



department of Conservation and Recreation

# FORT WARREN, GEORGES ISLAND

## CURRICULUM PACKET

### Rebels Amongst the Ranks

Grades 5-8

2005 edition

Developed by Jayne E. Triber



photo credit: George Price

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*department of Conservation and Recreation*

## Fort Warren, Georges Island: Tours and School Programs

### **Dear Teachers:**

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Urban Parks and Recreation, offers school programs **by reservation** in May, June, and September. Please call **Boston's Best Cruises at 617-222-6999**, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. to make arrangements for transportation and reservations. Programs are.

**Permits:** Permits for normal day-use activities are required for **groups of 25 people or more**. [http://www.nps.gov/boha/planyourvisit/upload/DCR\\_recreational\\_permit.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/boha/planyourvisit/upload/DCR_recreational_permit.pdf)

Contact the park office to register; email is preferred at [Cheryl.desantis@state.ma.us](mailto:Cheryl.desantis@state.ma.us), phone **781-925-1032**, or fax **617-727-3947**.

**Transportation:** Public ferry service to the Boston Harbor Island national recreation area begins in early May. Ask about arrival and departure ferry service when making your reservation.

**Curriculum Packets:** A curriculum packet is posted on-line at [ ]. The packet contains general information on planning your trip to Georges Island, a menu of program options, pre-visit material on the history of Fort Warren and Georges Island, a map and description of Fort Warren, and a curriculum unit containing pre-visit educational materials or a classroom activity, a learning activity on Georges Island, and post-visit materials, including classroom activities, suggestions for research projects, and bibliographies.

### **The following options are available:**

**Self-guided tour:** Using maps, brochures, and other material in the curriculum packet, you may choose a self-guided tour of Fort Warren and Georges Island.

### **Tours by DCR park rangers or volunteers from the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands:**

- 1. General Interest Tour of Fort Warren:** Overview of the history and legends of Fort Warren from the Civil War through World War II. Topics include the fort's design and construction, its role in harbor defense, and especially its role as a prison for Confederate soldiers, sailors, and political prisoners during the Civil War.  
Duration: 45 minutes to 1 hour  
Maximum size: 50

Grades: 3-12 (adapted to grade level and appropriate Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks)

**2. Fort Warren during the Civil War:** A tour focusing on Fort Warren's Civil War history. Topics include the fort's role as a harbor fortification, Union Army training camp, and prison for Confederate soldiers, sailors, and political prisoners.

Duration: 45 minutes to 1 hour

Maximum size: 50

Grades: 3-12 (adapted to grade level and appropriate Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks)

### **Special School Programs:**

**1. Rebels Amongst the Ranks:** A special program focusing on Fort's Warren's Civil War role as a harbor fortification, training camp for the Union Army, and Confederate prisoner of war camp. In addition to a tour of Fort Warren that focuses on its Civil War history, students will participate in a learning activity using primary sources to explore the experience of a variety of individuals connected to Fort Warren during this time period.

Duration: 45 minutes to 1 hour for the tour/45minutes to 1 hour for the learning exercise

Maximum Size: 50

Grades: 5-8 (adapted to grade level and appropriate Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks)

**2. Liberty or Treason? The Case of Josiah H. Gordon:** Students will learn about the Civil War history of Fort Warren and study the case history of Josiah H. Gordon, a Maryland politician imprisoned at the fort. Through Gordon's letters and other primary sources, students will learn about a prisoner's daily life at Fort Warren and examine the issue of violations of civil liberties during wartime. The curriculum unit includes historical information on the Civil War and Fort Warren, biographical information on Josiah H. Gordon, pre-visit classroom activities, an on-site activity to accompany your field trip to Georges Island, and a post-visit classroom activity.

Duration: one or two 45-minute pre-visit classroom periods; 120 minutes for a field trip and on-site activity on Georges Island; one or two 45-minute post-visit classroom activities.

Maximum size: 50

Grades: 8-12 (adapted to grade level and appropriate Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks)



## Trip Tips

- ✓ **Transportation:** For information on ferry schedules, and departure points, please consult [www.bostonislands.com](http://www.bostonislands.com) (click on Getting There.”)
- ✓ **What to wear:** The temperature on the harbor and on Georges Island can be several degrees cooler than on the mainland. A tour of Fort Warren also involves considerable walking and many opportunities to get dirty. Students should wear rugged clothing, comfortable walking shoes or boots, and bring along a sweater or jacket. *Island advice: Dress in layers!*
- ✓ **Availability of food:** There is a snack bar on the island (located beside the Visitor Center), or you may bring lunch or snacks. Consult Georges Island map for location of picnic areas. Please carry all trash off of Georges Island.
- ✓ **Restrooms:** Consult Georges Island map for location of restrooms.
- ✓ **What to bring:** Lunch/snack, water, flashlight (for exploring dark corridors of Fort Warren), camera, pencil or pen, and other supplies for projects, sunscreen. *Remember: You will be on an island; if you forgot to bring something from home, you will have to do without it.*
- ✓ **Safety First:** While efforts are continuously being made to eliminate hazards for visitors to Fort Warren, there are still some dangerous areas. Students should be warned about going beyond fences and danger signs and to stay away from steep drops.
- ✓ **Group Supervision:** A ratio of 1 teacher or chaperone per 10 students is required and the teacher(s) or chaperone(s) must accompany the students while they explore the fort. Teachers and chaperones are responsible for their students. Emergency facilities such as first aid, police, and radio contact with the mainland are available at the Visitor Center.
- ✓ **If you need assistance:** DCR & NPS Rangers and volunteers from the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands are available to answer questions and provide any other assistance.

## **Rebels Amongst the Ranks**

### **Curriculum Unit**

#### **Grades 5-8**

#### **The goals of the curriculum unit are:**

- ✓ To learn about the different experiences of people connected to Fort Warren during the Civil War (Union soldiers and Confederate military and civilian prisoners).
- ✓ To understand the impact of the Civil War on individuals, especially in Massachusetts and on the Boston Harbor Islands
- ✓ To learn about the history and legends of Fort Warren
- ✓ To learn about the different parts of Fort Warren
- ✓ To introduce students to historical research

#### **Contents of the curriculum plan:**

- ✓ Connections to Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks
- ✓ Brief History of Fort Warren and Georges Island
- ✓ Study guide (map and tour of Fort Warren)
- ✓ Pre-visit background material on slavery and issues leading to the Civil War
- ✓ Pre-visit background material on the role of the Boston Harbor Islands during the Civil War
- ✓ Review sheets for pre-visit material
- ✓ A learning activity to accompany your tour
- ✓ Post-visit classroom activities
- ✓ A bibliography for further research (books and websites)

#### **Format:**

- ✓ Pre-visit educational materials will prepare students for their visit to Fort Warren. Teachers may use the enclosed review sheets or adapt the material as they see fit.
- ✓ **Tour of Fort Warren:** The tour will focus on Fort Warren's Civil War history. Topics include the fort's role as a harbor fortification, Union Army training camp, and prison for Confederate soldiers, sailors, and political prisoners. The format will be an interactive tour incorporating a learning activity that uses primary sources to explore the Civil War experiences of a variety of individuals at Fort Warren.  
Duration: 45 minutes to 1 hour  
Maximum size: 35
- ✓ Post-visit classroom activities (one for grades 5-6; one for grades 7-8)

## **Connections to Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks**

**Note to Teachers:** The connections may be found in the pre- and post-visit materials in the curriculum unit as well as on the tour of Fort Warren.

### **GRADE 5:**

#### **Concepts and Skills/History and Geography:**

1. Identify different ways of dating historical narratives
2. Interpret timelines of events

#### **Learning Standards:**

- 5.12: Explain the causes of the establishment of slavery in North America...Describe the life of free African Americans in the colonies.
- 5.28: Explain the events leading up to, and significance of, the Louisiana Purchase of 1803.
- 5.30: Describe the significance and consequences of the abolition of slavery in the northern states after the Revolution and of the 1808 law that banned the importation of slaves into the United States.
- 5.34. Identify the key issues that contributed to the onset of the Civil War.
- a. the debate over slavery and westward expansion
  - B. diverging economic interests.

### **GRADE 7:**

#### **Concepts and Skills/History and Geography:**

1. Construct and interpret timelines of events
2. Distinguish between primary and secondary sources
3. Identify multiple causes and effects when examining historical events

### **GRADE 8:**

“The reading of primary source documents is a key feature of the two-year set of U. S. history standards.” **Note: Students will use primary sources in the learning activity that is part of the Fort Warren tour as well as in the post-visit classroom activities.**

#### **Concepts and Skills/History and Geography:**

1. Show connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and ideas and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments.
2. Interpret the past within its own historical context rather than in terms of present-day norms and values.
3. Distinguish between historical fact and opinion.

**Learning Standards:**

USI.14: Explain the characteristics of American democracy, including the concepts of popular sovereignty and constitutional government (which includes representative institutions, federalism, separation of powers, shared powers, checks and balances, and individual rights).

USI.26: Describe the causes, course, and consequence of America's westward expansion and its growing diplomatic assertiveness. Use a map of North America to trace America's expansion to the Civil War, including the location of the Santa Fe and Oregon trails.

USI.30: Describe the formation of the abolitionist movement, the roles of various abolitionists, and the response of southerners and northerners to abolitionism.

USI.34: Describe how the different economies and cultures of the North and South contributed to the growing importance of sectional politics in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

USI.35: Summarize the critical developments leading to the Civil War.

USI.36: On a map of North America, identify Union and Confederate States at the outbreak of the war.

USI.37: Analyze Abraham Lincoln's presidency, his views on slavery, and the political obstacles he encountered.



photo credit: Ken Mallory

## Brief History of Georges Island and Fort Warren

Today, the history of Georges Island focuses primarily on the military history of Fort Warren from the Civil War through World War II. Yet, the island's history began over 125,000 years ago when moving glaciers formed smooth-sloped hills or **drumlins** made up of glacial debris or **till** containing pebbles, cobbles, and boulders. Some 15,000 years ago, the climate warmed and the glaciers melted. About 4-5,000 years ago, sea levels rose, isolating several drumlins that became the Boston Harbor Islands, including Georges Island. This process created a unique geological formation: the only drumlin field or **swarm** in the United States that intersects a coastline.

For thousands of years, Native Americans visited the Boston Harbor Islands from early spring to late autumn, making full use of the islands' natural resources. They fished in Boston Harbor and cultivated crops and hunted on the Boston Harbor Islands. Today, their descendants from the Wampanoag, Massachusetts, Nipmuck, and other tribes regard the islands as an important part of their cultural heritage.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, English and European immigrants arrived in Boston and soon discovered that fishing and trade would be the key to economic success. The protection of the shipping trade and of Boston, itself, required the building of lighthouses and fortifications on several of the Boston Harbor Islands, beginning with **Boston Light** on Little Brewster Island in 1716 (the oldest and only manned light station in the United States) and **Castle William** in the 1630s (the first of eight fortifications on Castle Island).

**Georges Island** was originally known as **Pembertons Island**, named for its first owner, **James Pemberton**. Pemberton began living on the island in 1628, two years before the great Puritan migration began. By the 1690s, the island was renamed Georges Island for **John George**, possibly a tenant farmer on the island. Georges Island was presumably used for farming and grazing animals in this period.

During the Revolutionary War, **John Adams** was one of several political and military leaders who recognized the military importance of Georges Island, which guarded **The Narrows**, the main shipping channel into Boston. Although the British Army had evacuated Boston in March 1776, British ships remained anchored in the Nantasket

Roads Channel until June, harassing American shipping and raising fears of reinvasion. In 1778, our French allies built temporary **earthworks** (raised embankments of dirt for mounting guns and defending a position) on Georges Island to protect their fleet and defend Boston from possible British attack.

In 1825, the City of Boston bought Georges Island and turned it over to the United States government. From 1825-1832, the federal government constructed a seawall around the island to control erosion and expanded the island to construct additional defenses. In 1833, **Colonel Sylvanus Thayer** of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and former superintendent of West Point, began supervising the construction of **Fort Warren**, named for **Dr. Joseph Warren**, the Revolutionary War patriot killed at the Battle of Bunker Hill in June 1775.

Built with granite from **Cape Ann** and **Quincy**, Fort Warren was largely finished by 1850, but when the Civil War broke out in April 1861, there was still construction debris on the parade ground and no guns were mounted. **Governor John Andrew** and the Massachusetts Legislature played a critical role in organizing heavy artillery companies to garrison Fort Warren during the Civil War.

During the Civil War, Fort Warren served as Boston's main line of defense against invasion by Confederate naval forces, as an early recruiting and training camp for Union soldiers, and, most importantly, as a Confederate prisoner-of-war camp for military and political prisoners.

In October 1861, Fort Warren's prisoners included the mayor of Baltimore, the governor of Kentucky, and several members of the Maryland Legislature. In November 1861, the Confederate diplomats **James Murray Mason** and **John Slidell** were removed from a British ship by the Union Navy and held at Fort Warren until January 1862. The highest-ranking prisoner was **Alexander H. Stephens**, Vice-President of the Confederacy, who was imprisoned there from May to October 1865.

Although some prisoners complained about overcrowding and poor food, Fort Warren's living conditions were far superior to Confederate and most Union prisoner-of-war camps. Under the command of **Colonel Justin Dimick** and his successors, Fort Warren recorded only 13 deaths among the more than 2000 prisoners confined there during the Civil War.

Improvements in longer-range artillery after the Civil War resulted in new construction and military uses for Fort Warren. Updated gun batteries were being installed in the 1890s. When the **Spanish-American War** broke out in 1898, Boston Harbor was mined and Fort Warren returned to active military strength. In the years before **World War I (U. S. involvement, 1917-1918)**, a mine storage building (now the Administration Building) and several observation towers were built, and Fort Warren

served as a mine command center during the war. In the early 1920s, a passageway was added extending from the Civil War Guard House to a concrete structure that served as a mine control center during **World War II (U. S. involvement, 1941-1945)**.

Fort Warren was decommissioned in 1950 and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1970. Georges Island has been owned and operated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts since 1958. In 1970, it became one of seventeen islands managed by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) and the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) as part of Boston Harbor Islands State Park. In 2003, MDC and DEM merged to form the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Since 1996, Georges Island has also been part of the national park system within the Boston Harbor Islands national park area, a partnership of national, state, and local representatives.

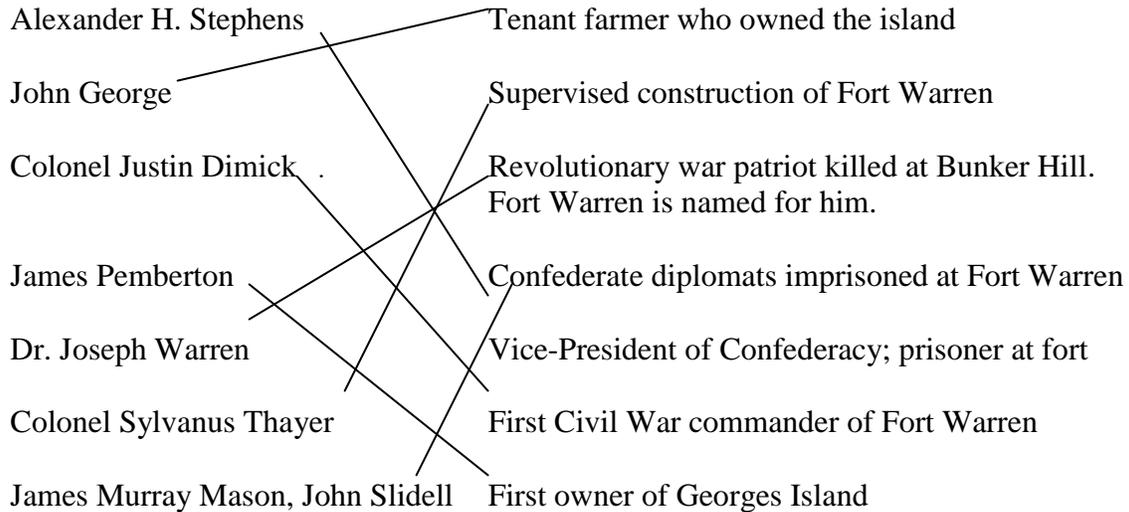
**See Bibliography at end of Curriculum Packet.**



### Review Sheet (Teachers' Answer Key)

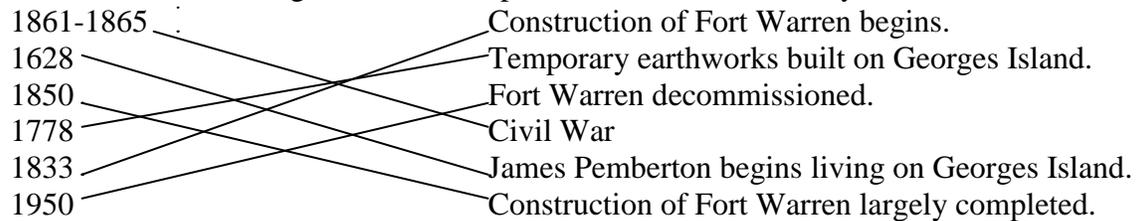
#### Who Am I?

Draw a line connecting important people in the history of Fort Warren and Georges Island to the correct description:



#### Match Game

Draw a line connecting the dates to important events in the history of Fort Warren:



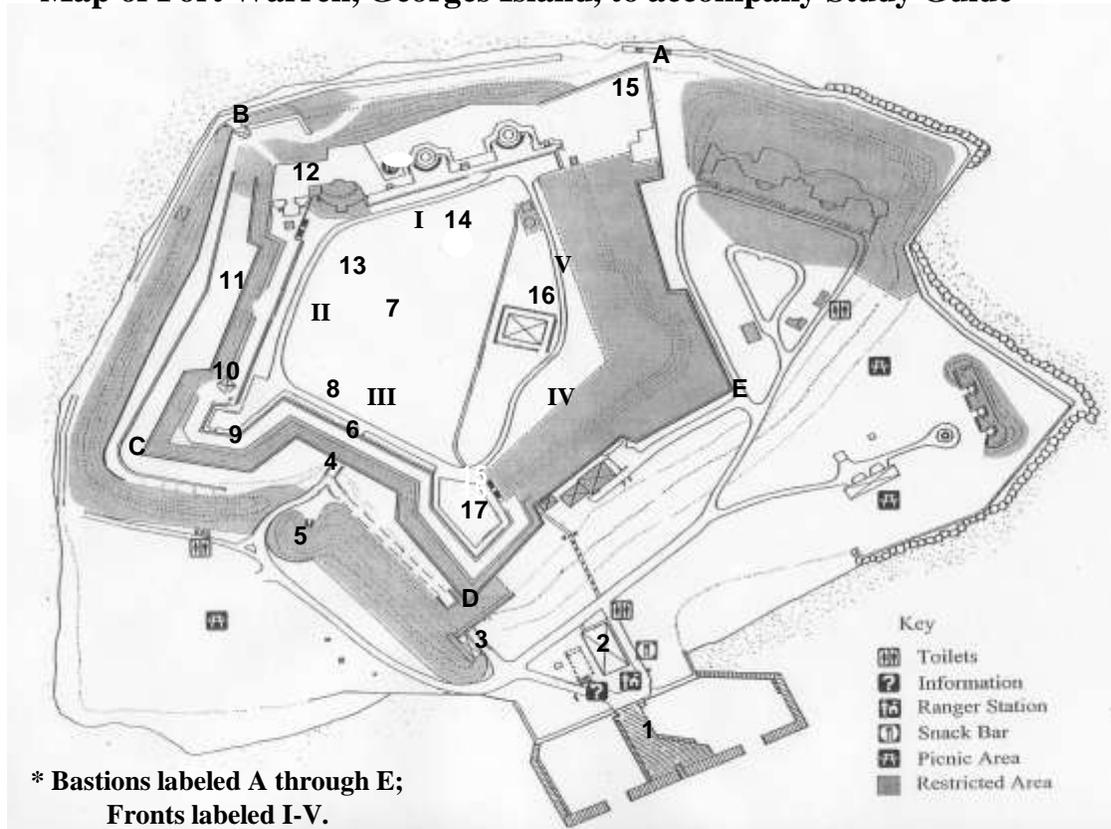
#### Questions:

1. What is a drumlin? **Smooth-sloped hill formed by moving glaciers. Georges Island is a drumlin.**

2. How did Native Americans make use of the Boston Harbor Islands? **They cultivated (grew) crops and hunted on the islands.**

3. Why was a fort built on Georges Island? **Georges Island guards The Narrows, the main shipping channel into Boston.**

## Map of Fort Warren, Georges Island, to accompany Study Guide



Note: Tour does not have to be taken in this order.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Pier/Wharf                              | 9. Bakery   |
| 2. Mine Storage Building                   | 10. Observation Post/Fire Control Tower                 |
| 3. Civil War Guardhouse                    | 11. Front II Terreplein                                 |
| 4. Ditch                                   | 12. Front I Terreplein                                  |
| 5. Demilune                                | 13. Front II Casemates (Confederate Enlisted Prisoners) |
| 6. Bridge and Sallyport                    | 14. Front I Casemates (Union Enlisted Men)              |
| 7. Parade Ground                           | 15. Bastion A   |
| 8. Front III Casemates (Historic Quarters) | 16. Powder Magazine                                     |
|  | 17. Old Hospital  |

## Study Guide for Fort Warren Tour:

**Fort Warren design and construction:** Fort Warren was built between the 1830s and 1850s, during the “Third System” of American fortification construction. From 1816-1866, United States Army engineers worked to create a permanent, integrated harbor defense system. During this period, Colonel Sylvanus Thayer supervised construction of Fort Independence on Castle Island, Fort Warren on Georges Island, and Fort Winthrop on Governors Island (now part of Logan Airport).

Fort Warren is a typical “Third System” fort: a multi-sided self-contained masonry structure with multi-tiered gun emplacements (guns on more than one level). The fort has five **bastions** (labeled “A” through “E”), arrow-shaped projecting parts of a fort between the fort’s five **fronts**, or sides. The bastions provided crossfire along the walls to clear the area of invaders. Guns were also mounted in **casemates**, interior rooms within the fort’s walls, and fired through openings called **embrasures**. Guns were also mounted on the **terreplein**, or roof level, on top of the casemates. Here, guns were mounted on the **ramparts**, broad embankments of earth. Above the ramparts are **parapets**, protective walls of earth (or sometimes stone) that protected soldiers and artillery from enemy fire. Additional defensive features will be discussed below.

After the Civil War, Fort Warren was at wartime status during the Spanish-American War (1898) and World War I (1917-1918). In 1928, the fort was deactivated and placed on caretaker status, returning to active military strength during World War II (1941-1945). The fort remained on active military status as late as 1949. Over the years, Fort Warren was modernized to incorporate new developments in weapons and warfare.

**The following locations are either tour stops or other places of interest at Fort Warren:**

### 1. Pier/Wharf:

The original wharf was made of stone and provided a fixed landing for the island’s main pier. The present finger pier is a close copy of what Fort Warren had when it was last an active military installation. **Note:** A **wharf** is a fixed platform where ships are loaded and unloaded. A wharf often has buildings on for businesses related to the sea and trade. A **pier** is a raised walkway over water, usually made of pilings, that is used as a landing place.

### 2. Mine Storage Building:

The brick building facing the pier (now an Administration Building, housing the Ranger Station and Snack Bar) was built in 1906 to store and service mines that protected Boston Harbor during World War I and World War II.

### 3. Guardhouse:

The Civil War guardhouse was Fort Warren's security office. Soldiers on guard duty spent four hours in the guardhouse after two hours guard duty at various posts within the fort. Major Francis Parker of the First Battalion, Massachusetts Infantry (later the 32<sup>nd</sup> Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry), described the harsh conditions during the winter of 1861-62: "Such duty on a bleak island, exposed to the terrible cold and storms of a New England winter, was no pastime." The guardhouse also served as a jail for soldiers who broke military rules. A concrete passageway added in the early 1920s extended from the guardhouse to a bomb proofed mine control casemate.

### 4. Ditch:

After passing through the passageway, you will see a **ditch** (unlike a moat, which is usually filled with water) formed by the walls of the fort on one side and a large mound of earth called a **coverface** on the other side. The earthen coverface would absorb direct artillery fire, masking and protecting the fort's masonry walls.

### 5. Demilune:

To your left, you will see an entrance leading to the **demilune**. A full view of this curved, granite defensive structure shaped like a half-moon ("Demilune" is French for half-moon), may be seen if you follow the path leading to the picnic area. Note how the demilune's curved shape would give its guns control of this side of Georges Island.

In October 1863, Private Sawyer, a deserter from a Maine regiment, was imprisoned in one of the demilune's casemates. Over a period of three weeks, he managed to chisel the edges of the musketry **loopholes** (narrow angled windows in the granite walls to allow soldiers to be protected while firing muskets), squeeze through the opening, and escape. Sawyer swam to a nearby schooner, but the captain later turned him in to authorities.

### 6. Bridge and Sallyport:

To the right is a **bridge** leading to a passageway that is called a **sallyport**. Soldiers would "sally forth" or rush through the sallyport in order to attack an enemy force. Today's bridge is a replacement, but it is similar to the original. Fort Warren had a **drawbridge**, a deck that could be raised in case of enemy attack. If you look up on either side of the sallyport, you can see some of the hardware that raised and lowered the bridge. Inside the sallyport, there are grooves in the floor that gave men and horses traction so that they would not slip on the granite. There are also a pair of columns on either side at the middle of the sallyport that were designed as guides for a **portcullis**, a grate that could be lowered into place to prevent passage into a fort.

### 7. Parade Ground:

As you enter through the sallyport, you will see an open grassy area in the center of the fort. The **parade ground** was used for a variety of activities, including daily **muster**

(roll-call and military inspection), drilling, dress parades, and recreational activities, including baseball and football.

**The Story of “John Brown’s Body”:** At the beginning of the Civil War, the Massachusetts Second Battalion of Infantry, known as the Tiger Battalion, arrived at Fort Warren. The soldiers were ordered to clean up piles of dirt and rubbish on the parade ground. As they worked, they passed the time by singing popular songs, including the hymn, “Say, Brothers, Will You Meet Us?” Soon, they began composing new words to the melody.

One of soldiers in the battalion was Private John Brown, who had the same name as the famous abolitionist who had led a raid on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, in an attempt to start a slave uprising. The abolitionist John Brown was executed for his crime in 1859. Private Brown’s fellow soldiers teased him, telling him he couldn’t be John Brown, because John Brown’s body was mouldering (decaying or rotting) in the grave. Soldiers at Fort Warren began singing “John Brown’s body lies a-mouldering in the grave (repeated 3 times)...His soul goes marching on!”

One version of the story is that when the 12<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Regiment arrived at Fort Warren, their regimental band learned the catchy tune and played it during a dress parade on the parade ground. The four regiments that trained at Fort Warren carried the tune with them when they left Fort Warren. George Kimball of the 12<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Regiment remembered the song’s popularity: “It spread from regiment to regiment like wildfire.”

The author Julia Ward Howe was quite familiar with the song. In her *Reminiscences, 1819-1899*, she recalled returning from a review of troops in Washington with her minister, the Reverend James Freeman Clarke, and several friends. On the return trip, they sang popular army songs, ending with “John Brown’s Body.” Another version of the story claims that they heard soldiers singing the song. Reverend Clarke turned to Mrs. Howe, and asked, “Why do you not write some good words for that stirring tune?” When Mrs. Howe woke up early the next morning, she “scrawled the verses almost without looking at the paper.” The new song was “The Battle Hymn of the Republic.”

### **8. Front III Casemates (Historic Quarters):**

Turning left after you enter the sallyport, you will find a complex of rooms that were used both as quarters for Fort Warren’s officers from the 1860s to the 1890s and as quarters for Confederate political prisoners during the Civil War. Later, they were used for administrative purposes.

In November 1861, the Confederate diplomats James Murray Mason and John Slidell were removed from a British ship by the Union Navy and later imprisoned at Fort Warren. Great Britain protested that Mason and Slidell’s removal from a neutral vessel

on the high seas was a violation of international law. Secretary of State William Seward feared that an angry British government might decide to actively support the Confederate states. Under Seward's orders, Mason and Slidell were released on January 1, 1862.

At the end of the Civil War, two high-ranking Confederate politicians were held at Fort Warren: John Reagan, Postmaster General of the Confederate States of America, and Alexander H. Stephens, Vice-President of the Confederate States of America. On May 28, 1865, Stephens described the initial impact of his confinement:

The horrors of imprisonment, close confinement, no one to see or talk to, with the reflection of being cut off for I know not how long and perhaps forever—from communication with dear ones at home, are beyond description. Words utterly fail to express the soul's anguish.

By the end of July, Stephens was released from close confinement and allowed to walk the grounds during the day, talk to his fellow prisoners and Union officers and soldiers, and to receive visitors. He was released from Fort Warren on October 13, 1865.

### **9. Bakery:**

The entrance to the bakery is located in the **Bastion C** courtyard. From the 1860s to 1900, this room and others in Bastion C were used for food storage, preparation, and serving. During the Civil War, officers and gentlemen at Fort Warren—both Union and Confederate—usually ate better than enlisted men. Enlisted men—both Union soldiers and Confederate prisoners—were supposed to receive fresh beef with potatoes three times a week, salt beef, pork, or ham three times a week, and baked beans on Sunday. They were also entitled to coffee or tea and twenty-two ounces of bread a day. Confederate officers and Federal civilian prisoners often formed a private **mess** (a group of people, usually in the military, who eat their meals together), using their money to purchase better food from the **sutler** (a civilian shopkeeper on an army post). Josiah Gordon, a member of the Maryland Legislature who was imprisoned at Fort Warren in March 1862, described a dinner of “a leg of mutton mildly roasted and boiled ham with stewed chicken after a dish of tomato soup.” The menu also included mashed potatoes, stewed carrots, stewed parsnips, green peas, and dried apples, with “rice boiled in milk and sweetened” for dessert. He finished the meal with “a good cup of coffee.”

### **10. Observation Post/Fire Control Tower:**

As you leave the bakery, walk across the Bastion C courtyard and climb the circular stairs leading to the **Observation Post**. Thirty years after the Civil War, the increasing range of artillery and the mining of harbors to prevent enemy invasion required the use of observation posts to track enemy vessels and coordinate the firing of Fort Warren's guns. This Observation Post was built around 1900 and was used during World War I

and World War II. Note that it is built of brick, not the fort's original granite. The use of brick and concrete is a clue to later additions to Fort Warren's original construction.

### **Harbor View:**

From the Observation Post, look around and see how many Boston Harbor Islands you can identify. Look straight ahead to see the **Brewster Islands**, including **Little Brewster Island**, the home of **Boston Light**, the oldest and only manned light station in the country (built in 1716). Watch for its flash! Turn ninety degrees to your right and see **Pedlocks Island**, a large island made up of five drumlins (hills shaped by glaciers). Pedlocks Island also has a fort, **Fort Andrews** (c. 1900). **Hull Gut** separates Pedlocks Island from the town of Hull. Can you see the water tower of **Fort Revere** (1900) on **Telegraph Hill**? Turn ninety degrees again and you can see **Rainsford Island**, once the site of hospitals, poorhouses, and a boys' reformatory. **Long Island** (behind Rainsford) is the site of a lighthouse, **Fort Strong**, (c. 1900), and the former Long Island Chronic Care Hospital. Today, Long Island houses a homeless shelter, alcohol and drug rehabilitation programs, and other social service programs. Turning once again, you can see **Gallops Island** and **Lovells Island**, separated by **The Narrows**, once the main shipping channel into Boston Harbor. Over the years, Gallops Island was the site of a restaurant, a Civil War camp, quarantine station, and U.S. Maritime Service Radio Training School (during World War II). Lovells Island is the home of **Fort Standish** (1900).

### **11. Front II Terreplein:**

As you leave the Observation Post and walk to your right, you will be on the **terreplein** section or roof level of Front II. You can imagine the size of the Rodman cannons in use during the Civil War by looking at the stone platforms and the traverse arches, which allowed the guns to move from side to side while tracking the movement of enemy ships.

### **Harbor Defense:**

The fort's location guarding **The Narrows**, the main shipping channel into the inner harbor, to the north and the Nantasket Roads channel to the south, made Fort Warren Boston's main line of defense against enemy raids throughout the nineteenth century. Imagine an enemy ship passing below and you can understand why guns were placed where they were.

**12. Front I Terreplein:** The Front I Terreplein is to the right of the Front II Terreplein (between Bastions A and B). Here, you can see how Fort Warren was modernized after the Civil War. In 1885, Secretary of War William Endicott headed a board of Army and Navy officers and civilians organized to recommend a new system of harbor defenses and weapons. Beginning in the late 1890s and continuing into the early 1900s, Endicott-era concrete gun batteries were installed on the Front I Terreplein (from left to right:

**Battery Plunkett, Battery Jack Adams, and Battery Stevenson)** and outside the walls of the fort. **Go down the staircase to return to the lower level of the fort.**

**13. Front II Casemates (Confederate Enlisted Prisoners):**

These casemates were used as living quarters for Confederate enlisted prisoners. The quarters were considered reasonably comfortable. J. H. Tomb, chief engineer in the Confederate Navy, described how he and his fellow prisoners slept on bunks “being of pine boards three in a row, one above the other.” The prisoners also had “a supply of straw (for a mattress) and one blanket.

**14. Front I Casemates (Union Enlisted Men):**

The outer rooms had two cannons commanding the shipping channel into Boston Harbor. Note the stone traverse arches in the floors. The inner rooms were living quarters for Union enlisted men during the Civil War.

**15. Bastion A:**

Bastion A once had the same double room layout as the Front I casemates and an open courtyard like Bastion D (across the parade ground). In the 1870s, the courtyard was covered to provide for new terreplein gun emplacements. This allowed for new rooms inside so soldiers could train indoors and provided a bombproof storage **magazine** (a place to store gunpowder or other explosive material). During World War II (1941-1945), Bastion A held a recreation hall, movie theater, bowling alley, and storage space.

**15. Powder Magazine (parade ground):**

This large powder magazine, completed in 1863, was designed for limited access storage. Smaller service magazines were located around the fort, closer to the guns. Originally the walls and ceiling were covered with climate-controlling wood.

The powder magazine plays a part in Fort Warren’s most famous legend: **The Lady in Black**. Melanie Lanier was reputedly the young wife of a Confederate prisoner at Fort Warren (identified as Samuel Lanier in some versions of the story). Lanier got a message to his wife, asking her to help him escape from Fort Warren. She landed in Hull, Massachusetts, south of Georges Island, found the home of a Southern sympathizer, and was provided with a pistol and men’s clothing (a Union soldier’s uniform in some versions of the legend).

On a dark, rainy night, Mrs. Lanier landed a row boat on Georges Island and slipped by the guards. She reached a ditch under the **Corridor of Dungeons** (also known as the Bastion E **scarp gallery** on the fort’s outer wall: a row of small casemates with openings in the wall for musketry fire). After giving a prearranged signal, she was hoisted up into the fort through a musketry loophole.

The Confederate prisoners were to dig a tunnel from their cells to the parade ground, overpower the guards, and take over Fort Warren. Unfortunately, they went off course and struck the granite wall of the powder magazine. The noise alerted the guards, and Mrs. Lanier was trapped in the Corridor of Dungeons. She pulled out her pistol and aimed it at Colonel Justin Dimick, commander of Fort Warren. As she fired, the pistol exploded, killing her husband.

She was found guilty of being a spy and sentenced to be hanged. Her final request was to be hanged in women's clothing. She was executed wearing a black robe that had been worn by one of the Union soldiers in a play. Since then, many people have claimed to have seen the ghost of the Lady in Black.

### **17. Old Hospital:**

Located in Bastion D, this large room served as a hospital ward from the Civil War until 1906. Living conditions at Fort Warren were better than what existed at most Civil War prisons, and only 13 prisoners died out of more than 2000 prisoners confined there during the Civil War.

A union soldier named Litchfield described conditions in the hospital on October 3, 1864: "The room occupied by the men who have measles is filled with rebels awaiting exchange [The Union and Confederacy sporadically exchanged or traded prisoners.]. There's three of the rebs in the ward, they all say they are in consumption [tuberculosis] and I should not think strange if two of them were."

When a new hospital was built outside the fort's walls, the old hospital became the fort's library. By the 1940s, the room became a post exchange [store], selling a variety of items for soldiers stationed at Fort Warren.

**Sources:** Metropolitan District Commission, *Georges Island Study Guides*, 1983, 1993, *Historic Curriculum Packet, Self-Guided Tour Brochure*; Minor H. McLain, "The Military Prison at Fort Warren," *Civil War History* VIII (1962), pp. 136-151; Jay Schmidt, *Fort Warren: New England's Most Historic Civil War Site* (Amherst, N.H., 2003); Edward Rowe Snow, *The Islands of Boston Harbor* (1935, 1971; updated edition, Beverly, MA, 2002); Jayne E. Triber, "Defending the City, Defending the Nation: The Military History of the Boston Harbor Islands," unpublished paper, 2003).

## Review Sheet

### **Parts of a fort:**

Draw a line between the parts of a fort and the correct definition:

Parade Ground	Protective wall of earth or stone to protect soldiers and artillery
Bastion	Curved defensive structure shaped like a half-moon
Parapet	Large mound of earth that absorbs artillery fire and protects a fort
Casemate	Open grassy area in center of fort for drilling, parades, recreation
Coverface	Arrow-shaped projecting parts of fort that provide crossfire Fort Warren has five of these.
Demilune	Interior rooms within fort's walls (for guns and living quarters)

### **Questions:**

1. During which wars was Fort Warren on active military status?
2. What is the purpose of a **portcullis**?
3. Where were Confederate diplomats Mason and Slidell and Confederate Vice-President Alexander Hamilton imprisoned at Fort Warren?
4. What other Boston Harbor Island fortifications were built around the same time as Fort Warren?
5. How can you tell which parts of Fort Warren were built after the Civil War?

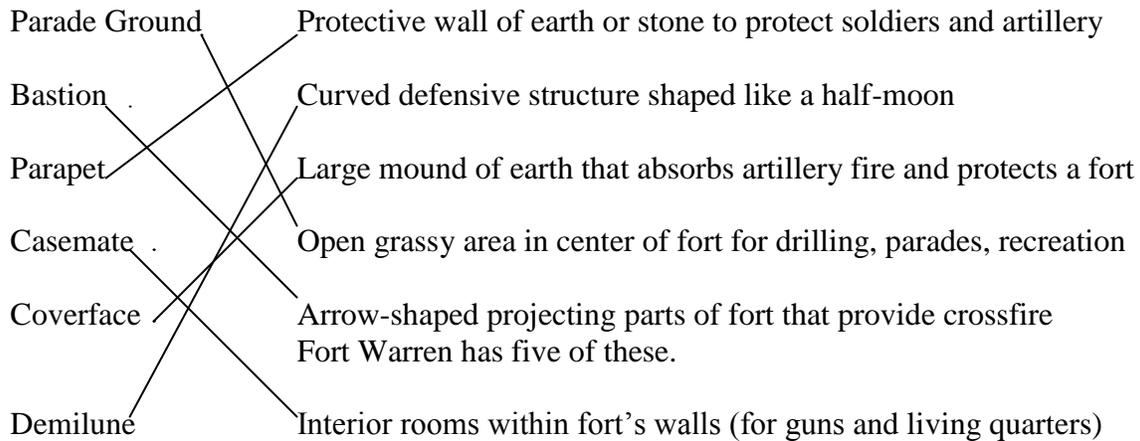
### **A Riddle:**

I escaped from Fort Warren's demilune, but I was not a Confederate prisoner. Who am I?

## Review Sheet (Teachers' Answer Key)

### Parts of a fort:

Draw a line between the parts of a fort and the correct definition:



### Questions:

1. During which wars was Fort Warren on active military status? **Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, and World War II.**
2. What is the purpose of a **portcullis**? **It was a grate that could be lowered into place to prevent passage into a fort.**
3. Where were Confederate diplomats Mason and Slidell and Confederate Vice-President Alexander Hamilton imprisoned at Fort Warren? **Front III Casemates (also known as Historic Quarters)**
4. What other Boston Harbor Island fortifications were built around the same time as Fort Warren? **Fort Independence on Castle Island and Fort Winthrop on Governors Island**
5. How can you tell which parts of Fort Warren were built after the Civil War? **The original parts of the fort (1830s-1850s) were built of granite. Later additions were built of brick and concrete.**

### A Riddle:

I escaped from Fort Warren's demilune, but I was not a Confederate prisoner. Who am I? **Private Sawyer, a deserter from a Maine regiment**

## Slavery and the Coming of the Civil War

The first Africans in England's American colonies arrived in Virginia in 1619, when a Dutch trader exchanged "20 and odd Negroes" for supplies. From their first contact, English colonists were struck by the differences between themselves and Africans—differences in color, language, and customs—that they believed marked African culture as savage. This unquestioning racial prejudice made slavery readily acceptable in colonial society.

Still, slavery developed slowly, for initially slaves were more expensive than indentured servants (settlers who agreed to work for a master for a fixed period of time in exchange for transportation to the colonies). However, by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, European immigrants could afford to buy cheap land in the colonies instead of becoming indentured servants. Slaves became a more abundant and cheaper labor force.

By the mid-1680s, black slaves outnumbered white servants in the southern labor force. Although slaves made up only 4-5% of the population of the Northern colonies in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they constituted an important percentage of the urban labor force (as high as 17% in New York and 5% in Boston). In New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, slaves worked as domestic servants, teamsters, dockworkers, and sailors.

During the Revolutionary period, many Americans were troubled by the presence of slavery while they claimed to be fighting for their freedom from slavery under British rule. In 1768, a correspondent to a Philadelphia newspaper asked: "How suits it with the glorious cause of Liberty to keep your fellow men in bondage, men equally the work of your great Creator, men formed for freedom as yourselves?"

In the 1780s and 1790s, antislavery societies formed in both the North and the upper South (Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware). In 1783, the Massachusetts Supreme Court, responding to lawsuits brought by African Americans, ruled that slavery violated the state constitution. In 1787, the Confederation Congress (the national government formed under the Articles of Confederation) prohibited slavery in the Northwest Territory in. By 1804, all the Northern states had passed measures for emancipation or the gradual abolition of slavery.

In May 1787, fifty-five delegates from twelve states (Rhode Island refused to send a delegation) met in the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia to create a stronger union. Delegates from South Carolina and Georgia represented rice planters who were anxious to increase their slave holdings in order to make up for wartime losses. They were, as James Madison said, "inflexible on the point of slaves." The delegates abandoned any effort to abolish slavery beyond ending the slave trade in 1808. They

also agreed that five slaves would be counted as the equal of three freemen for the purpose of political representation (the “three-fifths rule”).

The invention of the cotton gin in 1793, which separated cotton seeds from the fiber, made cotton the South’s most valuable crop and removed any economic incentive to abolish slavery. Cotton-growing, however, depleted the soil. In 1803, the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from France, doubling the size of the country. Southern planters demanded the right to extend slavery and the “Cotton Kingdom” into the new territory.

In 1819, Missouri, largely populated by slave-owners who had migrated from Kentucky and Tennessee, applied for admission to the Union as a slave state. Northern politicians were opposed because it would upset the existing political balance of eleven free and eleven slave states. In 1820, Senator Henry Clay of Kentucky proposed the Missouri Compromise: Maine would be admitted to the Union as a free state in 1820, and Missouri would be admitted as a slave state in 1821. Thereafter, slavery would only be permitted in the Louisiana Territory south of the 36 degree 30 foot latitude line. During the Missouri Crisis, Thomas Jefferson expressed his fear that slavery would eventually destroy the Union: “This momentous question like a fire bell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once the [death] knell of the Union.”

Over the next thirty years, the United States became increasingly divided over slavery. In the 1830s, black and white Americans began demanding the immediate abolition of slavery. Two of these *abolitionists* were Frederick Douglass, a former slave, and William Lloyd Garrison, the white publisher of the militant anti-slavery newspaper, *The Liberator*. Douglass and Garrison disagreed over whether political action or moral suasion would achieve their goal, but they were united in their belief that there could be no compromise over slavery.

By 1850, the South had lost its political power in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, a victim of the growing population of the free states. Southerners saw themselves as a minority interest under attack. Southern politicians, including John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, upheld the constitutional rights of states to nullify (“to make legally null and void...of no value or consequence”) national laws that they believed were harmful to their interests. In 1847, under the states’ rights doctrine, Calhoun argued that Congress had no constitutional right to prohibit slavery in the territories because the territories were the property of all the states, North and South.

Henry Clay tried to save the Union again with the Compromise of 1850, his plan for dealing with slavery in the territory acquired in the Mexican War (1846-1848). He proposed that California be admitted as a free state and that the remainder of the territory be organized as the New Mexico territory, with the issue of slavery to be decided by the inhabitants of the territory (popular sovereignty). He also proposed that

the slave trade, but not slavery, be abolished in the District of Columbia, and that the Fugitive Slave Law should be strengthened. This time, Clay's attempt to forge a national compromise over slavery failed. The bill passed only when Democratic Senator Stephen Douglas of Illinois split the measure into five separate bills, allowing senators to vote in favor of their respective sectional interests.

Four years later, the nation divided again over the issue of the expansion of slavery—this time in the Kansas and Nebraska territories. Under the Missouri Compromise, slavery was prohibited in the region, but in the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, Senator Stephen Douglas argued that the Compromise of 1850 had established the principle of popular sovereignty to decide whether slavery would be allowed in the territories. The Kansas-Nebraska Act turned Kansas into a bloody battleground between pro- and anti-slavery settlers and increased anti-slavery feelings in the Northern states.

By the presidential election of 1860, slavery had divided the Democratic Party into northern and southern wings. The Whig Party disappeared altogether, replaced in 1854 by a new anti-slavery party, the Republican Party. Americans now faced regional elections. In the North, the candidates were Senator Stephen Douglas of Illinois, running as a Northern Democrat, and Abraham Lincoln of Illinois, running as a Republican. In the South, the candidates were John Breckinridge of Kentucky, running as a Southern Democrat or "Dixiecrat," and John Bell of Tennessee, a former Whig now running as a candidate of the Constitutional Union Party. On the issue of slavery, Douglas, the Northern Democrat, continued to defend popular sovereignty, while Breckinridge, the Southern Democrat, upheld the belief that the federal government must protect slavery in the territories. Bell, the Constitutional Union Party candidate, tried to avoid the issue of slavery with a vague promise to support the Constitution and the Union. It was Republican Abraham Lincoln, however, who posed the greatest threat to the Southern states.

As a senatorial candidate in 1858 and as a presidential candidate in 1860, Lincoln was consistent in his belief that slavery was morally wrong. He tried to reassure Southerners that he agreed with them that the Constitution *did not* give the federal government the power to interfere with slavery in the states. *However, he also stood by the belief that the Founding Fathers and subsequent Congresses had established ample precedents that gave the federal government the right to prohibit slavery in the territories.* Ironically, Lincoln agreed with Southerners that slavery must expand or die. His election, and his commitment to forbidding slavery in the territories, signaled the eventual end of slavery.

Lincoln was victorious, winning all eighteen of the free states (splitting New Jersey with Stephen Douglas) and 38% of the popular vote. His electoral vote total was 180 compared to 123 for the other three candidates combined. On December 20, 1860, South Carolina became the first Southern state to secede from the Union. By the time

Lincoln was inaugurated, on March 4, 1861, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas had also seceded. On April 12, 1861, Confederate troops fired on Fort Sumter in South Carolina. Three days later, President Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteer soldiers to put down the “insurrection.”

The Civil War had begun. President Lincoln prepared to wage a war to save the Union, not to free the slaves. The Confederate States prepared to fight “The War for Southern Independence” in defense of states’ rights and slavery. When the war ended four years later, Abraham Lincoln had freed the slaves—at least those in the Southern states—with his Emancipation Proclamation (1863). He was assassinated before the rest of the slaves were freed by the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution (December 18, 1865). The cost of saving the Union and freeing the slaves was high: 622,111 men from the North and the South had died, either on the battlefield or from disease—more Americans killed than in any other American war.

**Bibliography:** David Donald, *Liberty and Union* (1978); John Mack Faragher, et al, *Out of Many: A History of the American People*, Vol. I (1990), Chapters 4, 7-9, 11-16; William G. Freehling, “The Founding Fathers and Slavery,” *American Historical Review* (Feb. 1972); Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Man’s Burden* (1968); Gary Nash, *Red, White, and Black* (1982); Jayne E. Triber, “Government and Politics,” in Robert J. Allison, editor, *American Eras: Development of a Nation, 1783-1815* (1997).

## Review Sheet

### Match Game:

Draw a line connecting the dates to important events in the history of slavery:

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1619 | Mass. Supreme Court ruled that slavery violated the state's constitution.  |
| 1804 | Invention of the cotton gin, increasing the value of cotton and removing any economic incentive to abolish slavery |
| 1783 | By this date, all the Northern states had passed measures for emancipation or the gradual abolition of slavery.    |
| 1808 | The slave trade (but not slavery) was abolished in the United States.  |
| 1793 | The first Africans arrived in England's American colonies (in Virginia).   |

### Questions:

1. Why did slavery develop slowly in England's American colonies?
2. Which Congressional act established a dividing line between slave and free territories that lasted for thirty years?
3. Which Congressional act established the principle of popular sovereignty in deciding whether slavery would be allowed in the territories?
4. Who was Frederick Douglass?
5. Who were the four presidential candidates in the election of 1860?
6. Which southern state was the first to secede from the Union?
7. **Extra credit:** Why was Abraham Lincoln a threat to the Southern states?

## Review Sheet (Teachers' Answer Key)

### Match Game:

Draw a line connecting the dates to important events in the history of slavery:

1619	Mass. Supreme Court ruled that slavery violated the state's constitution.
1804	Invention of the cotton gin, increasing the value of cotton and removing any economic incentive to abolish slavery
1783	By this date, all the Northern states had passed measures for emancipation or the gradual abolition of slavery.
1808	The slave trade (but not slavery) was abolished in the United States.
1793	The first Africans arrived in England's American colonies (in Virginia).

### Questions:

1. Why did slavery develop slowly in England's American colonies?

**Initially, slaves were more expensive than indentured servants.**

2. Which Congressional act established a dividing line between slave and free territories that lasted for thirty years? **The Missouri Compromise (1820)**

3. Which Congressional act established the principle of popular sovereignty in deciding whether slavery would be allowed in the territories? **Compromise of 1850**

4. Who was Frederick Douglass? **A black abolitionist (one who believed in the immediate abolition or end of slavery)**

5. Who were the four presidential candidates in the election of 1860? **Stephen Douglas (Northern Democrat), Abraham Lincoln (Republican), John Breckinridge (Southern Democrat or "Dixiecrat"), John Bell (Constitutional Union Party)**

6. Which southern state was the first to secede from the Union? **South Carolina**

7. **Extra credit:** Why was Abraham Lincoln a threat to the Southern states? **He believed that the federal government had the right to forbid slavery in the territories, which would eventually lead to the end of slavery.**

## **The Boston Harbor Islands during the Civil War**

During the four years of the Civil War, several of the Boston Harbor Islands played an important military role, serving as the site of harbor defenses, recruiting and training camps, an ordnance testing site, and prison camps.

On April 15, 1861, three days after the Confederates fired on Fort Sumter in South Carolina, President Abraham Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 three-month volunteers, including two regiments from Massachusetts. William Schouler, Adjutant-General of Massachusetts, described the initial enthusiasm for what Northerners believed would be a short war:

It is impossible to overstate the excitement which pervaded the entire community through this eventful week. The railroad depots were surrounded with crowds of people; and the companies, as they arrived, were received with cheer of grateful welcome. . . . Men and boys carried miniature flags in their hands or on their hats. The horse-cars and express-wagons were decked with similar devices; and young misses adorned their persons with rosettes and ribbons, in which were blended the national red, white, and blue.<sup>1</sup>

On May 3, 1861, President Lincoln issued his first proclamation for volunteers to serve three years or for the duration of the war, recognizing that the war would not be over quickly. By 1863, the federal government had resorted to a draft. The endless demand for troops during the four years of the Civil War turned several of the Boston Harbor Islands into recruiting and training camps.

On the same day that President Lincoln called for three-month volunteers, Governor John Andrew of Massachusetts informed Secretary of War Simon Cameron of the defenseless condition of the Boston Harbor Island fortifications (“Allow me to suggest that our forts are entirely unmanned. . . .”) and of his plans to improve defenses.<sup>2</sup> Frustrated by the federal government’s inattention to harbor defense, the government of Massachusetts also organized heavy artillery companies to garrison Fort Independence on Castle Island, Fort Warren on Georges Island, and Fort Winthrop on Governors Island (now the site of Logan Airport).

During the Civil War, Fort Independence on Castle Island served as a secondary seacoast defense, a recruiting and training camp, a prison for federal troops, and an ordnance-testing site. Charles Francis Adams, the great-grandson of President John Adams, was one of the many Harvard-educated sons of prominent Boston families who

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<sup>1</sup> William Schouler, *A History of Massachusetts in the Civil War*, (Boston, 1868), Vol. I, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew to Cameron, quoted in Schouler, *Massachusetts in the Civil War*, Vol. I, p. 57.

received his military training at Fort Independence (“Elementary in the extreme, it was all the preliminary training I ever had.”).<sup>3</sup>

Gallops Island was the site of a training camp and a mustering out camp (for discharging soldiers from service) for Union soldiers. The most famous regiment discharged from Gallops Island was the Fifty-Fourth Regiment Massachusetts Infantry, the African-American regiment led by white abolitionist Colonel Robert Gould Shaw whose soldiers included two sons of the black abolitionist Frederick Douglass. The story of the Fifty-Fourth and its heroic assault on Fort Wagner, South Carolina, on July 18, 1863, has been dramatically portrayed in the movie “Glory.”

In May 1861, Colonel Thomas Cass began recruiting the Ninth Regiment Massachusetts Infantry, the first Irish regiment in the state, at Long Island. By 1863, Long Island served as a training camp for draftees from the New England states.

Fort Warren on Georges Island was the busiest Boston Harbor island during the Civil War. Its strategic location, guarding The Narrows, the shipping channel into Boston’s inner harbor, and the Nantasket Roads channel to the south, made it Boston’s main line of defense against enemy invasion. The fort also served as a recruiting and training camp for Massachusetts regiments of the Union Army. Fort Warren’s most important wartime function was as a Confederate prisoner-of-war camp, beginning in October 1861, with the arrival of 155 political prisoners and over 600 military prisoners.

The highest-ranking civilian prisoner at Fort Warren was Alexander H. Stephens, Vice-President of the Confederacy, who was held at the fort from May 25-October 13, 1865. On May 28, 1865, Stephens described the initial impact of his imprisonment:

The horrors of imprisonment, close confinement, no one to see or talk to, with the reflection of being cut off for I know not how long and perhaps forever—from communication with dear ones at home, are beyond description. Words utterly fail to express the soul’s anguish....<sup>4</sup>

In each subsequent war in our nation’s history, the military establishments on the Boston Harbor Islands, including Georges Island, continued to protect Boston and Massachusetts from foreign attack and to train American soldiers and sailors to defend their country at home and abroad.

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<sup>3</sup> Charles Francis Adams, *Charles Francis Adams, 1835-1915: An Autobiography* (New York, 1916), p. 114.

<sup>4</sup> Alexander H. Stephens, *Recollections of Alexander H. Stephens* (1910, reprint with new introduction by Ben Forkner, Baton Rouge, 1998), p. 133.

## Review Sheet

### Match Game:

Match each island with its Civil War role:

Georges Island	Training camp for draftees from New England
Castle Island	Training camp and mustering out camp
Governors Island	Site of Fort Warren: a harbor defense, recruiting/training camp, Confederate prisoner-of-war camp
Long Island	Site of Fort Independence: secondary seacoast defense, recruiting/training camp, prison for federal troops, ordnance-testing site
Gallops Island	Site of Fort Winthrop: harbor defense

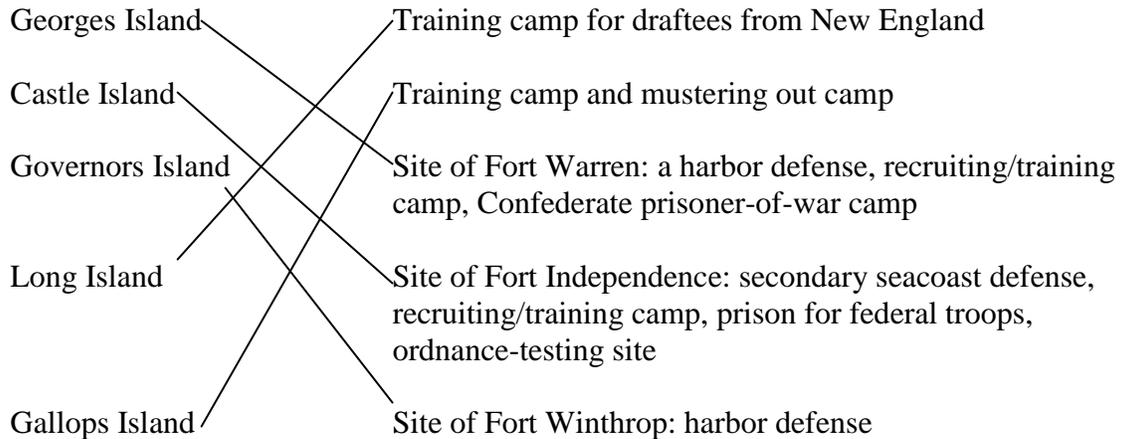
### Identifications:

1. John Andrew:
2. Fifty-Fourth Regiment Massachusetts Infantry:
3. Charles Francis Adams:
4. April 15, 1861:
5. Ninth Regiment Massachusetts Infantry:

## Review Sheet (Teachers' Answer Key)

### Match Game:

Match each island with its Civil War role:



### Identifications:

1. John Andrew: **Civil War governor of Massachusetts**
2. Fifty-Fourth Regiment Massachusetts Infantry: **Famous African-American regiment known for its heroic assault on Fort Wagner, South Carolina. Mustered out (discharged) from Gallops Island. Led by Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, a white abolitionist. Two sons of Frederick Douglass, the black abolitionist, were in the regiment.**
3. Charles Francis Adams: **Great-grandson of President John Adams. He received his military training at Fort Independence on Castle Island**
4. April 15, 1861: **President Abraham Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 three-month volunteers, including two regiments from Massachusetts (three days after Confederates fired on Fort Sumter, South Carolina).**
5. Ninth Regiment Massachusetts Infantry: **First Irish regiment in Massachusetts. Recruited at Long Island (Led by Colonel Thomas Cass).**

**Who Said It?  
Scavenger Hunt**  
**A Learning Activity to Accompany the Fort Warren Tour**

**Goals:** To learn about the different experiences of people connected to Fort Warren during the Civil War; to understand the impact of the Civil War on individuals; to learn about the history and legends of Fort Warren; to learn about the different parts of Fort Warren.

**Format of the Game:**

- The class will divide into 5 or 6 groups. During the tour, you will pause for 3 minutes at five places in the fort.
- At each of the five places (listed below), your group will match the place in the fort to one of quotes (A-E) and to the person connected to the quote (1-5). Each group will receive a clipboard, pencil, answer sheet, study guide, and laminated cards with the places, quotes, and people.
- **Hints: Look for clues in the quotes, pay attention to the tour, read the signs, and read the Study Guide.**
- The Scavenger Hunt may be completed on Georges Island at the end of the tour, on the boat ride home, or in your classroom.

**ANSWERS:**

Place	Quote (A-E)	Person (1-5)
Parade Ground		
Confederate Political Prisoners' Quarters		
Bakery		
Front I Casemates		
Powder Magazine		

**For discussion:**

1. How did you figure out the answers?

2. **Optional:** Three interesting facts or stories you learned today (class discussion or written exercise):

**Who Said It?  
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**ANSWER KEY**

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- **Hints: Look for clues in the quotes, pay attention to the tour, read the signs, and read the Study Guide.**
- The Scavenger Hunt may be completed on Georges Island at the end of the tour, on the boat ride home, or in your classroom.

**ANSWERS:**

Place	Quote (A-E)	Person (1-5)
Parade Ground	B	3 (Lt. Col. Randall McGavock, 10 <sup>th</sup> Tenn. Infantry, Confederate prisoner)
Confederate Political Prisoners' Quarters	E	1 (Alexander H. Stephens, V.P. of Confederacy, prisoner at Fort Warren from May-October 1865)
Bakery	A	4 (Chief engineer J. H. Tomb, Confederate Navy enlisted man)
Front I Casemates	C	5 (Unidentified Union soldier, quoted in "Our War Correspondence," column in <i>Cape Ann Advertiser</i> , 1861, 1862).
Powder Magazine	D	2 (The Lady in Black—Melanie Lanier)

**Quotes:**

A. “Our rations were good and sufficient. I was fortunate enough to secure a position on the water commission and along with another Reb each day we would march back and forth with a large barrel supported by side bars, a Yank with a gun acting as our escort.”

B. “I felt very indignant today upon hearing a whole company while drilling with their Capt. at their head singing “Old Jno [John] Brown” which is an Abolition Song published soon after the execution of that scoundrel, and which is very insulting to a southerner. No gentleman would be guilty of such conduct.”

C. “There are two large rooms, well lighted, and provided with good bunks, rough tables, benches, gun racks, and a nice large stove. We also have plenty of fuel, and if the boys can’t make themselves comfortable when off duty, it is their own fault.”

D. I was never a prisoner at Fort Warren, but I was determined to free a beloved family member who was a prisoner there. I rowed a boat to Georges Island and made my way into the fort. The prisoners were supposed to dig an escape tunnel, but they went off course, struck a granite wall of one of the fort’s buildings, and we were all caught--but not before something terrible happened to my beloved. I was hanged for my crime, but many believe I am still here at Fort Warren.

E. “Crowds of strangers, visiting men and women, peep into my windows, trying to get a look at me, I write at my table, and let them make the best observation they can. My only objection is that they stand so thick as to obscure my light in some degree.”

How did you figure out the answers? **For example, internal evidence in quotes (language, description of events or parts of fort), information on the tour, signs, etc.**

**2. Optional:** In either a discussion format or writing exercise, students can share three interesting facts or stories that they learned during their visit to Georges Island.

## Post-Visit Classroom Activities Grades 5-6

1. Trace the Civil War experience of one of the regiments that trained at Fort Warren. Using information from websites, students can use maps and timelines to follow the history of a regiment from training at Fort Warren through battlefield service and discharge.

Two of the regiments that trained at Fort Warren were the 11<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry and the 12<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry. You can find regimental histories at [www.massachusettscivilwar.com](http://www.massachusettscivilwar.com), and at [www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/index.html](http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/index.html).

2. Trace the Civil War experience of one of the Confederate prisoners of war at Fort Warren: Lieutenant Colonel Randall W. McGavock of the 10<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry.
  - a. Go to [www.sunsite.utk.edu/civil-war/warweb.html](http://www.sunsite.utk.edu/civil-war/warweb.html). Click on “State and Local Studies” and go to “The Tennessee Civil War Home Page.” Click on “Information by Unit” and then “10<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry.” Students can use maps and timelines to create an overview of McGavock’s Civil War experience.
  - b. For more detail on McGavock and his death at the Battle of Raymond, go to [www.battleofraymond.org](http://www.battleofraymond.org). Search under “McGavock.”

For additional research on regimental and battle histories and background information, go to [www.sunsite.utk.edu/civil-war/warweb.html](http://www.sunsite.utk.edu/civil-war/warweb.html).

For students who would like to find other sources of information, try [www.ask.com](http://www.ask.com) (Ask Jeeves). There is also a children’s version: [www.ajkids.com](http://www.ajkids.com).

## **The Lady in Black Legend**

### **A Post-Visit Classroom Exercise in Historical Research**

### **Grades 7-8**

Goals of this exercise:

- Understanding the importance of legends
- Understanding the difference between history and legends
- Learning how to do historical research

**Legend:** “a story coming down from the past; *especially*: one popularly regarded as historical though not verifiable.” Definition from *Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1977, p. 656.

**History:** “a chronological record of significant events (as affecting a nation or institution); a branch of knowledge that records and explains past events.” Definition from *Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1977, p. 543.

#### **The Lady in Black:**

The story of the Lady in Black is probably the most famous legend connected to Fort Warren. There are different versions of the legend, the most well-known told by author and Boston Harbor historian Edward Rowe Snow. In *The Islands of Boston Harbor* (1935, 1971, 2002), Snow wrote: “I herewith offer the reader the legend without the slightest guarantee that any part of it is true (p. 30).”

Snow writes that during the Civil War, hundreds of prisoners captured by General Ambrose Burnside at Roanoke Island were imprisoned at Fort Warren. Among them was “a young lieutenant who had been married only a few weeks before.” Other versions identify the prisoner as “a young Confederate naval officer” named Samuel Lanier (Emily and David Kales, *All about the Boston Harbor Islands*, 1993 edition, p. 61) or as “a young soldier from Georgia” named Andrew Lanier (undated pamphlet on Fort Warren published by the Metropolitan District Commission).

Lanier got a message to his wife [identified as Melanie Lanier in some versions of the legend], who came north to help her husband escape from Fort Warren. She landed in Hull, Massachusetts, south of Georges Island, found the home of a Southerner [or a Southern sympathizer], and was provided with a pistol and men’s clothing [One version says that she was disguised as a Union soldier.].

On a dark, rainy night, Melanie Lanier landed a row boat on the beach at Georges Island. She slipped by the sentries and reached the ditch under the **Corridor of Dungeons** (also known as the Bastion E **scarp gallery**, on the fort’s outer wall: a row of small casemates with openings in the wall for musketry fire). After giving a prearranged signal, she was hoisted up into the fort through a musketry loophole.

The plan was for the Confederate prisoners to dig their way out of the dungeon into the parade ground, overpower the guards, and take over Fort Warren. Unfortunately, the prisoners went off course while digging the tunnel and struck a granite wall of the fort's powder magazine. Union soldiers on the other side of the wall heard the noise and sounded an alarm. Mrs. Lanier, who was trapped in the Corridor of Dungeons, pulled out her pistol and aimed it at Colonel Justin Dimick, commander of Fort Warren. As she fired, the pistol exploded, killing her husband.

Melanie Lanier was found guilty of being a spy and sentenced to death by hanging. Her final request was to be hanged in women's clothing. A search of Fort Warren turned up a black robe that had been worn by one of the Union soldiers in a play, and the death sentence was carried out.

Since that time, many soldiers and civilians at Fort Warren have claimed to have seen the ghost of the Lady in Black. Richard Cassidy was a Union soldier from South Boston who was stationed at Fort Warren shortly after the execution. While walking his post one night near the site of the hanging, he felt a pair of hands choking him. He twisted around and saw the Lady in Black. He ran screaming to the guardhouse, but the other soldiers did not believe his story. Instead, he was given thirty days in solitary confinement for deserting his post.

On another occasion, three soldiers walking through the sallyport saw five impressions of a girl's shoe leading nowhere and coming from nowhere. Another ghost sighting comes from a soldier from Fort Banks in Winthrop. He was climbing to the top of the ladder leading to the Corridor of Dungeons when he heard a voice warning him: "Don't come in here!" He went no further.

Did you see the Lady in Black while you were at Fort Warren?

### **Part I: Legends and History**

1. Why do people enjoy legends?

2. What is the difference between history and legends?

3. What makes the story of the Lady in Black believable?

**Part II: Researching the story of the Lady in Black:**

**Step one: What do we know about the story from various sources?**

In addition to the information contained in the above paragraphs, we also know:

- That there is a monument on Georges Island that lists the names of Confederate prisoners who died at Fort Warren. One of the prisoners who died was: **Samuel T. Lanier, Co K, 10 NC ST (North Carolina state or militia regiment)**.
- M. F. Sweetser, author of *King's Handbook of Boston Harbor* (1881, 1882), writes that there were 800 Confederate prisoners at Fort Warren in the winter of 1861-1862, and that most of them were captured by General Burnside in the Roanoke Island campaign.
- A pamphlet published by the Metropolitan District Commission, the agency that used to manage Georges Island, claims that the Lady in Black's escape attempt occurred on January 15, 1862, and that Melanie Lanier was executed on February 2, 1862.

**Use all the information from the various versions of the legend plus the additional information above to answer the following questions:**

**1. Name of Lady in Black's husband:**

**2. Rank and branch of Confederate military:**

**3. Where was he from?**

**4. Where was he captured?**

**Step two: Trying to find factual information on Samuel or Melanie Lanier and the Lady in Black legend:**

1. Can you find any accounts of the escape attempt and execution of the Lady in Black in Boston newspapers? Note that the pamphlet mentioned above says that the escape attempt was on January 15, 1862, and that Melanie Lanier was executed on February 2, 1862. The *Boston Herald* and *Boston Post* were two newspapers published during the Civil War. If you can find microfilm copies in a library, see if you can find any stories about Samuel and Melanie Lanier and



**The Lady in Black Legend**  
**A Post-Visit Classroom Exercise in Historical Research**  
**Grades 7-8**  
**TEACHERS' ANSWER KEY**

Goals of this exercise:

- Understanding the importance of legends
- Understanding the difference between history and legends
- Learning how to do historical research

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of small casemates with openings in the wall for musketry fire). After giving a prearranged signal, she was hoisted up into the fort through a musketry loophole.

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Melanie Lanier was found guilty of being a spy and sentenced to death by hanging. Her final request was to be hanged in women's clothing. A search of Fort Warren turned up a black robe that had been worn by one of the Union soldiers in a play, and the death sentence was carried out.

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Did you see the Lady in Black while you were at Fort Warren?

### **Part I: Legends and History**

1. Why do people enjoy legends? **Opinion question. Some possible answers: They inspire us, scare us, or make us use our imaginations, and legends are more interesting than history, which has too many names and dates!**

2. What is the difference between history and legends? **History is a record of events that we can verify or prove through written sources (letters, diaries, or newspapers), archaeological evidence (Civil War-era ammunition as evidence of a battle), or oral histories (accounts by people who witnessed events). Legends are**

stories passed down to us that *may be* based on real people or events, but they usually have dramatic or exaggerated details to make the stories more interesting or exciting, and they cannot be verified in the same way that history can.

3. What makes the story of the Lady in Black believable? **Opinion question, but some possible answers:**

- the amount of detail in the various versions of the legend
- the number of people who claim to have seen the ghost
- It is a fact that there were escapes from Civil War prisons, including Fort Warren.
- People want to believe a story filled with bravery and romance.

## **Part II: Researching the story of the Lady in Black:**

### **Step one: What do we know about the story from various sources?**

In addition to the information contained in the above paragraphs, we also know:

- That there is a monument on Georges Island that lists the names of Confederate prisoners who died at Fort Warren. One of the prisoners who died was: **Samuel T. Lanier, Co K, 10 NC ST (North Carolina state or militia regiment).**
- M. F. Sweetser, author of *King's Handbook of Boston Harbor* (1881, 1882), writes that there were 800 Confederate prisoners at Fort Warren in the winter of 1861-1862, and that most of them were captured by General Burnside in the Roanoke Island campaign.
- A pamphlet published by the Metropolitan District Commission, the agency that used to manage Georges Island, claims that the Lady in Black's escape attempt occurred on January 15, 1862, and that Melanie Lanier was executed on February 2, 1862.

**Use all the information from the various versions of the legend plus the additional information above to answer the following questions:**

**1. Name of Lady in Black's husband: Andrew Lanier, Samuel Lanier, Samuel T. Lanier**

**2. Rank and branch of Confederate military: a "young lieutenant" or "young Confederate naval officer" named Samuel Lanier; "a young soldier from Georgia" named Andrew Lanier; Samuel T. Lanier, Co K, 10 NC ST (state militia regiment)**

**3. Where was he from? Andrew Lanier from Georgia or Samuel T. Lanier from North Carolina**

**4. Where was he captured? Was he one of the soldiers captured by General Burnside in the Roanoke Island [North Carolina] campaign?**

**Step two: Trying to find factual information on Samuel or Melanie Lanier and the Lady in Black legend:**

1. Can you find any accounts of the escape attempt and execution of the Lady in Black in Boston newspapers? Note that the pamphlet mentioned above says that the escape attempt was on January 15, 1862, and that Melanie Lanier was executed on February 2, 1862. The *Boston Herald* and *Boston Post* were two newspapers published during the Civil War. If you can find microfilm copies in a library, see if you can find any stories about Samuel and Melanie Lanier and their attempt to escape from Fort Warren. Also, go to [www.letterscivilwar.com](http://www.letterscivilwar.com) and search under “Lanier” and “Fort Warren.” Did you find anything? **Nothing on either the escape attempt or execution of the Lady in Black. Don’t you think that such a tragic and exciting event would have appeared in newspapers?**

2. Using the information you gathered from the various legends and histories of Fort Warren search for information on the Lady in Black’s husband. Remember to look up the different names, rank and branch of the military, and any other information about his regiment, where he was captured, or where he was from. Can you find any information linking a Confederate soldier or sailor named Lanier to Fort Warren?

a. You can find information on Civil War soldiers, sailors, and prisoners of war at [www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/index.html](http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/index.html) (Civil War Soldiers and Sailors, a National Park Service website). Do searches on Andrew Lanier, Samuel Lanier, and Samuel T. Lanier. Enter all the other information you have gathered from the various sources. What did you find? **Nothing on Andrew Lanier, Confederate soldier from Georgia. There are several entries under Samuel Lanier, including one for Samuel T. Lanier, 1 North Carolina Artillery, which was also known as the 10 North Carolina State Regiment. He was a private in the regiment (Remember the monument on Georges Island listing Samuel T. Lanier, Co K, 10 NC ST). Click on “1<sup>st</sup> Regiment, North Carolina Artillery” for more information on the regiment’s history. There is nothing linking the regiment to Fort Warren.**

b. Go to [www.ask.com](http://www.ask.com) (Ask Jeeves) and enter all the Laniers that may be connected to Fort Warren. To save time, enter “Andrew Lanier, Fort Warren” and “Samuel Lanier, Fort Warren.” What did you find? **When you search “Samuel Lanier, Fort Warren,” you are linked to a website**

([www.thewashingtongrays.homestead.com/index.html](http://www.thewashingtongrays.homestead.com/index.html)) on Company K, 10<sup>th</sup> Regiment North Carolina State Troops Heavy Artillery (1<sup>st</sup> Regiment N.C. Artillery), known as the “Washington Grays.” The company was captured at Fort Hatteras [N.C.] on August 29, 1861, and imprisoned at Fort Warren. There is also information on Private Samuel T. Lanier, who enlisted in Beaufort County, N.C., on April 22, 1861, at the age of 18, and who died at Fort Warren on January 25, 1862, of typhoid fever. This is the Samuel T. Lanier, whose name is on a monument at Fort Warren.

**Questions:**

1. Did you learn anything that can prove the Lady in Black legend? **Nothing from newspapers or other primary sources that historians use for proof.**
  
2. What did you learn about a man named Samuel T. Lanier who was a prisoner at Fort Warren? Was he the Lady in Black’s husband? **He was a young private who enlisted for twelve months service in Beaufort County, N.C., on April 22, 1861, at the age of 18. He was a member of Co. K, 10 Regiment North Carolina State Troops Heavy Artillery, also known as 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment N.C. Artillery. His company was captured at Fort Hatteras [N.C.] on August 29, 1861 and imprisoned at Fort Warren. Lanier died at Fort Warren on January 25, 1862, of typhoid fever. Obviously, he was not the Lady in Black’s husband!**
  
3. How do you think the legend of the Lady in Black got started? **Opinion question. Possible answers: Older soldiers stationed at Fort Warren during the Civil War told the story to scare younger soldiers. Authors and storytellers like Edward Rowe Snow told the story so people would become interested in Fort Warren and Georges Island and want to preserve the island as a public park.**
  
4. Do you still believe that the legend of the Lady in Black is true? **Open-ended question. Sometimes children (and adults!) are disappointed when they can’t prove that a legend is true. The point may be raised that it doesn’t matter if the legend can be proved or not. It’s still a great story, filled with bravery, romance, and tragedy that can inspire us, scare us, or make us cry.**

## Select Bibliography on Fort Warren, Georges Island, and Massachusetts during the Civil War

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- Stephens, Alexander H. *Recollections of Alexander H. Stephens*. 1910. Reprint, Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1998.
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**Websites:**

The Civil War is probably the most studied period in American History. There are *many, many* websites devoted to the subject, and they have links to other websites. The following websites are a good place to start.

[www.sunsite.utk.edu/civil-war/warweb.html#modern](http://www.sunsite.utk.edu/civil-war/warweb.html#modern). The American Civil War Homepage. Extensive website linking to a wide variety of websites on the Civil War, covering such topics as battle and regimental histories, biographies of military and political leaders, maps, photographs, music of the Civil War, and much more.

[www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/index.html](http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/index.html). Civil War Soldiers and Sailors. A National Park Service website for researching Union and Confederate soldiers, sailors, prisoners of war, regimental and unit histories, battles, and more.

[www.letterscivilwar.com/index.html](http://www.letterscivilwar.com/index.html). Letters of the Civil War. A wide-ranging compilation of letters, diaries, and newspaper stories on the Civil War from a Massachusetts perspective, providing an overview of the state's experience during the Civil War. Topics include military activities on the Boston Harbor Islands, descriptions of battles written by Union soldiers from Massachusetts, and accounts of the home front during the Civil War.

[www.masshome.com/histcwar.html](http://www.masshome.com/histcwar.html). MassHome Directory of Civil War Web Sites. Useful for researching soldiers and regimental histories. Contains links to several other Civil War websites.

[www.massachusettscivilwar.com](http://www.massachusettscivilwar.com). Massachusetts Civil War Research Center. Useful for researching Massachusetts soldiers and sailors and regimental and unit histories.