Civil War History

Jim Downs
Editor
GETTYSBURG COLLEGE

Crystal Feimster
Associate Editor
YALE UNIVERSITY

Civil War History

CONTENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2025

Volume Seventy-One · Number Three

On the cover: Matthew Rhea, Jefferson and Cocke Counties, Tennessee Rhea Family Papers 1759-1859 Collection, Accession #THS 10, ID #42910, Tennessee Historical Society.

CONTRIBUTORS

RICHARD EDWARDS is Director Emeritus, Center for Great Plains Studies, University of Nebraska, and author of fifteen books, most recently (with Jacob Friefeld) *The First Migrants: How Black Homesteaders' Quest for Land and Freedom Heralded America's Great Migration* (2023).

KATHRYN LOFTON is Lex Hixon Professor of Religious Studies and American Studies, professor of history and divinity, at Yale University.

JULIE MUJIC is an assistant professor of global commerce at Denison University. She studies the impact of the Civil War on the midwestern home front.

The September 2025 issue includes cutting-edge scholarship in the interdisciplinary field of Civil War–era studies. Renowned religious scholar Kathryn Lofton examines the chilling case of an 1854 lynching and murder of a family in eastern Tennessee. While Lofton provides a rich social history of this atrocity, she also brilliantly examines how the lynching myth is not a postbellum creation but developed during the antebellum period. Lofton places the lynching narratives within the context of nineteenth-century Christianity, providing a compelling interdisciplinary analysis of antebellum period.

Also in this issue, distinguished economics professor Richard Edwards adds an important political history of the Civil War period. As Edwards explains, "the 1862 midterm elections proved extraordinarily consequential for American society, but many contemporaries and historians misinterpreted the results." Drawing on a dazzling collection of sources, among them the *Chicago Tribune* to the *Philadelphia Inquirer,* and the *Tribune Almanac and Political Register,* Edwards smartly submits that lower voter turnout resulted from "the withdrawal of soldiers from their home districts," which made them unable to vote.

Assistant professor of global commerce and Civil War historian Julie Mujic offers a fascinating exploration of how Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) can enhance archival research. Scholars, teachers, and students of history have debated extensively about the limitations and benefits of Generative Artificial Intelligence. Mujic offers an experiment for Civil War scholars by using an 1864 unpublished antiwar poem by Samuel Medary, a Columbus, Ohio, Peace Democrat newspaper editor, to test AI as a scholarly method.

There is no book review section in this issue.