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Stones River National Battlefield

3501 Old Nashville Highway
Murfreesboro, TN 37129
Phone: (615) 893-9501, Fax: (615) 893-9508



Regimental File Donation Form

Donor Name: G. WATKIN THOMAS
Address: P.O. BOX 674433
City: MARIETTA State: GA Zipcode: 30006
Phone: 561-512-5055 Fax: _____

Significant Person's Name: George W. McNeel
Unit: 8th TX Cav.

List Contents of Donation Below:

Photograph of McNeel
Fall 2010 Smithsonian Magazine with article on McNeel.



Geo. W. McNeil '60 Texas.

NEW YORK & TEXAS

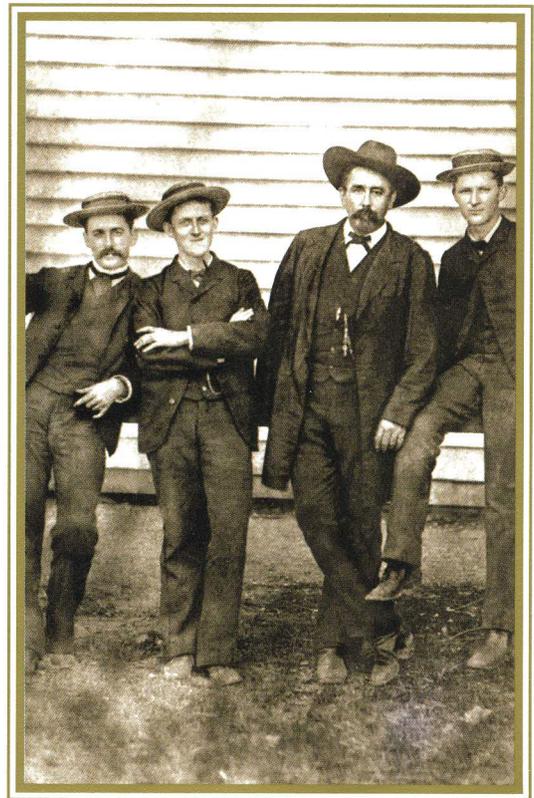


A year after graduation, George W. McNeel married Maria Pell Brower of Brooklyn, New York. Seven years before, his widowed father, J. Greenville McNeel, married a woman who was also from Brooklyn, Alma Amelia Blydenburgh. This might seem a strange coincidence made even stranger by the national climate before the war. But the McNeels' connections to the New York area were more extensive than attendance at Rutgers College. George's bride was the daughter of a cotton merchant who founded the New York and Texas Packet Line, John H. Brower. His stepmother was the daughter of the merchant's business partner.

Then as now, New York was the country's center of global trade. In the prewar United States, global trade largely meant southern commodities—sugar, tobacco, rice, and especially cotton. In some years, cotton accounted for more than 60 percent of exports. It's been estimated that New York took in 38 cents of every dollar made in the business, whether by finance, insurance, or shipping through such firms as the New York and Texas Packet Line.

Along with these connections came a politics that made New York "virtually an annex of the South," as a New York friend of Abraham Lincoln wrote after the war. Early in 1861, in perhaps the most extraordinary address ever heard by a city council, Mayor Fernando Wood suggested that Gotham, too, should secede and exist as an independent city-state.

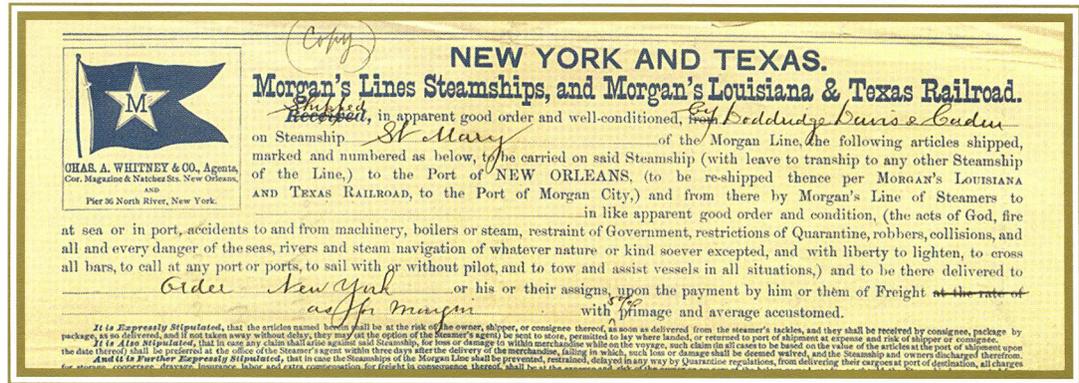
"With our aggrieved brethren of the Slave States, we have friendly relations and a common sympathy," the mayor said in the address. "We have not participated in the warfare upon their



ELLERSLIE FOUNDER J. GREENVILLE McNEEL IN FRONT OF THE PLANTATION'S LIVERY STABLE. THE THREE YOUNG MEN ARE ALMOST CERTAINLY GEORGE W. McNEEL (LEFT) AND THE BROTHER AND COUSIN WHO FOLLOWED HIM TO RUTGERS.

constitutional rights or their domestic institutions. While other portions of our State have unfortunately been imbued with the fanatical spirit which actuates a portion of the people of New England, the city of New York has unfalteringly preserved the integrity of its principles."

A BILL OF LADING
FROM THE PAPERS OF
JOHN H. BROWER



Mayor Wood was a Tammany Hall Democrat with ties to the sort of street politicians depicted in the movie *Gangs of New York*. He had already earned a reputation for wild words, and his proposal was in no way taken seriously. But the sentiment behind it struck chords with both the merchant class and an immigrant constituency

York businessmen affirmed their commitment to the Union but sought to reassure the South of their support of slaveholder rights. The many signers included William B. Astor, Samuel J. Tilden, and the founder of the New York and Texas Packet Line, John H. Brower.



CSS NASHVILLE BURNING THE SHIP HARVEY BIRCH
BY DUNCAN McFARLANE, 1864

The feelings of the other class came to a head with the passage of the Enrollment Act of 1863, the first federal draft law, which allowed those with means to avoid service by paying a \$300 commutation fee or by hiring a substitute soldier. When the first names were called in Manhattan, protests against the draft turned to attacks on the free black population. Citywide rioting included streetlamp lynchings and the looting and burning of the Colored Orphan Asylum at Fifth Avenue and 43rd Street, which was cheered on by a crowd of two thousand. To battle the rioters, the War Department ordered a detachment of soldiers who had just fought at Gettysburg.

who associated the antislavery movement with Protestant, nativist values and the prospect of freed slaves with competition for work.

The views of the merchant class had been expressed in the "Pine Street Resolutions" of December 1860, in which a committee of New

During World War II, it became a convention of combat movies to feature a wiseacre from Brooklyn and a laconic type with a nickname like "Tex." Brooklyn and Texas were easy shorthand for the diversity of backgrounds bound together by the war—northern and southern, eastern and western, ethnic and native, tenement stoop and wide open spaces. In the Civil War, on both sides of the line, diversity was not an easy thing to reconcile. Sometime in 1861, George's wife Maria came with him to Texas and set up house at the plantation, Ellerslie. That same year, her father gained a place in Civil War naval history: one of his ships, the *Harvey Birch*, was the first vessel seized and destroyed by the Confederates.★