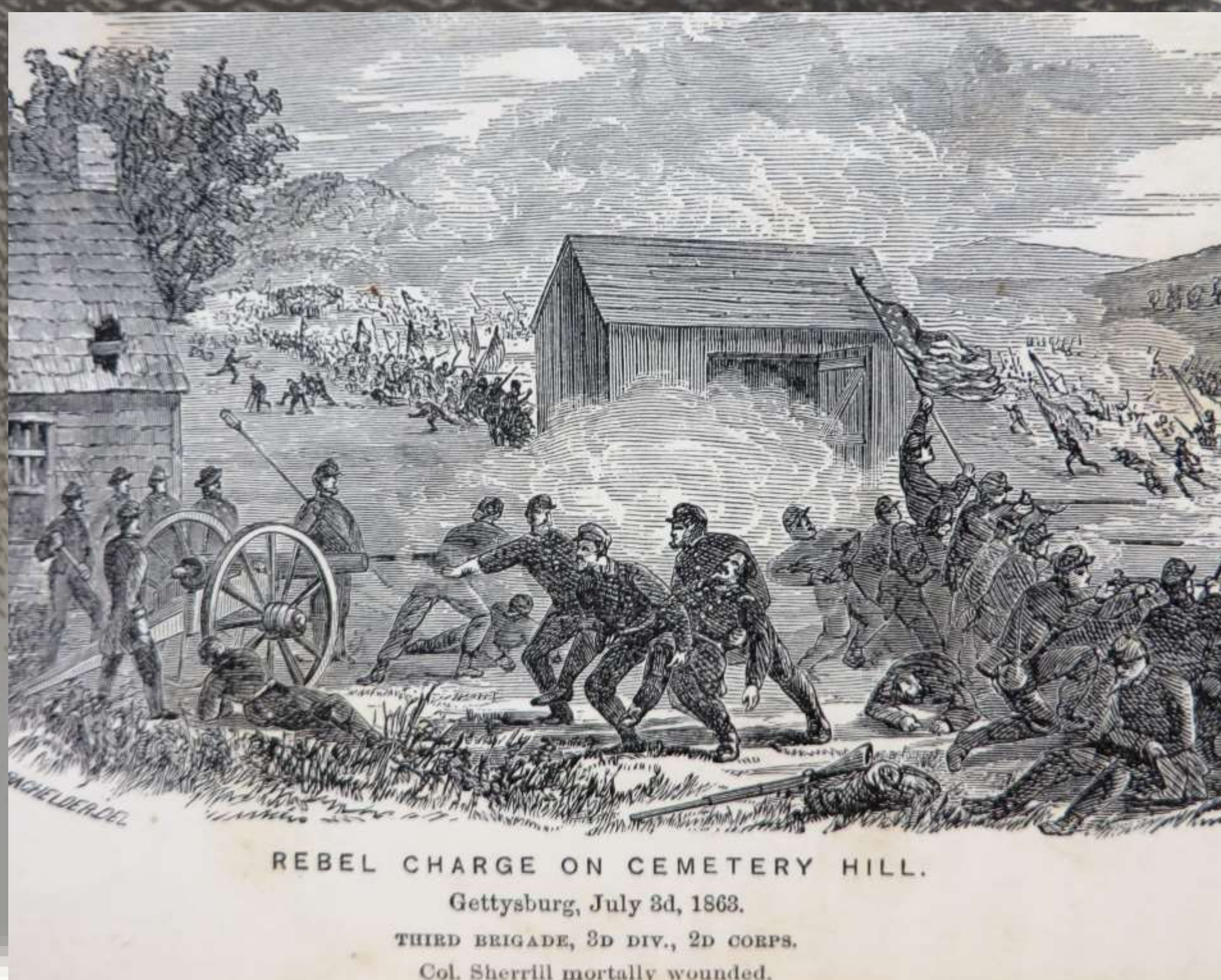


Hometown Hero: Eliakim Sherrill

In 1862 Colonel Eliakim Sherrill was the third choice to lead the 126th Regiment New York Volunteers. A newcomer to Geneva in 1860, the honor fell to Sherrill after Charles Folger and D.A. Ogden of Penn Yan declined. His first command was at Maryland Heights above Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, where he received horrific injuries when he was shot through the jaw. Sherrill returned to command in February 1863, but was mortally wounded at Gettysburg on July 3. His body was returned to Geneva and buried in Washington Street Cemetery with military honors.

Born in Greenville, New York, Eliakim Sherrill served in Congress and the New York State Senate from Ulster County. He moved to Geneva in 1860 and purchased a large farm on the north side of town. The neighborhood is now known as Torrey Park.



The late Col. Sherrill.

Arrangements for the Funeral Obsequies
AT GENEVA,
On Sunday, July 12th.

Predicated on intelligence which has been received in regard to the arrival of the body of the lamented Col. SHERRILL, the following arrangements for the funeral obsequies are announced:

The funeral will take place from the residence of the deceased, on Sunday the 12th inst., at 1 1-2 o'clock P. M.—services at the Presbyterian Church at 2 o'clock.

ORDER OF PROCESSION.

Band.

Military Escort.

Composed of returned and furloughed officers and soldiers, under command of Major Platner.

The Rev. Clergy.

MILITARY PALE BEARERS.

(Gen. J. G. Swift, Gen. Thomas H. H. House, Com. T. T. Craven, Col. Chas. B. Stuart.)

HEARSE.

Horse of deceased, led by groom.

CIVIC PALE BEARERS.

(Hon. G. V. Sackett, Hon. Geo. Goddes, Hon. Wm. W. Wright, Jas. G. Sheldon, Esq.)

Family and relatives of the deceased.

Trustees of the Village of Geneva.

Faculty and Students of Hobart College.

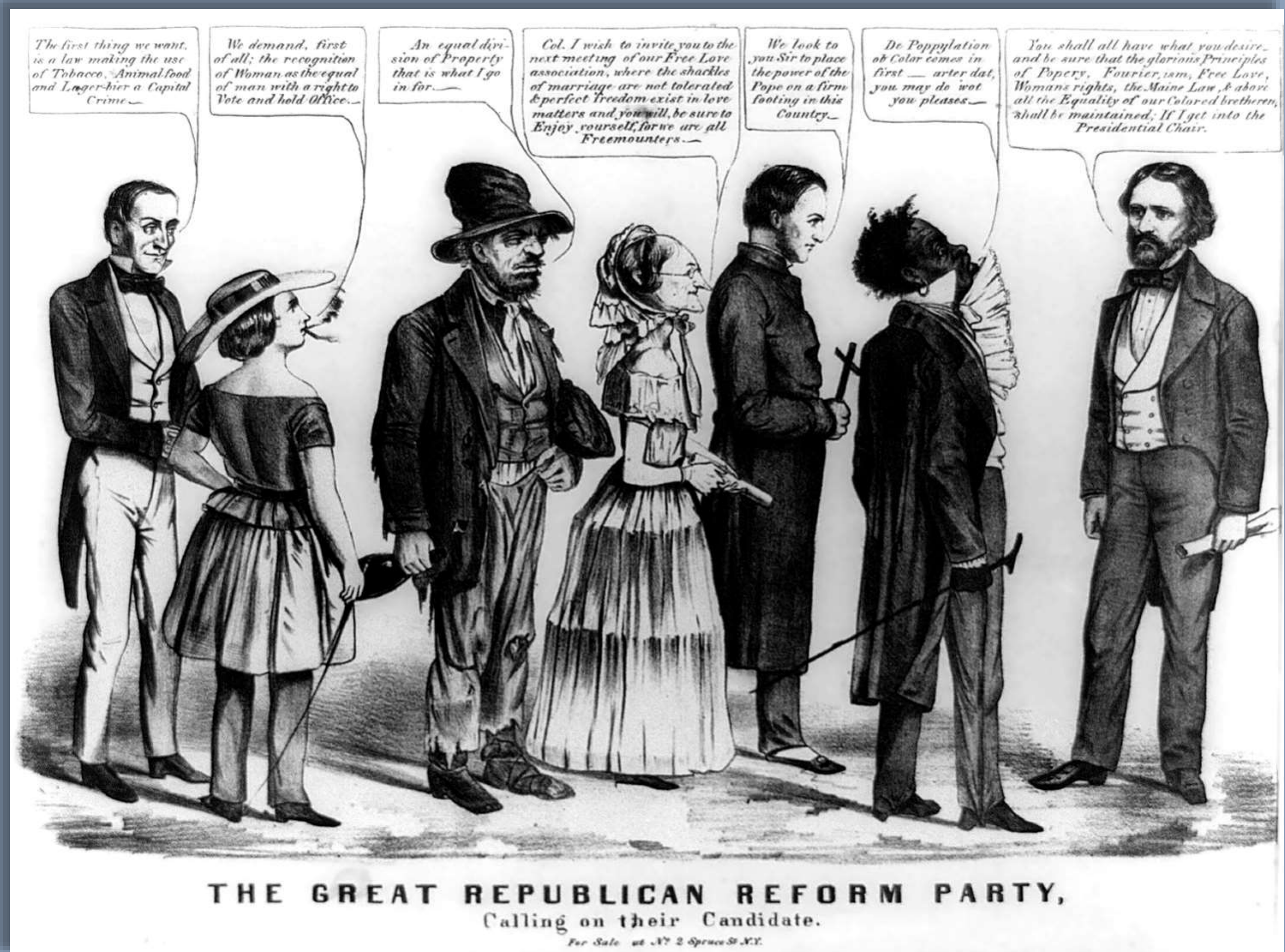
Citizens and Strangers.

All those connected with the organizations mentioned, whether in civil or military life, are invited to be present and to participate in the obsequies to the patriot dead, without other or more formal notice.

Those connected with the military are requested to appear in uniform, and to report to Major PLATNER at the Franklin House.

A House Divided: New York State

With the country's largest population, New York was politically important in the years leading up to the Civil War. However, the state was split between downstate Democrats and upstate Republicans. New York City businessmen had strong trade ties to the South and wanted to maintain the Union at all costs. Recent urban immigrants also sided with the Democrats as they feared that more free African-Americans would compete with them for jobs. Republicans, many influenced by the religious and reform movements that began in upstate, favored halting the spread of slavery to new territories and states.



In 1856, John Fremont (right) was the first Republican anti-slavery presidential candidate. Democrats tried to discredit him by linking abolitionists to other groups: women's rights, free love, and Roman Catholics.



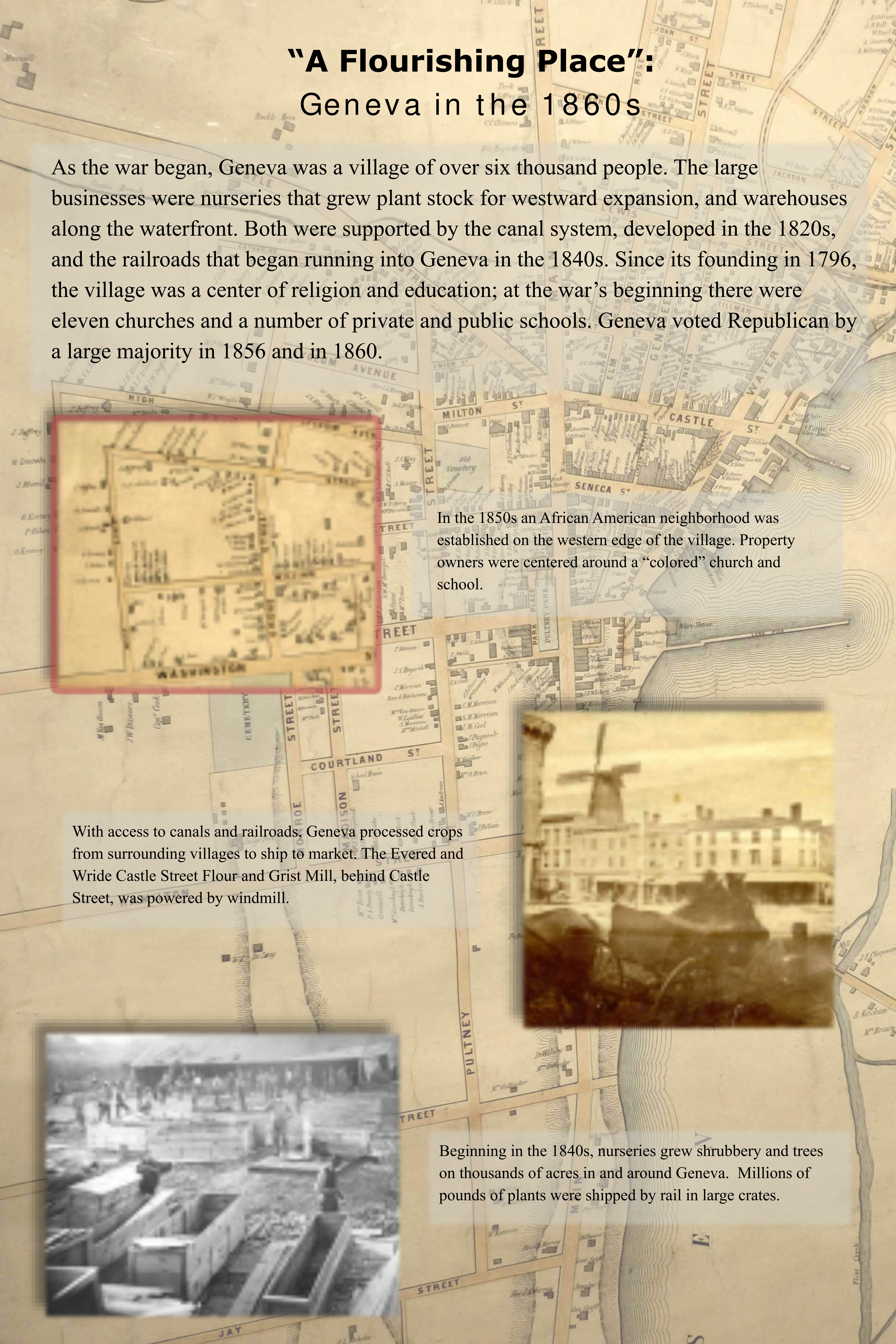
Abraham Lincoln carried New York State in 1860, but he lost New York City by a large margin. As tensions over Fort Sumter increased, Mayor Fernando Wood suggested that the city secede to protect Southern trade.




From 1854 until its statehood in 1861, Kansas Territory saw violence between pro- and anti-slavery supporters. The September 19th meeting was organized by Republicans who renamed Linden Hall on Seneca Street in honor of John Fremont.

“A Flourishing Place”: Geneva in the 1860s


As the war began, Geneva was a village of over six thousand people. The large businesses were nurseries that grew plant stock for westward expansion, and warehouses along the waterfront. Both were supported by the canal system, developed in the 1820s, and the railroads that began running into Geneva in the 1840s. Since its founding in 1796, the village was a center of religion and education; at the war's beginning there were eleven churches and a number of private and public schools. Geneva voted Republican by a large majority in 1856 and in 1860.



In the 1850s an African American neighborhood was established on the western edge of the village. Property owners were centered around a “colored” church and school.



With access to canals and railroads, Geneva processed crops from surrounding villages to ship to market. The Evered and Wride Castle Street Flour and Grist Mill, behind Castle Street, was powered by windmill.



Beginning in the 1840s, nurseries grew shrubbery and trees on thousands of acres in and around Geneva. Millions of pounds of plants were shipped by rail in large crates.

“Bold Soldier Boys”: Local Militia

In April 1861, the United States Army had about 13,000 regular troops, primarily protecting the national frontiers. The state militia system only required recruits to serve 90 days per calendar year. Congress authorized President Lincoln to recruit state volunteers, which was initially effective in raising an army. In March 1863 Congress passed the Enrollment Act, creating federal powers to raise an army without state assistance. New York contributed more men, material, and money than any other state, north or south. Genevans were involved in at least eleven regiments raised from this region.

In July 1862 the former White Springs Trotting Track was selected as the site for a training camp for new recruits. Named after a local general, Camp Swift was the mustering point for the 126th and 148th infantry regiments. It was in the general location of the Tops Plaza on Hamilton Street.



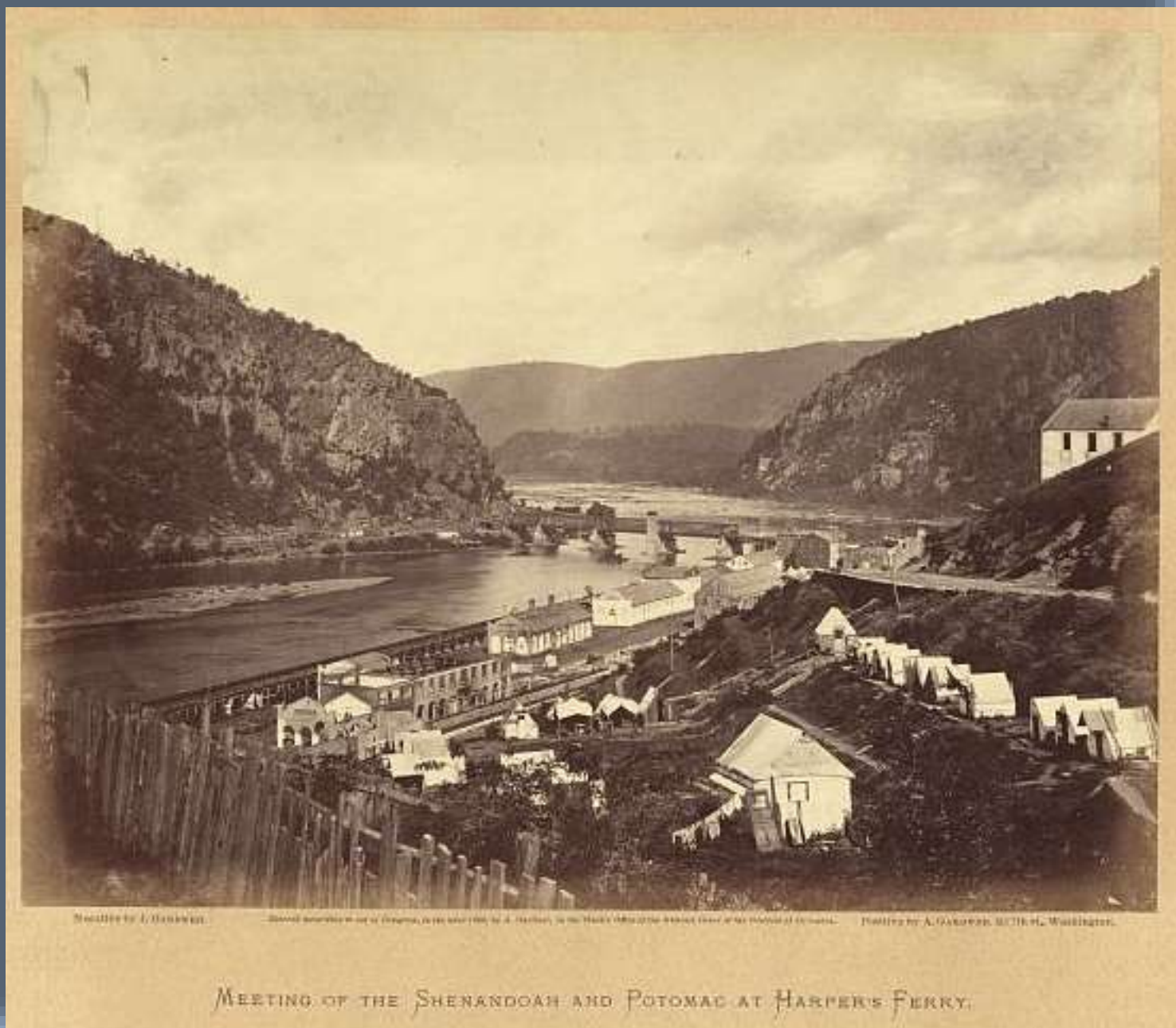
Serving from 1861 to 1863, the 33rd Infantry Regiment (left) was the first unit from Geneva. Major battles involving Geneva regiments included Williamsburg, Yorktown, Seven Days Battle, Malverne Hill, Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg.

National, state, and county bounties were offered to encourage enlistment. At first, single men were preferred but the advertisement to the right mentions that the advance payment will “provide handsomely for the family of the married man who may enlist.”



“The Cowards of Harper’s Ferry”: The 126th Regiment NY Volunteers

The 126th Regiment New York Volunteers was mustered into duty on August 22, 1862 and was not relieved until after the end of the war in 1865. After a humiliating beginning at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, the regiment redeemed themselves in major battles including Gettysburg, the Wilderness, Cold Harbor, and Petersburg. It was one of a small number of regiments in the entire Union Army that had more men killed in action than die from disease.



The 126th was assigned to protect Maryland Heights, above Harpers Ferry. Some witnesses claimed the unit fled while others claimed they stood firm in the midst of chaos. Regardless, over 11,000 Union troops were captured by the Confederates two days later.



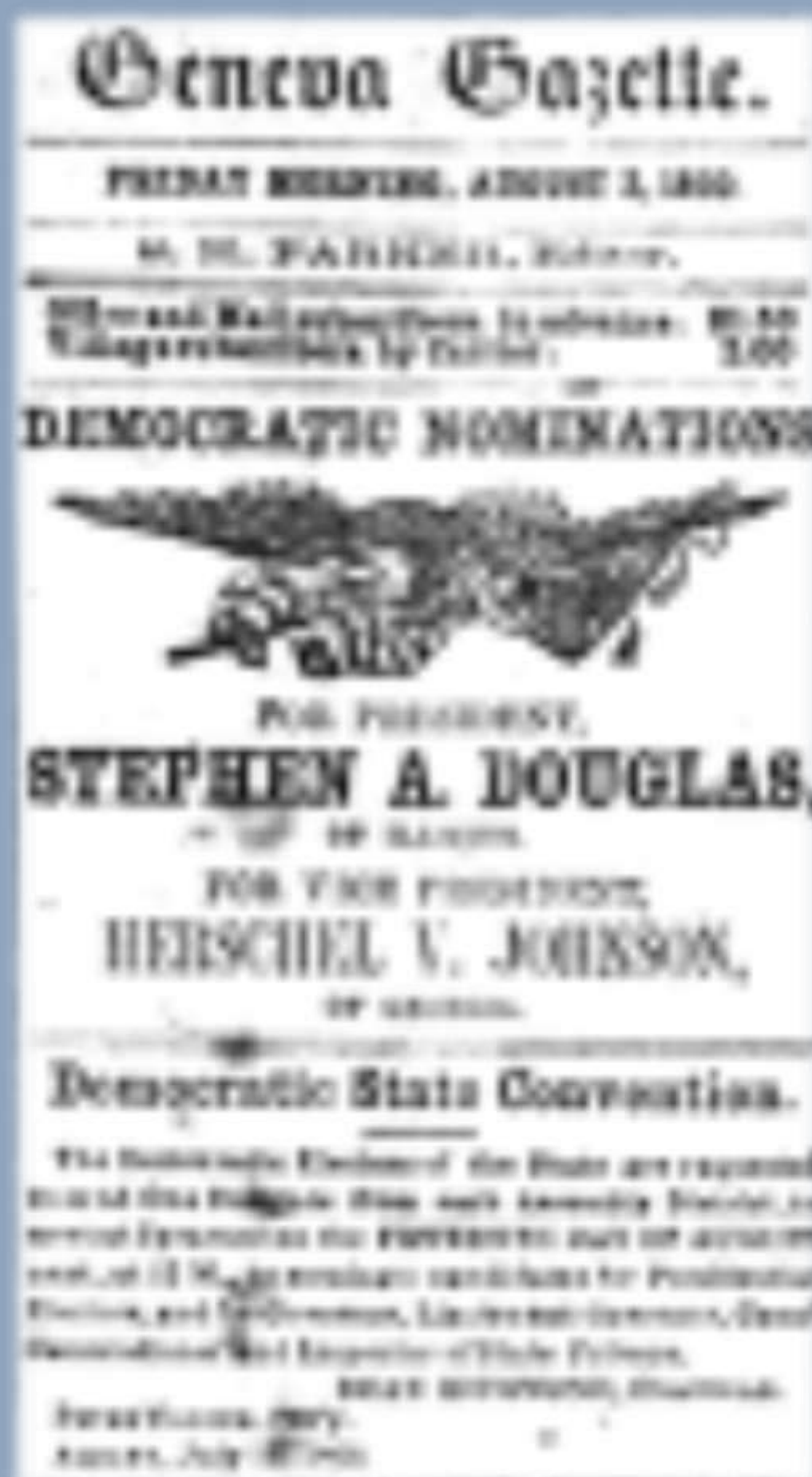
Blue stars indicate battles fought by the 126th and red dots are engagements of New York units.



Jerry Wall, born in Geneva, received the Congressional Medal of Honor for capturing the enemy’s flag at Gettysburg. Regimental colors were strategically important markers in battle. To lose the colors was disgraceful, and to capture the enemy’s was courageous.

War of Words: Geneva Newspapers

Nineteenth-century newspapers were closely aligned with political parties. Historically, they are the best resources for gauging local opinions, and seeing how events of the preceding decades slowly built up to the Civil War. The *Geneva Gazette*, published by Edgar Parker, was the Democratic paper and believed the North had no right to force its opinions upon the South. William Johnson published the Republican-siding *Geneva Courier* which was very opposed to slavery. Like most papers in the Union, the *Gazette* supported the war when it broke out. It soon returned to partisan reporting until Lincoln's death, when it mourned the late President.

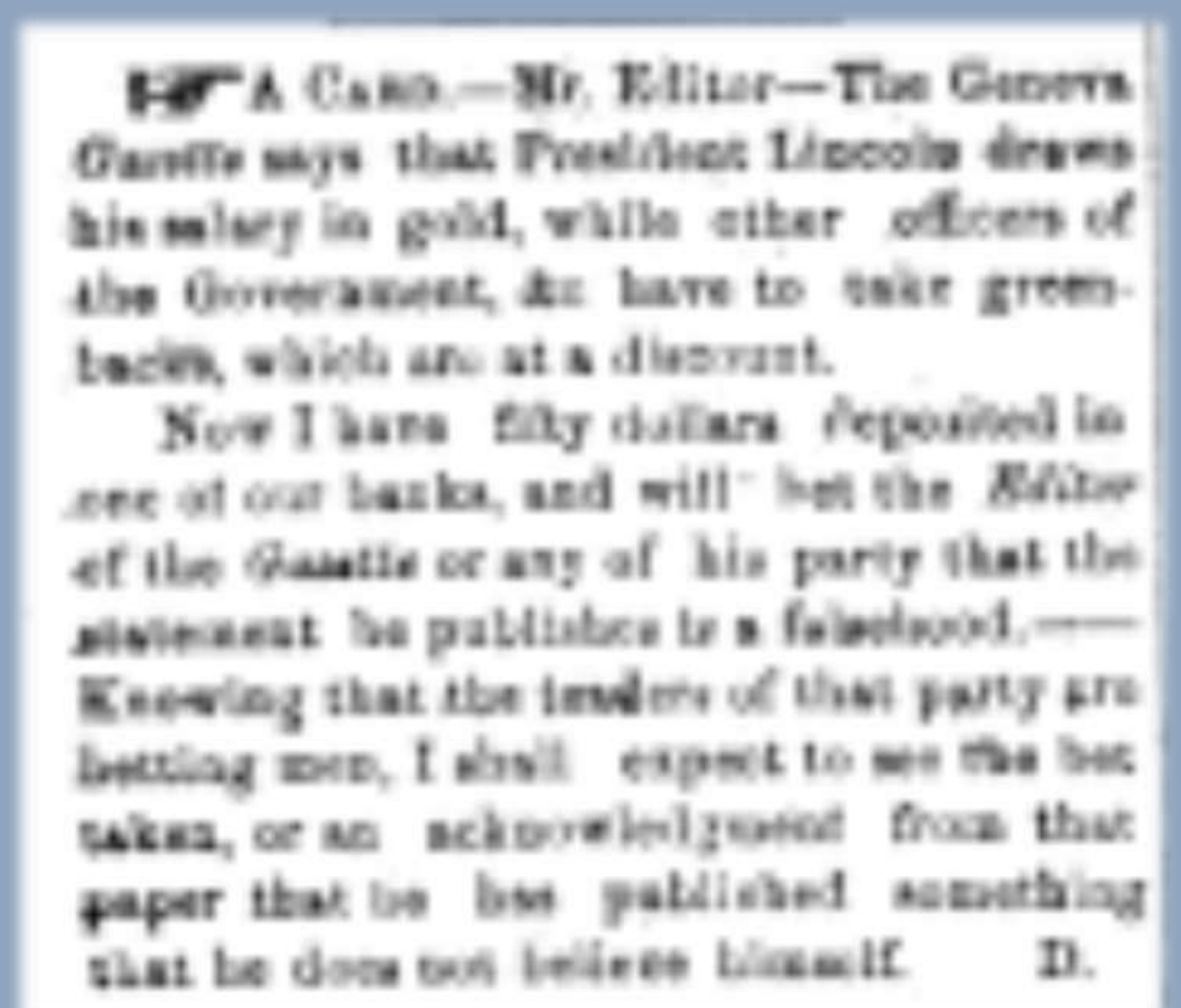


1862 *Geneva Gazette*. At the time, the writing was all editorial comment and little journalism.

Brothers Edgar (above) and Stephen Parker shared control of the *Gazette*; Edgar was editor from 1862 to 1865, with Stephen in charge before and after that period. They supported the war on constitutional grounds, but felt that the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation made abolition the primary goal.



In response to the turmoil in Kansas, the *Courier* began using the slogan "No More Compromise with Slavery.—No More Slave Territory.—No More Slave States." in 1854. One of the few things known about the paper's publisher William Johnson was that he served as Geneva's postmaster, the title the *Gazette* often used when mocking him in its paper.



“The Union Must and Shall Be Preserved”:

Legacy of the Civil War

As the deadliest war in American history, the Civil War still shapes our culture.

Communities came together on Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, to lay flowers on soldiers’ graves and partake in religious and patriotic ceremonies. The federal government created the first national cemeteries for military veterans and spouses. Veterans reunited with each other into the 1930s, in regimental units and as members of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) in the north, and the United Confederate Veterans (UCV) in the south. The central issues of the war (race and states’ rights) continue to be main topics of discussion.



Grand Army of the Republic Swift Post #94 met at the Armory on Main Street. This procession of veterans took place around 1916.



In 1966 President Lyndon Johnson proclaimed Waterloo, New York the official birthplace of Memorial Day. Many other towns claim to be the first to decorate and commemorate soldiers’ graves.



Reynolds’ Battery L, 1st New York Light Artillery is a reenactment unit that portrays “the life and trials of a Civil War Artillery soldier during the 1860s.” The original Reynolds’ Battery was formed in Rochester in September 1861.