99.

his chaplaincy. Besides being a close friend, he faithfully attended the formal and informal services, prayer meetings and devotionals held by Trumbull for the men of the 10th Connecticut. As adjutant, he often used his influence as an officer to encourage the men of the regiment to attend the regimental religious meetings. Camp also took the responsibility of establishing and coordinating many of the religious meetings. In short, he acted as something of an aide to the chaplain. Trumbull responded in kind by helping Camp with some of his functional duties as an adjutant. Both men involved themselves in the duties and responsibilities of the other, militarily and spiritually.³⁶

When the 10th Connecticut was stationed south of Charleston, during the winter of 1863 in relative inactivity, the two men were together quite often. In time they became known in the regiment as "the twins". Their level of honesty and trust allowed them to bring their discussions to a point of intimate sharing of life's problems, including those which were personal, moral, and spiritual.³⁷

In the Spring of 1863, the Confederacy was still clinging to four major but blockaded seaports: Charleston, Galveston, Mobile and Wilmington. For both political and strategic reasons, Federals deemed it expedient to close

³⁶ Ibid., 115; Howard, Life Story, 195-97.

³⁷ Ibid.; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 100.

those ports as soon as practicable. Militarily, the blockading fleets around Charleston, once the city was captured, could be released to track down the highly successful Rebel commerce raiders. The loss of Charleston, (which had been the heart and soul of the prewar secessionist movement in the South) would also be a tremendous psychological blow to the Confederate military effort. Conversely, the fall of Charleston would have the opposite affect upon a Northern public and press clamoring for victories. The Union navy too had a personal objective to achieve: to prove that its monitors and other armored ships were as invincible against coastal forts as they were against enemy ships. Rear Adm. Samuel Dupont, recently outfitted with new monitors and the casemated warship New Ironsides, was expected to achieve a stunning naval conquest much like those that had preceded him at Roanoke Island, New Orleans and Memphis.³⁸

Unfortunately for DuPont and the infantry force under Gen. Quincy Gillmore, the defenses of Charleston proved to be more than adequate to stave off the combined naval/infantry attack and subsequent siege operations. On April 7, Dupont's naval assault took place unsuccessfully,

³⁸ Allan Nevins, The War for the Union: War Becomes Revolution, 1862-1863, (New York, 1960), II, 430; James G. Randall and David H. Donald, The Civil War and Reconstruction, (Lexington, Mass., 1969), 451.

with the batteries in and around the harbor outshooting the ships almost 16 to 1 at point-blank range. The Navy retreated with second thoughts about using armored ships to attack well-defended fortresses.

On July 14, the Second Brigade left Seabrook Island on transports for James Island. Four days later, the full First Division marched across Coles' Island, crossed over to Folley Island, and there took transports to Morris Island. All three of these islands are situated on the coast and appear as one large peninsula just south of Charleston. Morris Island guarded the main ship channel leading into the city from the south, and it was on the northern tip of the island that the Confederates had constructed an impressive earthen fortress known as Battery Wagner.³⁹

From July 11 to July 18, Federals launched a series of infantry attacks against Battery Wagner. The first Union assault gained a toehold on the parapet but was eventually driven off under heavy fire. Two more assaults were made within the week; yet unfortunately for the Union forces, they met with less success than the first. The 10th Connecticut was ordered, along with its brigade, to take part in the third assault on July 18, but the order to charge was

³⁹ Smith, Record of Service, 395; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 135, 150; George B. Davis, Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, (New York, 1983), Plate CXXXI.

rescinded just as the column came under fire.⁴⁰

On July 19, the 10th Connecticut relieved the 54th Massachusetts on the Federal front before Battery Wagner. The 54th was the regiment that became notable for two things: it was one of the first instances when black troops were engaged in battle, and their courageous assault on Battery Wagner resulted in heavy casualties. The 10th Connecticut had sustained its own share of hardships. By the time the regiment had reached Morris Island, it had experienced an average of thirty-two per cent sick, mainly because the climate and marshy environment of Seabrook Island had been so unhealthy. Trumbull himself had become ill prior to crossing over to Coles' Island. Had it not been for Camp, he might not have been able to keep up with the movement of the regiment.⁴¹

As the 10th Connecticut passed along the outside of the shore of Morris Island on its way to relieve the 54th Massachusetts, Trumbull captured on paper the scene that was unfolding. "The [New] Ironsides has already moved over the bar and taken position to open the fight. The five monitors are near her, & just back of them are wooden gunboats and

⁴⁰ Herman Hattaway and Archer Jones, How the North Won, (Urbana, Ill., 1983), 426; Smith, Record of Service, 395; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 154-55.

⁴¹ Smith, Record of Service, 395; O. R., XXVIII, Pt. 1, 327, 362; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 142-43.

mortar schooners . . . Forts Sumter, and Moultrie, and Johnson, and Ripley, and Castle Pinckney, and Batteries Wagner and Greg _ at Cummings Point _ and its other defenses, are close at hand . . . The attack in Charleston is in progress . . . The Ironsides has opened fire, and now pouring forth a perfect shower of iron hail. The turrets of the queer little monitors are all belching fire and smoke from their enormous guns . . . Fort Wagner, near the upper end of the island we are to land upon, is the focus of all this fire from the water, and also of that from the heavy siege guns and mortars of our newly erected batteries on land."⁴²

Soon after the bombardment, the 10th Connecticut went ashore and waited for its orders. The soldiers had hoped for a period of rest, but orders to "fall in" quickly changed the anticipation of rest to a mood of anxiety and pensiveness, especially as they considered the well-fortified Wagner. Trumbull wrote: "Many of those now standing here in all the flush and hope of early manhood must bite the dust ere this night has close fairly upon us, and many a limb must be mangled, and cry of agony forced out, and many a stout heart tested, and deed of valor performed, and noble soul tried to its utmost endurance, ere any of these can return to seek the

⁴² Henry Clay Trumbull, from his Prison Journal, page 2, entry of July 30, 1863. Cited hereafter as Prison Journal.

much needed and longed for rest."⁴³

Prior to the end of the naval bombardment, Trumbull decided that his best duties as chaplain would be to care for the wounded who were being sent back to the rear to a makeshift hospital on the shore. He gave aid to the doctors in tending to the wounded, along with giving spiritual aid and comfort. As he helped the soldiers, he talked of Jesus and prayed with them. They appreciated the fact that a chaplain was there to help assuage their fears.

While helping a wounded Ohio colonel to the makeshift hospital, Trumbull stumbled across the adjutant of the 6th Connecticut, Walter Fitch. Trumbull winced because the young Fitch had been "shot through the chest. I love him for the place he fills and for his nativity. I fear he has fought his last battle. He tells me he trusts in and prays to Jesus. I pray with him briefly, there on that bloody shore, and turn to another." Trumbull turned to other soldiers. One had lost an arm; another had been disemboweled; both men were dying. At the sight of so many mangled bodies Trumbull felt "a sense of weakness and dependence on God's strength comes at such a time." He added that "a call is to plea with and for one who is just to enter the Divine presence and give an account of his earthly stewardship. Again and again do I pray with dying ones here to-night, and often do I induce dying ones

⁴³ Ibid.; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 150-52.

to pray for themselves . . . Some tell me how strong is now their trust in the crucified Redeemer, and how precious is his presence to their souls in their hour of trial; and others cry with heart piercing agony that He is not their accepted Saviour. Ah, how this racks my body, brain and heart, and how much more of such work is there than I anticipated."⁴⁴

After a restless sleep, Trumbull awoke in the camp of the some engineers who had been kind enough to give the chaplain a tent and a blanket when Trumbull could not find his regiment in the darkness. As soon as Trumbull linked up with Camp that morning, the two went to the front lines to rejoin their regiment. Feeling relieved that the 10th Connecticut had not seen action and therefore was spared further casualties, they laid down for a nap under an artillery platform. When they awoke, they heard that a flag of truce existed between the lines so that the wounded could be gathered and the dead buried. Several hours later, the major of the 10th Connecticut informed Trumbull and Camp that an armistice had indeed been established.

Trumbull did not hesitate to view this as an opportunity to minister to the wounded, to be "a means of comfort and grace as they are being lifted from the hard bed where they

⁴⁴ Prison Journal, 2; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 155; Record of Service, 260. Walter Fitch survived the seemingly mortal wound and was discharged a year later.

have groaned away the weary night." Camp accompanied him in the hope that he might see some college classmates who were now serving in the Confederate army. Trumbull took along "a small flask of brandy for the wounded who may need the stimulus, and my pocket Bible as my always timely friend and helper."⁴⁵

However, as Trumbull and Camp discovered, no armistice had actually existed. All that had been agreed upon between the two armies was a designated line behind which each side could remove their dead and wounded. Not realizing this, the two men inadvertently wandered into a detail of Confederate soldiers who in turn led them to a group of Confederate officers. These officers were startled to see two Union officers beyond the truce line. Trumbull and Camp suddenly became prisoners of war. To surrender in the heat of battle is one thing, but to become a prisoner by walking unknowingly into the the enemy's lines is a cruel embarrassment. In the few hours immediately after their capture, Trumbull and Camp hoped that the mistake and misunderstanding would be resolved quickly and that they would return to their lines.⁴⁶

The Confederates, however, thought that the two Union officers were spies attempting to determine the extent and

⁴⁵ Prison Journal, 3; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 156; Smith, Record of Service, 395.

⁴⁶ Prison Journal, 4; Trumbull, Memories, 256-57; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 157.

location of the Confederate defenses around Battery Wagner. This was not true, but the Confederate general commanding Battery Wagner did not want to take the responsibility of releasing the two would-be spies if they had valuable information. Therefore he remanded Trumbull and Camp to higher authorities in Charleston.

The two were blindfolded as they went past the Battery to Cummings Point, then unblindfolded, and held until nightfall when they were placed on a steamer to Charleston. Once in Charleston, a provost examined Trumbull and Camp before sending them to the Charleston jail with eighteen other prisoners. All of them were crammed into a single cell. In what became his prison journal, Trumbull penned his thoughts. "The heavy door is closed upon us, the lock grates in its socket, in thick darkness we are now fairly imprisoned, and a full sense of our new position presses heavily upon us." Trumbull's only consolation that first night was knowing that if God wanted him in jail, at least he could be there with his friend Henry Camp. The chaplain knelt and prayed, asking God's blessing on them all, then tried to find a comfortable spot on the crowded floor where he could sleep.⁴⁷

As the reality of a lengthy prison stay began to

⁴⁷ Prison Journal, 4; Trumbull, Memories, 257-60; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 158.

dominate Trumbull's thoughts, he began to fear for his health. He had been sick, he felt weak, and he assumed that the privations of imprisonment would only exacerbate his condition. "This is the season of heat, and that of disease approaches . . . and I may be kept in prison for many months if I live as long." To make matters worse, Trumbull's devotional reading this second day of captivity was from Jeremiah 22:10,12 "Do not weep for the dead or mourn for him, but weep continually for the one who goes away; for he will never return or see his native land . . . but in the place where they led him captive, there he will die and not see this land again."

This pushed Trumbull's spirits to a new low, and resting his head on Henry Camp's knees so that no one could see what he was doing, he wept freely. "And now Henry [Camp] shows himself my friend as so many times before . . . He speaks encouraging words, pictures a bright future, whispers truths of consolation, and in every way labors to inspire me with confidence and hope. He keeps me from utter despair . . .

. "48

Soon thereafter, Trumbull, along with Camp, went before Gen. P. G. T. Beauregard to answer some questions. Trumbull and nineteen privates were ordered to the hospital of "Yankee wounded" on Queen Street in Charleston. One hundred and

⁴⁸ Prison Journal, 5.

sixty-three wounded Federal soldiers had just arrived, following the latest attack on Battery Wagner. "Oh what a sight meets my eye!" Trumbull wrote, as many of the wounded men had survived for a night unattended on the battlefield. They had been trampled upon, received additional wounds as they lay on the ground, and "the blood from their wounds saturated their clothing or coagulated on their faces and hands." They were, to Trumbull, "in shocking plight, in worse condition and with more severe and frightful wounds than any crowd of sufferers I ever put eyes upon."

Trumbull did not blame the Confederates for this carnage. He recognized the circumstances of war surrounding the exceptional plight of the wounded. He had the highest praise for "eight of the best surgeons of Charleston . . . doing their utmost for the relief of our poor boys . . . Oh how rapidly they perform their task, and how the legs and arms pile up on the ground about them."⁴⁹

Again, as Trumbull moved from one man to the next, giving aid and comfort, he also gave spiritual counsel. Most of the wounded Union soldiers were surprised to see a chaplain from their own army tending to them in a Confederate hospital. Surprise then gave way to appreciation, as men were willing, if not eager, to talk about their spiritual condition. To those who indicated that they had had little

⁴⁹ Prison Journal, 5; Trumbull, Memories, 263-66.

interest in Christianity, Trumbull told them that Jesus was ready "to hear his prayers for himself, and to intercede for him with the God against whom he has sinned."

In the physical and mental anguish of most of the men, the wounded, especially self-proclaimed non-Christians, revealed much to Trumbull about their sordid pasts, and expressed guilt for their waywardness. An eighteen-year-old soldier, "shot in several places," was laid aside to die because the surgeons determined that he was beyond saving. The surgeons, using chloroform, had anesthetized the pain, but the effect of the drug left the man confused. He thought his leg had been removed. Finally, he realized the worst. "Oh it is sad to see him--so recently a well formed, strong, and trustworthy soldier, full of life and hope, now breathing away in despair the last fleeting moments of his earthly existence . . . Earnestly I seek to lead this man's thoughts to Jesus, but he is so bound to earth, that neither prayer nor exhortation seems to lift him away from time and sense." To another soldier Trumbull took the responsibility of telling him that he was about to die, so that he "could prepare for the steadily approaching hour of death." In agony the soldier replied, "Oh I am not ready to die . . . I've been such a sinner." He continued by telling the chaplain how guilty he felt about the sinful ways of the last few years of his life. Trumbull spoke of Jesus the Redeemer who was sufficient for his sins, prayed with the soldier, and

encouraged him to accept the Savior and to ask for forgiveness. In dying voice the young man prayed to God. As his life ebbed, he earnestly thanked Trumbull for being the means of his conversion. For the chaplain, such encounters "try the nerve, and rock the soul, especially when on every side is seen blood running like water, or ghastly fly blown wounds, or heaps of newly sundered limbs, or pale, dying sufferers." As night fell and all the operations were completed, Trumbull finally lay down to sleep.⁵⁰

As if spending twenty-four hours in a sea of carnage were not disheartening enough, the next day Trumbull learned that Camp had been transferred to a prison in Columbia, S. C. Trumbull remained in the hospital for four days before returning to the Charleston jail. To his shock, Trumbull found himself in solitary confinement. A night in such confinement was particularly hard on Trumbull. "How can I stand this? Shall I live here long in such a place and plight?" The solitary confinement even affected his usually strong spiritual resolve. "I try to read my Bible, but am unable to fasten my thoughts on a book. I seek to pray, but my mind wanders even from God — my only hope."

In a day's time he was given two meals, both consisting of bread and corn coffee. The next morning a general on Beauregard's staff briefly questioned him. Back in solitary

⁵⁰ Prison Journal, 5-6; Trumbull, Memories, 125-29.

confinement, Trumbull again strove in vain to pray and read his Bible. He wound up pacing his cell. He calculated that he walked approximately a little over a half-mile in his cell. Later that afternoon he was returned to the cell where he and Camp had originally been held.⁵¹

Two days later, on July 23, Trumbull and a naval surgeon, named Dr. Luck were taken to the Richlands prison in Columbia. Soon after arriving at the facility, Trumbull was reunited with the redoubtable Camp. The occasion was a happy one for the two men, and they exchanged accounts of experiences over the past week. A rumor that the officers, excluding Trumbull and Dr. Luck, were to be sent on to the Libby prison in Richmond, Va., briefly dampened their spirits. "Before dark, the order came as feared. . . . Oh how sad were Henry and I that evening as we sat together telling of what had intervened since we were in Charleston, side by side, and speaking of the possibilities of the future. It seemed to me my heart would break, and I had no expectation of surviving my imprisonment." The next morning the orders were rescinded, and their anxiety over being separated was assuaged for the time being.⁵²

The Richlands prison was a qualitative improvement in comparison to the overcrowded city jail in Charleston. Eight

⁵¹ Prison Journal, 7; Trumbull, Memories, 267-71.

⁵² Prison Journal, 7; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 163.

officers shared two rooms that were connected by a case opening. Two large, bunked, pine beds were in one of the rooms. Four officers shared each bed. A single oak door, fastened by an ordinary lock, secured them in their rooms. The hallway connecting the rooms opened to a recreational yard "enclosed by a high fence with the boards so beveled and lapped as to prevent peeking into or from it." Cooking rooms were on either side of the recreational yard, and included a source of fresh but undrinkable water. Near the prison was the town hall, whose spire could be seen by the prisoners, as well as the city market-place, where the officers could procure extra food from vendors.⁵³

Soldiers guarding the prison were Confederate veterans whose wounds kept them from participating in active campaigning with the main armies. Consequently, they sympathized with the plight of the Union soldiers now in captivity and granted them many personal favors. Prisoners were able to purchase fresh milk, coffee, biscuits, cooked meats, and more importantly, the fresh fruits and vegetables containing the nutrients so essential for warding off sickness. Trumbull and Camp, after waking in the morning and going out to the hydrant to wash up, would then be on the "look out for old Maggie, a reliable darkey from the market, who is usually as early as 7 with hot coffee for us both, and

⁵³ Prison Journal, 7; Trumbull, Memories, 273-75.

perhaps warm biscuits, a mutten chop or fried chicken, and cucumbers and tomatoes."⁵⁴

Trumbull and Camp quickly settled into the routine of prison life at Richlands. After a leisurely breakfast that would take several hours to prepare and eat, the two men read the Bible together, then helped to clean the rooms and wrote letters home. From 10 to 11 a.m., their favorite time of day, they had use of the recreational yard. "None of us wears coats or vests, and scarce any have whole pants. When permitted to go out there is a rush through the hall and at times it seems as if a set of wild school boys were at their recess." They played leap-frog, wrestled, gymnastics and other games, then the men returned to their rooms. If possible, they ordered another meal from Maggie.

The afternoons were again spent in leisure, followed by another period of recreation. As night fell the men would sit and converse in the darkness until a watchman in the nearby town hall tower cried out the time of nine o'clock. Trumbull then led the men in prayer, and they retired to bed. Sleep was not always restful. Mosquitos, fleas, and "bed-bugs" seemed to assault them from every side, but the most troublesome insect, according to Trumbull, were the

⁵⁴ Prison Journal, 7, 8; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 166-67. Maggie, with no prior knowledge that Trumbull and Camp were referred to as "the twins," began affectionately calling the two men "de mates." Trumbull, Memories, 276-77.

flies. They seemed most persistent just after dawn, with their own special reveille for the prisoners.⁵⁵

Mixed into this regimen, Trumbull began to hold regular religious services for his fellow inmates. He found this to be a strange experience. He wrote: "I have often addressed the inmates of jail, and prison houses, in the line of my mission, but not until now have I spoken in full sympathy with those about me in such a place of confinement. It seems odd to preach as a prisoner to fellow prisoners, with a guard standing over me, his rifle loaded and bayonet fixed."

The captain of the guard at Richlands was was "a Christian" man who allowed Trumbull to preach twice on Sundays, first to the enlisted men and then to the officers. He also gave Trumbull and the men a hymnbook, which was their only source of music until they procured a music book and two more hymnals in October. In that same month the naval and marine contingent that had been captured in Charleston harbor were transferred to Richlands, and Trumbull added a third service to his Sunday preaching schedule.⁵⁶

What Trumbull said to the men in these sermons is, unfortunately, not included in his prison journal. No doubt he sought to encourage the men spiritually and psychologically in their environment. Yet Trumbull was

⁵⁵ Prison Journal, 8.

⁵⁶ Prison Journal, 8, 11; Trumbull, Memories, 25-27.

openly candid about his own personal experience with God during this time. His devotional readings during this time were came from the Old Testament book of Jeremiah. This portion of scripture had real life similarities for Trumbull: Jeremiah was the great prophet who foretold of the Israelite's kingdom of Judah's 6th century B.C. fall to the Babylonian empire, destruction of Jerusalem, and subsequent removal and captivity of the nation of Judah in Babylon for seventy years. In 536 B.C. the Israelites returned to Jerusalem and rebuilt the Temple and Walls, but not before an entire generation had died in captivity. For Trumbull, the possibility of dying in captivity was all too real and frightening. His often literal interpretation of his daily devotional readings buttressed that belief. Trumbull called it "the remarkable adaptation of passages in my daily Bible reading to my condition, state of mind, recent experiences, or prospects . . ." Already mentioned was the passage he read from Jeremiah when he first got to jail in Charleston. The next day in the hospital he read: "Lift up your voice in Basham; Cry out also from Abarim; For all your lovers have been crushed. . . . And your lovers will go into captivity . . . into another country where you were not born, and there you will die. But as for the land to which they desire to return, they will not return to it." This passage did little to encourage him, especially in the midst of the bloody

makeshift hospital.⁵⁷

On the first Sunday in August, after hearing that a commission had been established by President Lincoln for the exchange of prisoners, Trumbull's evening devotion was: "Lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people . . . and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers . . . I will save thee from afar . . . for I am with thee." As they continued to hear that the commissioners were meeting Trumbull read "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I promised."

On September 1, a flood of Charlestonian refugees who apparently believed that their city was about to fall deluged Columbia. Watching this from his prison window, Trumbull read as his text that day: "Remove out of the midst of Babylon . . . for lo, I will raise, and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country; and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken." Such symbolism began to lift Trumbull's spirits.⁵⁸

The lowest point for the chaplain came sometime in late

⁵⁷ Jeremiah 22:20,22,26-27; Howard F. Vos, Beginnings In the Old Testament (Chicago, 1975), 156; J. D. Douglas (ed.), The New Bible Dictionary (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1979), 606-11.

⁵⁸ Jeremiah 30:3,10,11; 33:14; 50:8,9.

August or early September. He had been experiencing an extended cold and fever when his wife wrote that his youngest daughter, Fanny, who had been sick herself for close to a month, had died. Though confident that it was "well with the child", Trumbull tried to couch his mourning in as positive a note as he possibly could. Yet he confided to his wife the difficulty of trying to appear positive. "I was oppressed when I wrote last on this [prison journal]. I am still weighed down. I was then, without hope and I am not yet totally enshrouded in gloom. Then, I sought to write cheerfully. I wish to do so now. I then, avoided the full expression of my feelings. That must still be my course."⁵⁹

As always, Henry Camp was there to serve his ill friend through such means as reading his daily passages of

⁵⁹ Prison Journal, 9. The phrase "it is well" [with the child] has two possible sources. In II Kings 4:18-37 the prophet Elisha encounters a Shunammite woman whose son has died. The son had been promised to her by Elisha in exchange for her kind treatment to Elisha as he passed through her region. When the son died of a sunstroke, the woman went to Elisha to get him to raise the boy from the dead. Her faith in Elisha was supreme, for when she approached his servant and was asked by him about the state of the boy, who had recently died, she replied, "it is well" (II Kings 4:26). Her reasoning seems to have centered around the principle that if Elisha could bring life out of her "barrenness" of womb, then he could easily restore the dead son to life. Indeed, Elisha was able to accomplish this miracle as he marveled at the woman's faith. Trumbull was referring, no doubt, to the spiritual state of his deceased daughter, when he stated "it is well." A second source for Trumbull's statement could be from the nineteenth-century hymn "It is Well With My Soul." Most likely, Trumbull's reference was to the former.

scripture. On October 12, the recitation was from Ezekiel 20:17 and concerned the inconsistent faithfulness of God's people. "Nevertheless mine eyes spared them from destroying them, neither did I make an end of them in the wilderness." That evening the New Testament plenary was I Peter 5:6-7: "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your cares upon him, for he careth for you."

It seemed as though Trumbull's devotions were finally mitigating against his feelings. Then, several days later, the prisoners were informed that exchanges of officers had ended. Trumbull wrote: "That was gloomy intelligence enough. We were all downcast." Once again he turned to his Bible in Ezekiel and read: "Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the Lord have spoken and will do it."

Obeing God rather than his feelings, Trumbull made supplication to God for strength. Three days later, he saw a copy of the order calling for his exchange. "Oh how my lack of faith was rebuked for this! Why did I doubt that God cared for me as he cares for all his children, and that I might confidently cast all my cares upon him."⁶⁰

At the end of his incarceration Trumbull reflected that "imprisonment is a horrid condition for any man." He was

⁶⁰ Prison Journal, 11-12.

referring to the feelings of despair, the loneliness and longings for wife and children, and the loss of personal freedom that confinement as a prisoner of war bring. Though it is true that Trumbull believed that imprisonment to be psychologically "horrid," it would appear from his journal that his physical care and well-being was, at this time for a Confederate prison, fairly good. Men in this environment, though it leaves much to be desired, were still allowed the freedom to to be expressive and to enjoy what they could of their prison experiences in many ways. Perhaps this was due to the fact that Trumbull was an officer who may have been treated better than the imprisoned enlisted men.

Trumbull also had a source of money which allowed him to purchase extra food and minor conveniences such as a ticking which he and Camp stuffed with pine litter and "corn fodder". As Trumbull put it, "now we rest in luxurious style, especially since the jailor has furnished us with a blanket for our exclusive use." In all fairness to the Confederates in Columbia, the Richlands prison was clean, spacious, well-ventilated; the men were allowed to bathe and wash their clothes, and at this time, the prison was able to meet the nutritional requirements of the men to keep them reasonably healthy.⁶¹

The prisoners sought entertainment in a variety of ways.

⁶¹ Prison Journal, 7; Trumbull, Memories, 275.

The captain of the guard, whom Trumbull described as "a Christian man and a gentleman," loaned the men a hymnbook, and gave them a copy of Shakespeare's plays. The result of these gifts was the formation of a group of amateur thespians who acted out the plays "in every style of performance, and in every possible voice." The book of Shakespeare was but one example showing the overwhelming importance and interest of any book that the prisoners could obtain. A couple of the officers were able to purchase books written in German. This provided the men with a dual return for their investment. It happened that two lieutenants with them were German, and they translated the books so that they could be enjoyed by all. In addition to reading the books, and a small class for the study of German began.⁶²

Federal prisoners also practiced manual dexterity by building small wooden items for their convenience and pleasure. One of their first undertakings at Richlands was carving a chess set. Henry Camp was especially skilled at the game, having once been president of the Chess Club at Yale. Trumbull said that Camp "keeps up his well earned reputation. He has good players to contend with, but he beats them all." As an "outbuilding" was being put up in the prison yard, some of the officers procured scraps of wood and built themselves a small table, which they used mainly for

⁶² Prison Journal, 8; Trumbull, Memories, 281.

playing cards. Along with this they were able to construct some shelves for personal items which accumulated "even in jail."⁶³

From their window during the day, the men could see the center of town, especially a kiosk where the current news was posted. Although the print was not legible from such a distance, the men could watch the readers and get a general idea of the state of the war. "If they cluster about it, talking together, rubbing their hands and smiling . . . our hearts are saddened for we know that it bodes no good to the old flag. . . ." However, the prisoners could take comfort if those reading the papers showed signs of concern by shaking their heads and appearing deep in thought.

Also near the prison was the town hall, where local concerts were performed in the evenings "so near our quarters as to give us their benefit." The prisoners crowded near their windows to listen in keen interest to pleasant music which quickly reminded them of the times of peace, of home and of loved ones. One night in particular the men were especially touched by the singing of "Home Sweet Home," and many were moved to tears and prayer as they longed for their homes and families.⁶⁴

Always, there was social intercourse which provided them

⁶³ Prison Journal, 10; Trumbull, Memories, 281-82.

⁶⁴ Prison Journal, 10, Oct. 7, 8.

with the best means of passing their time in prison. Trumbull described the men at times as "chained tigers, fairly exhausting ourselves in vain efforts to regain our liberty, not by plans of escape but, by the mere power of will and desire." As might be expected, some of the prisoners grew depressed-- whereupon they were cheered up by the others, and vice versa. In the Autumn when the weather turned cooler, prisoners had fires in their quarters. Around their small fireplaces they would talk through the evenings, telling tales, ghost stories, holding evening devotions, and reminiscing about home.

One such evening, Trumbull and Camp sat together and spoke of what was probably taking place at their homes at that moment. As they described the activities of their families in their familiar home surroundings, they both agreed that their loved ones were most likely thinking of them as well. As they struck upon this thought, their emotions quickly turned into sorrow and their conversation on the subject ended to keep from depressing them any further. "Again and again" Trumbull wrote, they had to veer from such thoughts and "turn to other things" lest they forget that as prisoners and prisons go, theirs was a rather comfortable environment. By attending to their "present duty, present enjoyments or relaxation, leaving all else to God our only hope" they could put behind them the anxiety and worry over their families which were so far removed from them

but so much a part of their thoughts.

The soldiers' relationships to one another in prison was the cement that kept them from their longings to be free, and allowed them some enjoyment. "A joke is laughed at, even here, a good story is appreciated. A comical sight is an object of merriment. We can sit about the fire in the evening and find pleasure in the cheerful songs of the navy officers, or in the lively talk of each other about better, brighter days of auld lang syne."⁶⁵

In mid-October Trumbull learned that his exchange had been secured. Finally, on Friday, November 6, he began the tedious process of being exchanged. His greatest lament was leaving his good friend Camp behind in Columbia. The two men had hoped that they might spend Thanksgiving together in Hartford. Now the future of their relationship was moving into a vast unknown. Trumbull feared that he might never see his friend again, yet he left the issue up to the providence of God. Their four-month stay in prison had only made them closer friends. Trumbull felt as though he owed much to Camp, who had comforted, cheered and ministered to him in the "solitude and fearful wretchedness" of prison life. Without Camp's presence, Trumbull conjectured that he might have died

⁶⁵ Prison Journal, 8, 10-11.

while imprisoned.⁶⁶

The first leg of his release from Richlands was a railroad passage to Richmond, where he and other Federals to be exchanged were temporarily held at the infamous Libby Prison. Again, Trumbull and Dr. Luck, the physician being exchanged with him, were treated well by the guards who escorted them to the capital. "Confederate officers invariably treated us with courtesy, even while expressing their determination never to submit to our govt. We had very pleasant conversations with them as we came along."

Trumbull's entourage went through the city of Richmond on its way to Libby. While traveling through the public square, Trumbull took good note of the "fine statue of Henry Clay." The cost of the war was already telling on the city of Richmond, as Trumbull and the guard stopped at a restaurant to get a cup of rye coffee. A single cup cost a dollar and a half. Afterwards, they were taken to Libby Prison and held there for two days--enough time for Trumbull to later make a lengthy description of the character of prison life at Libby.⁶⁷

On the morning of November 11, Chaplain Trumbull was busy writing at a desk in Libby Prison when a Confederate

⁶⁶ Prison Journal, 13; Trumbull, Knighly Soldier, 166, 168; Trumbull, Memories, 289.

⁶⁷ Prison Journal, 13-15; Trumbull, Memories, 290, 291-99.

officer summoned him to leave. He was literally whisked to a landing on the James River, placed aboard a steamer flying a white flag, and then taken forty miles downstream to meet a Union boat at City Point. He had to spend the night aboard the steamer--one more night "beneath the Confederate emblem of treason and rebellion." With the first light of the morning Trumbull finally saw the "banner of the free:" the Union flag flying over the flag of truce transport New York. Beaming with patriotic pride, Trumbull boarded the transport feeling as though he wanted to hug everyone on board. He was so overjoyed that he kissed a miniature U.S. flag draped over the saloon mirror, "and wept for very joy that I was safe, in God's providence, under their folds [of the flag] again." By sundown the New York was near Fort Monroe, Va., and Trumbull's mind was now occupied with his family, and how soon he would see them again.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Prison Journal, 14; Trumbull, Memories, 162; O. R., Ser. II, VI, 775-76.

CHAPTER III: TEST OF CHAPLAINCY

In mid-December, 1863, Trumbull returned to his regiment and the war after a brief visit with his family in New York City. The 10th Connecticut, after its ordeal in Charleston, was reassigned to garrison duty in St. Augustine, Fla.

The beginning of 1864 was an auspicious one for Henry Clay Trumbull. For the first time in his army service, he was forced to face the reality of emancipated slaves. The Negroes in St. Augustine were celebrating January 1 as an anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, and the Superintendent of Contrabands asked Trumbull to speak on the occasion. Four days earlier, Trumbull had gladly preached to the "contrabands" in their separate Sunday school. For him to deliver a commemorative speech on the Emancipation Proclamation, however, exposed Trumbull as a man for his time.

Trumbull was a bigot. In spite of the fact that he treated all people humanely, he exhibited an attitude of condescending superiority toward emancipated blacks. The Emancipation Proclamation to him was "a sad mistake if not a grievous wrong". He also strongly disapproved of the management of the contrabands in the St. Augustine region. To speak on the anniversary of the Proclamation, which he considered the "jollification" of a bogus writ, consequently

provided Trumbull with a dilemma. His attitude stemmed from the feeling that emancipated blacks had delusions about the meaning of "freedom" in the Proclamation. Trumbull thought the blacks interpreted that freedom to mean an exemption from any kind of labor or responsibility. For the perpetually busy and fastidious Trumbull, this perceived attitude on the part of blacks was an anathema.⁶⁹

Trumbull agreed to speak on the January 1 occasion, but not on the beauty of the freedom newly acquired by the blacks. Instead, Trumbull sought to inculcate two ideas: that personal freedom meant personal responsibility, and that everybody must be responsible workers and accept their place in society under God's providence.⁷⁰

Trumbull, like many Union officers in service near Confederate lines, kept a black servant. Mingo, his servant in St. Augustine, performed many of the smaller, domestic chores of camp life. This included such things as starting the morning fire, making coffee, preparing meals, and brushing off clothes. Mingo's presence undoubtedly allowed Trumbull to accomplish all he did in a day's time, especially his writing. Perhaps the two most important responsibilities given to Mingo were taking care of the horses and watching

⁶⁹ Trumbull Letter 95, Dec. 29, 1864; Trumbull, Memories, 407-408.

⁷⁰ Trumbull Letter 96, Jan. 2, 1864.

over the personal effects of Henry Trumbull and Henry Camp when they were away from camp. Yet Mingo was an exception. Trumbull was concerned over the large number of St. Augustine's emancipated slaves who did very little immediately after being freed. Seeing this condition day after day out troubled Trumbull. However, he would come to realize that the situation was quite normal; a large population of newly freed slaves would gradually take time to assimilate into the work force. Trumbull's long term expectation for blacks in the labor force was rather low, as he expected them to perform tasks in freedom as they had performed in slavery, i. e. , as the "mud sill" of society.⁷¹

The year 1864 brought arduous campaigning for the 10th Connecticut. For the first four months, it remained in St. Augustine in relative inactivity. This lull gave Trumbull more opportunities to pay attention to the spiritual needs of the soldiers. Even an army during lull periods runs on a schedule all its own, a schedule that decries any resemblance of continuity. To be successful and avoid discouragement, a chaplain with no military authority had to possess several traits. One was an attitude of flexibility that enabled him to deal with unexpected changes in the schedule and routine. Another was the ability to make the most of any opportunities

⁷¹ Ibid. This letter contains a brief outline of the January 1 speech given for the anniversary. Trumbull, Memories, 407-409.

available by personally tailoring a ministry to the contingencies of the environment. Trumbull possessed these in abundance as he was able to minister successfully and find fulfillment, even in the midst of the vagaries of army life.

As always, the ministry brought its special rewards to Trumbull through the moral and spiritual response of his charge. Trumbull strove to see that camp life provided the best moral environment for his 10th Connecticut, but his greatest rewards always came from successful proselytizing efforts. In his view, to strengthen the moral fabric of army society was one thing, but to secure a man's soul was quite another. On Monday, February 1, Trumbull wrote his wife: "I strive to improve the various opportunities which are given me of reaching the hearts of the men I love, and I pray and believe that I am not laboring in vain in the Lord. More and more are coming to Jesus. My heart is renewedly thankful for the good work of grace which goes on silently in our midst."⁷²

Nine days earlier, Trumbull baptized four men in his regiment who had recently "come to Jesus". Trumbull described at some length the conversion of one of those men, young Samuel Mills. Prior to Trumbull's capture on Morris Island, Mills had not exhibited any interest in religion. However, on Morris Island Mills became sick, and by the time

⁷² Trumbull Letter 106, Feb. 1, 1864.

Trumbull returned from prison the young private's health had worsened. In such a condition, Trumbull led Mills to trust in Jesus. Mills experienced some doubts about his new-found faith shortly after his conversion. In January, Mills's physical condition became life-threatening, but his spiritual condition was such that he feared little for the certain death awaiting him. Seldom had a soldier's spiritual response touched Trumbull more. Trumbull longed for the type of confident, submissive, affectionate faith in Christ displayed by Mills in the face of death. Trumbull consoled and met with Mills as often as possible until Mills left for home in Greenwich, Conn. There, to the surprise and encouragement of Trumbull, Mills would recuperate.⁷³

Securing moral behavior was always important to Trumbull, and he did this best by visiting the men in camp on a regular basis. A large part of his ministerial success with the regiment lay in his willingness to be with the men in both the desperation of battle and the drudgery of camp life. St. Augustine was drudgery. After his release from prison, Trumbull experienced a greater respect for the soldiers, and they for him. Certainly Trumbull could expect to break up a few card games and silence the swearing by simply walking down the regimental streets, but these days

⁷³ Trumbull Letter 103, Jan. 22, 1864; Trumbull Letter of Apr. 1, 1864 (not numbered).

he could also expect to draw a crowd. The soldiers easily discerned a good chaplain from a bad one, and the good chaplain Trumbull had been missed by the regiment while he was in prison.

Trumbull had also gained respect from the men because he had endured prison for the Union cause. The men enthusiastically huddled around him when he came into camp, simply to be regaled by the stories of prison life. More important to Trumbull was what the men were saying to him. He learned that while he had been in prison, the men in the ranks had spoken of him daily; and after his exchange they waited impatiently for his to return to St. Augustine. Such admiration and respect went a long way in giving Trumbull confidence and encouragement in his mission.⁷⁴

This period of relative inactivity gave Trumbull time to conduct numerous religious services. It also became a time of boredom and loneliness for the chaplain. Trumbull's Sundays were spent in preaching twice in the mornings, conducting an afternoon Sunday School, visiting the hospital to speak in two or more of the wards, then finishing with an evening prayer meeting. During the week Trumbull led evening prayer meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays. These opportunities for regular services were rare during active campaigning.

⁷⁴ Trumbull Letter 108, Feb. 3, 1864.

This was also a period when soldiers, if they had not already realized it, learned that the majority of their army service would be spent in the routine of camp life. Some of Trumbull's most boring and lengthy letters were written in those first few months of 1864, which undoubtedly provided his wife and family with much news and entertainment. Details of traveling troubadours, social events, St. Augustine architecture along with a short history of that city, fill the pages. Trumbull also filled them with his loneliness. A constant longing and lament was expressed for his close friend Henry Ward Camp. At one point Trumbull learned that Camp had escaped from Richlands Jail in Columbia with a group of other officers, only to be recaptured near the North Carolina border. Trumbull looked forward with great anticipation to being reunited with his friend.⁷⁵

If Trumbull wrote a profusion of letters during this time, his wife wrote to him a near equal amount. On January 17, she sent him a fourteen page letter, to which Trumbull replied, "Oh how I value every line you write". What Trumbull enjoyed getting the most, like the rest of his wartime compatriots, were the letters and news sent from home. Apparently there had been some debate between Trumbull

⁷⁵ Trumbull Letters 106, Feb. 1, 1864; 107, Feb. 2, 1864; 109, Feb. 10, 1864; 110, Feb. 12, 1864; Trumbull, Knighly Soldier, 170-92; Bell I. Wiley, "In Camp with the Common Soldier," in William C. Davis (ed.), The Image of War: 1861-1865, (New York, 1982), 173, 185.

and his wife over the cost of mailing so many letters. One the most poignant sentences he ever wrote was in his February 1st letter to his wife: "Don't trouble yourself about postage. Letters and fresh air I must have, or die."⁷⁶

In March, Trumbull received a furlough to spend some extended time with his family for the first time since being exchanged from prison. Yet before he left, he preached a sermon that would foment regimental discord for weeks. In mid-February, many of the three-year terms of enlistment for veterans of the 10th would expire. Several of the soldiers had decided not to re-enlist, and the colonel of the regiment called upon Trumbull to make a plea in his February 7 sermon to encourage those veterans to remain. The sermon was successful: by the following Wednesday, thirty-eight veterans had re-enlisted.

In his sermon Trumbull had equated army service with patriotism, and then subtly linked that patriotism to the Union in its just and holy cause against the Confederacy. This perspective was all well and good; yet the sermon had two negative results. It made some of the men feel guilty for not re-enlisting while others re-enlisted out of guilt when their real desire was to go home; and it made many of the newer veterans feel slighted, as if Trumbull had attached

⁷⁶ Trumbull Letter 106, Feb. 1, 1864; Trumbull, Memories, 133-35.

greater significance to the older veterans. This was not Trumbull's intention, but by the end of March this by-product had depressed him to the point of affecting his health.⁷⁷

On Sunday, March 20, Trumbull preached the first of several sermons designed to reconcile this misunderstanding. He appealed to Christian honor. Unsoldierly behavior, he stressed, not only hurt the character of the regiment, but also (appealing now to the believers) brought shame, grief, and dishonor to Christ. By the end of April, the discord was finally quelled. To explain himself, Trumbull wrote several magazine articles which he distributed to the men. Moreover, his active role in campaigning in the field helped assure the men of his support and impartiality.⁷⁸

With the first of April came the anticipation that the 10th Connecticut would see active service farther north. Trumbull continued with his regular services, and even expanded his ministry by holding a separate Sunday school for freedmen.⁷⁹ He had extra time to write sermons, which of late had been successful with the men. He also allowed

⁷⁷ Henry Clay Trumbull, Desirableness of Active Service, A Sermon Preached to the Tenth Connecticut Regiment, at St. Augustine, Florida, on Sabbath, April 10th, 1864 (Hartford, 1864), 21.

⁷⁸ Trumbull Letters 116, Mar. 22, 1864; 117, Mar. 25, 1864; 118, Mar. 29, 1864.

⁷⁹ The freedmen had just been allowed to attend the regular services with white officers and enlisted men. Trumbull Letter 121, Apr. 5, 1864.

himself the time to do some sight-seeing in St. Augustine. He was postponing such "pleasure trips" until Henry Ward Camp returned from prison, but the prospect of active duty caused him briefly to turn aside from his duties as chaplain and enjoy the surroundings.⁸⁰

On April 17 The 10th Connecticut finally received its orders. When Trumbull preached his farewell sermon in St. Augustine, the house in which he preached was filled to capacity, with 150 additional people standing outside. The next day the regiment bade farewell to the citizens of St. Augustine, and departed on the propeller steamer Tappahanock for Port Royal Sound, S.C. After a stormy and seasick trip to Port Royal Sound, the 10th had a few days respite before continuing on the next leg of their journey to Fort Monroe, Va.

Trumbull even made the most of the opportunity on these seafaring journeys to minister. Not to be deterred by the steamer's cramped, dark and humid environment below deck, Trumbull held several services. These services were termed by Trumbull as the "test of Chaplaincy". The long trip on the hot steamer was wearing on the men's nerves, and they began to swear and grumble at a level seldom heard by the chaplain. "Officers were cursed. The Govt. was cursed. Our

⁸⁰ Trumbull Letters 121, Apr. 5, 1864; 122, Apr. 8, 1864; 123, Apr. 13, 1864.

cause was cursed". The low point was reached on Sunday evening, April 24. Going into the ship's hold to conduct a service, Trumbull waited for a light so that he could see. In the darkness, Trumbull overheard a soldier close to him, unaware of Trumbull's presence, say: "A d____d pretty piece of business, shut men up like hogs and then come down here to preach to them."

This statement was not amusing to the chaplain, who above all wanted to be considered by the men as their friend. Like many times before, Trumbull faced the situation squarely, and with firm conviction preached a sermon that dealt with the problem at hand. Trumbull took his text from I Peter 3:10: "For he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile." The interpretation and subsequent application from this text was simple: grumbling and swearing only make a bad situation worse. Moreover, good soldiers know how to take care of themselves. Trumbull tempered his reproof by explaining that he thoroughly understood the situation. He too was sharing the difficult experience with them. Along with this, he offered prayer that everyone might have patience to bear up under their circumstances.

Trumbull assumed afterwards that little good had come of his exhortation. Just the opposite was true. He had stimulated the conscience of the overwhelming majority of the men, so much so that even the officers told him of the changed

attitudes and "present cheerfulness of the men." Conversely, this response on the part of the men also affected Trumbull. Prior to this event, he despaired of the men's response to his spiritual guidance. Their positive response renewed Trumbull's commitment to his ministry and his trust in God to make his ministry more effective. The bitterness and discord over the "veteran" misunderstanding had finally been assuaged in Trumbull's mind. If this was the "test of Chaplaincy" as Trumbull put it earlier, then he was not found wanting.⁸¹

On April 24, the 10th Connecticut disembarked at Fort Monroe and encamped off Gloucester Point on the York River. After three and a half months of residential living in St. Augustine, Trumbull was now back to living under the canvas in camp. To enhance his ministry relationship to the men, Trumbull actually preferred living in camp. The one person who could make camp life truly ideal for Trumbull was the imprisoned Henry Ward Camp, the friend for whom he lamented. On April 25, Trumbull learned that his adjutant friend had been part of prisoner exchange. He used a page and a half of a letter to his wife to express both his joy and the joy of many others within the regiment over his friend's release. On May 1, the two men were reunited on the boat which was

⁸¹ O. R., XXXV, Pt. 2, 51, 62; Trumbull Letters 125, Apr. 20, 1864; 126, Apr. 20, 1864; 127, Apr. 21, 1864; Apr. 24, 1864.

transporting Henry Ward Camp to Annapolis. Trumbull wrote Alice that he had experienced "joy beyond expression" to see Henry once more. It was May 16 before Henry Trumbull and Henry Camp were together again in camp. The latter was briefly returning home to Connecticut and serve out the terms of his exchange. By the time he returned, the long period of inactivity had ended.⁸²

Unfortunately for the 10th Connecticut, it was about to take part in Gen. Ben Butler's campaign on Richmond. Although the men did not know when they would be thrown into battle, they did know that fighting was imminent. The officers were allowed only a small valise of baggage, the rest of their belongings sent home or placed on a steamer. Formal and regular religious services would have to wait for another lull, and Trumbull contented himself and the men with services in the field--when such meetings could be held. The prayer meetings at Gloucester Point, prior to the move to Bermuda Hundred, were somber events. The men were more serious, the hymn-singing carried more pathos, the prayers were more earnest. A greater parity between non-believers and believers existed, or, as Trumbull put it, "some of our

⁸² Trumbull Letters 129, Apr. 25, 1864; 130, Apr. 25, 1864; 131, Apr. 26, 1864; 133, May 1, 1864; 145, May 17, 1864; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 210, 217-18, 221.

best and some of our roughest men were there".⁸³

For many the feeling was one of realization that many of their comrades' voices, perhaps even their own, would not be heard in prayer again. Trumbull's messages were also more spiritually expedient. He urged the men to avail themselves of the free redemption of Christ in preparation for eternity, which Trumbull illustrated as being no different from the preparation for war, when one takes ammunition to fight his earthly enemy. The soldiers also began asking Trumbull to write letters of condolence to family and loved ones in the event of their deaths.⁸⁴

On May 4 the regiment left Gloucester, not to travel up the York River as the soldiers had assumed, but down to Fort Monroe and up the James River to City Point. After "hurrying up to wait" for two days, the troops finally disembarked in the early morning of May 6 above City Point. They immediately pushed seven miles west toward the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad in an attempt to sever that vital link to the Confederate capitol. Before sunrise the 10th had dug rifle pits alongside a road on the east side of the railroad, then took position in line of battle along the same road. During the morning, the battle slowly began increasing in

⁸³ Allan Nevins, The War for the Union (New York, 1947), IV, 46-47; Trumbull Letter 136, May 3, 1864.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

intensity in front of the third brigade of the first division of the X Army Corps, a brigade comprised of the 10th Connecticut, 11th Maine, 24th Massachusetts, and the 100th New York.⁸⁵

As the third brigade moved out on the main road toward Petersburg, the firing steadily increased. The 10th Connecticut was ordered to be in close reserve on the right of the brigade, to keep that side of the line from being flanked. As artillery shells and bullets increasingly flew in their direction, the men were ordered to lie down to avoid getting hit. Trumbull, conscious of his preaching on active service in St. Augustine, chose to remain standing, and walked up and down the line encouraging the men. Bullets struck all around him, and Trumbull even tried to dig a few of the bullets out of the dirt. The chaplain had no delusions about his safety in exposing himself to fire. He simply knew the effect of sharing the dangers of battle with the men would have upon his credibility and respect as a chaplain. "I did these things because I must do something". The risk paid off: that night he heard that the men were talking of his coolness and daring.

After tearing up a few miles of track on the Richmond

⁸⁵ O. R., XXXVI, Pt. 1, 116; Robert Underwood Johnson, and Clarence Clough Buel (eds.), Battles and Leaders of the Civil War (New York, 1887-1888), IV, 181; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 221.

and Petersburg Railroad and entrenching for five days, Butler slowly moved his army toward Richmond. These five days were filled with sporadic fighting, and Trumbull took many shifts on the picket line to encourage the soldiers. Several times Trumbull traveled beyond the picket lines to deliver orders to other regiments in the brigade. On such occasions, he carried Henry Camp's pistol at the ready, not intending to be captured and put in prison again.

The creeping Army of the James was brought to a halt by Beauregard in the battle at Drewry's Bluff near the James River. On May 14, the 10th Connecticut engaged in "picket shooting," Minie balls and artillery shells constantly filled the air, and strained the nerves of everyone, including Trumbull. The chaplain eventually went back to the field hospital to tend to the wounded and dying. This strained his nerves even more as he observed torn and mutilated bodies, including a gasping soldier whose brains were spilling out of a hole torn in his skull.

The following day the Army of the James began retreating back to Bermuda Hundred, and once there threw up a line of entrenchment in the narrow neck between the James and the York Rivers. The 10th had been fortunate, losing 40 men with only 6 dead. The 100th New York of their brigade suffered nearly 50% casualties. The evening of the 16th gave Trumbull the first opportunity to conduct a prayer meeting since leaving Gloucester Point, and the meeting was well

attended.⁸⁶

During the course of the previous week's fighting, Trumbull had been thrilled at seeing Union soldiers charge in battle formation toward a Rebel battery, "heart-sickened" at the sight of maimed and mangled men who had been shot in the action, and scared by a cannonball that, had he not ducked in time, would have decapitated him. This last incident took place while Trumbull was delivering the mail and was witnessed by several men in the 10th Connecticut. The incident frightened them as badly as it did Trumbull, as many thought that they had lost their chaplain for sure. Trumbull reflected that it "was a day of battle, a day of blood, a day of sadness, a day of excitement, a day of fatigue". Retreating back to Bermuda brought one consolation to Trumbull: Camp had returned to the regiment and reestablished the physical closeness of their friendship.⁸⁷

With Butler defeated and bottled up in the Bermuda Hundred peninsula, the Army of the James settled into a wait-and-see entrenchment warfare. Reserve camps were established with "bomb-proofs", and rifle pits were dug on the front lines. Eventually, the soldiers grew indifferent to

⁸⁶ O. R., XXXVI, Pt. 2, 43, 74, 78-80, 86; James M. McPherson, Ordeal by Fire (New York, 1982), 413; Trumbull Letters 139, May 7, 1864; 140, May 9, 1864; 145, May 17, 1864; Trumbull, Memories, 8.

⁸⁷ Trumbull Letters 142, May 11, 1864; 144, May 15, 1864; 145, May 17, 1864.

the constant and sporadic skirmishes between the pickets, as well as the occasional artillery duels. Regiments moved from reserve camp to the front line to relieve other regiments and, in the course of time, would establish somewhat neighborly relationships with the enemy across from their front.

That relationship with the enemy would take an interesting and sad twist for the men of the 10th Connecticut on a Sunday in early June. The Union line occupied by the 10th had been near a church in the "Ware Bottom". The Union forces, the 10th in particular, previously held that part of the line and used the church for religious services. The Confederates pushed forward, overrunning the Union lines and consequently bringing the church building to just within their new lines. On Sunday, June 5, the 10th Connecticut was in the rifle pits and within earshot of the church as a Confederate chaplain held a service. Unable to have a service of their own, Trumbull and the 10th sat quietly in the pits to listen to the hymns and prayers of their Confederate Christian brethren. It seemed strange to Trumbull that Christian men had to pass the Sabbath by worshipping God with weapons at the ready, and to turn quickly from sacredness to mortal destruction if need be. Trumbull then envisioned a time when the war would be over and Christian brothers would no longer have to face each other in battle.

The next day Trumbull and Camp had the privilege of being entertained by two members of the Christian Commission. It seemed that the two delegates were unfamiliar with life in the field. They were incredulous upon discovering that Chaplain Trumbull actually slept in an open tent and that on nighttime picket duty he slept on the ground with no shelter at all. Trumbull's already-low opinion of the Christian Commission, based on its reluctance to visit the front more often, was reinforced by the delegates' token visit.⁸⁸

Trumbull disdained fellow missionaries who did not want to endure the privations of camp life with the soldiers. He knew how such a chaplain or missionary would be perceived by the men, especially if the chaplain preached courage to duty. Perhaps, too, Trumbull knew that moral and spiritual leaders were "marked" men in society, men whose life styles were closely examined by those to whom they ministered. Trumbull recognized that soldiers quickly noticed cowardice and reproachful behavior on the part of chaplains.⁸⁹

In contrast to Trumbull's dedication were chaplains who considered camp life too immoral for them to enter. Returning from an errand at the landing above City Point, Trumbull was accompanied by Chaplain Jarvis of the 1st

⁸⁸ Trumbull Letters 152, May 27, 1864; 156, June 5, 1864; O. R., LI, Pt. 1, 1236.

⁸⁹ Trumbull, Memories, 5, 106.

Connecticut Artillery, where Trumbull's brother Tom was serving. Jarvis told Trumbull that he considered him somewhat "demoralized" for his "impetuous activity" among the filth, profanity, and gambling of camp. Jarvis also could neither understand nor approve of Trumbull going into battle with the regiment and exposing himself to such danger. Trumbull said nothing to the young chaplain; later, to his wife he commented on the holier-than-thou Jarvis: "a pleasant fellow, but oh so green as to his work and soldier life".⁹⁰

The soldiers had become conditioned to Trumbull's frequent presence in camp. Three days after his conversation with Chaplain Jarvis, Trumbull heard from one of the more devout Christian men in his regiment that some of the men in the ambulance corps were playing cards in a rifle pit. Trumbull decided to catch the scoundrels in the act. However, the card players had anticipated that the chaplain would roam through the lines and they had left a lookout for him. With a flurry of activity, the men quickly stashed away their instruments of sin. By the time Trumbull got to their shelter, they were all busy reading a religious newspaper which they had divided among themselves. Trumbull said nothing about the cards, but made sure that the men profited from his call. Trumbull later wrote to Alice: "I am glad to have the men so desirous of avoiding evil in my presence as

⁹⁰ Trumbull Letter 157, June 12, 1864.

to shrink from detection, even though deceit is a consequence of these attempts to cover their misdeeds. My influence over them in these matters evidences such possibilities of good as I pray I may avail myself to their soul's benefit."⁹¹

Not all the encounters that Trumbull had with the men were met with as much respect for a man of the cloth as the wary card players. Nor was Trumbull loathe to describe the disrespect that was occasionally shown him. Several months after the card-playing incident, he asked a soldier if he prayed. "Hell no Chaplain," was his reply, and added: "I don't know as I ever got along quite so far as that." The soldier then confessed, in a tone that communicated that he was somewhat annoyed by Trumbull's prodding, that he had never even prayed as a boy. He had been brought up to read the Bible, go to church and be good on Sundays, but never became a religious person. Trumbull was not impressed by this soldier's response and concluded that soldiers who profess Christ "are the best of the earth." Even though Christian soldiers could be rough, reckless, and sometimes failing as believers, they were a "noble, self-denying, patriotic set . . . patient in all their trials, so prompt in all their duty."⁹²

As General Grant made his swing east around Richmond to

⁹¹ Trumbull Letter 159, June 15, 1864.

⁹² Trumbull Letter 179, Aug. 9, 1864.

assail Petersburg, firing along the line at Bermuda Hundred increased. Trumbull's unshakable devotion to God and country did not always translate into a blind faith in the military leadership. Being bottled up in the Bermuda Hundred while casualty figures rose was frustratingly hard on all the men. Trumbull continued to encourage the Union cause but was frank about Butler's abilities as a commander. If there was one thing at which Butler was consistently good, Trumbull stated, it was incompetence. Trumbull and the soldiers believed Butler would lead his men into a senseless and aimless battle where many would be needlessly killed. The effect of such leadership was telling as battle-hardened veterans were beginning to shrink from combat. Their dislike for Butler was so great that upon hearing a rumor on July 14th that Gen. W. F. "Baldy" Smith had replaced Butler, they felt greatly relieved that "B. F. B. is really started".⁹³

General Grant, on the other hand, was viewed with great respect by Trumbull and the men. After returning to reserve duty on Saturday, July 16, the 10th Connecticut got its first look at Grant as he and Butler, along with a small staff, passed by their camp. To Trumbull, Grant appeared as "a little man . . . round shouldered . . . does not look great in any sense." But Grant's inconspicuous trappings did not diminish Trumbull's trust in Grant's military leadership.

⁹³ Letters 164, June 24, 1864; 170, July 14, 1864.

It was Trumbull's conviction that Grant was God's divine instrument to produce a just end for God's "favored people" in the North. In curious contrast to Butler, Trumbull's trust in God allowed for a trust in Grant, for good or for ill.⁹⁴

Meeting the spiritual needs of the men in combat conditions was usually a difficult task for a chaplain. The hardest part for Trumbull was meeting the needs of the wounded and dying. Though he often filled the role of nurse at the field hospital and assisted the physicians in surgery, Trumbull never grew indifferent to the sufferings of the wounded men. As a chaplain, he not only gave aid and comfort to the incapacitated, but also sought to determine their spiritual status. For unregenerate men who were mortally wounded, he would possibly be their last chance at salvation with Christ before death could sweep them into an eternal darkness.

Trumbull found this a difficult task. The sight of hideously wounded men was more unnerving to him than the dead on a battlefield. A man in his regiment who was instantly killed by a bullet that crushed his skull was less sad to Trumbull than a soldier seen running to the rear, a hole shot in his face with blood running down his cheeks and out his

⁹⁴ Trumbull Letter 171, July 18, 1864; Trumbull, Memories, 305, 307.

mouth. After a brief fight in August, Trumbull went back to the field hospital to visit a dying soldier from the 10th Connecticut. Several days afterward, he wrote that "the saddest side of war is ever where the wounded are cared for," as the "long rows of ghastly corpses or of pallid or gory sufferers, chill and sicken the stoutest heart. . . ." ⁹⁵

This last trip to the field hospital to visit the dying soldier illustrates another one of the difficult aspects of meeting the spiritual needs of the wounded and dying. Along with discerning the spiritual condition of a man, Trumbull often had to determine the physical condition and then render an honest judgment and prognosis. Veteran soldiers knew when a wound was mortal and when it was not. Trumbull, as a chaplain and therefore a man of trust, often had to tell a wounded man the worst. The soldier whom Trumbull had gone back to see, Pvt. Denis Mahoney, had a bullet pass through his body. Trumbull gently told the agonized Denis that he could not recover, spoke of Jesus, prayed with him, and took Denis' ring at his request to send home to his mother so that she might have it as a memento. After giving Denis some "opiate," Trumbull left Denis to die and returned to the front. ⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Letters 159, June 15, 1864; 182, August 18, 1864.

⁹⁶ Trumbull Letter 185, Aug. 21, 1864; Trumbull, Knighly Soldier, 274.

Unless called back to the field hospital by a dying man, Trumbull preferred during battle to be with the men at the front. In heavy fighting on August 18, Trumbull hesitated briefly as he debated in his mind whether or not he should stay at the front when so many wounded were being taken to the rear. Should he not also be at the rear with those men? Trumbull's reasoning clarified this dilemma: attendants at the rear were numerous; someone needed to prod the stretcher bearers; the wounded and dying on the field seeking religious counsel would be neglected if he were not there; consequently: "My place was with the regiment. My duty was to cheer the living, to send back the wounded, to minister to those dying on the field, to learn about the dead. I rushed on with lightened heart."⁹⁷

Another major aspect of meeting the spiritual needs of the men was the pulpit, whether through formal or informal liturgy. Here Trumbull's particular skill was his ability to apply scripture to the issues of war and camp life. His sermons and talks most often tied the the duties and goals of army life and the Union cause to spiritual principles. His sermons dealt with the problems of selfishness, discouragement and fear; they continually stressed that God was concerned with the personal needs of the soldiers. During his first service on Bermuda Hundred after some

⁹⁷ Trumbull Letter 182, Aug. 18, 1864.

fighting, even the hymn was appropriately chosen, "A Charge to Keep Have I".

On July 18, Trumbull used the passage from Romans 14:17 "For none of us liveth to himself . . ." to preach on the soldiers' individual responsibility to their country. On a Sunday morning in late July, after the 10th Connecticut had spent much time going to and from the front lines at Bermuda Hundred, Trumbull preached from Deuteronomy 33:18 "Rejoice Zebulon, in thy going out; and Issachar, in thy tents." The illustration: Zebulon and Issachar represented two types of men; one active and returning to duty, the other quietly returning to the rear. The soldier, whether he be "at the front or the rear," had reason to give thanks to God for his providence in their lives. Trumbull's contemporary application of Biblical principals worked in part because he truly believed their validity, even in the barbarous environment of war. When in late August the 10th Connecticut was losing faith in its military leaders and casualties were taking a heavy toll, Trumbull wrote "God is over all. Precious thought that! He reigneth. Let the earth rejoice . . ." ⁹⁸

The bleakness of the environment in Bermuda Hundred was also affecting the soldiers in another way that was directly

⁹⁸ Ibid., 171, July 18, 1864; 177, Aug. 4, 1864; 183, Aug. 19, 1864; 184, Aug. 21, 1864.

affecting Trumbull: desertion. Desertion was painful to Trumbull ideologically and practically. Although he could understand a man's reasons for deserting under fire, nonetheless it bothered him to see men so unfaithful to their country. He was also adamantly opposed to the recruiting practices of substitution and bounties in Northern states and particularly in Connecticut. Trumbull objected to these practices for several reasons. Avarice and greed often caused many of the men so recruited to desert and re-enlist for additional bounty money, and substitutes were often recruited by dubious means, if not outright duress. More significant to Trumbull, was the fact that he often dealt directly with the deserters who were caught and sentenced to death. That is to say, he often had to counsel with them prior to their execution. Such visits were never easy, and in March of 1865, Trumbull wrote to Alice and told her how trying it was to be with men who had but hours to live, yet at the same time he had to "seek to lead [them] to Jesus."⁹⁹

Trumbull directly blamed the ills of desertion in his regiment to the Connecticut War Committee who allowed "substitute brokers" to continue to exist. The Confederate prisons at Andersonville, Millen, Macon and Charleston were

⁹⁹ Ibid., 191, Sept. 6, 1864; 216, Dec. 24, 1864; 238, March 10, 1865; Trumbull, Memories, 177.

"original Edens of purity and happiness" compared to the "recruiting agencies of Hartford and New Haven, Bridgeport and Norwich." The Belle Isle prison in Richmond was a "much better nursery for a Union soldier than is the office of a Connt. War Committee."¹⁰⁰

But for all his editorializing, Trumbull did not quibble over the issue of why, rather what should be done about desertions. Substitutions and bounties were wrong. Those responsible for the current system were deserving of the noose. Yet, desertion itself was even more wrong. Desertion touched Trumbull's keen sense of patriotism and devotion to duty. On Christmas Eve 1864, outside the Richmond defenses, Trumbull estimated that thirty men in their regiment had deserted since Thanksgiving, and noted that in the last few weeks over a hundred had deserted from a New England regiment stationed near by. Desertions "must be stopped," even if the harsh dictum of executing deserters was "by the score or hundred instead of by the single or half dozen to bring the end."¹⁰¹

Trumbull's views on desertion were not confined to letters written to his wife. He wrote to influential friends in Connecticut who published his views in local newspapers

¹⁰⁰ Trumbull Letter 211, Dec. 9, 1864; Trumbull, Memories, 185.

¹⁰¹ Trumbull Letter 216, Dec. 24, 1864.

and state journals. The result was a round of debates with the editors of these newspapers and journals, for which Trumbull felt these men might bring popular public sentiment to bear against him. But this did not keep Trumbull "silent as to the abomination of infamy nor run from the Southern superiors of the Northern shirks." Above all, He stuck to his convictions on this matter and was confident that his views represented that of the army in general. He also predicted that those who opposed him in the press would find public sentiment against them when the soldiers serving on the front returned to Connecticut.¹⁰²

The experiences of the 10th Connecticut from August to the first of October, 1864, were similar to that of the first months of the summer. Stuck in Bermuda Hundred, their existence alternated between reserve duty, camp, front-line duty in the trenches and picket duty. Along with their assignments were the occasional battles, both small and large, that by now had become an accepted part of the Bermuda Hundred campaign. Trumbull did have one narrow escape as a shell from a Union battery exploded directly in front of him, miraculously missing him, but knocked him backward onto the ground and stunned him.¹⁰³

Trumbull was kept busy during this phase of the campaign

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 183, (no date); O. R., XXXXII, Pt. 1, 727.

with a steady flow of wounded soldiers, deaths, and burial ceremonies. A Christian burial in the field could give a modicum of relief to the mourning families at home whose son, killed in service, had not been left to simply rot in the open. Under such conditions as they were, these burials were often simple events where the dead were buried in shallow graves, and Trumbull would say a prayer over their bodies.¹⁰⁴

After a battle on August 24 near Deep Bottom, Va., Trumbull went out with a flag of truce to help identify missing men and bury the dead, only to be sickened by the sight of mangled and bloated corpses that had been stripped of their clothes by needy Confederates. To his surprise, he noted that the negro Union dead were completely untouched by the enemy, including their boots and side arms. "A rebel private is too proud to steal from a negro. There's honor for you."¹⁰⁵

In battle Trumbull tended to the wounded as best as possible. Often this meant removing the wounded from further harm behind a tree or a rise of ground, then assessing the severity of the wound, giving comfort and counsel. For many, this was an opportunity for him to make an eleventh hour request regarding their spiritual status. After a brief

¹⁰⁴ Trumbull Letter 187, Aug. 25, 1864; Trumbull, Memories, 215-16, 218-20.

¹⁰⁵ Trumbull Letter 187, Aug. 25, 1864.

demonstration before Richmond on October 4, Trumbull discovered a sergeant in his regiment, a good friend, mortally wounded in the spine. The sergeant, knowing his fate, doubted his "eternal security" and in great pain told Trumbull he had "put it [Christianity] off . . . and now it's late." The sergeant's pleas to God as Trumbull prayed for and with him, was very trying to the chaplain, as he feared these soldiers, brave in battle, would fail the ultimate test of God's judgement when they died, and wind up in hell. He hoped that this sergeant, unprepared for death, would somehow be an example that would warn the rest of his comrades not to put God off until it was too late.¹⁰⁶ The brigade was kept mobile and busy throughout most of the Summer and early Fall. There was even a brief trip to the siege operations around Petersburg for three weeks in late August to mid-September. Prior to the march to Petersburg, the regiment held a well attended prayer meeting. The service was solemn, the listeners interested. It was one of the few services that Trumbull would be able to hold until the late Fall. By then his life as a chaplain in the Army of the James would take a heart-rending turn. In early October, Trumbull's best friend, Christian comrade, helper, encourager, and newly commissioned Major of the 10th Connecticut, Henry Ward Camp,

¹⁰⁶ Trumbull Letter 198, Oct. 4, 1864.

was killed on the Darbytown Road outside Richmond.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.; Trumbull Letter 189, Aug. 31, 1864; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 281-83, 294; O. R., XCII, pt. 1, 740-41; XXXXII, pt. 1, 732-34, 741; Smith, Record of Service, 398.

CHAPTER IV: THIS WAR IS CRUEL BUSINESS

Oh Alice, Alice, pity me. I am alive. I am whole in body, but Henry Camp, dear, dear boy, is fallen, and my heart is crushed and bleeding. Oh pray for me, pray for his stricken loved ones. May God give us grace in our bitter sorrow and crying need.

The date was October 13, and the regiment was near Richmond on the Darbytown Road that ran southeast from the city. At sunrise the 10th Connecticut, as part of Gen. Alfred H. Terry's division, was in position by the road in preparation for an attack against the Confederate position which was, by the observation of field officers, very well fortified. The order to advance was given. First went the cavalry, followed by the infantry, until it came to some woods and subsequently halted in a thicket. The men were supposed to charge. Yet in assaying the situation, some of the officers, feeling that a charge would be suicidal, lodged an official protest with Gens. Terry and Adelbert Ames. Ames viewed the situation himself and decided to go ahead with the ill-fated assault. Henry Camp had just returned to the regiment from collecting stragglers. In the words of the chaplain, he was "brave, cheerful" and "true as ever." Trumbull secretly hoped that Camp would not be back in time for the

attack. He also noted in his diary that "All [were] heavy hearted but Henry."

Trumbull followed the regiment forward until Federal cavalry, under heavy enemy fire, broke through the Union lines on its way to the rear with some wounded men (no doubt to the chagrin of the infantry, whose disdain for the cavalry was notorious). The infantry assault met heavy fire, first from artillery and then from musketry. Trumbull halted to tend to the wounded until part of the 10th Connecticut retreated. Soon he returned to the rear for the stretcher corps to help remove wounded from the field. It was then that he heard of Camp's fall. Camp was rallying the broken line of the 10th Connecticut in front of the Confederate defensive works. After yelling "come on boys, come on!" and turning to the color sergeant, he was struck several times by the enemy's bullets. At first disbelieving the report, Trumbull continued to care for the wounded. That evening, after talking to the men and officers of the attack, he confronted the reality that his best friend was indeed dead. He then wrote the above lines in a mournful letter to his wife.¹⁰⁸

The death of Henry Camp was a watershed not only

¹⁰⁸ Trumbull Letter 201, Oct. 13, 1864; Henry Clay Trumbull Diary, Oct. 13, 1864; Trumbull, Knightly Soldier, 310, 316; O. R., XLII, Pt. 1, 732-34, 740-41.

in Trumbull's military career, but in his life as well. In no other communication to his wife does he articulate and descriptive chaplain pen words that carry as much pathos. His existence in the army changed to a more lonely status. Never again would he develop and enjoy a friendship as close.

The next day, October 14, Trumbull asked his superiors to establish a flag of truce so that he could retrieve Camp's body. The Confederates who had repulsed the assault were soldiers of the 6th South Carolina. After a long delay, they finally obliged the Union officers and sent back the body, which had been briefly buried. Trumbull escorted the remains to Bermuda Hundred in an ambulance, and had it immediately embalmed. He also made plans to accompany the remains to Hartford.¹⁰⁹

The heavy-hearted Trumbull spent three more days in camp while securing a leave of absence and preparing a sermon for the following Sunday. In that sermon he spoke from Hebrews 12:2, a verse which had a timely exhortation: "Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." Trumbull could hardly have

¹⁰⁹ Trumbull Diary, Oct. 14-15, 1864.

missed the two verses sandwiching the above verse, whose appropriate words said to "lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, . . . For consider Him who has endured such hostilities by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart."

The chaplain had braved sickness and privation in camp; he had endured imprisonment; he had suffered the loss of his youngest daughter, who had died while he was in prison; he had persevered through the heavy loss of life in recent fighting. Now his best friend was dead. This last blow was perhaps the hardest. It was a trauma in which a man with less resolve might quickly lose heart. Yet this was the time to be reminded of his greatest pillar, his Redeemer, and to once again fix his eyes upon Jesus, the one who had endured even to the point of the cross.¹¹⁰

The following Monday, Trumbull departed Bermuda Hundred for Fort Monroe, Va. The next day he was on a boat to Baltimore. From there he took trains to Philadelphia and then to New York. At 2 a.m. Thursday morning he reached Hartford for a stay that lasted about three and a half weeks. He conducted his friend's

¹¹⁰ Ibid., Oct. 15-17, 1864.

funeral, ran numerous errands, preached in several churches, spoke in Sunday schools, led prayer meetings, and relaxed at home with his family. Yet he spent much time comforting and consoling with the Camp family. Finally, on November 14, he left Hartford to begin his long trip back to the Army of the James, still camped along the outer defenses of Richmond. He reached his regiment late on Thursday, November 17, and the beginning of his diary entry the next day read: "Before Richmond." In a letter to his wife that same day Trumbull wrote: "Again the familiar sound of cannon greeted our ears and the scenes of army life were once more visible on every side."¹¹¹

Trumbull also revealed how difficult it was for him to return to the army without the companionship of Henry Camp. "Oh how lonely I am. . . . Without dear Henry I am lonely everywhere. I miss him as I should miss my eyesight." Returning to the regiment only highlighted his sadness because army life had always been the venue for his relationship with Henry Camp. Trumbull's emotional burden was especially heavy during the first few weeks back, and caused him to lose sleep. He laid awake at nights "with the past flitting before me, and

¹¹¹ Ibid., Oct. 18-Nov. 18, 1864 passim.

the present weighing upon me."¹¹²

The activities of the present were his numerous duties as a chaplain, which he hoped would not suffer from his bereavement. However, Trumbull filled his sadness with activity. By the Sunday after Thanksgiving he had preached two sermons, attended two civilian services and visited the divisional, brigade and regimental officers fourteen different times. Even though camp life was not the same without Henry Camp, Trumbull was always glad to be ministering to the regiment. He was more content as a chaplain at this time than he could have been doing anything else, and he prayed that he could "be really a blessing" to the men. He feared that his present state of mind would cause him to neglect the men, and in so thinking he redoubled his efforts.¹¹³

By the first of December, the 10th Connecticut outside Richmond had settled into winter quarters of rudimentary log cabins chinked with mud. Trumbull wrote that his roof was a canvas tent-fly and served as the only natural source of light in his cabin, which had no windows. On December 1, writing by candlelight on a crude table, Trumbull described some of the changes that

¹¹² Trumbull Letter 205, Nov. 20, 1864; 207, Nov. 25, 1864.

¹¹³ Ibid., 208, Nov. 27, 1864.

had recently taken place in the army. First, the X and XVIII Corps had merged to form the XXIV Corps, Army of the James. Their new corps commander was Gen. E. O. C. Ord. Second, the brigade had just received 250 new recruits, "making our camp look more unfamiliar than ever." To Trumbull, these new recruits were like a bunch of cocky schoolboys whose obnoxious and surly behavior tested the patience of veterans and officers alike. The chaplain also commented on a problem attributed to the recruits: stealing. He stated that theft was virtually unknown among the veteran soldiers, but "only newcomers, fresh from the demoralizing influences of civil life are addicted to it in camp."

The veterans struck back by playing pranks on the "greenhorns." On one occasion, they used Trumbull as the bait. Wearing his gauntlets and a clean coat, and sporting a new saddle, the chaplain rode into camp to check a rumor that some of the men were gambling. As he reined up to one of the camp "streets," a small group of veterans crowded around him. The new recruits, viewing this commotion, asked "what was the row." At this point one of the veterans replied that the officer on horseback was none other than General Grant! Trumbull was immediately surrounded by a mob of gullible and incredulous recruits intent upon seeing the leader

of all the Union forces.¹¹⁴

New recruits also brought an increase in soldiers who signed up as substitutes, and with them came an increase in desertion. So were the executions for taking the "Grand Bounce." Again, Trumbull was exasperated and blamed the Connecticut substitute brokers. In a letter to the governor of Connecticut, Wm. A. Buckingham, Trumbull requested that the next meeting of the state legislature "order a general hanging, and then string on the gallows every man who has anything to do with this criminal business."¹¹⁵

The day after Christmas, Trumbull met privately with a soldier who had been sentenced to die by firing squad for desertion. The circumstances surrounding this particular execution were especially difficult for Trumbull to contemplate. The young soldier had bravely served in a New Hampshire regiment during the first part of the war and earned a promotion to corporal of the color guard. His health eventually forced his discharge from the army, and he returned home to recuperate. The man then re-enlisted. Yet seeing the financial gain of being a substitute, he deserted his regiment and went north. Unfortunately for him, upon his return he was

¹¹⁴ Trumbull Letter 209, Dec. 1, 1864.

¹¹⁵ Trumbull, Memories, 62.

inadvertently recognized by members of his old regiment, and promptly arrested. To make the situation worse for Trumbull, the sentenced soldier told him that he was baptized as an infant and had been a "Sabbath school scholar." His brother-in-law, a colonel in a New York regiment, had been killed at Chickamauga. Afterwards his sister and her children became his responsibility, and now he was condemned to die for desertion. He was also engaged to be married.

Trumbull wrote that it was "piteous to hear his moans" for his loved ones, especially when they learned of the way he met his dishonorable end. Trumbull spent an emotional several hours into the late night with the deserter, then came to see him again on the morning of his execution. The soldier prayed with the chaplain. He prayed not for himself, but for the Trumbull, his family, and the officers and men of the regiment.

The execution of this soldier highlighted a continual problem in shooting Civil War deserters: sometimes the tasks were performed in a sloppy manner. To achieve a maximum disciplinary effect, the condemned soldier's brigade formed an open square around the spot of the execution so that the soldiers could watch the consequences of this martial crime. Trumbull made the "gloomy ride" with the culprit and then administered the last rites as the soldier sat on his coffin en route to

the formed square. "It was hard to shake hands with a young soldier in full health and strength and hear his firm clear voice, and then to stand by and see him fired at with the Spencer rifles of his comrades . . ."

The first salvo did not kill the man outright; he was propped up to be shot a second time; another volley was unsuccessful. Finally, a rifle had to be placed to his temple and fired to bring death to the man. Trumbull concluded this story to his wife by stating that "I am anything but strong and in good spirits this afternoon. This war is cruel business, is it not?"¹¹⁶

In addition to his skills as a dedicated and respected chaplain, Trumbull also showed a coolness under fire and an ability to lead men. In late December, 1864, he was "pleaded with . . . quite strongly" by a colonel in his brigade to be the new commander of the 10th Connecticut. Its present colonel was at home in ill-health. Prior to his death, Henry Camp spoke quite often to Trumbull of his desire for him to be the man to succeed the position. Trumbull always shrugged off such suggestions. Yet Camp assured him that if the post ever vacated, he would be asked to take it.

¹¹⁶ Trumbull Letter 216, Dec. 24, 1864; Trumbull, Memories, 188-90.

The chaplain was gratified and flattered when the colonel offered the post, but he declined. Later the brigade commander, Gen. Joseph. R. Hawley, again asked Trumbull to take the position. Hawley added that Trumbull could even retain his role as chaplain. It was a great temptation for Trumbull, who had often been described by individuals in the north as one whose role was noncombatant and removed from any of the physical dangers of warfare. Noncombatant, yes; physically removed from danger, no. Nor was he afraid to die "in the battle's van; for a soldier's death is the most glorious death one can know."

That evening, while considering the offer, he read as his evening devotional a passage in I Timothy 5: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called and hast professed of good profession before many witnesses"(underlining Trumbull's).

These sentiments reminded Trumbull of his calling, and that his conscience constrained him to the work of saving souls. Consequently, he viewed promotion as desirable but temporal and personal. He continued as chaplain, without promotion, with a clear conscience.¹¹⁷

The first of January was cold enough to force

¹¹⁷ Trumbull Letter 216, Dec. 24, 1864.

Trumbull's services indoors. On Sunday, January 2, he preached in the officers' mess tent on the first three words in the Bible: "In the beginning . . ." As always, Trumbull sought to encourage the men to carry on as Christians and soldiers. God, he stressed, has given us the beginning in our course as men and as soldiers in our country's service. God will therefore provide us with our end: "victory, peace, home, rest, joy . . .," and He who gave the beginning "can alone give us the strength for our course, and grace to the end." He ended this sermon with a plea for the troops to renew their resolve, and to submit to God's will as they moved forward in their cause.¹¹⁸

A week later, Trumbull preached to the entire regiment. He had never before made his services mandatory, but to him this was an important exception. During the preceding week, Trumbull found out from visiting with the men in camp, especially the new recruits, that many of them had the mistaken idea that deserting to the rear, or going home, would not carry a stiff disciplinary measure if they were caught. They had the delusion that only desertion to the enemy would result in the death penalty. The last eight men sent before the firing squad in their division were executed

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 219, Jan. 1, 1865.

because they had deserted their post and attempted to go home.¹¹⁹

Trumbull wanted to insure that the men understood the truth, so he asked the colonel of the regiment to order a mandatory service. "I was glad to have the men ordered to listen to good advice." His text was Jeremiah 35:10: "We have dwelt in tents and obeyed." His interpretation and application to men was simple: the best men were those who stayed on the front lines and were obedient to their commanders. Not only was desertion immoral and reflective of the worst kind of men, but it was perilous as well. In closing, he urged the men to be obedient to all of God's laws. "I spoke prayerfully and earnestly," he added.¹²⁰

Later that day Trumbull received the highest compliment that he had known. The colonel and major of the 11th Maine, which was part of their brigade, told him that under any circumstances he was welcome to speak to their regiment. The men of the 11th Maine had so often seen Trumbull at the front during battle that the officers said "they all loved me." Trumbull placed this compliment into his spiritual perspective. He had declined the offer made earlier for the field promotion

¹¹⁹ Trumbull, Memories, 19.

¹²⁰ Trumbull Letter 222, Jan. 8, 1865.

because he felt it would interfere with his higher calling to save souls. The compliment paid to him by the men of the 11th Maine only buttressed his conviction to stay at the front because he knew the effect it would have upon the impact of his ministry. "May I live or die as will best promote the spiritual interests of these noble men about me."¹²¹

Desertions continued. In desperation the officers decided that deserters should be shot on the spot rather than going through the a time-consuming process of a formal execution. They hoped this policy would have a greater deterrent against the problem. Trumbull described the fate of one soldier who was caught in the act and a pistol was placed to his head and the trigger pulled, but faulty percussion caps saved him,--"to our regret" Trumbull added. These men were not soldiers, he asserted; they were "villainous representatives of infamous Connecticut republican cowards. Shame on the sneaking renegades at home."¹²²

In mid-February, 1865, Trumbull happily secured his own chapel for holding services. Soldiers built a rudimentary log structure and stretched a

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid., 223, Feb. 12, 1865; 233, Feb. 20, 1865; 234, Feb. 23, 1865.

forty-by-sixty-foot canvas tent-fly over it for a roof. Trumbull labored an entire Saturday evening to produce a twenty-page dedication sermon for his new chapel, but the following morning the wind blew the roof away. The dedication service had to be postponed. Sunday, February 19, marked the official dedication of the chapel. For the occasion Trumbull chose I Kings 6:12; "Concerning this house which thou art building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgements, and keep all my commandments to walk in them: then will I perform my word with thee."

The dedication of a chapel was compatible with Trumbull's constant theological theme: duty and responsibility. The verse from I Kings centers mainly on the performance of those in the house rather than on the house itself, even a house of worship.

Perhaps, too, Trumbull was again trying to inculcate the idea of reverence and obedience. Jesus communicated this same idea when He asked of his disciples "Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say." This clearly fit into Trumbull's views on peritology, i.e., if you truly revere God you will obey His commands. Not only was one obedient as a Christian, but following the chaplain's logic one is also obedient as a citizen and soldier. During a period when desertions and executions were mentioned in almost every

letter home to his wife, his messages could hardly have followed another course.¹²³

The infamy of desertions aside, Trumbull still enjoyed army life in general and his role as chaplain in particular. In late February, 1865, his ministry bore the kind of fruit that encouraged him the most. Sergeant-major Lewis A. Thornton of the 10th Connecticut rededicated his life to Christ after lengthy urgings from Trumbull that began while the regiment was in St. Augustine. Thornton had subsequently been wounded in the action and was sent home to recuperate. His brush with death evidently touched his spiritual nerve and troubled his conscience. When he returned to the regiment in February, he had "found [his] rest at the foot of the cross Now he is an active worker for the Master among us," wrote Trumbull. Soon after Trumbull wrote this letter, Thornton received a promotion to lieutenant.¹²⁴

Thornton was a veteran and deserving of Trumbull's praise for his bravery, service, and spiritual resolve. However, since November the new recruits also began to

¹²³ Trumbull Letters 232, Feb. 12, 1865; 233, Feb. 20, 1865; 234, Feb. 23, 1865; 237, Mar. 5, 1865; 238, Mar. 10, 1865; Trumbull, Memories, 35-7.

¹²⁴ Trumbull Letter 235, Feb. 27, 1865; Smith, Record of Service, 399.

"change their bearing" toward Trumbull's ministry. One Saturday evening, though tired and enduring a headache, Trumbull decided on the spur of the moment to hold a prayer meeting for the men. He did not expect a large turnout, but to his surprise he found the new chapel filled with a larger number of men than had previously attended his prayer meetings. Most of them were new recruits. Trumbull had earlier viewed these men as a "hopeless abandoned class" of soldiers. Now this change caused him to exclaim that "truly the army is a great evangelizer!"¹²⁵

Trumbull's ministry to the soldiers kept him busy, which in turn helped to mitigate against his feelings of loneliness since Henry Camp's death. Occasionally he would experience periods of depression. In an effort to paint a facade over his feelings, he usually turned to levity. "I have joked and laughed the more because of my sadness within."

Before the war ended, Trumbull completed a memoir of his friend. It bore the title The Knightly Soldier. Even though the army was special to Trumbull as a ministry, it was also the environment that reminded him of his former relationship with Camp. Yet being around soldiers had a way of lifting his spirits. Early in

¹²⁵ Trumbull Letter 235, Feb. 27, 1865.

March he wrote: "There is none like the soldiers. I am glad to speak for them. If I live, my efforts shall be to win their honor. I want to preach at home a sermon on the hallowing influences of army life."¹²⁶

March, 1865, however, brought more sorrow to Trumbull. His brother Tom, the lieutenant colonel of the 1st Connecticut Heavy Artillery, died after a long illness contracted near Richmond the previous spring. Once again, Trumbull obtained leave and made the long trip home for the funeral. He did not return to his regiment until April 19, ten days after Lee had surrendered to Grant. Unfortunately for posterity, Trumbull's absence during this period meant that an articulate and detailed account of the military movements to Appomattox from his pen never materialized.¹²⁷

When Trumbull went home for his brother's funeral, the war essentially ended for him. He returned to the 10th Connecticut to spend nineteen more weeks with occupational forces around Richmond. Men in the 10th Connecticut warmly welcomed Trumbull when he got back from Hartford. On the steamer carrying him to Richmond,

¹²⁶ Ibid., 226, Jan. 22, 1865; 236, Mar. 2, 1865; unnumbered letter of Apr. 16, 1865.

¹²⁷ Ibid., April 16, 1865; Smith, Record of Service, 120.

Trumbull wrote to Alice: "I do love the soldiers, more and more."

The soldiers too, wished that he had been with them during the final weeks of the fighting. The 10th Connecticut took a major part in the April 2 assault on Fort Gregg, outside Petersburg. When the victory at Fort Gregg was certain, one of the men called to the others: "I wonder what the Chaplain would say, now?" The officers repeatedly told the chaplain that the men often said "Won't the chaplain be sorry he missed this?", and "He [Trumbull] wouldn't have missed it for a thousand dollars!"

Trumbull had become a respected and integral part of his regiment. Yet his return was bittersweet. The army again brought back fond memories of Henry Camp. As a result, he felt more sad and lonely in his "sad sphere of duty." He confessed to his wife that "more and more I long to leave it." This in spite of his great love for ministering to the soldiers.¹²⁸

On August 26, 1865, the 10th Connecticut left Richmond for home. At Hartford on September 5, it was mustered out of service, twenty-five days short of four

¹²⁸ O. R., XXXXVI, Pt. 1, 1183, 1192-95, 1198; Trumbull Letters, Apr. 16, 1865; 247, Apr. 26, 1865; Trumbull, Memories, 200-02; Smith, Record of Service, 397.

years' service.¹²⁹

¹²⁹ Ibid.

CHAPTER V: A FAITHFUL STEWARD

Trumbull journeyed to New England and resumed peacetime labors. In October, 1865, he returned to work at the American Sunday School Union, this time as the missionary secretary. He became coordinator for the entire New England district. This is not to say that he did not have other offers or alternatives. Many people by now recognized his skills in writing and editing. One of his army commanders planned to purchase the Baltimore American newspaper, and he offered Trumbull half interest in the paper in exchange for being its editor. He was also asked to coordinate the curriculum of a new military school in New England to be headed by Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside. The New York Sunday School Union offered him a lucrative position; several prominent New England churches asked him to be their minister. Yet Trumbull remained devoted to the Sunday school ministry, mainly because he believed it was a great arena in which to evangelize the young.¹³⁰

Trumbull was indefatigable. Phillip Howard, his son-in-law, called him "the hardest worker I have ever

¹³⁰ The Congregationalist and Christian World LXXXVIII (1903), 938; Howard, Life Story, 236-37, 280-83.

known." The thought of taking a vacation, even of short duration, was anathema to him. He traveled throughout New England, wrote articles for The Sunday School Times, composed sermons, and gave numerous speeches. In the midst of these activities, he continued to publish his own works as he had done during the war. With all of his responsibilities as a chaplain in the war, Trumbull penned regular articles for The Sunday School World and two New England newspapers, the Hartford Courant and the Springfield Republican. He also finished the biography of Henry Camp.

Shortly after the war, Trumbull also attended Yale College and received a Master of Arts degree in studies of the history of Sunday schools. By 1870, he had published three articles and two lengthy books. One book was the wartime story of a captured army sergeant who died at Andersonville Prison. The second was a history of children's worship. An incredible drive and capacity for work continued to characterize his life, even in his later years.¹³¹

With time, the constant travel in the Sunday school field work began to have an adverse affect on his

¹³¹ Howard, Life Story, 238-39, 246-47; The Congregationalist and Christian World, LXXXVIII (1903), 938; Allan Nevins et al. (eds.), Civil War Books: A Critical Bibliography, (Baton Rouge, 1967-1969), I, 170.

health. Not only did he rove throughout the New England region, but he was also called to speak at conferences and Sunday school institutions throughout the country. In 1875, Trumbull moved to Philadelphia to accept a new job as the editor of a nationally syndicated weekly Sunday school periodical, The Sunday School Times. The periodical had a circulation of 16,000 when he arrived; at its peak, under his direction, it reached a circulation of 160,000 subscribers. The Times was a teaching aid to help Sunday school teachers plan their curricula. Eventually, the need for this type of general syndicated study guide lessened as individual denominations began to plan and publish their own curricula. Yet Trumbull brought high success to the Times. He chose, directed, and often wrote the biblical articles (conservative in its theology), and he always added an editorial.¹³²

Unfortunately for Trumbull's health, the job of writing and editing proved no more ameliorating than that of his previous employment with the Sunday School Union. After five years as editor for the Times, he suffered a collapse and was bedridden for a time. Many people presumed that he was no longer capable of

¹³² Howard, Life Story, 292-94; The Congregationalist and Christian World, LXXXVIII (1903), 938.

continuing his work. His doctor prescribed that he travel overseas to the drier and warmer climate of the Middle East. In January, 1881, Trumbull left Hartford on a tour that took him through most of the Sinai Peninsula, Upper Nile, and the Holy Land.

In addition to giving Trumbull time for recuperation his travels allowed him to do archaeological and biblical research. Trumbull made an important contribution to biblical archaeology by confirming the original discovery of Kadesh-Barnea, an oasis point in the Sinai where the Israelites twice had gathered.

The first time the Israelites were at Kadesh was right after their release from Egypt and under Moses' leadership. It was at Kadesh-Barnea that they hesitated to go into the Promised Land. Their apprehensions in following God's instruction at this point cursed them with a forty-year trek in the wilderness. At the end of that period, they again returned to Kadesh-Barnea; this time, they did not hesitate to cross the Jordan into Canaan.

During the mid-19th Century, three different sites were assumed to be the original Kadesh-Barnea. The site upon which most Biblical scholars agreed had been seen and described in detail only once by a Westerner. Until Trumbull's trip, these observations had never been

confirmed.

Trumbull applied his usual resolve to the situation and visited all three sites while touring the MiddleEast. This is significant because his guides were reluctant to venture into that region since it was controlled by a hostile tribe of nomadic Arabs. Trumbull pushed forward despite the potential danger; his experience on the front lines of civil war had erased his apprehensions. As a result, he positively identified the site described by the earlier discovery. English scholars carefully examined Trumbull's descriptions, and judged them to be of sound research. Even those who disagreed with his conclusions regarding the original site did agree that his work was exhaustive and scholarly. Although his find was not original, it did help to clear confusion over an important biblical site.¹³³

In May, 1881, a healthy Trumbull returned to United States. He began to write a series of books whose themes were taken from portions of Scripture treating of the places he had visited in the Sinai and Holy Land. By this time, he had become something of an theological "institution" in New England. The beard that he had

¹³³ Douglas, New Bible Dictionary, 687, 1327-30; Howard, Life Story, 331-32, 337-44, 352; The Congregationalist and Christian World, LXXXVIII (1903), 937-38.

grown during the Civil War gave him a patriarchal dignity. The strength of his outward character, and his ability to get along with people, (which had won the soldiers' respect and affection during the war), continued to characterize his later years. He was well liked and respected by the majority of those with whom he came into contact. Trumbull remained staunchly principled, yet flexible enough in dealing with the needs of others so as not to alienate them. His devotion to God remained constant and provided a source of inspiration for his Christian co-laborers who either worked for him or made his acquaintance.

Friendships were sacred to Trumbull. Perhaps his memories of Henry Camp caused him not to take friendships for granted. When Trumbull did show signs of having feet of clay by losing his temper (usually because of his adherence to principle), he was quick to apologize and reconcile, even if he agreed to disagree. He even wrote a book on the subject: Friendship, The Master Passion. He later confided to his son-in-law that this volume "was the work of which he himself thought the most, and upon which he had bestowed the the most thought and care."

Years later, in an editorial on friendship, Trumbull wrote that most people test their friendships by determining how loyal their friends are to them.

Instead, said Trumbull, "Our friendship-love ought not to pivot on his fidelity, but on ours." Trumbull demonstrated friendship by continually taking the initiative in the lives of those he called his friends.¹³⁴

Although Trumbull waxed ideally about relationships and friendships, and while he had many friends, his devotion to his work and ministry leaves his social life open to some debate. If, in the estimation of his brother-in-law, he was a hard working man, one must wonder when he had time to develop close relationships. Phillip Howard knew his father-in-law well. Yet he gave us the impression that he was highly enamored with Trumbull and wrote his biography in part to eulogize him. Because they worked together, Howard spent much time with Trumbull. Eventually Trumbull came to trust him like a son. The same was true of his relationship with Henry Camp.

Other than these two men, it is difficult to conceive of Trumbull having many close friendships. Viewed in the large, Trumbull's strengths and success lay in his writing and speaking skills. His ministry was important for its time, and Trumbull gained the respect and appreciation of his peers and colleagues.

¹³⁴ Howard, Life Story, 375, 462, 464-65, 479-81, 483.

Trumbull was affable, warm, and charismatic in dealing with people, but he seemed in actuality to have been a man with little time to cultivate deeper friendships.¹³⁵

From 1886 to 1897 Trumbull was Chaplain-in-Chief of a Union veteran's group, the Loyal Legion of the United States. The ex-soldiers of the 10th Connecticut, as well as other veterans from New England, continued to have an affection and esteem for their old chaplain. In 1885 and 1897, he was one of several chaplains who officiated at Grant's two funeral services. Whatever Grant's failings were as a president, he was still a great soldier and a great man in the eyes of Trumbull. At Grant's interment in New York City, Trumbull said: "Our service for General Grant is at an end; but his service for us and for our country still goes on. . . . his life story will be a lesson and an inspiration to the citizens of the great republic which he saved and served."¹³⁶

Beginning in 1899, Trumbull's consummate pace steadily declined. To borrow somewhat from a biblical passage, his spirit was willing but the flesh was weakening. He no longer busily ran many errands. For unknown medical reasons, his legs no longer functioned

¹³⁵ Howard, Life Story, 462, 465, 472-73, 477, 484, 487.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 485-86; Trumbull, Memories, 334.

normally. Trumbull's Civil War prison experience had left a loathsome and indelible impression on him, for one of his great fears was living the life as a confined shut-in. Yet when he recognized the inevitable situation facing him, he looked to make the best of it.

Eventually, he found some gain in what at first appeared to be a loss. His mental faculties were as finely tuned as ever, and would remain so until the end. Often when he was in a situation that required the physical help of another he would say: "Well, I'm glad I am not entirely laid aside. I'd rather lose three legs at any time than one head." He wrote more than ever, mainly the reminiscences of other missionaries, as well as articles, books, and his editorials for The Sunday School Times. Always there was the multitude of letters sent to friends and acquaintances.¹³⁷

Trumbull's work area was his room, located on the second story of his West Philadelphia home. From there he could look out through his bay window onto the city streets and wave to friends and passersby. Although on rare occasions he walked along the streets of Philadelphia with someone aiding him, he was mainly confined to his bed. Exercise became even more rare

¹³⁷ The Congregationalist and Christian World, LXXXVIII (1903), 938; Howard, Life Story, 487-88.

during the last two years of his life. When he could no longer visit others, people came often to visit him in his room. He welcomed them in his usual warm manner. In the last few months of his life, there were periods when Trumbull would sit in his room in quiet reflection for long periods of time. This reflection was not in sadness, but in an attitude of one who knows that his life is coming to an end.¹³⁸

Trumbull accepted death calmly and unemotionally. Perhaps he felt that death would, as Paul said it in the New Testament, be gain for him. There were no feelings of lack of fulfillment in life, or that life had somehow cheated him. If he did have one regret, it was stated simply to Phillip Howard shortly before his death: "I wish I had done far better with the opportunities God had given me."

In the early summer of 1903, Trumbull began to talk candidly about his death to family members and friends. He told them that he knew the end was swiftly approaching so he went ahead and tendered goodbyes and a few last, special words. He told them that he was doing this because he knew he would not have the opportunity to say these things when the time came to die. In this Trumbull displayed foresight and

¹³⁸ Howard, Life Story, 491-92, 495.

sensitivity.¹³⁹

On Sunday, December 6, no longer able to preach or attend church, Trumbull worked in his room until his grandchildren--his favorite guests--came to see him. The following day he was still revelling over their visit as he worked through the morning hours on a manuscript. Before noon he was wearied to the point of concern, and laid down to rest. He quickly lapsed into unconsciousness, and died the next morning.¹⁴⁰

Trumbull's simple funeral ceremony at the Walnut Street Presbyterian Church was well attended. Several speakers eulogized his life and Godly character qualities, along with the "new life" Trumbull now had in the heavenly realm. Trumbull's body was then transported to Hartford for interment. As a Sunday school teacher, chaplain, minister and writer, Trumbull was single minded in his devotion to God and the furtherance of his ministry. Perhaps it is fitting that he was buried with his army cloak beside him, as a symbol of the Christian soldier who loved his God and his country. The Apostle Paul wrote in I Corinthians 4: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover,

¹³⁹ Ibid., 495; Philippians 1:21.

¹⁴⁰ Howard, Life Story, 498.

it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."

It can be said that Henry Clay Trumbull was a servant of Christ, and a faithful steward of the mysteries of God.¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 498-500; Robert E. Speer, Men Who Were Found Faithful, (New York, 1912), 156-70; The Philadelphia Inquirer, Dec. 9, 1903.

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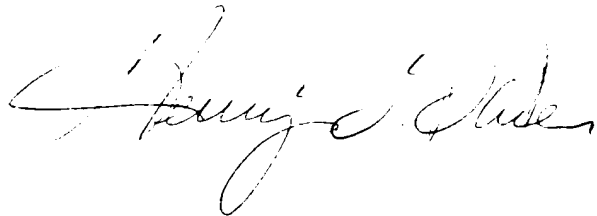
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Henry Theodore Thill was born July 26, 1955 in St. Louis, Missouri. He graduated from Southwest Missouri State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education to teach Art. He spent the next six years as a missionary for an interdenominational Christian youth organization. In August, 1984 he enrolled in the Master of Arts program in History at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Here he pursued his graduate work under the direction of Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr. He held a Graduate Teaching Assistantship for one year. During one quarter at Virginia Tech, he taught a survey course in American History. In June, 1985, he was awarded the Homer Davis Memorial Scholarship in Civil War Studies. He is a member of the Phi Alpha Theta honor society.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Henry T. Thill". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page.