

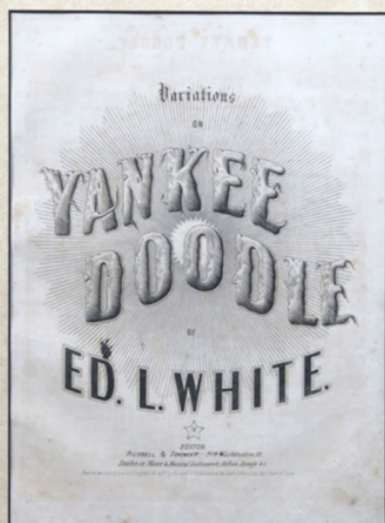
MUSIC OF THE CIVIL WAR

In the 1850s, the decade leading up to the Civil War, music was heard and played everywhere in the country. Classical pieces, opera, dances, religious music, band music, and blackface minstrel songs permeated the culture. Parlor pianos everywhere rang out sentimental ballads, with the music of Stephen Foster the most prominent.

When the Civil war broke out in April, 1861, the country was primed and ready for a musical explosion of patriotism and emotional expression. Publishers poured out an amazing variety of war music beginning with George F. Root's *The First Gun is Fired*, published only three days after the bombardment of Fort Sumter. From that day, countless songs on many subjects were published daily over the next four years.

Although many of these songs would easily fit into more than one category, the basic themes of the music can be divided into ten subjects. The Selle-Agner Exhibit, *Music of the Civil War*, illustrates the emotions, the excitement, the sadness, the humor, and the tragedy of this unforgettable time in our history.

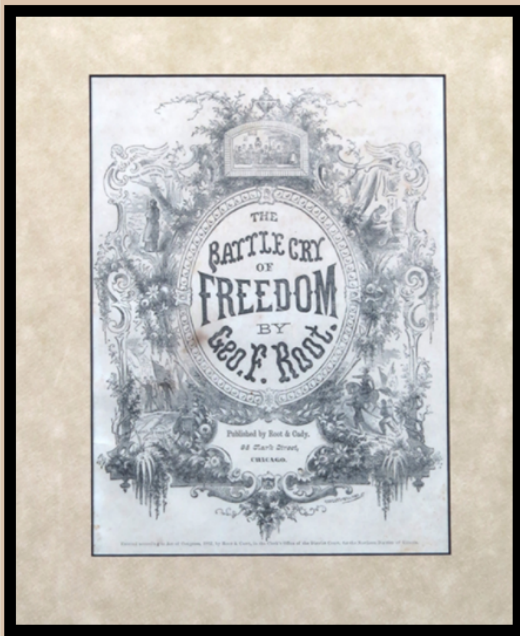
This exhibit has been cataloged, and excerpts have been placed on the website as a Virtual Exhibit.



ANTEBELLUM NATIONAL ANTHEMS

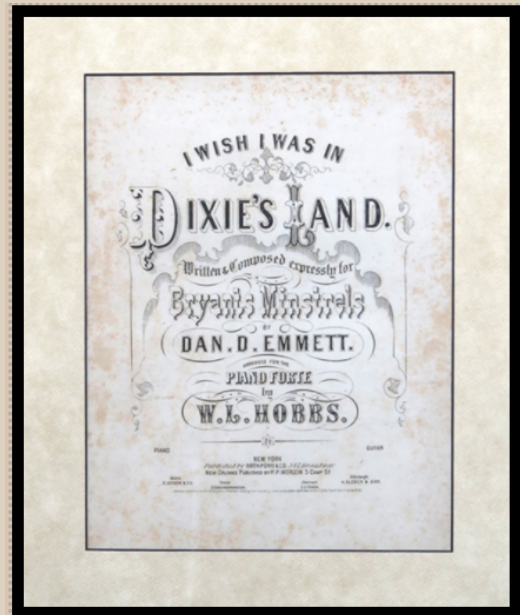
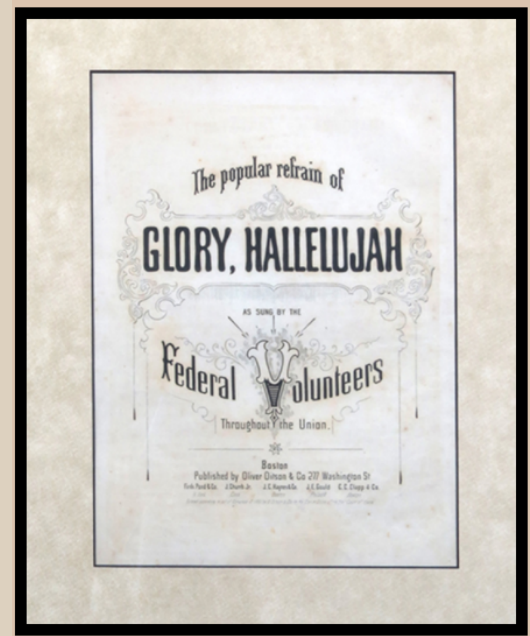
Before the Civil War, there were several songs engrained in the hearts of all Americans, both North and South. Known as National Anthems, these songs sparked the spirit of nationalism, uniting all 34 states in a love of country.





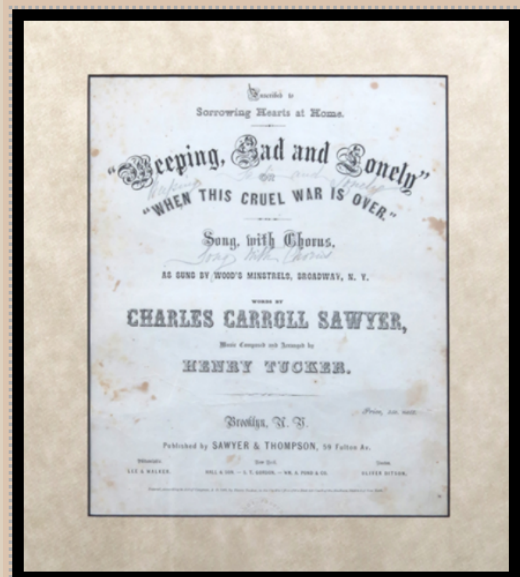
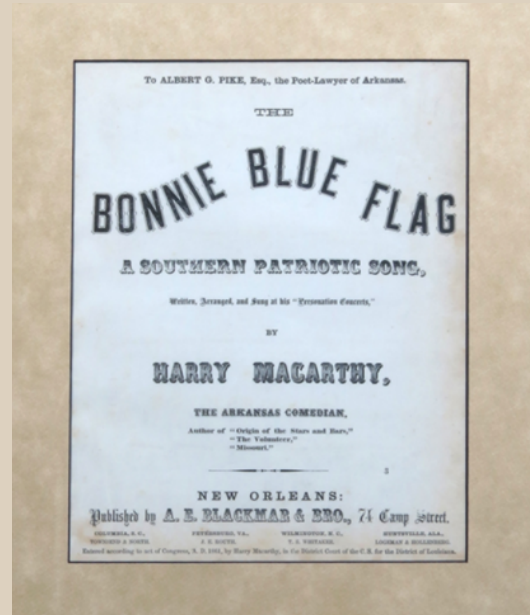
**MOST POPULAR
UNION SONGS**

With the outbreak of war, songs of the Northern states expressed the strong sentiment to preserve the Union. The music began to circulate in the North spread by the marching troops, Two of these songs, *The Battle Cry of Freedom* and *Glory Hallelujah* remain well known today.



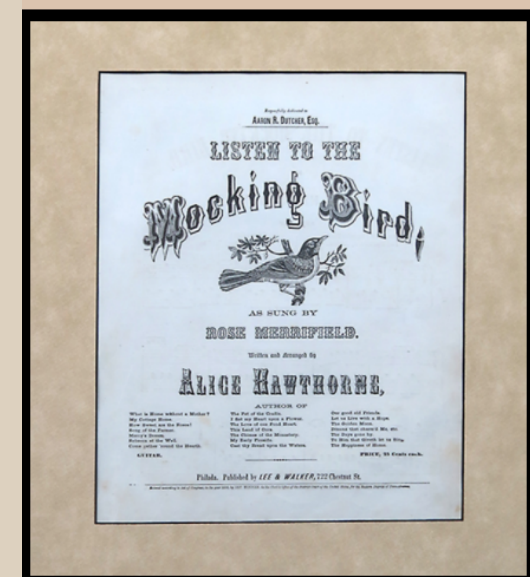
**MOST POPULAR
CONFEDERATE SONGS**

When the fighting began on April 12, 1861, the South found itself without any national songs. The Star-Spangled Banner as well as America became forbidden but the South quickly replaced them with their two famous unofficial anthems, Dixie's Land and The Bonnie Blue Flag.



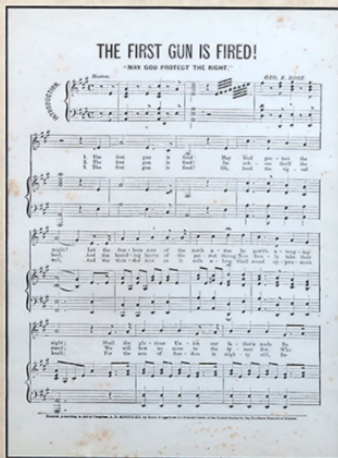
POPULAR SONGS OF BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH

Many Civil war songs had great appeal on both sides of the conflict. Expressing the common themes of patriotism, death, and separation, the music was embraced equally by both sections.



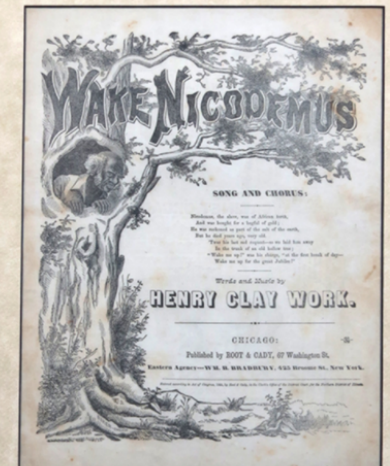
PATRIOTIC SONGS

Many patriotic songs featured colorful covers to go along with their themes. The music was intended to stir national pride, celebrate love of country and to recall specific events of the war.



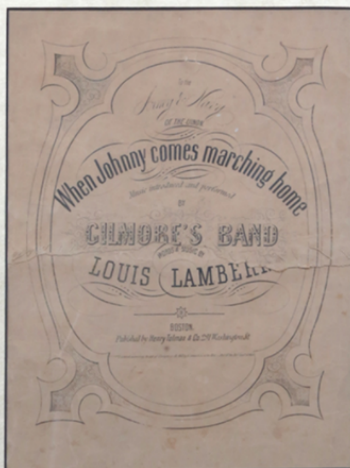
EMANCIPATION SONGS

For more than 200 years before the Civil war, slaves in the Southern states hoped and prayed for the "Day of Jubilee," the day when they would finally be free. With President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, that day had finally come.



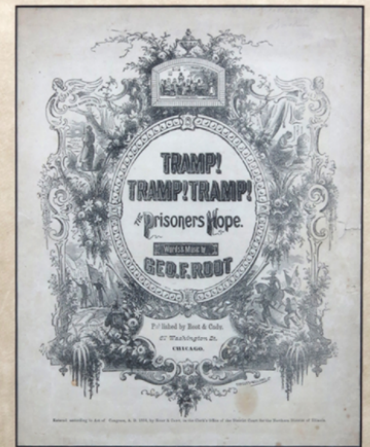
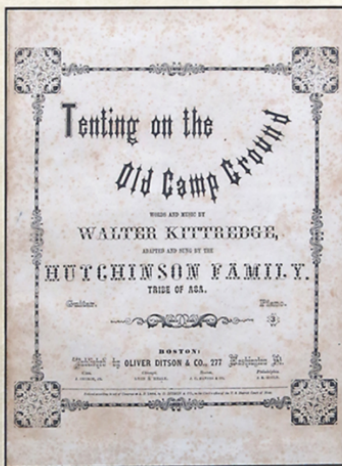
SONGS OF HOME LIFE

Much of the music in this category expresses the feelings of those on the home front contemplating the fate of those on the battlefield. Most songs deal with thoughts of absent sons and husbands or hopeful post war reunions.



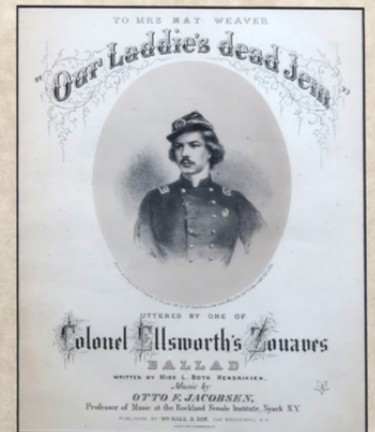
SONGS OF THIS SOLDIER'S LIFE

While some of these songs tell of the everyday camaraderie of soldiers in camp or on the march, most portray hardships and fears of being captured or killed. Still, thoughts of home were always first in every soldier's heart.



SONG OF BATTLEFIELD DEATH

For the Civil War soldier, the possibility of dying was a fact of everyday life. Most melodies tell of patriotism, bravery and courage as the soldier draws his last breath.



SONGS OF MOTHER

While many Civil War songs are about Lincoln, Davis, Grant, or Lee, the most important person to a soldier was "mother." Hundreds of "mother songs" were written, seeking her comfort, love and protection in desperate and dangerous times.

