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SYNOPSIS

Foreword War can damage the psyche with a dysfunction called post-traumatic stress disorder, which can reduce the survivor to an irrational or even vegetative state. In World War II, the syndrome was called battle fatigue; in World War I, it was known as shell shock. During the Civil War, before medical science had named the syndrome, the men who came out of combat in distress were said to have "soldier's heart."

Chapter One In June 1861, Charley wants to leave Winona, Minnesota, to take part in a shooting war. At age 15, he is in a hurry to leave the farm to join the army before he misses the excitement. When a state volunteer regiment forms, he walks to Fort Snelling, where he can be anonymous, and lies about his age. He promises his widowed mother he won't get into trouble and that he will send most of the 11 dollars per month to her. Politicians, officers, and reporters think the war will end within two months.

Chapter Two At Fort Snelling, Charley, pretending to be 18, signs on and receives an unofficial issue of clothing rather than a uniform. He writes his mother that the food is bad and that the men repeatedly drill in the compound. Lacking adequate ammunition, they conduct drill with empty rifles. She writes back three times a week and suggests desertion. On June 22, the regiment travels by steamboat from St. Paul to La Crosse, Wisconsin. There, the volunteers board trains for the journey south.

Chapter Three At Chicago, crowds cheer them. They continue across country to Maryland, where Charley sees his first black woman. A white woman drags her back to the house. On the infantry's march from Maryland to Manassas, Virginia, scraggly farms remind him that he came from a prosperous home.

Chapter Four At Bull Run, a cannon ball decapitates Massey. Charley is so terrified he forgets to fire. After Lieutenant Olafson suffers a leg wound, he orders Charley to fall back. Another shot is fatal to Olafson. Back at the tree line, Charley vomits.

Chapter Five That night, the officers compliment the men, but Charley knows that rebel forces pushed them back. By lantern light, men search through the bodies for friends and comrades. Charley is too weary and too disgusted to help. He receives dry bread and cold salt pork for dinner. At dawn, he follows orders to check and clean his weapon, refill cartridge boxes, and get caps and water for his canteen. When he realizes that the brook is pink with blood, he tries to vomit.

A sergeant orders Charley into position. Among the volunteers, he can't run away. The line forms; the men fix bayonets. There are no picnickers or congressmen observing as they had the day before. Charley prays before battle, which doesn't start. The rebels have pulled out during the night. He

and others wet themselves in fear.

Chapter Six In camp at Washington, Charley learns that the Battle for Manassas Junction is also called Bull Run for the nearby creek. He dons a new uniform, receives three months' pay, and does some sightseeing. For a quarter, he buys two apple pies from a sutler, keeps four dollars, and sends the rest to his mother. McClellan commands the army. Charley believes his own death is near. He forages for food and suffers dysentery. At the hospital, a doctor serves him whiskey and a powder to mix in water.

Sixteen-year-old Nelson looks forward to war. Charley accuses him of inexperience. Rebel soldiers scream and charge, but run from the field when Union forces cut them in half. He snarls at the enemy until a sergeant trips him and orders withdrawal. Nelson, suffering a belly wound, knows he is dying. To accommodate his wounded comrade, Charley loads Nelson's rifle and removes his shoe. Nelson gives him a letter for his folks in Deerwood. Charley leaves water for Nelson, who apologizes for his earlier retort. Charley weeps as he returns to the unit. He hears a shot that ends Nelson's life.

Chapter Seven Into fall, Charley lives in camp in a log shanty. Disease, bad weather, and rumors take their toll. Cited New Yorkers are unclean and fall rapidly to disease. Nearby women cook for the men, but can't begin to feed the 90,000 soldiers camped near only 20 farms.

Charley takes whiskey for afever and tends his rifle and feet. He knows that battles are the decision of the men in charge. On picket duty, he trades coffee for a rebel's tobacco. The second night of their exchange, an officer warns Charley about speaking to the enemy.

Chapter Eight Charley feels isolated. He takes part in a detail to slaughter horses for food for the men in the hospital, but hates killing horses. At 4 A.M., the troops march 20 miles to the sound of artillery. Late that afternoon, they join a terrifying clash. When rebel cavalry charges, the sergeant orders them to fire low at the horses. The troops wheel left and fire at a huge enemy contingent.

Charley's clothing is hit. Near dark, he savages the enemy with his bayonet. A corporal sends him to the surgeon's tent for treatment, but the attendant finds he isn't hit, only spotted with other men's blood. Before Charley can leave, a doctor orders him to help make a windbreak against the cold by stacking bodies.

Chapter Nine At Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, rebels attack over open meadow. At the brow of the hill, Charley feels protected by a wall as artillery mows down more of the enemy. With bayonet, he charges the rebels. He takes two hits before passing out.

Chapter Ten In June 1867, Charley feels older than his 21 years. He walks with a cane and passes blood. Sounds of war haunt him. On a summer morning at his shack near Winona, he seeks a place on the river where he visits dead

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soldiers in his thoughts. He loads a Confederate revolver and takes his ease with his combat memories.

Author's Note Charley Goddard is a real person, but the events of the novel are altered to suit the a fictional plot. At the end of the Battle of Gettysburg, only 47 of the 1,000 men in the First Minnesota Volunteers survived. Charley suffered permanent injury that would not heal. He died of stress in December 1868.

TIME LINE

- 1856** Charley is born in Winona, Minnesota.
- 1860 Dec. 20** South Carolina secedes from the union by unanimous vote.
- 1861 Feb. 18** Jefferson Davis becomes president of the Confederacy.
- April 12** Rebels bombard Fort Sumter.
- April 20** Colonel Robert E. Lee takes command of the Virginia troops.
- May 6** The Confederacy declares war on the United States.
- June** At 15, Charley joins the Minnesota volunteers at Fort Snelling.
- June 22** The Minnesota volunteers move south by steamboat and train.
- July 16-21** Beauregard and McDowell clash at Manassas (the First Battle of Bull Run).
At Bull Run, Charley is so terrified he forgets to fire.
that night Charley is too weary to help search for wounded.
at dawn The Minnesota volunteers fix bayonets, but the rebels have pulled out during the night.
- September** Charley receives a new uniform and three months' pay.
- second battle** Rebel soldiers scream and charge, but run from the field when the Union forces cut them in half.
- afterward** Nelson shoots himself to end the pain of a stomach wound.
- that fall** Charley lives in camp in a log shanty.
- 1862 Feb. 5** Julia Ward Howe publishes "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."
- Aug. 30** Charley's unit leaves for battle.
Lee is victorious at Manassas (the Second Battle of Bull Run).
that afternoon Charley helps make a windbreak by stacking bodies.
- Sept. 17-18** McClellan defeats Lee at Antietam.
- Nov. 5** Burnside replaces McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac.
- December 11-15** Burnside achieves a costly victory over Lee at Fredericksburg, Virginia.
- 1863 Jan. 1** Abraham Lincoln signs the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing the slaves.
- Jan. 26** Lincoln places General Joseph Hooker over the Union army.
- April 28-May 4** Lee defeats Hooker and captures Chancellorsville, Virginia.
- May 10** General Stonewall Jackson dies after being shot by his own troops on May 2.
- June 3** Lee launches a second invasion of the North at Fredericksburg, Virginia.
- June 28** Lincoln elevates General George Meade to commander-in-chief of Union forces.

July 1-3 Meade defeats Lee at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Charley takes two hits before passing out. Of the 1,000 First Minnesota Volunteers, only 47 survive.

November 19 Lincoln dedicates a national cemetery at Gettysburg.

December Abraham Lincoln issues a proclamation of amnesty to Confederates who pledge allegiance to the Union.

1864 February Confederate forces open Andersonville Prison.

March 12 General Ulysses S. Grant replaces Meade as chief of the Union army.

May 4-12 Lee and Grant clash in the Wilderness and Spotsylvania, Virginia.

Nov. 9 General William T. Sherman begins his march through Georgia to the sea, which ends Dec. 20.

1865 Jan. 31 Robert E. Lee is named General-in-Chief of the Confederacy.

February 17 Sherman burns Columbia, South Carolina.

April 2-3 Jefferson Davis withdraws from Richmond to Danville to establish a new Confederate capital.

April 9 Lee surrenders to Grant at Appomattox Court House, Virginia.

April 14 John Wilkes Booth shoots Lincoln.

1867 June Charley walks with a cane and passes blood. Sounds of war haunt him.

1868 December Charley Goddard dies of stress.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

A man who has undergone unusual character-molding experiences, Gary Paulsen writes from honest reflection. Born May 17, 1939 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, he is the son of Eunice and Oscar Paulsen, a career military officer and alcoholic whose addiction caused Paulsen much grief during his childhood. After World War II, Paulsen's father moved to the Philippines, where his son came to know him better. The instability of addicted parents left Paulsen in need of shelter with relatives, some of whom entertained him with storytelling.

At age 15, the stress of poor school performance and low self-esteem pushed Paulsen to the brink of suicide. During cold weather, to warm himself and avoid the misery of school and home, he took shelter in the library, where a staff member handed him books to read. Gradually, like a hungry beggar, he filled in gaps in his education with science fiction, westerns, and classics. Paulsen reminisces, "When she handed me the card, she handed me the world."

After a year at Bemidji College in Duluth and three years in the army, Paulsen served as a field engineer for the aerospace department of Bendix and Lockheed. Settling in California, he worked as an editor and film extra. His first novel, *The Special War* (1966), was so realistic that the FBI investigated his knowledge of missiles. He settled in Taos, New Mexico, where a dependence on alcohol ended his first marriage. The failure cost him a son and daughter, who were adopted by their stepfather. In Evergreen, Colorado, he dealt with alcoholism through Alcoholics Anonymous.

In his second marriage, Paulsen found more opportunities to cherish a close relationship with wife Ruth Wright, a painter and co-author of *Dogteam* (1993) and illustrator of *Father Water, Mother Woods* (1995), and their son James.

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When poverty brought on by a 1978 lawsuit for libel threatened his family, Paulsen returned to home territory to farm, ranch, and trap beaver for the state of Minnesota to supplement a lagging income from writing. While running a dog team, he thrilled to the bright star-filled skies and the rhythmic breathing of the team. With sponsorship from Lands' End clothiers, he made an unlikely attempt on the 1983 Iditarod, an annual Alaskan event covering 1,180 miles of rough, late-season ice and snow from Anchorage to Nome. Hopes for returning to the course the following year ended after Paulsen suffered a heart attack at Logan Airport in Boston.

Currently one of America's most prolific writers of young adult literature, Paulsen makes frequent guest appearances, school visits, and readings and divides his times between residences in Leonard, Minnesota, and Tularosa, New Mexico. His current passion is sailing and a proposed solo trans-Pacific journey. When he returns to Minnesota, he enjoys public readings and storytelling at nearby town halls. He has written for over three decades. At times he grows discouraged with his work, but has accepted the fact that writing is his burden and that he must do it at his own pace, in his own style. From 1993 through 2000 he published over 50 books, most for young adult readers, his favorite audience.

CRITIC'S CORNER

Over the rough years of writing short stories, magazine articles, stage and screenplays, westerns, how-to books, and novels, Gary Paulsen had to find the voice that best expresses self and an erratic work rhythm that accommodates bursts of energy that keep him reading voraciously, studying the classics of Jack London and Herman Melville, perusing current fiction by writers like Alice Walker and Cynthia Rylant, and working into the night. His most common themes—survival and coming-of-age—have brought him adulation from the New York Public Library and from the American Library Association.

Paulsen's list of honors come from many quarters. He received Newbery Honors in 1986 and 1988 for *Dogsong* and *Hatchet*, in 1992 for *Clabbered Dirt*, *Sweet Grass*, and again in 1993 for *Eastern Sun*, *Winter Moon*. Other honors include the Dorothy Canfield Fisher award, William Allen White award, Midland Authors award, Western Writers of America Golden Spur award, Jeremiah Ludington award, Regina Medal, Parent's Choice award, Tennessee Volunteer State Book award, Notable Children's Trade Book in Social Studies, American Booksellers Pick of the List, Iowa Children's Choice award, Wisconsin Golden Archer award, NCTE Notable Book, *Parenting* Magazine Reading-Magic award, ALA Notable Books for *Nightjohn* and *Woodsong*, IRA/CBC Children's Choice, Booklist Editors' Choice, and a Child Study Association of America's Children award.

A juvenile version of Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*, Paulsen's novel speaks briefly, yet eloquently about brutality and death. Critics have lauded Paulsen for *Soldier's Heart* because of its simplicity of language and stark, persuasive view of battlefield slaughter and for the portrait of a badly shaken young man who is unable to return to the carefree life he had once known. *Horn Book* extolled Paulsen's ability to write for young children about the horrors of the Civil War. Returned home a mere shell of himself, Charley lives in the outer edge of suicide, knowing that he must eventually flee the voices that drum in his head.

OTHER BOOKS BY GARY PAULSEN

Fiction

- Alida's Song* (1999)
- Beet Fields: Memories of a Sixteenth Summer* (2000)
- The Boy Who Owned The School* (1990)
- Brian's Return* (1999)
- Brian's Winter* (1996)
- Call Me Francis Tucket* (1995)
- Canoe Days* (1996)
- Canyons* (1990)
- The Car* (1994)
- Caught By the Sea* (2001)
- A Christmas Sonata* (1991)
- The Cookcamp* (1991)
- The Creature of Blackwater Lake* (1997)
- The Crossing* (1987)
- Culpepper's Cannon* (1992)
- The Curse of The Ruins* (1998)
- Dancing Carl* (1983)
- Danger on Midnight River* (1995)
- Dogsong* (1985)
- Dogteam* (1993)
- Eastern Sun, Winter Moon: An Autobiographical Essay* (1993)
- Escape* (2000)
- Escape from Fire Mountain* (1995)
- Father Water, Mother Moon* (1994)
- The Flight of the Hawk* (1998)
- Grizzly* (1997)
- Harris and Me: A Summer Remembered* (1993)
- Hatchet* (1987)
- The Haymeadow* (1992)
- Island* (1988)
- The Legend of Red Horse Cavern* (1994)
- Monument* (1993)
- Mr. Tucket* (1968)
- The Night The White Deer Died* (1978)
- Nightjohn* (1993)
- Popcorn Days and Buttermilk Nights* (1983)
- Project: A Perfect World* (1996)
- The Rifle* (1995)
- The River* (1991)
- Rock Jockeys* (1995)
- Sarny: A Life Remembered* (1996)
- The Schernoff Discoveries* (1997)
- Sentries* (1986)
- Sisters=Hermanas* (1993)
- Super Amos* (1997)
- The Tent: A Parable in One Sitting* (1995)
- Thunder Valley* (1998)
- Tiltawhirl John* (1977)
- The Time Benders* (1997)
- The Tortilla Factory* (1995)
- Tracker* (1984)
- The Transall Saga* (1999)
- The Treasure of El Patron* (1996)
- Tucket's Gold* (1999)
- Tucket's Home* (2000)
- Tucket's Ride* (1996)
- The Voyage of The Frog* (1989)
- The White Fox Chronicles* (2000)
- The Winter Room* (1989)
- Worksong* (1996)

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Nonfiction

- Guts* (2001)
My Life in Dog Years (1999)
Puppies, Dogs, and Blue Northers: A Tribute to Cookie (1996)
Winterdance: The Fine Madness of Running the Iditarod (1994)
Woodsong (1990)
Zero to Sixty: The Motorcycle Journey of a Lifetime (1997)

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GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To comprehend the demands of preparing for war
2. To prioritize the tasks of living in an army camp
3. To describe human slaughter
4. To explain the use of tools, equipment, and weapons
5. To contrast naivete and experience
6. To describe letters written in combat
7. To characterize moments of perplexity, change, understanding, and gratitude
8. To analyze elements of a bildungsroman
9. To locate examples of self-awareness and love of nature
10. To enumerate skills necessary for survival and cleanliness
11. To evaluate a chain of command
12. To empathize with regret and grief

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To compare Charley and Nelson in their anticipation of battle
2. To account for Charley's decline and death
3. To analyze Charley's terrors of war
4. To contrast life in Minnesota with a winter in camp
5. To explain why Charley trades with the enemy
6. To enumerate non-combat dangers to soldiers
7. To comment on learning by observing and doing
8. To account for a mix of good memories with bad
9. To project the response of local people to Charley's death
10. To recount Charley's compassion for people and animals
11. To characterize Nelson's last moments

LITERARY TERMS AND APPLICATIONS

For a better understanding of Gary Paulsen's style, present the following terms and applications to his novel:

bildungsroman a novel that describes the coming-of-age of an untried or naive youth. Paulsen uses the discipline of army life to explain how a teenaged boy witnesses slavery, loss, and death. As Charley experiences battle, he finds himself vastly changed in attitude toward violence and bloodshed. Without hesitation, he describes himself as a man after he has undergone artillery fire and deaths all around him. In the last scene, at age 21, he is spiritually an old man laden with the rapid coming-to-knowledge in war that costs him all of boyhood's innocence.

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historic milieu the historical, political, or geographic setting of events in a period of history, as in the military career of Charley, a fictional version of a real member of the First Minnesota Volunteers at Manassas and Gettysburg. By placing the character in these events, the author details experiences that rob a young soldier of youth and thrust him heartlessly into mass killing at some of the most horrendous of U. S. military engagements.

irony an implied discrepancy between what is said or done and what is meant. The shift in Charley's step, outlook, and thoughts in the final scene produces the focal anomaly—a young man who survived the Civil War and who enters a premature decline. As though aged in years, Charley leans on a cane on his way to a quiet spot where he can sit and reflect on the war experience with a menacing pistol at his side.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING

The milieu of Gary Paulsen's *Soldier's Heart* moves methodically through the introduction to war tactics at Fort Snelling, where Charley flees from rural Winona and farm life to learn drilling and musketry. The text is deliberately sparse on details about food and lodging. It moves directly to the point at which Charley ends boot camp and travels by steamboat and rail to Virginia. The revelation of similar scenes through Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania lulls him into the comfort of a plush seat and pleasant view until he reaches Maryland, his first view of slavery.

Farther south, Charley sees the farmland change as he enters regions of poor farms, shacks, half-clothed children, and adults in rags. His introduction to "poor white trash" helps him to understand the situation in the South, where people "couldn't get out of their yards, let alone fight a proper army." His mind begins to return to home, a prosperous farm where he has a well-tended garden and a house ready for the hardship of winter. To his mother and brother Orren, Charley confides that he has seen unbelievable scenes.

The abrupt shift from home, boot camp, and a train ride thrusts Charley into the kinds of wounds that cannon and artillery inflict on people and horses. Instead of pleasant countryside, he views a headless corpse, bursts of powder, and the thunk-slap of bullets entering flesh. He feels the death struggles of Lieutenant Olafson and crouches lower to flee to the safety of maple trees, where he vomits.

The harsh winter scene of the Washington camp and of life in a log shanty enables Charley to appreciate his home training. While foraging the countryside for food and learning to manage sanitation and personal cleanliness, he avoids serious illness and keeps his rifle ready for the next action. The march to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, takes him through countryside denuded of greenery. No longer sightseeing as he goes, Charley can only witness the destruction caused by rifles and cannon.

In the final scene, Charley, empty and withdrawn from family, has lost his ability to enjoy the "sweet things" he saw on his entrance into the war. He makes his way to a river retreat to weather the mental torment of battle fatigue. Near a flat rock, he sets out a revolver to admire as though he might need its fine workings to take him away from earthly suffering.

CROSS-CURRICULAR SOURCES

Novels

James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier, *My Brother Sam Is Dead*
Stephen Crane, *The Red Badge of Courage*
Joe Haldeman, *Forever War*
Robert Heinlein, *Starship Troopers*
Irene Hunt, *Across Five Aprils*
Harold Keith, *Rifles For Watie*
Walter Dean Myers, *Fallen Angels*
Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*
Michael Shaara, *The Killer Angels*
Dalton Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun*
Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse Five*
Jessamyn West, *Except for Me and Thee* and *Friendly Persuasion*

Nonfiction

Gabor S. Borritt, ed., *The Gettysburg Nobody Knows*
Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War*
Les Jensen, *Johnny Reb: The Uniform of the Confederate Army, 1861-1865*
MacKinlay Kantor, *Gettysburg*
Philip Katcher, *The Civil War Sourcebook*
Michael J. McAfee and John P. Langellier, *Billy Yank: The Uniform of the Union Army, 1861-1865*
Jim Murphy, *The Long Road to Gettysburg*

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Videos/DVDs

Gettysburg (1994)

THEMES AND MOTIFS

A study of the central issues and situations in *Soldier's Heart* should include these aspects:

Themes

- naivete
- family
- travel
- combat
- terror
- loss
- isolation
- survival
- mental unrest

Motifs

- coping with battlefield emotions
- adapting to army life
- discovering the value of home
- assuming the role of infantryman
- adapting to permanent physical and emotional handicap

MEANING STUDY

Following are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have a particular meaning in this coming-of-age novel. Explain each. Section and page numbers pinpoint the context in which the item appears.

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1. Most were irrational; many were in a vegetative state. (Foreword, p. xv)
(Paulsen's introduction works backward in time from current understanding of post-traumatic stress disorder through past psychiatric terms for damaged minds applied to casualties from previous wars. In the trench warfare of World War I, men dazed and deafened by concussion of shells developed the thousand-yard stare, illogic, and a non-interactive state that reduced them from humans to unemotional functioning tissue.)
2. He would lie about his age and sign up as a man and get him a musket and a uniform and go to see what a war was like. (Chap. One, p. 4)
(Charley enters the war armed with a large-bore, muzzle-loading rifle that requires tedious cleaning, filling, packing, and cocking before it is ready for firing. The time that it takes him to recharge becomes a focus of his training for the infantry.)
3. The men don't like them much and there's talk of hanging the commissary officer. (Chap. Two, p. 8)
(The men in Charley's regiment show more animosity to the Union officers who supply them substandard rations than to the rebels the Union army will fight.)
4. They were called into formation, ordered to get all their gear and marched to the river, where steamboats were waiting to take them to St. Paul. (Chap. Two, p. 12)
(Charley has time for rumor, letters, and talk of dispatch to frontier forts until the call to arms on June 22, 1861, ends surmise with a definite destination—south to the Civil War battlefields.)
5. All the soldiers talked about the poor white trash and how these were the people they had come to fight, people who couldn't get out of their yards, let alone fight a proper army. (Chap. Three, p. 18)
(The sharp contrast between prosperous farms to the north and the shirrtail farms and pathetic housing of Southern poor whites impresses on Charley exactly who the enemy is. Charley concludes, "This ain't going to be much of a war. I don't see how they can fight.")
6. Get up, boy. We're to fall back. (Chap. Four, p. 25)
(Charley learns to follow orders in combat, which officers scream at him and the others over general uproar. Charley requires extra urging to break the psychological spell of savage fighting as he returns to normal tasks of helping comrades to safety.)
7. Somebody came out of the dark and handed him a piece of half-dried bread and cold, raw salt pork. (Chap. Five, p. 30)
(The best way to transport unrefrigerated meat from military supply post to the field is by salting it. The rations are uncouth, but Charley is so overcome by weariness that he gobbles up his portion and empties his canteen of water.)
8. They walked in line to the Rebel earthworks and found the enemy gone. (Chap. Five, p. 38)
(Charley moves over open ground in anticipation of a second battle, but he finds a low fortification of earth and logs, which inhibited the Union army from seeing that the rebels had moved on to another site.)
9. Charley came down with such a case of dysentery he couldn't dig toilet holes fast enough and had to go to the

temporary hospital at the back of the march. (Chap. Six, pp. 44-45)

(Dysentery is a bacterial infection of the intestines that endangers soldiers by dehydrating tissues, depleting them of energy, and subjecting them to cramps and intermittent diarrhea. In such a state, a soldier could require hospitalization to halt the drain on the body.)

10. Better hold up there, gamecock—you can't take the whole Rebel army. (Chap. Six, p. 51)
(The officer in charge sees such feistiness in Charley that he compares him to a gamecock, a rooster trained to attack and kill competing roosters in fights arranged strictly for display and gambling on the outcome.)

COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages from the novel.

Motivation

1. List the changes that occur in Charley.
(As Charley moves from underage volunteer to trained infantryman, he anticipates getting to the war, but regrets that it may be over before he can fight. The train south from Fort Snelling begins his experience with a different lifestyle. He leaves behind cheering crowds and waving children to witness the hardship of slavery and farming among poor whites. At Manassas, he quickly obeys orders, but withdraws from combat in horror of the carnage to bodies. By the second battle, he is experienced enough to warn Nelson, but not willing to explain why war is so terrible.
After dysentery, a trip to the hospital, a detail killing horses for food, and a brief rest at the field surgery, Charley returns to the Gettysburg battlefield a wiser, less eager soldier in combat. After he receives two wounds, he recedes from consciousness. The return of Charley to Winona, Minnesota, demonstrates the serious alteration in physical strength and attitude. He walks with a cane, passes blood, and spends his days at the riverbank reliving the scenes of the Civil War in which he participated. The revolver lying alongside him suggests his battle with suicide, a possible end to a daily nightmare.)

Setting

2. Why does the land seem unsuited to a military engagement?
(The 20-mile march to the next battleground takes Charley through pleasant farmland. Before he arrives at the battle scene, at 3:00 P. M., he hears artillery and notices that the trees have lost their leaves. The country lane seems beautiful and the dappled light attractive, but Charley's thoughts are lost in the war ahead. The attack of cavalry plunges Charley into a burst of firing that strikes every horse.
At Gettysburg, Charley notes that the "Rebels would have to leave the trees and walk, under constant fire from artillery, across the meadow and up the incline to the fences and rock walls where the Union soldiers waited." The usual bare space awaiting the clash of troops seems cruel to the rebels, who must cross a wide open field without cover. For once, Charley feels protected at the brow of the hill, where miscalculations of cannon fire

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send balls over the Union soldiers' heads. The barrage is so intense that, to Charley, it seemed like a staged "tableau.")

Character Development

3. Why does Charley join the army?

(At the beginning of a "shooting war," Charley, at age 15, is swept up from a peaceful existence on a farm in Winona, Minnesota. To him, "It was better than a circus." A country boy yearning for adventure, he wants to hurry and join the First Minnesota Volunteers before he misses all the hula-baloo. He reasons, "The only shooting war to come in a man's life and if a man didn't step right along he'd miss the whole thing.")

Charley's work in the fields to support his widowed mother and brother Orren gives the impression that Charley is already a man. He is tall with hands as wide as a stove lid. The only way he can join the infantry is to talk his mother into allowing him to walk to Fort Snelling and lie about his age. At the end of extended argument, he declares, "So I'm going to be a man and do what a man can do.")

Historical Milieu

4. What does the novel say about the Civil War?

(Paulsen stresses the waste of life and extremes of torn human and animal bodies to emphasize the terrors that Charley must survive. The differences in life style between North and South extend beyond racial differences to the economic divide between prosperous farm families to the north and the crackers living in "poor white trash" poverty in Maryland and farther south. The clash between these citizens from different areas of the United States brings together unlike pairs, such as boys like Charley and the rebel on picket duty. Both suffer shortages and willingly swap cotton and tobacco to make up for what they miss while tramping about with poorly supplied armies. Even worse is the pathetic dress of the rebel, who has wrapped his feet against cold and dresses in rags.)

Theme

5. What is the significance of the title?

(To have a soldier's heart is to lose perspective on life and to live in echoing memories that refuse to let the mind go free. Men like Charley survive the war and various wounds, but succumb to a sterility of thought and action. As though imprisoned on the river bank, a 21-year-old veteran sits by the peaceful ripples and eats his bread and cheese to avoid thinking of loss and multiple death. The loaded revolver he carries with him symbolizes the onerous dread of death and the hovering wish for release through suicide that becomes his lifetime's burden. Having a soldier's heart condemns Charley to die slowly, more poignantly than Nelson waiting to expire on the field from a belly wound.)

Interpretation

6. What is the purpose of the author's note?

(Paulsen emphasizes the source of his story in the biography of a real Minnesota soldier who returned from war too wounded to do much more than survive from day to day and to live out mental replays of the anguish he witnessed at Gettysburg. By outlining for the reader the difference between straight history and historical fiction, Paulsen accounts for changes to the experience of the

real Charley Goddard. Through literary art, Paulsen dramatizes Charley's decline in the last chapter. By comprehending the note, readers can understand how writers of historical fiction must begin with stark facts—dates, leaders, conflicts, battles, units, etc.)

Conflict

7. What causes Charley to buy apple pies from a vendor he dislikes?

(For individual purchases beyond government issue, Union soldiers spend their monthly salary of \$11 at commissaries and sutleries, the traveling groceries that follow the troops. These government-approved profiteers drive wagons filled with more palatable goods than army kitchen hardtack and salt pork. In exchange for cash, vendors sell pie, molasses candy, raisins, crackers, sugar, flour, butter and cheese, eggs, bacon, salt mackerel, citrus fruit, apples, and soft drinks as well as tobacco and liquor. Men like Charley grumbled, but looked forward to the moldy, rancid, and overpriced goods that they could cook in a tin dipper, a tin can with wire bail, or a makeshift fry pan fashioned from half a canteen with a stick handle. When the sutler grew insufferably dishonest, men often attacked his wagon or tent, seized his goods, and burned the rest to the ground. Officers, who tended to side with the men, ignored the vengeful acts.)

Atmosphere

8. Why do the surroundings of the Washington camp carry its own dangers?

(A necessity to the success of the campaign, hygiene and quality camp cooking, according to Winfield Scott, General in Chief of the U. S. Army, warded off scurvy, dysentery, pneumonia, typhoid, malaria, and the Virginia quickstep, a witty name for diarrhea, which was no laughing matter. These standard wartime diseases could rapidly sap a fighting force, causing 400,000 of the 600,000 deaths reported. In traditional fashion, soldiers on both sides also foraged for fuel and supplies, a euphemism for innocent berrying and herb-picking as well as thieving from pantries, apiaries, orchards, dairies, henyards, and stores. According to Captain John W. DeForest of the Twelfth Connecticut Volunteers, such plundering from stragglers was often the result of delayed wages, which could lag months behind.)

Author Purpose

9. Why does Paulsen fill the story with personal impressions?

(Gary Paulsen devotes the novel to Charley. By trying to relive the war experience of a real Minnesota volunteer, the novelist allows the reader to follow Charley into battle, anticipate the onslaught of enemy soldiers, and follow officers' directions on how to fight off the rebels while remaining alive. Charley's impressions of sound, puffs of smoke, pounding of cannon, regular beat of rifle fire, and groans of the wounded surround the reader, denying escape from the carnage ahead.

In the end, the reader has experienced the battles of Manassas and Gettysburg from a single point of view—that of a young infantryman fighting at ground level with a muzzle-loading musket. Charley expresses his impressions of cavalry and artillery fire, but his emphasis on shooting and stabbing with a bayonet return the focus to the infantry. Charley's nightmares, his

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jumpy nerves, and his return home in reduced emotional condition indicate how horrific battle keeps the survivor from returning to normal life.)

Structure

10. What is the purpose of the foreword?
(Leading into the story with a clinical explanation of post-traumatic stress disorder prepares the reader for a mental shift in Charley that follows him the rest of his short life. By following medical knowledge from current times back to the Civil War, Paulsen explains how an understanding of combat trauma has developed with the expansion of military medicine. He explains that Charley suffers because "the wholesale killing by men using raw firepower, was so new and misunderstood." Paulsen adds that without scientific explanations of the effects of madness, people had no way of accounting for damage to men who survived except to say they had acquired a "soldier's heart.")

HOW LANGUAGE WORKS

Gary Paulsen presents characters not only by action and thought, but by creating typical language from a variety of backgrounds:

1. Charley's mother, who anticipates being worn down by his arguments in favor of joining the volunteers, reduces her replies to simple statements: "You ain't but a boy."
2. In his absence, her comments in letters grow in length: "I know it ain't right, but you must think on coming home now."
3. Charley's childish logic erupts in bursts, for example, "You can use the money and I won't be under your feet all the time."
4. In a new situation far from home, Charley grows wordy with details: "We boil the beans and use them for a meal, then use the leftover beans for soup the next day and on the third day take any cooked beans that are left, dry them and crush them and boil them for coffee."
5. Charley's prim upbringing is evident in his offense at Swenson for swearing in standard man-talk: "Hell, it'll probably be over before we get to Washington."
6. Charley's metamorphosis from underage infantryman to seasoned veteran appears in his rebuke of Nelson, "You don't know as much as a slick-eared calf."
7. The paternalistic comments of older soldiers separates the young infantrymen from their superiors in a hierarchy similar to father and son. Before the second battle, a sergeant comments, "There'll be plenty of time for puking later. Get ready."
8. By the final battle, Charley has the perspective of a veteran who can complain to himself, "Oh, this is nasty work. This is right nasty work."

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Art

1. Organize a group to illustrate step-by-step instructions on how to clean and load a musket. Explain the use of the ramrod and oil and the importance of powder, paper cartridge, minié ball, hammer, and nipple.
2. Design a poster displaying a military funeral. Stress costumes, hair styles, and camaraderie among survivors who honor veterans like Massey, Nelson, Lieutenant Olafson, and Charley Goddard.

Cinema

1. View films about soldiers and military life. Compare the movies' settings, themes, and dialogue to the hardships that Charley and Nelson face during the Civil War.
2. Propose a movie of *Soldiers' Heart*. Select scenes that balance suffering with pleasure, particularly Charley's enjoyment of cheers and waves from people greeting the train and his weariness with winter sickness and hunger in camp.

Drama

1. Draw stage settings for a dramatization of building a log shanty, making a windbreak of Union corpses to shield a field surgery, filling a canteen with bloody creek water, arguing with a parent about joining the volunteers, saying goodbye to Nelson, learning to march and present arms, traveling by train through cheering crowds, and sitting by the river listening to voices from combat.

Economics

1. Sketch advertisements for a sutler. Attach to each item in his stock a price reflecting the inflation that results in 25¢ apple pies.
2. Estimate the cost of outfitting each of the First Minnesota Volunteers in black pants, gray socks, and black felt hat. Contrast the current cost of outfitting soldiers.

Education

Brainstorm ways of preparing veterans like Charley for return to civilian life. Suggest methods of helping him live alone and tend to his needs, including dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder.

Geography

1. Work with a small group to re-create the way south from Fort Snelling to Manassas, Virginia. Indicate junctions of rail lines and steamboat passage. Post a scale of miles indicating how far Charley travels by each conveyance.
2. Create a series of maps depicting the strategy of the Battle of Gettysburg.

Health

1. List the dangers of a stomach wound. Explain why surgeons choose to treat wounded limbs rather than internal organs. Why would a soldier be more likely to recover if he is wearing clean clothes at the time of his combat injury?
2. Make an illustrated report on the physical effects of terror. Indicate how combatants vary in response, including boasting, falling silent, suffering bad dreams, snarling at the enemy, running, or wetting themselves.
3. Summarize the shift in public awareness of post-traumatic stress disorder. Explain why the term eventually applied to nurses and doctors as well as combat soldiers.
4. Explain to a small group why dysentery, typhus, measles, or diarrhea could sap an army. List measures taken by the U. S. Sanitary Commission, which outlined specifications for latrines, water supplies, horse dung removal, and food storage and service.
5. Make an audiotaped report on communicable disease during long encampment and combat. Explain why the pink creek water and unburied bodies threaten infantrymen like Charley.

History and Social Studies

1. Make a list of the kinds of work that soldiers perform

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other than fighting.

2. Explain the most significant events on Charley's trip south from Fort Snelling to Manassas, Virginia.
3. Read aloud state laws governing the age at which young people can volunteer for military service. Explain why laws require young people to get their parents' permission for joining at an early age.
4. Chart the resources of each army at Gettysburg. Determine whether each side made the best use of leadership, spies, maps, equipment, supplies, ammunition, cavalry, artillery, and infantry.
5. Make a model to illustrate how horses ease hard jobs, such as placing cannon and moving an army camp to a new locale.
6. Draw a wall chart explaining how the chain of command operated. Discuss the official position, uniform, pay, transport, and activation of the First Minnesota Volunteers.
7. Compose an illustrated list of essential army implements, particularly shovels and axes.
8. Write a report on General George McClelland. Explain how his appointment to command the Army of the Potomac raised morale and inspired the men.

Language Arts

1. Read aloud selections from nonfiction, novels, plays, essays, and stories that describe combat such as Erich Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* or Mariano Azuela's *The Underdogs*.
2. Explain in a theme the value of reading war fiction. Suggest ways of discussing Charley's experiences from varying points of view.
3. Write a theme in which you explain the role of a minor character. Determine which characters interact effectively with Charley to reveal some trait or attitude such as naivete, compassion, love of animals, logic, and trickery.
4. Outline additional chapters to *Soldier's Heart*. Include Charley's mother's attempt to nurse him back to mental and physical health, his response to the assassination of President Lincoln, and his old friends greeting him as a war hero.
5. Read aloud Randall Jarrell's "Death of the Ball Turret Gunner." Explain why he uses metaphors to imply that the gunner is as innocent as an unborn baby.
6. Make an illustrated pronouncing gazetteer to accompany *Soldier's Heart*. Include terms in context such as gamey, compound, typhus, rabid, defensive drill, devastating, chain and grapeshot, earthworks, glut, factual, fall back, Manassas Junction, grips, crackers, original sin, plush, fanfare, vegetative state, present arms, cap-and-ball revolver, manual of arms, and psyche.
7. Write a vignette, tableau, or one-act radio play about camaraderie. Show why men care for each other and how rumors help them cope with the stress of waiting to follow orders.
8. Contrast Union and Confederate slang.
9. Write a theme on writing stories about history. Include details from the novel.
10. Draw a character web showing people involved in the war. Annotate each entry with the few details Paulsen gives.

11. Assemble a handbook for volunteers that prepares them for marching, long encampment, picket duty, rifle care, addressing the enemy, treating the wounded, aiding surgeons and attendants, posting letters home, staying fit and clean, and using leisure time.

Psychology

1. Compose an extended definition of emotional and physical isolation. Explain why officers have to force Charley into and out of the fighting mode, in which he is inflamed with a will to slaughter the enemy. Determine what clues prove that Charley has a "soldier's heart."
2. Using incidents from the book, comment on gradual changes in Charley.
3. Project a day when Charley can no longer tolerate sad or terrible thoughts and the pain of unhealed war wounds. Discuss how he will say farewell to his mother or to Orren.

Religion

List reasons why going to war makes Charley think about behavior, profanity, heaven and hell, and dying and going to be with God.

Speech

1. Compose a speech on the value of friendships in the army. Debate whether Charley's withdrawal into self is good for him or for raw recruits like Nelson. Discuss why Charley chooses not to converse with a man who swears.
2. Prepare a talk on the importance of letters to soldiers. Use as examples Charley's sending most of his pay to his mother and his descriptions of traveling south to war.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. List examples in the novel of cold, disease, adventure, hard work, rumor, dreams, planning, killing, disgust, rage, leadership, and admiration.
2. Compile lines that express Charley's thoughts about each battle.
3. Compose a scene in which Charley arrives home after extended hospital care.
4. Make a list of characters from the novel and explain the relationship of each to the action.

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VOCABULARY TEST

Using the terms in parentheses, complete each sentence below with a detail from the novel.

1. (unscathed) The luckiest soldiers _____

2. (Manassas) A shooting war _____

3. (tow cotton) He wrapped a chicken _____

4. (slogans) His mother knew _____

5. (haft) He could shoulder his rifle _____

6. (expend) The live ammunition _____

7. (regular army) Frontier forts _____

8. (crackers) The wrongheadedness of _____

9. (profanity) Even a low order of _____

10. (shallow grade) The Rebel soldiers were _____

11. (windbreak) Charley and another soldier _____

12. (incline) The Rebels would _____

13. (formation) They were called _____

14. (commissary) The men _____

15. (earthworks) They walked _____

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COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

Match the following descriptions with characters. Choose your answers from the list of people below. You may use some of the answers more than once and some not at all.

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| _____ 1. warns Charley of the rock | A. Charley |
| _____ 2. receives a stomach wound | B. Nelson |
| _____ 3. sits peacefully by the river | C. Lincoln |
| _____ 4. is beheaded | D. Charley's mother |
| _____ 5. appoints a new commander | E. Orren |
| _____ 6. can sit a horse well and earns the men's respect | F. Paul |
| _____ 7. urges Charley to desert | G. McClellan |
| _____ 8. seeks coffee for 'baccy | H. Massey |
| _____ 9. dies in a farm accident | J. reb on picket duty |
| _____ 10. can almost pity rebel forces | I. Lieutenant Olafson |

Part II: Fact/Opinion (30 points)

Mark each statement either **T** for true, **F** for false, or **O** for opinion. Justify your answer on the line that follows.

- _____ 1. Charley is a better than average soldier.

- _____ 2. At Gettysburg, the rebel forces have to cross a wide meadow to attack.

- _____ 3. Soliders in the field hospital refuse to eat horse meat.

- _____ 4. At his shack, Charley withdraws from the world's pity and curiosity.

- _____ 5. Nelson apologizes for making a snippy reply to Charley about battle.

- _____ 6. At night after the first battle, Charley is too nauseated to eat.

- _____ 7. Charley over-polishes his musket because it helps him forget that he must fight again.

- _____ 8. The revolver Charley carries was stolen from a Union officer.

- _____ 9. Foraging for food is illegal.

- _____ 10. By lying about his age, Charley risks being posted on the frontier.

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Part III: Identification (20 points)

Explain the significance of the following details:

1. trench stove
2. blood
3. windbreak
4. New York volunteers
5. Charley Goddard

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Describe the army's activities during winter.
2. List ways that Charley learns about loss and death.
3. Explain why officers must force Charley to stop advancing on the enemy.
4. Summarize the ways in which Charley copes with dangers to his health.
5. Characterize the three battles of Charley's army career.

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COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Choose a correct answer to complete each statement. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left.

- _____ 1. In letters to his mother and brother Orren,
 - A. Nelson tells them that surgeons don't treat belly wounds.
 - B. Charley claims to be a man.
 - C. the volunteer ponders whether to desert or serve at a frontier fort.
 - D. Olafson describes the carnage at Gettysburg.

- _____ 2. Charley is surprised by the change in the land when he reaches
 - A. Chicago.
 - B. Washington.
 - C. Maryland
 - D. Virginia.

- _____ 3. Charley in the novel and Charley Goddard
 - A. are the same person.
 - B. bear little resemblance.
 - C. both suffer dysentery and miss the Battle of Manassas.
 - D. are both young when they enlist.

- _____ 4. Hand gives Charley powder for
 - A. loading a cap-and-ball pistol.
 - B. the trench stove.
 - C. dysentery.
 - D. men dying of stomach wounds.

- _____ 5. Charley stomps around angrily over
 - A. having to kill horses.
 - B. being forced to abandon Nelson.
 - C. a second engagement so soon after Manassas.
 - D. shooting empty rifles.

- _____ 6. While waiting for medical examination,
 - A. men die at the aid station.
 - B. the wounded stack bodies outside the surgery.
 - C. Charley sees a headless corpse.
 - D. rebels charge across a wide meadow.

- _____ 7. The men admire
 - A. Grant for winning in Tennessee.
 - B. McClellan for sitting a horse well.
 - C. surgeons working with cold hands.
 - D. sutlers for supplying them pies.

- _____ 8. The local housewives can't
 - A. bear to join picnickers watching the battle.
 - B. drink from polluted creek water.
 - C. supply all 90,000 men.
 - D. add amputated legs to the pile.

- _____ 9. When Charley returns home,
 - A. his mother grieves over his wounds.
 - B. he must use a cane.
 - C. he commits suicide with an officer's pistol.
 - D. he receives a commendation for heroism.

- _____ 10. Charley jokes to his mother about
 - A. girls at the train station.
 - B. shooting an empty rifle.
 - C. hanging the commissary officer.
 - D. trading coffee with a rebel for tobacco.

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Part II: Setting Identification (20 points)

Identify the settings in which the following events take place. Select your answers from the list that follows.

camp hospital	field surgery	Indiana	oven	train
Chicago	Fort Snelling	log shanties	river	Washington
Civil War	frontier fort	Manassas	steamboat	World War I
creek	Gettysburg	Maryland	Tennessee	World War II

- _____ 1. Trench warfare produces shell shock.
- _____ 2. Men suffer the thousand-yard stare.
- _____ 3. Charley forgets to fire.
- _____ 4. A veteran sits by a polished cap-and-ball revolver.
- _____ 5. Charley sees the sights during a pause in the fighting.
- _____ 6. A doctor dispenses powder to mix in water.
- _____ 7. Union artillery fires chain and grapeshot.
- _____ 8. Charley must fire an empty rifle.
- _____ 9. A white woman forces a slave into the house.
- _____ 10. Water is tinged pink with blood.

Part III: Fill-in (20 points)

Fill in the blanks with answers that complete each statement.

1. In June 1861, Charley leaves _____, Minnesota, to take part in a shooting war and joins volunteers at Fort _____.
2. He sends most of the first pay of _____ dollars to his mother and pays 50¢ for two _____.
3. There are no picnickers or _____ observing at the Battle of _____ as they had the day before.
4. _____, suffering a belly wound, knows he is dying and entrusts a _____ to Charley.
5. Charley takes _____ for ague and tends his _____ and feet.

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Explain the significance of two of the following quotations:

1. Only forty-seven men were left standing of the thousand original soldiers of the First Minnesota Volunteers.
2. It would serve no purpose to go out there and see it all again.
3. Not one animal came through unhit.
4. If they left the food the "dirty seceshes" would just eat it.
5. The training must work, he thought.

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ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY TEST

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. J | 6. G |
| 2. B | 7. D |
| 3. A | 8. J |
| 4. H | 9. F |
| 5. C | 10. A |

Part II: Fact/Opinion (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. O | 6. F |
| 2. T | 7. O |
| 3. F | 8. F |
| 4. F | 9. T |
| 5. T | 10. F |

Part III: Identification (20 points)

1. Charley and his comrades must build a trench stove to see them through the winter in a log shanty.
2. The blood on Charley's shirt comes from another man rather than from a wound to his body.
3. The surgeon requests a windbreak that Charley and others create by stacking frozen bodies.
4. Country boys like Charley are better off at survival than city boys from New York.
5. The fictional Charley is based on a real Civil War veteran, who dies from stress.

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. A |
| 2. C | 7. B |
| 3. D | 8. C |
| 4. D | 9. B |
| 5. A | 10. C |

Part II: Setting Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. World War I | 6. camp hospital |
| 2. World War II | 7. Gettysburg |
| 3. Manassas | 8. Fort Snelling |
| 4. river | 9. Maryland |
| 5. Washington | 10. Creek |

Part III: Fill-in (20 points)

1. Winona, Snelling
2. 33, apple pies
3. congressmen, Manassas (or Bull Run)
4. Nelson, letter
5. whiskey, rifle

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.



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