

Northerners at War: Reflections on the Civil War Home Front

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Review

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Gallman, J. Matthew *Northerners at War: Reflections on the Civil War Home Front*. The Kent State University Press, \$39.95 ISBN 978-1-60635-045-4

A Deeper Look at Civil War Society

This collection of essays covers the thoughtful observations of a Civil War scholar and educator gleaned from twenty years of research on the impact of the war on northern social behavior, economic stability, and unusual opportunities for businessmen and women. His eleven articles use the specific locations of Philadelphia, New York, and Gettysburg to demonstrate the changes and continuities that occurred during the war years. His economic assessments challenge the view that the North experienced great change during the war, pointing to the stabilizing impact of federal spending that meant the survival of both large and small businesses that converted to supplying war goods and services. His comparison with southern government activities resulted in a conclusion that the South was more committed to the modern concept of "full-scale war" than the North because it was directly involved in manufacturing and transportation. In another article he uses the town of Gettysburg to show this northern town's experiences of war as dissimilar to common northern experiences because of the amount of destruction that occurred in the battle fought in and around a civilian population. Yet in other significant ways Gallman viewed Gettysburg as significantly different from those southern towns that repeatedly experienced raids, battles or military occupation throughout the four-year period. Another article positively compares the experience of Philadelphia, whose mayor took immediate action to protect the city from mob activity in light of the Union Draft Law, with other towns whose majors waited for problems to develop before taking precautions to avoid the kind of eruptions that occurred in New York City. There are multiple articles on Anna Elizabeth Dickson, who Gallman presented as an example of a woman who took advantage of wartime speaking opportunities to earn a living on a speaker's circuit despite

the challenging restrictions she faced because of her youth and her sex.

Gallman begins each article with an explanation of the initial challenge that prompted him to include the specific article in this single volume intended for Civil War enthusiasts and scholars who might not have the time to dig through the necessary volumes to uncover these gems that were published over a twenty year period. He noted the times his efforts had been prompted by participation in conferences honoring the contributions to the field of eminent retiring historians. This book falls within that tradition by collecting, in one place, his observations about the northern civilian arena during the Civil War. Gallman is currently professor of history at University of Florida and has published numerous articles throughout his career. His books include *Mastering Wartime: a Social History of Philadelphia during the Civil War*, *The North Fights the Civil War*, and *America's Joan of Arc: The Life of Anna Elizabeth Dickson*.

This is not a book for the individual seeking to gain a cohesive grasp of unexplored ideas on the northern home front. Instead it would be useful to graduate students or researchers who have an existing framework of knowledge in northern economics or social patterns before or during the war.

Dr. Nancy Zens, Professor of History, Central Oregon Community College, has taught courses and seminars on the Civil War for the past twenty years.