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**THE TRUE CAUSE OF FREEDOM: THE KOSSUTH
EMIGRATION AND THE HUNGARIANS'
PARTICIPATION IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR**

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INTRODUCTION

Objectives of Research

In order to understand the different levels of objectives of this doctoral dissertation, it is necessary to provide some context to the overall project. This dissertation is the result of a research project I started as an undergraduate student. In seven years, it went through several stages (M.A. thesis, Hungarian National Students' Conference Competition Paper, Ph.D project proposal) which were needed to take it further on to a higher level of complexity and contribute to the insufficient and out-of-date literature of the field.

As an undergraduate student I sought after the Hungarians' involvement in the American Civil War, hopelessly surrounded as it was by myths of extraordinary heroism spread mostly by Hungarian-American, often self-appointed, historians eager to demonstrate the military contributions of their community to the Union cause. In the paper that came out of this project I managed to do away with many of these misconceptions, but I could not escape realizing that I left many more questions unanswered than I could actually settle. Meanwhile, I managed to dig up a challenging amount of basically unknown archival as well as published material that prompted me to continue my work and considerably widen the scope of my investigations. Through the long months of research in the archives and libraries in the United States and Germany as well as Hungary, I slowly realized that I needed to venture into new fields of study that no Hungarian historian had yet attempted; into ones that at first glance seemed to take me further and further away from my original goal: immigration history, historical geography, community studies, and genealogy. However, I felt that my predecessors studying this subject matter had committed a serious mistake by taking this short episode of the Hungarian participants' lives out of the context of Antebellum America ignoring most of their experience as immigrants who had carried their heavy "cultural baggage" with them all the way from Hungary.

With these factors in mind, I formulated the following major objectives for my dissertation:

- (1) To try to place the so-called Kossuth emigration within the wider context of the Old Immigration in general, and the emigrés of the European revolutionary wave of 1848/1849 in particular.
- (2) To correct earlier estimates regarding the number of people of Hungarian origin in the United States in the 1850s by analyzing various archival sources, particularly passenger lists of ships arriving in American ports between 1848 and 1865; Federal Census data from the years 1850 and 1860.
- (3) To place Hungarians in mid-nineteenth century American society a) by making use of data mainly from the above-mentioned federal population records b) by identifying some similar and dissimilar characteristics of Hungarians in the United States with those of other ethnic groups. An extensive comparison of this kind, however, would go beyond the scope of this study.
- (4) To find the major motivating forces which induced many Kossuth emigrés to enlist in the American Civil War.
- (5) To draw an objective picture of the role Hungarian emigrants played in the conflict between North and South.
- (6) To place some of the legendary Hungarian figures of the Civil War under my magnifying glass, and take a measure of their activities.
- (7) To study the Post-Civil War careers of the Hungarian soldiers for indications of whether their military service meant a step forward in the process of their integration into American society and their assimilation into American life.
- (8) To compile the so-far most accurate biographical list of Hungarian participants in the Civil War.

In order to proceed, however, it is essential to define the term "Kossuth emigration". Up to now, scholars have taken this term for granted, and made no distinctions among Hungarians living in the United States in the decade prior to the Civil War, therefore, no attempts to define the term itself have been made. In this understanding, everybody who fought under Kossuth's flag in the Hungarian War of Independence in 1848/49 and fled the country after the collapse of the Hungarian cause to escape Habsburg retaliation did qualify as a Kossuth emigrant. No attention was paid to

those who had emigrated to the United States before 1848, yet volunteered in the Civil War. As a matter of fact, it has to be pointed out in their defence that, with the lack of complete statistical data of Hungarians leaving the country following the surrender of the Hungarian Army in 1849, it is almost impossible to determine who had actually taken part in the Hungarian War of Liberation, and who had not. Although I carried out extensive research in various federal immigration records, the very often fragmented nature of these sources precludes wide generalizations concerning the major "push-factors" that motivated Hungarians to migrate to the United States in this particular period. However, it can be safely concluded that no Hungarian mass migration to the United States had occurred before 1848 (between 1829 and 1848, the number of Hungarians arriving in American ports never exceeded 12 per year), therefore, it can be inferred that most Hungarians in this period had indeed been involved in the events of the Hungarian freedom fight on one level or another, and their decision to leave their homeland had to do with either the fear of reprisal, or with seeking liberal ideals for which they had in vain fought in Hungary. That is the reason why I resolved that I would regard 'Kossuth Emigrant' an umbrella term, with all Hungarians living in the United States in the period between 1848 and 1865 comprised in it, and use it interchangeably with the term 'Forty-Eighter', frequently applied to other ethnic groups, as well.

Another possible source of confusion, which has caused several problems in the literature scrutinizing the foreigners' involvement in the American Civil War, also has to be clarified. Very often the ethnicity of the individual soldiers is difficult to determine. Moreover, many of them are claimed by several ethnic groups as their "own". Hungary, for instance, was not an independent country in the middle of the nineteenth-century, and remained under Habsburg rule after the Austrian-Russian coalition forces crushed the Hungarian armed forces in 1849. Slightly more than half a century later, Hungary lost huge portions of its territory after the First World War, raising the question whether people who were born in Transylvania, for example, which was detached from Hungary after 1920 and became part of neighboring Romania, should be considered Hungarian or Romanian. Throughout my work, I resolved this problem by taking the Pre-Trianon historical boundaries of Hungary as a point of reference. However, I did not keep to it under all circumstances: wherever it was possible, I considered what the individuals

themselves said about their ethnicity (for example, Albin Schoepf was born in Podgorze, Poland, from a Polish father and a Hungarian mother, yet he declared on several occasions that he regarded himself Hungarian — this explains his inclusion in this work). In my dissertation, I decided not to make any differentiation between those who were born in the Pre-Trianon territory of Hungary and those who were ethnic Hungarians (the two categories coincided with the overwhelming majority of individuals under my scrutiny) as far as terminology was concerned, and I refer to both groups as Hungarians, instead of using the Hungarian word 'magyar' for ethnic Hungarians, since it did not seem to lead anywhere with this specific sample.

Furthermore, I deem it essential that this desperate quest for ethnic heroes should be over once and for all, as it is most often historical accuracy which falls victim to these attempts. Therefore, I indicated everywhere the possible links individual soldiers had with other ethnic groups hoping that this will result in an unbiased academic approach void of the tensions caused by the long rivalry between neighboring countries in Central-Eastern Europe.

Position and Significance within the Scholarship

Studying historical links and contacts is not an effortless enterprise. The many barriers include: the need for reading knowledge of two or more languages and the scattered location of sources. This limited accessibility often results in the inability to grasp certain subject matters in their entirety. Hungarian-American connections in general, and the history of the Kossuth emigrés' involvement in the American Civil War in particular, is no exception. The fact that three books have been devoted to this topic alone might seem promising, but none of the three Hungarian authors (Eugene Pivány, Edmund Vasváry, and Tivadar Ács) were historians by profession, and this, regrettably, shows in their works, which abound in errors. None of them paid any attention to indicating their sources, and they all inclined toward myth-making. However, the gravest deficiency of their work is that they did not try to go beyond national categories, and reach a more general level of analysis in interpreting migration patterns. All these shortcomings of the works preceding my dissertation rendered them and the works

written in what I call the ethnic period of immigration history unhelpful, as a stable point of reference, and basically prompted me to start from scratch.

Interestingly enough, the international dimensions of the Civil War, including the role of the foreign-born in the conflict, have been rather neglected. Nevertheless, the available works offered a reasonable starting point, and these had a considerable influence on my approach to ethnic involvement in the war, despite their mistakes. Of course, among the most important is Ella Lonn, whose *Foreigners in the Confederacy* (1940) and *Foreigners in the Union Army and Navy* (1951) are still the definitive sources for information. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, Lonn's works contain many inaccuracies concerning Hungarians, mainly due to her extensive use of the works of the earlier-mentioned Hungarian-American authors. Another influential work of comprehensive nature is William Burton's *Melting Pot Soldiers: The Union's Ethnic Regiments* (1998) from which I benefited a lot as well as from Dean B. Mahin's *The Blessed Place of Freedom: Europeans in Civil War America* (2002). Although more specific in its nature, I consider Martin W. Öfele's *German-Speaking Officers in the U.S. Colored Troops* one of the most excellent works in the field, and his work definitely had an influence on how I see the subject. I am particularly reassured by his observation that "the Hungarians' participation in the American Civil War has so far received only scarce attention in historical literature," and his emphasis on the need for a work of academic quality, validating my choice of topic. (For an in-depth analysis of the available works on this subject matter see Chapter on Historiography and Methodology).¹

To outline the theoretical background, I will try to define the conceptual framework of my dissertation. It has evolved considerably since I started seven years ago. My original intention was to write some kind of military history in which soldiers served as links between Hungary and the United States, or more precisely, between two wars: the Hungarian War of Independence of 1848/49 and the American Civil War. However,

¹ Ella Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1940) (Hereafter cited as Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy*); Ella Lonn, *Foreigners in the Union Army and Navy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951) (Hereafter cited as, Lonn, *Foreigners in the Union*); William Burton, *Melting Pot Soldiers: The Union's Ethnic Regiments* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1998); Dean B. Mahin, *Blessed Place of Freedom: Europeans in Civil War America* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 2002) (Hereafter cited as, Mahin, *Blessed Place*); Martin Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers in the U.S. Colored Troops, 1863-1867* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2004) (Hereafter cited as, Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*)

during my research I had to expand the scope of my inquiries, and I realized that the Hungarians' decision to enlist either in the Union or the Confederate Army cannot be understood without their immigrant experience, which induced me to start working in the realm of immigration history. And again, I could have found myself stranded, as I had a clear conception of how I should proceed: I was aware of the need for comparisons, but I realized that in terms of Hungarian Forty-Eighters and Old Immigrants, no immigration studies have been carried out.

Therefore, again, I had to start from scratch, resulting in the rather complex nature of my dissertation. I had to start doing a single group or community study, which led to an in-depth analysis of the Hungarian immigrant experience. This single case study constituted the major building block of migration studies I intended to work with. I totally adopt Rudolph Vecoli's approach who argues that single group studies neglect common aspects of experience transcending ethnic differences. Answers to the basic question, "What is specific and what is general in the migration phenomenon?" can be found through comparative methods, so this was one of my top priorities during my work. Throughout the entire process, I felt that theoretically I was walking in the footsteps of the first generation of immigration historians, and in a sense, regarding Old Immigrants from Hungary I can be regarded as a first generation immigration historian indeed, among those labelled by Jon Gjerde as "Ethnic Turnerians". Among others, Theodore Blegen, Carl Wittke, and Marcus Lee Hansen had not only keen interest in immigration history, but pioneered such approaches as 'grass roots history' or 'history from the bottom up'. They recognized the two major reference points in immigrant experience: 1) connections between immigrants and their homeland, and (2) Assimilation into American life, and their seeking ways of comparisons had both interdisciplinary and transnational results.²

The writing of one more migration historian has to be acknowledged here, at the discussion of the theoretical background to my dissertation: Nancy L. Green could not be more right when she envisages the immigrant experience as standing somewhere between "the tourists' hasty generalizations" and "the social scientists' constructed

² Rudolph J. Vecoli, "Contadini in Chicago: A Critique of the 'Uprooted,'" *Journal of American History*, 51, No. 3. (1964), 404-416.

comparisons.” During the analysis of the immense number of primary sources by Hungarian immigrants living in the United States, I kept in mind her evaluation of the immigrant embodying an implicit comparison between 1) past and present 2) one world and another 3) two languages, and (4) two sets of cultural norms. I do share Green’s opinion that ”comparisons can better help us test our conclusions based on single case studies,” and ”evaluate the part of the individual, the group, and structure in the causal phenomena of migration” in order to “understand that which is specific and that which is general in the migration experience,” however, a comparative analysis of this kind would point into a different direction from that of my study and go beyond the scope of it. Nevertheless, it is my conviction that this should be the next stage in the historical analysis of the Hungarian forty-eighters.³

Thesis Outline

This dissertation explores one of the most-neglected chapters of Hungarian-American historical links and contacts: the first major influx of Hungarian immigrants in the United States of America after the defeat of the Hungarian War of Independence in 1849: the so-called Kossuth emigration. In order to survey the Hungarian community in America in the 1850s, the dissertation builds heavily upon my comprehensive analysis of the Hungarians in the federal population records in 1850 and 1860, the first of its kind. Unfortunately, these statistics add up to some 100 pages, therefore, they could not be included in this work, although they fill a long-felt gap in our knowledge. In the future, I hope to publish them in a separate volume, along with other statistical data concerning the Kossuth emigration.

The goal of the dissertation is primarily not the discussion of the Hungarian presence overseas in the mid-19th century, but to focus on the Hungarian-born soldiers who enlisted in the Civil War, either in the North or in the South. Military service in the War of the Rebellion, however, will be regarded as an integral part of the immigrant experience, inseparable from it, as it is my utmost conviction that the basic motivations

³ Nancy L. Green, “The Comparative Method and Poststructural Structuralism— New Perspectives for Migration Studies,” *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 13, No. 4, (1994), 3-22.

for volunteering in a war which was seemingly none of these immigrants' business cannot be understood without getting a clear picture of their lives in Antebellum America.

Following this line of thought means that the discussion of the stories of Kossuth emigrés can by no means end with the end of the Civil War proper. For some of them, successful military service meant an elevated chance of integrating into American society, what many had failed to achieve before the Civil War, although evidence suggests that the overwhelming majority of the Hungarian Old Immigrants showed their determination to assimilate by applying for American citizenship, and actually became naturalized by the end of the Civil War at the latest. For others, who were only a small minority, the end of the war, which almost co-incided with the general amnesty following the Compromise between the Habsburgs and Hungary in 1867, signalled the end of their exile, and they returned to their homeland.

The thesis uses linear chronological order as a major organizing principle. It follows the immigrants from setting foot on American soil to becoming citizens of the United States (or returning to Hungary). What connects those in the focus of attention of this work, however, is that they served in the military in the bloodiest fraternal war in American history. The dissertation will argue that there is no significant difference between ethnic soldiers enlisting in the Union Army or the Confederate Army: considering their motivations to volunteer, their expectations, and the conditions they had to face. For foreigners, probably the greatest difference between the two armies was that the chances of promotion for foreign-born in the ranks of the Confederate army were considerably less.

In Chapter One "Historiography and Methodology" I summarize the scholarly work that has been carried out in the field of Hungarian-American relations in general, and on the Kossuth emigration in particular. Although I have already made some references to them in this Introduction, further discussion is inevitable, as for a long time only these studies were the ones to turn to for information. Therefore, I elaborate on the historiography in general, concluding that hardly any noteworthy attempts have been made to write about the works themselves scrutinizing the Hungarian-American past. I include a survey of synthesizing attempts to discuss the history of people of Hungarian

origin in America, which are not too numerous either. However, these are the ones which are available to a relatively wide audience, and so have been responsible for spreading many misconceptions. In the following part of this chapter, I highlight the major works on the Kossuth emigration, finding that the overwhelming majority of these books publish primary sources (memoirs, diaries, letters), with almost no attempt at analysis. Continuing along these lines, I summarize the three major works dealing with the Hungarians' participation in the American Civil War, and my critical remarks regarding them are intended to show the major points in which I believe my dissertation supersedes them. As even the most "recent" one, Tivadar Ács's *Magyarok az Amerikai Polgárháborúban* was published more than four decades ago, I attribute special importance to the final part of this chapter describing the current state of affairs, and introducing individuals' work carried out in the field in the past couple of decades to show that they, including the present dissertation, attempt to apply modern methodology and approaches, and so mark the beginning of a new era in researching the Hungarian-American past.

Chapter Two "To These Shores I Was Driven by Tyranny" offers a quantitative as well as a qualitative discussion of Hungarian emigration to the United States between the end of the Hungarian War of Liberation (1849) and the end of the American Civil War (1865). I use the statistical data from my research in the Passenger Arrival Lists section of the National Archives in Washington, D.C., which enabled me to estimate the number of Hungarian-born people setting foot on American soil in any of the major ports. This I consider one of the major achievements of my work, as it allows for a systematic identification of trends in this particular wave of Hungarian immigration in the United States. After evaluating the statistical data, I have established that the years following Louis Kossuth's visit to America in 1851-52 meant the peak in the inflow of Hungarians, which could be easily foretold, and shows that earlier works were mistaken in claiming that the Civil War was a major attracting force for hundreds of Hungarians eager to enlist in the Union Army. On the contrary, in the first three years of the conflict the number of Hungarians arriving in the United States dropped to Pre-1848 levels, easily refuting the myth of Hungarian soldiers thronging to America to fight for the emancipation of slaves.

Equal emphasis is laid on the qualitative analysis of the migration experience. I suggest reasons why Hungarians opted for emigrating to the United States, and scrutinize the image they had of America. The vast majority of them, of course, had never been to the United States, still through some of the published travelogues of the age (for instance, Sándor Farkas Bölöni's *Journey to North America*) they seem to have had clear conceptions of the cornerstones of the American model of democracy. I found that the comparative nature inherent in the immigrant experience played a crucial role in their decision-making process: they hoped to realize in the United States all the democratic ideals for which they had vainly struggled in their homeland. In this chapter I tailgate the immigrants and highlight various phases of their experience: the sea voyage, homesickness, arrival and immediate reactions to life in America. The time of the arrival for many of them coincided with a period which I refer to as the "Kossuth-craze" in America, when the image of Hungarians as freedom-fighters was deeply imprinted in the American public mind, and he, and his followers, enjoyed immense popularity. Kossuth's American tour is the subject of numerous academic works — Hungarian as well as American —, therefore, I decided not to discuss it in detail, but to focus on its consequences in the formation of the Hungarian-American community. After Kossuth's departure from America — bitterly dissatisfied over his failure to secure the financial and even military support of the United States, which could have prevented another Russian intervention in case of new war of liberation (intervention for non-intervention) — the Kossuth emigration rapidly lost its political nature, and its members soon dispersed all over the country.

In Chapter Three "Extra Hungariam Non Est Vita, Si Est Vita, Non Est Ita", I focus on the history of the Hungarian-American community (or rather communities) in the decade prior to the Civil War. Using the federal census statistics, I survey the geographical distribution, the real estate and personal property conditions, the occupation and family patterns of the Hungarians living in the United States in 1850 and a decade later. This enabled me to conclude that Kossuth emigrés in general had a hard time finding employment, as most of them lacked marketable qualifications and job experience, and the financial situation of the average Hungarian immigrant of the time was below the national level. As these deductions are based on population statistics

collected barely a year prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, I contend that these factors along with the fact that most Kossuth emigrants were seasoned soldiers, resulted in their mass volunteering in the United army mainly in the first year of the war.

Following this line of thinking, Chapter Four "To See This Great Country United Again" seeks to answer the question: "what motivated the Hungarian soldiers to participate in the American Civil War?" Every effort was made to compare their motivations to those of other soldiers — native-born Americans as well as foreigners — so that steps can be taken to move from the particular to the general. By the application of this comparative method, I argue that the major motivating forces to volunteer in the Union Army were:

- 1) Loyalty of the foreign-born towards their adopted country, and the urge to fight in defence of what many of them considered the "best government on Earth."
- 2) Utilizing their military talents in a period when the North badly needed experienced officers
- 3) Some of the Hungarians — although they can be considered exceptions — were attracted to the ranks of The Union Army by the promise of higher bounty.
- 4) Similarly, the military challenge of the Civil War raised the interest of many soldiers
- 5) Several young men enlisted seeking adventure
- 6) Maintaining not only their own freedom, but that of their neighbors and members of the local community
- 7) Advancing the abolition of slavery.

Refuting earlier assumptions, my dissertation argues that Hungarians' loyalty to their adopted country, and the drive for enhancing their acceptance within their local communities, were considerably more significant motivations for them to enlist than abolitionist sentiments.

In the final part of this chapter, I focus on the Hungarian-born soldiers who offered their services in the Confederate Army. Based on the analysis of available primary sources, I note that on the whole Hungarian motivations for volunteering in the Southern army did not diverge from those of their Unionist counterparts as much as one would

have assumed based on the secondary literature. What is conspicuous is that preservation of the institution of slavery was similarly missing from the accounts, just as the emancipation of African-Americans was missing from among the explanations for volunteering by Hungarians serving in the Union Army. Following the detailed analysis of the occurrent motivations for joining the ranks of the Confederate military I establish that there were Hungarian-born soldiers who enlisted because

- (1) They were hoping to advance their own social and financial status
- (2) They sympathized with the Southern people and felt contempt towards the Federal Government: they often drew parallels between the Southerners' struggle for states' rights and the fight of the Hungarian nation against the tyranny of the Habsburgs
- (3) They wanted to dispel the suspicion, often surrounding the foreign-born in the South, that they sympathized with the Union, which easily resulted in severe persecution
- (4) Many of them had, just like young men in the North, the love of adventure in their hearts.

Chapter Five, "Taking Up Arms in the Civil War", attempts to provide a quantitative analysis of the Hungarians' involvement in the War of the Rebellion. Through the statistical data collected mainly in the Civil War military records of the National Archives in Washington, D.C., I correct the earlier, rather exaggerated, estimations concerning the number of Hungarians serving in the Civil War, and revise the myth that Hungarians were the most over-represented ethnic group in terms of volunteering in the conflict in relation to their total number in America. I am going to analyze several factors which offer an insight into their military service: time and location of enlistment, units, muster-in and muster-out ranks among them. On the basis of these, I designate three major centers for Hungarian enlistment: New York, General Frémont's Department of the West with headquarters at St. Louis, Missouri, and the Midwestern states of Indiana, Illinois and Iowa. However, I am going to refute previous assertions that there were all-Hungarian regiments in the Union Army: even the so-called Hungarian companies at the international regiment of the 39th New York Volunteers (Garibaldi Guards) had only some Hungarian soldiers among their ranks.

In the final part of this chapter, I offer a discussion of the Hungarians' service in the ranks of the Confederate Army. I present a quantitative analysis, however, it has become clear that due to the lack of sources it is immensely difficult to make far-reaching conclusions regarding the patterns of their service. I also point out that there are several Confederate soldiers who are not included in this work, as their Hungarian origin is yet to be substantiated.

In Chapter Six, "The Triumvirate," the three most renowned Hungarian participants of the American Civil War are placed under a magnifying glass to consider the myths surrounding them. Brigadier General Sándor (Alexander) Asbóth, Major General Julius H. Stahel (Gyula Számwald) and Colonel Károly (Charles) Zágonyi indeed played important roles in the war machine of the Union, and the former two Hungarians held crucial positions in the Diplomatic Corps of the United States after the Civil War. However, the books and articles dealing with (or just touching upon) their careers are riddled with errors. Therefore, in this chapter I use the results of my recent research and those of Stephen Beszedits, who is one of the definitive sources. Besides the objective analysis of their careers and achievements, special attention will be paid to the investigation of the hero-making mechanism of the Hungarian-American historians.

Chapter Seven, "Friends of the Long-Oppressed Race," gives a brief summary of a so-far neglected subject: Hungarian officers commissioned in the United States Colored Troops. In order to be able to present the clear context, I also set out to investigate how Hungarians related to the institution of slavery and the issue of emancipation. I will point out that the majority of Hungarians abhorred the "peculiar institution", and considered it antagonistic to the democratic principles they sincerely believed the United States represented. Although there is no evidence suggesting that abolitionist sentiments constituted a major drive for volunteering in general, it is noteworthy that more than ten percent of the Hungarian-born soldiers serving in the Union Army obtained commissions in the colored regiments, which is a relatively high rate. I formulate the possible motives for applying for these positions as follows:

- 1) Sympathy with African-American people and a moral urge to take an active part in bringing about their freedom
- 2) Considering colored regiments pivotal in overcoming the Confederate forces

- 3) Higher ranks and therefore higher wages in these regiments
- 4) Opportunity for promotion, which many foreigners were not able to realize otherwise

On the basis of the available primary sources, I establish that Hungarian soldiers — most of them veterans of at least one European war — represented the moral principles of the chivalrous type of soldier, and they approached colored men with respect, treating them as equal with themselves. I also offer some case studies to illustrate the hardships foreign-born officers — among them Hungarians — came across while serving as officers in the colored units: discrimination on behalf of native-born Americans, including allegations of racism and alcoholism. Nevertheless, at the end of the chapter I show how the memory of these Hungarian soldiers — along with all their comrades serving in colored regiments — is kept alive in the United States.

Chapter Eight, "International Fraud: Col. Béla Estván," presents a case study whose subject is Col. Béla Estván, the Confederate counterpart of the triumvirate of Asboth, Stahel and Zagonyi — as far as familiarity is concerned. Estván's book entitled *War Pictures from the South* became a real best-seller of the Civil War years appearing in three editions within two years (1863, 1864) in three countries (Britain, Germany and the United States), thus making Estván's name well-known right away. In this chapter, however, I attempt to re-construct Estván's life to correct the numerous errors surrounding his figure in the literature, and reach the appalling conclusion that — despite the claims of a number of authors — Estván was a fraud: there was barely any truth in what he said about himself: not only did he turn out not to have been Hungarian, but his real name was not Estván either. My extensive research has revealed that he made up most of the elements of his alleged Confederate Civil War career, and he can be safely considered a real adventurer whose primary aim was to advance his own position among all circumstances.

Chapter Nine, "The Aftermath," offers a dual perspective of the post-Civil War Era. On one hand, I scrutinize the careers of the Hungarian-born Civil War veterans following the war. On the other, I summarize the commemoration of the participation of Hungarians in the War of the Rebellion both in the United States and Hungary.

I point out that the Civil War took a heavy toll on Hungarians, as far as the relatively high proportion of dead and wounded is concerned. Nevertheless, on the basis of the comparison of muster-in and muster-out ranks, I conclude that the overwhelming majority of the Hungarian officers serving in the Civil War managed to advance their status in the war machine of the Union Army, and this definitely promoted their integration in the American society of the Reconstruction Era. As the proportion of Kossuth emigrés who left the United States and returned to their homeland stayed below ten percent of all Hungarian-born Civil War participants, and statistics show that most of them had already become naturalized American citizens by the end of the war at the latest, my dissertation argues that those who took service in the American military considered the United States as their new home, and most of them had already given up the idea of returning to Hungary. Also, I refute the assumption that this was a painful choice for most of them; benefiting from their successful military career most of them managed to achieve their American Dream, something they had been unable to do prior to the Civil War. Special emphasis is laid on those who achieved distinguished careers in the American diplomatic corps, as — except for Asboth and Stahel — this chapter of the Kossuth emigration has been largely neglected in the literature, although several of the former officers were appointed consuls. George Pomutz, for instance, was U.S. consul to Russia and played a significant role in the purchase of Alaska in 1867, but there were Hungarian-born consuls in Yokohama, Japan, Shanghai, China, British Guyana, Tahiti, Crete, and Taranto, Italy, as well. These appointments — along with others who had less extraordinary careers — can be understood as the appreciation of their adopted country for their having taken up arms in defense of its institutions and democratic ideals, and shows that they became readily accepted as citizens of the United States.

The second part of this chapter is devoted to the memory of the Hungarians' participation, and will also touch upon some of their major contributions — not exclusively from a military point of view. To my knowledge no academic work has studied this subject matter, therefore, I have taken extra efforts to make this part as up to date as possible and include several illustrations. I highlight the absence of a monument commemorating the Hungarians' involvement in the Civil War either in the United States or in Hungary, but stress that on the level of individuals the situation is much better. My

inquiries will not be limited to the United States, but will include such exotic ones as, for instance, Bernard Bettelheim's monument in Ryu Kyu, Japan, totally unfamiliar both in Hungary and in the United States. Several other examples are enumerated including the highly intriguing fact that even a U.S. liberty ship was named after one of the Civil War participants, Brigadier General George Pomutz, during the Second World War.

This chapter also scrutinizes Hungarians' contributions, not directly related to the military history of the Civil War, including their literary works or, for instance, innovations among them. Despite some initiatives in the past years, no documentaries commemorating the history of the Hungarian involvement in the American Civil War have been made yet, although there is one cinematographic depiction of it, Hungarian Director Gábor Bódy's movie *Amerikai Anzix* [American Torso] (1975).

Due to the nature of the subject and the geographical dispersion of the Hungarian-American community in the period under my scrutiny, often the only way to carry out meaningful analysis is to remain on the level of individuals. Furthermore, although each of the three books written on the subject of the participation of Hungarians in the American Civil War included some sort of list of the individuals having served in the conflict, the authors

- 1) Made no efforts to substantiate that the soldiers were indeed born in Hungary
- 2) Failed to cope with the difficulties arising in the dual nature of the study of historical links and contacts, particularly with the fact that some of the sources are accessible in one country, and others in the other.
- 3) Carried out no systematic research making use of the research methodology of mainly genealogy.
- 4) Had the major motivation to inflate the number of Hungarian-born participants as much as possible so that the role they played in the conflict would appear more significant than that of other ethnic groups, thus enhancing group cohesion.

Taking all this into consideration, I compiled a biographical list of all the Hungarian soldiers whose Civil War service can be supported with evidence. The total number of individuals included in this section is lower than those mentioned by Tivadar Ács in his *Magyarok az amerikai polgárháborúban*. This is due to the fact that I was careful to include only those whose Hungarian origin as well as Civil War service can be

substantiated. Hungarian soldiers serving in the Union and the Confederate armies will both appear in the alphabetized list, and learning from the mistakes of my predecessors, I indicated my sources at the discussion of the career of each individual. This resulted in a large number of references, nevertheless, I look on my dissertation as the starting point of modern academic research in this field. So I consider it of utmost importance that future researchers get a clear conception of the material I used and can apply them as reference points.

Methodology

My dissertation offers a study which is comparative, and combines the methods of both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The lack of previous academic works necessitated that it is of comprehensive nature, therefore, it utilizes a wide range of approaches to the study of the past.

The Kossuth emigration falls within the scope of immigration history, whereas the assimilation and acculturation of Hungarian emigrés in the United States required the extensive use of the methods of social history, often going down to the level of microhistory (community studies), which was almost entirely missing from earlier Hungarian analyses prior to the 1970s. At the investigation of the participation of the Hungarians' involvement in the Civil War, I made use of the research tools of military history, including such specific sub-branches as the study of individual military units, weapons, uniforms, and prisoners-of-war. Additional pieces of information could be obtained from the field of historical memory; from the investigation of historical monuments, militaria, and re-enactment, among several others.

However, the final part of this dissertation, the Biographical List of Hungarian participants in the conflict, necessitated the use of methodology borrowed from genealogists and family historians. This involved the combined use of traditional archival resources and internet-based genealogical research aids, making it possible to access such a wide range of information which would have been unimaginable even two decades ago. As no such research has been carried out up to now, I refer here to Chapter One, the second part of which is entirely devoted to the discussion of methodology.

Structurewise and in the system of referencing, the dissertation strictly adheres to the style guide of the fifteenth edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003). I chose the use of footnotes, due to their more reader-friendly nature.

Hungarian names are more often than not hopelessly misspelled in American sources. Due to the intended audience of this book, I decided to use the most frequent English spellings of the names, however, a list of the individuals' names and their most frequent variations is attached to the Biographical List section. As for those, whose (first) names had no English versions mentioned in the literature, I used their Hungarian names.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is the result of continuing research over nearly ten years. It started as a project for a competition paper for the Hungarian Students' Conference, where it won first prize and irreversibly turned my attention to this subject. Since then, I have been dealing with it, with just brief periods when I simply could not get to it due to my exciting, yet trying first steps as an instructor at the Institute of English and American Studies at the University of Debrecen. Such a long work of research, of course, means that I owe my thanks to a lot of people without whom I would have never been able to accomplish this great task.

Although not directly influencing this work, I definitely have to start with my highschool history teacher and form-master László Pinczés, who not only shared with me the joy he found in the study of history, but taught me important lessons of life, too. That is the reason, he still serves as a role model for me as a teacher. Continuing along this line, I am indebted to Tibor Glant, head of the North American Department at IEAS at the University of Debrecen, who taught me first the history of the United States, and supervised my work with the conference paper. He not only offered me a full-time position at his department, but he has helped me both with useful material and encouragement. Similarly to him, I am grateful for the help of Csaba Lévai, whose classes were the first in-depth analyses I encountered as an undergrad, and who supervised all my work since then, including this dissertation. I am indebted for his insightful comments and grasp of the subject, and, also, for inviting me to the wonderful community of Cllohres.net. My colleagues also helped me a lot, many of them not even knowingly, by their devotion to their fields of study. I am indebted to Péter Szaffkó, Director of the Institute of English and American Studies, for his support and generosity in partly financing my last year of doctoral studies. My thanks go to the associates of the Institute Office, especially Judit Katona, Erika Kiss and Armand Szőke, for taking much of the burden of administrative matters off me when I badly needed time, and Judit, who always tried to arrange the most suitable schedule of classes for me, so that — in the complete lack of sabbaticals — I could work on my dissertation.

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I could not be more indebted to Stephen Beszedits, who has been studying the Hungarians' involvement in the American Civil War for decades, and who taught me a great deal about academic humility and precision. Although no historian by formal education, he has achieved much more than all professionals in the field and through our decade-long correspondence I learned a lot. He was generous enough to share not only his insights, but many results of his research as well. I hope that my work will raise so many questions in him that he will finally find the time and incentive to write his own interpretation of the subject.

I also wish to express thanks to Murry Nelson, Professor of Education and American Studies at Pennsylvania State University, for offering to read my typescript and for his

insightful comments and suggestions for improvement. I learned a lot from him during his one-year stay at the University of Debrecen as a Fulbright visiting lecturer and Országgh Chair.

Of course, without the help of a multitude of librarians and archivists, I could not have written this dissertation. I owe thanks to the associates of the following institutions: the Library of the University of Debrecen (my special thanks go to Boglárka Dávid, who never got tired of my requests for books to get hold of through interlibrary loan, and Teréz Szabó, from the IEAS Library); the National Archives in Budapest; Mária Kórász affiliated with the Vasváry Collection at Somogyi Library in Szeged, Hungary; the National Archives and the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., the McKeldin Library of the University of Maryland at College Park, MD; the numerous libraries of Indiana University at Bloomington, IN; the archival collection of the Chicago Historical Society; and the library of the John F. Kennedy Institute of the Freie Universität in Berlin, Germany.

I wish to express my gratitude to some individuals as well. Catherine Catalfamo was kind enough to shed light on several aspects of the regimental history of the Garibaldi Guards. Mr. Roy Gustrowski provided crucial bits and pieces of information on the life and career of Joseph Vándor. I am also indebted to Janet Kozlay for setting a wonderful example of academic zeal and devotion proving that genealogy can indeed be of great help for historians. She let me participate in the translation and transcription of the German and Hungarian letters of her ancestor, Hungarian Civil War participant Eugene Kozlay. She also shared with me documents which enabled me to illustrate some points I intended to make in my dissertation. I am indebted to Dr. William A. Dobak, from the U.S. Army Center of Military History, who found the time to read my chapter on Hungarians in the colored regiments and commented on it. I learned a lot from József Pozsonyi, director of the Andor Semsey Museum in Balmazújváros, Hungary, ardent researcher of the genealogy of the Semsey family. For his assistance in the exhausting processing of the census data I am indebted to István Rózsa, who happens to be my best friend, too.

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CHAPTER ONE HISTORIOGRAPHY AND METHODOLOGY

Writing about research methodology and providing an overview of the historiography of a given subject matter is a risky venture. Historians who do it risk boring their readers to tears. That is why, the presentation of this aspect is usually pushed into the background, more often than not, banished to a separate chapter at the end of books, bypassed and ignored by the overwhelming majority of readers. Why then include a methodological chapter in this work? It is my conviction that the search for ‘whys’ sometimes necessitates the presentation of ‘hows’ as well. What follows, therefore, is a brief summary of the authors and works studying the history of Kossuth Emigration in general and the Hungarians’ involvement in the American Civil War in particular. This is followed by the discussion of the methodological contributions of this work to the investigation of the subject matter, with special focus on such hitherto ignored types of sources as ship passenger lists, census data, or even sources from the realm of genealogy.

The Historiography of the Kossuth Emigration

The involvement of foreign-born soldiers in the American Civil War seems to be one of the most neglected subject matters in the vast field of Civil War studies. The publication of Ella Lonn’s trail-blazing *Foreigners in the Confederacy* (1940) followed more than a decade later by her *Foreigners in the Union Army and Navy* (1951) indicated a shift of emphasis toward the social history of the armies, notably the social and ethnic background of soldiers, and more toward the footsoldiers and away from the generals. Lonn’s books, however, are still the definite sources for information, despite the numerous attempts to scrutinize the foreign element in the War of the Rebellion. Nevertheless, each and every ethnic group has had its own historian who studied its presence in the United States. The problem with these works in general is that they are biased and they attach too much significance to the groups they write about and to which they themselves belong. Therefore, one has to approach these works with extreme caution. Some of them serve pure mythmaking purposes with the overall aim of

enhancing cohesion within the group and justifying its presence in America. What is more, there is often a tangible competition between the individual ethnic groups and, unfortunately, historical accuracy often falls victim to these rivalries. Therefore, we have to be familiar with the academic works devoted to the study of the presence of ethnic groups in the United States.⁴

Interestingly enough, there have hardly been any attempts to write comprehensively about the historiography of the Hungarian-American past. In her article on Károly Rácz-Rónay, one of the neglected students of the subject, Mária Kórász, head of the Vasváry Collection at Somogyi Library, in Szeged, Hungary devoted a couple of lines and footnote references to the historiography of the presence of Hungarians in America. Géza Kacziány outlined the memoir literature between 1848 and 1914 which contains useful information. The definite work for historiographical information is Stephen Béla Várdy's *Magyarok az Újvilágban* [Hungarians in the New World] which contains the most extensive list of archival and published material concerning Hungarian-American relations. Várdy considered this topic significant enough to devote an entire subchapter to it in this hefty volume. And, more or less, that is about it. Except for my article entitled "All Quiet for Forty Years: The Hungarian Participation in the American Civil War: A Historiographical Essay" published in 2006, no further work has been done in this field so far.⁵

Attempts to Synthesize the History of Hungarian Americans

There is no shortage of works, however, offering a comprehensive study of the history of people of Hungarian origin in America. The very first of these works was an article by Sándor Márki, professor of history at Kolozsvár, entitled "America and the Hungarians" which appeared in 1893. This article excelled in its scholarly quality and

⁴ Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy*; Lonn, *Foreigners in the Union*.

⁵ Mária Kórász, "Az amerikai magyar történetírás kezdetei: Rácz Rónay Károly levelei," *Aetas* (1996/1), 119-138; Géza Kacziány, *A magyar mémoires-irodalom 1848-tól 1914-ig* (Budapest, Lantos, 1917); Stephen Béla Várdy, *Magyarok az Újvilágban. Az Észak-amerikai Magyarság Rendhagyó Története* (Budapest: Magyar Nyelv és Kultúra Nemzetközi Társasága, 2000) (Hereafter cited as, Várdy, *Magyarok az Újvilágban*); István Kornél Vida, "All Quiet for Forty Years: The Hungarian Participation in the American Civil War. A Historiographical Essay," in *Europe and the World in European Historiography* (Ed. Csaba Lévai) (Pisa, Italy: Pisa University Press, 2006), 231-241.

definitely served as a basis for further investigations by subsequent generations of historians.⁶

Eugene (Jenő) Pivány (1873-1946) the ardent researcher of the subject contributed much to the study of Hungarian-American historical links and contacts. However, he never composed a synthesis, although he did write about several aspects of his investigations in articles. He published a volume under the title *Hungarian-American Historical Connections* (1927) following the Hungarian version published a year earlier. Pivány concentrated on the period up to the coming of the Civil War, and, unfortunately, he failed to complete the planned second volume of his work. Pivány was indeed one of the most influential students of the subject, although he did not include documentation in his works. Thus most of his claims are impossible to validate, particularly because his collections were destroyed during the Second World War.⁷

Géza Kende (1879-1933), journalist and editor of the daily *Szabadság* in Cleveland, Ohio, contributed to this academic field with the first synthesis of the history of the Hungarian presence in America. His two-volume work *Magyarok Amerikában: Az amerikai magyarság története* [Hungarians in America: The History of Hungarian Americans] (1926) was a collection of colorful anecdotes, yet it was riddled with numerous errors. Nevertheless, we must agree with Professor Várdy who wrote that "[it is] an almost indispensable book which is worthy of a new edition containing the so-far unpublished third volume." Like Pivány, Kende also failed to indicate his sources casting some doubt on at least some of his claims.⁸

The most prolific Hungarian-American writer was definitely Edmund (Ödön) Vasváry (1888-1977) who was not only an ardent researcher, but he also authored a vast number of articles about the Hungarians in America. Nevertheless, like his predecessors, he did not attempt to organize his material into a single volume. His efforts were not futile though: the immense material he put together during the long decades of his life constituted the basis of the collection which is named after him and is in the custody of

⁶ Márki, Sándor. "Amerika s a magyarság," *Földrajzi Közlemények* (1893/2), 49-94.

⁷ Eugene Pivány, *Magyar-amerikai történelmi kapcsolatok. A Columbus előtti időktől az amerikai polgárháború befejezéséig* [Hungarian-American Relations from Pre-Columbian Times to the End of the Civil War] (Budapest, Egyetemi Nyomda, 1926)

⁸ Géza Kende, *Magyarok Amerikában: Az amerikai magyarság története, 1583-1926* (Cleveland: Szabadság, 1926) (Hereafter cited as, Kende, *Magyarok Amerikában*); Várdy. *Magyarok az Újvilágban*, 589.

the Somogyi Library in Szeged. This library published a posthumous book entitled *Magyar Amerika* (1988) which was practically a collection of Vasváry's articles, although they cover only a tiny fragment of his life's work.⁹

The first synthesis in English of this subject matter was written by Emil Lengyel (1895-1985). His *Americans from Hungary* (1948) was primarily based on the books of the above-mentioned authors, thus it perpetuates many of their factual errors. The second part of his work concentrating on the period since 1914, however, was based on his own research, and this definitely makes it an excellent contribution to the study of Hungarian-American relations.¹⁰

The following decades saw a number of historians studying related topics, yet none of them have attempted to write a synthesis in this period. Julianna Puskás published her *Kivándorló Magyarok az Egyesült Államokban, 1880-1940* in 1982, the somewhat abridged English version of which appeared the same year under the title *From Hungary to the United States, 1880-1940*. As the title suggests, Puskás concentrated on the so-called New Immigration and, regrettably, treated the Antebellum wave of Hungarian immigrants in the United States as if they had never existed, which is the greatest shortcoming of her work. Her hefty volume is the culmination of her very thorough research, is highly academic, and therefore is not as well known as other popular books of less scholarly quality. In 2000, Julianna Puskás came out with an excellent synthesis in which she made use of her most-recent research with the title *Ties that Bind, Ties that Divide: 100 Years of Hungarian Experience in the United States*, but she limited her enquiries in this work as well, just as she had done in her previous ones.¹¹

At the same time, there were attempts to create syntheses in the United States, as well. Steven Béla Várdy published his *Hungarian-Americans* in 1985, which was followed one and a half decades later by another work, the already-mentioned *Magyarok az Újvilágban* (2000). There is no doubt that Várdy is the most prolific researcher of the Hungarian-American past: he authored or co-authored sixteen books and some 450

⁹ Edmund Vasváry, *Magyar Amerika* (Szeged: Somogyi Könyvtár, 1988) (Hereafter cited as, Vasváry, *Magyar Amerika*)

¹⁰ Emil Lengyel, *Americans from Hungary* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1948) (Hereafter cited as, Lengyel, *Americans*)

¹¹ Julianna Puskás, *Kivándorló Magyarok az Egyesült Államokban, 1880-1940* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982); Julianna Puskás, *From Hungary to the United States, 1880-1940* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982); Julianna Puskás, *Ties that Bind Ties that Divide* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 2000)

articles, essays and reviews. *Magyarok az Újvilágban* is a readable book intended for the general reader as well as for professional historians. However, when writing the first half of his book, especially the chapters on the Old Immigration and the Civil War, Várdy borrowed extensively from the available secondary literature, and often did so without actually questioning them. By doing so, he inevitably kept many of the recurrent inaccuracies alive. Nonetheless, Professor Várdy's book is excellent and exhaustive, and as a synthesis it is one of a kind in the available literature. One can only hope that he will be proven wrong when he writes that "after the retirement of the present generation of scholars there is not going to be another Hungarian American generation that can continue this work."¹²

The Kossuth Emigration

Those eager to get reliable information on the first sizeable wave of Hungarian immigrants in the United States of America, are not at all kindly treated by historians. There is only a single comprehensive work on this subject: Lajos Lukács's *A magyar politikai emigráció, 1849-1867* (1984) which did not exclusively have Transatlantic migration in its focus. Of course, much information can be gained from the above-mentioned general histories of the Hungarian-American past as well, although more often than not they only scratch the surface. Therefore, there seems no other option but to make use of the more specific works.¹³

It becomes apparent right away that the majority of the works dealing with this initial period of mass migration consists of publications of primary sources: diaries, memoirs, correspondence between emigrants and those having stayed back in Hungary. This is, of course, to be appreciated as a wide range of sources have been made accessible. However, the evaluation of these writings definitely requires some preliminary knowledge of the subject. Furthermore, the editors of some of these works did not bother much to include citations, which makes it wearisome, or sometimes even impossible to trace their sources. Yet another problem with these works comes from the very nature of

¹² Stephen Béla Várdy, *The Hungarian Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1985)

¹³ Lajos Lukács, *A magyar politikai emigráció 1849-1867* (Budapest: Kossuth könyvkiadó, 1984) (Hereafter cited as, Lukács, *Magyar politikai emigráció*)

studying historical links and contacts between two peoples: a portion of the sources is available in Hungary, while others can be accessed only overseas. Some of them were written in Hungarian, others are in English or even German. Therefore, the reading knowledge of at least two languages is a pre-requisite here as regrettably few sources have been translated into English or Hungarian.

A full analysis of this body of secondary literature would go beyond the scope of this chapter. So I propose to give a brief overview of the most significant monographs instead. The two-volumed *A Kossuth emigráció Angliában és Amerikában, 1851-52* [The Kossuth Emigration in England and America, 1851-52](Ed. Dénes Jánosy) (1940-1944)¹⁴ is an essential work, although, as it is apparent from the title, it concentrates only on the first phase of this wave of immigration in the United States and ignores the rest of the decade. Fortunately, many other works cover this period. Tivadar Ács published and edited a number of first-hand immigrant accounts: *Kossuth papja: Ács Gedeon* [Kossuth's Priest: Gedeon Ács](1940); *New-Buda* (1941); *Akik elvándoroltak* [Those who Emigrated](1942); *Magyarok idegenben* [Hungarians Far From Home](1946); *Magyar úttörők az Újvilágban, László Károly naplójeljegyzései, 1850-1867* [Hungarian Trailblazers in the New World: The Diaries of Károly László, 1850-1867] (1942); *A száműzöttek. Fiala János emlékiratai* [The Castaway: The memoirs of János Fiala] (1943). Similarly intriguing insight into the everyday life of Hungarian Americans is offered by a volume entitled *Mészáros Lázár külföldi levelei* [The letters of Lázár Mészáros written abroad] (Ed. Viktor Szokoly) (1867); Nicholas Perczel's *Naplóm az emigrációból* [My Diary from the Emigration](1977); and István Kinizsi's recently-published *A Sánta Huszár naplója* [The Diary of the Lame Hussar](1999). All these books offer bits and pieces of information, yet it is indeed hard to systematize them. No wonder that so far no historian has endeavored to do this immensely challenging yet crucial work.¹⁵

¹⁴ Dénes Jánosy, ed., *A Kossuth-emigráció Angliában és Amerikában, 1851-52* 2 Volumes. (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1940) (Hereafter cited as, Jánosy, *Kossuth-emigráció*)

¹⁵ Tivadar Ács, *Kossuth papja: Ács Gedeon* (Vác: Kapisztrán Nyomda, 1940) (Hereafter cited as, Ács, *Kossuth papja*); Tivadar Ács, *New Buda* (Budapest, 1941) (Hereafter cited as, Ács, *New Buda*); Tivadar Ács, *Akik elvándoroltak* (Budapest, 1942); Tivadar Ács, *Magyarok idegenben* (Budapest: Magyar Téka, 1946); Tivadar Ács, *Magyar úttörők az Újvilágban, László Károly naplójeljegyzései, 1850-1867* (Budapest: Láthatár Kiadó, 1942) (Hereafter cited as, Ács, *Magyar úttörők*); Tivadar Ács, *A száműzöttek. Fiala János emlékiratai* (Budapest, 1943) (Hereafter cited as, Ács, *Száműzöttek*); Viktor Szokoly, *Mészáros Lázár*

About the Hungarians' Involvement in the American Civil War

Considering the fact that the Kossuth Emigration has been somewhat ignored by historians, it may sound surprising that one — yet important — episode of this period has excited the interest of Hungarian as well as Hungarian-American historians, so much so that three volumes have been written on this topic alone! Notwithstanding, if one takes a closer look at these work, it will soon be clear that these three books are overall not three, but just one or two!

Eugene Pivány's *Hungarians in the American Civil War*, which appeared in 1913, was a trail-blazing work indeed. The problem is that it is riddled with factual errors and — especially in the light of modern Civil War studies and research — it is clear that Pivány, who was a journalist, failed to place the Hungarians within the wider framework of foreign participation in the American Civil War. Similarly to the chroniclers of other ethnic groups, he exaggerated the number of Hungarians participating in the conflict and their heroism. (Interestingly, he chose a golden mean in estimating the total number of people of Hungarian origin living in the United States around the time of the outbreak of the Civil War to be approximately 4,000. Nevertheless, one can just guess why he wrote that about 800 of them got involved in the conflict, which would mean that one out of five Hungarians took up arms in the Civil War! No other ethnic group in the United States got even close to this representation in proportion to their share in the total population.) In spite of all these shortcomings of his book, Pivány did an excellent job as a researcher, and he showed the way for the next generations of historians.¹⁶

Edmund Vasváry also devoted his only book-length work to this subject: He published his *Lincoln's Hungarians Heroes* in 1939 in a bilingual edition. His work is definitely the one to turn to for an introductory picture of the Hungarians' involvement in the war between the states. He managed to revise and implement Pivány's work and he

külföldi levelei (Pest: Ráth Mór, 1867) (Hereafter cited as, Szokoly, *Mészáros Lázár*); Miklós Perczel, *Naplóm az emigrációból*, 2 Volumes (Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó, 1977-1979) (Hereafter cited as, Perczel, *Naplóm*); István Kinizsi, *A „Sánta Huszár” naplója* (Marosvásárhely: Impress, 1999) (Hereafter cited as, Kinizsi, *Sánta Huszár*)

¹⁶ Eugene Pivány, *Hungarians in the American Civil War* (Cleveland, 1913) (Hereafter cited as, Pivány, *Hungarians in the Civil War*)

placed the topic in its correct historical context. Vasváry broke away from the "traditions" of his forerunners, and finally he did include an extensive list of references and brief biographical sketches in his work. Of course, all this does not mean that *Lincoln's Hungarian Heroes* is void of mistakes and misconceptions. Vasváry's work is also riddled with errors, many minor and some major ones. I personally believe that he did not choose wisely when deciding upon the title of the book, because it suggests that Hungarians fought only in the Union Army, which was not the case — as the author himself acknowledged. Similarly to Pivány, he exaggerated both the number of Hungarians living in the United States at the time of the Civil War and of those who jumped to arms in the conflict. In 1963-64 the William Penn Fraternal Association published a series of articles by Vasváry under the title "Lincoln and the Hungarians", which did not represent a brand new approach to the topic, but did add some new pieces of information.¹⁷

The third book on this subject is the only one published exclusively in Hungarian. Tivadar Ács finished his *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban 1861-65* [Hungarians in the North American Civil War] in 1964 and up to this date, this has remained the most recent book upon this subject. Ács thought that the estimates of his forerunners should be revised and, according to him, no fewer than 5,000 Hungarians fought in the Civil War! Of course, on the basis of modern Civil War research and the census data of 1860 and 1870, we can conclude that in all likelihood the grand total of the Hungarians living in the United States at the time of the Civil War was considerably lower than 5,000, never mind the number who actually participated in the fights. Ács made use of the fact that the first two books on this subject had been relatively unknown in Hungary and his aim was to laud "Hungarian heroes", whose names "should be sacred and their bravery and honor with which they shed their blood in defence of freedom outside their homeland must be forever remembered." Some parts of *Magyarok az amerikai polgárháborúban* are pure mythmaking and, apart from the many factual errors, this is probably its greatest shortcoming. Ács's knowledge of the Civil War we cannot

¹⁷ Edmund Vasváry, *Lincoln's Hungarian Heroes* (Washington, D.C.: Hungarian Reformed Federation of America, 1939) (Hereafter cited as, Vasváry, *Lincoln's Hungarian Heroes*); Edmund Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians* (Pittsburgh, PA: William Penn Fraternal Association, 1963-1964) (Hereafter cited as, Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*)

but declare superficial and he obviously failed to put the Hungarian participation in the war between the states in its right context.¹⁸

Modern Research of the Hungarians' Involvement in the Civil War

I gave my article on the historiography of the Hungarians' participation in the American Civil War the title "All quiet for forty years", indicating that not a single book had been published on this topic since 1964. Researching Hungarian-American relations fell victim to the communist takeover in Hungary: only a privileged few, deemed trustworthy and faithful enough to the regime, were allowed to do research in the United States. It is tantalizing to know that a large number of unpublished primary sources sank into oblivion, making any further research immensely difficult, and doing irreparable damage to the study of Hungarian-American historical links and contacts as well as Civil War studies.

This is, however, not to state that there has not been any research carried out in this field of study in the last couple of decades. A Canadian-Hungarian, Stephen Beszedits, is definitely the most ardent and prolific contemporary student of the Hungarians' involvement in the American Civil War. Although not a historian by profession, he does not commit the same mistakes as Pivány, Vasváry or Ács committed: he has done extensive research, his writings are wisely constructed, and he avoids mythmaking and jumping to unfounded assumptions. Primarily he has focused on the lives of some Hungarians (Charles Semsey, Julius H. Stahel, Frederick Knefler and Rudolf Tauszky), and he summarized his findings in shorter articles, which are accessible on the Internet. His only book is the prison diary of Emeric Szabad, a Hungarian Prisoner of War in the Civil War: *The Libby Prison Diary by Colonel Emeric Szabad* (1999). He has managed to pile up a huge amount of material on the topic and one can just hope that he will summarize all his findings in a longer work in the not-so-distant future. As for my contributions to the literature, I started to scrutinize this topic when I was still an undergraduate student and I compiled the results of my research in a paper titled *Doing*

¹⁸ Tivadar Ács, *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban, 1861-65* (Budapest: Pannónia, 1964), 124. (Hereafter cited as, Ács, *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban*)

Away with Myths: A New Look at the Participation of Hungarians in the American Civil War (2001), which won the national first prize at the Hungarian Students' Conference the same year. In subsequent years I authored a number of articles on various topics related to the Kossuth emigration and Hungarians in the Civil War.¹⁹

It is heartening to see an increasing demand among Hungarian-Americans as well for unpublished documents in connection with their history and their expanding scope of interest to cover the earlier- neglected Civil War, too. The latest manifestation of these efforts is the already-mentioned *The Libby Prison Diary*. In addition to this effort by Stephen Beszedits, there are others, as well. Just to mention one of them, Janet Kozlay is dedicated to publishing the documents of her ancestor, Col. Eugene Kozlay (1826-1883), 54th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment, and we do look forward to reading it.

Methodology of the Current Work

The question may arise whether this or any other recently published work can provide new pieces of information not yet brought to light. It is my utmost conviction that they can, and that is the main reason that I consider it necessary to devote at least a subchapter to the presentation of methodology here by laying special emphasis on the new types of sources used throughout my research and the new ways of approaching the topic.

I considered the works by Pivány, Vasváry and Ács as obvious starting points, but I soon realized that they are so much riddled with errors that correcting them would require a volume itself. Therefore, what I did was basically start from scratch.

As far as primary sources are concerned, it comes from the nature of studying historical links and contacts between peoples that the available sources are divided between two or sometimes even more countries. In our case, the overwhelming majority of archival sources was available in the United States, so the American archives and libraries were definitely the places to start investigations.

¹⁹ Stephen Beszedits, ed., *The Libby Prison Diary by Colonel Emeric Szabad* (Toronto: B&L Information Services, 1999) (Hereafter cited as, Beszedits, *Libby Prison Diary*); István Kornél Vida, *Doing Away with Myths: A New Look at the Participation of Hungarians in the American Civil War*. National Students' Conference Paper (Debrecen, 2001) (Hereafter cited as, Vida. *Myths*); István Kornél Vida, "The Concept of Citizenship and the Hungarian Immigrants in the United States in the 1850's: A Case Study," in S.G. Ellis, G. Hálfanarson, A.K. Isaacs, eds., *Citizenship in Historical Perspective* (Pisa, Italy: Pisa University Press, 2006), 227-236.

The collections of the National Archives in Washington, D.C. proved to be a real goldmine. I laid special emphasis on the investigations of such so-far neglected types of sources as the passenger arrival lists of American ports, census records, and Civil War pension records. A possible typology of the sources I used is as follows:²⁰

1. Population and Immigration Records
2. Military Records
3. Land Records
4. Others

As for the first group of documents, my investigations covered three major types of primary sources. One of the most apparent deficiencies of the existing works was the total lack of information about the exact number of Hungarians living in the United States in the 1850s and during the Civil War. There seem to be a number of reasons for not having reliable estimates on how many people of Hungarian origin actually lived in America during our period. Unfortunately, Hungarian government records cannot be used at all, as Hungarian authorities started to keep track of the number of emigrants only as late as 1899. Although in some European ports files were kept of emigrants heading for America, they are often sporadic and mostly concentrated on the era of the so-called New Immigration starting around 1871. What makes them even less useful for our purposes is the fact that they did not consistently indicate the country of birth and the destination. As far as Hungarians were concerned, it is essential to emphasize that Hungarian citizenship did not even exist officially, Hungary being part of the Austrian Empire, and this blurs all the boundaries between such ethnic groups as Austrians, Bohemians, Hungarians, or even Slovenians. Therefore, research based on most of the migration-related sources in Europe would surely lead nowhere.²¹

In the National Archives three major collections are pertinent. The Passenger Arrival Lists made possible a clear picture of the inflow of Hungarians in the period between 1850 and 1870. In 1819 Congress enacted the first legislation concerning the processing

²⁰ For information about the use of the collections of the National Archives see, *Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Trust Fund Board, 1985)

²¹ Vida, *Myths*, 7-9.

of immigrants. It provided that a record should be kept of the number of passengers in each customs district and mandated the registration of each person's name, age, sex, occupation and country of birth. Up to 1867, the records included all "alien passengers arrived", although it did not distinguish "immigrants" from "passengers."²² The passenger arrival records also available in the National Archives consist of customs passenger lists, immigration passenger lists, and indexes to some of the lists. The records were created by the captains or masters of the vessels, collectors of customs, and immigration officers at the ports of entry to comply with the above-mentioned federal laws. Most of the records are in Records of the United States Customs Service, Record Group 36, where nearly all the lists and indexes are available as microfilm publications.

Another significant group of archival sources was the census data. A census has been taken in the United States every ten years since 1790, for the purpose of enumerating the population for apportioning representatives. Information about households and individuals was collected house-to-house canvass. The filled-in forms constitute the population schedules for each decennial census. The originals of these census records from the period between 1840 and 1870 are in the custody of the National Archives in Washington, D.C. The census of 1850 is often called "the first modern census". Beginning with that year more comprehensive census information was gathered. Prior to 1850 only the name of the household head was recorded. In the 1850 schedules, for the first time, the name of each free person in a household was given (free inhabitants were separated from the slave schedules). In addition, an entry for each free person indicates name, age, sex, color (white, black, or mulatto), occupation for males over 15, value of real estate owned, the state, territory, or country of birth, whether the person attended school or was married within a year, whether the person could read or write if over 20, and whether the person was deaf-mute, blind, insane, an idiot, a pauper, or a convict. The censuses of 1860 and 1870 followed the very same pattern, so they provide the same type of information. The census schedules are part of the Records of the Bureau of the Census,

²² See, John P. Colletta, *They Came in Ships. A Guide to Finding Your Immigrant Ancestor's Arrival Record* (Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry, 2002)

Record Group 29. The 1850 schedules are microfilmed on M432, 1,009 rolls, the 1860 schedules on M653, 1,438 rolls, whereas the 1870 ones on M593, 1,748 rolls.²³

The third smaller group of population and immigration-related sources is Federal Naturalization Records. The naturalization acts provided that aliens who wished to become citizens of the United States should apply to “any common law court of record.” Federal naturalization records usually consist of a declaration of intention, petitions, depositions, and a record of naturalization. Hungarian-American historians did not take any notice of these sources, but they reveal much about the Hungarians’ concept of homeland and citizenship.

The military records of the National Archives by their nature provide the only possible source of information concerning the careers of Hungarians in the American Civil War. The military service records of volunteers consist of data taken from muster and pay rolls, rank rolls, returns, hospital and prison records, and other sources. They make it possible to reconstruct the military service of individuals. Sometimes, however, they need complementing which can be done by studying the Pension Records. The veterans’ application files consist of such important pieces of information as particulars concerning their military services, their places of birth (which was very often omitted in the muster rolls), date of birth, or age. To place immigrants of Hungarian origin on the American social palette, we must have a clear conception of their financial situation. Of course, starting with the Census of 1860, all census records contain information on the value of the real estate owned and also on their personal property. In some cases further information can be gained from the Land Records of the National Archives. They contain all transfer of land ownership which took place under laws passed by Congress. For my purposes, it proved very fruitful to study the so-called land entry papers, records of transaction in which the government transferred land to individuals, and also the patents, which are documents guaranteeing titles to lands.

Beyond the record groups listed above, others had important bits and pieces of information. These included the claims records, the passport application files, or even the

²³ For more detailed information about the censuses consult, Donne Delle and R. Carmen, *Federal Census Schedules, 1850-80: Primary Sources for Historical Research*. (Reference Information Paper 67, 1973); Carroll D. Wright and William C. Hunt, *The History and Growth of the United States Census* (56th Congress, 1st session, S. Doc. 194, serial 3856)

papers of the government from the Civil War Era — Union and Confederate alike. Also, the National Archives was not the only place with important documents. There were an astonishingly high number of primary sources available elsewhere, other than governmental records. Many libraries hold personal papers or just single items of correspondence between a Hungarian emigrant and someone else, which were all worth a look. Of course, access was not easily gained, especially in Hungary. A great deal of patience was required.

Because of the nature of the subject, some of the information was available in Hungarian archives. There were Kossuth emigrés, actually in minority, who at one point in their careers returned to Hungary, and their personal papers are available in the Hungarian National Archives in Budapest. Despite the shorter geographical distance, the very much overcomplicated process of pulling documents made it way more exhausting to do research here than at any other similar institution.

There are many documents owned by individuals: usually descendants of Civil War participants, or private collectors. I had a very pleasant surprise here: everybody I contacted seemed to understand the importance of my project and were more than willing to assist me. The list would go very long here, but I tried to include all these kind individuals in the Acknowledgements section.

I have to make it clear that no Hungarian historian has ever attempted to do thorough research among the federal census records from the period between 1850 and 1870. I soon realized the reason for this. Everyone who has ever worked with microfilm sources knows that searching for information on film is extremely time-consuming and tiresome. Moreover, there are numerous difficulties to searching for people of Hungarian origin in these records. No indexes group the household heads on the basis of their country of origin, so it is impossible to trace them using solely the microfilmed schedules. Additional sources, for example, contemporary newspapers, offer a way out in search for names of Hungarian people who migrated to the United States, but these sources are sporadic by their nature and the spelling of the foreign names is hopelessly and gloriously confused in them. Using them as the only starting point for further research surely leads nowhere. It is true that the Passenger Arrival Lists would offer an excellent addition to the Census Records as means of finding information, but the problem with them, again, is

that searching in the lists is only possible on the basis of names, and evidently some additional information is needed, as the records of passengers are voluminous. For some parts, there are hundreds of lists for each year, many of which contain hundreds of names. A general search, consequently, would be prohibitively time-consuming.

These are the main reasons, why, in my point of view, no historian so far has embarked on collecting data about this first sizeable wave of Hungarian immigrants to the United States. Moving downward (starting out from general population statistics) in these records does not seem to work with the early immigration records, therefore, the exact opposite could offer a possible way of approaching them. However, as we have seen, the confusing nature of the various record groups and the fact that we know the full names of only a disproportionately small number of immigrants makes this enterprise almost hopeless.

A different approach and the recent development in research methodology, however, may solve this deadlock and finally enable us to place this early period of Hungarian expatriation within the general framework of Hungarian emigration to the United States. This aid may come from the realm of genealogy, therefore, a brief introduction to this often neglected stepchild of history may be worthwhile.

Genealogy is the study of the history of families and the documentation of lines of ancestry and descent. Although in the United States pedigree *per se* has not been crucial in determining status or in transferring property, in more limited situations it has had some importance. Since the 18th century genealogy has developed into a subsidiary academic discipline, serving sociology, history, medicine, and law. Libraries often have departments of genealogy, where volumes used in genealogical research are kept (passenger ship lists, immigration records, family genealogies); many historical societies also have such libraries.²⁴

As the United States is undoubtedly a nation of immigrants, where individual self-definition is often complicated by geographical, cultural and language barriers, people understandably wish to know about their ancestors and roots. Getting hold of these pieces

²⁴ Concerning genealogy consult, Bill R. Linder, *How To Trace Your Family History: A Basic Guide to Genealogy* (New York: Everest House, 1980); Loretto Dennis Szucs and Sandra Hargreaves Luebking, eds., *The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy* (Ancestry.com, 1996); Bertram Hawthorne Groene, *Tracing Your Civil War Ancestor* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 1973)

of information is often immensely difficult, especially for those with no research experience. Therefore, it is no exaggeration to say that one of the most profitable history-related enterprises overseas is being a genealogist: a special kind of family “private eye” who takes the lives of long-deceased relatives under his magnifying glass.

What makes their services particularly indispensable is the fact that the primary sources of information are the federal records available for research at the National Archives. As it could be seen previously, doing research there can be quite confusing. One cannot enter knowing only a single name. The National Archives keeps federal records, therefore, one should always have information on when, how, and where their ancestor came into contact with the federal government (birth, enlistment, marriage, naturalization, death). For those who find this job too complicated, professional genealogists can offer assistance. Although they are looked at reproachfully by the rest of the historian profession, these “genies”, as they are generally nicknamed, can be of great help in certain cases and not just in the reconstruction of family histories. One of the fields where genealogy can provide precious pieces of information is migration studies and this is the point where this branch of history can come in handy in connection when studying the history of the Kossuth emigration.

However, our original problems are not solved by this recognition. We hardly face any chance going to the National Archives, if we know only the names, misspelled as they often were as the expatriates disembarked, either by the master of the ship or the immigration officer at their port of entry. However, two factors offer a solution to this problem. Searching for ancestors ranks just below baseball among pastimes in the United States, although it is clear that not everybody has the opportunity to do research personally in the archives, and not everybody can afford to hire a “genie” to do this job for them. It is no wonder that the spread of the Internet spawned very successful enterprises which offered access to the digitized images of the original documents, and, what is more important, the creation of these databases offer advanced search options, other than the rather restricted ones in the archives.

Throughout my work I used two of the most popular Internet-based genealogical research aids, *HeritageQuest Online* and *Ancestry.com*. They are the greatest genealogical data providers online and the combined application of them made it possible

to fill in many of the gaps in my knowledge about the Kossuth emigrés. Their advanced search options enable us to search for an individual's surname, age, state, county, age sex, race and birthplace. And this last feature is exactly what we have sought. This is the most crucial option of the software, yet — although they have been working carefully with the transcription of the original documents — some mistakes, mostly misspellings do occur, but based on the previous archives-based research, these can be corrected rather easily, and more importantly, the user has the chance to go back to the original documents themselves for double-checking, which is not always possible when using traditional sources. These aids also solve the problem of accessibility, and modern technology can help eliminate errors in the archival material, as the digital versions can be zoomed, so a considerably higher level of precision can be reached. What is more, by using these softwares not only the household heads can be detected, but further members of the households (spouses, underage children, elderly people, servants) as well. This would not have been possible by using the microfilm version of the population records.

These two data providers offer much more than that. *Ancestry.com's* United States Immigration Records collection contains various crucial sources of information, among them passenger lists for all major ports, immigration lists, naturalization applications, and the data of the Emigrant Savings Bank. All these enable us to try to fill the gaps in our knowledge about the lives and careers of Hungarian immigrants, particularly if combined with the Birth and Marriages Index, and Death Records.

However, not only archival sources are worth examining. Contemporary newspapers are also real “treasure chests” as very often they provide unique insight into the lives of individuals: news about their achievements, or advertisements connected to their enterprises, gossip about them, or death notices and obituaries. The greatest problem with them is their availability, as, except for the most widespread papers such as the *New York Daily Times* in the mid-1900s, they are not accessible everywhere. This can also be overcome by the use of the Internet, as there are services which offer the digitized versions of historical newspapers online.²⁵

²⁵ Although considerably more difficult to handle, historical newspaper collections exist in microfilm version. Consult, Winifred Gregorie, ed., *American Newspapers, 1821-1936: A Union List of Files Available in the United States and Canada* (New York, 1937)

For every Hungarian student of Hungarian-American relations, the Vasváry Collection of the Somogyi Library in Szeged, Hungary is the place to start. Edmund Vasváry did an excellent job in collecting material related to the history of the Hungarian-American community. The collection, founded in 1978, after the death of Vasváry, contains 437 volumes of newspaper clippings, manuscripts, letters, and more than 1,000 books. The collection was microfilmed and one of the copies went to the American Hungarian Foundation in New Brunswick, New Jersey. However, it is continuously expanding with material related to the Hungarian past in the United States through donations from both institutions and individuals.

One compendium of primary sources has to be highlighted. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* is definitely the most comprehensive collection of the primary sources of the conflict, and it is by all means the foundation of all Civil War-related research.²⁶

The number of secondary sources relating to the Hungarians' participation in the American Civil War is overwhelming. This is not to suggest that all these works have Hungarians in their main focus of attention, but important bits and pieces of information can be obtained from them. However, this way of finding trace of references is very slow and tiresome, and the results are sometimes haphazard.

Although not studying the Hungarians involvement in the Civil War, and being much more focused in its subject than my work, Martin Öfele's *German-Speaking Officers in the U.S. Colored Troops, 1863-1867* deserves special mentioning here. There is only a superficial overlap between our topics, however, Öfele had to face very similar methodological challenges to those of mine. Working with a sample comprised of the records of a given number of individuals, it might be difficult for him as well as for me to make it clear why any individual's fate should be representative for a larger group. Öfele included various groups he collectively calls "German-speaking" in his study (among them some Hungarian forty-eighters, as well), which is somewhat confusing. Similarly, however, I also had to opt for not differentiating between Hungarian immigrants in general and the so-called Kossuth emigrés: on the one hand, the limited number of

²⁶ For information on the Vasváry Collection see, <http://www.sk-szeged.hu/english/vasvary.html> (January 25, 2007); *The War of the Rebellion. A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901) (Hereafter cited as OR)

sources would not allow this, on the other, available population statistics show that the number of Hungarians arriving in the United States prior to 1849-50 was negligible. To concentrate on a single issue only, when discussing the motivations to enlist in the Union or the Confederate army, it would be ideal if we could start out with the question: "Why did the individuals volunteer in the Civil War?" and then move on to the analysis of general patterns which applies to the entire group. With an even more restrictive sample than Öfele (he analyzed the careers of 265 German-speaking officers, whereas the total number of Hungarians who without doubt served in the Civil War is around 100), it is hard to arrive at conclusions. Öfele's book, nevertheless, along with other works, including mine, should be regarded as the first steps towards research placing foreigners in the Civil War in a comparative context, although the bulk of the necessary research is yet to be carried out.

Overall, a comprehensive approach to this subject requires examination of a multitude of primary and secondary sources, at numerous depositories, and in a variety of formats. I also had to adopt methodology from several fields of study: migration, social, military history as well as microhistory, among others. To illustrate the nature of research necessary to gather information about the Hungarian Civil War participants, I am presenting one of them as a case study, focusing on methodology I applied and sometimes tailored to the specific research demands of this work.

Bernard Bettelheim was one of the very few Hungarian Civil War participants who was actually no "Kossuth emigré", as he had left Hungary prior to 1848. He was not entirely unknown in the Hungarian-American literature: Leslie Konnyu published an article about him in the *American Hungarian Review* in 1989, but Hungarian-American works touching upon him failed to grasp what an adventurous career he really had. First, I worked with the English-language literature coming from the field of historical links and contacts between Japan and Western Civilization, and religious history (Bettelheim served as a Christian missionary in the Liu Ch'iu Islands). His diary, published recently, is totally unfamiliar in the Hungarian literature, just like the numerous secondary works focusing on his activities as a British naval missionary. This period of his life could be reconstructed based on various published primary accounts linked to Commodore Perry's

expedition to Japan between 1852 and 1854. It was Perry who took Bettelheim and his family to the United States.

The American career of the Hungarian missionary, who had acquired a medical degree in Italy in the 1840s, could be studied mostly with the help of population statistics. The microfilm and digital versions of the Federal Censuses of 1860 and 1880 provide essential information concerning Bettelheim and members of his family. The combined use of these two types of sources enabled me to detect Bettelheim in the genealogical database at all, as his name was misspelled in the references as 'Bettlehan'. Furthermore, I gained detailed data concerning the particulars of his family members. Other genealogical information include the cemetery records of his son, Bernard, Jr. citing that he was born onboard a British vessel. (Census data even indicate the coordinates of the exact site where he was born on the Atlantic ocean.)

925	926	Barnard J. Bettelheim	50	M	Yasum (2670	300	Hungary
925	922	Elizabeth M.	40	F				England
		Victoria R.	16	F				do
		Barnard J. G.	14	M				37° 51' + 1" EN Atlantic Ocean
		Susan F. M.	11	F				London, Japan

Bernard Bettelheim in the Federal Census of 1860. NA, M653, Roll 199, 824.

Another type of sources I used was the military records: Civil War service records and pension files in the National Archives. Both of these were available about Bettelheim, too. Microhistory could also be of help: local newspaper articles, ads and obituaries contain plenty of information concerning the life of individuals. (Upon Bettelheim's arrival in the United States, for instance, *The New York Daily Times* published several articles about the experiences of the Hungarian missionary.)²⁷

Contact had to be initiated with the Okinawa Prefectural Government to get reliable information about Bettelheim's monument in Ryu Kyu. This was the typical course to follow with items falling into the category of historical memory.

²⁷ *The New York Daily Times*, March 31, 1855, 8; *The New York Daily Times*, April 17, 1855, 1.

The very much scattered nature of the Hungarian community in the United States resulted that its presentation had to be carried out through the analysis of individual careers, each of which required particular methods and tricks.

CHAPTER TWO

“TO THESE SHORES I WAS DRIVEN BY TYRANNY”: HUNGARIAN EMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES IN THE ANTEBELLUM ERA

The decade between 1845 and 1855 saw a spectacular increase in immigration in the United States. The approximately three million immigrants who entered the country represented one half of those who sought refuge or a better life in the United States between the 1810s and the Civil War. The majority of them left Europe for economic reasons, such as land shortage, labor surplus, and the potato-blight in Ireland, but after the revolutions of 1848 and 1849 politically motivated immigration became considerable for the first time. In the history of Hungarian emigration to the United States the so-called "Kossuth emigration", which started after the defeat of the Hungarian War of Independence against the Habsburg rule and peaked around Lajos Kossuth's trip to America in 1851-1852, can be considered as the first noteworthy wave. Prior to 1848, only sporadic contacts had existed between Hungary and the United States: it was more or less limited to travelers and adventurers, entrepreneurs, craftsmen and missionaries. According to the Passenger Arrival Lists some fifty Hungarians visited America in the period between 1828 and 1848. This does not mean, however, that these years did not have any significance in the history of Hungarian-American links: the first accounts of America and its people reached a relatively wide audience in Hungary which played a major role in forming public opinion about the United States and sowing the seeds of America's image as the "Land of the Free."²⁸

Many Hungarian political and military leaders, having clashed violently with the Habsburgs in 1848/49 sought refuge from retaliation following the defeat of the cause of Hungarian freedom. In the first 2-3 years following 1849, Hungarian expatriates were scattered about in various countries, only to realize how awfully difficult it was for them to make a living. When the internment of the Kossuth emigrés in Turkey concluded, the

²⁸ James McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and the Reconstruction* (New York: Knopf, 1982), 82; For an excellent analysis of the image of America in Hungary up to 1848 see, Géza Závodszky, *Az Amerika-motívum és a polgárosodó Magyarország: A kezdetektől 1848-ig* (Budapest: Korona Kiadó, 1997)

overwhelming majority of them left for Britain, forming the largest Hungarian immigrant community of the time in London. However, they soon realized that there was a shortage of employment opportunities, particularly as most of them did not have command of English at all. Furthermore, they were embarrassed by the fact that the British Government failed to provide them the financial support they had hoped they would be granted. That was the main reason why many of them started to contemplate leaving Albion for the New World. The British Parliament also supported this solution for the problem of Hungarian political refugees, and voted £1,000 for financing the expenses of their transatlantic voyage. But what gave a real impetus to Hungarian emigration to the United States was the visit of Louis Kossuth himself in America, as the “Nation’s Guest” between December 1851 and July 1852, and the immense enthusiasm with which Americans greeted the Hungarian “Champion of Freedom”.

However, it would be a mistake to suggest that only external forces turned the Hungarians’ attention towards America. Although it is true that the connections between the two countries had been limited prior to 1848, there were definitely sources upon which the Hungarian public could form a picture of the United States. Consequently, it is worthwhile to look closely at the image of America in mid-19th century Hungary.

Despite the sporadic nature of the links between the two countries, the Hungarian press quite regularly published articles on various social issues in America. Special emphasis, of course, was given to the institution of slavery, which was abhorred by most of the Hungarian public, and to the situation of Native Americans. Although only a very small number of Hungarians lived in America in the period between 1810 and 1848, yet every now and then, first-hand accounts appeared in Hungarian journals. The ones penned not by travelers but those who actually settled down overseas went beyond a superficial analysis of certain aspects of American social relations or simply praising the high level of technological advancement as compared to Hungary, but they were able to give well-founded comparison between what they had experienced in their homeland and how they lived in America.

Freedom is a recurrent theme in most of the accounts. Mrs. Gáspár Princz, for instance, wrote from Baltimore, Maryland in 1818, “This is a free country, we have no king here, but a President. Everyone can do whatever they wish here in order to make a

living. Nobody is nobler than the others, all of us are nobles. People don't greet each other by raising their hats – the poor is as good here as the wealthy.” Her final remark makes it clear that she did not have second thoughts about staying in the United States: “*Our country is a free republic.*”²⁹

Similar ideas were expressed by ship captain Károly Gy., who also highlighted in a letter written in 1834: “Everybody is free to think, write, and speak as they wish — others might attempt to contradict, but the government does not get involved in any of these debates.” He described the Americans as a very peaceful nation, since: “Even in a huge city like New York, not a single soldier is to be seen, as there is no need for them.”³⁰

Lőrinc Tóth, in his article entitled “The Old and The New World” published in 1837 wrote that “despite some of its imperfections, America is still promising, a Soul, an energetic Youth, as compared to the crippled institutions of the Old World.” His conclusion was: “Although the Americans are only at the dawn of their existence, they understand the science of Truth and Reality way better than we do.”³¹

In 1893, one of the Hungarian Civil War participants, Cornelius Fernet recalled his knowledge of America prior to his emigration in 1849 as follows:

Forty-four years ago there were very few who were familiar with the social and intellectual conditions of this great, distant western continent — not just in Hungary, but in Europe in general. I myself could infer to the conditions in the New World from accounts which were hard to access and were very often distorted, and from Cooper's novels. However, I knew much about the history of the glorious and successful War of Independence which brought about the founding of this giant republic.³²

Those who had belonged to the social layer of peasantry back in Hungary could not but applaud the lack of oppression and feeling of social inferiority. All of these accounts necessarily had great influence on everyone who read them in Hungary, which was

²⁹ Mrs. Princz's letter written to her relatives in Hungary (1818) Vasváry Collection. Somogyi Library. Szeged, Hungary. R1, d, 31. Emphasis mine and translation mine.

³⁰ Cited in Kende, *Magyarok Amerikában*, I, 42-43. Translation mine.

³¹ Lőrinc Tóth, “Ó és Új Világ,” *Athenaeum* (August 31, 1837), 273-280. Translation mine.

³² Cornelius Fernet, “Amerika rokonszenve a magyar szabadságharcz férfiai iránt,” *Történelmi Lapok*. (April 1, 1893), 69. Translation mine.

groaning under the adverse effects of her Union with Austria as well as of the negative legacy of long centuries of feudalism.

Probably the most important of all the accounts of the United States in this period was Sándor Farkas Bölöni's *Journey to North America* which appeared in 1834. Bölöni, one of the pre-eminent intellectuals from Transylvania, was granted permission by Vienna to travel to the United States. Moreover, his book escaped the attention of the Habsburg authorities, and he managed to publish his travelogue without censorship. His three-month stay in the United States resulted in much more than a simple travelogue. Bölöni gave a very thorough analysis of the working of American democracy, and his observations regarding the social framework were also wise. No wonder the intellectual elite of Hungary heartily welcomed his *Journey in North America*. István Széchenyi, prominent Hungarian liberal thinker and reformer of the time, wrote the following in his letter addressed to Bölöni, "How unexpressably pleasant moments I experienced by reading your book I can hardly explain. If only they had been hours and days! When I took it in hand I was not able to put it aside! I thank the Almighty for the birth of this book; its beneficial effect on our country can not be estimated." The opinion of Miklós Wesselényi, another leading figure of the Hungarian reform movement of the 1830s-1840s, was not less enthusiastic about the book. He expressed his "scholarly envy", for Bölöni could see "*the young giant of human rights and freedom*" with his own eyes, while he himself was continuously denied permission by Vienna no matter how eager he was to travel to the U.S. In his opinion, the three major achievements of the American system were *civic equality*, the *political system* and the *pleasant social conditions*. He considers the ideas of Bölöni's books as "seeds which would soon begin to sprout and will grow into a giant tree in Hungarian soil." Besides Bölöni's book, many read Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, and historian Stephen Béla Várdy is probably right when he wrote that the influence of Bölöni's book in Hungary was very similar to that of Tocqueville in Western Europe. These books created a strikingly attractive picture of America among Hungarians. It is no wonder, therefore, that after the defeat of the War of Independence, many opted to try their luck overseas.³³

³³ Sándor Farkas Bölöni, *Utazás Észak-Amerikában* (Cluj: Dácia, 1975), 326; Várdy, *Magyarok az Újvilágban*, 35.

Another highly intriguing account was written by Ágoston Haraszthy, who visited America some ten years later than Bölöni, and spent considerably more time overseas. During his almost two-year visit, he focused more on the economic opportunities offered by America, and in this fact lies the influence of his work published in 1844, also under the title *Utazás Északamerikában* [Journey in North America]. What is more, Haraszthy himself left Hungary for good and settled down in America along with this family. His career was a typical series of ups and downs for an entrepreneur: he is reputed to be the father of vine-culture in California; however, he was very often on the verge of bankruptcy. Even his death cannot be considered banal: he was probably killed by alligators on his own estate in Nicaragua in 1869.³⁴

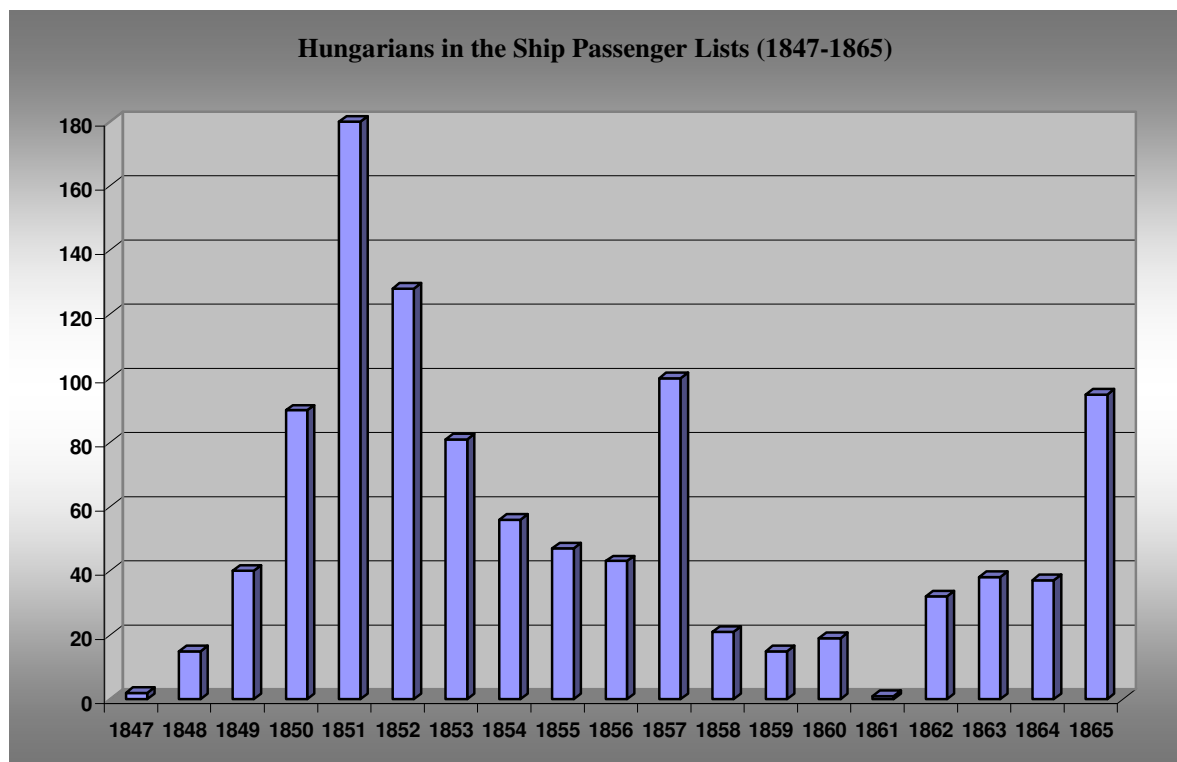
All these works played major roles in popularizing America, and creating an image of it in Hungary both as a land where individuals are not denied the freedoms of speech, religion, press, or assembly by the government, and where there is an immense variety of opportunity for everyone to get along. As the lack of these in Hungary were among the hardest of all the grievances in the Reform Age, their very existence in America made it an appealing place for many emigrés.

The first emigrants in this wave of Hungarian revolutionaries, soldiers and political refugees arrived as early as 1849, that is about two years prior to Kossuth's visit to America. Usually we consider László (Ladislaus) Újházy, János (John) Prágay and the above-mentioned Kornél (Cornelius) Fornet as the first Kossuth emigrés; they set foot on American soil on December 9, 1849. Nevertheless, the analysis of the Passenger Lists shows us that they were by no means the only Hungarians winding up in the United States as early as 1849. In 1847 the official records name only two persons of Hungarian origin arriving in America, whereas in 1849 there are forty of them, which was a twentyfold increase. Until 1851, the year when Kossuth himself traveled to America, the number of Hungarian arrivals doubled each year. Just as the attention of the Hungarian revolutionary leader turned away from the United States after 1852, the number of Hungarians emigrating to America decreased considerably, as well, and showed constant shrinking in the subsequent years with the exception of 1857, when the number of arrivals peaked again, rather unexpectedly. (See diagram showing *Hungarians in the*

³⁴ Ágoston Haraszthy, *Utazás Északamerikában* (Pest: G. Heckenast, 1844)

Passenger Lists, 1847-1865) Although some might jump to the conclusion that this had to do with the end of the Crimean War, which could have resulted in the inflow of veterans seeking opportunities in America, when we take a closer look at the sample it becomes evident that most of the people arriving during 1857 were men taking their families with them: spouses and often 4 or 5 children. Earlier this had been rather unusual: the typical emigrant from Hungary in that period was single, male, and in his late twenties or thirties.

Immigration records indicate that by 1858 the inflow of Hungarians descended almost to the level of Pre-1848 immigration and hit rock bottom in 1861. Although the Civil War years saw a fresh increase, this cannot be assigned exclusively to the pull of the conflict being a pull-factor. The composition of the immigrants in the period between 1861 and 1865 was rather heterogeneous influx. Still it can be safely stated that the earlier works were wrong in claiming that after the hopes of a new Hungarian freedom fight had come to nothing with the peace treaty of Villafranca in 1859. Several hundred disappointed soldiers had retired from service in the Hungarian Legion in Italy, and had moved to the United States, many of them actually entering the service of the Union Army. In reality, as the chapter on the biographical information of Civil War participants demonstrates, hardly any Hungarians went to the United States with the purpose of performing military service during the years of the Civil War. (A notable exception is Joseph Pulitzer). Many had not reached military age, or were arriving with their families (being quite unlikely fresh volunteers), and by collating the list of immigrants with that of Civil War service records, it can be easily seen that there is basically no overlap between the two groups.



Source: Data compiled from Records of the U.S. Customs Service, Record Group 36, Passenger Arrival Lists, M334, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

A study of the ports of departure for emigrants of Hungarian origin immediately reveals a major transition. In 1848 the German ports of Bremen and Hamburg were still the locations from which more than sixty per cent of the emigrants embarked. In 1849, however, half of the passengers set off from Liverpool, Southampton, Glasgow or London, indicating that by then a considerable number of Hungarians had moved to the British Isles. In 1850 this rate was eighty per cent, and the proportion of those Hungarians leaving for America from Britain did not shrink below 50 per cent in the subsequent years either, although it seems that Kossuth's visit attracted basically every member of the Hungarian refugee community who contemplated emigrating to America. Starting in 1854, there was a steady shift back toward the port of Bremen, and by 1857 more than ten times as many Hungarians sailed from Germany to America as from Britain. This tendency seemed to come to a halt around the coming of the Civil War, and

British ports managed to get back some of their passengers. In 1865 exactly half of the Hungarian passengers embarked in Liverpool or London.

Emigrating to the United States was a major undertaking at the time, although making preparations was not too complicated for most Hungarians. As refugees, very few of them had any belongings with them. However, purchasing their tickets was indeed an obstacle. The fare was rather high, according to estimates about one third of a laborer's annual income was required to buy passage for an average-sized family. Many Hungarians unable to find employment in Britain could hardly make ends meet. To save them from starvation and find a way to get rid of the unwanted refugees quickly, as well as to comply with the diplomatic pressure of Austria, the British Parliament voted to take on the cost of the voyage to America. In his letter on the transportation of Hungarians to America, Miklós Kiss reported to Kossuth that everyone received £12 from the British Government: £5 for transportation, £3 to pay off their debts, £2 after embarkation, and £2 upon their arrival in America. Kiss informed the Hungarian ex-governor that the British authorities had warned them that they could not expect any further help, and were advised to leave. Altogether 76 Hungarians made use of this opportunity and emigrated to America between April 2 and August 21, 1852.³⁵

We can be certain that the majority of emigrants of the age did not look back on their ship with fond memories. Although there were more and more steamers in service, the tickets for sailing ships were considerably cheaper, which is why many refugees opted for the latter. Crossing the Atlantic Ocean onboard a sailing ship lasted on average 43 days, whereas a steamship could usually make it in 12-14 days. No wonder that for most passengers the voyage onboard sailing ships seemed to last for eternity. What is more, they had to face a variety of hardships including sea sickness, inadequate food, lack of privacy, and frequent illnesses. Most Hungarians had never been on an ocean-going vessel, and seasickness gave many of them a hard time. Lajos Dancs recalls a fellow Hungarian named Almády who was a real giant on land, but aboard ship went down with sea-sickness immediately. He did not even get out of bed throughout the 31 days of their

³⁵ Miklós Kiss to Kossuth on the transportation of Hungarians to the US from Britain. (March 26, 1852), London; Jánossy, *Kossuth-emigráció*, II, 709-711.

voyage to New York. Dancs slyly remarked that Almády became a giant again as soon as he felt solid land under his feet.³⁶

The one-and-a-half month sea voyage gave plenty of time for the passengers to linger about onboard — if the weather was calm — and puzzle over their situation and prospects. Some lamented leaving their homeland, but the great majority looked forward to catching sight of the American coastline — which would not only mean the end of their maritime ordeals, but the beginning of their new lives. Ladislaus Újházy, one of the key figures of Hungarian emigration to the United States in this period, summarized his major motivation for moving to America: “To these shores I was driven by tyranny.”³⁷

Positive thinking sometimes gave place to feelings of homesickness and sorrow over not knowing whether they would ever be able to return to Hungary. Emigration itself was indeed a very intense experience. Having spent a few months in America, Eugene Kozlay penned the following long poem about it:

Let you emigrate. . .

When the heart is not feeling, as it ponders upon
this word,—when you love
your country only when it gives you pleasure and
glory, and not when it is
bitter,—when the one who is leaving doesn't hear in
his soul: “stay,
stay”—when you are convinced after your calculations
that you can't use
anything anymore at home,—when your secret hopes are
quenched in your
heart,—when you don't love anyone anymore, or
anything that you leave here,—
then,—let you emigrate.

But then, what is the home? Land, what is given
freely elsewhere,—here the
green grass is grown on the blood of your ancestors,
but there it is still
richer; here you find national memories at every

³⁶ Lajos Dancs, *Töredékek tíz éves emigrationalis élményeimből* (Nagy-Szöllős: Székely Simon, 1890) (Hereafter cited as, Dancs, *Töredékek*), 12.

³⁷ Homer L. Calkin, “The Modern Ark: The Coming of the Foreigners,” *The Palimpsest*. The State Historical Society of Iowa (April, 1962), 182.

step you take, gladness or
sorrow, glory or grief; one hill—one field of
victory— one ruin, or
grave—what do you see? There are views elsewhere
too, and for those who
passed away it is no matter whether someone
remembers them or not.

Be cool. What is the merit of this nation, for you
to love her, for you to
belong to her? Other nations also have their
history, maybe greater than
ours—all of their future is more shining, all of
them are richer.

And what is patriotism all about? Weakness of the
soul, poetic ardour,
childish instinct. When some secret emotion is
asking in you: do you see
those familiar hills, whose flowers you know by
name? Isn't your memory
dreaming of the threshold of that house where you
played your childhood
years, aren't you hearing those familiar sounds that
are rising with the
flowers of the field, don't you see in your dreams
the faces of those whom
you loved, don't you sleep quietly knowing your head
is leaning on the heart
of your fatherland, don't the boastings fly in your
heart when you think of
the past, doesn't it swell when you look into the
future? Can you bring them
with you? The plain of mirages, the familiar
dwelling place, the sweet
melody, the kind faces, the memory and hope that are
bound to the life of
the nation? Banish the emotion from your heart, and
make yourself believe
that the world is big enough, that the people are
equal everywhere, that it
doesn't matter for humankind whether there is a
Hungarian nation or not.

Let you emigrate! Let you sell your land to whoever
is willing to pay the

best price, let a stranger nation come in to your
place, and let stay to be
Hungarian only those who are fools, and are in love
with the land, and the
poor who have to love it. Let us tell to each other
that now is the time
when the nation should be divided, to spread into
the east and into the
west. Let him not live there where his ancestors
have died, and he die where
he was born.

Let you emigrate, who doesn't feel else than the
changing of seasons, who
can look back from the border without wet eyes, who
doesn't have a burden
other than his luggage, who doesn't want to turn
with a bold face toward the
dark times, and who is looking for sunshine only. He
is a happy man, and he
is smart if he leaves us here, we who are determined
to bear all things, to
be tired always, and keep the old heart forever.³⁸

/Around 1852/

Kozlay cannot be considered a typical emigrant in the sense that he was not looking backward, but was confident that emigration would eventually mean their fate turning for the better.

Most accounts of the sea voyages recalled clearly the moment of the first glimpse of American land. József Madarász wrote about his feelings at this moment: "I caught sight in a quarter-of-an-hour distance the outlines of the state of New Jersey. [...] We were eager to take a look at the Free Land, America with sacred reverence. I greeted the sacred shelter of the long-persecuted with the blessings of my homeland, my blood and my

³⁸ Eugene Kozlay, "Let you emigrate" Kozlay Papers. Sándor Petőfi Museum of Literature. Budapest. Under procession. I am grateful to Janet Kozlay for calling my attention to this piece of writing and sharing it with me.

beloved ones.”³⁹ Another emigrant, Salamon Neumann, gave the following advice to everyone following his footsteps:

Everyone setting foot on the soil of the United States should erase from their memories what they were, what they were accustomed to, what their ranks used to be in their homelands, because here they will get right into the midst of a whirlpool the waves of which will suffuse them at once.⁴⁰

Based on Federal Immigration Records, we can see that the overwhelming majority of the Kossuth emigrants landed at the port of New York City. At the end of the 1840s some arrived in Boston or New Orleans, but their proportion remained under 10 per cent. Starting in 1850, data show that Hungarians almost exclusively landed in the city of New York. In this, of course, there might be some discrepancies as the passenger lists for some harbors and for some years are rather scant, nevertheless the extant records clearly indicate the trend.

There are two clearly distinguishable periods in Hungarians’ arrival in America. Starting in 1849, and ending with Kossuth’s leaving for Britain disappointed and rather ignored, Hungarians enjoyed immense popularity in the United States. The American public had been following the events of the Hungarian War of Independence with elevated interest — it is not at all an exaggeration to state that this event placed Hungary on the world map for Americans. In *The New York Times* alone nearly 1,000 articles appeared on Kossuth or his followers during 1851 and 1852. The huge demand for information about Hungary led the renowned philanthropist, Charles Loring Brace to visit the country in 1851 and to summarize his impressions in a book entitled *Hungary in 1851: with an Experience of the Austrian Police* (the title refers to his not-so-pleasant experience when he was arrested by the Austrian authorities and briefly imprisoned in

³⁹ József Madarász, *Emlékirataim* (Budapest: Franklin-Társulat, 1883) (Hereafter cited as, Madarász, *Emlékirataim*), 296. Translation mine

⁴⁰ Salamon Neumann, “Amerikai vázlatok,” *Pesti Napló* (February 26, 1860) Translation mine

Nagyvárad.) His book was published at the time of Kossuth's visit in America, and became a bestseller right away.⁴¹

The American press was full of outbursts of sympathy. On November 18, 1851 the *New York Times*, the top selling daily paper in New York City wrote about the Hungarian refugees: "In exile, without home — friendless, penniless, and every feeling of their sad hearts and every thought of their minds imprisoned by our unknown language, they are among us, either knowing not what to do, or else wringing from most unsuitable labors a precarious and scanty subsistence."⁴²

The first refugees to arrive were received with utmost cordiality. President Zachary Taylor in his letter to Ladislaus Újházy, who was considered to be the leader of the Hungarian immigrants by both the Hungarians themselves and the Americans, wrote: "I am sure that I speak the universal sentiment of my countrymen in bidding you and your associates a cordial welcome to our soil, the natural asylum of the oppressed from every clime. We offer you protection and a free participation in the benefits of our institutions and our laws, and trust that you may find in America a second home." Hamilton Fish, Governor of New York also offered an asylum for the "unsuccessful defenders of liberty and the rights of man." The euphoria definitely peaked in December 1851; when Lajos Kossuth set foot on American soil 200,000 people awaited him at the Battery in Lower Manhattan. Kossuth's speeches were listened to with great eagerness, and he was hailed as the champion of liberty. In the following months, he started a tour in America during which he delivered some six hundred speeches, and visited the most significant cities in the United States.⁴³

The Hungarian ex-governor sought to achieve can be best described as intervention for non-intervention; he tried to obtain American financial and military support in case a new freedom fight started. Concerning the Washingtonian heritage of

⁴¹ Charles Loring Brace, *Hungary in 1851: with an Experience of the Austrian Police* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1852) (Hereafter cited as, Brace, *Hungary in 1851*) The first Hungarian translation has appeared just recently: Charles Loring Brace, *Magyarország 1851-ben* (Csaba Lévai and István Kornél Vida, eds.) (Máriabesenyő-Gödöllő: Attraktor, 2006)

⁴² *The New York Times*, November 18, 1851, 4.

⁴³ For information about Kossuth's visit to America among others see, John H Komlós, *Louis Kossuth in America, 1851-1852* (Buffalo, N.Y.: East European Institute, 1973) and Tibor Frank, "Marketing Hungary: Kossuth and the Politics of Propaganda," in *Lajos Kossuth Sent Word*, edited by László Péter, Martyn Rady, Peter Sherwood (London: Hungarian Cultural Center, 2003), 221-249.

neutrality in American foreign policy, he concluded, “The principle of neutrality does not involve the principle of indifference to the violation of the laws of nations, which are a common property to all nations. Indifference to these violations is rather contrary to the principle of neutrality; as, indeed, it is a fallacy to believe that you are neutral.” He, however, turned out to have misread this. Abraham Lincoln, just to mention one example, in his “Resolutions in Behalf of Hungarian Freedom” made on January 9, 1852, wrote that Louis Kossuth was to be recognized as “the most worthy and distinguished representative of the cause of civil and religious liberty on the continent of Europe,” but also pointed out that “[it was] the duty of our government to neither foment, nor assist, such revolutions in other governments,” and made it clear: “We may not legally or warrantably interfere abroad, to aid, so no other government may interfere abroad.”⁴⁴

Unluckily, Kossuth’s strategy of not getting involved in domestic issues of the United States made him suspect in the eyes of many. The abolitionists were disappointed with him feeling that he let them down: William Lloyd Garrison published a book-length open letter in which he attacked Kossuth for refusing to openly condemn slavery as an evil institution. Besides this new bitter group of enemies, Kossuth failed to win the sympathy of the South: except for New Orleans, none of the cities invited him and the Southerners’ attitude towards him approached open hostility.⁴⁵

Kossuth was deeply disappointed with his failure to achieve the major goal of his trip: diplomatic and military support for a new Hungarian freedom fight that he hoped would come in the not very distant future. However, probably his advocacy alienated the majority of the American public from him: on July 14, 1852 Kossuth left America for Britain aboard the liner *Africa*. On June 9, 1852 *The New York Times* summarized the essence of the Kossuth phenomenon: “We have heard the grandest of orators; our view of the National duty and destiny has been enlarged [...] and the warmth of our patriotism

⁴⁴ Abraham Lincoln, “Resolutions in Behalf of Hungarian Freedom” (January 9, 1852) In Roy P. Basler, ed., *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1953-1955) (Hereafter cited as, *Collected Works*), II, 115-116.

⁴⁵ William Lloyd Garrison, *Letter to Louis Kossuth, Concerning Freedom and Slavery in the United States in Behalf of the American Anti-Slavery Society* (Boston: R.F. Wallcut, 1852)

and humanity tested by the sure gauge of a practical appeal.” The author bade farewell to him by naming him the “Epaminondas, the last Greek of European annals.”⁴⁶

Probably the Hungarian refugees benefited most from his popularity. They were introduced into the social life in New York City, and became the distinguished guests of countless meetings, banquets and rallies. Numerous Associations of Friends of Hungary were founded all over the country, with the exception of the Southern states, of course. The Americans also proved to be great donors: the total amount of money collected was \$84,000, as indicated by Kossuth’s Treasurer, Pál Hajnik, in his report. People of Hungarian origin enjoyed such popularity in the United States those days, that many emigrants of other nationality actually pretended to be Hungarians. One of the finest examples was Col. Béla Estván, who we now know was neither Hungarian by birth (he was born in Vienna, his original name was Peter Heinrich), nor a colonel in the Hungarian Army, as he claimed. (See the chapter on him.) There are several references in the correspondence of Hungarian refugees to impostors pretending to be Hungarians. *The New York Times* published a number of articles on Dr. Naphegyi, who claimed to be a Hungarian physician. He was, however, exposed as a swindler by Ujházi, who revealed that he did not even speak Hungarian.⁴⁷

As most Hungarians came to realize very quickly, American enthusiasm proved to be short lived. The Kossuth craze suddenly died down, so much so, that soon William Henry Seward complained upon the return of Kossuth in Washington, D.C., "Hungary and Kossuth have passed from the memory of all men here but myself." One of the Kossuth sympathizers wrote to him in June 1852:

I am sad and almost discouraged when I reflect upon the fact that we cannot give solid and substantial proofs of the sympathy we profess and which many really feel.[...] As I told you I sent out hundreds of letters appealing to our friends to form associations and send us funds. [...] I have received only four answers and only one of the four contained money[...]The wealthy men of the State are all conservative and opposed to your projects. [...] You electrified our people and from a multitude of small contributions obtained a much larger sum than I supposed to be possible.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ *The New York Times*, June 9, 1852, 2.

⁴⁷ Pál Hajnik’s report on Kossuth’s incomes and expenditures in the US (June 10, 1852), Washington, D.C., Jánossy, *Kossuth-emigráció*, II, 867; *New York Daily Times* (July 27, 1852), 4.

⁴⁸ Cited by Stephen Beszedits, “The Nation’s Guest: Kossuth in America,”

Very similar news reached Kossuth from Pittsburgh: a Mrs. Eliot lamented to Kossuth that “she was not willing to believe [the interest in the Hungarian cause] has all vanished as the distance between [him] and this community has increased.”⁴⁹

Kossuth left the United States soon afterward, so the real losers as American interest diminished were the subsequent waves of immigrants from Hungary. Lajos Dancs, who arrived some two years after the very first emigrants under the leadership of Újházy, summarized his group’s reception in New York City:

We arrived at the Promised Land. No one was waiting for us, we were not received with such an ovation as Újházy and those who had capitulated at Komárom were, and who were welcomed so enthusiastically. They were even granted land by Congress in the state of Iowa, where they founded the city of New Buda. [...] Hardly two years elapsed since the arrival of Újházy, but this time was enough for the Americans to completely forget everything what had happened in Hungary. No one asked who we were, where we were heading for and how we were to make a living. We had to take care of everything by ourselves.⁵⁰

Sándor Lukács, who made a brief, 10-day-long trip to New York City in 1850, came to the very same conclusion. In his letter published in the Hungarian daily *Pesti Napló* he pointed out, “It is typical of the American people that they are very enthusiastic about every novelty, they gaze at it, but when they are finished watching[...] they just throw it away just like used clothing.”⁵¹

By the time Kossuth left the United States several hundred Hungarians had arrived in the United States of America. Although their original intention had been to use the hospitality of the American people and prepare for a new freedom fight in Hungary, they soon realized that no opportunity seemed available. They had no other option but to settle down and get along in the United States. The so-called Kossuth emigration lost its political nature with lightning speed, as several of its members were often forced to do even most menial jobs to make ends meet. How the majority of Hungarians living in

<http://www.hccc.org/A2e/A20224a.shtml> (Accessed: July 21, 2006); Howe to Kossuth. (June 27, 1852) Jánossy, *Kossuth-emigráció*, II, 896-897.

⁴⁹ Mrs. Eliot to Kossuth (May 5, 1852) Pittsburgh, PA; Jánossy, *Kossuth-emigráció*, II, 816-817.

⁵⁰ Dancs, *Töredékek*, 28.

⁵¹ Lukács’s letter published in *Pesti Napló* (December 24, 1850) Translation mine

America experienced the period which started in 1852 and lasted up to the beginning of the Civil War, was probably best described by József Majthényi in a letter written to his wife, “If a man emigrates to America [...] all he needs are strong hands and the will to work.”⁵²

⁵² József Majthényi to his wife. Philadelphia, PA. (August 14, 1851) Cited in Stephen Taba, “Hungarian Pioneers in America,” *The Hungarian Quarterly*, Vol. 7, No. 1, (1941/Spring), 52. (Hereafter cited as, Taba, “Hungarian Pioneers”)

CHAPTER THREE

“EXTRA HUNGARIAM NON EST VITA, SI EST VITA, NON EST ITA”⁵³ KOSSUTH EMIGRÉS IN THE UNITED STATES PRIOR TO THE CIVIL WAR

For most Kossuth emigrants, it became obvious very soon after their arrival that they would have to prepare for a longer stay in the United States, as the situation of Hungary was not likely to improve in the short run. Ladislaus Újházy, the key figure of this first phase of the Hungarians' inflow into the country, was convinced that the Hungarians in America should try to stick together, settle down and form a coherent community prepared for any opportunity to start a new freedom fight in Hungary. Right after his landing in America in December 1849, he wrote to Francis Pulszky: “My hobbyhorse theory is that all Hungarian expatriates and the remnants of our Revolution should concentrate here, because we could not organize ourselves strongly in order to be able to do something for the sake of the rebirth of our homeland elsewhere, but in this free country, where all our activities are free.”⁵⁴

At first not everyone agreed with Újházy. As long as the Americans' enthusiasm towards Kossuth and the Hungarians lasted, it was relatively easy for the refugees to make a living, in spite of the fact that very few of them spoke English. However, as soon as they had nothing much to expect from the Americans any more, they were to learn probably the hardest lesson of all: the American work ethic.

Most of the Kossuth emigrés knew no trade, and they had no experience regarding manual labor. Without this and the knowledge of English they were soon to realize that they faced no chance whatsoever on the labor market, and, unfortunately enough, many of them were very slow to understand this. Having been politicians, intellectuals and soldiers back in Hungary, they had no qualification or expertise they could have utilized in America. Lajos Dancs, who arrived in America in the summer of 1851, recalled:

We were out to look for jobs, but when we were asked what trade we knew, they were highly surprised at us responding, ‘none’. “How can you live without a business?” We replied that we were well up in making war, fencing, riding.

⁵³ Popular saying in Latin among Hungarians at the time meaning: “There is no life outside Hungary, if there is, it is not like it.”

⁵⁴ Újházy to Pulszky (December 25, 1849) Cited in Ács, *New Buda*, 107.

We were almost laughed at: “What is the point in all that?” [...] It was to no avail us saying that we were willing to learn anything, we were determined and had talent, they were just shaking their heads and no one would give us work.⁵⁵

The Kossuth Emigrants, although they had fought under the flag of social change in Hungary, carried along with them the social conceptions of their homeland, where the nobility was exempt from work, and manual labor was considered degrading. Francis Pulszky summarized what he had come across in America:

But now after having seen more than half of the states I must confess I feel the greatest respect for this nation of workers. [...]Idleness is not the distinctive feature of gentlemanship but even if blended with a great fortune, it is always despised. *Otium cum dignitate*, this great aim of the Europeans is here entirely impossible. A rentier who lives to spend and to enjoy, not to work, would be turned out from every society, and every work is regarded as honorable. It is a new feature in mankind’s history.⁵⁶

József Majthényi had very similar impressions about this aspect of life in America. He wrote to his wife in 1851: “I have seen neither a beggar nor any poor looking person, because the flourishing industry and extensive trade provide an honest livelihood for everybody unless he prefers to remain lazy. Work is a virtue here, and by it one can acquire not only the daily bread, but even, within a few years, a little capital.” The first warning newcomers usually received from those who had spent some time in America was similar to the one István Kinizsi got from Gedeon Ács: “My friend, here you have to work, otherwise you will not only be starving, but become excluded from the higher society.”⁵⁷

The next crucial, and often painful, realization was summarized by the very same Gedeon Ács: “I know no trade, I am ignorant as regards arts, I am not skillful and strong enough to do even hoeing or cutting wood. I studied Caesar’s wars against the Gauls, the points of the Treaty of Utrecht, the way noble estates are inherited [...] but nothing that could earn me a living, if Fate happens to cast me among foreigners.” Lázár Mészáros, former Secretary of War in Hungary, also pointed out:

⁵⁵ Dancs, *Töredékek*, 29.

⁵⁶ Pulszky’s Letter to J. Neumann. Niagara Falls (May 25, 1852) Quoted in Jánossy, *Kossuth-emigráció*, II, 462. *Otium cum dignitate* means leisure in dignity in Latin.

⁵⁷ József Majthényi to his wife. Philadelphia, PA (August 14, 1851) in Taba, “Hungarian Pioneers”, 52; Kinizsi, *Sánta Huszár*, 117.

Those who have positive professions, trades will find work everywhere, and if they are skillful, persevering and industrious enough, will do just fine and will later probably get rich. Those, however, who are cultivated, have knowledge only of literature and other arts, will starve here, unless they get some hard and difficult work.⁵⁸

The accounts of Hungarian emigrants reveal much about their prospects regarding finding employment. Some had qualifications that made them suitable for certain professions. Alexander Asboth, who had obtained a degree as a civil engineer from the Institutum Geometricum in the Hungarian capital, was able to find employment as a civil engineer and he even worked for the renowned landscape architect Fredrick Law Olmsted. Similarly, John Fiala had been a civil engineer in Hungary, and had no problem getting a job as a topographer. Anton Gerster, another Hungarian civil engineer, was a colleague of John Augustus Roebling, the foremost suspension bridge-builder of the time. There were several Hungarians with medical degrees and they without exception managed to start their practices in the United States, as well.

The overwhelming majority of the Hungarians were not this lucky. Those who had no marketable qualifications soon found themselves looking for jobs among the unskilled or semi-skilled workforce. In New York City they could rely on large manufacturing plants hiring cheap immigrant labor: particularly the factory system in the skyrocketing clothing industry provided employment for many who could bear the dull routine for long hours at low wages. The Hungarians soon found themselves in rivalry with other immigrant groups, especially with the Irish, who were "envious of others, rude, hated laborers of any other nationality and could not become reconciled until they crowded them out," as Károly László put it.⁵⁹

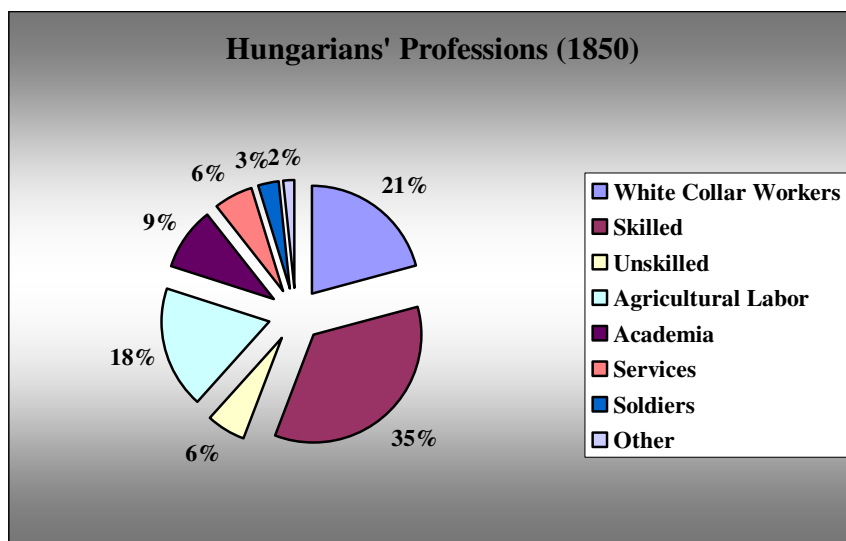
Analysis of the rather fragmented Federal Census Records of 1850 reveals records of the occupations of only 245 out of the 452 Hungarians living in the United States, enabling us to establish certain tendencies regarding their occupation patterns. About one third of the Hungarians worked as skilled craftsmen, particularly in the garment industry, and as metal

⁵⁸ Lázár Mészáros to Antal Mészáros. Brooklyn, NY. (Sept. 5, 1853) Cited in Szokoly, *Mészáros Lázár*, 32. Translation mine

⁵⁹ Robert Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City, 1825-1863* (Port Washington, NY: I.J. Friedman, 1949) (Hereafter cited as, Ernst, *Immigrant Life*), 17; László cited in Ács, *Magyar úttörők*, 13.

or construction workers. There were also numerous Hungarians with low-skilled employment such as cigar makers and painters. This seems to prove that in this early stage in the Hungarian emigration toward the United States, the expatriates mostly made use of their qualification and job experience from their homeland. None of them worked as skilled workers in the fast-growing industrial sector, in which Hungary lagged far behind America. Hungarians had no experience as machinists, steamboatmen, or mechanics.

The second most numerous group of profession Hungarians held is that of white-collar workers. The most represented occupations in this category were merchants and clerks. As far as the first groups was concerned, it is quite likely that the majority of them had come to the United States prior to 1848, as obviously a longer time was required to build up their business connections. For the latter group, English proficiency was a precondition of being hired.



Statistical Data Compiled from Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, Census of 1850 M432, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Eighteen percent of the Hungarians whose professions are indicated in the population records worked in agriculture as either farmers or agricultural laborers. Every tenth Hungarian living in the United States held a professional position, such as doctor, civil engineer, clergyman, and lawyer. In contrast, relatively few Hungarians found employment in the service industry and worked as salesmen, barbers, and confectionaries. The fact that

there were two who indicated their professions as gentleman or nobleman reflected the persistence of Hungarian social views in the American setting.

Altogether, we do not know the professions of 45 percent of the Hungarians either because they were not indicated in the Census or because these people did not have employment. The New York State Census of 1855 gives some idea of Hungarian unemployment (and of Bohemian, as they were not separately indicated in the records) living in New York City. Out of the total of 331 residents, only 85 (26 percent) was gainfully employed which was considerably lower than the proportion of the foreign-born with employment in general (43 percent). As compared to employment statistics derived from the federal census records of 1850, it becomes apparent right away that white collar workers as well as skilled industrial workers were fields in which Hungarians found employment in higher proportions (32.4 percent and 41 percent respectively, compared to 20 and 33 percent, respectively).⁶⁰

The shockingly high rate of unemployment among Hungarians living in New York explains why so many of the Kossuth emigrants moved to the West seeking new opportunities. Therefore, at this point it definitely makes sense to take a look at the regional distribution of Hungarians in the 1850s, mainly through the federal censuses of 1850 and 1860.

In 1850, 452 people of Hungarian origin lived in the United States. Almost half (206) of them chose to settle down in the Mid-Atlantic states, with the overwhelming majority living in New York City (180). New England did not prove to be so receptive towards immigrants: only one out of ten Hungarians lived in these states. Although an approximately equal number of Hungarian refugees settled down in the Southern and Midwestern states (81-80), the latter states showed a considerably higher level of concentration. In the South, New Orleans, Louisiana was the single center of immigration for Hungarians, whereas the Midwestern states appear to have been more balanced. Comparatively few Hungarians got as far as the Western coast, and most of them were attracted to California by the Gold Rush. For instance, József Majthényi wrote his wife on August 4, 1850: "It is my utmost intention

⁶⁰ Ernst, *Immigrant Life*, 213.

to travel to California and there get down to gold digging, and I intend to do it until I can acquire such a fortune which can found a basis for your common future.”⁶¹

Throughout the decade between the censuses of 1850 and 1860, a major transformation took place in the geographical distribution of Hungarians living in the United States. New York City still remained the “gateway to America” for most of them, but the proportion of those who actually settled down in the city decreased from 40 percent to only 22.7 percent. (The total number of the Hungarian-born population in the United States in 1860 was 2,710.) The very same tendency occurred in the Mid-Atlantic states in general, and New England: in the case of the former ones the decrease was only 8 percent (from 45 to 37 percent), but the proportion of the Hungarians choosing any of the New England states shrank to less than half of the level of 1850 (from 10.3 to 4.5 percent). A considerable fall took place in the representation of Southern states as a place to settle down (from 17 percent to 10). As opposed to the apparent decrease in the proportion of Hungarian-born inhabitants, the Hungarian population of the Midwestern states, particularly Illinois, Iowa, Missouri and Ohio, skyrocketed in this period. In 1850 less than 20 percent of the Hungarians tried their luck in the Midwest, but by 1860 more than 41 percent lived there. This more than twofold increase well indicates a tangible change in how the Hungarians saw their opportunities and prospects in America.

As already noted, Kossuth emigrés experienced hard times in New York and the big cities of the East Coast. Without the command of English and marketable qualifications or trades, the fading away of Americans’ enthusiasm towards them and the cause of Hungary’s freedom seemed frightening and pushed many of them to the verge of poverty.

There were two main responses to this challenge. Firstly, some individuals tried to adapt their talents to the American environment, and make a living one way or another. One of the very first of these attempts was the formation of a singing group called *Magyar Dalárda* [Hungarian Vocalists].

⁶¹ Quoted in Ács, *New Buda*, 116; Majthényi wanted his wife and children, whom he had left behind, to join him in America.



Hungarian singers in their national costume. Photo Courtesy: The Library of Congress, CPHPGA, Thomas Moore

The group was founded on August 17, 1851 by 11 members, none of them trained singers. Lajos Dancs, a member, quite straightforwardly stated in his book that their sole purpose was to earn enough to make a living, and they did not give too much thought to popularizing Hungarian culture overseas. Their very first performance at Castle Garden proved to be the last one as well, and it was such a huge failure that, according to Dancs, “they were glad they were not pummeled.” The group soon dissolved and the members were out looking for manual labor. There were other attempts to start enterprises and earn an independent living. János Kalapsza founded a riding school at No. 103 13th Street in South Boston (American Horse Care of Captain J. N. Kalapsza), where fellow Hungarian Charles Zagonyi was employed as assistant instructor and István Kinizsi as a riding master. The institution was opened on October 1, 1852, and enjoyed relative success during the subsequent years, as it was supported by the elite of Boston, some of them still enthusiastic supporters of Kossuth.⁶² Former hussar captain, Lajos Török, founded a pub named “*A Három Magyarhoz*” [To the Three Hungarians], which did not particularly flourish, yet

⁶² Kinizsi, *Sánta Huszár*, 135.

served as an important meeting place for the Hungarian expatriates in New York. Lajos Kossuth got involved in creating employment for several fellow-Hungarians, when he instructed Alexander Asboth to organize a belt factory in Weaverton, New York, and Gustav Wagner to establish an ammunition factory in Morningville, although his primary aim was to produce weapons and military equipment for the purposes of a future freedom fight in Hungary by making use of the sums flowing in from the Americans' donations. Most of these enterprises proved to be short lived and soon many of the Hungarians started to have doubts about staying in New York. This was the time when the Kossuth emigration lost its political nature, and soon became scattered all over the country. Bertalan Szemere, former Hungarian Prime Minister, described the miserable condition of the Hungarian community as follows:

The refugees don't formulate an association, there is no organizing, no mutual responsibilities, no political directions. The Hungarian emigrés were scattered about, and there was nobody who would have taken care of saving the banner or replacing the lost one. Everyone seemed to save themselves only, and nobody thought of preserving the intellectual and moral treasures, not even those who could have done so.⁶³

Szemere was not entirely right in claiming that there were no Hungarian associations formed in the United States in this period. One attempt to bring the Kossuth emigrants together was the founding of the first Hungarian Protestant Church by Gedeon Ács, who became its preacher. Services were held at the side chapel of the Dutch Reformed Church in Fulton Street every Sunday morning from 10.00 to 12.00. Later he recalled what he felt about the importance of this group: "Even I felt often touched when I glanced at the small congregation, the first Hungarian congregation in America. We were expatriates without a country, and the church linked us together fraternally when we met once a week."⁶⁴

The Hungarian preacher soon saw the congregation tailing away, shrinking along with New York's Hungarian population. He continued working, although he became most disappointed with the American lifestyle, and he is a perfect example of the unsuccessful immigrant who criticizes everything that is different from what he was used to in this

⁶³ Jánossy, *Kossuth-emigráció*, II, 698-699; Gábor Albert, ed., *Szemere Bertalan leveleskönyve, 1849-1865* (Balassi Kiadó: Budapest, 1999) (Hereafter cited as, Albert, *Szemere leveleskönyve*), 86.

⁶⁴ Ács, *Kossuth papja*, 79.

homeland. He was not alone with his delusions, as he himself put it: “They assumed that it was easy to make a living in America, and the roast pigeon might not fly directly in their mouths, but at least it flies pretty close to them.[...] These dreamers [...] were all bitterly disappointed. [...] They would not have thought that they might not be able to get an easy, yet well-paying job.”⁶⁵

More and more, stories spread among the Kossuth emigrants about fellow Hungarians starving and living in immense poverty. Ács became the major proponent of the founding of a Hungarian mutual aid society, motivated after an incident in which, as he said, “A friend of ours went down with a contagious disease and his landlord drove him away because of this. The poor Hungarian died in the street.”⁶⁶

Another possible device to bring the dispersed members of the Hungarian community together was an almost one-person enterprise. Károly Kornis, aided by Lajos Dancs and Xavér Gorszky, started a newspaper targeting specifically the Hungarian-speakers living in the United States in general and in New York City in particular. The first issue of the *Magyar Száműzöttek Lapja* [Hungarian Exiles’ Newspaper] appeared on October 15, 1853. The subscription fee was one dollar a month and they managed to collect 117 subscribers. Several Hungarians contributed to the paper including ex-Secretary of War Lázár Mészáros and General Antal Vetter. The first four-page issue was printed in 100 copies. However, they soon turned out to be short of subscribers, and the third issue came out only with a week delay, and the fourth one was only 2-page long. Due to financial problems, the editors discontinued the paper after November 30. Altogether, the *Magyar Száműzöttek Lapja* was a noble effort, but the fact that it was an all-Hungarian paper limited the readership to the small Hungarian community, the members of which were not very well off either. What is more, unlike other ethnic papers, it failed to serve both as a mirror of immigrant life in the United States, and as a vehicle for adjustment. The insufficient number of subscribers not only reflected the exodus of the Hungarians from New York, but also the lack of unity within the Hungarian community, which was not a new phenomenon among the immigrants. Mészáros wrote sarcastically about this in his letter to Sebő Vukovics, former Secretary of Justice: “Hungarians here [in New York] are just like over there, in London: they love each

⁶⁵ Péter Bogáti ed., Gedeon Ács, *Mihelyt gyertyámat eloltom. Bostoni jegyzetek, 1856-63* (Budapest: Gondolat kiadó, 1989), 10-12.

⁶⁶ Ács, *Kossuth papja*, 79.

other.” Therefore, we cannot but agree with historian Géza Kende, who concluded, “[The paper] was choked to death by the lack of unity among Hungarians, by jealousy and insults.”⁶⁷

The news of the coming of the Crimean War seemed an excellent opportunity for the Hungarian community to re-activate its members again and for the entire group to re-gain its political character. On November 10, 1853 they organized a meeting in New York to mobilize Hungarians and demonstrate their readiness to protect their homeland. Soon the so-called *Amerikai Magyar Emigrációs Bizottmány* [American Hungarian Emigrational Committee] was formed to collect signatures and drum up Hungarians willing to serve in the Crimean War. However, their efforts failed to raise the interest of Hungarians, causing many to become disappointed with politics once and for all. Lázár Mészáros, who had been the chairman of the committee, allegedly said that his pistol would respond to anyone trying to get him involved in politics again.⁶⁸

One more occasion brought the Kossuth emigrants out of their isolation. The news of the outbreak of the war between the coalition forces of France and Piedmont against Austria in 1859 was heartening for the Hungarian expatriates, as they felt that this could pave the way for a new Hungarian freedom fight as well. No wonder that many of them seemed to be eager to give up their existence in the United States and cross the Atlantic to join the already-existing Hungarian Legion in Italy. However, many of them did not have enough money to finance their trip, and both Kossuth and Alexander Asboth warned them to wait for the right opportunity. For the time being, they contented themselves with forming committees in New York and Chicago expressing their sympathies with the Italians. Julian Kuné, president of the Hungarian North Western Central Committee, summarized their major goals, “We are ready now and hereafter to support the cause of universal liberty against all enemies, and pledge ourselves to assist morally and physically the true cause of freedom wherever our services are required.”⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Várdy, *Magyarok az Újvilágban*, 95; For articles on Kornis’s newspaper, see: Stephen Béla Várdy, “A magyar Száműzöttek Lapja: Az első amerikai-magyar újság megszületése,” *Amerikai Magyar Népszava/Szabadság*. (April 2, 1999), 15-16; Stephen Béla Várdy, “Az első magyar újság és újságszerkesztő Amerikában,” *Debreceni Szemle* (1999/4), 511-515; Ernst, *Immigrant Life*, 150-161; Kende, *Magyarok Amerikában*, I, 130.

⁶⁸ Lukács, *Magyar politikai emigráció*, 251-252.

⁶⁹ *Chicago Press and Tribune*, June 25, 1859, 1.

Despite its increasing activity, the Hungarian-American community still lacked effective leadership, and this resulted in inadequate communication between the various Hungarian groups scattered all over the country. Hungarians bombarded the editors of the *Chicago Press and Tribune* inquiring if there had been indeed Hungarians who had already sold their properties and were preparing to return to Hungary? They also asked if there was any sign that a revolution would start soon in their homeland. In response, The *Chicago Press and Tribune* published György Klapka's Proclamation written to Hungarian soldiers serving in Austrian ranks in which he called on them to desert the Imperial Army. He also urged them, "Let us form in Italy a Hungarian army, with which, after fighting on alien ground, we may return to our own country, to take part also in the war of independence, and save the honor of the Magyar nation." Klapka referred to 300 Hungarians who had already left America to join the Hungarian Legion in Italy, but no historical sources confirm the existence of these reinforcements. Lajos Kossuth warned the members of the Hungarian-American community that they should be patient and wait for the perfect moment, which was probably as discouraging for many as the lack of money to finance their crossing the Atlantic Ocean. There were associations, such as the Central Committee of American Citizens under the influence of Shepherd Knapp, President of the Mechanics Bank in New York, which acted on behalf the Hungarians, accepted contributions to arm them and finance their voyage. It proved quite difficult, however, to rally Americans behind the Hungarian cause, particularly as the organizers had very short time to make arrangements: the French made peace rather unexpectedly giving a final blow to all Hungarian hopes of starting over the war of independence against Austria, and sinking the Kossuth emigrés living in America back to their non-political routine almost entirely void of the prospect of ever living to see Hungary free.⁷⁰

With the gradual loss of every hope to return to their homeland, and at the same time, facing grave financial problems, more and more Hungarians made up their mind to leave New York and the major cities in the East Coast, and venture to the Midwest or beyond. The first major group of Hungarian refugees to leave New York led by Ladislaus Újházy did so as early as April 1851. He failed to convince the American Congress to grant them land for a

⁷⁰ Asboth's Letter to Hungarians. Published in *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 11, 1859, 1; *The New York Times*, July 8, 1859, 8; Klapka's Proclamation published in *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 2, 1859; Kossuth's letter to Hungarians appeared in *Chicago Press and Tribune*, June 25, 1859.

Hungarian settlement. So they set out to claim the federal lands on the frontier, which had already been surveyed. After four months of tiresome travel, they finally arrived in the Southern part of Iowa, close to the Thompson River. At that point Újházy had a wait-and-see attitude concerning the future of the Hungarian settlement: “We won’t stand entirely on our feet as long as Kossuth is not here, and he either joins us, or, if he wishes to found a bigger settlement elsewhere, we can move there with him.” Although Kossuth had neither the intention to join the Hungarians in New Buda, nor did he want to stay in the United States, there were more and more arriving at the small settlement, which was named after the capital of Hungary. A correspondent for *The New York Times* visited the small frontier village in the summer of 1851 and gave a description of it:

The aspect of the country presents ridges of elevation, narrow ravines, and occasionally wide spread vallies, all covered with a rich soil, varying from one to 3 feet deep, which displays its fruitfulness in the abundant production of grass, of fruit and flowers. The Thompson River about 50 yards in width, but too shallow for navigable purposes, winds slowly through Decatur county. [...] Its course is lined by a heavy body of timber, from 1 to 3 miles wide, consisting chiefly of sugarmaple, black walnut, white oak and elm.⁷¹

This was the place where Újházy intended to form a settlement of Hungarians, still hoping that Lajos Kossuth might join them soon. However, when he had the chance to meet Kossuth on March 9, 1852 in St. Louis, Missouri, the Hungarian ex-governor made it clear that he did not have specific plans concerning New Buda, and he considered Újházy’s plan to found a Hungarian settlement out on the American frontier a serious mistake. His major argument was that they would become hopelessly isolated there with no prospect of doing anything for the cause of Hungarian freedom.

Left on their own, Kossuth’s followers were indeed trying hard. In spite of the fact that the population of the village was increasing for some time, the inhabitants became doubly isolated: they hardly had any contact with the leaders of the Hungarian emigration at the time, New Buda being some 800 miles away from Pittsburgh without any railroad connection at the time; what is more, the tiny Frontier settlement mainly attracted

⁷¹ “Summer View of New Buda,” *The New York Times*, November 19, 1851, 4.

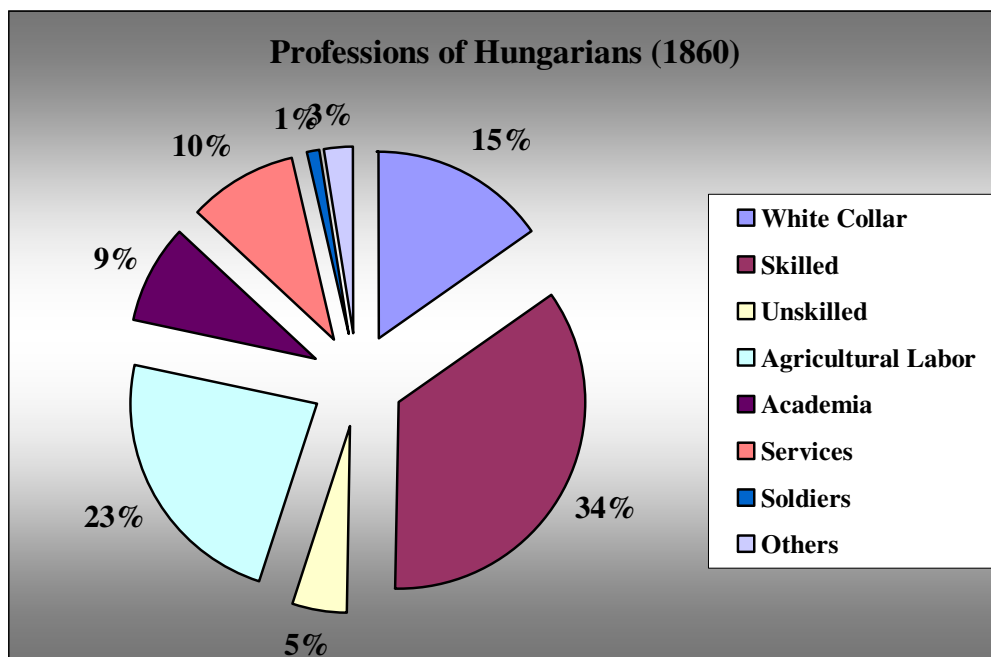
Hungarians and Germans, so they did not have much contact with the “Jankók” [Johnies] either, as Hungarians generally nicknamed the Yankees.⁷²

Most of the emigrants realized very soon that in order to get along they needed to learn a trade, and to master the English language. As for the former, there were several articles published in Hungarian dailies in the second half of the 1850s warning those who were thinking about emigrating to America to have some kind of profession, otherwise they might have a hard time finding employment. In 1859, the Hungarian Daily *Vasárnapi Újság* published an article introducing two artisans of Hungarian origin, who succeeded in making a career overseas. As the writer, István Cserépy put it, “By sticking to their principle ‘The enduring will pioneer all path’, they reached a position and respect all Hungarians can be proud of. They must be grateful, however, to their Good Fate for being artisans, they were the masters of a trade.” The examples of carpenter Anton Gerster and saddler Mihály Mohor showed, Cserépy pointed out, that “all those who dare to sail to America without any qualification or not being used to hard work, will face a future full of hardship and misery.”⁷³

Concerning the professions of the Kossuth emigrants in the latter half of the 1850s, the major source at our disposal is the federal census of 1860. The higher number of people of Hungarian origin living in America, and the more complete data provided by the census make it possible for us to assemble a clearer picture of the Hungarians’ lives in the United States prior to the Civil War. Out of the 2,710 Hungarians living in the United States based on the Federal Census Records, the professions of 914 were indicated. On the one hand, this offers a much larger sample to work with than the census data taken a decade earlier, on the other hand, one might jump to the conclusion that this number would result in a less representative sample, as this is only 33.7 percent of the total Hungarian-born population in the United States. However, it is crucial to point out that the census of 1860 was the first one in which not only household-heads, but Hungarian spouses and children were also listed. Of course, the great majority of those having professions were household-heads, so we must analyze the number of employees in their proportion to the total number of household-heads, which was 1,125. This finally gives us a definitely more representative sample (81.2%).

⁷² Pál Liptay, “Uj-Buda (Amerikai Naplóból),” *Fővárosi Lapok*, January 24, 1877 and January 25, 1877.

⁷³ István Cserépy, “Iparos Hazánkfia Észak-Amerikában,” *Vasárnapi Újság* (1859/ 11): 127-128.



Statistical Data Compiled from Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, Census of 1860 M653, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Statistical data from the censuses of 1850 and 1860 shows that no radical changes took place in the distribution of jobs throughout this decade. The proportion of Hungarians with white-collar work shrank by 5 percent to 15%, whereas the rate of skilled craftsmen basically remained unchanged (34.3%-35%). The proportion of those with agricultural jobs increased to 23 percent, which shows that there was a major movement of Hungarians towards the frontier areas where they either claimed moderate parcels of land and were engaged in farming, or they worked for other farmers as agricultural laborers. Interestingly, the rate of those serving in the armed forces decreased by 3 percent, whereas the proportion of Hungarians in the services sector increased by the very same rate, which shows at least some re-structuring of the occupation patterns of the urban population.

New Buda was more like a group of independent farms than a single town. All that connected these small farms was the fact that the majority of their owners were Hungarians. Still, the number of inhabitants of Hungarian origin never exceeded 30 or 40. By the time of the Census of 1860, this number had shrunk to 13. There were several reasons for this. First, the vanishing hope for its becoming a center of Hungarians in America surely turned many away from it. The hardships of frontier life also proved to be unbearable for those

unaccustomed to physical labor. The geographical location of the settlement was far less promising than it had seemed at the beginning of the 1850s, as it became clear that no railroad line was going to reach it, causing many prospective settlers as well as investors to re-consider moving there. Furthermore, the climate turned out to be cooler than ideal for farming, which forced several Hungarians to leave and move further to the south. New Buda was the brainchild of Ladislaus Újházy, but he was among the first ones to leave it. For some time, he had had second thoughts about moving to the south, as he pointed out in his letter written to Ödön Beöthy, “My present habitation is not as warm as I hoped it would be, but I cannot move further to the South, as then I would have to live in a slave state, which is against my principles.” However, in March 1853, about two years after the death of his wife, he moved to Texas where he founded yet another Hungarian settlement which he named Sírmező [Grave Site], which very well reflects how desperate and bitter this old man was. He even took the coffin of his wife with him and reburied it there.⁷⁴

By the 1870s only a handful remained at New Buda. During his travel to the United States, Pál Liptay visited there in 1870 and summarized the divergence between his expectations and what he found there: “I imagined it as a great flourishing settlement, but I was mistaken – I saw flourishing farms, although spread out away from each other. The name New Buda will be kept alive by our fellow Hungarians living there, but after their time even it may disappear from the map of America, just like many other settlements did.” He was right about the future of the small settlement, although it is not quite clear when the last Hungarian left it for good, but it seems safe to conclude that by the end of the 1880s, it ceased to exist.⁷⁵

Károly Rácz-Rónay, one of the forgotten chroniclers of the Hungarian-American past, published a series of articles about the major Hungarian settlements which constitute an excellent starting point for the discussion of the geographical distribution of Kossuth emigrés in the antebellum era. He listed New Buda, along with New York, Chicago, New Orleans, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Haraszthyfalva, Bridgeport, and Cleveland as locations where most Hungarians concentrated. Rácz-Rónay worked mostly with the papers of

⁷⁴ Újházy to Beöthy Ödön. Published in *Pesti Napló*, December 14, 1850; Cited in Ács, *New Buda*, 130.

⁷⁵ Liptay, Pál. “Uj Buda (Amerikai Naplóból),” *Fővárosi Lapok*, January 24, 1877 and January 25, 1877.

Hungarian emigrants, so we have to take a look at the federal census records and locate the geographical centers of Hungarians based on them.

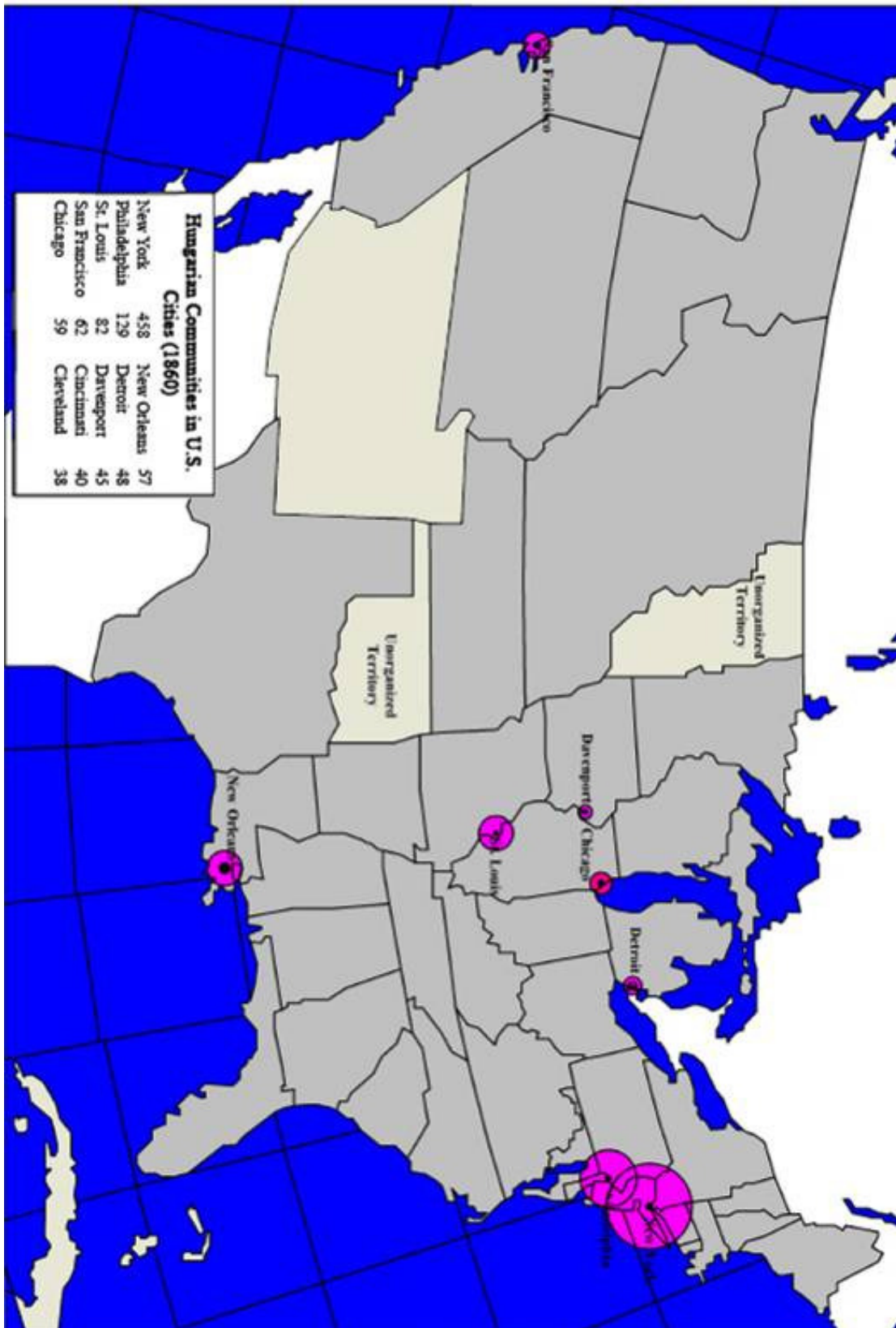
According to the census data from 1860, New York still had the largest Hungarian community with 458 people living there. This meant a 2.5 fold increase in the decade between 1850 and 1860, but it was by no means the most considerable one. The Hungarian population of Philadelphia accrued to 129 almost six times as large as a decade earlier. In the East Coast no other significant Hungarian community remained by 1860, and — as we have seen earlier — there was a major influx of Hungarians in the Midwestern states. The most significant centers were St. Louis, Chicago and Detroit. Most of the Hungarians had left New Buda by this time, and it had to give way to Davenport in Scott County as the most thriving Hungarian community in Iowa. In the South, New Orleans remained the most important center of immigrants, and basically it was the only place where Hungarian concentrated in relatively higher numbers. In the West, San Francisco had higher Hungarian population consisting of people lured by the Gold Rush, adventurers as well as entrepreneurs. The following table shows the ranking of cities according to the size of their population of Hungarian origin.

Rank	City	Hungarian Population
1.	New York, NY	458
2.	Philadelphia, PA	129
3.	St. Louis, MO	82
4.	San Francisco, CA	62
5.	Chicago, IL	59
6.	New Orleans, LA	57
7.	Detroit, MI	48
8.	Davenport, IA	45
9.	Cincinnati, OH	40
10.	Cleveland, OH	38

Statistical Data Compiled from Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, Census of 1860 M653, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

The analysis of the distribution of Hungarian population in the United States confirms that although there were some centers, they were not significant (with the sole exception of New York) and they provided no real basis for the members of the Hungarian-American community to keep in touch, co-operate, and form associations capable of acting on behalf the whole group.

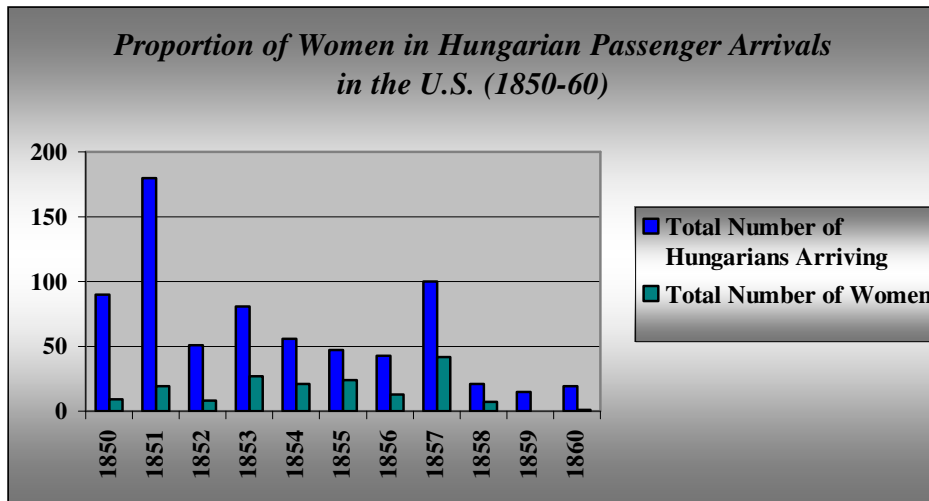
It is also very interesting to note that the overwhelming majority of the 2,710 Hungarians then living in the United States (2,452) settled in what shortly became the Union, as opposed to only 258, who lived in one of the future Confederate states.



Major Hungarian communities in the United States (1860)

It is not by chance that the Hungarian immigrant experience is almost entirely reconstructed based on various sources written by males. The analysis of immigration statistics reveals that women were disproportionately underrepresented in this early Hungarian-American community. When the Census of 1850 was taken, only 5.5 percent of all the Hungarian-born household heads were female, and their proportion barely increased throughout the decade before the Civil War: in 1860 8.5 percent of the Hungarian household heads were women. Whereas approximately 30 percent of the male household heads were married in 1850 (about one third of them had Hungarian wives), a decade later the proportion of married household heads reached 50 percent, and the rate of Hungarian spouses increased to 40 percent. József Majthényi, in a letter to his wife, wrote on December 4, 1851 from New Buda, “The young maid here gets married right away, as the several Hungarians here or on their way here, are almost exclusively bachelors,” and suggested that his wife “should bring an old maid.” Calculations based on the two censuses show that the total number of women of Hungarian origin in 1850 was only 45 (female household heads and wives together), that is 10 percent of the total Hungarian population in the United States, whereas their proportion slightly increased to 12.9 percent by 1860. The fact that the rate of adults in the sample dropped from 73.9 percent in 1850 to 50.9 percent in 1860 proves that by the second half of the 1850s it was more and more typical that the Kossuth emigrés got married and were raising children, and this increase in the rate of female immigrants of Hungarian origin was reflected in the passenger arrival lists of the mid-1850s, as well.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Majthényi to his wife (December 4, 1851) In Ács, *New Buda*, 209; Statistical Data Compiled from Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, Census of 1850 M432 and Census of 1860 M653, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29.



Source: Data compiled from Records of the U.S. Customs Service, Record Group 36, Passenger Arrival Lists, M334, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

No matter how steadily the number of Hungarian women increased in the United States, their prospects of employment were very limited. Most of the women were housewives, and those who were independent household heads had a poor choice of jobs: out of the only 29 women, whose jobs we have information about, 14 worked as servants, 3 as housekeepers, 3 as dressmakers, 1 as French teacher and 1 as music teacher. Furthermore, 3 of them were nuns.

Despite the hardships of life in the United States of America, leaving the country and returning to Hungary was not even an option for the Kossuth emigrants at least until 1867, when the compromise between Hungary and the Habsburgs resulted in a general amnesty to those who had taken up arms against the Habsburg monarchy in 1848/49. Therefore, the majority of the Kossuth emigrés stayed in America, and Hungarian return-migration remained negligible throughout the 1850s and the Civil War years. As far as general statistics go for this period, the rate of those who returned to their homelands was an estimated 6.6 percent, based on passenger arrival numbers via Hamburg (most of whom were Germans).⁷⁷

With the prospect of returning to their homelands in the near future ruled out, a unique duality characterized the life of Hungarian emigrants. Having been involved in Hungary's

⁷⁷ Rudolph J. Vecoli and Suzanne M. Sinke eds., *A Century of European Migrations, 1830-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 295.

fight for freedom only to see it fail, most of them were fervently attached to it. Their everyday life was often made miserable by homesickness: it is a recurrent topic in their correspondence, and some of them even penned poems reflecting such sentiments. Roderick Rombauer published his own verse in his autobiography:

And I am man, though in loving heart
My fatherland's saint [holy] shrine may higher rise,
And for its sufferings my soul keener smart.
The world's my home.⁷⁸

John Xantus, who was among those returning to Hungary after the Civil War, established, "There is only one place for us in this great world: 'Home', which may not be great, magnificent or famous, and though poor, is still the most potent magnet for its wandering sons." Ladislaus Újházy, who was frequently overcome by homesickness, concluded, "Displaced people, you are the truly awful image of unhappiness." The Hungarian exiles often quoted a popular saying in Latin at the time: "Extra Hungariam non est vita, si est vita, non est ita." Gedeon Ács, yet another emigrant apparently unable to accept his situation, wrote: "He [The emigrant] is grabbed by the neck by the two old feelings you cannot get rid of: Grief and Homesickness, and he is doing his best to get them drunk"⁷⁹

Not all members of the Kossuth emigration shared their views, though. Some seemed to appreciate what the United States offered to them; Ferenc Varga, one of the inhabitants of New Buda, formulated it this way: "I became separated from my adored homeland, but the Almighty blessed me with a family in which I found compensation." Another immigrant from Hungary, Dániel Kászonyi, had very different impressions about living in America:

Was I so happy in that country? Was there any capital in the world in which I would not have wished to live less than in that of Hungary, Pest? I saw myself losing my entire estate there. It was Hungarians who deceived my mother, and took away all her wealth. [...] Or should I love the landscape and the country, because I do not know anything more beautiful? Oh, no, I had already known

⁷⁸ Roderick E. Rombauer, *The History of a Life* (St. Louis: By author, 1903) (Hereafter cited as, Rombauer, *History of a Life*), 17.

⁷⁹ John Xantus, *Travels in Southern California* (Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1976) (Hereafter cited as, Xantus, *Travels*), 94; Quoted in *Szabadság*, Cleveland, OH (1911/ 21); Ács, *Kossuth papja*, 115.

then England, Scotland and Italy — they are all much more beautiful than Hungary. England surpasses Hungary in all respects.⁸⁰

Many of the Hungarians decided to apply for American citizenship. Due to the sporadic state of naturalization records, we can only rely on estimates, but it is safe to conclude that the majority of them did go through naturalization some time during the 1850s or the Civil War. Although a number of them failed to realize their individual “American Dreams”, they still looked upon the United States as the place where they possessed all the freedoms for which they had been fighting in vain in their homeland. Ladislaus Újházy explained, “In America I have found the protection of a caring homeland that I have grown to love and respect, where I achieved freedom for myself among a noble kind, unlike the other side of the ocean, in Europe.” A parallel between the freedom fight of Hungary and that of the Americans back in 1775-1783 was frequently drawn by Americans as well as Hungarians. Dr. A. Sidney Doane, health officer of New York port, in his speech welcoming Lajos Kossuth in New York City expressed, “The great struggle which you have begun in Hungary — the blow which you have struck for Hungarian nationality, is so like the struggle of our fathers, so like the blow they struck, [...] and we have looked upon [...] you, sir, and your compatriots, as sons of the same liberty.” Acceptance and giving citizenship by naturalization can be seen, therefore, as a reciprocal gift and was definitely encouraged by the American government. The Congress — due to the several supporters of the Hungarians both in the House and the Senate including future Secretary of State William H. Seward, passed a bill granting land to “the refugees who took part in the support of the struggles for liberty and independence in Hungary”⁸¹

Sources reveal that Hungarians who did apply for American citizenship outnumbered those who were hesitant to do so in the first half of the 1850s. In the years following the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 and especially the Supreme Court’s infamous Dred Scott decision in 1857, they got more and more confused and had a hard time making something out of the unravelling sectional strife in the United States. Most of them abhorred the

⁸⁰ Ferenc Varga, “Bujdosásom története,” *Szabadság*, Cleveland, OH (Dec. 20, 1900); Dániel Kászonyi, *Magyarhon négy korszaka* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Kiadó, 1977), 340-341. Translation mine

⁸¹ Ladislaus Újházy to Mrs. Pulszky. Turin, Italy. (September 1, 1860) Quoted in Ács, *New Buda*, 279; *The New York Times*, December 6, 1851, 1; Bill Granting Land to the Refugees from Hungary. 31st Congress, 1st Session, 1851.

institution of slavery and were deeply disappointed that it might be on its way to territorial expansion. Gedeon Ács wrote in his diary in the fall of 1858: “From this very day on, I could be an American citizen if I wished. How fantastic this prospect had seemed to me once, when I did not know what despicable character the people living in the Southern states have. [...] I could be a citizen now, if I wanted to, but I feel ashamed to do so.” Still, a couple of weeks later he made the following entry, “Today I have become an American citizen. [...] I thought it would be better than remaining what I had been for nine years—homeless pilgrim.”⁸²

Naturalization was an uncomplicated process at that time. The immigrants had to declare their intention to become full members of the American society. After living in the country for five years, they were required to pledge allegiance to the Constitution of the United States of America. The text of the oath went as follows: “I hereby solemnly take the oath and declare that it is my bona-fide intention to become a citizen of the United States of America and that I am ready to denounce my allegiance to any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty, especially to the Kaiser of Austria, as King of Hungary for ever (...)”⁸³

By becoming American citizens the Hungarian refugees hoped to obtain all the rights of a free citizen they had been denied in the Austrian Empire. This definitely accounts for their leaving Hungary (which became even more oppressed by Austria after 1849) and their intention to become American citizens. Charles Loring Brace, who spent some time in Hungary in 1851 and wrote a book entitled *Hungary in 1851*, documented the attraction of American freedom to Hungarians. A Hungarian merchant in the capital told him, “We are all like just slaves! If I can only sell my stock I shall go over at once to America!” Similarly, he writes about another encounter: “The next morning [...] a very old [Hungarian] man came in just to shake hands with me, and see an American before he died. ‘Ah! You are happy,’ said he, ‘You are free! But we...’”⁸⁴

Apparently, the United States had great appeal as far as both individual freedoms and economic opportunities were concerned. But were Hungarian indeed doing so well

⁸² Ács, *Kossuth papja*, 137; Ács, *Kossuth papja*, p. 175; For this issue in detail see, István Kornél Vida, “The Concept of Citizenship and the Hungarian Immigrants in the United States in the 1850’s: A Case Study,” in S.G. Ellis, G. Hálfanarson, A.K. Isaacs eds., *Citizenship in Historical Perspective* (Pisa, Italy: Pisa University Press, 2006), 227-236.

⁸³ The text of the pledge is quoted in several works written by Hungarian emigrants. For instance, Ács, *Magyar úttörők*, 24.

⁸⁴ Brace, *Hungary in 1851*, 37, 136.

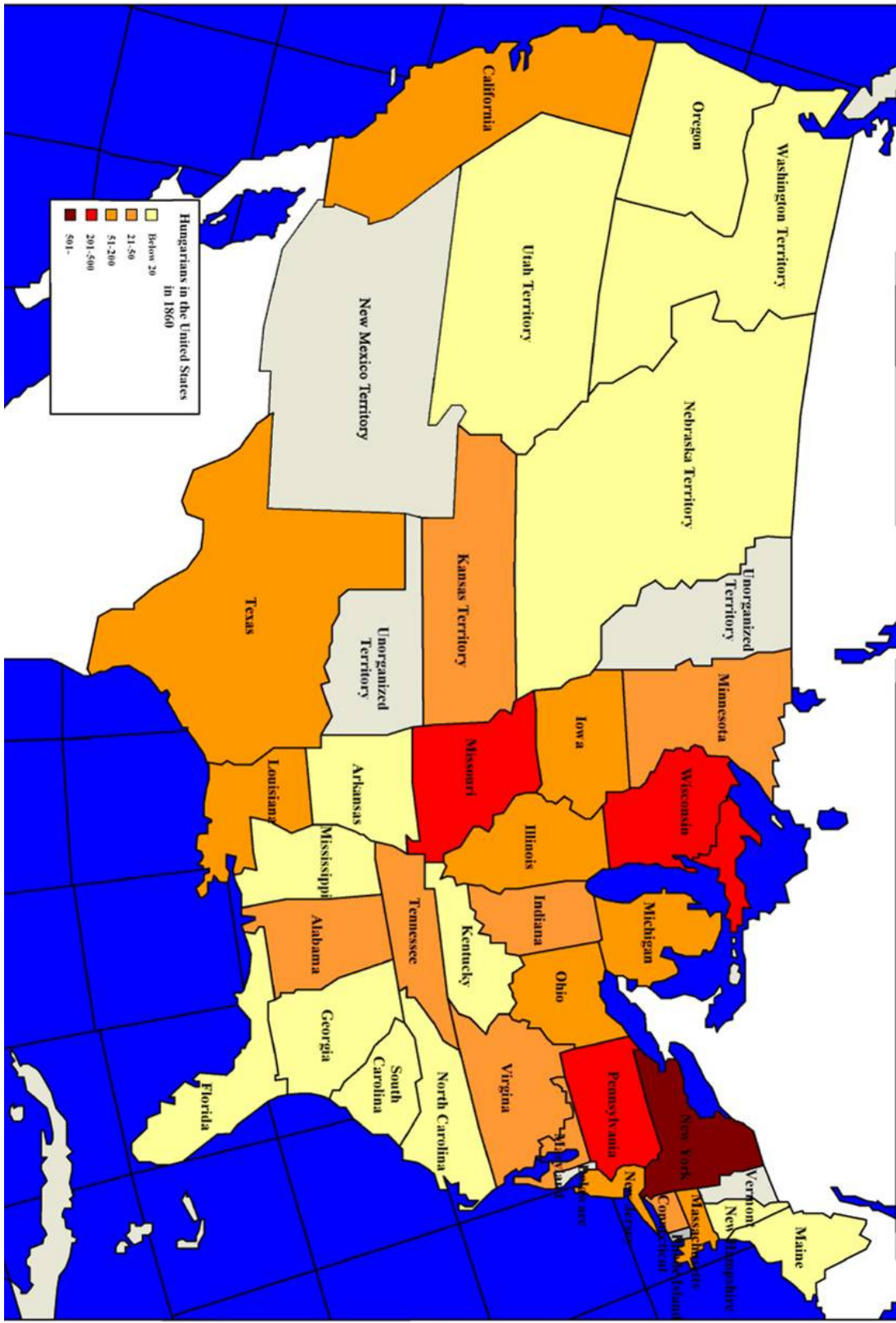
financially overseas in the 1850s? In order to be able to place them in the contemporary American social spectrum, we have to study carefully statistical evidence of their financial situation. The table below shows the personal property holdings of Hungarian families in 1860 compared to all American households. Data from 1860 offer insight into the economic conditions of families in 31 states and territories, and they reveal that Hungarians had personal property worth more than the average in only 14 of the states. In California, Ohio and Tennessee, Hungarians owned slightly above-the-average personal property. In Illinois there seems to be a considerable difference between the Hungarians and the mean personal property, however, a Hungarian-born fur trader, A. Hertsack alone owned property worth 80,000 dollars, which must be considered as an exception by all means. Excluding him, we can establish that Hungarians on average owned only \$458, well below the average level of \$740. The same applies to North Carolina, where there were only 5 family units with Hungarian-born household heads.. Physician J. Schonwald from Wilmington, N.C. had personal property worth \$15,000, which was some seven times as much as that of all the other families combined! This is, therefore, no basis for conclusions.

State	Personal Property (Hungarians) (USD/ Family Unit)	Personal Property (General) (USD/ Family Unit)
Alabama	3,814	5,763
Arkansas	204	338
California	1,224	1,156
Connecticut	864	1,593
Florida	133	411
Georgia	333	450
Illinois	1,416	740
Indiana	335	119
Iowa	806	579
Kansas	163	98
Kentucky	121	297
Louisiana	930	3,709
Maryland	183	250
Massachusetts	92	261
Michigan	532	608
Minnesota	579	427
Mississippi	No Data	642
Missouri	537	1,356

Nebraska	No Data	167
New Jersey	519	232
New York	447	187
North Carolina	3,402	2,961
Ohio	207	133
Oregon	430	308
Pennsylvania	317	174
Rhode Island	125	231
South Carolina	25	7,209
Tennessee	478	401
Texas	839	3,412
Virginia	110	368
Wisconsin	270	92

Statistical Data Compiled from Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, Census of 1860 M653, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Another crucial factor in wealth accumulation was real estate ownership. This is much more difficult to determine as the only source available is the federal censuses. These pieces of information were self-reported, similarly to occupations, and, unfortunately, they are very sporadic, which might not be surprising considering the fact that 1860 was the first time they were included in the census. The real estate property of only 210 out of the altogether 1,125 Hungarian household units is known (18.6%), strongly limiting our ability to generalize.

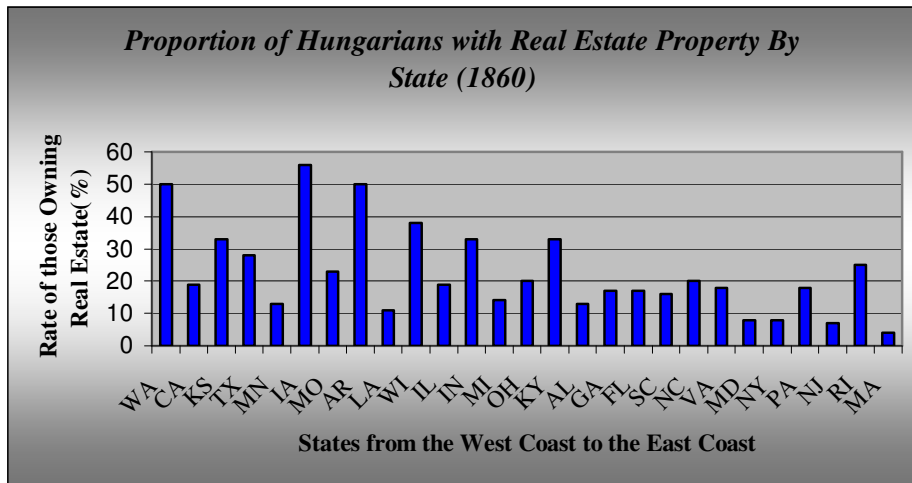


Territorial Distribution of Hungarians in the United States in 1860

The examination of the Hungarians' territorial distribution in the United States in 1860 revealed that by then there were more and more Hungarians living in the frontier states, such as Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, California or Territories like Kansas. The prospect of acquiring riches was naturally among the most important pull-factors for Hungarian as well as other immigrants, and indeed, three of the top five states with the highest average of Hungarian-owned real estate property were frontier states: Iowa, Wisconsin, and California. (What is more, in these states there is a relatively high proportion of known real estate property holdings, unlike, for instance, Alabama and Connecticut, where the real wealth of only a fragment of Hungarian household heads is known.) In three-fourth of the states, however, Hungarians owned real estate valued at less than \$400. Joseph P. Ferrie's excellent study, "Migration to the Frontier in Mid-Nineteenth Century America: A Re-examination of Turner's Safety Valve," pointed out that the average real property holding in the more settled states was worth \$2,770, whereas on the frontier it was \$508 in 1860. It is easy to see that Hungarians both on the frontier and elsewhere had below-average real estate wealth. However, their example seems to support Ferrie's conclusion that "migration to the frontier conferred benefits on those at the bottom of the ability distribution and provided an important alternative means to economic success."⁸⁵

According to many of the personal accounts, a large number of Hungarians living in any of the bigger cities in the East Coast had grave financial problems, and census data reveal that in New York, for instance, hardly any of the Hungarians reported real wealth. This was definitely among the major factors which "pushed" Hungarian immigrants towards the frontier. Indeed, the analysis of census records confirms that the rate of Hungarian families owning real estate was considerably higher in the Midwest or even further to the West than in any part of the eastern seaboard. The chart below shows the percentage of Hungarian real estate owners in their proportion to the overall population of Hungarians in the states and territories in 1860.

⁸⁵ Joseph P. Ferrie, "Migration to the Frontier in Mid-Nineteenth Century America: A Re-examination of Turner's Safety Valve," Manuscript. Accessible: [http://eh.net/abstracts/archives.php?order=date&rev=.](http://eh.net/abstracts/archives.php?order=date&rev=)



Statistical Data Compiled from Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, Census of 1860 M653, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

It is apparent that in some of the Midwestern states (Iowa, Wisconsin) more than half of the Hungarian household units had real estate properties to report, whereas in the states of Massachusetts, New Jersey or even New York it did not exceed 10 percent.

Although the very presence of real estate property might be a sign of relative economic advantages of the Frontier over East Coast territories, the level of real wealth is an even more significant factor. From this perspective, one might conclude that Hungarians' wealth accumulation on the frontier was considerable only when compared to that of those who remained in the East Coast. Ladislaus Újházy, when he decided to leave New Buda for Texas, sold his farm for \$800 in the fall of 1852. Taking this as a point of reference, we can learn from population statistics that in 34 out of 36 states and territories, the mean value of real estates owned by Hungarian families did not exceed this level.

<i>State</i>	<i>Hungarian Household Heads</i>	<i>Mean Real Wealth</i>
Iowa	24	\$1,147
Wisconsin	28	964
Connecticut	2	778
Alabama	2	667
California	18	577

Texas	8	533
Rhode Island	1	500
Missouri	23	424
North Carolina	1	400
Michigan	4	369
Louisiana	4	368
Pennsylvania	18	348
Illinois	16	336
Ohio	10	330
Indiana	8	312
Kentucky	2	283
Arkansas	3	200
D.C.	1	187
New York	20	156
Maryland	1	154
New Jersey	2	134
Kansas	5	107
Minnesota	2	87
Florida	1	83
Virginia	2	73
Georgia	1	67
South Carolina	1	50
Massachusetts	1	36
Washington	1	0

Statistical Data Compiled from Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, Census of 1860 M653, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

The further Hungarians moved to the West, the more likely they were to accumulate more wealth. A comparison of mean real wealth of Hungarians in Iowa, where the Hungarians' mean real wealth was the highest, with general state statistics, making use of data collected and published by David W. Galenson and Clayne L. Pope, brings to light a number of interesting results. It becomes apparent that Hungarian-born household heads had slightly above-the-average real wealth in Iowa (\$1,147 in contrast to the mean \$1,131 in Galenson's random samples in 1860). However, the same cannot be established regarding

personal wealth: the mean personal wealth in the 1860 Iowa random sample was \$468, whereas the Hungarians' personal wealth was lower, \$359 per household head.⁸⁶

All in all, Hungarians moved to the frontier seeking improved economic opportunities, and in total numbers they managed to accumulate wealth, as compared to their previous status. However, relative to the national level of wealth, their financial situation was below average more or less regardless of their actual place of residence. Especially those who had had to escape the retaliation of the Habsburgs back in 1849, had difficulty finding employment, as they had no marketable qualifications, since the majority of them were soldiers, and knew no other trade. No wonder that when the Civil War came, several members of the Kossuth emigration proved to be more than willing to utilize their martial expertise, and rallied to either the Union or, in smaller numbers, to the Confederate ranks in the fraternal war between North and South.

⁸⁶ David W. Galenson and Clayne L. Pope, "Economic and Geographic Mobility on the Farming Frontier: Evidence from Appanoose County, Iowa, 1850-1870," *Journal of Economic History*, 49, No. 3. (1989): 635-55.

CHAPTER FOUR

"TO SEE THIS GREAT COUNTRY UNITED AGAIN": HUNGARIANS' MOTIVATIONS TO ENLIST IN THE UNION AND CONFEDERATE ARMIES

The fact that Hungarians opted for settling down in the Frontier states in great numbers did not mean that they failed to pay attention to the sectional strife between North and South that dominated American domestic politics in most of the 1850s. On the contrary, since some of the worst manifestations of the conflict were acted out for instance in Kansas, those who settled in the West might have even been more tuned to this issue than others. It can be established from the correspondence of some of the Kossuth emigrés that they had a clear conception of what was going on on the national level. In general, it is safe to conclude that the vast majority of them allied with the Republican Party, since they frowned on the very idea of the territorial expansion of slavery, which they considered to be an evil institution. Some of the Hungarians even took an active part in political rallies. Miklós (Nicholas) Perczel argued in Davenport in Iowa at the turn of 1860-1861:

We pointed out that the Union is a constitutional law of the land, the cornerstone of the entire organization of the nation, the disturbance of which is politically unsound and should not go unpunished, because it would result not only in the dissolution of the country, but also threaten the very existence of the republican form of government since the aristocratically inclined citizens of the pro-secession states would soon seek to establish a monarchy to ensure the security of their institutions and the fruition of their grandiose plans.

He also warned that "from political as well as economic considerations the breakup of the Union would not only be harmful to the United States but fatal."⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Perczel, *Naplóm*, II, 184-185.

Right after the election of the Republican presidential candidate, Abraham Lincoln, on November 30, 1860 Gedeon Ács devoted a long entry in his diary to popular sovereignty, perhaps the most hotly-debated contemporary issue, and he complained about the prospect of the territorial expansion of the “peculiar institution.” Nevertheless, he came to the conclusion that “the above-mentioned causes will [not] prompt the cotton-growing states to secede” in which he turned out to be mistaken very soon.⁸⁸

After the first shots had been fired at Fort Sumter and the long and bloody Civil War commenced, Hungarians responded quickly and rallied to the Union ranks in the first months of the conflict. Discussions of their motivations for doing so abound with misconceptions and errors. One of the most-frequently appearing explanations for the Hungarians’ enthusiastic support of the Union cause was that they were eager to fight for the liberation of slaves, in order to do away with the anachronistic institution which they considered to be the major blemish on the American system of democracy. Hungarian-American historian Emil Lengyel, for instance, in his book entitled *Americans from Hungary* promoted the idea that the Kossuth emigrés volunteered in the Union Army to fight “the tyrant of slavery, and they offered their arms to strike it down.” Although not as one-sidedly as Lengyel, Edmund Vasváry also suggested that “all of them joined voluntarily,” as “they believed in the supreme aims of this struggle.” Vasváry did not even take notice of the fact that there were Hungarians supporting the Confederate cause, and gave the title *Lincoln’s Hungarian Heroes* to his 1939 book. Tivadar Ács, in the Epilogue of his *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban* wrote that the Hungarian soldiers “fought on a distant part of the world, and sacrificed their lives for the Grand Cause of the emancipation of slaves.” However, when one takes a closer look at the possible motives of foreign soldiers in general, and Hungarians in particular, to support either the North or the South, it becomes clear that the issue was much more complex than that.⁸⁹

Actually none of the Hungarian Civil War participants said that they had been motivated to fight for the emancipation of African-Americans. Compared with any of the ethnic groups’ representatives, or even native-born Americans, they rarely indicated this

⁸⁸ Ács, *Kossuth papja*, 200.

⁸⁹ Lengyel, *Americans*, 73; Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 3; Ács, *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban*, 122.

as a major driving force to enter military service. All three of the Hungarian authors, Pivány, Vasváry and Ács, ignored the fact that in the first two years of the conflict liberation of the slaves was nowhere to be found among the official goals of the Lincoln administration. (For a detailed discussion of the issue of emancipation and Hungarian volunteers see, Chapter Eight)

Rather than abolition, the most important motivating force to fight for the Union was definitely the affection of the Kossuth emigrés — similarly to other Forty-Eighters — for the American model of democracy. Many of them had already become naturalized citizens of the United States by the beginning of the war, and they considered America as their adopted country. Alexander Asboth, the most prominent figure of the Kossuth emigration in the city of New York, addressed the Hungarians living in America on the pages of the *New York Times* on May 3, 1861 as follows:

We see with deep sorrow the glorious Republic of the United States, our adopted Country, upon the verge of dissolution, the realization of which would be a triumph for all despots and the doom of self-government.

In this distracted state of the country, it behooves us Hungarians to remember that we belong to that nation which struggled gallantly, but unsuccessfully, for the same liberty, which crowned the efforts of Washington, it beheaves [sic] us to remember, that when after the disastrous termination of our national struggle, at the demand of Austria and Russia, Gov. Kossuth, our Chief, with others of us now here, were detained by the Sultan in Asia Minor, the generous intervention by the United States set us free, and the national steam-frigate *Mississippi*, under the glorious flag of Stars and Stripes, brought us safely from a gloomy prison to the free shores of America.

The sympathy and assistance thus bestowed upon down-trodden Hungary and its scattered exiled sons moved me with a feeling of everlasting gratitude, and ten years of citizenship of this country, by virtue of which I have enjoyed the blessings of its institutions, render me deeply impressed with all its duties and obligations, as deeply and earnestly as if I was native of the soil.

Thus actuated, I have already offered my military services to the Government. Many of you have done the same, and I feel confident that you all share my sense of indebtedness to the United States, and would feel equally gratified with myself in attesting it by substantial service.

You all know the value of the Union as it was, and will stand by it faithful and true, and defend it at all hazards, with that same firmness and gallantry displayed so emphatically in the defence of our native land, the rights and Constitution of

Hungary. To embody these sentiments in a practical form, we Hungarians in New York and its vicinity must meet, [ill.] unite and organize.⁹⁰

Asboth called a meeting of Hungarians in New York to May 4, which was followed by another one on July 18, 1861. At the latter the possibilities of organizing an all-Hungarian regiment were discussed and those present even appointed Major Stephen Kovács as prospective colonel of the would-be regiment. Regimental surgeon Dr. Attila Kelemen and Emanuel Lulley were commissioned to find supporters to raise the necessary funds to equip the regiment. Although this particular attempt to found a Hungarian regiment came to nothing, just like all the others, soldiers of Hungarian origin were enthusiastic about joining multi-ethnic units such as the "Garibaldi Guards", the 39th New York Volunteers, or the Lincoln Riflemen, 24th Illinois Volunteer Regiment.⁹¹

Among the causes most often mentioned in the correspondence of ethnic soldiers, the preservation of the Union and maintaining "the best government on Earth" were the most prevalent, and several of the soldiers expressed that they felt it was their duty to serve their adopted country. Albert Ruttkay, one of Lajos Kossuth's nephews, who served in the Third Colored Heavy Artillery, said the following about his motivations for volunteering, "I joined the service out of pure motives of patriotism, at a time when *our Country* justly demanded the firm support."⁹²

In this respect Hungarians were not at all different from other foreign-born soldiers. However, particular parallels can be observed between them and the German Forty-Eighters. Partly because they had fought for the very same cause in their homelands, their military qualifications, the circumstances among which they wound up in the United States of America, and their appreciation of the opportunities they came across in America, they found a common cause. Their unity was further strengthened by the fact that both ethnic groups spoke German, then the official language of occupied Hungary and familiar to those Hungarians who had served in the Imperial Army prior to 1848/49.

⁹⁰ *The New York Times*, May 3, 1861.

⁹¹ For details concerning these ethnic regiments see, Michael Bacarella, *Lincoln's Foreign Legion: the 39th New York Infantry, the Garibaldi Guard* (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Publisher, 1996); Ray W. Burhop, *The Twenty Fourth Illinois Infantry Regiment: The Story of a Civil War Regiment* (Tampa, FL : Burhop Associates, 2003) (Hereafter cited as, Burhop, *Twenty Fourth Illinois*)

⁹² Albert Ruttkay to Maj. Gen. N. P. Banks. (May 30, 1865) Service Records Albert Ruttkay, 1st Florida Cavalry, National Archives, Washington, D.C., RG 94. Emphasis mine.

In the United States they very often served in common regiments so much so that Hungarians were often taken for Germans by the American public. József Madarász recalls a conversation of his in the United States with an Englishman which well illustrates contemporary misconceptions in the Anglo-Saxon countries:

- Sir, are you a foreigner?
- Yes, Sir.
- Are you German? [...]
- No, Sir, I am Hungarian.
- Hungarian, Hungarian, but Hungarians are also Germans.
- No, Sir, Hungarians are not Germans.
- And what are Hungarians, if not Germans?
- Hungarians are totally different from Germans in their language, customs and characteristics. Magyar is Hungarian in English, whereas we call the Germans German or Dutch.
- And Sir, are the Austrians German?
- Yes, the Austrians are German.
- And isn't Hungary part of the Austrian Empire?
- Sir, Hungary is indeed governed by the Austrians despite its Constitution, it's true, still Hungary is a distinct nation, and it is not German, unlike Austria.
- But if Hungary is part of the Austrian Empire and the Austrians are German, consequently, Hungarians also must be German.⁹³

Hungarian-born Major General Julius H. Stahel had very strong connections with such leading figures of the German-American community including Carl Schurz and Franz Sigel and this probably strengthened similar misconceptions. Even President Lincoln misspelled his name as Stahl and his lines written to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton suggest that Stahel's promotion was a likely gesture towards German-Americans in exchange for their supporting Lincoln at the 1860 Election: "I intended proposing you [...] that Schurz and Stahl should both be Maj. Genls. They together with Sigel, are our sincere friends." It comes as no surprise, therefore, that in numerous instances the Germans enumerated very similar reasons for taking up arms. An anonymous German soldier wrote in the *Louisville Journal* on June 11, 1861, "We all left our fatherland because we desired to rid our necks of the heel of the tyrant that trampled upon our rights. The proud spirit of our race will never submit to the yoke of bondage with [which] Jeff. Davis and his

⁹³ Madarász, *Emlékirataim*, 317-318. Translation mine

followers are striving to fasten upon us.” Marquis Adolphe Chambrun, a French diplomat visiting America to investigate the progress of the Civil War, found it paradoxical that “professed enemies of order and established institutions in Prussia or Austria, here they are [...] readily giving their intelligence, activity, and even their blood in the service of a new country.” What Chambrun failed to understand was the fact that the Forty-Eighters were not avowed enemies of constitutional law and order, but hoped to support the one which to them represented the safeguard of democratic ideals they had in vain fought for in their homelands. Their support of democracy in Europe and in America became linked to each other, and although indirectly, the failure of the revolutions in Europe in 1848/49 influenced their views and positions regarding Civil War volunteering as well.⁹⁴

Újházy sent the following proclamation to the Hungarian soldiers serving in the Union Army on December 1, 1861, upon his leaving for Italy as consul of United States to Ancona:

The miserable Hungarian exiles became dispersed on the entire Globe, and still: we have come together here in such great numbers! One might ask: “How come?” The main reason is that wherever the bugle-call of Freedom blares, Hungarians leave all of their properties behind no matter how cherished they had been to them, and they rush to the battle field where Honor and Valor can triumph against Villainy and Tyranny. *You have gathered in defense of the sacred cause of Freedom, helping to defend the government of this republic, which was attacked by an evil and pretentious aristocracy — such an aristocracy that not only forces other human beings to serve them, but degrades them to the level of animals [...]* As long as we don’t get the chance to fight for our constitutional existence against the blood-sucking Austrians, let us fight here, for our adopted country. And once the day of the Triumph comes, and not only *the old glory of the Republic will be restored*, but it will become an even shinier example for other nations to follow, we will be able to stand out with our arms toughened in fight to the battlefield where we have to take revenge for our our many martyred fellow countrymen.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Quoted in Stephen Beszedits, “Some Notes on the Life and Career of Major-General Julius Stahel. Insignia No.1491 New York Commandery,” (Hereafter cited as, Beszedits, “Julius Stahel”), 4; *Louisville Journal*, June 11, 1861, 2; Marquis Adolphe Chambrun, *Impressions of Lincoln and the Civil War: A Foreigner’s Account* (NY: Random House, 1952), 64-65.

⁹⁵ *Az Egyesült Éjszak-Amerikai Respublica had seregében levő Magyarokhoz intézett búcsú szava Újházi Lászlónak.* (December 1, 1861) Nyomtatvány. OL, Kossuth Gyűjtemény. Emigr. Ir. (1861): 75. Emphasis mine

In his diary, Col. Emeric Szabad summarized his major motivations for volunteering in the Northern Army, "I came to America to fight for the Union, the destruction of which would cause joy to none but tyrants and despots." Charles Zagonyi, another Hungarian participant of the Civil War, expressed similar sentiments to those of Asboth, Újházy and Szabad. In his testimony before the Joint Committee on the Conduct of War he declared, "I took service in the United States army only for the reason that I wanted to see this great country united again, and put down the rebellion, and not to divide it more and more. I am not a fortune hunter." However, it was not by chance that he was defending himself from insinuations suggesting that he was seeking the advancement of his own economic status, similarly to other foreign-born officers in the Civil War. In the Civil War South, there was a firm belief that the North hired foreign mercenaries who would do the fighting instead of them, and were interested in nothing else but money. For instance, Michael Egan, Captain of 15th West Virginia, quotes in his recollections entitled *The Flying, Gray-Haired Yank* the common Southern sentiment at the time, "[The Union] had sent 'the off-scourings' of Europe, [...] to invade our homes and firesides in an effort to overthrow constitutional right and rob us of our property." All this suggested that many of the foreigners were attracted to the ranks of the Union army by "the offer of 13 dollars a month and rations" which many saw as "the only chance to provide for themselves and their families," as German regional historian Michael Loeffler, concluded.⁹⁶

But was this the case with the members of the Kossuth emigration as well? Mary Chesnut in her famous diary placed the Hungarians in the category of mercenaries, "An appalling list of foreigners in the Yankee army," she wrote in October 1861, "these newspapers tell of the Hungarians, Russians, Prussians[...]." It was certainly true that the majority of Hungarians in the United States had problems finding employment, and their economic conditions were worse than the average in most parts of the country. This was particularly the case with the Kossuth emigrés, so it is hardly surprising that they were among the first to volunteer their services in the military. The prospect of financial advancement was definitely a factor for many of them, although it must be said that in

⁹⁶ *The New York Herald*, July 20, 1861, 5; Beszedits, *Libby Prison Diary*, 75; "Zagonyi's Testimony on February 24, 1862," *The War in the West* (Milwood, New York, 1977), 190.

the first phase of the war the pay was rather poor and unreliable; the large enlistment bounties were exceptional. For the Hungarians it was important that they had marketable skills as seasoned veterans, who knew considerably more about warfare than the immense majority of the American volunteers. Col. Gustave Waagner, chief of artillery under General Frémont, once complained about his inexperienced fellow soldiers, “It is most astonishing how ignorant they are; there is not one of these men who can trace a regular work. Of West Point I speak not, but of the people about here, and they will not learn of me---from me who know [sic].” Their experience was badly needed by both the Union and the Confederate Armies in the initial phase of the conflict, which was described by historian James M. McPherson as one in which “amateurs went to war”. As we will see later, Hungarians indeed served in the most urgently-needed positions which required considerable expertise such as military engineers, topographers, cavalry and artillery officers, and surgeons. Beyond the regular monthly payment, which came in handy for many of them, it must have been a great relief for them to feel that they were finally useful members of the community and they could use their skills and experience.⁹⁷

Some allegations of mercenary motives are hard to repudiate. One of the most famous cases was General György Klapka, renowned Hungarian commander of the Hungarian War of Independence. In response to the attempts of the American consul in Torino to recruit experienced officers to join the Union Army, Klapka sent a letter to General George B. McClellan, commander of the Army of Potomac, in which he expressed his willingness to go to the United States for an unashamedly-high \$100,000 bonus and \$25,000 per annum salary. McClellan was even more outraged by Klapka’s stated intention of becoming commander-in-chief as soon as he mastered the English language, and this incident further deepened his, and many others’, distrust in foreign soldiers.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Mary Boykin Miller Chesnut, *Mary Chesnut’s Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 207; Quoted in: Russell, *My Diary*, 341; James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) (Hereafter cited as, McPherson, *Cause and Comrades*), 5; Michael Egan, *The Flying, Gray-Haired Yank* (Philadelphia: Edgewood Publishing, 1888), 251; Michael Loeffler, *Preussens und Sachsens Beziehungen zu den USA Waehrends des Sessessionskrieges, 1860-65* (Berlin, Free University of Berlin, 1999), 180.

⁹⁸ For the American consul’s offer see, *Figyelmessy’s letter to his comrades*, Torino, Italy (November 9, 1861) OL, Türr Iratok, 71/a; Lukács, 256-257.

For many, however, the prospect of a higher bounty was not as attractive as the military challenge of the Civil War. Especially those who were serving in the Hungarian Legion in Italy felt that the "treacherous" peace of Villafranca in 1859 deprived them of all hope for a new freedom fight in Hungary, and many started seeking new opportunities. Although statistics show that there was no mass migration of Hungarian veterans from Italy to the United States throughout the Civil War, some did go to serve in the Union Army, among them Nicholai Dunka and Philip Figyelmessy, and several others contemplated the idea of taking their sabres overseas. Nándor Éber, former Brigadier General under Garibaldi wrote to his comrade, István Türr: "The American struggle is very interesting: hundreds of thousands of people facing each other, this is not to be seen every day." Still, eventually he gave up the idea of moving to America.⁹⁹

Military service had a certain appeal to many young men who often volunteered seeking adventure and were convinced that the war would last for only a couple of months. Most Kossuth emigrés, on the other hand, were well aware of the real nature of war, and serving in the army was an utterly different kind of magnet for them than for the majority of "green" (inexperienced) Americans. The Hungarians had been accustomed to the prestige of being a soldier either in their homeland or in Italy, and they were hoping for similar recognition in the United States. The enlistment of Eugene Kozlay, for instance, had nothing to do with the abolition of slavery which he definitely opposed. Moreover, his involvement in the trading business in New York which had gained much of its profit from cotton prior to the Civil War, led him to sympathize with the South. Nevertheless, he joined the Union Army and by the end of the conflict, he rose to the rank of brigadier general by brevet. Military service for him, and for many other Hungarian emigrants, provided an avenue for respect, in some cases even for glory. Janet Kozlay, Eugene's descendant, ardent genealogist and researcher of her family's past, attributes his enlistment to his "huge ego", and concludes, "being called a general (in fact brigadier-general by brevet) must have been a huge satisfaction for him." Similarly to him, young Joseph Pulitzer, also dreamed of becoming a soldier, although due to his frail health he was turned away by the Austrian Army as well as the French

⁹⁹ Éber to Türr. (June 5, 1862) OL, Türr Iratok, 1434.

Foreign Legion. He could enlist in the Union cavalry just to become miserably disappointed with the military career he had anticipated to be glorious.¹⁰⁰

Except for Hungarians who either joined one of the ethnic regiments with Hungarian companies or a relatively large number of Hungarian-born, or were invited to serve on the staff of General John Charles Frémont, the majority of Kossuth emigrants enlisted in local regiments, usually closest to their actual place of residence. Another major motive to do so was, therefore, maintaining not only their own freedom, but that of their neighbors and the members of the local community. (Here I do not necessarily mean physical freedom, but maintaining the existence of a free government against an expansionist South — that was how many interpreted the impact of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the Dred Scott decision as well as the armed conflict between North and South.) This seemed the best way for them to demonstrate their loyalty to their adopted country and also to enhance their integration and acceptance within these communities.

What is even more intriguing is why foreigners in general, and Hungarian in particular made up their minds to support the Confederate cause with their arms. Although almost entirely ignored in the Hungarian-American historical literature, there were indeed Hungarians who not only settled down in what later became Confederate states, but joined the ranks of the Southern army, as well. It is worth, therefore, taking a closer look at what the major motivating factors were for them to do so. Due to the small number of Hungarians serving in the Confederate army, and to the fragmented nature and insufficient number of sources, the reconstruction of their motivations is a trying endeavor.

The definitive work for information on volunteering in the Confederate army is still Ella Lonn's *Foreigners in the Confederacy* in which she established, "Sometimes voluntary enlistments came from men so out of sympathy with the [Southern] cause that their presence in the Confederate States army can be only explained by the phrase 'drifting along with the tide'." Lonn cites a Hungarian, Col. Béla Estván, who — as we will later see — turned out to be neither colonel, nor Hungarian, and whose real name

¹⁰⁰ I have gained information on Kozlay's motivations for volunteering from my correspondence with Janet Kozlay; András Csillag, *Joseph Pulitzer és az amerikai sajtó* (Budapest, Osiris Kiadó, 2000) (Hereafter cited as, Csillag. *Pulitzer*), 29-30.

was Peter Heinrich, as an example for this. Estván in his *War Pictures from the South* wrote the following about the reasons for his enlistment, "Circumstances led me to take service in the Confederate army - my long residence in the Southern States being, however, the main inducement thereto." Elsewhere he added, "It was now 13 years that I had been away from my native home and now, drawn into the whirlpool of events, I found myself, almost against my will, serving in the ranks of a foreign army, and fighting for a cause, with which neither my head nor my heart could thoroughly sympathize." However, a careful analysis of Estván's career reveals that — despite his self-styled reluctance — he wrote at least two letters to Confederate President Jefferson Davis, offering his services to him, and outlining a plan to form two foreign regiments, an infantry and a cavalry unit, from the states of Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee. These, of course, do not suggest any reluctance to participate in the conflict, yet it would be a mistake to think that Estván was a committed supporter of the cause of the Confederacy either. In light of his entire career, one cannot but agree with historian Robert W. Frazer who remarked that Estván really wished to serve only himself. A reviewer of Estván's book, rather maliciously, remarked, "[He] gazes on the battlefield with the calm indifference of the woman who witnessed the conflict between her husband and a bear," which is the "correct temperament of a soldier, but it is also the characteristics of a mercenary."¹⁰¹

Other Hungarians serving in the Confederate Army were not immune to charges of seeking only personal financial gains through their volunteering either. Another well-known case was that of another Hungarian, Col. Adolphus Adler, who was Engineer-in-Chief in the Wise Brigade, and was arrested by the Richmond authorities; the charges, however, are not quite clear. Some attributed it to the fact that he brought suspicion against himself by openly criticizing his superiors, but there were many who said that he himself was not satisfied with the opportunities offered to him, as a foreigner, in Confederate service. William Harris, who met Adler in the prison, directly questioned

¹⁰¹ Quoted in Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy*, 58; Béla Estván, *War Pictures from the South* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1863) (Hereafter cited as, Estván, *War Pictures*), iii; *The New York Times*, July 19, 1863, 3.

his commitment, “He would have turned Turk, Secesh, and Unionist alternately, in order to escape his portending doom.”¹⁰²

Although he saw no military service in the Civil War, Anthony Vallas, a Hungarian-born professor of mathematics and philosophy at Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy, also became the target of criticism for his lack of enthusiasm for the Confederate cause. William Tecumseh Sherman, then superintendent of the institution, described him as a “foreigner who doesn’t care [too much about] the Confederacy, but will follow his immediate self-interests,” and referred to him as a “hypocritical foreigner who would serve the Devil for his pay.”¹⁰³

In the Confederate states there was public hostility to foreigners which was further exacerbated by the common belief that actually it was the despised foreign mercenaries who did the bulk of fighting in the North. These sentiments appeared in legislation as well. In August 1861, the Confederate president signed an act which said, “Conferred upon every noncitizen in the military service protection during the war and the rights of a citizen, together with the right to become naturalized and entitled to all the rights of citizenship upon taking an oath to support the Constitution and indicating which one of the Confederate States he intended to become a citizen.” In the winter of 1861-62, however, the Confederate Congress enacted a bill that was to bar any foreign-born person from becoming a citizen of the Confederacy. Jefferson Davis vetoed it saying that [it would impose] a “legislative stigma” on aliens serving in the army and “on those of our fellow-citizens who are of foreign birth.” The Confederate Conscription Act passed on April 16, 1862 ordered that “Foreigners who are not citizens of the Confederate States and who shall not have acquired a domicile shall not be subject to military duty” and if enlisted “shall be discharged at the expiration of their original term of enlistment.” Furthermore, General Order No. 82 issued by the Adjutant-General’s Office contained the following regulations: “Foreigners not domiciled in the Confederate States are not liable to conscription. [...] Long residence, of itself, does not constitute domicile. A person may acquire domicile in less than one year, and he may not acquire it in twenty

¹⁰² William C. Harris, *Prison-Life in a Tobacco Warehouse at Richmond* (Philadelphia, PA: G.W. Childs, 1862), 87.

¹⁰³ Sherman to Ellen Ewing Sherman (November 3, 1860 and December 5, 1860) In Brooks D. Simpson and Jean V. Berlin, eds. *Sherman’s Civil War: Selected Correspondence of William T. Sherman, 1860-65* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 4 and 39.

years. [...] The principal evidences of intention to remain are the declarations of the party, the exercise of rights of citizenship, marriage and the acquisition of real estate.”¹⁰⁴

We can be sure that both Adler and Estván volunteered to promote their own social and financial status, and it soon became obvious that promotion for the foreign-born was not easy in the Confederate Army. “Our service offers but little inducement to the soldiers of fortune, but a great deal to the men of principle,” said President Davis to a visitor at Charleston. Indeed, Estván, who hardly fit in the latter category, as we will later see, soon started to search for other opportunities, and left service which resulted in the *Richmond Examiner* writing about him, “In these war times, they [the deserters] are plentiful under the uniform of military officers. Estván, the soi-disant count, who ran to the North after playing out his calls here, was one of a particular class.”¹⁰⁵

Not all foreign soldiers were attracted by the hope of individual financial gains. Another major motivation was what William Watson called “sympathy with other loyal, law-abiding people who felt contempt for the Federal Government’s failure to afford loyal Southerners aid and support.” It is highly interesting that Hungarian-born Southerners — similarly to those living in the North — found parallels between the cause for which they jumped to arms in their homeland and in their adopted country: between the struggle for states’ rights and Hungary’s efforts to break free from the tyranny of the Habsburgs. At first this might sound farfetched, however, they were not alone in doing so. A native-born Confederate captain explained to Emeric Szabad, a Hungarian prisoner-of-war, that “he found it incomprehensible how a Hungarian could fight with the d---d Yankees against the Southern people who were fighting for what Hungarians had fought for in 1848.” Similarly, in 1866 the *Old Guard* referred to a not-yet-identified Hungarian surgeon, who had served in the Confederate Army telling a [Southern] lady not to complain: “I know that you suffer for I have been through it before in my own country.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ *Journal of the Provisional Congress of the Confederate States of America* (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1904-1905), I, 621; Mahin, *Blessed Place*, 63; Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy*, 385.

¹⁰⁵ *Daily Richmond Examiner*, February 5, 1864, 6.

¹⁰⁶ William Watson, *Life in the Confederate Army: Being the Observations and Experiences of an Alien in the South during the American Civil War* (New York: Scribner&Welford, 1888) (Hereafter cited as, Watson, *Life in the Confederate Army*), 58-59; Quoted in Beszedits, *Libby Prison Diary*, 75; *The Old Guard*. Vol. 4, Issue 5 (May 1866), 306-307.

It can also be taken for granted that many people of foreign birth enlisted so that they would not be regarded as cowards by their neighbors, and also to avoid suspicions that they might sympathize with the Union which could very easily result in severe persecution. The renowned Irish reporter, war correspondent to *The Times*, William H. Russell took note of in his diary, "Persons found guilty [...] of stating their belief that the Northerners will be successful are sent to prison for six months. The accused are generally foreigners.[...]" In Richmond alone more than 350 Germans were arrested without stated charges, but evidently due to the Confederate authorities' distrust of their loyalty. In Texas atrocities against the foreigners — especially Germans — were not at all rare, as many of them were unwilling to accept conscription into the Confederate Army even if it meant risking the confiscation of their properties. Some of the Germans decided to flee to Mexico: on August 10, 1862 Col. Duff's cavalymen found a group of some 60 Germans on the Nueces River killing and wounding about half of them. It was no wonder, consequently, that many Germans were among the firsts to surrender to the advancing Union troops in the South.¹⁰⁷

In San Antonio, Texas four sons of a Hungarian-born saddler, Ben Varga volunteered in the Confederate Army. It is highly probable that the appreciation of the local community and the hope to become able to integrate easier played major roles in prompting the boys to volunteer and serve throughout the Civil War.

The love of adventure was also certainly present in the heart of all young men, regardless which country they were born in, attracting many to join the Southern Army. Nevertheless, the grave realities of fighting in the Civil War soon discouraged many from enlisting or re-enlisting upon the expiration of their terms of service.

Although all Hungarians served in the Confederate Army as volunteers, on April 9, 1862 the First Draft Law went into effect applying to all males between the ages of 18 and 35, later to be followed by similar laws further expanding the circle of those obliged to perform military service (in February 1864 17-50 years of age). These laws were very

¹⁰⁷ William H. Russell, *My Diary North and South* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1954) (Hereafter cited as, Russell, *My Diary*), 234; *Deutsche in den Diensten der Konfoederation* (Technical University of Berlin, Germany) (<http://www2.tu-berlin.de/presse/tui/95jan/deutsche.html>); Mahin, *Blessed Place*, 67-69.

unpopular among the foreigners, as they associated the passing of similar pieces of legislation with despotic regimes.¹⁰⁸

Chroniclers of the presence of Hungarians in the United States did not really know what to make out of the Hungarians supporting the Confederacy mainly due to the existence of the peculiar institution which they considered as a disgrace that went counter to all the democratic ideals they believed the United States represented. This was the main reason why all of them left more or less uncommented the fact that there were Hungarians serving in the army of the South. Of course, we know very well that there were. But what was their attitude towards the institution of slavery?

The vast majority of the foreigners in the states of the Confederacy had little or no connection at all with the plantation system, and had hardly any contact with slaves. It seems safe to state that most of them felt very similar to William Watson, who wrote about his own stance regarding slavery, "I had no interest in it, or connection with it, but was rather opposed to it," and he added that a large number in the South were opposed to it, although on quite different principles from the New England political abolitionists. Similarly to the foreign-born in the ranks of the Union army who — with the exception of the few ardent abolitionists — were not fighting *against* the institution of slavery, it seems that foreigners in Confederate service were not fighting *for* it. In this respect, there was no considerable difference between their positions in the two armies, just as there was a similarity between the native-born and the immigrants in the South, as well. James M. McPherson said to a Civil War newsgroup in August 1996, "In fighting for their home and country, Southern soldiers took slavery for granted as the basis of the society and the country for which they fought."¹⁰⁹ Slavery was, therefore, not of particular importance for the vast majority of Southern soldiers, with the single exception being the so-called 'white trash' layer of society, who had no wealth or property, the color of their skin and the privileges that went along with this being basically the only things differentiating them from the slaves. No wonder, consequently, that they were trying to preserve their superiority valuing "the one dignity belonging to them, as white people, in a slave country." Having no interest in the peculiar institution,

¹⁰⁸ Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy*, 387.

¹⁰⁹ Watson, *Life in the Confederate Army*, 395; James M. McPherson to Civil War Newsgroup (August 16, 1996)

for most foreigners — Hungarians included — defending their homes, families, and their adopted country was a major motive for volunteering.

McPherson devoted an entire book, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War*, to the analysis of the causes which moved soldiers — Northerners and Southerners alike — to enlist, and identified as many as fourteen possible key motivations ranging from the defense of homeland, through adventure to the pursuit of promotion. However, his research proved that Confederate and Union soldiers gave give similar reasons, except, as one would expect, on the subject of slavery. The sheer number of possible motivations suggests that volunteering in the Civil War was a complex issue which is definitely further complicated by the specific influencing factors in the case of the foreign-born. The analysis of the motivations which prompted Hungarians to take up arms in the conflict seems to support this. Although there were individual variants, we can conclude overall that the members of the Kossuth emigration mostly enlisted in order to utilize their military talents and prove their loyalty towards their adopted country. Earlier assumptions that they primarily took arms to help bring about the emancipation of slaves are not sustainable, although they cannot be entirely ruled out.¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ McPherson, *Cause and Comrades*. The fourteen major motivations are as follows according to Professor McPherson: Martial enthusiasm, discipline, leadership, comradeship, character, religion, defense of homeland, preservation of the union, liberty, slavery, vengeance, duty, glory, honor.

CHAPTER FIVE

TAKING UP ARMS IN THE CIVIL WAR

Hungarian-born authors have overstated the number of Hungarians in the war between North and South. Just to mention one example, Eugene Pivány in his *Hungarians in the American Civil War* (1913), which broke new grounds despite its many factual errors, suggested that the number of Hungarians living in the United States in 1860 exceeded 4,000, and even estimated that approximately 800 of them (a whopping 1 out of 5) served in the Civil War. Tivadar Ács went even further, claiming that no fewer than 5,000 Hungarian-born soldiers saw service in the war. No wonder that many of the works dealing with various aspects of Hungarian-American historical links and contacts took pride in stating that the Hungarians were the most over-represented ethnic group serving in the war in proportion to their overall number.¹¹¹

These exaggerations were not confined to Hungarian authors. In his *The Blessed Place of Freedom*, a recent work scrutinizing immigrant involvement in the American Civil War, Dean B. Mahin concludes, "Estimates of the number of volunteers from each major immigrant group have been inflated by ethnic authors eager to prove that their group had made an important contribution to the ultimate Union victory." These tendencies went hand in hand with the common Southern exaggeration of the role of "foreign mercenaries," who they said served in such great numbers in the Northern armed forces that they turned the scales in favor of the Union. General Robert E. Lee allegedly said, "Take the Dutch out of the Union Army and we could whip the Yankees easily."¹¹²

Modern Civil War research has shown that the proportion of foreigners in the Union Army was below 20 percent. So immigrants were hardly a decisive element in terms of numbers. The Union had a great advantage in manpower anyway. Moreover, about 10 percent of the Northern population as a whole volunteered in the Union army, so the

¹¹¹ Pivány, *Hungarians in the Civil War*, 5-6., Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 1-2, Ács, *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban*, 22-23.

¹¹² Mahin, *Blessed Place of Freedom*, 10; Irene M. Franck, *The German American Heritage* (New York: Facts on File, 1989), 109.

proportion of volunteers coming from many ethnic groups was inevitably higher than the national rate.

Below is the comparison of the participation of some of the major ethnic groups in relation to their total numbers in the United States in 1860.

<i>Ethnic Group</i>	<i>Total Number in the North</i>	<i>Total Number of Civil War Participants</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Germans	1,229,144	180,000	13.8
Irish	1,526,541	150,000	9.3
Britons	563,186	50,000	8.8
Belgians	9,072	500	5.5

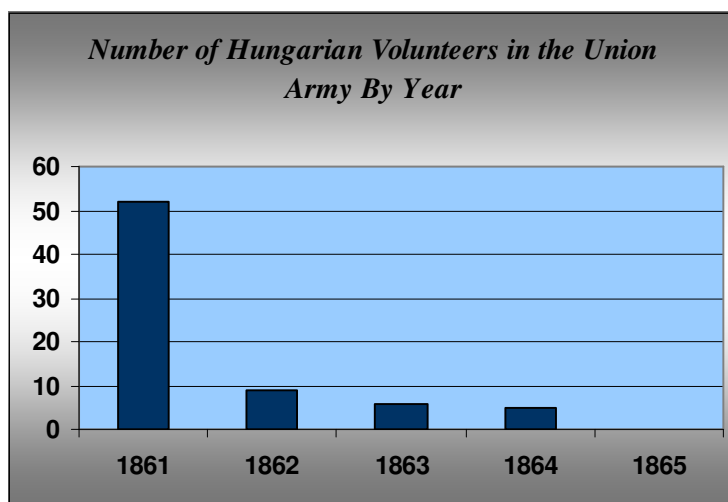
Source: Data Taken from Dean B. Mahin. *The Blessed Place of Freedom* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 2002), 1-3; 15, 29, 43-49.

Overall, the rate of volunteers in proportion to the total population of the specific ethnic group was close to 10 percent in most cases. In some groups the proportion of volunteers approached 15 percent.

It is difficult to determine the exact number of Hungarians serving in the ranks of either army. Recruiting officers rarely indicated the volunteers' nationality or place of birth, so Civil War service records have to be complemented with population statistics and pension records. Even the combined use of these types of sources does not guarantee the identification of the nationality of individuals. All three above-mentioned Hungarian authors attached a list of alleged Hungarian-born soldiers in the Civil War, but the number of names in these lists did not even approach their overall estimates. Pivány, Vasváry and Ács did not take into account the fact that many of those they identified as Hungarians were in reality of other nationality, and in some cases they even lied about having served in the war. With this in mind, the current study names only those whose nationality is clearly identifiable as Hungarian.

The Biographical List section of this work includes eighty-seven Hungarian soldiers in the Union Army, and twelve who joined the Confederate Army. This list is not complete, and probably never will be. However, it is clear that there is little likelihood that future research will significantly expand this total number of known Hungarian soldiers. Of the total number of identified Hungarian-born Civil War soldiers on the list,

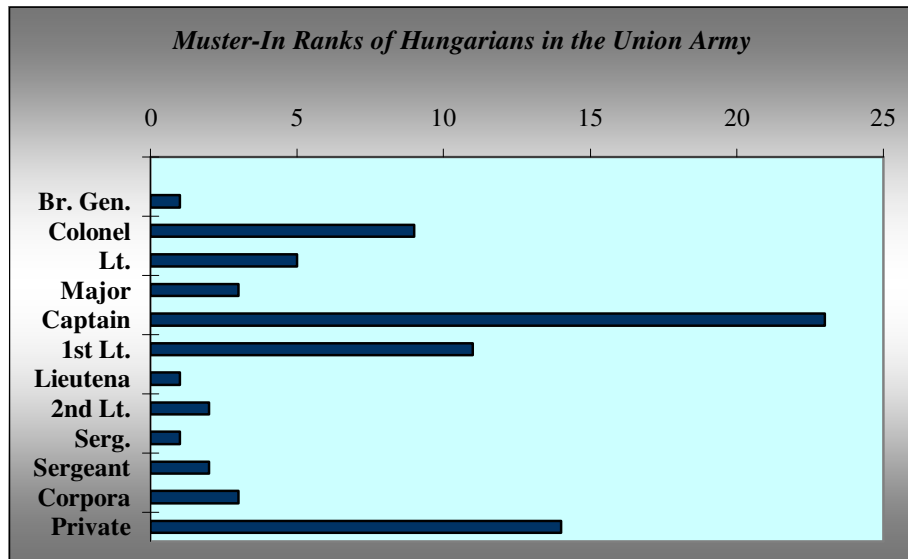
almost nine of every ten joined the Union army, closely corresponding with the distribution of Hungarians north and south in the general population. (According to the population statistics taken from the federal census of 1860, 993 (88%) out of the total number of 1,125 Hungarian family heads in the United States settled down in Northern states.) Enlistment rates on both sides were also similar: in the Union Army their proportion was 8.7 percent; in contrast, in the Confederate Army it was slightly higher, 9 percent. This definitely proves that Hungarian-Americans were by no means exceptional regarding their willingness to volunteer in the Civil War. The chart below shows just how quickly Hungarians responded to the Union call for volunteers after Fort Sumter. Fifty-two of the total of 72 Hungarians, whose exact date of enlistment is known, volunteered in the very first year of the conflict, most of them in fact during the very first month, as service records show.



Data Compiled from the Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's- 1917, Record Group 94, Compiled Military Records, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

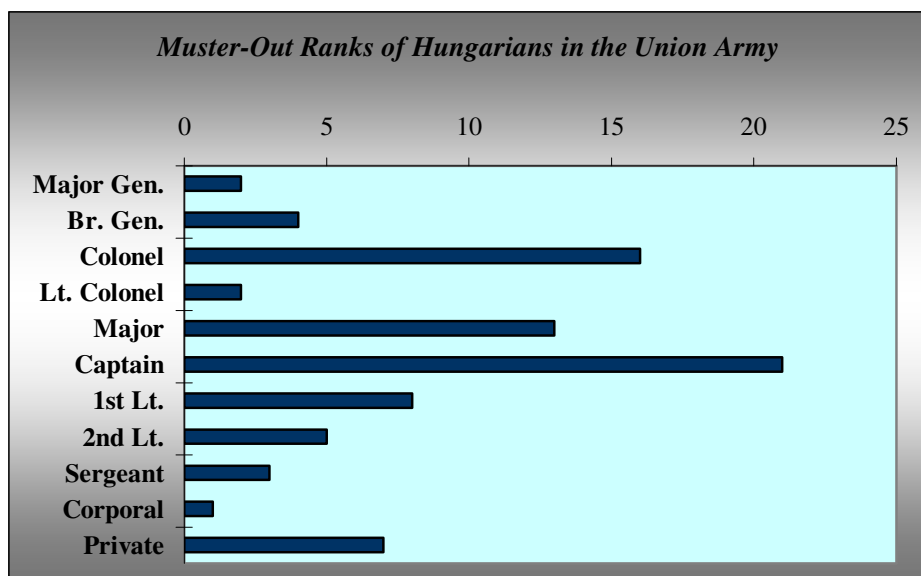
This enthusiasm faded in the subsequent years, and in 1865 we have no data of Hungarians entering the service of the Union.

Two thirds of the Hungarians who were mustered in the various volunteer regiments were commissioned as officers.



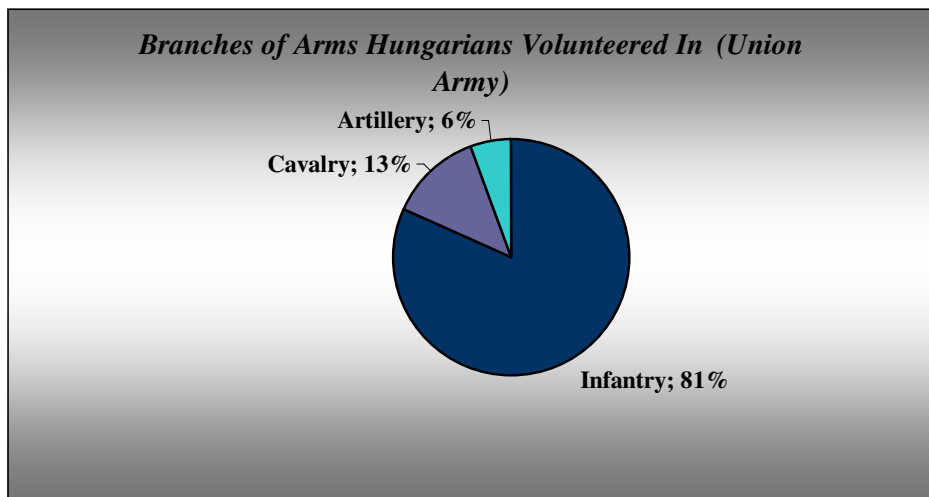
Data Compiled from the Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's- 1917, Record Group 94, Compiled Military Records, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Many had experience from the Hungarian freedom fight and were mostly mustered in as 1st lieutenants or captains. Some even received commissions as commanders of regiments with the rank of colonel, or more rarely obtained the rank of brigadier general. Their enlistment was beneficial for them and for the Union Army: they were able to utilize their military talents, which was badly needed in the first phase of the conflict when the Union army was short of seasoned veterans.



Data Compiled from the Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's- 1917, Record Group 94, Compiled Military Records, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

By the time individuals were mustered out in the Union Army, most of them had risen significantly in rank. While 75% had mustered in as officers, 87% finished their service with commissions. Two of the Hungarians rose to the rank of major general, and four obtained the rank of brigadier general. The number of Hungarian colonels commanding regiments more than doubled, and majors rose at an even more remarkable rate (more than fourfold increase). Although by the end of their service fewer Hungarians served in the army as privates, this was partly because those joining in the latter half of the Civil War with no military experience were mustered in as private, and they had little opportunity to get promoted. These included Joseph Pulitzer, who enlisted in the 1st New York [Lincoln] Cavalry as a private, and had no chance of getting promoted.¹¹³



Data Compiled from the Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's- 1917, Record Group 94, Compiled Military Records, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

The distribution of Hungarians among the various branches of arms more or less reflected the general composition of the Union Army. About 80 percent of the units were infantry regiments. Out of the estimated 2.5 million soldiers serving in the Northern Armed forces, about 326,000 were in the 272 cavalry regiments, which was about 13

¹¹³ See, Csillag, *Pulitzer*.

percent of the total manpower of the North. The proportion of Hungarian-born soldiers in the Union's cavalry was similar.¹¹⁴

As far as the actual states from which Hungarian soldiers volunteered are concerned, three major centers can be identified: 35 percent of them joined in New York, twenty-seven percent in Missouri, and twelve percent in both Illinois and Iowa. Although no all-Hungarian regiments were formed in the Civil War, some military units in these states showed a high concentration of the foreign-born, and Hungarians in particular.

New York and the “Melting Pot Soldiers”

In the Hungarian-American literature, the 39th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment, known usually as the ‘Garibaldi Guards,’ was often designated as a Hungarian unit. However, only 10 verifiable Hungarians served in this regiment. Confusion about the ethnicity of the members may be due to the fact that Hungarian Frederick George D’Utassy raised and commanded the regiment. Furthermore, this truly multi-ethnic unit, which had French, French Canadian, Spanish, Portuguese, Swiss and German ethnic companies, also had three companies that were referred to as ‘Hungarian.’ Probably this caused Anthony Tihamer Komjathy, among others, to conclude that “half of the rank and file of the Garibaldi Guard were Hungarians.” Careful analysis of the rosters of the regiment does not support these claims: despite the lack of standardized muster rolls indicating the soldiers’ country of birth, we can safely assert that there were no several hundred Hungarians serving in the regiment.¹¹⁵

Nevertheless, the importance of “Hungarianness” was not due to the actual number of Hungarians; rather it stood for the common cause of Italians, Hungarians or Germans who had fought in 1848/49 in their home countries. When the regiment was mustered in on May 23, 1861 in New York on LaFayette Place, an American, a Hungarian and an Italian flag were presented to the soldiers. In the white stripe of the Hungarian flag a wreath of laurel and oak leaves surrounded the inscription: “Vincere vele mori” with the

¹¹⁴ For information on the Union cavalry consult, Edward G. Longacre, *Lincoln's Cavalrymen. A History of the Mounted Forces of the Army of the Potomac* (Mechanicsburg, Pa. : Stackpole Books, 2000)

¹¹⁵ Anthony Tihamer Komjathy, *A Thousand Years of the Hungarian Art of War* (Toronto, CA: Rakoczi Foundation, 1982), 110.

translation on the reverse, "Conquer or die." Across the flag, in letters of green and gold, was inscribed: "Garibaldi Guard." Attached to the staff, which was surmounted by a silver battle-axe, was a red, white and blue pennant, with the motto, "Brethren before, brethren again."¹¹⁶ The symbolism was clear.

The regiment was built on a mixture of European traditions. To start with, they wore an Italian-style uniform similar to that of Italian Bersaglieri (Sharpshooters), with broad flat hats adorned with feathers. Furthermore, there were several so-called "Vivandières" or "Cantinières" with them: women who traveled with the soldiers for little or no pay as sutlers, mascots or nurses. Some even fought alongside their male counterparts, although the majority was sent home near the end of 1861 when the regiment began to see real fighting.¹¹⁷

The most controversial figure of the regiment was Colonel Frederick George D'Utassy. A veteran of the Hungarian War of Independence with considerable political support in New York, he raised the regiment and became its colonel. However, many officers and men resisted his primary goal of Americanizing the regiment as much as possible. This played a major role in generating accusations against him of fraud and falsification of regimental documents as early as the fall of 1861. For the time being he managed to prove his innocence. Nevertheless, his strict disciplinary style turned several of his soldiers against him, including some fellow Hungarians. Captain Francis Takats got into a disagreement with D'Utassy and on July 8, 1861 he wrote a petition demanding the resignation of the colonel. Several officers of the regiment also signed it. Two days later they went as far as refusing to drill, and two companies marched to Washington, D.C., where they were arrested.

¹¹⁶ *The New York Times*, May 24, 1861, 8; Also: *Harper's Weekly*, June 8, 1861, 359, 362.

¹¹⁷ Susan Lyons Hughes, "The Daughter of the Regiment: A Brief History of the Vivandieres and Cantinieres in the American Civil War," EHistory.com: U.S. Civil War "A Nation Divided" (2000/May) (<http://womenshistory.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http://www.ehistory.com/uscw/features/articles/0005/vivandieres.cfm>) (June 18, 2007)



Alfred R. Waud. "Surrender of the revolting Garibaldi Guards to the U.S. Cavalry" with Cpt. Francis Takats in the middle of the picture. Source: *New York Illustrated News*, July 22 1861. Library of Congress, DRWG/US - Waud, No. 17

Captain Takats was court martialled and discharged in November 1861. D'Utassy was cleared, but frequent rumors linked him with corrupt practices, particularly diverting government funds to his personal purposes. Moreover, his rather extravagant taste and lifestyle alienated many of his soldiers. Eventually, he was arrested in March 1863 and was charged with 25 criminal specifications. The court-martial found him guilty and sent him to prison for one year.¹¹⁸

All of the confusion surrounding the regiment turned many soldiers, including Hungarians, away from the unit (all the Hungarians who are known to have served here volunteered in 1861), but those who did see service with the 39th New York were eager to prove themselves. Hugo Hillebrandt, another veteran of the Hungarian War of Independence, rose from sergeant major to major within a year. He was involved in the battle of Harper's Ferry on September 13, 1862, which was probably the darkest day in the history of the regiment, as on the Maryland Heights 3,000 Union soldiers surrendered to the Confederates. The subsequent investigations found that Hildebrandt was one of the few officers of the Garibaldi Guards who did their best to avoid the fiasco. Later, on the second day of the battle of Gettysburg he led four companies and re-took Watson's

¹¹⁸ For details, See D'Utassy in Biographical List

Battery from the 21st Mississippi. For his gallantry, he was brevetted colonel by President Andrew Johnson in 1869. Anthony Weekey also progressed quickly in rank, from 1st lieutenant to major within less than a year. However, he fell victim to some unidentified disease in the spring of 1862.

Hungarians living in New York as well as other parts of the country had very strong links with the German-American community. Eugene Kozlay organized the 54th New York Volunteer Infantry, which was named 'Schwarze Jaeger' and its soldiers were recruited mainly from among German-Americans in Brooklyn. The regiment was named after the volunteer force of Ludwig Adolf Wilhelm, Baron von Lützow in the Napoleonic Wars. The overwhelming majority of the soldiers were of German origin, but Kozlay was not the only Hungarian, as another Kossuth emigrant, Stephen Kovats was his major. Julius H. Stahel assisted Col. Louis Blenker in raising the 8th New York Volunteer regiment, and became the lieutenant-colonel of the unit. Kossuth emigrés served in some ten other New York regiments that did not have noticeable concentrations of Hungarians.

Frémont's Hungarians in Missouri

The state of Missouri played a crucial role in the Civil War. Not only did the nation's major lines of westward travel and communication pass through the state, but its relatively large population made it an excellent source of manpower. A high proportion of the population was foreign-born, mostly German, who were instrumental in keeping the slave state in the Union after the secession crisis of 1860. In fact, about four-fifths of the population of St. Louis were foreigners, mostly Germans, who supported the Union. In contrast, more than two-thirds of the white population in Missouri were of Southern stock.

St. Louis was also the residence of the third largest Hungarian community in the United States. Similarly to New York, Kossuth emigrés were strongly attached to the local German community, and, starting in 1861, they shared in organizing pro-Union forces into effective home guard units in the city. Probably the most prominent of all of them were the four Rombauer brothers: Roderick, Robert, Roland and Raphael had all settled down in St. Louis, and were deeply involved in the public life of the city. All four

of them volunteered in Missouri regiments, and greatly contributed to the final victory of the Union forces in the state. They were not the only ones, though. Anton Gerster organized a company of St. Louis volunteers in 1861 which was called Gerster's Independent Company of Pioneers. In the later phase of the Civil War, he became captain of the 5th Missouri Infantry and the 27th Missouri Infantry. In both units, he was responsible for building and repairing fortifications and bridges, utilizing his qualification as a civil engineer.

However, another factor beyond German-American unionism attracted the finest, most experienced Hungarian officers into the state. John Charles Frémont was a real romantic hero in the eyes of many in America: the Pathfinder who played a major role both in the exploration of the West and the conquest of California. His ardent opposition to the territorial expansion of slavery resulted in his nomination as the Republican presidential candidate at the election of 1856. His loss to James Buchanan forestalled disunion for another four years, as the Southern states threatened to secede if Frémont was elected. At the outbreak of the Civil War, his political connections secured him a major generalship, although the “political general” had never commanded larger armies before. Lincoln appointed him to command the rather precarious Department of the West, which had its headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri. This appointment, however, was not what one would call rewarding. Missouri was a border-state hotbed of secessionist sentiments with the population being badly divided: 100,000 of the state’s citizens volunteered in the Union Army, while 50,000 in the ranks of the Confederacy. The special convention of Missouri on secession voted decisively for remaining in the Union, but the state’s Pro-Confederate governor, Claiborne F. Jackson, ordered the mobilization of several hundred state militia troops. However, Union General Nathaniel Lyon quickly encircled their camp and forced their surrender. This did not end the clashes between Pro-Slavery and Anti-Slavery forces in Missouri, though. The latter continued to wage a guerilla-type of warfare against the Union troops, enjoying the support of many in the state, and even in St. Louis, where Frémont established his headquarters.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ For information about the Civil War in Missouri consult, Carolyn M. Bartels, *The Civil War in Missouri, 1861-1865* (Independence, MO: Two Trails Publishing, 2003); also: Robert J. Rombauer, *The Union Cause in St. Louis in 1861: An Historical Sketch* (St. Louis : Press of Nixon-Jones Print. Co., 1909) (Hereafter cited as, Rombauer, *Union Cause*)

These were the major challenges John Charles Frémont was supposed to face. However, he encountered immense difficulties in establishing his command. Headstrong and independent, Frémont deeply distrusted regular officers and West Pointers. He surrounded himself mainly with European officers – all of them veterans of either the revolutionary wars of 1848/49 or the Crimean War. Frémont particularly favored Hungarians: no wonder his Department Headquarters soon contained a major concentration of Kossuth emigrés ready to take up arms in defense of the Union.¹²⁰

Frémont did not care much about military regulations and procedures. He often appointed officers without asking authorization from anyone, and often fabricated commissions which did not even exist. Brigadier General Samuel R. Curtis in his letter written to Lincoln on October 12, 1861 complained, “What has particularly surprised me, is the General’s mode of calling, organizing and officering and supplying his Army—Law and rank, and usage, are apparently lost sight of.” He also concluded, “In my opinion Gen Fremont lacks the intelligence, the experience, the sagacity necessary to his command.” It was not only Curtis, but most of the ignored West Pointers, among them John Pope and Samuel D. Sturgis, who complained about his extensive employment of foreigners, and the forming of such irregular units as the Benton Hussars or the Frémont Hussars.¹²¹

Frémont made one of the most experienced as well as respected members of the Kossuth emigration, Alexander Asboth, his chief-of staff. The Hungarian played a pre-eminent role in organizing the Department of the West into an effective fighting unit. Stephen Beszedits quotes Alan Nevins in his “Hungarians with General John C. Frémont in the American Civil War”, who wrote about Asboth, “He was highly efficient in seeing that the new regiments drilled hard, steadily and with growing precision.”¹²²

Another Hungarian, Albert Anselm, was selected as Asboth’s adjutant on Frémont’s staff. Anselm had played a major role in organizing Home Guard units in St. Louis.

¹²⁰ Judy Yandoh, “Taking off the Kid Gloves,” *America’s Civil War* (1992/March), 46-54. (Hereafter cited as, Yandoh, “Kid Gloves”)

¹²¹ Samuel R. Curtis to Lincoln (October 12, 1861) *Collected Works*, IV, 549-550; Andrew Rolle, *John Charles Frémont: Character as Destiny* (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1991), 196.

¹²² Stephen Beszedits, “Hungarians with General John C. Frémont in the American Civil War,” *Vasváry Collection Newsletter*. (2003/2) Accessible at: <http://www.sk-szeged.hu/szolgalatas/vasvary/newsletter/03dec/beszedits.html> (Hereafter cited as, Beszedits, “Hungarians with Frémont”)

John Fiala became Frémont's chief topographical engineer, and contributed greatly to the completion of the fortifications around the city of St. Louis. What is more, he was one of the proponents of establishing a river flotilla of gunboats. Nevertheless, he did not escape anti-foreigner sentiments that surrounded the Hungarian officers on Frémont's staff: Br. Gen. Curtis complained that "[Frémont] makes a German by the name of Col. Fiala, 'Chief of Engineers and Inspector General' and gives him entire control of the forts now nearly finished in this city (Benton Barracks, near St. Louis, MO)."¹²³

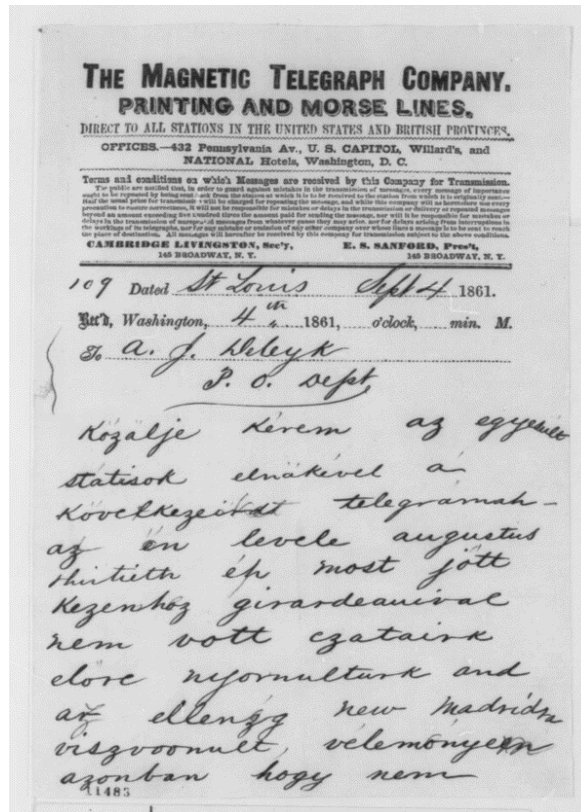
Probably the most famous of all Hungarian officers serving under the command of General Frémont was Charles Zagonyi, who organized a special cavalry unit named Frémont Bodyguard primarily to provide him personal protection. Later the troopers were more widely used, and participated in Frémont's efforts to push back the Confederates in Missouri. The peak of Zagonyi's career and the existence of the Bodyguard was undoubtedly their "Death Ride" at Springfield, Missouri on October 25, 1861, when they managed to re-capture the small city for a couple of hours from an enemy force well outnumbering Zagonyi's own troopers. Zagonyi became well known and his deeds were widely publicized.¹²⁴

Several other Hungarian-born officers offered their services to Frémont and served in his Western Department. Gustave Waagner was appointed chief of artillery in Cairo, Illinois, and his adjutant was a fellow Hungarian, Lt. Raphael Guido Rombauer. Unlike Frémont, however, they felt distrust not towards regular officers and West Pointers, but other American volunteers who they felt were hopelessly inexperienced.

Frémont, who was very much concerned about the activity of the Confederate intelligence service in Missouri and highly desired confidentiality, used the Hungarian language as a kind of encryption in his telegraph communication with Washington, D.C. or Cairo, Illinois, which in a way anticipates the use of Navajo code-talkers in the Pacific campaign of World War II.

¹²³ Samuel R. Curtis to Lincoln (October 12, 1861) *Collected Works*, IV, 550.

¹²⁴ More on him and the Death Ride see, Chapter "The Triumvirate"



Frémont's telegram in Hungarian to De Zeyk. September 4, 1861 Source: The Abraham Lincoln Papers. Library of Congress, Series I., General Correspondence, 1833-1916. No. 1485.¹²⁵

Alexander Asboth sent the telegrams to the Post Office Department, where a Hungarian clerk, Albert De Zeyk, translated and delivered them to Lincoln. Similarly, in Cairo General Grant used the services of Lt. Rombauer in processing and translating the messages coming from Frémont's HQ.

Frémont faced many difficulties as the commander of the Western Department. Numerous secessionist guerillas and bushwhackers gave him and the Union Army a hard time, and his political enemies accused him of reckless expenditures and

¹²⁵ The English translation of the dispatch is as follows, "Please to communicate the following to the President of the United States--Your letter of the 10th August just received with contents had no battle -- the enemy retreated to New Madrid I nevertheless expect an engagement very soon. A telegram just received from Cairo informs me that several steel plated war vessels left Memphis advancing on us. Their vessels being better than ours Cairo is endangered. Could not you get from a near arsenal sixteen gun carriages to suit 10 inch Dahlgren guns-- The guns are here but the carriages are wanting-- I was waiting in vain these ten days past the promised help from Washington though the enemy is moving rapidly."

misappropriation. His promotion to major general created jealousy in many regular army officers, and the long-time lack of Union military success in Missouri added fuel to the fire. Frémont's most controversial decision concerned his Proclamation of August 31, 1861, in which he established martial law in the entire state of Missouri. In this document, he also declared, "The property, real and personal, of all persons in the State of Missouri who shall take up arms against the United States, and who shall be directly proven to have taken an active part with their enemies in the field, is declared to be confiscated to the public use; and their slaves, if any they have, are hereby declared free." Although Frémont immediately became the celebrated hero of the Radical Republicans, Lincoln, who was anxious to keep the slaveholding border states within the Union, ordered Frémont to rescind the proclamation. Frémont, whose error "was to act the brave man's part, without the statesman's tact," as John Greenleaf Whittier put it, was nevertheless convinced that he had made the right decision and refused to carry out Lincoln's order. Eventually the President issued an order modifying the general's proclamation, and on October 24, 1861 relieved him of command.¹²⁶

Many of the foreign officers, among them Hungarians, were removed with Frémont. Their services were declared unwanted because that they were claimed to have been commissioned illegally by Frémont, but their loyalty to him had much to do with their dismissal. Zagonyi, the commander of the Frémont Bodyguard, was placed on the inactive list; he returned to service for a short period of time only when Frémont was appointed commander of the Mountain Department early 1862. After a couple of months, in June 1862, both of them resigned. Zagonyi never saw service in the Civil War again, and sank into complete oblivion. Along with him, Anselm Albert and John Fiala were also shelved. Alexander Asboth was the only one among the Hungarian officers on Frémont's staff who remained in active service after the housecleaning.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ For further details as well as the full-text version of the Proclamation see, <http://www.longcamp.com/proc3.html>

¹²⁷ Beszedits, "Hungarians with Frémont"

The Midwest: Hungarians Enlisting in Illinois, Indiana and Iowa

Chicago had the fifth largest Hungarian community in the United States in 1860, and Hungarians were actively involved in forming associations in Chicago. For instance, the Hungarian North Western Central Committee was established in 1859 with the primary aim of keeping touch with the European Central Committee, and preparing for the Hungarians' mobilization in the War of 1859 in Italy. There was also a Chicago Hungarian Benevolent Association, and, like in St. Louis or New York, they had very strong links with the local German-American community. When the Civil War came, several Kossuth emigrés responded to Asboth's call to enlist in the Union Army, and they followed a very similar pattern in volunteering to that of Hungarians in New York. Despite the claims of Vasváry or Ács, there were no all-Hungarian regiments in Chicago either. Nevertheless, Hungarians did play a significant role in organizing foreign elements into fighting units.

One of them, Géza Mihalotzy, a former captain in the Hungarian War of Independence, asked fellow-Hungarian Julian Kuné, who was involved in the political activity of the Republican Party and personally knew Abraham Lincoln, to take a request to the newly-elected President to allow them to organize a militia unit "composed of men of Hungarian, Bohemian and Slavonian origin", and name it "Lincoln Riflemen". Kuné observed that "many of the naturalized citizens who had served in European armies, began to organize companies, and drilled them night after night." and talked highly of Mihalotzy, "who stands in front rank as a patriotic and far-seeing naturalized citizen." He apparently managed to convince Lincoln who scribbled at the bottom of the page, "I cheerfully grant the request above made." Accordingly, the militia unit was organized with Mihalotzy as colonel, and another Hungarian, Augustus Kovats as lieutenant. The soldiers of the "Lincoln Riflemen" enlisted for three months and were assigned to General George B. McClellan.¹²⁸

Kune himself contemplated forming a regiment of foreigners. Therefore, when the Civil War broke out, he asked McClellan to relieve both the Riflemen and the all-

¹²⁸ Julian Kuné, *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian Hungarian Exile* (Chicago: The Author, 1911), 91; Mihalótzy's letter. Chicago Historical Society. Richard Yates Manuscript Collection, F38AS .C4C4 v. 2 No. 5, 133-136.

German Union Cadets, whose three-month service was about to expire anyway, and let them be incorporated into the newly-organized 24th Illinois Volunteer Infantry regiment. Again, Kuné secured Lincoln's approval, and the 24th Illinois was formed. However, he was bitterly disappointed when he learned that Friedrich Hecker was elected colonel, Mihalotzy lieutenant-colonel, and he became only major of the regiment. He resigned shortly afterward. In December 1861 Hecker also left, to be substituted by Mihalotzy as colonel and commander of the "Lincoln Riflemen". Mihalotzy was fatally wounded in 1864, and battle wounds also forced Augustus Kovats to resign. The 24th Illinois contained some other Hungarian-born soldiers, but not in significant positions. Alexander Jekelfalussy rose to the rank of captain, whereas Francis Langenfeld served as a 1st lieutenant.

The state of Illinois and Chicago were not the only centers of Hungarians in the 1850s. About ten percent of the Hungarians lived in Ohio, Indiana and Iowa. The main centers of Hungarians were the small settlement of Davenport in Iowa, as well as Cleveland and Cincinnati in Ohio. The urge of the community to volunteer was definitely strong here, and many of the foreigners joined the ranks of the Union Army. However, in the regiments formed in these Midwestern states, there was no such concentration of Hungarians as in the Garibaldi Guards or in the 24th Illinois Volunteers. Nicholas Perczel organized the 10th Iowa Infantry and became its colonel, but this attracted basically no Hungarians to this regiment. It seems that in the Midwest ethnic origin was less important than the place of residence as motivation for mobilization. Accordingly, several foreigners, including Hungarians, took part in organizing militia units with the primary purpose of self-defense. The Radnich brothers, Emeric and Stephen, for example, both volunteered to serve in an Iowa Home Guards unit. All this did not mean, however, that volunteering in Midwestern regiments did not hold the promise of promotion and a successful military career: Frederick Knefler, for instance, was commissioned as 1st lieutenant and in 1865 was mustered out as brigadier-general by brevet, thus becoming the highest-ranking Jewish soldier in the Civil War.

Hungarians in Confederate Ranks

The symmetrical treatment of the Hungarians' service in the Union and the Confederate armies requires that the latter group is discussed here, although it is essential to point out that the sporadic nature of the sources concerning Kossuth emigrés taking up arms in the Confederate army hardly enables us to draw far-reaching conclusions.

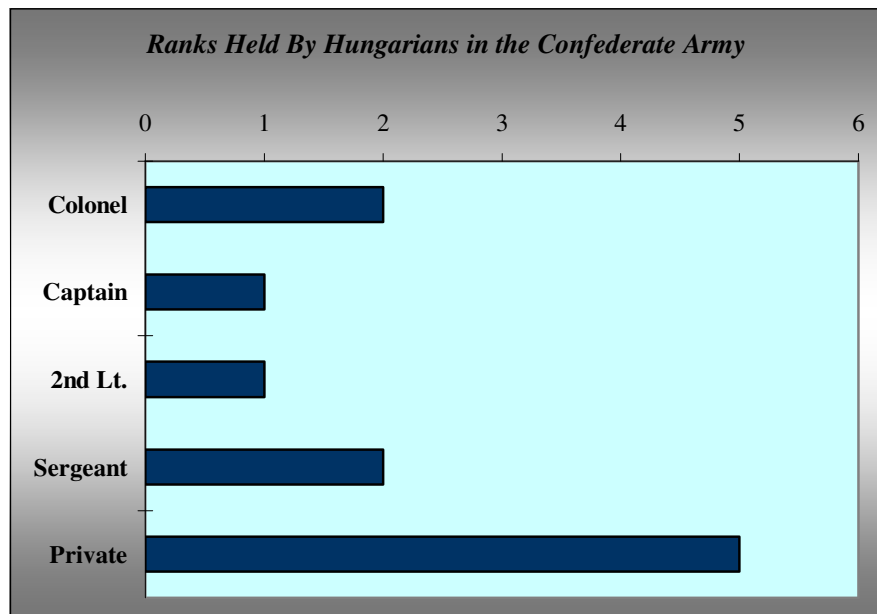
As mentioned earlier, approximately 12 percent of all soldiers of confirmed Hungarian origin enlisted in the Confederate army. Statistically this barely qualifies as representative sample enabling us to step beyond the level of individuals and make some generalizations. All that can be known is that the rate of Hungarian volunteers in proportion to the number of the Hungarian-born in Union and Confederate territory corresponded (8.7 percent, 9 percent, respectively), although in the latter the population was considerably lower.

As far as the date of enlistment is concerned, Hungarians were as fast to respond to the Confederate call as those volunteering in the Union Army: about 70 percent of the enlistments in both armies took place in the very first year of the Civil War. We have no data of Hungarian soldiers enlisting in the Confederate army in 1864 and 1865.



Data Compiled from the Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's- 1917, Record Group 94, Compiled Military Records, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

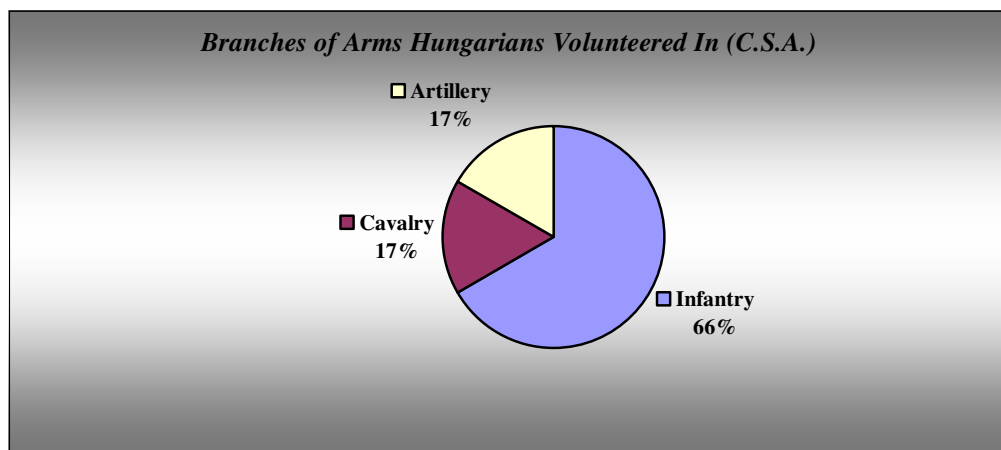
We have seen that a whopping 75% of the Hungarians were mustered in the Union Army as officer, and an even higher proportion (87%) of them left service as one. Interestingly, this tendency was the direct opposite in the Confederate army: more than 60 percent of the Hungarian-born never elevated to ranks of officer; as a matter of fact, 50 percent of them remained private throughout the conflict.¹²⁹



Data Compiled from the Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's- 1917, Record Group 94, Compiled Military Records, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

A lower proportion of Hungarians served in the infantry in the Confederate army than in the Union army (66% as compared to 81%), but, again, due to the considerably smaller sample, this does not necessarily reveal significant differences between enlistment patterns in North and South.

¹²⁹ Due to the lack of reliable archival sources, these pieces of statistics are definitely not ones to draw conclusion from, particularly as the two Hungarians commissioned as colonels served for a brief period before they left Confederate service for good.



Data Compiled from the Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's- 1917, Record Group 94, Compiled Military Records, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Hungarian enlistment concentrated in only four states of the Confederacy: Virginia, Tennessee, Louisiana and Texas. These four states were among the five Southern states with the most numerous Hungarian population. Texas and Louisiana happened to be the ones with the highest number of foreigners in general.

<i>State</i>	<i>Number of Hungarian born (1860)</i>	<i>In proportion to the total population of Hungarians in the Confederacy (258)</i>
Louisiana	88	34.1%
Texas	53	20.5%
Alabama	28	10.8%
Virginia	23	8.9%
Tennessee	21	8.1%

Statistical Data Compiled from Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, Census of 1860 M653, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

The two highest-ranking officers in the Confederate Army, Col. Béla Estván and Col. Adolphus Adler were among the most controversial Hungarian participants. Both of them enlisted in Virginia, and served (if they did) for a brief period only.¹³⁰

The group of Hungarians joining the Confederate army in Texas concentrated in or around San Antonio and the small, yet thriving settlement of Galveston. Four of the five

¹³⁰ For the uncertainties surrounding Adler and Estván see, Chapter Seven, and the Biographical List.

sons of the Hungarian saddle maker, Benjamin Varga, volunteered in various Texas regiments, and, although none of them elevated beyond the rank of private, they served throughout the conflict. (They were not the only Hungarian siblings to do so: both the four Rombauer and Zulavsky brothers enlisted in the Union army.) Along with them, four other Hungarians joined the Confederate army in Texas, and one served in Louisiana.

As it can be seen, we have only deficient information regarding Hungarians' supporting the Southern cause. There are a few Confederate soldiers whose Hungarian origin can be suspected (based on names, bits and pieces of personal information, references in first-hand accounts), but the verification is yet to be carried out. However, on the basis of statistical data concerning soldiers of other ethnicities, and general enlistment tendencies, at this point we have no reason to expect that future works of research will be able to identify a much higher number of Hungarians who served in Confederate regiments.

CHAPTER SIX

THE TRIUMVIRATE: A REVISION OF THE CIVIL WAR CAREERS OF ASBOTH, STAHEL AND ZAGONYI

What all works scrutinizing any aspect of the Hungarians involvement in the American Civil War have in common is that they give special prominence to three Hungarian soldiers: Alexander Asboth, Julius H. Stahel and Charles Zagonyi. Although they played very different roles in the military events of the Civil War, the formation of the heroic freedom-fighter image of Hungarians in the United States could be mainly assigned to their careers, according to Pivány, Vasváry, as well as Ács. Similarly to other students of ethnic participation, they felt that the more heroes they can line up who fought for the preservation of the Union, the more justified their presence in America was. (This was particularly crucial at the times of both world wars, when Hungary was at war with the United States, and it was of vital importance for Hungarian-Americans to prove their loyalty towards their adopted country.) This resulted in their being immensely biased towards the achievements of Hungarians in the conflict. All Hungarians were considered to be military heroes, and most details which could have shaken this assertion, were simply ignored. The importance of their military achievements were hopelessly exaggerated; Pivány, for example, called Zagonyi's cavalry charge at Springfield, Missouri on October 25, 1861 "one of the most heroic deeds recorded in the annals of warfare," and added, "it gave tone and spirit to the western army, instilled courage and a feeling of safety into the hearts of the loyal population of Missouri, and had a much-needed bracing effect all the country over." Vasváry agreed that Zagonyi was unquestionably "the greatest Hungarian hero of the Civil War" and his victory was "a real boost to the Northern morale". Ács also celebrated this event, although the way he

describes it can rather be regarded more as pure fiction than a work of any historical value.¹³¹

These were the major factors which provided enough motivation for me to include a chapter in this work with the primary aim to investigate the historical validity of the hero-making mechanism of Hungarian-American historians, and to try and offer an objective, historically accurate analysis of the careers and achievements of these three key figures among the Civil War participants of Hungarian origin.

Alexander Asboth

Alexander Asboth was one of the most renowned members of the Kossuth emigration and probably the most respected soldier of Hungarian origin in the Civil War. His military achievements were appreciated not only by the Hungarian-American community, but Americans also talked highly of him. Upon his retirement in 1864, *The New York Times* bade farewell to him in an article of appraisal in which he was called “a man of high character and of very marked ability. [...] one of the few in that contest who brought practical military knowledge and experience to the aid of the cause. [...] He has won the respect and friendship of all who knew him by the sterling qualities of his character, and by the modest manliness of his demeanor.”¹³²

Asboth was born on December 18, 1811 in Keszthely. He acquired an engineer's degree in Pest from the Institutum Geometricum. As a civil engineer he took part in a number of canal-building projects. He left his profession and joined the Hungarian army in the 1848-49 War of Liberation and reached the rank of lieutenant-colonel. He became one of the most loyal adherents of Lajos Kossuth, and accompanied him to exile after the collapse of the Hungarian cause. He was interned in Turkey until they got the chance to travel to the United States aboard the *U.S.S. Mississippi*. In the United States he continued working as an engineer: first he was head engineer in the railroad-building projects of the Syracuse-New York and New York-Binghamton lines. Later he was employed by famous

¹³¹ Pivány, *Hungarians in the American Civil War*, 15; Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 2; Ács, *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban*, 68-69.

¹³² *The New York Times*, November 26, 1864.

landscape architect Fredrick Law Olmsted, and he participated in surveying Central Park and the upper west side of Manhattan.¹³³

At the outbreak of the Civil War, General John Charles Frémont, freshly appointed commander of the Western Department, made Asboth his chief-of-staff. Being quite in the focus of attention of the press, a number of articles appeared about the Hungarians on Frémont's staff. *The New York Times* wrote about Asboth on September 3, 1861:

Gen. Asboth goes to work quietly and firmly. His penetrating glance at once judges what position the applicant is fit for, or if for none at all, and a few questions will speedily testify the correctness of his judgment. And in spite of his martial appearance, so kind is his heart and manner, that all who come in contact with him love him. The extent of his labors, comprising all the duties devolving upon the Chief of the Staff of the General [Frémont] commanding the Western Department, is enormous, and requires a superhuman energy to surmount. At midnight Gen. Asboth leaves his office, and at 5 o'clock in the morning, while his clerks are still in 'slumber's quiet arms' you can find him already at his desk [...]¹³⁴

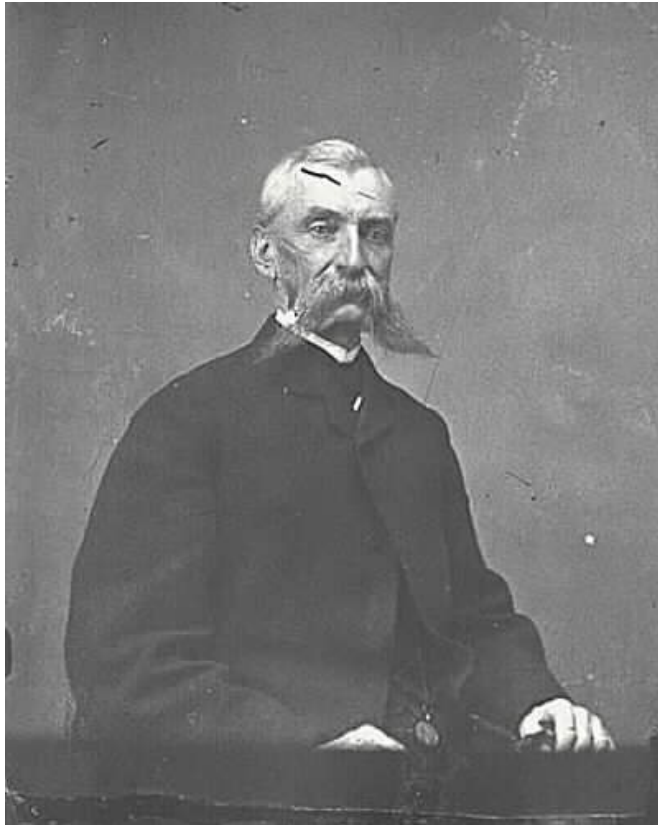
Most of his contemporaries agreed that he did an excellent job in organizing and drilling the regiments under his command.

Asboth remained in the Army of the Southwest even after the resignation of Frémont. He participated in the Pea Ridge campaign in Arkansas. On March 7, 1862 in the battle of Pea Ridge a musket ball passed through his right arm fracturing the humerus. However, he was back in saddle the following day. Although the surgeons reported it healed by May, Asboth suffered from a considerable pain because of the injured bone and that he did not rest it.¹³⁵

¹³³ For information on his Pre-1848/49 career consult, Vasváry Collection A3/14 and Ferenc Fodor, *Magyar vízimérnökök* (Budapesti Műszaki Egyetem Központi Könyvtára, No. 8, 1957; István Ágoston, *A nemzet inzsellérei: vízimérnökök élete és munkássága, XVIII-XX. sz* (Szeged, 2001); Ács, *Kossuth papja*, 92; Beszedits, "Hungarians with Frémont"

¹³⁴ *The New York Times* (September 3, 1861), 3.

¹³⁵ For the Medical File of Asboth see, Jack D. Welsh, M.D., *Medical Histories of Union Generals* (The Kent University Press, Kent, OH, 1996) (Hereafter cited as, Welsh, *Medical Histories*)



Alexander Asboth. Photo Courtesy: National Archives

On March 21, 1862 he was promoted to the rank of brigadier general. On November 9, 1863 he assumed command of the District of Pensacola (District of West Florida), thus he became in charge of a number of colored regiments. He managed to collect several fellow-Hungarian expatriate officers around him including Kossuth's nephews, Ladislaus and Emile Zulavsky, and Albert Ruttkay. Some of these officers commanded colored troops. As one can imagine, Asboth was not too popular among the local population. Historian William Watson Davis commented on this as follows: "He and his fellow Hungarians were hated, dreaded, and condemned by the country people of that section on the triple charge of being 'furreners', Yankees, and 'nigger lovers.'"¹³⁶

¹³⁶ John H. and David. J. Eicher, *Civil War High Commands* (Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 2001) (Hereafter cited as, Eicher, *High Commands*), 108-109; For the involvement of German-speaking foreigners, including Hungarians in the colored regiments see, Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*; István Kornél Vida, "'A régóta elnyomottak barátai': Magyar katonák az észak-amerikai polgárháború néger ezredeiben" ["Long-time friends of the oppressed": Hungarian soldiers in the Colored Troops in the American Civil War] *Aetas* (2008/2): 68-82; William Watson Davis, *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Florida* (New York: Columbia University, 1913) quoted in Beszedits, *Hungarians*.

Asboth was severely wounded at Marianna, Florida on September 27, 1864. One of the bullets hit him in the left cheek and the other broke his left arm in two places. One of the eyewitnesses described the incident as follows, "It was the women that did all the fighting, for they fired out of the windows and every by-place they met us. One woman walked right into the street with a pistol, and aimed at the general. She fired and shot him in the left arm, breaking it between the shoulder and elbow." He was taken to a private house, his wounds were dressed, but he could not return to service. On November 16 he was admitted to St. Louis Army General Hospital in New Orleans. It took several months before the bones started to unite, but his wounds rendered his arm more or less useless. Moreover, the surgeons could not locate and remove the bullet which lodged upon the palatine bone, so Asboth had to put up with the pain in his head for the rest of his life.¹³⁷

These wounds forced him to resign his commission. Of how popular a commander Asboth was, the following lines published in *The New York Times* on November 26, 1864 are most revealing:

We see that Gen. Asboth has been compelled by the severity of his wounds to retire for the present from active service and go to New Orleans for medical attendance. He is succeeded by Gen. Bailey. Gen. Asboth is one of the oldest and most meritorious of the foreign officers who entered our service when the rebellion broke out. He is a man of high character and of very marked ability. [...] one of the few in that contest who brought practical military knowledge and experience to the aid of the cause. [...] He has won the respect and friendship of all who knew him by the sterling qualities of his character, and by the modest manliness of his demeanor.¹³⁸

Despite the severity of his wounds and the fact that he was very feeble weighing only 140 pounds, Asboth resumed command. On March 13, 1865 he was brevetted major-general.

After the Civil War, in August 1865 he was appointed United States minister to Argentina and Uruguay. He did his best to bring about a cease-fire in the devastating armed conflict between Paraguay and Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay. (Also called War of the

¹³⁷ A.J. Bedford, Sergeant, 25th USCI in Edwin S. Redkey, ed., *A Grand Army of Black Men* (Cambridge University Press, New York, 1992) (Hereafter cited as, Redkey, *Grand Army*), 149; *Medical and Surgical History of the Civil War* (Broadfoot Publishing Co., Wilmington, N.C., 1991) (Hereafter cited as, *Medical History*), Vol. 8, 389.

¹³⁸ *The New York Times*, November 26, 1864.

Triple Alliance, 1864-1870.) Despite the best efforts of his doctors, suppuration and exfoliation on account of his head-wound continued, and he died on January 21, 1868 in Buenos Aires. His remains were taken back to the United States in 1990 and were reinterred in Arlington National Cemetery.¹³⁹

Julius H. Stahel

Unlike Brigadier General Asboth, Julius H. Stahel did not reach real prominence in the Hungarian War of Independence in 1848/49, and he cannot be considered a Kossuth emigrant proper either, as he did not leave the country following the fall of the Hungarian cause in order to flee economic and political persecution of the Austrian government. Nevertheless, his name sounds probably the most familiar in the United States as well, since he was the only officer of Hungarian origin in the Civil War having been awarded the highest military decoration of the United States, the Congressional Medal of Honor. Moreover, he also attained the highest rank among the Hungarians, as he obtained a major-generalship in 1863.

He was born Gyula Számwald in Szeged on November 5, 1825. He had classical education in his hometown and Pest. There are some sources claiming that he served in the Imperial Army as private and deserted at the coming of the Hungarian revolution in 1848. However, this is not supported by the sources at our disposal, but it is known that he moved to Buda, the Hungarian capital, and in 1846 he got employed by Gusztáv Emich, leading printer, publisher and bookseller.¹⁴⁰

That was where he got acquainted with the poet laureate of the Hungarian freedom struggle of 1848/49, Sándor Petőfi. The poet even wrote a highly ironic poem to Számwald which went as follows:

¹³⁹ On the centennial of Asboth's death, the periodical *Szabadság* published a series of articles: Péter Halász, "Asbóth," in *Szabadság*, February 17, 1968; Edmund Vasváry, "Asbóth tábornok sírja," *Szabadság*, March 18, 1968; Edmund Vasváry, "Golyó a fejben," *Szabadság*, July 18, 1968

¹⁴⁰ For the genealogy of the Számwald family see, Döme Lugosi, *Szeged hős fiai az USA szabadságharcában* (Szeged, 1939); Beszedits, "Julius Stahel", 14.

Petőfi: “Egy könyvárus emlékkönyvébe”

Az életcél boldogság, de előbb
Fáradni kell, hogy ezt a célt elérd,
Ugy ingyen ahhoz senki sem jut el,
Ahhoz nagyon sok mindenféle kell:
A becsülettől soha el ne térj
Sem indulatból, sem pedig díjért,
Szeresd hiven felebarátodat,
Ne vond föl közted s más közt a hidat,
A hon nevét, a drága szent hazát
Szivednek legtisztább helyére zárd,
S imádd az istent, s mindenekfelett
Áruld erősen költeményimet.¹⁴¹

In English:

“Into a Bookseller’s Memorial Book”

The goal of life is happiness, but before,
You have to make efforts to reach this goal.
Nobody can get hold of it free of charge,
Lots of various things are needed for it:
Never straggle from Honor
Neither out of temper, nor for reward,
Love truly your fellow human beings,
Do not draw up the bridge between you and others.
The name of the homeland. The precious sacred homeland
Close into the purest depth of your heart.
And worship God, but above all,
Sell my poems vigorously.¹⁴²

Like hundreds of thousands of young men in Hungary, Számwald got involved in the events of the War of Liberation in 1848. He joined patriotic organizations, including the Committee of Public Safety, created in order to maintain law and order, and later he volunteered in the Hungarian Revolutionary Army. He elevated to the rank of lieutenant, and served as adjutant on the staff of General Richard Guyon.

After the surrender of the Hungarian troops to the Austro-Russian forces, Stahel fled the country. However, he was lucky enough to have influential friends who managed to arrange that he could return to Hungary without having to fear any retaliation. First he

¹⁴¹ For the Hungarian text of the poem see, <http://www.globusz.com/ebooks/Petofi/00000081.htm#03>.
(December 10, 2007)

¹⁴² Translation mine.

became Emrich's silent partner, then he set off his own publishing enterprise, which, however, soon went bankrupt. It is likely that his financial failure forced him to leave his homeland and try his luck somewhere else. (Ferenc Agárdi suggests in his article that he had got married, but his young wife died in childbirth. The pain-stricken Számwald left Hungary, as it turn out, for good. Agárdi's claims are difficult to support with documents as well as those of Károly Rácz-Rónay, who stated that Számwald left Hungary because he was wanted for cheating and forgery, leaving behind his 20-year-old wife and their half-year old baby.)¹⁴³

This was the time when he changed his name to Julius Stahel, which was probably the name of his ancestors, and in 1856 he emigrated to the United States. He settled down in New York City, and took employment as an assistant editor for the *New York Illustrated News*. He wrote articles for the German-American press and won the recognition of the entire German-American community within a very short time.¹⁴⁴

At the commencement of the Civil War, he helped another German emigrant, Louis Blenker, organize the 8th New York Volunteer Infantry regiment, with Stahel as its lieutenant-colonel, and Blenker its colonel. Both of them played important role in organizing and drilling the regiment, which became a model unit. Soon they got the chance to prove themselves: although they did not participate in the battle of Bull Run on July 20, 1861, they provided cover for the retreat of the remnants of the defeated Union Army to Washington, D.C. For their meritorious conduct, both Blenker and Stahel were promoted: the former obtained brigadier-generalship, whereas the latter became colonel of the 8th New York. He was then promoted to brigadier-general on November 12, 1861.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Julius H. Stahel Papers. Library of Congress. Washington, D.C.; Information taken from the letter of Zsigmond Kemény. *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* (1915): 360; *Herringshaw's Encyclopedia of American Biography in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago, IL: American Publishers' Association, 1902), 880.

¹⁴⁴ Beszedits, *Life of Julius Stahel*, 2.

¹⁴⁵ Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 4.



Julius H. Stahel. Photo Courtesy: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C., LC-DIG-cwpb-05220.

In 1862 his regiment was assigned under the command of General Fremont's Mountain Department. The men of the 8th New York found themselves in the thick of fighting at the battle of Cross Keys on June 8, 1862, in Rockingham County, Virginia. The regiment served as a spearhead for the Union attack, and faced the deadly volley of the Confederate forces marching across a clover field. One of the soldiers of the 21st Georgia regiment recalled this as follows: "The Germans came marching across the clover field in beautiful line, carrying their guns at 'support arms' The Col. walked backwards in front of them [...] as though they were simply drilling." When the Confederates pulled the triggers, "the Germans fell across each other in piles" and "the whole regiment was annihilated at a single fire." 53 soldiers were killed on the spot, 27 later, and 100 men were wounded. The Southern troops took 74 prisoners of war.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Robert K. Krick, *Conquering the Valley: Stonewall Jackson at Port Republic* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1996) (Hereafter cited as, Krick, *Stonewall Jackson*), 168; Francis F. Wayland, ed., "Frémont's Pursuit of Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley: The Journal of Col. Albert Tracy, (1862/March-

There were some who laid the blame on Stahel for the bloodshed, but the Northern press focused on the bravery of the Northern men. *The New York Times* wrote about Stahel, “The part taken by Gen. Stahel and his Brigade of Germans, is the theme of general commendation. He has won the popular favor among American as well as foreign officers for his [...] soldierly qualities. He is brave, enthusiastic, and was seen during the day in the thickest of the fight, encouraging and urging his men.”¹⁴⁷

Most people who got acquainted with Stahel were impressed by his military bearing and gentlemanly qualities. One of his officers, Alexander Hamilton described him in his letter to H. W. Halleck: “From many months intimacy with Stahel both in private life and in the field I have every confidence in assuring you that he will be a great acquisition to you. His quiet, gentlemanlike demeanour has endeared him to officers of all ranks and his thorough military knowledge and accomplishments have secured the confidence and respect of both officers and men.” Even General McClellan, who had the reputation of not being fond of soldiers of foreign origin, wrote about him, “Of his [Blenker’s] subordinate officers the best was Gen. Stahl [sic], a Hungarian, who had served with distinction under Georgei. His real name, I believe, was Count Serbiani.”¹⁴⁸

He participated in the second battle of Bull Run on August 29-30, 1862 and his bravery was praised by General Pope. In the absence of Sigel he was named commander of the 11th Corps temporarily, then named to the command in January 1863. He was assigned to command of cavalry in the newly formed Grand Reserve Division under Sigel (Special Order No.29.)¹⁴⁹

On March 8, 1863 John Singleton Mosby with 30 men slipped through the Union defense and captured Brig. Gen. Edwin H. Stoughton, 2 other officers, 30 enlisted men and 60 horses. Abraham Lincoln personally ordered Stahel to take command of cavalry in defense of Washington, D.C. as there were rumors that the raiders were actually planning attacks on the federal capital. On March 14, 1863 the Hungarian officer was

July) *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 70, (1962): 334. (Hereafter cited as, Wayland, “Journal of Tracy”)

¹⁴⁷ Krick, *Stonewall Jackson*, 180.

¹⁴⁸ Alexander Hamilton’s letter written to H.W. Halleck. (November 21, 1861) Julius H. Stahel Papers. Library of Congress. Washington, D.C., No. 6/2; George B. McClellan, *McClellan’s Own Story* (New York: Webster and Co., 1887), 139.

¹⁴⁹ Beszedits, *Life of Julius Stahel*, 4.

promoted to the rank of major general. He spent the next months chasing Mosby, nicknamed the Gray Ghost, managing to check him, but failing to capture him.

In the days before the battle of Gettysburg, Stahel and his division performed reconnaissance duty. Brigadier General Alfred Pleasonton, commander of the cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac, in his letter written to John Farnsworth on June 23, 1863 wanted Stahel to be removed from the field and his division added to the Army of the Potomac. He argued that Stahel was lacking the energy and good sense required from a cavalry commander and even implied that Stahel was unfit because of his foreign origins. Stahel was indeed relieved of command, but was soon pressed into service to supplement Pleasonton's forces. Nevertheless, not everyone accepted Stahel with similar reservations. Alexander Hays from Centerville, Virginia wrote about his encounter with the Hungarian, "Yesterday we had a visit from Gen. Stahel and staff, who were passing through with 1,600 cavalry and several pieces of artillery. They had been down to Warrenton Junction. I was pleased with the general. He is small, not very handsome, but looks as if he could fight, is the most unassuming Dutchman I have met."¹⁵⁰

In the following months, Stahel was staying in the Union capital and participated in the social life of Washington, D.C., which was vibrant despite the war. Stahel escorted President Lincoln to Gettysburg when, on November 19, 1863, he delivered his famous address at the establishment of the military cemetery where the battle had been fought.¹⁵¹

On March 13, 1864 Stahel was assigned to the Department of West Virginia, where he became General Sigel's chief of cavalry and chief of staff. After the debacle at New Market on May 15, 1864, Sigel was relieved and replaced by General Hunter. Hunter had very serious doubts about Stahel: "He has but little experience as a cavalry officer in this country, nor I am aware that he has any experience with cavalry elsewhere," he wrote. During Hunter's Shenandoah Valley campaign, however, Stahel played a crucial role, particularly in the battle of Piedmont on June 5, 1864. In the engagement Stahel personally led his unmounted troopers in the battlefield when he was hit by a bullet in the left shoulder. He, however, left his command only for a short period during which

¹⁵⁰ Edward G. Longacre, *The Cavalry at Gettysburg* (London: Associated University Presses, 1986), 61; Adams McFadden Hays to Rachel McFadden. (June 12, 1863) Centerville, VA. *Life and Letters of Alexander Hays* (Pittsburgh: Privately Published, 1919), 396.

¹⁵¹ Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Haircourt, Brace and Co., 1954), 443.

the surgeons dressed his wounds and returned to service in spite of the fact that he was unable to mount his horse without assistance. Under his leadership their charge routed the Confederates. He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor on November 4, 1893 “for distinguished gallantry at the battle of Piedmont, West Virginia on June 5, 1864 in accordance with the act of Congress approved on March 3, 1863.” Even General Hunter acknowledged his performance: “It is but justice to Maj. Gen. Stahel to state that in the recent engagement he displayed excellent qualities of coolness and gallantry, and that for the final happy result the country is much indebted to his services,” he wrote to Major General Halleck.¹⁵²

While he was recuperating, he was relieved of command on July 16, and returned to duty only in August. He was soon transferred to the Middle Department, and served as president of court martial in Baltimore, Maryland. Nevertheless, his health remained very fragile: he had large internal and external hemorrhoids which caused him such pain and suffering that he eventually resigned his commission on February 8, 1865. Just two days following his resignation, he received a letter from Franz Sigel in which he expressed his appreciation for Stahel’s “faithful and excellent assistance.” His finishing lines went as follows:¹⁵³

I had good opportunity to become aware of your excellent qualities as a commander, while your incessant labors on long and fatiguing marches, your success in organizing, drilling and disciplining troops, as well as your bravery in battle, will be and are duly acknowledged by the many thousands, who have been under your command.¹⁵⁴

Stahel’s outstanding military service and excellent connections secured him a nomination by President Andrew Johnson to consulship at Yokohama, Japan on May 9, 1866. He remained in diplomatic service in Japan until 1884: he subsequently served as consul to Osaka and Hiogo. For an additional year he was consul of the United States in Shanghai, China. Ironically enough, Stahel performed diplomatic duty in the Far East

¹⁵² Hunter’s letter to Major Gen. Halleck (June 9, 1864) Julius H. Stahel Papers. Library of Congress. Washington, D.C. No. 19; Beszedits, *Life of Julius Stahel*, 7.

¹⁵³ Welsh, *Medical Histories*, 316-317.

¹⁵⁴ Sigel to Stahel (February 10, 1865) Julius H. Stahel Papers. Library of Congress. Washington, D.C.

along with John Singleton Mosby, his former Civil War adversary, and they became best friends.

In 1885 he returned to New York City. He worked as an executive for Equitable Life Assurance Society. He was actively involved in the life of the Hungarian-American community: his name can be found among the founders of First Hungarian Association for Self Culture of Philadelphia. He was, among others, Companion of the First Class of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the US.¹⁵⁵

For about a quarter of a century, the Hungarian veteran of two wars resided in the Hoffman House where he was known as “The General.”

Julius H. Stahel died of angina pectoris on December 4, 1912 in New York City. He was buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

Charles Zagonyi

Let the Crown-Poet paid
Sing of the “Light Brigade”
And “The wild charge they made”
When “Some one had blundered;”
Following the British Bard,
I sing of the Body-Guard—
The Heroes that fought so hard—
Where nobody blundered.
Hail, brave Zagonyi—hail!
All hail, the Body-Guard!—
The glorious—
The victorious—
The invincible Three Hundred.¹⁵⁶

The excerpt above is taken from Henford Lennox Gordon’s poem entitled “Charge of Fremont’s Body-Guard.” The author’s aim was to commemorate one of the first Union successes of the Civil War: the cavalry charge at Springfield, Missouri on October 25, 1861, which is generally remembered as Zagonyi’s Death Ride, named after Hungarian Major Charles Zagonyi. His figure stood in the focus of all works dealing

¹⁵⁵ Beszedits, *Life of Julius Stahel*, 8.

¹⁵⁶ Henford Lennox Gordon, “Charge of Fremont’s Body-Guard”

with the Hungarians' involvement in the American Civil War, and none of the authors seemed to care that there was an apparent contradiction between the hero-cult they created and the fact that most comprehensive Civil War histories do not even mention this particular event or the name of the Hungarian who was leading the Union troopers. What follows here is a short biography of Charles Zagonyi and also an attempt will be made to take objective measure of him and his famous charge.

There are lots of uncertain details concerning Zagonyi's life. Even the place and exact date of his birth is not clear. Some sources say that he was born in Szatmár County in 1826, whereas others claim that he was born in Szinérváralja on October 19, 1822. All we know for sure is that he was drawn into the whirlpool of events in 1848/49 and took part in the Hungarian struggle for freedom against the Austro-Russian coalition forces. He served under legendary Polish general Josef Bem as first lieutenant, and commanded a select cavalry unit. After the surrender of the Hungarian forces, he followed his commander to Turkey and he was interned for almost two years along with Bem. Later he left for Britain and eventually decided to emigrate to the United States. He set foot on American soil on July 2, 1851. Soon he found himself in the very same situation as other Hungarian exiles who had military experience but knew no trade. Zagonyi tried his luck, in the already-mentioned group called Hungarian Vocalists which dissolved very quickly. Zagonyi was in search of any kind of employment, and worked as a house painter in New York City and Philadelphia. In fall of 1852 he was lucky enough to be invited to a newly-founded riding school in Boston, Massachusetts as a riding master. The institution itself was founded by a Hungarian, Stephen Thout, and there were some other Hungarians employed including István Kinizsi and John Kalapsza.¹⁵⁷

Zagonyi got acquainted with Amanda Schweiger, from a German immigrant family, and after a short period of courting, married her in 1854. There are several references to her in the letters and diaries of Hungarian emigrés. Károly László, for instance, described her as a "pleasant-mannered, nice-faced and figured American lady from a

¹⁵⁷ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Civil War Missouri*.

Accessible at: <http://www.missouricivilwarmuseum.org/mo-hungarian.htm>. (Hereafter cited as, Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*)

German family who does not keep away from work and is very industrious.” László met the couple in 1859 and noted that Zagonyi and his wife both worked as tailors.¹⁵⁸

When the Civil War came, Zagonyi obviously felt that it was the right time to make use of his military experience. His service in the Union Army was due to General Frémont, who offered him a commission at his Western Department and appointed him “chief of cavalry” with the rank of captain. The Hungarian later summarized his motivations for joining the ranks of the Union army as follows:¹⁵⁹

I took service in the United States army only for the reason that I wanted to see this great country united again, and put down the rebellion, and not to divide it more and more. I am not a fortune hunter. [...] I had made up my mind that I would fight for no country but my own. But later, being called to serve under General Frémont whom I had never seen in my life, but for who I had a high esteem, I offered my services and was accepted.¹⁶⁰

Frémont, who seemed to be more interested in the pomp of war than the actual waging of it, authorized Zagonyi to organize a company of horsemen which was to serve as his bodyguard. The idea itself probably came from the Hungarian who convinced Frémont that this was customary in Europe and such a unit could both serve as a police force and a training school for further cavalry companies. There was no shortage in volunteers. Within five days there were enough recruits for two companies, and very soon two more. Zagonyi was personally responsible for training and drilling, soon turning the civilians into a well-trained cavalry force. He made sure that his soldiers were armed with quality sabres and modern revolvers, and ordered their saddles and equipment from a company in Chicago.

It did not take long until Frémont and his bodyguard unit grew very unpopular in St. Louis. Many civilians thought that the unit and its outfit was too pompous and the very idea of having a bodyguard unit was more fitting to an emperor than an American general. Zagonyi’s rather arrogant behavior and thick accent did not help too much either. Soon the Hungarian and his troopers were nicknamed “Frémont’s Pets” and the “Kid Glove Brigade”, and were targets of much ridicule as they had not seen any action since the forming of the unit.

¹⁵⁸ Ács, *Magyar úttörők*, 135.

¹⁵⁹ Yandoh, “Kid Gloves”, 46-54.

¹⁶⁰ Zagonyi’s Testimony (February 24, 1862) In *The War in the West* (Millwood, N.Y.: Kraus Reprint Co., 1977) (Hereafter cited as, Zagonyi, *Testimony*), 190.

This is not to suggest that other units under Frémont's command which actually saw action had so much to boast of. On August 10, 1861 Brigadier Nathaniel Lyon's army was defeated by the Confederates at Wilson's Creek, Missouri (Lyon himself was killed in the battle). On September 20, 1861 the small Union fortress of Lexington, Missouri fell and 3,000 Union troops surrendered. Frémont badly needed a military victory. He worked out a grandiose plan to fight his way to New Orleans.

Frémont started out from St. Louis to Jefferson City, then encamped his troops near Warsaw, Missouri. That was where he received news of 300 or 400 poorly-armed Confederates in the city of Springfield, Missouri just 55 miles away.

Zagonyi and the bodyguard were eager to prove themselves. Jay Monaghan wrote that „his men were eager to belie their reputation as ‘parlor pets’ in fancy uniforms and kid gloves. Even their glossy horses had been pointed out as toys.” Fremont granted the permission for him to start with an expeditionary force and try to capture the city, but only on condition that they were not overpowered by the Confederates.¹⁶¹

Zagonyi and the Bodyguard set off at 8 p.m. on October 24, when the 21-year-old Major White had already been on his way with his squadron, the so-called Prairie Scouts with 154 troopers to perform scouting duty. Zagonyi's unit soon caught up with them and the Hungarian officer took over command of the entire force, above all because White was ill and was able to follow his men only in a carriage. They agreed that White would stay and have a rest in a nearby farmhouse and follow only later. Zagonyi pushed on towards Springfield and a 2-hour march away from the city he was informed by a Union farmer that there were about 2,000 rebels stationing there. Furthermore, any chance of a surprise attack faded away, as they surprised a Confederate foraging party and managed to capture all of them but one who rode back to the city and evidently alarmed the city. Zagonyi sent a message to Fremont informing him of the circumstances and asked for reinforcement. He was, however, determined to continue with his mission, although he did not have authorization to do so. He made up his mind to leave the Bolivar Road leading directly to the city and a pro-Union farmer led him on a circuitous road to the east on the Mount Vernon Road in order to get into the rear of the Confederate positions. However, while haphazardly, yet probably wisely, changing his original plans he forgot to inform the left-

¹⁶¹ Jay Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border, 1854-1865* (Boston: Little and Brown Co., 1955), 183.

behind Major White about all this. The Major, when he somewhat recuperated, tried to catch up with Zagonyi and his men, but he was captured by men from the Missouri State militia. He was ripped off his belongings, but his life was spared.¹⁶²

According to accounts of the battle, Zagonyi ordered his men to gather around him and told them that anyone who wished could leave before the battle, which Captain Foley called "a queer proposition for a foreign-born officer to make an American soldier under arms in defence of his country!" According to another account Zagonyi addressed his soldiers in an elevated speech, which is, however, quite unlikely due to the fact that the Hungarian spoke only broken English. Anyway, what he said, if he did, went as follows:¹⁶³

"Fellow soldiers, comrades, brothers! This is your first battle. For our three hundred, the enemy are two thousand. If any of you are sick, or tired by the long march, or if any think the number is too great, now is the time to turn back. We must not retreat. Our honor, the honor of our General and our country, tell us to go on. I will lead you. We have been called holiday soldiers for the pavements of St. Louis; today we will show that we are soldiers for the battle. Your watchword shall be, '*The Union and Fremont*' Draw saber! By the right flank, quick trot, march!"¹⁶⁴

The Confederates formed near the fairground on the open slope of the hill backed by the dense stand of oak trees — both their flanks and rear were protected. The approaching Union cavalry was received with a murderous fire: Zagonyi found that he lost about one fourth of his men within seconds. However, he ordered an all-out attack against the Confederates, although a stout rail fence confined them into a narrow lane. Captain Foley and the Kentuckians adhering to their initial orders tried to outflank the enemy, in spite of the fact that their lines were confused, as some of them joined Zagonyi instead. Nevertheless, it is quite likely that it was due to them that Zagonyi's force escaped total annihilation. Their surprise attack gave enough time for the Bodyguard to re-form under the shelter of the hill and the cavalry, under the command of Captain Majthenyi, another Hungarian officer, charged right against the center of the rebels and made them flee.

¹⁶² For the sequence of events of the charge see, Yandoh, "Kid Gloves"; William Edward Dorsheimer, "Frémont's 100 Days in Missouri," *Atlantic Monthly* (1862/January): 251-258 (Hereafter cited as, Dorsheimer, "Frémont"); Robert E. Miller, "Zagonyi," *Missouri Historical Review*, Vol. 76 (1982/January): 174-192. (Hereafter cited as Miller, "Zagonyi")

¹⁶³ Quoted in Yandoh, "Kid Gloves", 51.

¹⁶⁴ Dorsheimer, "Frémont", 254.

Particularly the State Militia broke fast, but the infantry did not hold much longer either. What followed was the Bodyguard pursuing the rebels and sabering many of them. The Union cavalry fought its way to the city, without much opposition, and raised the Union banner on the courthouse pole. According to J. Winston's account of the battle, "as [Zagonyi] approaches a barn, a man steps from behind the door and lowers his rifle; but, before it has reached a level, Zagonyi's saber point descends upon his head and his life-blood leaps to the very top of the huge barn door."¹⁶⁵

As the fighting in the city was over, they could reckon up their casualties which were rather heavy on both sides. No official state report has ever been made on the number of killed and wounded. Zagonyi reported that 15 Union soldiers were killed, 27 were wounded and 10 were missing in action, whereas he estimated the number of killed Confederate soldiers to be 106. According to *The Medical and Surgical History of the Civil War* 18 Union troopers were killed, 37 were wounded, and 30 missing in action. Zagonyi's estimates regarding the number of fatalities in the Confederate lines are accepted by this work, and no reliable data is given for the number of Confederate wounded. However, it is worth pointing out that Zagonyi reported that the soldiers of the Body-Guard buried only 23 enemy soldiers, the rest of the Confederate casualties is just estimations.¹⁶⁶

Anyway, it seemed pretty clear that they were not able to hold the city for a long time, as the rebels were expected to return. Zagonyi, therefore, having released the imprisoned Union sympathizers, decided to leave some soldiers behind to guard the Union wounded and left the city as early as 9 p.m., taking with him about \$4,000 from the local bank. Major White, who was held captive a couple of miles away from the city, was freed by Union soldiers.

Zagonyi sent a report of the victory to Frémont, who arrived with the main army and re-captured Springfield a couple of days later after having sent jubilant dispatches of the victory to President Lincoln.

Zagonyi's victory was indeed something the Northern public opinion had desired for a long time. However, it soon turned out that it was not such a victory as it could be

¹⁶⁵ J. Winston, *Cora O'Kane; or the Doom of the Rebel Guard* (Claremont, N.H.: Association of Disabled Soldiers, 1868), 80.

¹⁶⁶ For Zagonyi's report see, OR, Series I, Vol. 3, Serial Vol. 3., 251-252; *Medical History*, VIII, xxxviii.

assumed on the basis of the initial reports, and Zagonyi could definitely not claim all the recognition for the action. In his report he stated that both the Prairie Scouts and the Irish Dragoons fled and left the Body Guard on its own. When the ladies of Springfield offered to present the Bodyguard and Major White's Prairie Scouts alike a flag in recognition of their heroism, an indignant Zagonyi turned down the offer, explaining that "it would be idle to affect ignorance of the fact that the same distinction has been conferred upon a body of men who, though placed under my command upon the occasion to which your partially obliges [sic] me to refer, deserted me at the very moment of the conflict, and exposed the officers and men of the Body Guard to a fate which the hand of Providence alone could avert." Fremont convened a court of inquiry which established that Zagonyi's report contained inaccuracies. The Major General awarded Major White a pair of silver spurs engraved with the names Springfield and Lexington. Zagonyi, however, was not willing to accept the court's finding.¹⁶⁷

The news of the charge, however, received positive reaction throughout the Union which shows how badly the Northerners needed a military victory in this first phase of the Civil War. There were poems written to the Hungarian officer which were commemorating the role he played in the charge. One of these was written by George H. Boker and published in *Littel's Living Age* for the first time, then re-published in a number of journals.

George H. Boker: "Zagonyi"

Bold captain of the Body Guard
I'll troll a stave to thee.
My voice is somewhat harsh and hard,
And rough my minstrelsy.
I've cheered until my throat is sore
For how our boys at Beaufort bore;
Yet here's a cheer for thee!

I hear the jingling spurs and reins,
Thy sabres at thy knee;
The blood runs lighter through my veins,
As I before me see

¹⁶⁷ Frank Moore, ed., *Rebellion Record* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1862), III, 272.

Thy hundred men, with thrusts and blows,
Ride down a thousand stubborn foes,
The foremost led by thee.

With pistol snap and rifle crack,-
Mere salvos fired to honor thee-
Ye plunge, and stamp, and shoot, and hack,
The way your sword make free;
Then back again- the path is wide
This time- ye gods! It was a ride,
The ride they took with thee!

No guardsmen of the whole command
Halts, quails, or turns to flee;
With bloody spur and steady hand
They gallop where they see.
Thy leading plume stream out ahead,
O'er flying, wounded, dying, dead;
They can but follow thee.

So, captain of the Body Guard,
I pledge a health to thee!
I hope to see thy shoulders starred,
My Paladin; and we
Shall laugh at fortune in the fray,
Whene'er you lead your well-known way
To death or victory.¹⁶⁸

It was not only civilians but military experts as well who set Zagonyi and his troopers' charge as an example "to illustrate what can be accomplished by a few cavalry, with but little training and no experience, when enthusiastic in a noble cause," just as James A. Congdon did in his *Cavalry Compendium* published in 1864.¹⁶⁹

Despite all these examples of acknowledgement and recognition, the success of Zagonyi and Frémont was short-lived. The former was soon relieved by Abraham Lincoln and replaced by General David Hunter on November 2, 1861. The investigations found that many of the appointments by Frémont were actually illegal and the majority of the soldiers brought in volunteer army by him were improperly mustered in. That is why, when Zagonyi and the Bodyguard returned to St. Louis, they were refused rations, forage

¹⁶⁸ *Littel's Living Age*, Vol. 73, Issue 935 (May 3, 1862): 230.

¹⁶⁹ James A. Congdon, *Congdon's Cavalry Compendium* (Philadelphia: J.P.Lippincott and Co., 1864), 4-5.

to their horses, uniform and pay. The Bodyguard was dissolved, and an embittered Zagonyi testified: “They have been discharged; dismissed with disgrace, really, not discharged. They were dismissed with disgrace. I saw a telegraphic despatch from Washington, which stated that we used some expressions at Springfield for which our further service in the United States army is doubtful expediency. So there was a reason why we should be dismissed from the service of the United States.” Edmund Vasváry went as far as to suggest that the Bodyguard was dissolved, because “President Lincoln felt jealousy towards Major General Frémont and stuck too much to the supreme command of the armed forces.”¹⁷⁰

As time passed, however, there were more and more questioning the validity of some of Zagonyi’s claims and also, doubting the overall importance of the Death-Ride, what is more, it became a political issue as well. Missouri Congressman Frank Blair, an ally of Lincoln and enemy of Frémont, delivered a speech at the House of Representatives claiming that “the charge of Zagonyi was in no sense a victory. Zagonyi and the men under him made a gallant charge; they came in and went out very much worsted, and fell back twenty-five miles.” In this case, military perspective obviously fell victim to political considerations, but this did not mean that the charge and its importance was not re-considered from a military point of view. One of the strongest critics of Zagonyi was Confederate Colonel William Preston Johnston, who wrote some two decades after the Civil War that “Zagonyi’s rhodomontade was merely a cloak for disaster. He was ambuscaded by militia, not more numerous than his own command, and severely handled, with the loss of only two or three of his opponents.” There are some apparent distortions of truth in his arguments, but there were many who came to a similar conclusion. *The Sentinel* in an article published in 1898 concluded, “Military Fustian Zagonyi’s chasseurs (Fremont Body Guard) made one dashing charge on the enemy, and then passed away into history. Such a charge was duplicated, more fiercely and decisively, fully forty times by Sherman’s bummers on the march to the sea and history will never record them.” Somewhat unfairly, in its article dealing with foreign military talent, *The Oregonian*

¹⁷⁰ Zagonyi, *Testimony*, 189; Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 3.

established that “Zagonyi and Asboth were daring troopers, fit to lead a reckless charge and fit for nothing else.”¹⁷¹

Robert E. Miller published an article about Zagonyi in the *Missouri Historical Review* in 1982, which is probably the first attempt to provide an objective evaluation of the Hungarian’s role in the Civil War. He pointed out that “Zagonyi’s charge appears to have been a rash act, given the lack of information concerning the strength and disposition of the Confederate forces,” as “General Fremont had given permission for the charge under the assumption that the enemy camp contained only 300 soldiers.” He also called attention to the inaccuracies of Zagonyi’s report in which he tried to avoid giving acknowledgement to the Prairie Scouts as if they had not deserved it, and quoted Captain Naughton, of the Irish Dragoons, who charged Zagonyi with “deliberately withholding all credit so that the public might conclude that his company [...] was not in the fight.” Ten years after Miller’s article, Judy Yandoh published an article entitled “Taking off the kid’s gloves” in *America’s Civil War* in which she concluded that the sole importance of the battle of Springfield lay in the Northern public’s hunger for victory, and the picture she offered of Zagonyi was not a very sympathetic one either.¹⁷²

Zagonyi’s fate is very much different from those of Asboth and Stahel. He remained loyal to Frémont even after his being relieved of command and was on inactive list himself for a longer period of time, which was very difficult for him in all probability. It was then that he met Ralph Waldo Emerson when he paid a visit to the Frémonts. The famous essayist, poet wrote about his encounter with him in his diary: “She [Mrs. Frémont] introduced me to Major Zagonyi [sic], the captain of Fremont’s Bodyguard, the hero of Springfield, Mo., a soldierly figure, who said, that ‘he was as well as his inactive life permitted.’” Zagonyi returned to active service for a brief period, when Frémont was appointed commander of the Mountain Department in early 1862, serving as his chief of cavalry with the rank of colonel. In June 1862, however, Frémont resigned and the Hungarian officer followed his example never to return to active service.¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ *Congressional Globe*, XXVIII., US 37th Cong, 2nd Sess., Pt 2, (March 7, 1862): 1118-1124; “Zagonyi’s Charge with the Fremont Body-Guard — a Picturesque Fol-De-Rol,” *Southern Historical Society Papers*, No. 3 (1887): 195-196; *The Sentinel*, May 29, 1898; *The Oregonian*, March 6, 1897.

¹⁷² Miller, “Zagonyi”, 183; OR, Ser.1. Vol. 3, 252-253; Yandoh. “Kid Gloves”, 54.

¹⁷³ Linda Allart et al, eds., *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Belknap Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1982), XV, 191-192.



Photo Courtesy: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C., LC-DIG-ppmsca-08367.

It was in his intention to return to Hungary, but there is no trace of him after 1867. The only reference to his possible fate comes from a fellow-expatriate Lajos Dancs, who did return to Hungary:

Later, in the mid-1860s I received a letter from him [Zagonyi] in which he asked me to look for an appropriate estate here, in Szöllős, because he intends to come home and settle down. [...] In this letter he notified me that he had become wealthy, and invested his money in a railroad company, and even become a member of the board of directors. [...] At the beginning of 1867 he wrote that he was coming home in the middle of that year, but [later] he let me know that the company had gone bankrupt and he had lost all his wealth. He did not intend to come home until he accumulated wealth again. It has been 23 years now that I have not heard anything from him: he is probably not alive now.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ Dancs, *Töredékek*, 69. Translation mine.

Unfortunately, we do not have any reliable information concerning Zagonyi's fate. An article published in the *Tuscumbia Osage Valley Sentinel* stated that Zagonyi kept a cigar shop in Pest in 1871. However, there is no proof that Zagonyi indeed returned to Hungary. The *Daily Bulletin Supplement* of San Francisco wrote in 1880 that Zagonyi disappeared mysteriously in 1870. Hungarian-American historian, Károly Rácz-Rónay wrote in a letter to Sándor Márki in 1921 that Zagonyi had starved to death in the United States. Anyhow, what we know for sure is that according to the federal census of 1870 his wife, Amanda Zagonyi, married someone in 1870 in Manhattan, New York, which means that Zagonyi had either died between 1865 and 1870, or they got divorced and he returned to Hungary, however, the former case seems to be the most plausible.¹⁷⁵

The overall military importance of Zagonyi's Death Ride is arguable, but there is no denying that it has been of special importance from the perspective of the Hungarian-American community and its local significance is obvious as well. In 1931 the University Club erected its Historical Marker No. 17 commemorating the event. In Springfield a 10-acre park was named after Zagonyi.¹⁷⁶

What connects the three Hungarian soldiers discussed in this chapter is the role they played in the process of self-justification of Hungarian-Americans. What can be argued is whether their military careers were as outstanding as they are presented in the sometimes very much biased works written by the chroniclers of ethnic Hungarian past. Asboth and Zagonyi were both brought into the machine of the Union volunteer army by Major General Frémont among highly controversial circumstances. Zagonyi obviously fell victim to the political intrigues that surrounded Frémont's command, and perhaps to his own excessive loyalty towards him. Asboth was in a very similar situation, however, being a renowned high-ranking officer back in Hungary, he was very much respected in America, as well. His excellent military career secured him a foreign service appointment after the Civil War. At the same time, Julius Stahel was relatively unknown at the beginning of the Civil War, and his connections with other Kossuth emigrés were rather loose as compared

¹⁷⁵ *Tuscumbia Osage Valley Sentinel*, February 24, 1871; Károly Rácz-Rónay to Sándor Márki. Hamburg. (August 3, 1921); cited in Mária Kórácz, "Az amerikai történetírás kezdetei," *Aetas* (1996/1), 129; *Marriage Registers, Extracts from Manhattan (1869-1880) and Brooklyn (1895-1897)* (Dept. of Health, Division of Vital Statistics, New York: New York, NY, 1870), Certificate number: 7289; John Maurath, an ardent researcher of the Body-Guard reached the same conclusion.

¹⁷⁶ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; For information on the Zagonyi Park visit, http://www.richgros.com/Springfield_History/Sites_HTML/Zagonyi.html (January 12, 2008)

to those of Zagonyi and Asboth. Actually, he seemed to have much closer links to German-Americans in New York, so much so, that there were some who suggested that his promotion to the rank of major general was a gesture towards German-Americans by President Abraham Lincoln. This is, of course, not to suggest that Stahel was a political general, as his achievements are beyond dispute, yet his connections with the German community are not to be denied. In 1861 *The Chicago Tribune*, for instance, referred to him as “The German Brigadier.” Nevertheless, he was the only Hungarian officer who received the Congressional Medal of Honor, and this raises him well above his contemporary critics.¹⁷⁷

In conclusion, it has to be emphasized that all three of these Hungarian officers had outstanding careers in the Civil War: they rose to high ranks, and were acknowledged. Asboth and Stahel played significant roles on a national level, but Zagonyi seems to be the odd one out here, as his Death Ride at Springfield, Missouri was of local importance only and there might be justification for questioning whether attacking the Confederates there made sense from a strategic point of view it at all. What is more, although the Union cavalry was outnumbered by the rebels, it was not taken into consideration in the historical literature that most of the Southern forces belonged to home guard units, and were inexperienced and poorly-armed.

Nevertheless, the careers of Asboth, Stahel as well as Zagonyi all seem to support the words of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who in his letter wrote to Edmund Vasváry on the occasion of the publishing of his book, *Lincoln's Hungarian Heroes*: “Men of Hungarian blood — many of them exiles from their fatherland — rendered valiant service to the cause of the Union.” However, and this is my main argument in this chapter, significant differentiations are necessary to be made in the evaluation of the historical role these individuals played. Due to the hero-making activity of Hungarian-American historians, Asboth, Stahel and Zagonyi, similarly to numerous other ethnic heroes, acquired special historical importance: their actions had significant effect on ethnic collective memory. Their contribution to the war effort of the Union guaranteed the success of the Hungarian-American community in the postwar United States as well as its visibility in American society. This is what all three above-mentioned Hungarian officers share: negligible as the

¹⁷⁷ Quoted in Beszedits, “Julius Stahel”, 4; “The German Brigadier,” *Chicago Tribune*, October 21, 1861, 1.

effect of Zagonyi's "Death Ride" may seem from a military point of view, its historical significance was great for the Hungarian-American community in creating group-cohesion, similarly to the undeniably heroic Civil War careers of Asboth and Stahel.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁸ Quoted in Vasváry, *Magyar Amerika*, 129.

CHAPTER SEVEN

INTERNATIONAL FRAUD: COL. BÉLA ESTVÁN

Béla Estván is one of the most often quoted participants of Hungarian origin in the American Civil War, in spite of the fact that hardly anything was known about him either by the scholars studying Hungarian-American historical links and contacts, or by his contemporaries in the United States. His book, *War Pictures from the South*, however, became a real bestseller of the Civil War years, and made Estván's name familiar to many. Because no other book by a Hungarian enjoyed such popularity in the period, Pivány, Vasváry and Ács accepted everything he wrote about himself or his wartime experience. However, careful research shows that Estván was not only a notorious liar, but was not even Hungarian! Estván's example shows that Hungarians were so popular at the beginning of the 1850s in the United States that some non-Hungarians even pretended to be Hungarians. Estván's popularity did not carry over into the community of real Hungarians. No fellow Hungarian emigrant wrote about him or reacted to his book. There was no trace of him in works about the Hungarian War of Liberation either. In fact, the absence of Hungarian interest in his exploits provided the first clues that he had fabricated his persona.¹⁷⁹

In spite of Estván's claim to have served in the ranks of the Confederate Army, in 1961 the Kossuth Foundation commemorated the centennial of the outbreak of the Civil War by highlighting his exploits. The foundation published a booklet by András Pogány entitled *Béla Estván: Hungarian Cavalry Colonel in the Confederate Army*. It did not matter to them that Estván apparently fought for secession and slavery, as they took for granted Estván's own words about his enlistment: "It was now 13 years that I had been away from my native home and now, drawn into the whirlpool of events, I found myself, almost against my will, serving in the ranks of a foreign army, and fighting for a cause, with which neither my head nor my heart could thoroughly sympathize." The author, Pogány, did not spend too much time researching Estván's life, except for some vague attempts which led him to false assumptions concerning the genealogy of Estván. The

¹⁷⁹ Estván, *War Pictures*.

scope of his book, therefore, is very limited, and the thin volume is not only riddled with errors, but it hardly goes beyond summarizing Estván's *War Pictures*.¹⁸⁰

Edmund Vasváry, the ardent student of the history of the Hungarian-American community and author of *Lincoln's Hungarian Heroes*, also mentioned Estván among the Hungarians who supported the South in the War Between the States in his articles published serially in the monthly of the William Penn Fraternal Association between 1961 and 1964. Yet, he himself called for further research, which, he indicated, "would be able to discover some favorable testimony about the life of this mysterious and elusive individual." Nevertheless, it is hard to tell how he came to the conclusion that "in his paper, Pogány writes about Estván with academic thoroughness." So it may be useful to summarize what the most recent investigations revealed about Estván.¹⁸¹

Little is known about Estván's early life. According to Pogány, he was born in 1827, although in the Census of 1860 the date of birth he gave was 1815. Pogány managed to identify a family of lesser nobility in Hungary named Estván, but could not prove any connection with that particular family. Béla became an officer of the Imperial Army of Austria-Hungary and later he wrote that he had "served the king of Hungary for fourteen years." He marched in Italy under Radetzky as captain of cavalry and participated in the Italian campaign of 1848. Having heard of the outbreak of the Hungarian revolution, he returned to Hungary and Governor Kossuth appointed him colonel of cavalry.¹⁸²

After the Hungarian forces laid down their arms at Világos in 1849, Estván had to leave the country in order to escape Habsburg retribution and, like many of his comrades, sought refuge in England. The exact date of his departure for the United States is not known, but it is highly probable that he sailed for the "Land of the Free" in 1850-51, right before or during Kossuth's tour of the country. None of the sources mention him as a member of Kossuth's retinue, and the reasons why he wound up in Richmond, Virginia,

¹⁸⁰ András Pogány, *Béla Estván: Hungarian Cavalry Colonel in the Confederate Army* (New York : Kossuth Foundation, 1961) (Hereafter cited as, Pogány, *Béla Estván*); Quoted in Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy*, 58.

¹⁸¹ Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 30.

¹⁸² Pogány, *Béla Estván*, 5. Pogány possibly gained this information from the Catalogue of the Library of Congress; *The Census of 1860*. Richmond, VA. National Archives, Washington, D.C., m-653; Pogány, *Béla Estván*, 4. He refers to the following book: Béla Kempelen, *Magyar nemes családok* [Hungarian Noble Families] (Budapest: Grill Károly Könyvkiadóvállalata, 1911); Béla Estván to Jefferson Davis (June 10, 1861) National Archives, Washington, D.C., Letters Received by the Confederate Secretary of War. RG 109. M-437, Reel 3, f1378.

are not clear either. That notwithstanding, in his letter to Confederate President Jefferson Davis in 1861 he wrote that he had been the citizen of the city for eight years, i.e., since 1853.¹⁸³

These are the details concerning Estván's early life as reconstructed by András Pogány and Ella Lonn. Yet sources make it clear that Estván lied about his past and he was indeed an adventurer, a real Münchhausen figure. It turned out that Béla Estván was only an assumed name and his real name was Peter Heinrich. He was born in Vienna on July 12, 1827. And, most importantly, he was Austrian by birth! It seems likely that later he only claimed to be Hungarian to win the sympathy and support of the Americans who were enthusiastic about the Hungarian freedom fight of 1848/49. According to Károly Rácz-Rónay, he followed the footsteps of his father, and learned the trade of a painter.¹⁸⁴

The most mysterious part of Estván's adventurous career was yet to come. In his book he boasted of having participated in the Crimean War and called himself the Hero of Sebastopol. No sources support these statements. As a matter of fact, Hungarian refugees in the United States were organizing an expeditionary force which was to sail over to Europe and help the Turks against the Russians. There is no evidence to prove that organized Hungarian units participated in the Crimean war, although there were some individuals who did. None of them, however, sided with the Russians, except for Col. Estván, assuming his claims can be trusted. Nevertheless, one clue shows that at least some credit could be given to Estván's words. The would-be Union Commander-in-Chief, Gen. George B. McClellan, was present in the Crimean War as a military observer and it is possible that he met the Hungarian adventurer there. It is known that McClellan had shown great interest in the Hungarian fight for freedom against the Habsburgs back in 1849 and had asked to be sent to Hungary as a military observer. However, because of the victory of the joint Austrian and Russian forces, his plan came to naught. He may have met Estván in the Crimea and this might provide an explanation to the surprising fact that, when his *War Pictures* was first published in Britain in 1863, Estván dedicated it to

¹⁸³ Béla Estván to Jefferson Davis (June 10, 1861) National Archives, Washington, D.C., Letters Received by the Confederate Secretary of War. RG 109. M-437, Reel 3, f1378.

¹⁸⁴ Vasváry Collection., Somogyi Library, Szeged., R1/E, 22.

McClellan, in spite of the fact that the Hungarian colonel had served in the Confederate Army. (The 1864 edition was dedicated to the soldiers of both armies.)¹⁸⁵

After the Crimean War Estván claimed to have returned to the United States and settled down in Richmond. There is only sporadic reference to his pre-Civil War years. Hermann Schuricht in his significant book on the Germans living in Virginia writes the following, not too flattering lines about Estván: "He (the so-called Count) lived there (in Richmond) upon the earnings of his two ladies, his wife and his sister-in-law, who gave lessons. [...] He himself was a very good-looking jovial man and knew how to play the part of an upright Austrian country nobleman to perfection."¹⁸⁶ The first mention of Estván in the American press is dated to 1854, when the *National Intelligencer* reported the concert of Count Estván and Countess Maria De Estván at Carusi's Saloon in Washington, D.C.¹⁸⁷

The census of 1860 supports Schuricht's claims. One can find two ladies living in Estván's household: Marie Estván, 25, and Laura Lacey, 22, both of whom made their living as teachers of French. Béla and Marie had a two-year-old daughter, Mary.¹⁸⁸

Ella Lonn, one of the foremost scholars of the field, states that Estván reached prominence in the Virginia militia and, mainly due to his experience gained in European battlefields, obtained a colonelcy by the time of John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry in 1859, and, according to Pogány, Estván also took part in the suppression of Brown's rebellion.¹⁸⁹

There is a 5-page sheet musical composition titled *Chicora, the original name of Carolina; Chicora, the Indian name of Carolina* from 1861 in the Rare Book, Manuscript and Special Collections Library of the Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, on which the name of C. B. Estván is specified as the publisher. It is dedicated to the patriotic ladies of the Southern Confederated States of North America, suggesting that Estván

¹⁸⁵ The reason for this was the fact that Turkey had afforded asylum to the Hungarian political refugees who left Hungary after the defeat of the War of Independence by Austria and Russia. *The New York Times*, November 17, 1853, 4; See, Dénes Jánossy, *Die Ungarische Emigration und der Krieg im Orient* (Budapest: Ostmitteleuropäische Bibliothek, 1939)

¹⁸⁶ Hermann Schuricht, *History of the German Element in Virginia* (Baltimore, 1898-1900), 88-89. (Hereafter cited as Schuricht, *History*)

¹⁸⁷ *The National Intelligencer*, May 24, 1854.

¹⁸⁸ *The Census of 1860*. Richmond, VA. National Archives, Washington, D.C., M-653.

¹⁸⁹ Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy*, 175; Pogány, *Béla Estván*, 7.

enthusiastically supported the Confederate cause. The outbreak of the Civil War found him in Richmond, the future capital of the newly-born Confederate States of America. Estván states in his book that he served as a commander of cavalry in the Confederate Army, and participated in a number of engagements including the first battle at Bull Run and Fair Oaks. He belonged to General Longstreet's staff in the battle of Seven Pines and Gaines' Mill and claimed that he was the one who changed the outcome of the latter engagement. A glorious military career. The only problem is that no evidence can be found to validate his statements. No Confederate commander ever bothered mentioning his name in either his memoirs or letters, and there is no trace of him in the *Official Records of the Civil War*. Considering this fact, no words will be wasted here upon the military deeds of which he boasts in his book. Instead, it is more worthwhile to take a look at the documents at the archives and try to "take the measure" of Estván on that basis.¹⁹⁰

In writing about his motives for joining the Confederate army, Estván made it seem as if he had been almost forced into Confederate service: "Circumstances led me to take service in the confederate army — my long residence in the Southern States being, however, the main inducement thereto."¹⁹¹ Nevertheless, on June 22, 1861, he wrote the following letter to Confederate President Jefferson Davis:

To His Excellency

The undersigned most respectfully begs have to [sic] offer his services to his Excellency the President of the Southern Confederated States.

I served the king of Hungary for fourteen years as a captain of cavalry and fought the victories in Italy under Radetzki.

Governor Kossuth of Hungary appointed me afterwards to Colonel of cavalry and served him in that capacity for two years. For the last eight years I have been a citizen of Richmond Virginia.

Being widely known amongst my countrymen and hoping to meet with ultimate success, I should be highly flattered if his Excellency would give me the permission to furnish me with the necessary means to establish a foreign Legion.

I refer to Hon. Porcher Miles of Charleston.

¹⁹⁰ *Chicora, the Original Name of Carolina; Chicora, the Indian name of Carolina*. Barhamville, South Carolina, 1861. Conf. Music #132, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

¹⁹¹ Estván, *War Pictures*, iii.

I have the honor to remain Your Excellency's most obedient servant: C. B. Estván¹⁹²

These lines suggest that Estván was more than willing to offer his services to the Confederate cause. But even so, barely a fortnight after the first letter Estván wrote another one to Davis:

His Excellency, President Jefferson Davis.

I, the undersigned most respectfully submit to your Excellency the following plan which if it should meet your approbation will be carried into execution as soon as I am furnished with the necessary permission.

I propose to raise in the states of Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky recruits for two foreign regiments: one of cavalry and one of infantry which if formed will be subject to the command of Brigadier General Wise.

The two regiments would be mustered in for the duration of the war; – the soldiers to be allowed to elect their officers captains included.

In [illegible] you will please allow me to give some details of my military life:

I have served fourteen years as captain of cavalry in the Austrian army and afterwards as colonel under Gov. Kossuth in Hungary.

For the last eight years I have been a citizen of Richmond Virginia.

I have the honor to remain

Your Excellency's most obedient servant: B. Estván¹⁹³

Davis passed both letters on to Confederate Secretary of War Leroy P. Walker, who inquired of opinions of Robert E. Lee and other military leaders in Richmond.

These two letters are the only documents which reveal some direct connection between Estván and the military apparatus of the Confederate States. It cannot be confirmed whether or not Estván had been commissioned as his name cannot be found in any of the rosters of regiments. Therefore, it is clear that all his statements in *War Pictures* must be treated with extreme caution, especially the parts about his own role. Even his contemporaries could not agree on how much his analyses of the events of the Civil War can be taken for granted. *The New York Herald*, for example, wrote that Estván had started a military school in Richmond, so he undisputedly was a military expert. On the contrary,

¹⁹² National Archives. M-437. Letters Received by the Confederate Secretary of War. RG 109. Reel 3, f1378.

¹⁹³ National Archives. M-437. Letters Received by the Confederate Secretary of War. RG 109., Reel 4, f475.

his reviewer in *The New York Times* wrote that Estván was “unimportant as a historian and probably insignificant as a commander” and “his claims as a military critic are not likely to be accepted by either side.”¹⁹⁴

Another documented aspect of Estván’s career definitely links his name to the Confederate war effort, although it is neither directly related to military heroism nor, as far as the outcome is concerned, particularly glorious. In 1861, along with Louis Froehlich, Estván started a business that made cavalry sabers and bayonets in Wilmington, North Carolina. As early as January 20, 1861, their firm of Froehlich&Estván or C.S. Arms Factory, had a contract with the state of North Carolina and made 61 cavalry sabers and 133 saber bayonets, and this was followed three days later by an order for another 35 cavalry sabers and 97 saber bayonets; the two orders combined were worth \$5,267. Between January 20, 1861 and March 1, 1862 the firm produced 479 cavalry sabers, 1054 saber bayonets and a couple of artillery bayonets. In 1862 cavalry sabers cost \$24.50 apiece, whereas for the saber bayonets the Ordnance Office of North Carolina at Raleigh paid \$10.50 apiece. However, there were more and more complaints regarding the quality of the weapons produced by Estván and his partner. For instance, Confederate Secretary of War J. P. Benjamin received a letter dated March 11, 1862, from Henry T. Clark writing on behalf of the Nineteenth North Carolina Cavalry Volunteer Regiment from Raleigh, N.C., in which he complained that the regiment was just partly armed and was “yet without sabers, although we spared neither effort nor money. We engaged from the Eastvan & Froelich [sic] sword factory at Wilmington, and paid high prices, but three-fourths of the swords proved worthless.”¹⁹⁵

About that time the firm started to face grave financial difficulties. On April 23, 1862, *The Weekly Standard* of Raleigh published a short notice seeking people who had claims against Froehlich&Estván or C.S. Arms Factory. Although the exact date is not known, it seems very probable that Estván quit very soon thereafter; the Richmond papers reported that the partnership was being dissolved. Ella Lonn confirmed this by stating that Louis Froehlich continued making swords alone at Kenansville, N.C., after his unsuccessful

¹⁹⁴ *The New York Herald*, July 29, 1863; *The New York Times*, July 19, 1863, 3.

¹⁹⁵ Letter of Henry T. Clark to J.P. Benjamin, Secretary of War (March 11, 1862) *OR*, Series IV, Vol. 1, 987.

venture with Estván. Froehlich employed about 15-20 hands in his manufactory, which was eventually closed down in 1864.¹⁹⁶

The documents do not verify any other details of Estván's Civil War career. In his *War Pictures* he states that after 18 months of campaigning with the Confederate Army he contracted yellow fever and resigned his commission. In the eyes of Ella Lonn his resignation was rather due to the fact that promotion was hard to come by for the foreign-born in the Confederate Army. She wrote that "probably this slowness of recognition had much to do with Estván's disgruntled attitude toward the Confederacy and ultimate departure in the midst of the war." Confederate President Jefferson Davis said to a visitor in Richmond: "Our service offers but little inducement to the soldiers of fortune, but a great deal to the men of principle." Hermann Schuricht, however, offered an entirely different explanation for Estván's leaving the Southern states: "When the Civil War commenced, he pretended to have recruited in North Carolina a regiment of Lancers and was authorized to draw from the Ordnance Department the necessary equipage" which he took to North Carolina and sold there. He also said that Estván tried to gain popularity in the North by claiming that he had deserted, going to Washington, D.C. in full Confederate uniform and even obtaining an audience with President Lincoln. Although no records support any of these claims, there is a striking similarity between this part of the stories of Estván and another Hungarian in Confederate service, Col Adolphus Adler, as both of them claimed to have been forced into the ranks of the Confederate army, and they acted as if they had been in possession of military information of vital importance, which they were, of course, more than willing to share with the Federal authorities. Anyway, whatever Estván's real reasons for leaving the Confederate States might have been, on September 13, 1862 he applied for a passport to the authorities in Washington and left America for Britain soon after.¹⁹⁷

Once in England, Estván wrote his *War Pictures from the South*, which saw three editions within slightly more than a year. This shows its considerable success, although

¹⁹⁶ For the firm see, L. Froehlich & B. Estvan. National Archives. M-346. Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms. Roll #287; *OR*, Series IV, Vol. 1, 987; *The Weekly Standard*, April 23, 1862, 3; For the firm's contracts with the Ordnance Office at Raleigh, see, National Archives. M-346. Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens and Business Firms. RG109, Roll #327; Lonn, *Foreigners*, 333.

¹⁹⁷ Estván, *War Pictures*, 175; Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy*, 166; Quoted in Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy*, 33; Schuricht, *History*, II, 88-89; National Archives. M-1371: Registers and Indexes for Passport Applications. Roll #03, No. 8325.

even the contemporary American press was divided over the book — Northern and Southern alike. Of course, the Confederate press treated him as a deserter and a foreign mercenary. The *Daily Richmond Examiner* described him in these words, "In these war times, they [the deserters] are plentiful under the uniform of military officers. Estván, the soi-disant count, who ran to the North after playing out his cards here, was one of a particular class." *The New York Times* reviewer of his book was similarly critical, claiming that Col. Estván belongs to the large class of warriors who can "be sharked up for any enterprise that hath a stomach in't. [...] We should prefer that he stood up more manfully either for the North or the South." In contrast, it was Estván's impartiality that was particularly emphasized by *The North American Review*. That reviewer concludes, "His book seems to us eminently wise in its judgments and opinions, is in its tone friendly to the people of the North."¹⁹⁸

This is the point where most sources finish Estván's story. Schuricht suggests that he revisited his old fatherland, Austria, and he was arrested and prosecuted as a criminal in Vienna. In the summer of 1864 the Emperor Maximilian of Austria's Habsburg-Lorraine family arrived in Mexico with the intention to create a new imperial order in the country. He enjoyed the military and financial support of Napoleon III, but he soon started to face grave financial difficulties as the French emperor lost interest and gradually withdrew his support. He also found an avowed enemy in the person of President Andrew Johnson, who wanted to get rid of the French as soon as the Civil War in the United States was over. The Monroe Doctrine became a subject for public discussion and the American public demanded its enforcement.¹⁹⁹

Maximilian decided to meet this challenge by counter-propaganda. He sought recognition and he did not think that he was playing a losing game. He established an agency in New York, which served as the center for imperial intrigue and propaganda. In

¹⁹⁸ *War Pictures from the South* was first published in Britain by Warner and Routledge in 1863. Under the same title in the United States it was published by D. Appleton in 1863, which was soon followed by the German translation under the title *Kriegsbilder aus Amerika. Von B. Estvan, oberst der cavalerie der Conföderirten armee* published in Leipzig by F.A. Brockhaus in 1864; *Daily Richmond Examiner*, February 5, 1864, 6; *The New York Times*, July 19, 1863, 3; *The North American Review* Vol. 97, Issue 201, (October 1863): 583-584.

¹⁹⁹ Schuricht, *History*, II, 89.

1865 the emperor appointed Luis de Arroyo consul general for the Mexican empire. His primary —and improbable— task was to secure recognition by the United States.²⁰⁰

Arroyo was visited in his New York office a number of times by Béla Estván. Arroyo recalled that “he gave the impression that he was a man of some consequence, and spoke encouragingly of the imperial prospects of recognition.” Estván told him that he had been the special correspondent for the *New York Herald*, and was sent to Mexico by James Gordon Bennett in October 1865. He managed to secure an audience with the emperor and later he summed up his motivations: “[...] despite my seventeen years of absence from my homeland I *still preserved a deep affection for the imperial Family of the House of Habsburg*, I took the opportunity with vivid interest to indirectly serve an imperial Prince, thus redeeming the political debt which I still had to pay to the Austrian House from previous years.” More accurately perhaps historian Robert W. Frazer observed that “it was doubtful that he desired to serve an imperial prince as much as he wished to serve Béla Estván.”²⁰¹

Nevertheless, Estván’s plan of subsidizing the American press was backed both by Maximilian and Arroyo. The emperor retained Estván for two years at \$5,000 a year. In addition, the Hungarian was provided a whopping \$40,000 a year for expenses, which was still only half of what Estván had hoped for. Estván returned to New York where his task was to prepare the material furnished by others for publication. He had to account for his expenditures at the end of each month, which displeased him very much. Whatever his feelings about these restrictions, he got down to opening offices in Washington and New York at once and employed several assistants. He overspent the \$40,000 during the first year. In addition, his budget called for an additional \$35,000, well above the sum provided for that year.²⁰²

Both Louis Borg, head of the Mexican consulate, and Maximilian’s agent, Mariano Degollado, were amazed at Estván’s budget. They hesitated to provide the Hungarian with

²⁰⁰ Robert W. Frazer, “Maximilian’s Propaganda Activities in the United States, 1865-1866,” *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 24, No.1 (February 1944) (Hereafter cited as Frazer, “Maximilian”): 4-5.

²⁰¹ Arroyo to Castillo, October 24, 1865. Hausarchiv, Archiv Kaiser Maximilians von Mexiko, Karton 146, Arroyo, fol. 76. Library of Congress facsimiles from Austrian archives. Hereafter cited as Arroyo, Hausarchiv; Quoted in Frazer, “Maximilian,” 19. Emphasis mine

²⁰² Estván to Fischer (January 12, 1867) Hausarchiv, Archiv Kaiser Maximilians von Mexiko, Karton 144, Berichte von B. Estvan aus New-York, fols. 685-687. Hereafter cited as Estvan, Hausarchiv; Frazer, “Maximilian”, 20-21.

the additional sum he requested. Finally they agreed to give him \$7,500, but refused to give him a cent more.

Estván made extensive use of propaganda in New York, whereas in Washington he was more interested in developing personal contacts and planning petty intrigues. According to his own account, he managed to bribe - among others - three New York newspapers and paid \$750 each to the *Herald*, *Tribune* and *Times*. However, none of the three dailies published articles favorable to the empire, except some sporadic ones in the *Tribune* which may have been rather due to Horace Greeley's opposition to the administration. Therefore, it is not at all unlikely that Estván pocketed the subsidies himself.²⁰³

The "Hungarian" spent most of his time in the capital trying to form acquaintances. For example, he met with the leaders of the Fenian movement and soon boasted that he had won almost a million voters for the empire.²⁰⁴

Estván fought vigorously for a free hand as far as the expenditure of money was concerned, but his pleas were rejected. When one of his installments failed to arrive, he turned to George Francis Train, one of his Fenian acquaintances, and a candidate for the U.S. Senate from Nebraska, from whom he received a loan of \$15,000; in return he gave Train a bill of exchange on the imperial government. Estván's drafts, however, returned unpaid and he could not turn Maximilian's order into cash either.²⁰⁵

Arroyo was not satisfied with the output of Estván's bureau. A number of articles treating the Mexican question appeared in the press, but most of them were partisan in nature (the Republicans were for the peaceful settlement of the question, whereas the Democratic press favored measures against the empire), and not the product of the Estván and his assistants. In April, 1866, Arroyo finally decided not to provide Estván additional funds. Estván was forbidden to call himself an employee of the imperial government or to make offers and concessions concerning Mexico. The documents regarding his activities were sent to the imperial foreign office, and the press campaign was terminated. He followed Castillo, who was in Europe with the Empress Charlotte, to Paris and Rome, but he could not achieve anything. He returned to New York, but his part in Maximilian's

²⁰³ Frazer, "Maximilian," 22.

²⁰⁴ Estván to Castillo (February 23, 1866) Estvan, Hausarchiv, Karton 144, fols. 629-631.

²⁰⁵ Frazer, "Maximilian", 24-25.

propaganda activities had ended. Meanwhile, the emperor's days in Mexico were numbered. In May 1867 he was captured by the soldiers of Juarez and - despite the objections of European diplomacy - he was executed on June 19.²⁰⁶

Soon thereafter, on July 6, *The New York Times* published an open letter to the editor written by Béla Estván, who titled himself as director of the Imperial Bureau of Mexico in the United States. In this letter, Estván accused the United States Government of a “reprehensible and self-dishonoring hesitation” and questioned why the United States failed to defend the life of Maximilian. Referring to the Monroe Doctrine, he asserted that it was the United States that forced France and other European powers to leave Mexico and should have had “the moral power, supported by an invincible military force, to protect, in the interest of our modern civilization, the life of a Christian Prince, from whom it had taken the means of self-protection and even of escape.” Estván called it the last act of his official duty to the murdered Emperor to give this solemn protest to the American people.²⁰⁷

Not much is known about his life thereafter. At the end of 1867 he wrote a letter to Cassius Marcellus Clay, the American ambassador to Russia, from London. This indicates that soon after the tragic end of Maximilian he returned to Europe. It is not clear how well Clay and Estván knew each other, but the informal parts of the letter show that they had been acquainted for some time. It is not clear either what Estván was doing in St. Petersburg, Berlin and London.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ Frazer, “Maximilian”, 27.

²⁰⁷ *The New York Times*, July 6, 1867, 4.

²⁰⁸ Estván to Cassius Marcellus Clay (December 13, 1867) Cassius Marcellus Papers Special Collection, Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum of the Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tennessee; Estván, B., *Der badische Entwurf einer Wertzuwachsteuer; eine kritische Studie* (Mannheim: J. Bensheimer, ca. 1911); Hardly any documents have been found so far which would reveal further details of Estván's life. There is a trace, however, which may serve as a starting point for additional research. In the database of WorldCat one can find a book written by - according the catalogue - B(éla) Estván, The work titled *Der badische Entwurf einer Wertzuwachsteuer; eine kritische Studie* [The Draft of a Value Added Tax in Baden; A Critical Study] was published in Mannheim, Germany around 1911. It is highly probable that there is some confusion about the author as — according to the catalogue of the Central Library of Mönchengladbach, Germany — the author of the work is a Dr. Heinrich Peter. This name is included in WorldCat as well, labeled as the person responsible for the publication. If it is taken into consideration that Estván would have been well over 80 by 1911, and no detail in the book refers to the writer, we have no reason to suspect that the author was Estván himself, especially as the book is of highly theoretical nature and to our knowledge the Hungarian had no economic qualification whatsoever. So, it is likely that there is a simple confusion of names here. There is one more thing, however, which would be interesting to track down. In 1872 a book titled *Harry Delaware; or, An American in Germany* was published in New York, which was written by a Mathilde Estvan. It would be necessary to confirm whether she was in any kind of

Estván returned to his Austrian homeland in 1872. He published a memorandum to Emperor Francis Joseph in which he demanded that he is paid 80,000 dollars that the deceased Maximilian had owed him. According to Vasváry, he elicited a considerable amount of money when he founded a mining company. Finally he was arrested and during his trial his own brother, who was living in Vienna, gave him up. Peter Heinrich, the Austrian swindler, was sentenced to 6 years of imprisonment on April 6, 1872. One of the contemporary papers described him as, “Tall, dry man, with short neck, big head, high forehead, thinning hair and grey beard.[...] Very pleasant, engaging personality.” We do not have any further information concerning the later stage of his life.²⁰⁹

So there are still a number of uncertainties concerning the life and career of Béla Estván, although several hitherto unknown documents shed light on many aspects of his personality and prove that Béla Estván was indeed a soldier-of-fortune, an adventurer whose primary aim was to make personal profit of every possible situation. It can be also be declared safely that he was not Hungarian, but was an international swindler. Nevertheless, his book became a real bestseller of the day; every now and then, excerpts from his book are re-published in books and magazines even today and his *War Pictures* is really a thrilling book to read — even if its credibility at many points is definitely questionable.²¹⁰

relationship with Béla or not; Mathilde Estvan, *Harry Delaware, or, An American in Germany* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1872); For basic information on Mathilde Estvan see, John Foster Kirk, *A Supplement to Allibone's Critical Dictionary of English Literature* (Philadelphia: Lippincott & Co., 1891), I, 562. Unfortunately, no details of her family background are given.

²⁰⁹ Vasváry Collection, R1E, p. 22, R1, d, 25; Constant von Wurzbach, *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich : enthaltend die Lebensskizzen der denkwürdigen Personen, welche 1750 bis 1850 im Kaiserstaate und in seinen Kronländern gesetzt haben* (Vienna : Univ-Buchdruckerei [etc.], 1856-91), XXIV, 406.

²¹⁰ Béla Estván, “The Yankee Wounded“ in *The Romance of the Civil War* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903). The same article has been just recently re-published in *Skedaddle*, Vol. 1, Issue 2 (March 3, 2004): 1-3.

CHAPTER EIGHT

"FRIENDS OF THE LONG-OPPRESSED RACE": SLAVERY AND HUNGARIANS IN THE COLORED REGIMENTS

You have officers who have faith in your manhood. They have left their homes and come among you, knowing they are liable of being hung by the rebel gov[ernment] should they be taken prisoners.[A]nd why? Because they instruct you to be soldiers.²¹¹

As mentioned earlier, it is essential to re-evaluate claims that Hungarians volunteered in the Union army, because they were primarily motivated by abolitionist sentiment, and intended to fight for the liberation of African-Americans. In spite of the fact that virtually none of the Hungarian-born soldiers in the Civil War expressed abolitionist ideas, it cannot be entirely ruled out as a possible motivation, particularly because a number of them applied for commissions in Colored Regiments. Of course, the question can be raised whether they were motivated by their desire for emancipation, or by some additional factors.²¹²

To evaluate the Kossuth emigrés' approach to the peculiar institution, we have to explain briefly how slavery was perceived by the Hungarian public, that is, what "cultural baggage" the Hungarian emigrants of the era carried to America, and how their attitude changed, if it did change at all, after they had gained first-hand experience regarding human bondage.

Hungarians in the Reform Age (the period in Hungarian history roughly between 1820 and 1848) saw a unique duality in the United States. On the one hand, they considered it the "Young Giant of Democracy" which epitomized everything they had been fighting for first on the political stage, later on the battlefields. On the other hand, they could not quite understand how such a dark, evil institution as slavery could flourish in "the Land of the Free." Not many Hungarians had the chance to actually travel to

²¹¹ General Order No. 25. By Col. L.L. Zulavsky. HQ 82nd Regt. US Infantry (Colored), Barrancas, FL. (May 1, 1864) Document G-130, Freedom Archives, Freedmen and Southern Society Project, University of Maryland, College Park, MD.

²¹² Tivadar Ács, for instance, concluded about the Hungarians' motivations in his *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban*: "Their blood was not shed for the unity of the North-American states, but for the cause of the liberation of slaves." Ács, *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban*, 122.

America and collect first-hand experience, and perhaps this was one of the main reasons why Sándor Farkas Bölöni's travelogue *My Journey to North America* became a real bestseller in the country. He related his first encounter with slavery:

I felt as if an icy hand touched my heart when I read this [a newspaper ad about a slave auction — VIK]. So, we arrived in the land of slavery. I sighed in sorrow [...] Having observed the unprecedented freedom stemming from the Constitution of this great country, with all its principles based on natural law and its institutions devoted to the advancement of mankind — the monstrous variance between the magnificent theory and this shameful practice was always incomprehensible to me.²¹³

Most Hungarians, of course, were aware of this nature of the United States as well, but when many of them had to flee their homeland after the collapse of the rebellion in 1849, no Kossuth emigrés refused to migrate to America because of aversion to slavery. This does not mean that they failed to express their revulsion. József Madarász, who visited the United States briefly, wrote in his diary upon his landfall:

I gave a hearty welcome to America from onboard the ship, and I wished flourishing of this country, the institutions of which are so humane with a single exception. With one single exception! Yes, the existence of slavery in you, America, is antagonistic to the spirit of your institutions; it is the shame of your greatness, and a blemish on your freedom. [...] If you wish to take your proper position, you have to do away with this blemish.²¹⁴

Later, as he travelled by train, he saw a plantation owner with his slaves, and he burst out:

My sense of humanity was exasperated! Such a humiliation of people because of the difference in the color of their skin in a free country! My face was flushed! My soul became disgusted, I was ashamed of these chains in the Land of the Free. Why can't I just make these poor creatures just tear the chains apart, why aren't those humiliated who themselves humiliate others this way.²¹⁵

Hungarian settlers in America tended to avoid slave states where they would have to encounter the physical presence of the institution of slavery or the plantation system daily. This was the main reason why Ladislaus Újházy put off moving to one of the

²¹³ Sándor Farkas Bölöni, *Napnyugati utazás: Napló* (Budapest: Helikon, 1984), 467-468.

²¹⁴ Madarász, *Emlékirataim*, 297.

²¹⁵ Madarász, *Emlékirataim*, 312-313.

Southern states, even though the climate there was far more suitable for agriculture. Similarly, only a handful of Hungarians wound up in the Southern states: altogether less than ten percent of the Hungarian-born population in the United States lived in one of the states that would soon secede. This can only partly be attributed to their own decision, for the society of the South was considerably less receptive towards immigrants than that of the North.²¹⁶

Nevertheless, Hungarian immigrants thought about, and acted toward, slavery in a variety of ways during the 1850s. The 38-year old, Hungarian-born Sigismund Brock owned a 240-acre plantation in Lawrence County, Alabama and twelve slaves (six adults and six children). This meant that he possessed a little bit above average slave property, and quite typically, it represented most of his capital. So far, only one more Hungarian slave owner has been identified. Ladislaus Újházy in one of his letters denounced Martin Koszta, who had prompted grave diplomatic crisis between the United States and Austria in 1853: "He owns a female black slave[...] I feel ashamed that there are Hungarians who hold slaves. How fast some people degenerate." Except for these two men Hungarians typically did not sympathize with the system. An exception was the Hungarian traveller, Béla Széchenyi, who sought a solution to the problem of slavery that was less radical than those offered by the abolitionists: "There are a lot of people — including me — who are in favor of transitional periods, and would prefer a bloodless revolution to [...] a rebellion destroying everything. The same could be applied to the emancipation of slaves." He also agreed that "modern times cannot put up with such a blight," but, according to him, the elevation of African-Americans had to precede their liberation, because they "stood on a very low level of civilization." Széchenyi accused the North of hypocrisy, where — although they claimed that the Confederacy was racist — free blacks were also discriminated against, and were denied full civil rights. He thought conditions as depicted in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* were atypical, and that a paternalistic presentation of the plantations would be much more accurate. Furthermore, he believed that liberation of slaves would unjustly deprive

²¹⁶ Újházy's letter to Ödön Beöthy. *Pesti Napló* (December 14, 1850) Quoted in: Ács, *New Buda*, 130.

slaveowners of their "miserable property," and concluded that the South "standing on its own feet" would surely solve the problem, which was its internal affair anyway.²¹⁷

Nevertheless, some Hungarians in America were not content with temporary, gradual changes, but demanded immediate abolition, and sometimes even advocated violence. One of them, as the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported, incited a slave cook to put arsenic into her masters' food at a feast in Augusta, Georgia. Six people died, and thirty-one became ill. The cook was burnt alive, and similar fate awaited the Hungarian radical abolitionist, whose name was Coskina, according to the account.²¹⁸

Violence also seemed acceptable to another Hungarian, Ferenc Kaiser, who joined the anti-slavery forces in Kansas during the armed conflicts there over the territorial expansion of slavery. He participated in the battle of Black Jack on June 2, 1856, was captured by pro-slavery troops in the battle of Osawatomie, and then shot in the head by a F. N. Coleman. His name appears on the monument of the casualties of the battle.²¹⁹

Not all Hungarians held such extreme views about the future of slavery. Perhaps the most interesting representative of this group was Eugene Kozlay, whose career is unusually well documented from the time he left Hungary after the defeat of the 1848 revolt. Kozlay wrote prolifically in his diaries, correspondence and literary works. All of them — first in Hungarian and German, and from the mid-1850s increasingly in English — reveal much about his opinion about slavery and African-Americans.²²⁰

The liberal ideals of the Hungarian War of Independence in 1848/49 were apparent in Kozlay's long German poem, written during his crossing of the Atlantic. He found parallels between the oppression of Hungarians and Native Americans, and his works, gave special importance to the topics of discrimination and racism. While living in New Orleans for a year, he wrote an article entitled "The Slave Market" in which he thoroughly evaluated the institution of slavery. He described the process of selling and

²¹⁷ For information about Brock see, Tom Blake, *Lauderdale County, Alabama. Largest Slaveholders from 1860 Slave Census Schedules*. <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/%7Eajac/allauderdale.htm>; United States. Bureau of Land Management. *Alabama Pre-1908 Homestead & Cash Entry Patent and Cadastral Survey Plat Index*. General Land Office Automated Records Project, 1996. No. 21163; Újházi's letter to his daughter, Klementin (January 10, 1856), Sír Mező, TX. Hungarian National Archives, Újházi Papers, Budapest, Hungary; Béla Széchenyi, *Amerikai utam* (Pest: G. Emich, 1863), 30-31 and 34-36.

²¹⁸ *Chicago Daily Tribune* (September 22, 1857)

²¹⁹ *Chicago Daily Tribune* (September 8, 1857); Dale E. Watts, "How Bloody was Bleeding Kansas?: Political Killings in Kansas Territory," *A Journal of the Central Plains*, Vol. 18 (Summer/1995): 116-129.

²²⁰ *Népszabadság*, March 11, 2006.

buying slaves, and concluded, "In a free country it is terrible to do such a thing." By the end of the 1850s Kozlay's opinion seemed to have changed concerning blacks. In 1857 *The United States Democratic Review* serialized his novel under the title *Secrets of the Past. A Romance of the South* in which the Afro-Americans characters appeared stupid and naive.²²¹

An equally interesting insight into Kozlay's opinion about emancipation can be found in his wartime diary. Well before the Emancipation Proclamation, on July 14, 1862 he wrote:

There are great many who will resign, because they say and with justice that they don't fight for the niggers and the Emancipation policy of the Abolitionist. That Congress had no right to pass law to abolish slavery anywhere is, and that this war is only for that purpose instituted by the fanatics. I agree in many things with this Genls who are high officers and influential; and if Congress, the President or their fanatical Abolitionist General will institute measures for the emancipation of the slaves, against the wishes of the majority and the wishes of the Eastern & Western states, then I will myself withdraw from the field. I came here to reestablish the Union as it was, but not to robe [rob] and subjugate any people. Let the South to be paid as they deserve for their fooly [folly]. Let every men die who works to destroy this land of liberty; but never steal their property, as the Abolitionist desire to do with the Southern men, and their slaves.²²²

On other occasions he complained about African-Americans, as well. In the same diary entry he wrote, "Some of them who followed our army—left us again and returned to their masters, to their prior capacity. So [is] this the class of people the fanatics desire to free?" Considering his opinion, it is hardly surprising that he did not agree with organizing colored regiments, and employing them in the Union war effort. He did not think that African-Americans were suitable for organized fighting, or amenable to military discipline. He complained several times that soldiers of the colored regiments were looting. Besides, he doubted their ability: "These last two nights, I had an alarm. The colored men are coming in by dozens and report the rebels 600 strong. I was

²²¹ Eugene Kozlay, "The Slave Market." Kozlay Papers, Courtesy of Janet Kozlay; The full text version of the novel is available on the Internet, as well a in the Making America Collection of Cornell University: <http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/moa/moa-cgi?notisid=AGD1642-0041-71>.

²²² Here Kozlay referred to John Charles Frémont's Emancipation Proclamation; Kozlay Regimental Diary. (July 14, 1862) Shenandoah Valley. Kozlay Papers. Courtesy of Janet Kozlay.

prepared to receive them, but as I expected, they would not come. These colored men if they see a dozen rebels, they generally set their number at 500.”²²³

Kozlay was also suspected of turning a blind eye to his soldiers’ occasional acts of cruelty against emancipated slaves. James C. Beecher, brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, commander of the 35th Colored Regiment, stated that Kozlay asserted in front of witnesses that a lieutenant of the 54th New York regiment (Kozlay’s unit) “settled all freedmen cases quickly – by tying the complainant by the thumbs.”²²⁴

This does not suggest that Kozlay was unusually racist. He distrusted African Americans, but he was by no means the only one in the North to do. More than anything, he merely assimilated to the society of his adopted country’s characteristic Negrophobia. Just to offer an ethnic analogy, Martin Öfele concluded about German-Americans that they “internalized the existing racial conceptions about societal hierarchies and had to establish their position [...] as distinctly above that of African Americans.”²²⁵

Several Kossuth emigrés, however, expressed their sympathy with the oppressed. Among the Hungarian soldiers who served in the American Civil War, ten Hungarian soldiers applied for commissions in colored regiments, which for a long time was considered to be obvious evidence of their abolitionist sentiments in the literature. Similarly to the Hungarians’ motivations for volunteering in the Civil War in general, the motives of these soldiers should be investigated to see whether really their friendship to the African-American race attracted them to the colored regiments.

The decision to recruit blacks and organize them into regiments dates back to May 22, 1863, when the War Department issued its General Order No. 143, which established a Bureau in the Adjutant General’s Office for this purpose. It was generally agreed on, however, that white officers should command these units, which was an obvious sign that Negrophobia had not been erased from the society of the North overnight, and many were still convinced that the African-American was an inferior race characterized by

²²³ Kozlay Papers (April 19, 1865) South-Carolina. Courtesy of Janet Kozlay.

²²⁴ Robert Singleton, “William Gilmore Simms, Woodlands, and the Freedmen’s Bureau,” *Mississippi Quarterly* (Winter/1996): 19-37.

²²⁵ Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 28.

irresponsibility, laziness, childishness, and it was immensely difficult to keep them in line.²²⁶

The applicants were evaluated by committees who were looking for real vocation in them. What were the major motivations for applying for these positions? Some applicants sympathized with the colored people, and earnestly believed that they can help improve their conditions: they considered serving in a colored regiment as a mission. Others, in contrast, thought that these regiments would be pivotal in breaking the resistance of the Confederacy, therefore, the better organized they were, the sooner the Union wins through. Commissions in the United States Colored Troops meant higher wages as well, which was very attractive for many. An applicant from Illinois with a wage of 13 dollars a month remarked, “I would drill a company of alligators for a hundred and twenty a month.”²²⁷

A commission as a commander or an officer, even in a colored regiment, definitely held prestige, and it was an important opportunity to step forward, particularly for the foreign-born, as volunteer regiments usually elected their own officers, and they — lacking connections and not being known by many — had no chance to become commanders. (It is worth pointing out, however, that in ethnic regiments, usually ethnic officers were elected, which was very typical, for instance, of the Germans.) Anyway, foreign officers, very often veterans of one or more European wars, enjoyed a relative advantage over Americans, although some of them had problems with acquiring the necessary level of proficiency in the English language.

The application procedure was simple: a letter had to be sent in along with a recommendation from the candidate’s commanding officer. Applications were judged on a competitive basis, and the final decision was made following a thorough oral examination. The four-member panel tested the applicant’s expertise in tactics, military regulations, general military knowledge, arithmetic, history and geography.

Rumors of the difficulty of the entrance examination spread very quickly, and soon an enterprise was started offering preparation for the exam. The Free Military School for Applicants for Commands of Colored Troops, proved to be so successful that by the

²²⁶ Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers* (New York: Meridian Books, 1990) (Hereafter cited as, Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*), 35.

²²⁷ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 41.

beginning of 1864 they had had 170 applicants registered each week. Ninety-six percent of those who completed their training were classified fit for service in colored regiments, whereas less than half of other applicants were admitted.²²⁸

On the basis of available sources, there were eleven Hungarians who applied for commission at colored regiments, but ten of them did actually serve in such units. Dr. Rudolph Tauszky served as assistant surgeon in a volunteer regiment. Seeking promotion, he applied for a commission as a regimental surgeon. When he was offered a position of assistant surgeon at the 1st Colored Regiment, however, he rejected it without hesitation. This might suggest that he considered it inferior to serve in a colored unit, but it merely shows that he was not willing to move without a promotion, particularly as travel took a lot of trouble. After the Civil War Tauszky became a prominent physician in New York City. However, on January 3, 1885 he took his gun and shot his wife and then attempted to commit suicide. Luckily enough, both of them survived, but Tauszky spent the rest of his life at Bloomingdale mental asylum. He died in 1889.²²⁹

Not all Hungarian emigrants had second thoughts about commissions in colored regiments. Alexander Asboth received an order from General Lorenzo Thomas to organize the recruitment of African Americans in Florida. As commander of the District of West Florida, Asboth had enough influence to help some fellow Hungarians get commissions in colored regiments. Peter Paul Dobozy became his aide-de-camp, and later organized the 2nd Tennessee Heavy Artillery in the rank of major.

²²⁸ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 41.

²²⁹ Rudolph Tauszky to Surgeon General US Army (August 31, 1863) Personal Papers Tauszky, RG 94, National Archives, Washington, D.C. I am indebted to William Dobak for clearing up Dr. Tauszky's likely motivations.



Peter Paul Dobozy. Photo Courtesy: Allene Chapin

Later he became lieutenant-colonel, when the 2nd Tennessee Heavy Artillery became the Fourth Colored Heavy Artillery. Dobozy did a very good job in organizing and drilling the regiment of black soldiers, yet, similarly to many foreigners in the Union Army, he was target of suspicion on the part of Americans. His ability to lead a regiment was questioned, but the inspection commission found that Dobozy was “a perfect gentleman in every respect; a very energetic, and good officer.” They even considered his proficiency in English satisfactory, although this was one of the major complaints of his accusers against him. What is more, Acting Medical Inspector John Rush reported about Dobozy’s regiment, “[Both medical and line officers] took much interest in procuring the comfort and well-being of the men,” and he also emphasized the good morale appearance, which he attributed to the officers’ high commitment.²³⁰

Probably the most renowned Hungarian officer serving in the colored regiments was Ladislaus Zulavsky, one of Lajos Kossuth’s nephews, already held the rank of lieutenant-colonel at the age of twenty-seven in the Union Army, too, and his bravery was widely

²³⁰ Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 126; Regimental Papers 4th USC Heavy Artillery, RG 94, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Inspection Report by John Rush, Act. Med. Insp. (May 30, 1864)

praised, and not only by Hungarian-Americans. Still, he also had his enemies who harshly criticized him as a commander, since he laid much larger emphasis on the moral education of African American soldiers, and often pushed military training into the background. Lt. Col. Isaac S. Bangs, for instance, was convinced that “Zulavsky especially lacked the persistent discipline required in such an organization as the USC.” In December 1864 the Hungarian-born officer faced court martial for negligence of duty, because it turned out that he had never instructed his regiment in battalion drill. Although Zulavsky himself often declared that he was not competent enough to command a regiment, the jury found him not guilty, and confirmed his rank and position. In spite of the fact that his further Civil War service was not entirely void of criticism either, Zulavsky did a good job leading his regiment. Brig. Gen. William A. Pile mentioned the 82nd in his report on the battle of Fort Blakely (April 9, 1865): “Although in reserve and consequently late in starting on the charge, preserved their regimental organization throughout, the officers exhibiting both skill and bravery.”²³¹

The Hungarian officer saw an important connection between the military service of African- Americans and the final victory of the Union troops, and he linked the victory over secession to the final triumph over the institution of slavery. There are many excerpts from his speeches showing that he believed in the equality of the African-American race: “The eyes of the world are upon you,” he exhorted his men, “to you the friends of your long oppressed race look for the proof of that manliness which they hold to be just as much your gift from Almighty God as that of any white man.” Apparently he managed to cope with the problem of black soldiers’ plundering and molesting white women. Zulavsky, who represented the European style of code of honor for soldiers, considered these acts as personal insults. On one occasion he pointed out:

We are soldiers and not desperadoes [sic] and only men of that class will be guilty of insulting women especially when those poor women like these poor refugees, come to us of themselves asking for help and protection. Tis [sic] a crying shame that any one wearing a soldiers uniform, should so far forget

²³¹ Isaac S. Bangs, “The Ullmann Brigade” In *War Papers Read Before the Commandery of the State of Maine, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States* (Portland: Thurston Print, 1898) (Hereafter cited as, Bangs, *The Ullmann Brigade*), II, 290-310; Öfele, 189.

himself, and the sacred cause he represents to be guilty of such atrocious brutality.²³²

Probably the best piece of evidence that he was an ardent supporter of the equality of African-Americans is his message to his soldiers after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln:

The U.S. Colored Troops above all classes of men, must carry love and veneration of Mr. Lincoln's memory in their hearts. They owe freedom, justice, consideration, fame, and every other blessing they and their kindred enjoy to him above all other men. He has been the redeemer of the colored race in this country, and his name must be as sacred on their lips as that of mankind's Redeemer.²³³

Contemporary sources mentioned another Hungarian officer, Ignatz Kappner, as a person in whose eyes African-Americans were on equal footing. In his obituary published by the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, Kappner's service at a colored regiment gained special importance, "There was no thought on the part of Col. Kappner that, in organizing and commanding a regiment of such troops, he was doing an action unworthy of the highest type of a soldier." He was armed, similarly to Zulavsky, with the moral principles he brought along with him from Hungary. He tolerated no lies and plundering in his regiment. What made him particularly suitable for leading a colored regiment was his empathy with which he approached blacks. Once, when his superiors were planning to remove the contraband camp outside Fort Pickering where the relatives of most soldiers lived, he communicated their protests to the Bureau of Colored Troops, "The men seem to be seriously alarmed [sic] and I would respectfully request to be informed what to tell them, and whether it would not be best to endeavour to have such families left here."²³⁴

²³² Öfele, xi; General Order No. 25. By Col. L.L. Zulavsky, HQ 82nd Regt. US Infantry (Colored), Barrancas, FL. (May 1, 1864) Document G-130, Freedom Archives, FSSP.

²³³ General Order No. 12. 18 May, 1865, OR, Ser. 1, Vol. 49, 2, 833f.

²³⁴ Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, Commandery of the State of Missouri. In Memoriam Colonel Ignatz Kappner. (St. Louis, MO, 1892); Col. I.G. Kappner 1st Tenn Heavy Artillery, Commanding Fort Pickering to Lt. Geo. A. Mason, Acting Assistant Adjutant General U.S. Col. Troops of Tennessee (March 4, 1864) Document G-9, FSSP.

Another Hungarian officer, Captain Joseph Csermelyi, had participated in the ill-fated filibustering expedition of Narciso Lopez in 1851. During the Civil War, he was among the Hungarians who gathered around Brigadier General Asboth when he assumed command of the Department of West Florida, and Csermelyi became captain in the 82nd Colored Regiment. He was brevetted major on March 13, 1865.

Not all of the Hungarians managed to cope with the difficulties they were supposed to face as officers serving in colored regiments. First lieutenant Alexander Toplanyi had to stand in front of an examining board in April 1863, which pointed out that he was “totally deficient in Infantry tactics and considering the length of time he has been in service deficient in Artillery tactics. He knows little or nothing about guard duty and very little about the internal economy of a company,” and heavily criticized him for not showing “the disposition to learn his duties and his course has been meddlesome and troublesome.” Although the board ruled that he was unqualified to hold the rank of 1st lieutenant in the Union Army, Toplanyi refused to accept the decision and asked for another examination. Interestingly enough, this time Brigadier General Barry, chairman of the board, found that Toplanyi was “equal if not superior to any artillery officer,” what is more, Col. William Birney of the 22nd U.S. Colored Troops proposed in his report: “It would gratify this command, both officers and men, to have him added to the list of our captains.” Toplanyi soon rose to the rank of captain in the 3rd Colored Infantry Regiment.²³⁵

In February 1865, however, he was court-martialled for assaulting one of his African-American soldiers. Pvt. John Banks testified that while he was on guard duty, Toplanyi, drunk, approached him and charged him with sleeping on the post. When Banks requested that witnesses be called, Toplanyi started beating him. Toplanyi said that he had felt insulted by the soldier’s lack of discipline and morale. All his officers substantiated that Toplanyi rejected corporal punishment and supported him, but the court obviously wanted to set a precedent. Furthermore, the incident revealed the most serious defect of Toplanyi’s character: alcoholism. He had already had bouts of drinking in his former unit, and this seemed to be the gravest problem this time as well, more than his being racist, as some of his contemporaries suggested. To the contrary, he seems to have been very effective in

²³⁵ Findings of a Board of Examination. (April 13, 1863) LR AGO V.S. 1863 M 767, RG 94, NA; Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 127.

organizing the regiment. Brigadier General E. P. Scammon wrote him, “[You managed to transform] a company of untaught Negroes into a highly disciplined and most efficient company of Artillery.” In any case, the court found Toplányi guilty and dismissed him, but his corps commander, Major Gen. Quincy A. Gillmore intervened, and Toplanyi managed to obtain a pardon and retain his reputation.²³⁶

Emile and Sigismund Zulavsky, along with their brother Ladislaus, and Albert Ruttkay also saw service at colored regiments in the Civil War, and it was probably their and Asboth’s support which more or less saved them from the attacks of anti-foreigner nature. There were others, however, who were not that fortunate: it was not his African American men, but other white officers who gave Louis Voneky, captain at the 68th Colored Infantry regiment in 1864, later major of the 51st Missouri Infantry regiment, a hard time, so much so that eventually he resigned. “I am so unfortunate as to be a Dutchman; that I never do anything by halves and cannot conform myself to do business in a lackadaisical style, but follow up my purposes and duties without regard to persons or showing favor or affection to anyone,” he was grumbling about his difficulties as a foreigner.²³⁷

Altogether it can be concluded that on the basis of available sources earlier assumptions claiming that the majority of Hungarians volunteered in the Union Army because they intended to fight for the liberation of slaves can be refuted. Undoubtedly, there were some who were concerned about the fate and emancipation of African-Americans so much so that they joined USCT. Unfortunately, this can be supported with evidence only in the case of Ladislaus Zulavsky. However, through analogies with other ethnic groups, we have every reason to suspect that Hungarian officers volunteered to be able to use their military talents and the experience they had gained on European battlefields, and were also seeking promotion and higher payment.

On July 18, 1998, a statue by African-American sculptor, Ed Hamilton, was unveiled in Washington, D.C. which was named African-American Civil War Memorial. It commemorates soldiers who contributed to bringing about the emancipation of African-Americans. The monument bears the names not only of black soldiers but of white

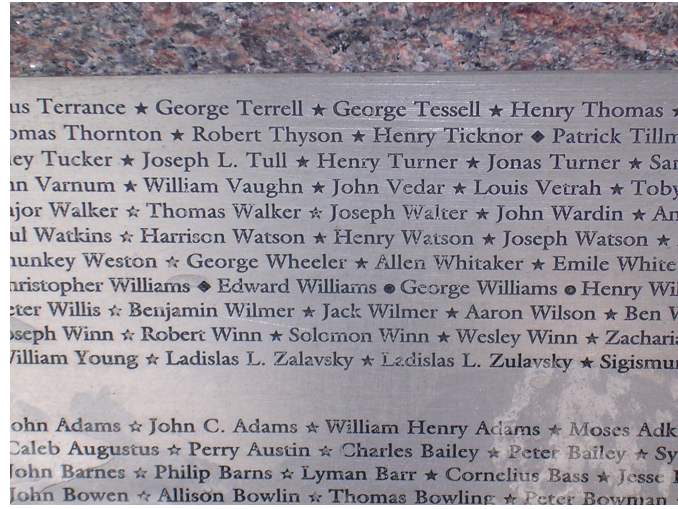
²³⁶ Brig. Gen. E. P. Scammon to Alexander Toplanyi (December 7, 1879) Pension File Alexander S. Toplanyi, RG 15, NA.

²³⁷ Vöneky to Maj. H. Hannahs (June 28, 1865) Service Records Louis Vöneky, 51st Missouri Infantry, RG 94, NA.

officers, as well: among them, those of Albert Ruttkay, Ladislaus and Emile Zulavsky, Alexander Toplanyi, Joseph Csermelyi.



African-American Civil War Memorial, Washington, D.C. Photo by the author.



Ladislaus and Sigismund Zulavsky on the base of the African American Civil War Memorial. Photo by the author.

CHAPTER NINE

THE AFTERMATH

Kossuth Emigrés in the Post-Civil War Years

On April 9, 1865 at about one o'clock in the afternoon General Robert E. Lee arrived at the home of Wilmer and Virginia McLean in the small town of Appomatox Court House, Virginia. A half hour later Union Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant joined him. After a meeting lasting no longer than ninety minutes, Lee accepted Grant's — rather generous — terms for surrender, thus putting an end to the bloody fraternal struggle. Lee reportedly said Grant before signing the document, "This will have a very happy effect on my army."²³⁸

It did have a very happy effect, on the entire war-weary nation, which had suffered more than 630,000 fatalities. There were hardly any families nationwide which were not affected by the war: dead or crippled fathers, husbands, and sons, and ruined families marked the slaughter that had been raging for four years.

The Civil War also took a heavy toll on the Hungarians who had been caught up in it. Captain Nicolai Dunka, Frémont's Hungarian aide-de-camp, was shot dead while forwarding a message to a distant part of the battlefield at the engagement of Cross Keys on June 8, 1862. Captain George Grechenek of the 72nd New York Volunteers was so severely wounded in the battle of Williamsburg, Virginia on May 5, 1862 that his leg had to be amputated. Still, gangrene attacked the stump and he passed away on May 16. Another former officer of Kossuth, Captain Hugo Hollan of the 119th Illinois Infantry was killed in combat on April 1, 1863 at Jackson, Tennessee. Similar fate awaited Colonel Géza Mihalotzy of the 24th Illinois Infantry Regiment, who died on March 11, 1864 of his gunshot wound he sustained on February 24, 1864. Major Anthony Weekey of the 39th New York Volunteers died in a disease contracted in the vicinity of Washington, D.C. on

²³⁸ Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant* (New York: C.L. Webster & Co., 1885-86)

April 28, 1862, while Sigismund Zulavsky fell victim to typhoid fever in Louisiana at Port Hudson on September 16, 1863.²³⁹

In addition, several of them were discharged due to battlefield wounds or diseases contracted during the campaigns. This is one of the reasons why only about 30 percent of the total number of Hungarian soldiers were still in service at the end of the Civil War. (The other reason is that the majority of them volunteered in the very first months of the Civil War.) Among the wounded, quite a few never recovered from wartime injury. Colonel Gabriel De Korponay and his son Stephen both received disability discharge from their Pennsylvania regiments, and died within a couple months of each other in 1865-66. Sixteen-year-old Nicholas Fejervary was so severely wounded in what was probably his very first battle that he was taken home to his father's estate in Iowa only to die. At Marianna, Florida Brigadier General Alexander Asboth was hit by two bullets on September 27, 1864: one hit him in the left cheek and the other broke his left arm. The surgeons could never locate the former one and it gave him immense pain for the rest of his life. Asboth was appointed U.S. minister to Argentina and Uruguay, but he died of his head wound as early as 1868. Colonel Philip Figyelmessy suffered a serious riding accident in 1864, and was unable to return to field service: he headed the court-martial in Baltimore, Maryland in the rest of the Civil War.²⁴⁰

Despite the casualties, about 87 percent of the Hungarians participating in the American Civil War were mustered out as officers, and — as it has been pointed out earlier — most of them advanced considerably in rank in the course of the war. Two of them, the already-mentioned Alexander Asboth and Julius H. Stahel rose to the rank of Major General, furthermore, the latter was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1893 for his heroic conduct at the battle of Piedmont, Virginia on January 5, 1864. He was the only Hungarian-born officer in the Civil War so honored. Frederick Knefler, Eugene Kozlay, Charles Munde and Albin Schoepf were all brevetted brigadier for their service.²⁴¹

²³⁹ Figyelmessy emlékirata, *Magyarország*, June 10, 1914, 17; *Medical History of the Civil War*, p. 173; *Daily Whig Republican*, Quincy Illinois, April 8, 1863, 3; *Medical History*, IX, 457.

²⁴⁰ *Historical Magazine*, Vol. 10, Number 4, April 1866; *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 22, 1865.

²⁴¹ Edmund Vasváry claimed that there was another Hungarian Congressional Medal recipient, Leopold Karpeles. However, the careful study of genealogical sources makes it clear that Karpeles was born in a

Considering all this, it can be established that the overwhelming majority of Hungarians who volunteered in the Civil War did actually benefit from their military service: having had problems integrating into American society and making a living in their adopted country (not unrelated to each other), they could utilize their military talent — very badly needed in the Union Army in the initial phase of the war — and their service earned them the well-deserved respect of their communities. This acceptance and the fact that the majority of the Kossuth emigrés had applied for American citizenship prior to the Civil War and in fact had become U.S. citizens by the beginning of the Civil War, explain why the proportion of Hungarians deciding to return to their mother country in relation to their number in the United States remained relatively low. On June 8, 1867, as part of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise establishing the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, Austrian Emperor Francis Joseph was crowned King of Hungary and he gave general amnesty to Hungarians who had fought in the War of Independence in 1848/49. This practically meant that after 1867 each member of the so-called Kossuth emigration could have returned to Hungary. Yet the statistics show that only 11 Hungarian Civil War veterans made up their minds to leave the United States for Hungary, which is only ten percent of the total number of Hungarian-born in the conflict. John Xantus, one of them, gave the following explanation for his decision:

Believe me, my friends, the Hungarian can never become American, for his heart and soul can never become as hard as the metal from which the dollar is minted. There is only one place for us in this great world: 'Home', which may not be great, magnificent or famous, and though poor, is still the most potent magnet for its wandering sons.²⁴²

Xantus was among those who proved unable to find their places in America. Nevertheless, after his brief visit to Hungary as early as 1861 brought him the honorary presidency of Budapest Zoo and membership in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences but no employment, he returned to the United States and tried his luck in the American Civil War. However, most of his attempts to get settled failed, and rather disappointed he left the country.

Bohemian Jewish family in Prague, and had no connections with Hungary. Just to mention one: *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes*, Vol. 12., No. 1 (November 1995)

²⁴² Xantus, *Travels*, 94.

Cornelius Fonet also returned to Hungary and, like Ignátz Debreczeny, found employment as a minor government official. Joseph Kemenyffy also decided to bid farewell to America and re-settled in Hungary, working as a lawyer. Physician Ignatz Langner gave up his rather profitable practice to start over again after returning to Hungary. Nicholas Perczel, who back in 1851 had been sentenced to death by the Habsburgs along with his brother Mór, legendary general of the Hungarian War of Liberation, was also allowed to set foot on Hungarian soil again in 1868, and held important administrative positions in the next decades. Emeric Radnich, a civil engineer in the United States before the Civil War, returned to his homeland, and had a prominent career, eventually becoming director of the Győr-Sopron-Ebenfurt railway. On the other hand, Theodore Majthenyi, one of the heroes of Zagonyi's Death Ride at Springfield, Missouri, gave up his commission in the U.S. Army in 1868 and took his family back to Hungary. He was commissioned in the Hungarian Army as a major, but soon he resigned and returned to the United States never to see his homeland again.²⁴³

Approximately nine out of ten Hungarian Civil War participants remained in their adopted country even after they could have returned to Hungary without having to worry about Habsburg retaliation. We have already seen that financially most of them had not done particularly well before the Civil War, so it is worth taking a look at how much the financial situation improved and position them on the contemporary American social ladder.

In 2007 The United States Department of State published a booklet entitled *The United States&Hungary: Paths of Diplomacy, 1848-2006* which quoted three Kossuth emigrés who entered service in the American diplomatic corps after the Civil War. Actually as many as seven Hungarian veterans served as consuls and ministers in various parts of the world from Tahiti through Argentina to Russia, and an eighth member of the Kossuth emigration was also appointed to a similar position.²⁴⁴

It was rather typical that the loyal service of high-ranking officers was awarded with foreign service posts, among them these Hungarians. Two of the "triumvirate" of the most renowned Hungarian-born soldiers, Alexander Asboth and Julius Stahel were almost

²⁴³ For details see, Biographical List

²⁴⁴ *The United States&Hungary: Paths of Diplomacy, 1848-2006* (U.S. Department of State: Washington, D.C., 2006), 20.

immediately offered positions in the American foreign service after the Civil War. In August 1865, Asboth became minister to Argentina and Uruguay. He was focused on bringing about a cease-fire in the so-called War of the Triple Alliance between Paraguay and Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay in 1864-1870. However, the Hungarian veteran of two wars suffered immensely from his Civil War wounds and died on January 21, 1868. Julius H. Stahel was appointed by President Andrew Johnson as consul at Yokohama, Japan on May 9, 1866. He remained in diplomatic service in Japan until 1884, and he subsequently served as consul to Osaka and Hiogo. He was consul of the United States in Shanghai, China for an additional year and eventually returned to New York City in 1885.

Approximately at the same time as Stahel, another Hungarian Civil War veteran was also appointed to a consulship by President Johnson: Brevet Brigadier General George Pomutz became U. S. consul to Russia in 1866 and served in this capacity in St. Petersburg until 1870. He played an instrumental role in the purchase of Alaska in 1867. He was appointed Consul General also in St. Petersburg in 1874, and he remained in that post until President Rutherford B. Hayes called him back. However, he remained in Russia and died in 1882.

Philip Figyelmessy was a veteran of three wars. He had served in the Hungarian War of Liberation as well as in the Hungarian Legion in Italy before participating in the American Civil War in which he rose to the rank of colonel, but received a disability discharge at the end of 1864. He had rather influential friends which is shown by the fact that on January 3, 1865 President Lincoln wrote the following letter to Secretary of State Seward, "A Hungarian by the name of Foegelmeisy [sic] was on Gen Stahl's [sic] staff, and by his going out of active service is thrown out. Some of our Pennsylvania friends are desirous to get him a Consulship. Can you find one for him? If you can, I will ascertain the christian name." Seward could find a consulship for Figyelmessy, and he was appointed American consul at Demerara in British Guyana the next month. He became an American citizen the very same month. He remained in his post for no less than twenty-two years, as he was reappointed by the Cleveland government in 1887.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁵ Abraham Lincoln to William H. Seward. (January 3, 1865) The Library of Congress, Abraham Lincoln Papers, Series I, General Correspondence, 1833-1916. Accessible on the Internet: <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query>.

Colonel Joseph Vandor, organizer and commander of the 7th Wisconsin Infantry regiment, was mustered out due to his wounds. He was appointed consul to Tahiti by Abraham Lincoln in 1862, and served in this position for six years. Particularly in the first phase of his consulship, he was frequently criticized for not being effective enough in attracting business interests to Tahiti. He himself complained quite extensively that his salary was \$1,000 which was barely enough to support his family. In 1868 President Andrew Johnson recalled him, and he returned to the United States.²⁴⁶

Albert De Zeyk never actually performed military service in the Civil War, but still played a key role in the Hungarian-language communication between Frémont's Western Department and the Post Office Department in Washington, D.C. He personally knew both President Lincoln and Secretary of State Seward, but when he applied for a consulship, it was probably the support of the influential fellow-Hungarian, László Újházy, which mattered most. Újházy's son, Farkas wrote to Francis Pulszky, "Did not you meet an Albert Zeyk in Paris who was on his way to Italy? He has become a consul in Taranto. My father recommended him to Seward." Indeed De Zeyk became American consul to Taranto, and was later actively involved in the American diplomatic corps: He worked at the Embassy in Paris and later at the consulate in Lyon. His subsequent posts included Frankfurt, Cairo and St.-Gallen. In 1882 he was transferred to Lisbon, and the following year to Turin, where he was American vice-consul until 1885, when he returned to Hungary.²⁴⁷

Colonel-by-brevet Hugo Hillebrandt was appointed United States consul at Candia, on the island of Crete in 1869. There he met the daughter of the Austrian consul and married her. He and his wife remained at his post until 1874.²⁴⁸

John Xantus, who was one of the most controversial figures in the whole Kossuth emigration, made use of his influential connections and secured an appointment as United States consul at Manzanillo in Mexico in December 1862. However, his term in office

²⁴⁶ Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate of the United States of America, 1861-62 (Hereafter cited as, *JEP*) (January 6, 1862), 71; *Daily Evening Bulletin*, December 13, 1862; *JEP*, July 25, 1868, 359.

²⁴⁷ Farkas Újházy's letter to Francis Pulszky. Ancona, Italy (Febr. 16, 1862) Quoted in Ács, *New Buda*, 309; "Zeyk Albert József," *Vasárnapi Újság*, July 19, 1885, 461-462.

²⁴⁸ *JEP*, March 3, 1869, 498.

proved to be short-lived: when he recognized one of the Mexican rebel chiefs, not only he was removed, but the State Department closed the consulate as well.²⁴⁹

Other Kossuth emigrants who saw no service in the American Civil War also received consular appointments in the Reconstruction Era. One of them, Louis Czapkay, who — despite Vasváry's claims — did not serve in the conflict, was a prominent citizen of the city of San Francisco. He represented the United States Department of Agriculture at the international exposition in Prussia in 1865 (Lincoln wrote a letter of recommendation for him) and after his return, Andrew Johnson appointed him U.S. consul in Romania and Serbia. No matter how successful a physician and landed capitalist he was, he died poor and forgotten in a hotel room at the Clarendon Hotel in Portland, Oregon in 1882.²⁵⁰

Ladislaus Újházy, one of the key figures of the Kossuth emigration, was also appointed consul to Ancona, Italy on December 23, 1861, and served until 1864, when he resigned. Some sources say he was still in office when he took part in the battle of Aspromonte in support of Garibaldi, and was captured by the royal troops. He was released after the intervention of Green Clay, the American ambassador.²⁵¹

These appointments in the American diplomatic corps reflect the appreciation of their adopted country for armed service in defense of its institutions and democratic ideals, and shows that they were readily accepted as full-fledged citizens of the United States. Actually, most of them had been naturalized by the end of the Civil War, which shows the mutual willingness to consider the temporary phase of their staying in America concluded.

Hungarian-born Civil War veterans seem to have found their place in the United States. Even those who eventually left America to settle down in Hungary carried permanent reminders of their years overseas. In his *Recollections*, Charles W. Marsh gave

²⁴⁹ Edgar Erskine Hume, *Ornithologists of the United States Army Medical Corps* Vol. I. (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1942), 511-512.

²⁵⁰ There are a number of controversies concerning Czapkay. He was a physician, who participated as a surgeon in the Hungarian War of Liberation. He was attracted to California by the gold rush and became rich through real estate transactions: he was the owner of the so-called Hungarian Block in San Francisco. He founded a Medical and Surgical Institute in the city, even the Philadelphia College of Medicine conferred upon him an honorary degree. At the same time, there were investigations against him, because he allegedly gave certain medicinal substances to patients to cause miscarriages. For information about him see, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, October 23, 1858, 330; *Morning Oregonian*, August 6, 1862; *Daily Evening Bulletin*, San Francisco, CA, May 29, 1882.

²⁵¹ Green Clay to Durando Foreign Minister, (August 31, 1862) Archivio Storico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri. Note delle Legazioni. Stati Uniti. 1860-68. 13491/862 (Busta 784) Green Clay to Durando Foreign Minister (August 31, 1862)

an account of his encounter with Baron Baróthy in Nagyvárad, who returned to Hungary after 1867, and concluded, “He had become an American citizen, and, apparently, had been so fortunate or so well treated while in the US that he was enthusiastic in his praises of our country and its institutions.”²⁵²

Those who stayed in America found employment without exception. Those who served as assistant or regimental surgeons utilized their wartime experience and all of them started successful practices. Some of them became prominent in American medical circles. Dr. Lazarus Schoney, who spent three years right after the Civil War in Paris and Berlin continuing his studies, became a distinguished professor of pathology and clinical microscopy at the New York Eclectic Medical College, and a Fellow of the New York Academy of Sciences. Dr. Rudolph Tauszky was also a celebrated expert in his field, mental illnesses, until he himself went insane and finished his life in a mental asylum after trying to shoot his wife and commit suicide. Another Hungarian, Dr. Arthur Wadgyamar, who had served as a 2nd lieutenant in the C.S. Laboratory in Nashville, TN, became professor of chemistry and botany at Humboldt Medical College, 1866-67, and he published several articles in medical journals.

Several other examples can be mentioned from other walks of life. Louis Solyom, the extraordinarily talented linguist, who was fluent in more than twenty languages and could make himself understood in twelve others, worked for the Library of Congress for 45 years. Raphael Rombauer made a fortune through his mining enterprise, whereas his brother, Roderick, graduate of the Dane Law School of Harvard University, made a name for himself as a lawyer and judge in St. Louis, Missouri. And of course, the name of Joseph Pulitzer cannot be omitted here: despite his failure to prove himself as a Union trooper in the Civil War, he carved out an extraordinary career in journalism, becoming one of the most influential tycoons of his age.

Quite a few Kossuth emigrants learned a trade and found employment as artisans or took up in farming in the West. Most of them were respected members of local communities, with many known to be public-spirited citizens. Colonel Peter Paul Dobozy farmed in Western Arkansas and later in Missouri, and was referred to as “something of a

²⁵² Charles W. Marsh, *Recollections, 1837-1910* (Chicago: Farm Implement News Company, 1910) (Hereafter cited as, Marsh, *Recollections*), 144.

local miracle”, since besides English and Hungarian, he also spoke Turkish, German and Italian. He was a founding member of the First Baptist Church of West Plains, Missouri. Robert Rombauer, who was editor of the St. Louis daily *New World*, was a whole-hearted proponent of cultural improvement in the city: the St. Louis Public Library was his brainchild. He was also president of the Board of Assessors and a member of the Board of Education. Nicholas Fejervary, father of Nicholas, Jr. who had died in the Civil War, left part of his fortune to the city of Davenport and opened an old folks’ home.²⁵³

It is essential to emphasize that no distinctions have to be made here: Hungarians who had served in the ranks of the Confederate army also prospered, and none of them left the place where they had been living prior to the Civil War, indicating their strong local attachments. The four sons of Ben Varga, a Hungarian saddler in San Antonio, Texas, all returned to the state after they had been paroled at the end of the war; three of them worked as saddlers in San Antonio, while the youngest brother, Paul, became a farmer. Charles Vidor, also from Texas, became very active in the bustling business life of the Lone Star State after the end of the Civil War. Not only did he have his own firm (in partnership with others), but he was a charter member of the Galveston Cotton Exchange, too. What is more, he was one of the founding members of the city’s very first volunteer firefighting company organized in 1868, which also shows his commitment to the interests of the people living in Galveston, Texas.²⁵⁴

Brevet Brigadier General Frederick Knefler, founder and long-time commander of the 79th Indiana Volunteers, became a respected member of Indianapolis society, and the Hungarian lawyer worked very hard to represent the interests of Civil War veterans and pensioners. His pet-project was erection of the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Monument in Indianapolis, which was finished in 1902. Knefler himself did not live to see it unveiled, as he died the previous year.²⁵⁵

²⁵³ Allene Chapin, “Colonel Peter Paul Dobozy: Exile in the Ozarks,” *West Plains Gazette* 21 (March/April 1983), 36-40. (Hereafter cited as, Chapin, “Dobozy”)

²⁵⁴ My thanks go to Stephen Beszedits for sharing the manuscript of his article “The Life and Times of Charles Vidor: A Hungarian Immigrant in Galveston, Texas” with me.

²⁵⁵ Stephen Beszedits, “Frederick Knefler: Hungarian Patriot and American General.” Accessible at: <http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/knefler.html>

2. “In Everlasting Remembrance”

The treatment of Hungarian involvement in the American Civil War by historians, professional as well as self-appointed, reveals the limited influence of scholarship on public memory. Historical accuracy very often falls victim to attempts to commemorate ethnic heroes by their own ethnic communities. Yet they are the ones to most often produce tangible results in the form of: monuments, statues, plaques, or even documentaries.

In spite of the fact that the Hungarians’ involvement in the War of the Rebellion attracted the attention of Hungarian-Americans, it has not been commemorated in general. In 1939, at the seventy-fifth anniversary of the battle of Piedmont, a Hungarian delegation visited the grave of Major General Julius H. Stahel, the only Hungarian Civil War participant to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt sent a letter to Edmund Vasvary commemorating this and the anniversary of the Hungarian War of Independence of 1848-1849. Roosevelt wrote, “Men of Hungarian blood — many of them exiles from their fatherland — rendered valiant service to the cause of the Union. Their deeds of sacrifice and bravery deserve to be held in everlasting remembrance.” More than half a century later, on June 6, 1992 The Hungarians in the U.S. Armed Forces Commemorative Plaque was unveiled in the American-Hungarian Heritage Center in New Brunswick, New Jersey.²⁵⁶

On the other hand, individual Hungarians’ contributions and heroic conduct have been recognized. One of the best-known Hungarian participants was Charles Zagonyi. Two principle factors made his “Death Ride” at Springfield, Missouri and his name familiar. In 1861 the army of the Union was so short of victories, particularly in the state of Missouri, that much more importance was attached to Zagonyi’s short-lived victory than it actually deserved. Hungarian-American authors played on this, and further exaggerated its importance. The result of these tendencies, abetted by local historians, was erection of a

²⁵⁶ Vasváry, *Lincoln’s Hungarian Heroes*, 5.

historical marker in Springfield, Missouri in 1931 commemorating “one of the most daring and brilliant cavalry charges of the Civil War.”²⁵⁷

Alexander Asboth died in 1868 in Buenos Aires. His grave was long neglected until his remains were re-interred at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. on October 23, 1990 in an imposing tomb, complying with his last wish to be buried in American soil. His homeland, however, was much slower in recognizing him than his adopted country: one of the high schools in his native city, Keszthely, was named after him only on June 22, 2001.²⁵⁸

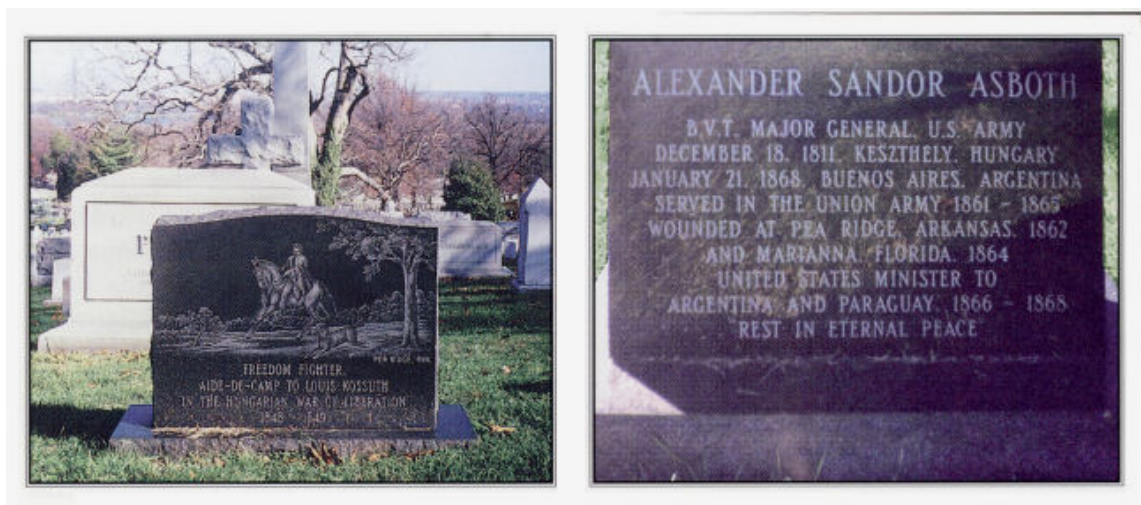


Photo Courtesy: István Ágoston

In contrast, George Pomutz was in a much more fortunate situation as far as his fatherland is concerned. What developed was a real competition between the Hungarian and Romanian ethnic groups in the United States, both of them claiming Pomutz as their own. (He was born in the Hungarian city of Gyula, in a Romanian family) In 2004 a statue was unveiled at the Falling Asleep of the Ever-Virgin Mary Cathedral in Cleveland, OH by the local Romanian-American community, which was followed by another one commemorating Pomutz in Gyula.

²⁵⁷ See, Historical Markers of Springfield and Greene County, Missouri. Marker No. 17, Zagonyi's Charge. See, <http://thelibrary.springfield.missouri.org/lochist/historicalsites/17.cfm>

²⁵⁸ “Patriot Finally Comes Home: Hungarian Hero of Civil War is Buried in Arlington,” *Washington Post*, October 24, 1990.



The Bust of George Pomutz in Gyula. Photo Courtesy: Sándor Bak

After Pomutz died in Russia, the Congress issued a joint resolution (No. 775) in 1913 in which it proposed that his remains be taken back to the United States and re-buried at Arlington. However, when World War I came, the whole initiative was forgotten. Nevertheless, a Colonel Pomutz Obelisk was erected at Arlington. Furthermore, in 1944 a Liberty Ship was named after him: the *S.S. George Pomutz* was launched on October 1944 and remained in service until 1970.



Liberty Ship SS. *John W. Brown*, same class as the vessel named after George Pomutz. In the background the battleship *U.S.S. New Jersey*. Photo Courtesy: Paul A. Farber

Although not due to his achievements in the Civil War in particular, or, as a matter of fact, in the United States in general, Dr. Bernard Bettelheim remains definitely one of the most recognized of all Kossuth emigrants. As a missionary in the Liu Ch'iu (Loo Choo) island, belonging to Ryu Kyu, he compiled the first grammar and dictionary of the Ryukyuan language and translated the gospels of John and Luke and the books of the Acts and Romans into Ryukyu, which was republished by the Japan Bible Society in 1977. As a recognition of his efforts, a statue commemorating him was erected in Ryu Kyu in 1926. Although it was destroyed in the battle of Okinawa in 1945, it was restored in 1954 in honor of the 100th year anniversary of his arrival on Okinawa.



Bettelheim's Monument in Ryu Kyu. Photo Courtesy: Okinawa Prefectural Government

Probably nothing indicates more clearly the respect and reverence of a group than naming a settlement, a place or an institution after an individual, and there are plenty of places in the United States which bear names of members of the Kossuth emigration. No fewer than four cities in the United States named Kossuth (in Pennsylvania, Indiana, Mississippi and Ohio), a Kossuthville in Florida, and a Kossuth County in Iowa. The city of Rombauer in Butler County, Missouri was named after Roderick Rombauer, presiding

judge of the St. Louis Court of Appeals for nine years, whereas Vidor in the state of Texas was named after Charles Vidor, charter member of the Galveston Cotton Exchange. Koszta, Iowa bears the name of yet another Kossuth émigré, Martin Koszta. One of the wealthiest of all the Kossuth emigrants, Nicholas Fejervary left part of his fortune to the city of Davenport, Iowa in 1895, including vast portions of his estate, on which a city park was created, named Fejervary Park. Similarly, one of the parks in Springfield, Missouri was named after Charles Zagonyi.

Hungarian Civil War participants did contribute to the Civil War literature, as well. Col. Béla Estván's bogus *War Pictures from the South* became a bestseller and appeared in three editions in as many years--in Britain, the United States and Germany. Less familiar but more reliable was Robert J. Rombauer's *The Union Cause in St. Louis: A Historical Sketch*, which is considered to be the definite source about the pro-Union movement in St. Louis in 1861. Emeric Szabad, who rose to a colonelcy in the Civil War and was a prolific writer, produced a Libby Prison Diary (published by Stephen Beszedits) and a book called *Modern War: Its Theory and Practice*, published in 1863, as well as several other books in English and French as well as Hungarian.²⁵⁹

Numerous Kossuth emigrés penned their memoirs, some of them in English, others in their native tongue. Most of them reveal little about the Civil War proper, but there are exceptions. Julian Kune wrote quite extensively about his role in the organization of the Lincoln Riflemen in Chicago in his recollections entitled *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian Hungarian Exile*.

Literary depictions of the subject do not abound. Hungarian playwright Pál Békés devoted a play entitled "New Buda" to it in which he drew a rather grotesque picture of the Kossuth emigrés: Hungarian noblemen realizing their equality in America with their former servants, featuring a very human (as opposed to his image as the Hero of Universal Freedom and Champion of Liberty) and often seasick Kossuth, and László Madarász, former Minister of Interior, spending the anniversary of the Revolution on March 15

²⁵⁹ Szabad's books included: *Elméleti és gyakorlati angol nyelvtan magyar hangokkal kifejezett kiejtéssel* (1848); *English and Hungarian Dialogues. For the Use of Travellers and Students* (1851); *Hungary Past and Present: Embracing its History from the Magyar Conquest to the Present Times* (A.&C. Black, Edinburgh, 1854); *The State Policy of Modern Europe, from the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century to the Present Time* (Longman, Brown, Green, Longmand and Roberts, 1857); *Two Napoleons and England: Two Pages of History* (London, 1858); *L'Europe avant et après la Paix de Villafranca*. (Turin, 1859); *Le Général Grant président de la république américaine par le colonel Émeric Szabad* (Paris, 1868)

drinking and playing cards with Keokuk, a Sauk chief. The grand subject of tragedies of immigrant life (death of Mrs. Újházy, the young poet Frigyes Kerényi committing suicide, the feeling of isolation and hopelessness) is sometimes mocked by manifestations of human fallibility counterbalancing it.)²⁶⁰

Péter Bogáti was inspired by the subject of Hungarians' participation in the American Civil War and wrote two historical novels for young adults: one about Zagonyi, *Órnagy úr, keressen magának ellenséget* [Major, Search for an Enemy] and another one about New Buda: *Flamingók Új-Budán* [Flamingos in New Buda]. His *Édes Pólim* [My sweet Póli] is based on the correspondence between Ladislaus Újházy and his daughter, and *A mahagóni ember* [The Mahogany Man] is the biographical novel of Károly László.²⁶¹

Only a single movie depicts any aspect of the American "adventure" of the Kossuth emigration. Director Gábor Bódy's movie *Amerikai Anzix* [American Torso] (1975) is based on John Fiala's diary, and structurewise it follows Ambrose Bierce's short story "George Thurston". Bódy won the Grand Prize at the film festival in Mannheim, Germany. In its approach it is somewhat similar to Békés's play, and what makes it really unique is its cinematographic devices: Bódy applied a self-invented special editing process called "light-editing" making the image torn, aged and over-exposed in order to resemble a silent film from the late 19th century, successfully creating the impression that the film was a documentary. No actual documentaries have been made so far on the Hungarians' involvement in the American Civil War.²⁶²

²⁶⁰ Pál Békés, *Tévé-játék; New-Buda* (Budapest : Neoprológus, 2002)

²⁶¹ Péter Bogáti, *Órnagy úr, keressen magának ellenséget!* (Budapest: Móra kiadó, 1978); *Flamingók Új Budán* (Budapest: Kossuth Kiadó, 1978); *Édes Pólim* (Budapest: Móra Kiadó, 1979); *A mahagóni ember* (Budapest: Móra kiadó, 1986)

²⁶² Gábor Bódy, dir., *Amerikai Anzix* (Balázs Béla Stúdió, 1975); The Béla Balázs Movie Studio was founded in 1959, and soon became the most important workshop of Hungarian experimental film. It made low budget movies, and without the pressure of actually showing the works: this made it possible to avoid communist censorship and allowed of experimenting without any compromise.



Hungarian Actor György Cserhalmi playing topographer Col. John Fiala in Gábor Bódy's movie, *Amerikai Anzix* (1975)

As it becomes apparent from this chapter, the study of the historical memory of the Hungarians' involvement in the American Civil War is in its infant stage. As this is not the main focus of my work, I offer only a collage of ways how this event impacted literature, film and how its memory is preserved in the United States and in Hungary. What one finds is hardly surprising: the forty years of the communist regime left its imprint on historical memory, too. Therefore, I am convinced that several interpretations of the cultural meaning of the Kossuth emigrés' taking up arms in the Civil War are yet to follow, as its cultural legacy on the Hungarian-American community is unquestionable, and there are a number of so-far unexplored cultural material to study.²⁶³

²⁶³ For an excellent study exploring the cultural significance of the Civil War in general see, Will Kaufman, *The Civil War in American Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006)

CONCLUSION

This study represents the first objective analysis of the Hungarians' involvement in the American Civil War. Due to the amateurish mythologizing efforts of the authors of the three best-known works scrutinizing the subject matter and the lack of authoritative scholarship on the Kossuth emigration in general, this work took an interdisciplinary approach, starting from scratch and using genealogical, demographic, and historical sources from Hungary as well as the United States, in English, Hungarian and German.. Throughout my work, I laid special emphasis on the utilization of the results of modern Civil War studies, military history, migration and ethnic studies, and historical memory. The use of these sources represents one of the most significant contributions of this work to the specific study of Hungarian-American links and contacts, as well as to the rather ignored subject of the involvement of foreigners in the War of the Rebellion.

I have proceeded from the assumption throughout this study that the Civil War service of the Hungarian-born soldiers is inseparable from their overall immigrant experience. This led me to the thicket of migration studies, working with passenger lists, census data, and naturalization records. Although from the outset my goals seemed very ambitious, I believe I have been able to apply the kind of comparative approach that other ethnic studies of foreign involvement usually failed to grasp. Recapitulating my major findings regarding the first major wave of Hungarian immigrants in the United States and their involvement in the American Civil War, distilled and condensed, the most important conclusions are as follows:

(1) After the failure of the Hungarian War of Independence in 1849, the so-called Kossuth emigrés fled Habsburg retaliation. However, none of the Western-European countries offered them more than temporary shelter. This, along with the positive image of the United States in Hungarians, prompted most of them to try their luck overseas.

(2) Meticulous analysis of passenger lists and federal census data from 1850 and 1860 shows that earlier works often over-estimated the number of Hungarians living in the

United States during the decade prior to the Civil War. No more than 3,000 Hungarian people had settled down in America by 1860.

(3) After Kossuth had left America in 1852, the Kossuth-emigration almost entirely lost its political nature; its members tried to integrate into American society. The immense majority of them applied for American citizenship and actually became naturalized by the coming of the Civil War, giving unequivocal evidence for their intention to stay in America, which they considered their adopted country. Earlier approaches to the history of this wave of immigrants, emphasizing accounts of homesickness, revealed the hardships of assimilation and acculturation rather than a longing to return.

(4) Population records from 1850 and 1860, that allow the mapping of the Hungarians' living conditions in America in the Ante-bellum era show that especially due to the lack of employment (many Hungarians had no marketable qualifications or professions), a high proportion of Kossuth emigrés left the big cities of the East Coast for the Midwestern Frontier. Although no exclusively Hungarian settlements appeared, New Buda and Davenport in Iowa, Chicago, and St. Louis had considerable Hungarian communities. The Census of 1860, with information concerning both real estate and personal wealth, provided glimpses of Hungarians on the contemporary American social ladder. The financial situation of Hungarians was below average as compared to the national level, and this was more or less regardless of the place where the immigrants settled down, although those who tried their luck on the frontier were slightly more likely to accumulate wealth.

(5) Abhorrence of slavery played a minor role in Hungarians' decision-making, and their choice had more to do with the fact that the Southern society seemed less receptive towards foreigners. Nevertheless, approximately ten percent of the Hungarians did settle in one of the states that seceded from the Union in 1860-61, a smaller portion than among other ethnic groups in America at the time.

(6) The issue of slavery was almost entirely negligible for soldiers both in the Union and Confederate armies in the initial phase of the conflict, and the motives for joining either of

the two armies showed remarkable similarities. The major motivating forces were as follows: a) loyalty to their adopted country b) perceived parallels between the present struggle and the Hungarian freedom fight for Hungarians serving on both sides c) utilization of their military talents d) promise of higher bounty e) thirst for adventure f) and rarely emancipation of African-Americans.

(7) The extensive study of the military records of Hungarian Civil War participants offered me an insight into various aspects of this chapter in the history of the Kossuth emigration: I have managed to get a clear picture of the regiments they served at, the ranks and commissions they held, furthermore, I have been able to reconstruct the major stages of their careers. Similarly to the total number of Hungarians, I have found that the number of those who actually took part in the War of the Rebellion was exaggerated, too.

(8) The rate of Hungarian participants in the war was around 8 percent, which more or less corresponded to the average proportion of foreign volunteering, but was lower than, for instance, that of German-Americans (13.8%). There was no considerable difference between the proportion of Hungarians who enlisted in the Union and the Confederacy army, as I found that it accurately corresponded to the territorial distribution of Hungarians. (88 percent in the Union and 12 percent in the Confederacy)

(9) There were no all-Hungarian regiments in the Civil War. Except for General John Frémont's Western Department Headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri, the Hungarians' locations of enlistment corresponded to their actual state of residence. Accordingly, there were three major centers of enlistment: New York, Frémont's Western Department, and the Midwest (Illinois, Indiana and Iowa). Although in none of them were exclusively Hungarian regiments formed. Nor were there entirely Hungarian companies.

(10) Béla Estván, frequently mentioned as the only Hungarian who achieved prominence in the Confederate Army, and author of the Civil War era bestseller *War Pictures from the South*, never held responsible position in the Confederate Army. He was not Hungarian, and his real name was not even Estván. In the case of another — at least real —

Hungarian, Charles Zagonyi, his role in the conflict, particularly surrounding his famous Death Ride at Springfield, Missouri, has been greatly exaggerated..

(11) Hungarians who cherished outright abolitionist sentiments constituted only a minority. However, there were among these soldiers some who volunteered for commissions in colored regiments; primary sources indicate that they were true friends of the African-American race.

(12) Most of the Kossuth emigrés did not return to their homeland, even after the Compromise of 1867, which brought general amnesty to those who took up arms against the Habsburg rule in 1848/49. This was partly due to the fact that the vast majority of them had become naturalized American citizens by 1865, and also, many of them did their best to make use of their military successes in the War of the Rebellion.

(13) Several Hungarian-born Civil War veterans were awarded consular appointments in the American Diplomatic Corps, and served for various terms in countries ranging from Tahiti to Russia.

(14) I have concluded with offering insights into how the Hungarians' involvement is commemorated in the United States and Hungary. I have made an attempt to include literary and cinematographic depictions as well as memorials, plaques or busts.

This study has sought to examine the Hungarians' involvement in the American Civil War, in an objective, comparative, and interdisciplinary manner, making full use of the results of modern academic research. Because of the inadequacies of earlier literature, this represents the beginning of modern Hungarian transatlantic migration studies rather than the end of them. Clearly, although the historian writes about the past for a contemporary audience, historical context is everything! Recognition of its importance can enable us to discard distortions of the past resulting from ethnic rivalries and attempts at self-justification. British writer Leslie Poles Hartley brilliantly captured this idea in the opening

sentence of his novel *The Go-Between* (1953): "The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there." I invite other historians to join me to the voyage to this country.

BIOGRAPHICAL LIST OF HUNGARIAN PARTICIPANTS IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

What follows is the so-far most complete and accurate biographical list of Hungarians who took part in the American Civil War. This is the compendiation of the results of my research carried out in the past seven years. Several soldiers in this list have appeared in earlier works, but, unfortunately, none of the authors studying the Hungarians' involvement in the conflict indicated their sources, therefore, I have paid special attention to proper referencing here. The list is by no means complete, I doubt it will ever be, but it contains all the soldiers whose Hungarian origin can be substantiated, and who provably served in either the Union or the Confederate army. The list is in alphabetical order, the affiliation of each soldier is indicated.

Adler, Adolphus

There are many contemporary accounts stating that Adolphus Adler was born in Hungary, however, not much can be found out concerning his career prior to his moving to the United States. He claimed to have been a civil and military engineer by profession, and he allegedly participated in the Hungarian War of Independence in 1848/49. His name cannot be found in any of the Hungarian archival files. He was reputedly wounded in the battle of Szolnok and was captured and imprisoned by the Austrians. He managed to escape and fled to Germany and France. He claimed to have served under Garibaldi in Italy in 1859, and he was wounded in the neck at Varese. However, his name can be located in the passenger lists which reveal that he arrived in New York on September 13, 1848, along with his two brothers, Jacob and Maurice. His age was 19 then.²⁶⁴

Once in the United States, he decided to settle down in Virginia. Adler, a Jew, had to face the distrust of the Southern society even at the outbreak of the Civil War. When the *Richmond Examiner* editorialized that Jews and foreigners were hesitant about offering

²⁶⁴ Schuricht, *History*, II, 177; Robert E. L. Krick, *Staff Officers in Gray* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 59; National Archives, M237, Roll 75, No. 1161611.

their services and compared them to vultures, the outraged Adler challenged the editor to a duel. The *Examiner* published a retraction right away. In 1861 he was, as he put it, “so situated that no other alternative presented itself than to take service in the rebel army.” He obtained a colonelcy in the brigade of Gen. Henry A. Wise, who assigned the Hungarian to the position of engineer-in-chief. The general wrote the following about Adler in his report on the skirmish at Scary Creek: “[For] locat[ing] the sites and plan the constructions of works for defence [...] I have employed Col. Adler — a Hungarian — a man of consummate ability, science and bravery.”²⁶⁵

Adler soon became suspicious in the eyes of his superior officers, particularly Wise. It is not quite easy to reconstruct what happened exactly, but in August 1861 he was arrested and imprisoned. Some sources state that this was due to his disloyalty towards the Southern cause. We have a rare opportunity to approach this story from a number of perspectives, as there were quite a few Northern officers who shared a cell with the Hungarian officer in various Richmond prisons including Castle Goodwin, and mentioned him in their personal recollections. According to some, he was imprisoned because he openly questioned the military talents of General Wise who he “persisted in styling ‘no soljare, no soljare’.” Others ascribed his imprisonment to his refusal to obey Wise’s orders.²⁶⁶

The *Weekly Raleigh Register* also gave an account of the Hungarian’s story. According to the article, Adler was distrusted in Wise’s brigade, that is why he left it and tried his luck in Richmond. After having failed in all his plans, he attempted to return to the troops. However, he turned out to be an impostor who did not have any official documents confirming his military service in the Southern army. That was the reason why Adler was put behind bars, and he apparently became so much obsessed with the idea that he was going to be executed that on August 31, 1861 he tried to cut his own throat with a razor or sword, yet he survived. He soon recovered enough and due to the

²⁶⁵ Peter Egill Brownfeld, “The Civil War: A Crucible of Jewish Acculturation Issues,” (Fall 2000) Accessible at:

http://www.acjna.org/acjna/articles_detail.aspx?id=42; “An Interesting Narrative. Statement of Col. Adolphus Adler,” *The New York Times*, September 4, 1862, 2; Report of Brig. Gen. Henry A. Wise, C. S. Army, of skirmish July 16, and of action at Scarey Creek (July 19, 1861); OR, Chapter IX. Series I, Volume 2, Serial No. 2, 289.

²⁶⁶ William C. Harris, *Prison-Life in a Tobacco Warehouse at Richmond* (Philadelphia, PA: G.W. Childs, 1862), 56.

lack of prisons, he was confined in the same cell as Union officers. One of the Northern men in the prison, was Alfred Ely, Republican Congressman, who had driven up to watch the battle of Bull Run and was captured by the Southerners. In his journal, Ely gave an account of the Hungarian's sad story and, similarly to all Union officers in the jail, felt sympathy towards him. He concluded that "[Adler] was a better officer and a better man than Wise and was indeed the 'noblest Roman of them all.'"²⁶⁷

Adler was kept imprisoned until August 1862. It is not quite clear whether he was released and expelled from the Confederate States or he managed to escape. *The New York Times* covered the rather adventurous story of his escape based, however, entirely on his own account. Adler posed as if he had resigned his commission while he was dissatisfied with the Confederate service and this cast suspicion on him which resulted in his arrest. This, along with other details of his extraordinary heroism how he presented them, make his narrative rather dubious.²⁶⁸

According to *The New York Times* he was about to offer his services to the Union army, but no information have surfaced so far about his further career.

Albert, Anselm



Anselm Albert was born Ignatz Albert in 1819 in Pest. He had excellent education in the military schools of Graz and Vienna. He was a lieutenant in the Austrian army until 1845, when he resigned. He volunteered in the Hungarian War of Independence — he was mustered in as a lieutenant, he served on General Perczel's staff, and by May 1849 he elevated to the rank of major. After the surrender of the Hungarian forces, he had no other option but to flee. He was taken prisoner by Romanian insurgents, but he was freed by General Bem's troops. He stayed with Bem and accompanied him to Turkey and Aleppo. For a shorter period of time he served in the Ottoman army, as well.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁷ *The Weekly Raleigh Register*, September 18, 1861, Issue 37, 1; Charles Lanman, ed., Alfred Ely, *Journal of Alfred Ely, a Prisoner of War in Richmond* (New York: Appleton and Co., 1862), 139n

²⁶⁸ *The New York Times*, September 4, 1862, 2.

²⁶⁹ Gábor Bona, *Tábornokok és törzstisztek a szabadságharcban 1848-49* (Budapest: Heraldika Kiadó, 2000) (Hereafter cited as, Bona, *Tábornokok*), 195.

He migrated to the United States in 1852. He tried his luck in several places including Louisiana, Nebraska or Davenport, Iowa, which was populated by many Hungarians. In St. Louis, Missouri he played a pre-eminent role in organizing the Pro-Union Home Guard units in 1861. He enlisted on April 24, 1861 in St. Louis as a captain. In June he got transferred to the Staff. As Lt. Colonel of the 3rd Missouri Infantry Regiment, the Hungarian officer was wounded and taken prisoner at the battle of Wilson's Creek on August 10, 1861. He was released ten days later and discharged on September 24, 1861.²⁷⁰

Albert was assigned aide-de-camp of General John Charles Frémont on March 31, 1862, who relied heavily on the services of foreign officers both as the commander of the Western Department and that of the Mountain Department. In his report written after the battle of Cross Keys, June 8, 1862 Frémont praised the services of Albert, whose “uncommon professional ability, joined to previous long experience in the field, rendered [his] services of the greatest value throughout a very laborious and hazardous campaign.”²⁷¹

After Frémont was forced to resign, Albert, who was loyal to him, was placed on the inactive list and did not see service until he finally resigned on June 8, 1864. Jessie Benton Frémont, wife of the General wrote the following about Albert in her letter to Indiana Congressman George Julian: “Col. Albert has been twelve years in America. [...] He has steadily done good duty until shelved in with the General. He speaks as good English as we do and is thorough in French and German — is a Hungarian and a trained officer.”²⁷²

After the Civil War he became the president of the Metropolitan Bank of St. Louis and was a highly respected citizen. Although he managed to accumulate a considerable wealth, he soon lost much of it. He became assistant editor of the German-language newspaper *Amerika* and was also employed as District Assessor. Anselm Albert died on November 20, 1893 in St. Louis.²⁷³

²⁷⁰ Anselm Albert Service Records, National Archives, M390 roll 1; Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*.

²⁷¹ Frémont's Report (June 12, 1862), OR, Series I, Vol. 12, Part 1, Reports, Serial No. 15, 26.

²⁷² Quoted in Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*.

²⁷³ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*.

Asboth, Alexander



For a detailed biography see, Chapter “The Triumvirate”

Baróthy, Charles



Charles Baróthy was born in Nagyvárad in 1846. His father served in the Hungarian War of Independence, and raised to the rank of major in General Joseph Bem’s army. As for his post-1849 career, there are some discrepancies in the sources, but it seems certain that by 1855 Baróthy had moved to America along with his family. They settled down in Omaha, Nebraska and were engaged in farming. When the Civil War broke out, young Charles could hardly wait to come of age: in 1864, at the age of 18, he was mustered in as a private at Company B 1st Battalion Cavalry then Company G at the 1st Nebraska Cavalry Regiment. He was mustered out as a private, too.²⁷⁴

According to some sources, after the Civil War he was involved in the indian wars. Later he was engaged in different business pursuits, but remained in Omaha until the end of his life. His father returned to Hungary after the amnesty that went with the Compromise of 1867. Charles W. Marsh, who visited Nagyvárad at the turn of the century, met him and remarked, ”He had become an American citizen, and, apparently, had been so fortunate or so well treated while in the US that he was enthusiastic in his praises of our country and its institutions.” One of Charles’ brothers, Árpád, became a well-known physician in Chicago.²⁷⁵

In 1938, at the age of 92, Charles Baróthy took part at the anniversary celebrations of the battle of Gettysburg, being one of the oldest Civil War veterans present, and definitely the oldest Hungarian survivor of the conflict. He died in 1944 in Omaha.

²⁷⁴ Civil War Service Records File – Charles Barothy. National Archives, M547 Roll 1; “Lost Hungarian American Civil War Veteran,” *Verhovayak Lapja*, February 14, 1941.

²⁷⁵ Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 16; Marsh, *Recollections*, 144.

Bettelheim, Bernard



Bernard Bettelheim was born in a Jewish family in Pozsony in 1811. He attended a rabbi school, later studied in Nagyvárad and in Debrecen Reformed College. As a result of his thorough education he mastered several languages at a young age: German, Slovakian, Hebrew, Latin, Greek, French, Spanish and Hungarian. He studied to become a doctor in Pest, Vienna and Padua. He obtained his medical degree in 1836. He authored a number of articles mainly on the treatment of patients falling sick with cholera. Some sources assert that he served in the Egyptian navy and he was the head surgeon of the Turkish army.²⁷⁶

He was converted some time in the late thirties and became a British subject. A British naval missionary society sent him to the Liu Ch'iu (Loo Choo) islands, belonging to Ryu Kyu. Bettelheim took his family with him, and his son, Bernard, Jr. was actually born onboard the British vessel *William Jardine* transporting the family to Ryu Kyu. They arrived in Liu Ch'iu on May 1, 1846 and 8 years of living in want started. Although his activities were officially tolerated by the authorities, the Hungarian missionary had to face constant opposition. He was beaten several times while he was preaching outdoors and one of the members of William Perry's expedition, Edward Yorke McCauley noted in his diary after meeting Bettelheim: "[He] made one convert who on acknowledging it in public was immediately stoned to death." Despite all the hardships, the missionary developed cow-pox vaccine, and secretly trained local doctors to Western medicine. He compiled the first grammar and dictionary of the Ryukyuan language and translated the gospels of John and Luke and the books of the Acts and Romans into Ryukyu, which was republished by the Japan Bible Society in 1977. As a recognition of all his efforts, a statue commemorating him was erected in Ryu Kyu in 1926. His journal and official correspondence was published in 2005.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁶ Leslie Konnyu, *Bettelheim, 1811-70. Trailblazer of Western Civilization* (American Hungarian Review, Kansas, 1989), 37; *With Perry to Japan. A Memoir by William Heine* (University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1990), 192; Gerald H. Anderson, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*. (New York: McMillan Reference, USA, 1998) (Hereafter cited as, Anderson, *Christian Missions*), 59.

²⁷⁷ Bernard J.C. Bettelheim (November 11, 1845 to 1910), born onboard the William Jardine, English sailing vessel bound from London to Loochoo Island, Japan (*Cemetery Records of Lin County, Missouri*, Vol. II.); Allan B. Cole, ed., *With Perry in Japan. The Diary of Edward Yorke McCauley* (Princeton:

Bettelheim finally left the island on February 8, 1854 and he served as Commodore Perry's interpreter. It is interesting to note that Perry's flagship, the *U.S.S. Mississippi* was the very same vessel which carried Kossuth from Turkey to England in 1850. The Bettelheims finally settled down in Illinois.

In the Civil War he enlisted as a surgeon at 106th Illinois Infantry Regiment on April 16 1863 holding a rank of major. He resigned on June 9, 1864.²⁷⁸

After the Civil War he returned to his profession as a physician. He died on February 9, 1870 in Brookfield, Missouri.

Botsay, Alexander

Alexander Botsay was born in 1828 in Hungary. We do not have any details concerning his life prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. He settled down in New Orleans and he volunteered in the Confederate Army as a private at 3rd Regt. European Brigade (Garde Francaise) Louisiana Militia.²⁷⁹

After the war, he returned to New Orleans and found employment as a carpenter. He married a Bavarian woman and they had five children. According to a Directory he was working as a box maker and box manufacturer in 1890. He died on December 22, 1913.²⁸⁰

Princeton University Press, 1992), 72; Anderson, *Christian Missions*, 60; On the monument the following can be read about Bettelheim: "First a resident of Rin Kae Ji," says the inscription, "later of Gokokuji for eight to nine years; translator of the Bible, interpreter to Perry, early teacher of Jenner's methods of vaccination and pioneer in Western civilization"

(http://www.baxleystamps.com/litho/bettelheim_mon.shtml) (December 8, 2007); A.P. Jenkins, ed., *The Journal and Official Correspondence of Bernard Jean Bettelheim, 1845-54* (Naha : Okinawa-ken Kyōikuiinkai, 2005)

²⁷⁸ Anderson, *Christian Missions*, #349737.

²⁷⁹ Andrew B. Booth, *Records of Louisiana Confederate Soldiers and Confederate Commands* 3 Vols. (New Orleans, LA, 1920), np; Civil War Service Records., NA, M253, Roll 44.

²⁸⁰ Census of 1880, NA, T9, Roll 461, 355; New Orleans, LA Directories, 1890-91 (LA: L. Soards, 1890-91); *New Orleans Death Index, 1908-1917*, State of Louisiana, Secretary of State, Division of Archives, Records Management, and History, Vital Records Indices, Baton Rouge, LA., Vol. 159., 394.

Csermelyi, Joseph

Joseph Csermelyi was born in 1830. According to Vasváry he had been a student of philosophy prior to 1848, when he got involved in the War of Liberation. He served as a lieutenant in the 33rd Hussar Regiment. After the downfall in 1849, he left the country and 1851 found him in America. He was one of the few Hungarians who took part in the ill-fated Cuban expedition led by Narciso Lopez in 1851. The Spanish captured him and he was sentenced to imprisonment and hard labor in the lead mines of Ceuta, North-Africa. After about 15 months, he was released and he returned to the United States.²⁸¹

In the Civil War he was mustered in as 1st lieutenant at Company K at 45th New York Volunteer Infantry. In June 1862 he was promoted to captain, but was discharged on October 3, 1862. He was among the Hungarians who gathered around Brigadier General Asboth when he was assigned commander of the Department of Western Florida, and Csermelyi became captain in the 82nd Colored Regiment. He was brevetted major for his extraordinary heroism at the battle of Fort Blakely (April 2-9, 1865).²⁸²

After the War of the Rebellion he got actively involved in the life of the Hungarian-American community and became elected president of the Hungarian Society in New York. He died in 1878 in New York.

Debreczeny, Ignatz

Debreczeny was born in 1822 in Szeged. He finished only a single year at the Piarist high school, then quit. He became a tailor's apprentice, and when the Hungarian War of Independence came, he joined the ranks of the *honvéds* immediately. He served as a lieutenant at the 13th Honvéd Battalion until January 1849, when he got transferred to the 48th Battalion. He distinguished himself at the siege of Buda on May 22, 1849, and he was awarded the 3rd Class Medal for his heroism. After he regained his strength, he

²⁸¹ Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 35; Vasváry Collection, Cs1/47; For a list of Hungarians, including Csermelyi, held captive in Ceuta see, *Daily National Intelligencer*, September 5, 1851.

²⁸² For his service at 82nd Colored Infantry Regiment see, Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 131, 133.

returned to active service, and was transferred to the 93rd Battalion in the rank of 1st lieutenant. He served in Corps V in the Bánság district up to the end of the conflict.²⁸³

After the surrender of the Hungarian troops, he fled the country. According to Edmund Vasváry, he had one more reason to do so, as he shot his sweetheart to death. He emigrated to America, settled down in New York and found employment as a tailor. Gedeon Ács, Hungarian protestant preacher described him as "a man who bragged of his taciturnity, although he was prattling all the time, never keeping his mouth shut."²⁸⁴

He participated in the Civil War, but no particulars could be figured out about his career so far. He returned to Hungary after 1867. He worked as a supervisor for the Alföld Railroad Company in Szeged. He died there in 1913.²⁸⁵

De Korponay, Gabriel

Gabriel De Korponay was one of the really few Hungarians who had migrated to the United States well before the defeat of the Hungarian War of Independence in 1848/49, he set foot on American soil in New York on May 14, 1844. He made his first appearance as dancer virtuoso in the United States in 1844. *The New York Herald* described him as "a very possessive figure" who was able to perform "very daring, complicating steps in his solo." Most sources agree that Korponay, along with Mademoiselle Desjardins introduced the polka dance in the United States, and gained immense popularity. The two of them set out a dance school, and later Korponay taught fencing in the military school of Major Dorm as well. One of his favourite students was Dashiell Bayard, later Civil War general, who was mortally wounded in the battle of Fredericksburg. According to Bayard's biographer, he acquired the military spirit from Korponay, so much so that he sought admission to West Point.²⁸⁶

²⁸³ Gábor Bona, *Hadnagyok és főhadnagyok az 1848/49. évi szabadságharcban* 3 vols. (Budapest: Heraldika Kiadó, 1998) (Hereafter cited as, Bona, *Hadnagyok*), I, 298; Zsigmond Mikár, *Honvéd Schematismus, vagyis az 1848/49-ki honvédseregből 1868-ban még életben volt főtiszteknek névkönyve* (Pest, 1869), 88.

²⁸⁴ Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 15-16.

²⁸⁵ *Történelmi Lapok* (1894/7-8); It is interesting to note that Antal Czibula's novel, *A nagy diktátor: Az ügyesség naplója* (Szeged, 1928) is partly about his life.

²⁸⁶ National Archives, M237, Roll 54, No. 30136731; *The New York Herald*, May 28, 1844 and July 1, 1844; For Bayard's biography see, <http://stonewall.hut.ru/leaders/bayard.htm>.

Korponay enlisted in the Mexican war and he was mustered in on May 21, 1847 as captain. In October 1847 and in the beginning of 1848, Korponay was on permanent recruiting duty in the United States. In July 1848 he and a company of cavalry recruits were attacked by a band of Comanches on the Santa Fe trail, but the soldiers led by the Hungarian routed the indians in an engagement which was later called "Gabriel's Barbecue" and was part of the larger battles of the Cimarron River (July 10 and 20, 1848). Korponay was finally mustered out on October 13, 1848 in Independence, Missouri. Some sources refer to Korponay as recruiting volunteers for the British at the time of the Crimean War.²⁸⁷

In the Civil War he was mustered in as lieutenant-colonel in the 28th Pennsylvania Volunteer Regiment on June 28, 1861. On December 19, 1861 he commanded his regiment in the skirmish at Point of Rocks, Maryland, in which he managed to drive back the enemy. He was promoted to colonel on April 25, 1862 when he took over the command of the regiment from Brigadier General John W. Geary. The same year he was in command of Camp Banks, near Alexandria, Virginia, and was responsible for the exchange of paroled soldiers. His efforts, which earned praise, included setting up a camp theater and organizing team sports for the inmates. He was ordered back to his command in March, 1863 and received a disability discharge on March 26, 1863.²⁸⁸

He died in Philadelphia, PA on February 10, 1866. He barely outlived his son, Stephen, who also served in a Pennsylvania regiment.²⁸⁹

De Korponay, Stephen



Son of Colonel of the 28th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment, Gabriel De Korponay. He was born in Paris, France on February 15, 1841. He was three years old, when his parents migrated to the United States. Not much can be known about his life, what is certain is that he volunteered in the Civil War and was mustered in as a private on July 9,

²⁸⁷ Helen J. and James E. Eldridge, "History: Second Battle of Cimarron River, July 20th 1848," http://rootsweb.com/~modallas/Cimarron_480720.html/; For the story about "Gabriel's Barbecue" see, <http://www.stjohnks.net/santafetrail/research/gabriels-barbeque.html>. (October 22, 2006)

²⁸⁸ Civil War Service Records, National Archives, M554 Roll 27; Samuel P. Bates, *History of the Pennsylvania Volunteers, 1861-65* (Harrisburg: B. Singerly, State Printer, 1868-1871); For Korponay's Report on the skirmish at Point of Rocks, see OR, Series I, Vol. 5, Serial No. 5., 473; Korponay ordered back to his regiment: OR, Series II, Volume 5, Prisoner of War, etc., Serial No. 118, 375.

²⁸⁹ Obituary: *Historical Magazine*, Vol. 10, Number 4, (April 1866)

1863 at Company C 52nd Pennsylvania Infantry regiment. After a very brief service, during which he was promoted to corporal, he was mustered out on September 1, 1863. He died on 20 June, 1865.²⁹⁰

De Zeyk, Albert J. 

Albert J. De Zeyk was born in 1828 in Cluj (Kolozsvár). He studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1847. Along with his brother, he volunteered in the Hungarian War of Liberation in 1848, and by February 12, 1849 he elevated to the rank of lieutenant at 73rd Honvéd Battalion. In July he was promoted captain and transferred to 3rd Ferdinand Hussar regiment.²⁹¹

In 1849 he escaped Austrian retaliation, but he managed to escape to France and on to Britain. He picked up studying chemistry and engineering. On July 9, 1852 he left Falmouth for Rio De Janeiro onboard the ship *Teriot*, and he worked in Brasil, Uruguay and Paraguay as an engineer at river regulation projects. In 1853 he was shipwrecked on the river La Plata and was saved by a U.S. vessel. He sailed to the United States, joined the navy and was involved in coast surveying. Károly László mentioned him in his memoirs saying that later he was trying to get a job as a drawing engineer. In 1857 he was working together with fellow Hungarian exile, George Grechenek, as land agent, civil engineer and land surveyor in the vicinity of Webster City, Iowa. They played an important role in the development of the small frontier settlement. Before moving to the west, on March 10, 1857 he married Elizabeth M. Whittlesey at Rock Creek Church in Washington, D.C. Two years later they had a daughter, Ilka, who was born in Iowa.²⁹²

²⁹⁰ I wish to express my thanks to Stephen Beszedits, who called my attention to Stephen De Korponay. For his Civil War service records see, *American Civil War Soldiers* [database on-line]. (Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 1999); For De Korponay's death notice see, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 22, 1865.

²⁹¹ Gábor Bona, *Kossuth kapitányai* (Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 1988) (Hereafter cited as, Bona, *Kossuth kapitányai*), 671; Ács, Tivadar, "Lincoln egyik magyar diplomatája," *Magyar Világ* (December/1965)

²⁹² Jánossy, *Kossuth-emigráció*, II, 674; Károly László, *Napló-töredék* (Budapest: Franklin Társulat, 1887) (Hereafter cited as, László. *Napló-töredék.*), 82; "Come to Hamilton County," *The Palimpsest* (August 1934): 275-286, 279. (Charles Aldrich, editor of the Hamilton Freeman reprinted some "Notes on Webster City" written on Dec. 15, 1857 by the travelling correspondent of the *Dubuque Express and Herald*) (Hereafter cited as, "Hamilton County"); *Daily National Intelligencer*, March 13, 1857.

De Zeyk did not take arms in the Civil War, but having returned to the capital, he worked as a clerk in the Post Office Department. The reason why he is included in this list of Hungarian participants in the Civil War is that General Frémont, being somewhat obsessed with coding his telegrams so that the rebels cannot get hold of any important detail concerning the plans of the Western Department, chose to send telegrams to Washington in Hungarian language. Having surrounded himself by Hungarian officers on his staff, this was rather easy to accomplish, and De Zeyk translated all dispatches in the Post Office Department and delivered them to the War Department or personally to Lincoln.²⁹³

It was probably due to this acquaintance with Lincoln that when Ladislaus Újházy recommended him to Secretary of State William Henry Seward, De Zeyk was nominated to the consul of the United States in Taranto on December 10, 1861.²⁹⁴



Albert De Zeyk. Source: *Vasárnapi Újság* (July 19, 1885), 461.

²⁹³ John A. Kasson to A. Lincoln, September 5, 1861 (The Abraham Lincoln Papers. Series 2, Gen. Correspondence. 1858-1864. Library of Congress)

Accessible at: [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mal:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(d4211200\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mal:@field(DOCID+@lit(d4211200)))

²⁹⁴ Farkas Újházy's letter to Pulszky, Ancona (Febr. 16, 1863), cited in Ács, *New Buda*, 309. In this letter Újházy asked Pulszky, "Did not you meet an Albert Zeyk in Paris who was on his way to Italy? He has become a consul in Taranto. My father recommended him to Seward."

He was involved in diplomacy in the second half of the 1860s as well. He was fluent in French, English, Spanish, Italian, German and, of course, Hungarian. He was working at the Embassy in Paris then at the consulate in Lyon. His further posts included Frankfurt, Cairo and St.-Gallen. In 1882 he was transferred to Lisboa, and the following year to Turin, where he was American vice-consul until 1885. It was then when he was visited by his niece, 17-year-old Sarolta Zeyk, who got acquainted with Kossuth, the exiled Hungarian icon, and started a very vivid correspondence with him, which was widely discussed in the literature debating whether there was a romantic relationship between the aging politician and the teenager girl or they were simply friends.²⁹⁵

In 1885 he returned to Hungary and was employed by the Hungarian government as a councilor at the Regency of Fiume. Later he worked for the Adria Sailing Shipping Company. He died in 1896 in Czéczeke.

Dobozy, Emeric

He was born on April 10, 1827 in Debrecen. He learned the trade of shoemaker. In the Hungarian War of Liberation he volunteered and served as a private. In 1849 he migrated to America, and he settled down in the small Hungarian settlement of New Buda, Iowa, where he continued working as a shoemaker. According to the Census of 1860, he was of rather modest means and was living alone. In the Civil War he enlisted at Company D at 10th Iowa Cavalry in September 1861, and he remained in the rank of private throughout the conflict. Apparently, he was not wounded, although he fought pretty much throughout the entire war.²⁹⁶

After being mustered out in 1865, he returned to New Buda and opened a shoemaker's shop. He proved to be an excellent workman, yet in 1876 he purchased a small farm, and started farming as well. He married Maria Sanders on September 2, 1867,

²⁹⁵ "Zeyk Albert József," *Vasárnapi Újság*, July 19, 1885, 461-462.

²⁹⁶ J.M Howell and H.C. Smith, *History of Decatur County, Iowa* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1915) (Hereafter cited as, Howell, *Decatur County*), II, 370-371.

a native of Germany, who was born in 1848. They had nine children. He passed away on July 6, 1885. His widow applied for his Civil War pension in 1890.²⁹⁷

Dobozy, Peter Paul 

Peter Paul Dobozy was born on April 17, 1833 in Szombathely. His original profession was butcher. He took part in the Hungarian War of Independence, then he escaped to Turkey. He joined the Hungarian Legion in Italy, and served as a lieutenant from August 1860 to 1862. He was wounded on his head on April 4, 1862 while fighting with the infamous Italian outlaw, Carmine Crocco Donatelli (1830-1905) near Venosa. Based on the 1910 Census data, he migrated to the United States in 1862. In the American Civil War, first he became Brig. Gen. Asboth's aide-de-camp in the rank of captain, and he so much respected him that he even declined a commission along with the promotion to major in order to stay under his command. In June 1863 Asboth ordered him to organize the 2nd Tennessee Heavy Artillery Regiment, and he soon became major of the newly-formed unit. Later he was lieutenant-colonel of the Fourth Colored Heavy Artillery.²⁹⁸

Dobozy did an excellent job in organizing African-American soldiers into an effective fighting unit. Similarly to, for example, fellow Hungarian Ladislaus Zulavsky, he also had to face charges questioning his capability to command a regiment. Eventually, however, the reviewing commission closed the case with the conclusion, "[Dobozy is] a perfect soldier in every respect; a very energetic, and good officer."²⁹⁹

After the Civil War, he first moved to the Ozark Mountains of western Arkansas and worked as a farmer and land surveyor for the railroad. Later he moved on to Howell,

²⁹⁷ Ács, *New Buda*, 71; Howell. *Decatur County.*, II, 372; For further information on his life consult, Vasváry Collection, D2/p. 38; For his Civil War career see, National Archives, M541 Roll 7; National Archives, Civil War Pension Files, Application No. 520651.

²⁹⁸ Lajos Lukács, *Az olaszországi Magyar Légió története es anyakönyvei, 1860-67* (Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest., 1986) (Hereafter cited as, Lukács, *Magyar Légió*), 94; Census of 1910; Census Place: West Plains Ward 1, Howell, Missouri; Roll: T624_784, 2a; Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 100-101;

²⁹⁹ Civil War Service Records: Dobozy, Peter Paul, National Archives, M589 Roll 24; For the charges against him see, Lt. Col. Charles H. Adams to Cpt. T. H. Harris, Ass. Adj. Gen. 16th Army Corps, (December 19, 1863) Regimental Papers 4th USC Heavy Artillery, RG 94, NA; Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 126.

Missouri, where he pursued farming. According to both the censuses of 1870 and 1880 he was living there. He married Malinda Frances McHan on January 11, 1874. They brought up several children and Dobozy played a crucial role in the life of the community. He was founding member of the First Baptist Church of West Plains, Missouri. He died there in 1919. His name is commemorated on the African-American Civil War Memorial in Washington, D.C.³⁰⁰

Dunka, Nicolai

He was born in Moldavia, in a family of Romanian origin. In the Hungarian War of Independence he served as a *honvéd*. Later, in July 1860 he became captain of the division of hussars in the Hungarian Legion in Italy. According to Philip Figyelmessy's memoirs, he was a restless man, who always got involved in rivalries between officers and he had a number of duels. Figyelmessy ascribed his dismissal from the Legion to this fact and refers to him as "the Volcano." Anyway, they left Turin, Italy together in November 1861 first for Britain then for the United States. Dunka set his foot on American soil in New York on December 4, 1861.³⁰¹

He was made additional-aide-de-camp on Frémont's staff with the rank of a captain. He did not fail to provoke some of his fellow officers even in the Civil War, although, luckily, none of the incidents ended in a duel as it had been the case several times back in Europe. The "Crazy Vlach", as sometimes Figyelmessy refers to him, spent most of his life in various armies, but he had not seen actual fighting until the battle of Cross Keys on June 8, 1862. It is very much ironic that his baptism of fire turned out to be his last engagement as well. Dunka's death is unique, because it happens to be exceedingly well documented, thus its circumstances can be reconstructed in its entirety.³⁰²

³⁰⁰ Chapin, "Dobozy", 36-40; Census of 1870, NA, Roll T9_691, family History Film: 1254691, page 456c; *South Central Missouri Genealogical Society Newsletter*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (April 2001); Peter P. Dobozy, Plaque Number: A-10.

³⁰¹ Vasváry Collection, D3, 42; Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 7; "Figyelmessy ezredes emlékiratai" Published serially in *Magyarország*. Translated and edited by Géza Kacziány. (Hereafter cited as *Figyelmessy emlékiratai*) *Magyarország* (June 4, 1914), 17.

³⁰² On his Civil War career see, OR, 1st Ser, XII, pt 1., 35; Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, 1789-1903* 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903) (Hereafter cited as, Heitman. *Historical Register*), I, 388, 339n.

His task was to take orders from Frémont to Stahel throughout the battle. Figyelmessy found his dead body in the evening: his pockets were obviously searched through, he was ripped of his sword and had two deep wounds on his stomach. What happened really was that he was shot by Private John Long, of Co B in 21st Georgia. “Long performed a historical service to posterity when he took from the captain’s body a copy of Fremont’s order of march that morning,” historian Robert K. Krick concluded, as “Gen. Trimble took the document with his report and it reached print; Federal copies did not survive.” Frémont also mentioned the death of Dunka in his official report of the battle: “One of my aides-de-camp, Cpt. Nicolai Dunka, a capable and brave officer, was killed by a musketball while carrying an order to this part of the field.” Dunka was buried at Union Church Graveyard in Cross Keys, Virginia.³⁰³

D’Utassy, Anthony

One of the three D’Utassy brothers serving in the American Civil War. He was born around 1831, according to Michael Bacarella, in Temensai, which is probably an awkwardly misspelled version of Temesvár.³⁰⁴

In the Civil War he was mustered in on September 1, 1861. He became 1st lieutenant at Company F at 39th New York Infantry Regiment, also known as Garibaldi Guard. His brother, Col. Frederick George D’Utassy was the commander of the regiment.³⁰⁵

On September 22, 1862 he was transferred to Company E and was promoted to the rank of captain. There are no records of him subsequent to May in 1863. As far as we can judge from the sources, he was not involved in Frederick’s fraud scandal.³⁰⁶

³⁰³ Figyelmessy emlékiratai, *Magyarország*, June 10, 1914, 17; Krick, *Stonewall Jackson*, 193; Wayland, “Journal of Tracy”, 339.

³⁰⁴ Bacarella, Michael. *Lincoln’s Foreign Legion: The 39th New York Infantry* (White Mane Publishing, 1997) (Hereafter cited as, Bacarella, *Lincoln’s Foreign Legion*), 258, Appendix III.

³⁰⁵ F. Phisterer, *New York in the War of the Rebellion* (Lyon, 1912) (Hereafter cited as Phisterer, *New York*), 2200.

³⁰⁶ For his Civil War records see, NA, M551 Roll 41.

D'Utassy, Carl

Brother of Anthony and Frederick D'Utassy. Along with them, he volunteered in New York City for 3 years. He also served in the 39th New York Volunteer regiment, on June 1, 1862 he was 2nd lieutenant at Company C. He was promoted to 1st lieutenant on September 22, 1862, and was mustered out on May 31, 1863.³⁰⁷

D'Utassy, Frederick George

According to his own testimonial, he was born in 1827 in Nagykanizsa in a relatively well-off Jewish family with long military traditions. He attended a military academy in Austria, and entered Austrian service as a cadet in 1845. By 1848 he reached the rank of 2nd lieutenant, however, he deserted and volunteered in the Hungarian army in the War of Liberation. That was when he changed his name to Utasi, later to Utassy and D'Utassy. He claimed that he was a major in the 127th Honvéd Battalion. However, based on Gábor Bona's book studying the lieutenants of the Hungarian War of Independence, he volunteered as a sergeant and became a lieutenant in the 67th Honvéd Battalion. Later he served in the 31st Battalion and on March 25 he was promoted to 1st lieutenant. As he related it, he was wounded several times, and even captured in the battle of Temesvár. He was sentenced to death for desertion, but he managed to escape to Turkey. However, all we know for sure is that he was forced into the Austrian Army in the 3rd Infantry Regiment as a private. He was released on April 5, 1851 and that was when he left the country. He instructed the Ottoman cavalry, and later was appointed private secretary to the high commissioner of the Ionian Islands, and he travelled extensively in the East and Italy. There are some documents which mention him as a

³⁰⁷ Bacarella, *Lincoln's Foreign Legion*, 259, Appendix III; Phisterer, *New York*, 2200.

veteran of the Hungarian Legion in Italy, although there is no trace of him in that capacity in the archival sources.³⁰⁸

There are at least as many uncertainties concerning the further phase of his Pre-Civil War career. There are assertions that he served in the Crimean War, however, his name could not be located in the official records. Some sources claim that in 1855 he went to England, became secretary to the Governor of Nova Scotia, Gaspar Le Marchand, and he was the person who secured him an appointment at Dalhousie College in Nova Scotia, Canada as a professor of languages. This is, however, quite unlikely, as this particular college was basically inactive in the period between 1843 and 1863. Other contemporaries of him claim that he was a dance and fencing instructor and a language master. He probably moved to New York City around 1860.³⁰⁹

Catherine Catalfamo in her Ph.D. dissertation entitled *The Thorny Rose: The Americanization of an Urban, Immigrant, Working Class Regiment in the Civil War. A Social History of the 39th New York Volunteer Infantry* describes Utassy as a master of many languages, since he spoke Hungarian, Spanish, German, French, Italian, and “an accomplished, articulate, even poetic writer in the English language, [whose] penmanship [was] perfect.”³¹⁰

His winning personality and many letters of recommendation secured him enough support to raise a regiment. He enlisted on May 17, 1861 in New York and set out for organizing the 39th New York Infantry Regiment, of which he became the colonel.

The 39th New York Infantry, or as it was usually called, the Garibaldi Guards, was indeed a multiethnic unit, which started out as an all-Italian regiment, however, later some companies comprised of other ethnic groups were added including Germans, Hungarians, Swiss, Spanish, Portuguese, etc. Utassy’s primary aim was to Americanize his regiment, just like his personal goal was to be transferred to an American regular unit.

³⁰⁸ Catherine Catalfamo, *The Thorny Rose: The Americanization of an Urban, Immigrant, Working Class Regiment in the Civil War. A Social History of the 39th New York Volunteer Infantry*. Ph. D. Dissertation. (Faculty of the Graduate School of The University of Texas, August 1989) (Hereafter cited as, Catalfamo, *The Thorny Rose*)Text accessed on:

<http://www.dmna.state.ny.us/historic/reghist/.../39thInfThornyRoseTOC.htm>. (December 12, 2007)

No pages indicated; Bona, *Hadnagyok*, I, 397-398; William Howard Russell wrote about him, “At dinner, Col. D’Utassy, of the Garibaldi Legion, who gives a curious account of his career. A Hungarian by birth went over from Austrian service [...]” Russell, *My Diary*, 580.

³⁰⁹ Catalfamo, *The Thorny Rose*.

³¹⁰ Catalfamo, *The Thorny Rose*.

In 1861 he applied for American citizenship as well. However, there were many around the Guards who did not sympathize with these efforts on part of him, so no wonder that soon he was attacked both in the press (a newspaper editor accused him of being an impostor and manufacturing his previous record of military service), and in a number of letters written to his superiors. He had to face diatribes which focused on him as a foreigner as well as ones which had anti-Semite overtones.

A very good description of him is offered by Cornelia McDonald, wife of a Virginia slave-owner, who actually met D'Utassy, and did not hesitate to give voice to her opinion that the Yankees hired Dutchmen [Germans] to do their fighting. Hers is probably the most vivid description of the appearance and temperament of the Hungarian:



Col. Frederick D'Utassy
Photo Courtesy: Morrisville State College Library.

June 12, 1862 — This afternoon I was called on by an officer, very short in stature, very gorgeously arrayed and very red in the face. He walked up to me quickly as I appeared in the hall and presented his card, Col. D'Utassy. I bowed and then he held before my eyes a paper, so close that I could see the writing with difficulty, and asked if that was my handwriting, speaking in very broken English. [...] [I] said, 'Yes' that it was my handwriting. He

stood still for a moment, his face glowing with gathering wrath, and at last gasped out in his anger, 'You call my men Dutchmen' His rage and his broken English excited my risibility so that I burst out laughing. His anger then knew no bounds, and almost dancing with excitement, he averred that they were no Dutchmen, adding a great deal that I did not understand. I said nothing till he had finished and then politely asked, 'Of what nationality are you, Col. D'Utassy? I could see at a glance that you are no Dutchman. I should have taken you for a Hungarian.' This was said at a venture, but it had a wonderfully modifying effect. His face instantly changed; a bland smile took possession of his little grey eyes, smoothed his forehead and puffed out his fat cheeks. 'Dat ish me, Hungary is my country.'³¹¹

In the fall of 1861 he was accused of fraud: drawing rations for 900 soldiers, although he had only 700. D'Utassy, however, managed to prove his regimental figures.

His military record in charge of the Guards was entirely spotless. He defended the Valley town of Romney with just 300 men, and at the battle of Cross Keys he led his regiment with extraordinary heroism in a daring assault against the enemy to the utmost satisfaction of his superior, General Frémont.

During the Maryland Campaign D'Utassy also got involved in the Harper's Ferry debacle, when the Union troops evacuated Maryland Heights on September 13, 1862, destroyed their arms, and about 3,000 soldiers walked under parole to Frederick, Maryland. The investigations, however, found that it was D'Utassy who tried to impede the surrender, and during the trial many officers from this command testified in favor of him. Col. Daniel Cameron said about D'Utassy: "I deem it but justice to Col. D'Utassy to say that during the time I was in his brigade he acted uniformly the part of a brave, energetic, and good officer. I saw nothing like cowardice, or anything approximating to it, in anything he did. I believe he would have been pleased to have gone out with us."³¹²

D'Utassy was known as a strict disciplinarian, who was an ardent foe of drinking. He encouraged his men to send home most of their pay to their families. Soon, however, when the federal government started a series of investigations in order to stop fraud and corruption, D'Utassy got into the crossfire of charges. He was well known for his extravagant tastes, and his love of women, and rumors could be heard that he spent

³¹¹ Cornelia McDonald, *A Diary: With Reminiscences of the War and Refugee Life in the Shenandoah Valley, 1860-1865* (Nashville: Cullom & Ghertner, 1934), 75.

³¹² For D'Utassy's report on the Harper's Ferry incident see, OR, Chapter XXXI, Series I, Vol 19, Part 1, Reports, Serial No. 27, 580; Col. Daniel Cameron on D'Utassy. OR, Chapter XXXI, Series I, Vol. 19, Part 1, Reports, Serial No. 27, 636.

governmental money for his own purposes. In March 1863 he was arrested and charged with 25 different criminal specifications.³¹³

At court martial there were 3 major charges against him: 1. Advising and persuading a soldier to desert 2. Unlawfully selling and disposing of Government horses for his own personal benefit 3. Conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline. The court found him not guilty of the first charge and also acquitted him in the charge of horse theft, however, he was convicted of converting the prices of government horses for his own use. The most serious of all was Charge 3 with 19 different specifications of acts of graft and fraud. The court found that D'Utassy was selling sutler businesses, and was also guilty of selling a commission to Cpt. Charles Wiegand of Co.A for 180 dollars. He allowed the members of the regimental band to draw privates' pay, and was also found responsible for defrauding the government of \$3,265.40 in illegal vouchers for expenses incurred in raising the regiment, although finally he was not convicted of knowingly defrauding the government or profiting from his actions, but as a colonel he was responsible. The court martial sentenced D'Utassy to one-year confinement at hard labor at Sing Sing, and ordered that he may not hold any rank, office, or employment in the service of the United States. The Hungarian officer requested a presidential pardon from Abraham Lincoln, arguing that he was only following European practices, and explaining most of the charges as fabrications of his enemies, yet Lincoln approved the sentence on May 27, 1863.³¹⁴

Catherine Catalfamo claims that after D'Utassy had served his term, he owned a photo studio in New York City (1865-67), and worked as an importer in a store at 41 Maiden Street. Later he was involved in the insurance business.³¹⁵

He died on May 2, 1892 in Wilmington, Delaware, the circumstances of which were widely discussed in the contemporary press. *The Democratic Standard* wrote that he "died of the congestion of the brain, the result of inhaling illuminating gas. Hanging his umbrella on the gas bracket on retiring at a hotel in Wilmington, the supposition is that the inside blinds of the window swung back, and, striking the umbrella, the gas was

³¹³ "The Col. D'Utassy Court Martial," *The New York Times*, March 23, 1863, 1.

³¹⁴ Catalfamo, *The Thorny Rose*; D'Utassy Request of pardon to Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln Papers. Series I, General Correspondence, 1833-1916 (January 22, 1864)

(Online: www.memory.loc.gov/mss/mal/mal1/297/2974100/002.gif)

³¹⁵ Catalfamo, *The Thorny Rose*.

turned on.” He did not regain consciousness. It has been suggested by some that he might have committed suicide, but it remained a mere supposition.³¹⁶

Estván, Béla (Heinrich, Peter) 

See, Chapter “International Fraud: Col. Béla Estván.”

Fekete, Alexander, Dr. 

Alexander Fekete was born on December 2, 1827 in Pest-Buda. His early education took place under Jesuit instruction. In 1845 he was admitted to the Medical Faculty at the University of Vienna. He got involved in the events of the Hungarian War of Liberation in 1848, volunteered in the Hungarian Army and served for 18 months. He was wounded at the battle of Nagyszeben and was captured by the Austrians. After 3 months of imprisonment he managed to escape to Turkey. In 1850 he moved to Britain, and some time around Kossuth’s visit to America, he himself crossed the Atlantic Ocean.³¹⁷

In the United States he went to live in St. Louis, Missouri and worked as a drug-clerk in 1852. He got the chance to finish his studies and graduated from St. Louis Medical College. He moved to Aviston, Illinois, where he met the young Catherine Fisher and soon married her. They settled down in Marinetown, Illinois, where Fekete soon became a prominent physician. In 1860 they were of modest means, and they had two children.³¹⁸

In the Civil War Dr. Fekete served as an assistant surgeon in the 5th Regiment Cavalry, Missouri State Militia and was discharged on April 13, 1865.³¹⁹

Right after the Civil War he was arrested in New Orleans and held in 5,000-dollar bail for causing the death of a little girl and boy, who suffering from chills and fever:

³¹⁶ *The Democratic Standard*, May 20, 1892.

³¹⁷ Wilbur Norton, *Centennial History of Madison County, Illinois and Its People, 1812-1912* (Salem, Mass.: Higginson Book Co., 1998), 403-404;

³¹⁸ Census of 1860. NA, M653, Roll 208, 693.

³¹⁹ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; Stephen Beszedits, “Dr. Rudolph Tauszky — a Hungarian Physician in the American Civil War,” *Vasváry Collection Newsletter* (2003/1) (Hereafter cited as, Beszedits, “Tauszky”); Leslie Konnyu, “Eagles of Two Continents,” *The American Hungarian Review*. Vol. I, No.3 (July, 1963): 1.

both died two hours after taking a medicine he had prescribed. However, he must have been acquitted in the malpractice suit that followed, as he moved to East St. Louis, Illinois where he settled and re-started his practice. He became a prominent citizen of the community, who was elected, among other public duties, postmaster in East St. Louis, and Coroner of St. Clair County in 1880. He had two children, Ida and Thomas. His son was a successful businessman in East St. Louis. Dr. Fekete probably died there, the exact date of his death is not known.³²⁰

Fejervary, Nicholas, Jr.



He was the only son of Nicholas Fejérváry (1811-1895), parliamentary deputy during the Hungarian War of Liberation of 1848-49. He was a wealthy man, who managed to take most of his wealth out of the country, when he emigrated. He arrived in the United States in 1852 and he found his new home in Davenport, Iowa. There he even managed to increase his wealth through real estate transactions to such an extent that on the basis of the Census of 1860 the value of his real estate wealth could be estimated around \$70,000, which definitely made him the most well-to-do Hungarian of all the Kossuth emigrés. He built a huge mansion and designed a giant park around it, which was presented to the city of Davenport after his death by his daughter, Celestine. The city opened a public park on the site which holds the name of Fejervary. Nicholas Fejérváry also founded a home for the aged and homeless in 1892, which was named after him as well.³²¹

Nicholas, Jr. was born in 1846 in Hont County. He was 6 years old when his parents emigrated to America. As his father was rich, Nicholas had an excellent education. He had a private tutor, who had been the student of education reformer Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), and he also had his father's huge library at his disposal. At the age of 15 he entered the local Griswald College where he intended to continue his studies.³²²

³²⁰ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, August 8, 1866; *Saturday Herald*, Decatur, IL, December 21, 1889, 8.

³²¹ Marie E. Mayer, "Nicholas Fejervary," *The Palimpsest* (June 1928): 189-198. (Hereafter cited as, Mayer, "Fejervary"); Census of 1860. NA, M 653, Roll 340, 509; Harry E. Downer, *History of Davenport and Scott County, Iowa* (Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1910), 685- 710.

³²² Mayer, "Fejervary", 195.

Hardly any details are known about his Civil War career. All we know is that he volunteered in 1862, when he was still only 16 (he must have lied about his date of birth to the recruiting officer). He was probably so seriously wounded in the first months of 1863 that he was taken home to Davenport. He died on March 13, 1863, and was buried at Oakdale Cemetery, Davenport, Iowa.³²³

Fiala, John A. 

John A. Fiala was born on January 26, 1822 in Temesvár in a wealthy civic family. He attended military school in Graz, then served in the 39th Infantry Regiment from 1836 to 1842. Later he was transferred to the headquarters of the Bánság District in Temesvár, but he soon left the military and found employment as a civil engineer. At the outbreak of the Hungarian War of Independence in 1848, he immediately volunteered in the Hungarian army. In January 1849 he was captain of the 9th Honvéd Battalion and was awarded the Military Medal 3rd Class for his bravery in the April campaign. In May he was promoted to major. In the last phase he belonged to the Southern army, and he claimed that he had been promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel, but it cannot be substantiated.³²⁴

After the collapse of the Hungarian cause, he fled to Turkey and joined General Bem in Aleppo. Then, similarly to many other Hungarian exiles, he chose to emigrate to America. After his arrival in America, he spent some time in New Orleans, worked at the Pacific Railroad, then he found employment in Missouri as a topographer. He settled down in St. Louis. Making use of his knowledge of military engineering gained at the Graz military school, he became an excellent topographer and surveyor. He was employed at the Surveyor-General's office and he prepared the first large sectional and topographical map of Missouri, and also of the territories between the Mississippi and the

³²³ Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 7; *Tombstone Records of Scott County, IA*, 163. Birth: 1846, Death: March 13, 1863, Cemetery: Oakdale, Davenport, IA; lot. 13 (<http://iowagravestones.org>)

³²⁴ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; Ács, *Száműzöttek*, 34-36; Bona, *Tábornokok*, 329.

Pacific Ocean. He married the daughter of Theodore Rombauer, Ida and they had 7 children born between 1855 and 1871.³²⁵

At the coming of the Civil War, he assisted Albert Anselm in organizing the pro-Union forces of St. Louis into effective fighting units. General Frémont appointed him to the position of ‘Chief of Engineers and Inspector General’ and he played a pre-eminent role in the construction of fortresses around the city of St. Louis. *The New York Times* wrote about him:

The range of his talents extends to every military subject, and his minute knowledge of the topography of Missouri makes his services especially valuable. To plan fortifications and arrange military dispositions of the troops, he brings a genius of which the present war will offer many chances to develop the resources.³²⁶

Fiala was responsible for raising a river flotilla of gunboats for Frémont. Although he — similarly to other foreigners including fellow Hungarian officers — was attacked by many, because he was favored by Frémont, he was promoted to Colonel on July 17, 1862. He continued to serve under Frémont during his command at the Mountain Department as a chief of topographical engineers. When Frémont resigned from command, Fiala was also put on the inactive list and did not see active service again.³²⁷

After the Civil War the Fiala family continued to live in St. Louis, but in the beginning of the 1870s they moved to California. In San Francisco he was employed as a draughtsman, while Ida worked in a fancy goods store. John Fiala died on December 8, 1911 in San Francisco. His memoirs were published by Tivadar Ács in 1943 with the title, *A száműzöttek. Fiala János emlékiratai* [The outcast. The memoirs of John Fiala]³²⁸

³²⁵ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; General Map of the United States and Their Territory between the Mississippi and the Pacific Ocean. (Kansas, Nebraska and Arizona) (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Washington, D.C. Call Number: G4050 1859 F5 RR 175); Census of 1880, NA, T9, MSF, Roll 78, Film 1254078, 81b.

³²⁶ *JEP* (July 17, 1862), p. 423; *The New York Times*, September 3, 1861, 3.

³²⁷ Frémont’s Report (June 25, 1862) Mountain Dept., OR, Series I, Vol. 12, Part 1, Reports, Serial No. 15, 35.

³²⁸ Census of 1870. NA, M593, Roll 811, Image 54; San Francisco, California Directories, 1889-1891 [database online], (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com, 2000); Census of 1880, NA, T9, Roll 78, Film 1254078, page 81b; Pension File: Widow: Ida Fiala, January 4, 1912 No. 977.864.

Figyelmessy, Philip

He was born on January 1, 1822 in Pest in a wealthy bourgeois family. His father owned a slaughterhouse and large portions of land. Philip attended the prestigious military academy in Wiener Neustadt (1832-1840), and served in the 6th Hussar Regiment from 1841 to 1843.³²⁹

In September 1848 he became lieutenant of at the Pest mounted militia, and on January 6, 1849 was transferred to the 17th Bocskai hussar regiment. On April 1, 1849 he was promoted to 1st lieutenant. Towards the end of the conflict, he served in the fortress of Komárom in the rank of captain.³³⁰

After the surrender of the Hungarian forces, as a result of the compromise between the Austrians and the defenders of Komárom, he received a safe-conduct from the Austrians, but he was involved in helping Hungarian political refugees to escape, therefore, he soon got into the focus of attention of the authorities and he himself had to escape. He followed Kossuth to Turkey. Soon he became one of the most important secret agents of the Hungarian ex-governor who promoted him to major. He was responsible for stirring up Transylvania, as the initial idea was to continue the struggle from there. Figyelmessy, at the order of Joseph Mack, the leader of this undertaking, illegally went to Hungary at least three times. Unfortunately, one of their companions betrayed them and soon they had to flee Austrian retaliation again.³³¹

Figyelmessy went to London in 1853 and stayed there until 1859. At the end of 1853 he was ready to travel to Turkey and participate in the organization of Hungarian troops in the Crimean War, but these plans came to nothing. In order to make a living, he became the assistant to fellow Hungarian-in-exile, Dr. Károly Dombory, who was involved in the very popular practice of day, mesmerism. Following some successful

³²⁹ One of the most crucial sources concerning Figyelmessy's life is his memoirs which were translated and edited by Géza Kacziány and published in the daily paper *Magyarország* between April 5 and June 19 in 1914. (Hereafter cited as, Figyelmessy, "Memoirs") Similarly to many other memoirs, one has to approach this one with reservations. Eugene Pivány allegedly said about him, "The old man is just like Münchhausen." For the most excellent short biography of Figyelmessy see, Stephen Beszedits, "The Life and Times of Philip Figyelmessy," *Vasváry Collection Newsletter* (2006/2) (Hereafter cited as, Beszedits, "Philip Figyelmessy")

³³⁰ Bona, *Kossuth kapitányai*, 209.

³³¹ Lengyel, *Americans*, 81.

cures, the wealthy thronged to his office. When he left for the Near East, to head a British military hospital in the Crimean War, Figyelmessy took over his practice. According to Dániel Kászonyi's memoirs, in the summer of 1856, he got an offer to move to Aberdeen, Scotland to a Sir Michael Bruce and continue his profitable practice in mesmerism there for full board and a payment of 5 guineas per week. At the rumors of the coming of the War of 1859, he went to Piedmont as Kossuth's adjutant. There were rumors that he had had 8 pairs of boots made thus preparing for the prolonged military conflict! After the sudden disheartening end of the war, he spent some time in London, but in 1860 he asked Kossuth to present him a letter of recommendation and on June 27, 1860 left London for Italy again to join the Hungarian Legion there. On July 27, 1860 he became the commander of the hussar squadron in the rank of lieutenant colonel. He was one of the leading figures of the open mutiny among the officers on April 23, 1861 when they demanded the removal of Major General Antal Vetter, Commander of the Hungarian Legion. Figyelmessy went so far that he physically abused his commander in order to force him to resign, which he finally did, and was replaced by Dániel Ihász. However, Figyelmessy himself had to leave the legion, what is more, he was sentenced to six-month imprisonment, which was later reduced to two months. He served his time in Alessandria.³³²

The American consul to Turin was trying to recruit experienced cavalry officers for the Union Army and this came in the nick of time for Figyelmessy. He was given a letter of recommendation to Secretary of State William Henry Seward by Kossuth, and together with Nicolai Dunka and George Sárpy he crossed the Atlantic and arrived in New York on December 4, 1861. Based on his account of the events, he was offered a colonelcy at a volunteer regiment, but he, having spent most of his career as a regular soldier, was highly mistrustful towards volunteers, and declined the offer. First he was inspector general at Wheeling, West Virginia, then he was given a commission as assistant of fellow-Hungarian, Col. Charles Zagonyi, chief of cavalry, under Frémont at the Mountain Department, in the rank of lieutenant colonel. He distinguished himself in the night

³³² Dániel Kászonyi, *Magyarhon négy korszaka* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi kiadó, 1977) (Hereafter cited as, Kászonyi, *Magyarhon*), 344; Lukács, *Magyar Légió*, 68-69, 74; On the Vetter incident see, Jenő Koltay-Kastner, ed., *Tanárky Gyula naplója* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Kiadó, 1961) (Hereafter cited as, Koltay-Kastner, *Tanárky*), 99, 259; Kászonyi, *Magyarhon*, 372; Beszedits, "Philip Figyelmessy."

charge at Strasburg, Virginia on June 1, 1862. He was promoted to colonel which officially confirmed by Congress on July 17, 1862. After the resignation of Frémont, he was also dismissed. After a couple of months, however, he managed to secure a position for himself on the staff of another fellow Hungarian, Gen. Julius Stahel. Figyelmessy was wounded seriously after falling from the horse near Harrisburg on February 22, 1864, and he could not return to active service in the Civil War. When he recuperated, however, he became head of the court martial in Baltimore, MD and remained in this position until December 1864.³³³

His influential friends secured him a consular appointment and in February 1865 he became American consul at Demerara in British Guyana, the very same month he was naturalized and became American citizen. According to most sources, he did excellent job in the foreign service, but the tropical climate and the tropical diseases such as yellow fever and malaria give them a hard time. His wife, Clara fell sick very often, and Philip asked for a different service and in 1872 he was indeed transferred to Mainz, in Hessen-Darmstadt. But it was too late: on September 7, 1872 his wife died, at the age of 42.³³⁴

After this he did not want to be transferred and remained in Georgetown in British Guyana. In 1875 he paid a visit to the United States and married Eliza J. Haldemann from Pennsylvania. They returned to Guyana together and in 1877 Eliza gave birth to a son, Louis, who was named after Louis Kossuth. In 1880 their second son, Julius was born, who got his name after Brig.-Gen. Julius H. Stahel, who agreed happily to be the godfather of the boy.³³⁵

In 1887 the Cleveland government recalled Figyelmessy, who, after a 22-year consulship, returned to the United States. That was when a tragic event happened in the family: the 12-year-old Louis drowned in the Susquehanna River. Both parents were devastated and decided to travel to Europe to try to forget.³³⁶

They got to Turin as well and Figyelmessy finally met Kossuth after a long time. They decided to settle down in Switzerland for some time, and that is how Figyelmessy had the

³³³ Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 12; Bona, *Kossuth kapitányai*, 210; Frémont's Report on the skirmish at Strasburg (June 12, 1862), OR, Series I, Vol. 12, Part 1, Reports, Serial No. 15, 650.

³³⁴ Abraham Lincoln to William H. Seward (January 3, 1865) The Library of Congress, Abraham Lincoln Papers, Series I, General Correspondence, 1833-1916. Accessible on the Internet: <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query>.

³³⁵ "Figyelmessy ezredes emlékiratai," *Magyarország*, June 17, 1914, 23.

³³⁶ "Figyelmessy ezredes emlékiratai," *Magyarország*, June 17, 1914, 17.

opportunity to be by Kossuth's side, when the Great Hungarian Patriot died in Turin on March 20, 1894. The Figyelmessy family returned to the United States in 1900, and settled down in Philadelphia, PA. That is where Philip passed away on July 25, 1907. He is buried at Marrietta Cemetery in Lancaster City, PA.³³⁷

Philip Figyelmessy is commemorated in Jenő Szekula's short novel entitled *Az emberiség lovagja* [The Knight of Mankind]. His second wife, Eliza published a children's book: *Two Boys in the Tropics* (New York, The Macmillan Co., 1910), which is based on the family's experience in British Guyana. During his consulship, Figyelmessy donated exotic wild animal species to the Hungarian National Museum.

Finto, John

Finto was born in 1831. All we know about him is that he arrived in America in 1854. He settled in Texas. At the commencement of the Civil War, he enlisted in San Antonio as private at Company D 5th Texas Regiment. He participated in the 1862 New Mexico campaign, during which he got wounded. He was left in a hospital in Santa Fe, and was captured by Union troops. He was sent to Camp Douglas in Illinois, and exchanged at Vicksburg in September 1862. He was finally paroled at San Antonio.³³⁸

After the Civil War he returned to Texas and was engaged in farming apparently in the rest of his life. He had a wife and six children. He passed away in 1905.³³⁹

Fornet, Cornelius

He was born in a family of French origin on August 10, 1818 in Strázsa, Szepes County, Hungary. He attended the Protestant college in Lócse, then he went on to study

³³⁷ "Figyelmessy ezredes emlékiratai," *Magyarország*, June 19, 1914, 17-18.

³³⁸ James P. McGuire, *The Hungarian Texans* (The University of Texas, San Antonio, 1993) (Hereafter cited as, McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*), 134.

³³⁹ Census of 1880., NA, T9 Roll 1291, 37; About Finta's purchasing a farm: *Texas General Land Office. Abstracts of all Original Texas Land Titles Comprising Grants and Locations*. (Austin, TX, 19--), Vol. 7, #304, File 1049.

engineering at the University of Pest. He graduated in 1843 and entered state service as a mining engineer in Délegyháza.³⁴⁰

He enlisted right away in the Hungarian War of Liberation in 1848 and he became an engineer officer in a sapper battalion, he was rising in the hierarchy very quickly: he was promoted to captain for his heroism in the battle of Nagysarló. He organized the 4th Sapper Battalion, and he became major of the new military unit.³⁴¹

Around the time of the defeat of the Hungarian Army, he was among the first ones who set off and left the country. He said farewell to his homeland on September 20, 1849 and arrived in Boston on December 9, 1849. Thus, he and his companion, John Prágay had first-hand experience of the utmost sympathy of the Americans towards the Hungarian freedom fighters. In Boston a special committee welcomed them, and they were housed in the Tremont Hotel as distinguished guests. Later he and Prágay moved on to New York City and wrote *The Hungarian Revolution*, the first book on the Hungarian War of Liberation in English, published by Putnam in 1850.³⁴²

The gold rush attracted him to California in 1850 and he founded a furnace and mint through which he accumulated a nice profit. With fellow-Hungarians, Samu Wass, Géza Molitor, Ede Damburghy and István Uznay, he purchased a quartz and goldmine, which they could sell with multiple profits, and still kept some shares just two years later. In April 1852 he met Kossuth in Boston, and in June he returned to Europe for a few weeks. On August 7, 1852 he married Adél Szépréthy at the American Embassy in Paris, then returned to New York onboard the *Atlantic* with his wife on October 3, 1852.³⁴³

The couple settled down in New Jersey and Fornet was engaged in farming. Lázár Mészáros, Hungarian Secretary of War during 1848/49, who settled down very close to Fornet, wrote about him, “A Hungarian friend of mine, Fornet Kornél, accumulated enough wealth and now owns a farm of 40 holds [57.8 acres]: he has 50 hotbeds under glass, which [...] costs him 120 dollars [...], but makes him 150-dollar pure profit.” Soon

³⁴⁰ László Fornet, ed., *Fornet Kornél, 1848-as őrnagy, amerikai ezredes élete — The Life of G.C. Fornet Colonel of Lincoln's Army. Adatok az amerikai magyar emigráció életéhez* (Budapest, 1946) (Hereafter cited as, *The Life of Fornet*), 4-8; Beszedits, “Hungarians in Missouri”

³⁴¹ Bona, *Tábornokok*, 333.

³⁴² *The Life of Fornet*, 9; Ács, *New Buda*, 21; Cornelius Fornet - John Pragay, *The Hungarian Revolution*. (New York: Putnam, 1850)

³⁴³ Ács, *New Buda*, 21; *The New York Times*, October 4, 1852, 7.

he managed to increase the amount of land he owned to 240 acres. Besides, he was working as a civil engineer as well.³⁴⁴

When the Civil War came, he became military engineer in Frémont's Western Department in a rank of major. In October 1861 he was severely wounded in an accident and he was temporarily relieved of service. After his recovery, nevertheless, he took part in the battle of Antietam (September 17, 1862), and he took an active part in organizing the 22nd New Jersey Infantry Regiment. Although he was appointed commander and colonel of the newly-formed regiment, due to the internal strifes within the unit and the fact that his person was objected to by both the men of the regiment and the citizens of Bergen County, NJ, he was not willing to accept the appointment and serve. His appointment was revoked on January 26, 1863, and his second-in-command, Abraham G. Demarest was appointed to commander. Fonet retired from service.³⁴⁵

Soon after the Civil War, following the Compromise of 1867 in Hungary which secured general amnesty to the participants of the War of Liberation, Fonet returned to his homeland. He settled down in the vicinity of the city of Mohács, and worked as a minor government official at a salt store. He died in Vác on March 10, 1894 and was buried at Kerepesi Street Cemetery in Budapest. In 1946, one of his descendants, László Fonet published a small volume about his life entitled, *Fonet Kornél, 1848-as őrnagy, amerikai ezredes élete — The Life of G.C. Fonet Colonel of Lincoln's Army. Adatok az amerikai magyar emigráció életéhez*. [Particulars on the Life of Hungarian-American Emigration]³⁴⁶

Gaal, Alexander

He was born in 1831, the exact location of his birth has not yet been identified. He was a corporal in the Imperial Army until 1848, when he deserted and probably took part in

³⁴⁴ Lázár Mészáros to Antal Mészáros (July 24, 1854) In Szokoly, *Mészáros Lázár*, 67.

³⁴⁵ For his Civil War career see, Civil War Service Records, NA, M550, Roll 8; Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri; The Life of Fonet*, 25; William S. Stryker, *Record of Officers and Men of New Jersey in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Trenton, NJ: John L. Murphey, Steam and Job Printer, 1876) (Hereafter cited as, Stryker, *Record of Officers*), 761.

³⁴⁶ Lengyel, *Americans*, 80; Reference to him living in Hungary: Edmund Vasváry, "Három amerikai a Dunán," *Szabadság*, December 4, 1963, 1-5.

the Hungarian War of Liberation. After the collapse of the Hungarian cause, he escaped, but hardly any information can be found on his career. According to some sources he served in the Hungarian Legion in Italy as a 1st lieutenant. If it was so, he must have resigned some time in 1862-64 and migrated to the United States.³⁴⁷

On October 10, 1864 he volunteered in the American Civil War and was mustered in as a captain at Company F 1st Florida Cavalry Regiment. He was probably severely wounded in one of the engagements, as he was mustered out of service on November 27, 1864.³⁴⁸

After the Civil War he settled down in Louisiana. From the New Orleans directories it can be established that he worked as a lottery agent in the city in 1890-1891. He died at the age of 79 on February 29, 1912. He is buried at Chalmette National Cemetery in Louisiana.³⁴⁹

Galfy (Gallik), Andrew 

He was born in 1818 in Berzéte, in Gömör and Kishont County. He was first employed as a store clerk, but soon became an independent store owner in Kassa. In the Hungarian War of Independence he served as a 1st lieutenant at the National Guards, he was wounded, and after he recuperated he was transferred to the 8th Battalion. After the surrender of the Hungarian troops, he fled to Paris, then crossed the Atlantic and tried his luck overseas. He worked as a woodcutter and a laborer in a box factory, and had a number of other menial jobs. He settled down in Dayton, Ohio, then roved over much of the Midwest as a peddler, but he returned to Dayton broke. The Hungarian adventurer did not despair, but decided to travel to Australia and try his luck in digging gold. However,

³⁴⁷ It is very important not to confuse Alexander Gaal with his namesake, Sándor Gál (1817-1871), Hungarian General in the Hungarian War of Independence, who was actively involved in the Hungarian insurgent activities in Transylvania in the first couple of year after 1849, and was colonel of the Hungarian Legion, but never visited the United States and, of course, did not fight in the War of the Rebellion.

³⁴⁸ Civil War Service Records, NA, M264, Roll 1.

³⁴⁹ Census of 1870, NA, M593 Roll 527, 331; New Orleans, LA Directories, 1890-91, New Orleans, LA: L. Soards, 1890-91; *New Orleans Death Indices, 1908-1917* (Ancestry.com, Provo, UT) Vol. 154, 488; Alexander Gaal, Chalmette National Cemetery, Section 136, Grave 12596.

no fortunes awaited him there either, therefore, he worked in a brick factory, then as a shepherd.³⁵⁰

He returned to the United States right away when he heard about the news of the outbreak of the Civil War. He was mustered in as a captain on October 2, 1861 at Company A, 58th Ohio. His regiment participated in the campaign along the Yazoo River in the last days of 1862, and in one of the engagements at Chicksaw Bayou on December 29 Gallfy was captured by the Confederates. He was paroled in March 1863.³⁵¹

He was detached of his regiment on May 22, 1863 and he served on the gunboat *Mound City* until August 1, 1863. Then he returned to the 58th Ohio and was promoted to Major on October 20, 1864. During the fights, Gallfy contracted yellow fever, and was finally mustered out on January 14, 1865 at Vicksburg, MS.³⁵²

After the Civil War he went to Boston and studied medicine. For some time he worked as a physician in Cincinnati, Ohio, then he started a veterinary practice in Kansas City, Missouri and opened a hospital for animals. In 1881, he returned to Hungary. He died in Kassa in 1885.³⁵³

Gerster, Anton 

Anton Gerster was born on June 7, 1825 in Kassa. He attended the Technical University in Vienna and graduated as an engineer. When the Hungarian War of Independence broke out, he volunteered and served in the 1st Battalion of Engineers first

³⁵⁰ József Szinnyei, *Magyar Írók élete és munkái* (Budapest: Hornyánszky Viktor császári és királyi udvari Könyvnyomda, 1891-1914) (Hereafter cited as, Szinnyei, *Magyar írók*), III, 976-978; Dénes Balázs, ed., *Magyar utazók lexikona* (Budapest: Panoráma, 1993), 133; About Gállfy-Gállik in Australia see, Egon Kunz, *Magyarok Ausztráliában* (Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 1997), 45.

³⁵¹ Whitelaw Reid, *Ohio in the War*. (Cincinnati, Ohio: Moore, Wilstach and Baldwin, 1868) Accessed on the Internet: <http://www.ohiocivilwar.com/58oh.html> (December 12, 2007); About his release see, Letter of Brig. Gen. John Adams, Provisional Army, C.S. to Major R.W. Memminger, Assitant Adjutant General, (March 24, 1863) OR, Series II, Vol. 5, Prisoners of War, etc., Serial No. 118, 856.

³⁵² *Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-66* (Cincinnati, OH Wilstach, Balwin and Co, 1886), V, p. 167; Civil War Service Records, NA, M552, Roll 37.

³⁵³ Census of 1870, M593, Roll 782, 470; Szinnyei, *Magyar írók*, III, 979.

as a lieutenant, then 1st lieutenant. After the Austrian and Russian armies crushed the Hungarian freedom fight, he escaped and emigrated to the United States.³⁵⁴

He was lucky enough to get employment in his profession, and he worked for the German-American John Augustus Roebling (1806-1869), one of the most renowned architects, foremost suspension bridge-builder of the time. He started the building of Brooklyn Bridge, which was finished by his son, Washington Augustus Roebling in 1883.³⁵⁵

In August 1861 he volunteered and became commander of a company called Gerster's Independent Company of Pioneers, organized in St. Louis. Later on he became captain of Sappers and Miners 5th Regiment Missouri Home Guard. As captain of the 5th Missouri Infantry and later the 27th Missouri Infantry, he was responsible for building and repairing fortifications and bridges. Being engineer at the District of Frontier, he supervised the construction of the forts around Fort Smith in Arkansas in April 1864 and at Fort Davidson in Missouri in August 1864. His terms of service expired on September 9, 1864 and he was mustered out.³⁵⁶

All we know of his post-Civil War years is that he lived in Brooklyn, New York for quite a long time. He was uncle of Dr. Árpád Gerster, renowned surgeon of the time, and Etelka Gerster, the famous soprano. Anton Gerster died in San Jose, CA on June 2, 1897.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁴ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, I, 462; Gerster's nephew, Dr. Árpád Gerster also mentioned his uncle in his memoirs, "My father's youngest brother, Anthony, joined Gorgey's [sic] insurgent army in 1848". A.S. Gerster, *Recollections of a New York Surgeon* (New York: Paul B. Hoeber, 1917) (Hereafter cited as, Gerster, *Recollections.*), 9.

³⁵⁵ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; Hamilton Schuyler, *The Roeblings: A Century of Engineers, Bridge Builders and Industrialists. The Story of Three Generations of an Illustrious Family, 1831-1931* (New York: AMS Press, 1972)

³⁵⁶ For Gerster's Service Records see, NA, M390 Roll 16; Pension Application File: NA, Johanne Gerster, No. 652.436, (1897); Cpt. Anton Gerster to Maj. Gen. Curtis. Fort Smith, Arkansas (April 9, 1864) OR, Series I, Vol. 34, Part III, Correspondence, Serial No. 63, 113; Cpt. Anton Gerster to Cpt. William Hoelcke, St. Louis, MO (Aug. 20, 1864) OR, Series I, Vol. 41, Part II, Correspondence, Serial No. 84, 806.

³⁵⁷ Gerster, *Recollections*, 148; Bona, *Hadnagyok*, I, 462.

Grechenek, George

It is not quite clear when George Grechenek was born. According to Gábor Bona, he was born in 1826, but the muster roll in his Civil War Service Records indicates that he was born in 1825. He attended the agricultural school in Keszthely, and after graduation he was employed by the Count Károlyi family as an estate overseer.³⁵⁸

In the fall of 1848, he volunteered in the militia of Szatmár County, and participated in the fights in Transylvania. In April 1849 he was promoted to lieutenant at the 88th honvéd battalion, and by the end of the War of Liberation he obtained the rank of 1st lieutenant.³⁵⁹

In 1850 he escaped from Hungary, and — similarly to many fellow exiles — was staying in Turkey for some time. He belonged to the very close circle of Kossuth, and formed, along with Dániel Ihász, István Kinizsi, János Kalapsza, the bodyguard for the ex-governor. He escorted Kossuth on his voyage to Britain, then to the United States.³⁶⁰

He stayed in America after Kossuth left the country in 1852. He was sharing rooms with Károly László, who quite frequently mentioned him in his memoirs. He gave account of the fact that Grechenek did all kinds of menial works at projects such as the canal building in New York state and the construction of the railroad line between New York and Syracuse, but he could hardly make ends meet. In 1857 he was working as a land agent and county surveyor with fellow exile, Albert De Zeyk in Hamilton County, Iowa.³⁶¹

In 1861 he volunteered on May 22, 1861 and became captain of Company H at 72nd New York Volunteers on June 1, 1861. In the battle of Williamsburg, Virginia he was severely wounded on May 5, 1862. His file is available in the *Medical and Surgical History of the Civil War*, so based on the report of his surgeon, R.B. Bontecou we have a clear picture of what happened to the Hungarian officer in a hospital in Washington, D.C. where he was taken: “Gunshot wound of the right popliteal space. A minie ball transfixing the thigh between the hamstrings and condyles of the femur, grooving that bone slightly

³⁵⁸ Ács, *Magyar úttörők*, 28-29, Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 3.

³⁵⁹ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, I, 489-490.

³⁶⁰ Perczel, *Naplóm*, I, 86.

³⁶¹ “Grechenek,” *New York Tribune*, April 22, 1852; “Grechenek will stay in US,” *Pittsburgh Gazette*, June 2, 1852; “Hamilton County”, 279.

at the attachments of the gastrocnemius muscles and injuring the artery and nerve.” His foot became gangrenous, the lower third of the thigh had to be amputated. However, the gangrene attacked the stump on the 15th and he died on the 16th May, 1862. He was buried at the National Cemetery across Soldiers’ Home in Washington, D.C.³⁶²

Grossinger, Charles 

Charles Grossinger was born in 1825 or 1826 in Pest. According to Gábor Bona, he was a student as the time of the outbreak of the Hungarian freedom fight in 1848. In September 1848 he served as a sergeant at 14th Honvéd Battalion in Pest. On June 27, 1849 he was promoted to lieutenant.³⁶³

After the defeat of the Hungarian War of Independence, he left Hungary. There is some confusion in the sources, as Lajos Dancs mentions him as one of the exiles in Turkey in 1850-1851. As opposed to him, Bona writes that he was captured by the Austrians and on February 1, 1850 he was forced to enter the 30th Infantry Regiment in the Imperial Army. If Bona is not mistaken, Grossinger deserted on March 14, 1851, then sought refuge in London.³⁶⁴

What can be supported with evidence is that he decided to migrate to America and he arrived in New York on August 2, 1851 aboard the vessel *Davonshire*. Similarly to many other recently-arrived immigrants, he was hardly able to make a living. Along with 10 fellow Hungarians including Dancs and Zagonyi, he formed a group with the name Hungarian Vocalists [Magyar Dalárda] on August 17, 1851, but it proved to be a huge fiasco that the members dissolved and started to do some kind of manual labor.³⁶⁵

In the 1850s he was involved in importing Hungarian wines. The company, named Grossinger and Freund, was located at 170 Water Street in New York. They seem to have had occasional financial difficulties, so much so, that in October 1860 their entire stock was auctioneered. By then, Grossinger was living in North Bergen, New Jersey with his

³⁶² Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 3; *Medical History*, XI, 173.

³⁶³ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, I, 496. Bona is probably wrong when he writes that Grossinger was born in 1831. There are numerous sources that disprove this.

³⁶⁴ Dancs, *Töredékek*, 90; Bona, *Hadnagyok*, I, 496.

³⁶⁵ Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, NY, 1820-1897. NA, M237, Roll 102, No. 1068; Dancs, *Töredékek*, 29, 33.

19-year-old wife, Sarah. In 1860 he was one of the pall bearers of Emilie Zulavsky Kossuth (1817- 1860), sister of Louis Kossuth. He was member of the Universal Masonic Lodge, too.³⁶⁶

He volunteered in the Civil War and was mustered in as 1st lieutenant on May 22, 1861. He got commission at Company A 72nd New York Volunteer Infantry. After the death of fellow-Hungarian, George Grechenek, he was promoted to captain on May 18, 1862. He was discharged on June 23, 1862. His son, Charles, was born in New Jersey in 1863.³⁶⁷

We do not have any further details about his life. In 1870 he was living with his family in New Jersey and he worked as a lighthouse keeper. It can also be known is that his wife, Sarah applied for his Civil War pension as a widow in 1877, therefore, he must have died some time in 1876 or 1877.³⁶⁸

Haraszthy, Gaza

He was born Géza Haraszthy on December 27, 1833 in Puszta Kútas. He was the eldest son of Ágoston Haraszthy, who became renowned as the Father of California viticulture. They arrived in New York City on September 28, 1842. They chose to settle down in Wisconsin. It was then that Géza anglicized his name to Gaza. His father was one of the wealthiest Hungarians in America at the time: according to the Census of 1860 he had real estates worth \$200,000. His son, however, was more interested in the navy and was preparing for the entrance examination at the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁶ *Universal Masonic Lodge Directory, 1860* (Leon Hyneman Publisher, 1860); Census of 1860. NA, M653, roll 694, 562; *The New York Herald*, July 2, 1860.

³⁶⁷ Civil War Service Records, NA, M551 Roll 56; Brown, Henri Le Fevre. *History of the 3rd Regiment Excelsior Brigade, 72d New York Volunteer Infantry* (Jamestown, NY: Journal Print Co., 1902)

³⁶⁸ Civil War Pension Application Files, Charles Grossinger, Sarah Grossinger (widow), NA, No. 334 181 (1877)

³⁶⁹ Brian McGinty, *Strong Wine: The Life and Legend of Agoston Haraszthy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998) (Hereafter cited as McGinty, *Life and Legend*), 38; Census of 1860. NA, M653, Roll 69, 659; Tivadar Ács writes in his *Magyarok az amerikai polgárháborúban* that Gaza was admitted to the naval academy, but never finished it. He claims that the Hungarian joined the U.S. Army in 1848 and served for four years. However, based on the available sources, all these cannot be substantiated. (Ács, *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban*, 39)

On June 28, 1863 he was mustered in as a captain at Company B 18th New York Cavalry. His baptism of fire took place when his regiment participated in restoring order in New York during the riots prompted by the National Conscription Act between July 13-16. The regiment was then sent to Washington, D.C., where they performed scouting duty until February 1864. On February 16 the 18th New York Cavalry was ordered to the Department of the Gulf. On March 7, 1864 they were placed under the command of Major Gen. Nathaniel Banks, and were transferred to the Gulf of Mexico as part of the 5th Cavalry Brigade, and they were to push North towards the Mississippi. On May 17-18, 1864 they were engaged in a 2-day battle at Yellow Bayou, Louisiana which was the end of Gen. Banks's ill-fated Red River Expedition. Although the battle was strategic Union victory which ensured their retreat, Gaza's company was captured by Confederate troops led by Gen. John Bankhead Magruder. He was imprisoned at Tyler, Texas and was released only on May 25, 1865 in a prisoner exchange. Despite the hardships of the long detainment, he re-joined his regiment and took part in the campaigns in Western Mississippi and Texas. Already after the end of the Civil War, on December 5, 1865 he was promoted to major and was mustered out with his company on May 31, 1866 in Victoria, Texas.³⁷⁰

After his father, Ágoston Haraszthy went bankrupt in California from his venture in the Buena Vista Winery in California, he moved to Nicaragua in 1868. He was about to build a distillery, but in 1869 he died while exploring the interior territories; evidence suggests that he either drowned or was killed by alligators. Gaza stayed at the family estate in Nicaragua, and died on December 17, 1878.³⁷¹

³⁷⁰ McGinty, *Life and Legend*, 387, 425; Civil War Service Records, NA, M551 Roll 59; Haraszthy was among the Prisoner-of-War officers who wrote a letter to Maj. Gen Canby, Commander of the Military Division of West Mississippi, calling his attention to their miserable condition and the fact that they are not exchanged while they had attempted to escape. February 11, 1865, OR, Series II, Vol. 8, Prisoners of War, Serial Number 121, 207.

³⁷¹ For the information on the exact date of his death see, *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, Volume 14 (Madison, WI: The Society, 1888-1931), 80-81.

Hillebrandt, Hugo

There are several versions of his date of birth, however, his own testimony seems to be the most reliable in which he said that he had been a soldier since his fourteenth year, since, 1843. So, he was probably born in 1829, but regarding his place of birth we do not have more than his obituary in the *New York Times* (April 7, 1896) which says that he was born in South Eastern Hungary in a wealthy, but not noble family. He attended a military academy, but left it immediately when the Hungarian War of Liberation broke out in 1848. He served as a lieutenant in the Hungarian Revolutionary Army (he was commissioned on May 14, 1849) “showing military genius and cool courage.” After the Austrian-Russian coalition crushed the Hungarian army, he fled to Turkey, where he spent several months, but — unlike some of his fellow exiles — refused to join the Turkish Army. Louis Kossuth’s visit to America attracted him to America as well, but he had really hard time finding employment. He worked for the U.S. Coast Survey Service, but he was too restless to stay there. Around 1859 he left the United States for Italy where he joined Garibaldi and stayed in his army until the Army of Liberation entered Rome. In 1860 he returned to America, and soon volunteered in the American Civil War.³⁷²

He enlisted in New York and was mustered in as sergeant major on May 9, 1861. On June 6, 1861 he was commissioned at Company S 39th New York Infantry, nicknamed The Garibaldi Guards, commanded by fellow Hungarian, Col. Frederick George D’Utassy. On September 14, 1861 he was appointed full adjutant and promoted to full captain on January 27, 1862. Not much time elapsed until he rose to the rank of major, on July 18, 1862. As major of his regiment, he was also involved in the evacuation of Maryland Heights in an engagement on September 13, 1862, after which about 3,000 Union soldiers surrendered and were paroled. The investigations found that Hillebrandt was not responsible, actually he was doing his best to stop the fleeing soldiers, most of whom were green.³⁷³

³⁷² Obituary – Hugo Hillebrandt. *The New York Times*, April 7, 1896, 5 and *New York Herald*, April 7, 1896, 5; For his testimony see, OR, Series I, Vol. 19, Part I, Reports, Serial No. 27.

³⁷³ Bacarella, *Lincoln’s Foreign Legion*, 258; Civil War Service Records, NA, 636 Roll 19; For Hillebrandt’s version of the Harper’s Ferry incident see, OR, Series I, Vol. 19, Part I, Reports, Serial No. 27.

Hillebrandt participated in the Battle of Gettysburg and there were four companies under his command. On July 2, 1863 the Guards managed to protect the flank of Willard's charge, and re-take the guns of Watson's Battery from the 21st Mississippi. Next day he was wounded in the thick of the fight, but recuperated relatively quickly, so he could take part in the Mine Run campaign in November 1863. However, due to the diseases contracted during this particular campaign and his earlier wounds, he was mustered out on December 10, 1863.³⁷⁴

On February 2, 1864 he was commissioned captain at the 12th Veteran Reserve Corps, then at the 16th Veteran Reserve Corps which were organized for the purpose of retaining those in service who had been unfit for active service. They were employed at bureaus, they guarded stores or did court martial duty. Hillebrandt was stationed in Washington, D.C. in 1864-65. In 1866 he was ordered to the Freedmen's Bureau in North Carolina until January 1868 first as officer, later as agent. On March 1, 1869 he was brevetted colonel by President Andrew Johnson for his "gallant service at the battle of Cross Keys [...] and Harper's Ferry[...]"³⁷⁵

President U.S. Grant appointed him consul at Candia, Island of Crete in 1869. There he got acquainted with the daughter of the Austrian consul and married her. He and his wife remained at his post until 1874.

In the years that followed, Hillebrandt settled down in Brooklyn and found employment as a clerk. He died on April 4, 1896 at the New York home of Gen. Robert Avery, who had been a long-time friend of his.³⁷⁶

Hollan, Hugo 

A son of a physician, he was born in a bourgeois family on March 14, 1819 in Szombathely. He became a professional soldier in the Imperial Army in 1838, and by

³⁷⁴ William F. Fox, *New York at Gettysburg* (Albany, 1900) (Hereafter cited as, Fox, *New York at Gettysburg*), I, 322.

³⁷⁵ Civil War Service Records, NA, 636 Roll 19; Pension Application Files: Hugo Hillebrandt – Claire Hillebrandt (widow), NA, Application No. 642.084; *JEP* (March 3, 1869.), 498.

³⁷⁶ *Brooklyn Directory, 1888-89 and 1889-90* (Brooklyn, NY: Lain and Co., 1889&1890); For his obituary, see: *The New York Times*, April 7, 1896, 5.

1845 he elevated to the rank of lieutenant. On August 1, 1848 he was promoted to 1st lieutenant at the 12th Hussar Regiment stationed in Bohemia.³⁷⁷

However, when he heard about the outbreak of the Hungarian revolution, which soon reached the proportions of a full-fetched war of independence in 1848, he deserted taking the 7th and 8th companies of his regiment with him on October 21, and joined the Hungarian cause. By November he reached the rank of vice-captain, and in April 1849 he was promoted to full captain at the Upper-Danube Division.³⁷⁸

After the collapse, he followed General Bem to Aleppo, Turkey, where he even served in the Ottoman Army for a brief period. In the spring of 1852, however, he decided to emigrate to the United States.

He settled down in Quincy, Illinois. On August 17, 1852 he married Regina Butze from Prussia, who gave birth to their first child, a girl, two years later. (Hollan had two sons from his previous marriage who were born in 1844 and 1846, and who followed their father to America.) He tried his luck in several enterprises, in 1860 he was working as a tea dealer.³⁷⁹

When the Civil War came, Hollan, a former professional soldier, saw a golden opportunity to make use of his experience and volunteered right away. He was mustered in as a corporal at Company A 10th Illinois Infantry Regiment on April 20, 1861, and upon the expiration of his three-month term of service, was mustered out on July 29, 1861 in Cairo, Illinois.³⁸⁰

He did not stay out of service for long: he became commander of the 1st Battalion Reserve Corps Missouri Cavalry, which was often referred to as Hollan Horse. His men, however, soon got involved in pillaging, looting and even violence against civilians was not rare for them. Brigadier-General Schoefield complained about Hollan and his unit, "These men had preceded me only a few days but they had already murdered one of the best Union men in that vicinity and committed numerous depredations upon the property of peaceful citizens. Since that time their conduct has been absolutely barbarous-a burning disgrace to the Army and the Union cause." Schoefield arrested 5 of the robbers

³⁷⁷ Bona, *Kossuth kapitányai*, 265; Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*.

³⁷⁸ Bona, *Kossuth kapitányai*, 265.

³⁷⁹ Adams County, Illinois Marriages, 1851-1900. Records at Quincy, Ill., Family History MicroFilm Library: #1845384-1845385; Census of 1860, NA, M653, Roll 154, 94.

³⁸⁰ Civil War Service Records, NA, M390, Roll 22.

as well as Hollan and one of his captains. The Hungarian officer was court-martialled and he lost command of his battalion.³⁸¹

Nevertheless, on October 7, 1862 he managed to re-enlist and became captain of Company A 119th Illinois Infantry Regiment. He died in combat on April 1, 1863 at Jackson, Tennessee.³⁸² The *Daily Whig Republican* in Quincy, Illinois covered the news of his death and concluded, “The loss of so worthy a man and so capable a soldier, will excite universal regret wherever he was known.” He was buried at Quincy, Illinois on April 9, 1863.³⁸³

Holmy, Johann Rudolph

In some sources he is referred to as Halmy. All we know about him is that he was born around 1839, probably in Hungary. At the time when the federal census of 1850 was taken, he was living in Westmoreland, Pennsylvania. Later he moved on and he worked as a farmer in Victoria County, Texas in the second half of the 1850s. He volunteered and was mustered in as 1st sergeant on October 5, 1861 at Company B 8th Texas Infantry. The only thing the recruiting officer noted about him is that he was 5 feet 6 inches tall. In July 1863 he obtained the rank of 2nd lieutenant, and was assigned with his unit to defend Galveston, Texas. In 1865 he was appointed post quartermaster and acting adjutant, and remained at the post of Battery Green. He was paroled, and no further information is available about him.³⁸⁴

Jekelfalussy, Alexander

He was born in Körmöcbánya on May 16, 1833. He was a student at the outbreak of the Hungarian War of Liberation, but he volunteered in Kassa and served at the 9th

³⁸¹ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; Brigadier-General J.M. Schoefield to Col. J.C. Kelton (January 2, 1862) OR, Series II, Vol. 1, Prisoners of War, etc., Serial No. 114, 250.

³⁸² Civil War Service Records, NA, M390, Roll 22.

³⁸³ *Daily Whig Republican*, Quincy Illinois, April 8, 1863, 3.

³⁸⁴ McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*, 154; Census of 1850, M432, Roll 837, 422; Civil War Service Records, NA, M227, Roll 17.

Honvéd Battalion. He was soon promoted to lieutenant and by the time of the Hungarian capitulation in August 1849, he was 1st lieutenant.³⁸⁵

On August 27, 1849 he was forced into Austrian service as private, but he managed to desert in Altona on March 1, 1850 and escaped to the United States. He settled down in Peoria, Illinois, and when the Civil War came, he volunteered in Chicago. He was mustered in as 1st lieutenant at Company F at 24th Illinois Infantry Regiment, also known as Lincoln Riflemen on July 8, 1861, and later he was promoted to captain. He was mustered out on August 6, 1864.³⁸⁶

After the Civil War he settled down in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. He worked as a cigar manufacturer for several decades. He got married, his wife Susanna was born in 1845, and emigrated to the United States from Prussia. They had two children: Magdalena was born in 1867, and Alex in 1872. Based on Gábor Bona's information, Alexander Jekelfalussy died in Milwaukee, WI on November 28, 1905. He is buried at Evergreen Cemetery in Manitowoc, Wisconsin.³⁸⁷

Kappner, Ignatz 

Martin Öfele refers to him in his *German-Speaking Officers in the U.S. Colored Troops, 1863-1867* as a Hungarian officer in the American Civil War. He is mentioned in Károly László's diary as a Hungarian captain. However, the Naturalization Records show him to have been born in Austria. (This might or might not mean that he was not Hungarian. Practically, Hungarian citizenship did not exist at the time, as Hungarians were also Austrian subjects. Notwithstanding, proud and patriotic Hungarians would rarely give their nationality as Austrian.)³⁸⁸

³⁸⁵ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, II, 131.

³⁸⁶ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, II, 131, Civil War Service Records, NA, M539 Roll 45; Some sources claim that he offered his resignation to his commander, Col. Géza Mihalóty, when he learned that he was ordered to arrest and surrender all fugitive slaves in and around the regiment camp, he, however, declined to accept the resignation. This piece of information needs confirmation in the future. (Susan M Papp, *Hungarian Americans and their Communities in Cleveland*. E-Book, 91.

Accessible: <http://www.clevelandmemory.org/Hungarians/index.htm> (January 13, 2008)

³⁸⁷ *Edwards' Manitowoc Directory for 1868-1869: Village and County Record* (Manitowoc, WI: Richard N. Cote, 197-); Census of 1880, NA, T9_1434, Roll: 1255434, 165; *Manitowoc Herald*, May 23, 1923.

³⁸⁸ László, *Napló-töredék*, 30; Common Pleas Court, NY County, January 10, 1860, Volume: 252 Record Number.

According to Öfele, Kappner was born in Sopron in 1826. Unfortunately, there is only sporadic information available concerning his Pre-Civil War career. It is quite likely that in 1848-49 he served in the Hungarian army and rose the rank of captain. After the surrender of the Hungarian army, he followed Kossuth to his exile in Turkey, and Károly László in the above-mentioned section of his diary gives his position as maitre de hôtel around the ex-governor.³⁸⁹

He probably emigrated to the United States during or after Kossuth's visit to America. He was naturalized in 1860, so he had appealed for American citizenship five years prior to that. At the outbreak of the Civil War he was living on 4th Avenue in New York City.³⁹⁰

He volunteered right away and was mustered in as a private at 7th New York State Militia. After the expiration of his 30-day service, he was mustered out. However, he re-enlisted quite soon and became lieutenant of the Engineer Regiment of the West, Missouri Volunteers.³⁹¹

For the third time he enlisted on April 15, 1863 in Memphis, Tennessee and organized the 1st Tennessee Heavy Artillery of African Descent which soon became one of the constituents of the 3rd US Colored Heavy Artillery. He became commander of Fort Pickering, and on September 3, 1863 Kappner was promoted to Colonel and was commanding the regiment.³⁹²

Most sources agree that he was a typical military professional, fought earnestly, and needed no political strings to pull for promotion. Major General Gillmore, Inspector General of Fortifications, praised Kappner's courteous attention and efficient aid during his stay at Memphis, and also "took pleasure in commending his zeal, intelligence, and ability" to the notice of his superiors. Kappner did an excellent job in organizing the untrained African Americans into an effective fighting unit and contemporary military experts found the 3rd U.S. Colored Heavy Artillery one of the best drilled regiments in the Civil War. In his obituary published by the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the

³⁸⁹ László, *Napló-töredék*, 30.

³⁹⁰ Common Pleas Court, NY County (January 10, 1860) Volume: 252 Record Number: 12. Soundex Index to Petitions for Naturalization filed in Federal, State, and Local Courts. NA, RG 85.

³⁹¹ Civil War Service Records, NA, M551, Roll 73.

³⁹² Civil War Service Records, NA, M390, Roll 25; For Kappner's appointment see, General Order No. 45, Memphis, TN (April 15, 1863) OR, Series III, Volume 3, Union Correspondence, etc., Serial No. 124, 123.

United States, Kappner's service at a colored regiment gained special importance: "There was no thought on the part of Col. Kappner that, in organizing and commanding a regiment of such troops, he was doing an action unworthy of the highest type of a soldier." He tried to fight whites' Negrophobia and challenged traditional norms of African American behavior. For instance, he urged his soldiers to participate in the celebrations organized by the Sons of Ham, a black fraternal association on August 1, 1865, at the same time, made sure that officers were escorting them constantly keeping an eye on their behavior.³⁹³

He was trying hard to keep his unit in service, but he lacked the necessary political connections, so along with his regiment, he was mustered out on April 30, 1866.

After the Civil War, he moved to St. Louis, and became partner of fellow-Hungarian, skyrocketing journalist mogul, Joseph Pulitzer and co-editor of *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. Later he was business manager of the paper, as well. He died on October 20, 1891.³⁹⁴

As a commander of a colored regiment, he certainly deserved being commemorated by the African-American community: his name is engraved on the African-American Civil War Memorial in Washington, D.C.³⁹⁵

Kemenyffy, Joseph

Keményffy was born Hartmann, in a Jewish family in Szentistvánbaksa in 1812 or 1814. He is one of the "mystery men" of the Hungarian Civil War participants, as we have hardly any information about his life. Based on Gábor Bona's work, he served as a sergeant in the 60th Infantry Regiment between 1831 and 1840. Then he studied pedagogy in Vienna, and found employment as a tutor in Kassa.³⁹⁶

³⁹³ Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served with U.S. Colored Troops. NA, M589 Roll 50; Ófele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 130-131; Major General Q.A. Gillmore to Major General N.J.T. Dana (December 14, 1864), OR, Series I, Volume 41, Part IV, Correspondence, Serial No. 86, 857; *In Memoriam Colonel Ignatz Kappner*. Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, Commandery of the State of Missouri (St. Louis, MO, 1892); Kevin R. Hardwick, "'Your old Father Abe Lincoln is dead and damned': Black soldiers and the Memphis race riots of 1866," *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 27, (1993/Fall): 109-128.

³⁹⁴ *Decatur Morning Review*, October 21, 1891, 1.

³⁹⁵ Col. Ignatz G. Kappner. African-American Civil War Memorial. Plaque Number A-8.

³⁹⁶ Bona, *Tábornokok*, 433.

In 1848 he entered Hungarian military service as 1st lieutenant at a Home Guard regiment. He changed his name to Keményffy then. In September he was promoted to captain, and in November, being immensely popular among students, became an instructor at the military school of the University of Pest, and was responsible for drilling. He was appointed commander of the University Legion in Pest, and later commanded the 90th Honvéd Battalion. On March 22, 1849 Keményffy badly whipped the Serbs at Kiszombor.³⁹⁷

After the defeat of the Hungarian forces, he was captured by the Austrians, and forced into military service as a private in the Imperial Army. In 1851, however, he was released, or based on Dancs's account, he escaped, and emigrated to America. Also, Dancs's book is the only source at our disposal, stating that he served in the Civil War as a captain.³⁹⁸

After the conflict he returned to Hungary, settled down in Zilah and worked as a lawyer, and an archivist after 1887. He died on November 24, 1895.³⁹⁹

Kiss, Anthony

Most of the information about Anthony Kiss can only be inferred from the census data and his military profile. He was born in 1826 or 1827. All we know for sure about him is that in 1860 he was living in Philadelphia, PA. He was single and was working as a shoemaker.⁴⁰⁰

In the Civil War he was mustered in a private at Company F at 39th New York Volunteers, or Garibaldi Guards, which was organized and later commanded by another Hungarian expatriate, Col. D'Utassy. Kiss was promoted to sergeant and was mustered out on October 1, 1862.⁴⁰¹

He re-enlisted, however, at Battery C, 1st New Jersey Light Artillery, and was mustered in as a private on November 9, 1863. He got severely wounded and was taken

³⁹⁷ Tibor Ács, "A tudományegyetem hadi tanfolyama és a Pesti Egyetemi Légión, 1848-1849," *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* (2000/3): 515.

³⁹⁸ Dancs, *Töredékek*, 91.

³⁹⁹ Bona, *Tábornokok*, 433.

⁴⁰⁰ Census of 1860. NA, M653, Roll 161, 829.

⁴⁰¹ Civil War Service Records, NA, M551 Roll 77.

to Lincoln U.S. Army General Hospital in Washington, D.C., and was discharged on December 17, 1864 due to disability. All we know about him is that he was once staying at National Military Home in Montgomery, Ohio. The date of his death has not yet been identified.⁴⁰²

Knefler, Frederick

Frederick Knefler was the highest-ranking Jewish officer in the American Civil War. He was born on April 12, 1834 in Arad. The original name of the family was Knoepfler. His father, Nathan Knefler was a physician who was one of the key figures of the local Jewish community as well as the city of Arad. This prosperous middle-class family background made it possible for young Frederick to acquire excellent education.⁴⁰³

He was barely 15 years old when the Hungarian War of Liberation broke out. With his father being in charge of a military hospital in Arad, and subsequently becoming chief surgeon of the 101st and 102nd battalions in a rank of captain, no wonder that the young boy was also attracted to the Hungarian freedom fight and enlisted. When the Hungarian cause, however, collapsed, the whole family had to flee abroad, and they wound up in the United States. Having spent some time in New York, where young Frederick learned the trade of carpenter, they moved to the West and settled down in Indianapolis, Indiana.⁴⁰⁴

The Kneflers were one of the very first Jewish families in Indianapolis and Nathan Knefler was among the two dozen founders of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, the city's first synagogue, founded on November 2, 1856. Fred was working as a carpenter and besides, he was studying law. He mastered English by reading Shakespeare and daily papers. He gained experience as deputy at the clerk of Marion County. In 1856 he

⁴⁰² Civil War Service Records, NA, M550, Roll 13; Stryker, *Record of Officers*, 1394.

⁴⁰³ For an excellent biography on Knefler see, Stephen Beszedits, "Frederick Knefler: Hungarian Patriot and American General," (Hereafter cited as, Beszedits, "Knefler") Accessible on the Internet: Jewish American History on the Net, <http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/knefler.html>; Another biography on him: Marla Hirsch, *Indiana's Great Jewish Civil War General: General Frederick Knefler (April 12, 1834-June 14, 1901)* (Indiana: M. Hirsch, 1979) Typescript. (Hereafter cited as, Hirsch, *Knefler*.)

⁴⁰⁴ Beszedits, "Knefler", 3.

was admitted to the bar, where he met Lew Wallace, lawyer, and future writer of *Ben Hur*. Wallace and Knefler became life-long friends.⁴⁰⁵

When the Civil War broke out, Lew Wallace was appointed state adjutant-general by Indiana Governor Oliver P. Morton and his primary task was to raise the required number of volunteer regiments to fill the state quota. He chose Knefler as his assistant. When, however, Wallace was made commander of one of the newly-formed regiments, the 11th Indiana Volunteer Infantry Regiment. Knefler followed him and was commissioned 1st lieutenant. On August 31, 1861 he elevated to the rank of captain and on September 8, 1861 he was promoted full captain. This took place when Wallace left the regiment to become brigadier-general and Knefler became his assistant adjutant-general. On May 16, 1862 he was promoted to the rank of major, and on Wallace's side participated in the capturing of Forts Donelson and Henry, and took part in the battle of Shiloh (April 6-7, 1862), which proved to be one of the bloodiest engagements of the Civil War causing more than 23,000 casualties which exceeded the casualties of the War of Independence, the war of 1812 and the Mexican war combined. No wonder that the Union commander, U.S. Grant was heavily criticized for his performance, and for the fact that he let himself be surprised by the enemy, and Grant, in order to share at least part of the responsibility, made a scapegoat out of Brig. Gen. Wallace, who — according to him — was way too slow in marching to the battlefield, and by doing so, he endangered the entire Union army. Wallace, however, argued that he did not have the faintest idea of the situation, and Captain Baxter, who handed him the dispatch of Grant scribbled on a small piece of paper, failed to inform him how grave the situation was. Knefler actually recalled that “Baxter brought cheering news.” Unfortunately, we will probably never know who is correct in his statement, as the small note was entrusted to Knefler's care, who simply tucked it under his sword belt and, as it turned out, lost it. Anyway, Wallace was removed from active duty for a while, and although eventually he could return, he would never again be entrusted with a battlefield command.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁵ Hirsch, *Knefler*, 4.

⁴⁰⁶ For Knefler's Civil War career see, Civil War Service Records. NA, M540, Roll 42; W.H.H. Terrell, ed., *Indiana in the War of the Rebellion. Report of the Adjutant General* (Indiana Historical Society, 1960), 565, Appendix; Beszedits, “Knefler”, 4-12; For the ominous ‘note incident’ at the battle of Shiloh consult, Wiley Sword, *Shiloh: Bloody April* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1974), 219; Larry J. Daniel, *The Battle That Changed the Civil War: Shiloh* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 257;

On August 27, 1862 Knefler was promoted colonel and assigned to the commander of the newly-organized 79th Indiana Volunteer Infantry regiment. He proved to be a very strict disciplinarian (usually common feature of those who saw service in any of the European regular armies), that is why he was quite unpopular among his men, but he soon gained their respect on the battlefield. The newly-formed regiment was immediately assigned under the command of Gen. Buell, at the Army of the Ohion in Louisville, Kentucky. The 79th Indiana participated in the battles of Perryville (October 7, 1862) and Stone's river (December 31, 1862- January 2, 1863). Knefler reported about the latter engagement, "The regiment went into action on December 31 with 341, rank and file, and lost during both engagements fully one-third of its available force, including more than half the commissioned officers in killed and wounded; but very few men are missing or taken prisoners." The 79th also took part in the battle of Chickamauga (September 18-20, 1863), and as a recognition of Knefler and his regiment, the state of Indiana erected a monument on the site of the battle.⁴⁰⁷

The battle of Chattanooga (November 23-25, 1863) brought even more success for him and his regiment. It was the 79th Indiana which managed to capture the Missionary Ridge, a formidable defensive position heavily defended by the Confederates. Colonel George F. Dick, Commander of 86th Indiana Volunteers, wrote in his official report, "While it is out of place, and I feel a delicacy in presuming to dictate as a junior officer, yet I must say that Col. Fred Knefler, Seventy-ninth Indiana Volunteers, well deserves and richly merits a commission as a brigadier-general, for his gallantry displayed in the charging and taking of Missionary Ridge."⁴⁰⁸

Knefler took his part in the Atlanta campaign, his regiment was present at the siege of Atlanta and they were among the troops marching into the city.

James Lee McDonough, *Shiloh – in Hell Before Night* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1977), 157.

⁴⁰⁷ Beszedits, "Knefler", 14.

⁴⁰⁸ Report of Colonel George F. Dick (November 27, 1863) OR, Series I, Vol. 31, Part II, Reports, Serial No. 55, 307.

As a recognition of his gallant service throughout these months leading the 79th Indiana Volunteers, he was brevetted brigadier general on March 13, 1865. He was mustered out on June 7, 1865.⁴⁰⁹

After the Civil War he remained in Indianapolis and entered into a law partnership with former U.S. District Attorney, John Hanna: Hanna&Knefler. In 1882 Hanna died and Knefler's new partnership was Knefler&Berryhill. He was commissioner of pensions between 1877 and 1885 and he worked extremely hard to rationalize the working of the system. He became president of the Board of Regents in charge of the erection of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument in Indianapolis which was finished in 1902. Knefler, however, died on June 14, 1901. His last wish was to be buried in the plainest coffin available without any service as he said, "I have never believed in wasting on dead bodies that which can benefit the living."⁴¹⁰

Kovacs, Stephen

It is not easy to reconstruct the details of the life and career of Stephen Kovács. There are numerous varieties, to start with, for his exact date of birth. According to his Civil War muster roll he was born in 1823, but other varieties include 1817 (Gábor Bona), 1830 (Census of 1870) and 1833 (Census of 1880.) Bona gives Szeged as his place of birth. All that seems to be sure about his early career is that he was a preacher and volunteered in the Hungarian War of Liberation in 1848. In the war he elevated to the rank of major, and towards the end of it, he served on the staff of General Guyon, commander of the IV. (Bácska) Hadtest.⁴¹¹

After the collapse of the Hungarian cause, he left the country for Turkey taking his fiancé, Fáni Ottoványi with him. They got married at Christmas in 1849 in Sumla, Turkey.⁴¹²

⁴⁰⁹ Recommendation for Promotion by Brigadier General Thomas J. Wood (January 8, 1865) OR, Series I, Volume 45, Part II, Correspondence, Serial No. 94, 544.

⁴¹⁰ Beszedits, "Knefler", 32; Knefler appointed pension agent: *The Daily Inter Ocean*, June 11, 1877, 6; On Knefler's funeral: *Sandusky Daily Star*, June 15, 1901.

⁴¹¹ Bona, *Tábornokok*, 458-459.

⁴¹² Gábor Egressy, *Egressy Gábor törökországi naplója. 1849-1850* (Pest: Kozma V., 1851), 128.

They arrived in the United States onboard the *U.S.S. Mississippi* in 1851. While they were staying in New York City, Kovács was desperately trying to find some employment, what he finally did. The renowned hat maker and entrepreneur, John N. Genin (1819-1878), who made huge fortunes out of the Hungarian exiles, as he started to sell Kossuth hats — black felt hats with a black feather — which soon ran short of supplies, because of the Kossuth-craze in America, offered him a job as a shop clerk in December 1851. He was struggling for further opportunities for work in the U.S., but finally they decided to try their luck in the frontier settlement of New Buda in Iowa in 1853, but it was really hard for him to make both ends meet. The family returned to New York soon, and Kovács played an important role in the life of the Hungarian community there. His son, Cornelius was born in 1853 and in 1858 Fanny gave birth to a baby girl, baptized as Anna. Kovacs was pondering about going to Italy in 1859 to fight against Austria, but eventually this plan came to nothing.⁴¹³

In 1861 he was among Hungarians who were working on organizing an all-Hungarian regiment in New York. The meeting held on July 18, 1861 elected him as acting colonel of the future regiment, which, however, never came to being. He, however, volunteered and was mustered in as a captain on September 7, 1861 at the 54th New York Volunteer regiment, also referred to as Barney Rifles. This regiment was organized by fellow Hungarian, Eugene Kozlay, who became colonel of the unit. He started his service at Company K on September 23, 1861, and was transferred to Company E on October 16. He was promoted to full captain on January 4, 1862, and on June 3, 1862 he elevated to the rank of major. He participated in the battle of Gettysburg (June 1-3, 1863) where his regiment was part of the Eleventh Army Corps. In the battle he was taken prisoner, and was sent to the infamous Libby Prison in Richmond. He was imprisoned there until March 11, 1864, when he was paroled. (It is interesting to remark that we have first-hand information on his presence in the prison, as fellow Hungarian exile, Civil War

⁴¹³ For the list of passengers transported from Turkey onboard U.S steamer *Mississippi* consult, *The New York Times*, November 11, 1850; His employment by Genin was mentioned in several sources: Perczel, *Naplóm*, II, 99; Kinizsi, “*Sánta Huszár*”, 115; Census of 1860. NA, M653, Roll 816, 817; Kovács was member of the Hungarian committee organized in 1859 with the task to prepare plans for the formation of an expeditionary unit to be sent to Italy. *The New York Times*, May 21, 1859, 5.

participant, Emeric Szabad shared the same prison, and he gave an account of his time in jail in his Libby Prison Diary.)⁴¹⁴

Although there are many sources that praise Kovács's Civil War career, we have a very unique primary source at our disposal: Col. Kozlay's regimental journal, in which he — although also Hungarian by birth — gives a highly critical description of Kovács:

My Major Kovacs, he should like to retain his position by all means in this regiment. But I am sure that if I go, he will not be able to hold himself up. He is a good fellow, but a very useless soldier. If the regiment is veteran, the best he does will be, go home. I have no help, but not the least in him; the men do not respect him, he does not understand how to drill them. He knows tolerable well the command, but whether it is executed right or wrong, there he has no judgment or knowledge to decide.⁴¹⁵

He also writes about getting an official notification that Kovács would be promoted to lieutenant-colonel. His immediate reaction to this was as follows:

What a folly? To appoint a man for that position who is totally unfit. I cannot understand the folly of this appointment. How was it done? Who recommended him? I did not. I am sorry for poor Kovacs because he loses even his former position by this mad act of his to accept such appointment for which he is unfit.⁴¹⁶

In the end Kovács was not promoted, and was discharged on June 2, 1865. However, he was mustered in again as a major on June 20, 1865 and eventually mustered out with his regiment on April 14, 1866 in Charleston, SC.⁴¹⁷

After the Civil War he lived in New York City. According to the Federal Census of 1880, he was working as a cigar maker. He died in 1884 at the residence of his long-time friend, fellow Hungarian, Dr. Attila Kelemen. (It is also worth noting here that some

⁴¹⁴ *New York Herald*, July 20, 1861, 5; Civil War Service Records. NA, M551, Roll 78; Beszedits, *Libby Prison Diary*.

⁴¹⁵ *Regimental Journal of Col. Eugene A. Kozlay*. (Transcribed by Janet Kozlay) (Hereafter cited as, Kozlay, *Regimental Journal*.), 58. Available on the Internet: <http://www.dmna.state.ny.us/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/54thInf/54thInfKozlayJournal1.htm>. (September 21, 2007)

⁴¹⁶ Kozlay, *Regimental Journal*, 34.

⁴¹⁷ Civil War Service Records. NA, M551, Roll 78.

sources erroneously claimed that Kovacs perished while being a POW at Libby Prison.)⁴¹⁸

Kovats, Augustus



He was born on August 22, 1830 in Pécel. He attended military school, and in 1848 volunteered into the Hungarian revolutionary army right away. He served in Pest at the 1st Honvéd Battalion, then, already as a sergeant, he was transferred to the 99th Battalion. By the end of the conflict he had elevated to the rank of lieutenant, and was one of the defenders of the fortress in Komárom.⁴¹⁹

After the Austrian-Russian coalition forces crushed the Hungarian troops, he was arrested and forced to Austrian service as a private at the 42nd Infantry Regiment. However, he managed to desert in Schleswig-Holstein, and fled to London in 1850. Soon he emigrated to the United States of America.

In 1851, he set off organizing a force to assist Narciso Lopez's filibuster expedition to Cuba, but had only got as far as Savannah by the time Lopez was captured by the Spanish. Although his party was dissolved, he remained in the South and made a living by giving fencing lessons. Soon, however, he returned to the North, greatly because of the tangible secessionist sentiments in the South. He tried his luck in the small settlement of New Buda in Iowa, but later moved on and settled down in Cincinnati, Ohio and ran a grocery store. In 1852 he married Martha A. Wallace. In 1856 they moved to Chicago, IL and Kovats had various occupations.⁴²⁰

On June 22, 1861 he not only volunteered in the Union Army and was mustered in as a captain at the 24th Illinois Infantry regiment, but earlier he had also assisted Géza Mihalotzy, fellow Hungarian expatriate, to organize the militia unit called "Lincoln Riflemen". He was so severely wounded at an engagement at Jasper, Tennessee on June 21, 1862 that he had to resign on January 19, 1863. His property was almost entirely

⁴¹⁸ Census of 1880. NA, T9, Roll 873, 98; For his obituary see, *The New York Times*, April 17, 1884.

⁴¹⁹ A.T. Andreas, *History of Cook County, Illinois: From the Earliest Period to the Present Time* (Chicago, IL: A.T. Andreas, 1884) (Hereafter cited as, Andreas, *Cook County*), 762; Bona, *Hadnagyok*, II, 277.

⁴²⁰ Andreas, *Cook County*, 762; Ács, *New Buda*, 74.

destroyed by fire at Camp Butler, Illinois on December 2, 1865, for which he was desperately seeking compensation from the Committee of Claims. As a recognition of his meritorious service, he was brevetted major and was mustered in at the 7th Regiment Veteran Reserve Corps and after the actual end of the Civil War served at 2nd Battalion Veteran Reserve Corps. He was honorably discharged on June 30, 1866.⁴²¹

After the Civil War he returned to civilian life in Chicago. First he worked as an inspector of customs, then he became Justice of Peace until 1870. Later he moved to Jefferson, IL , where he was also Justice of Peace and was involved in the real estate business. He died on November 7, 1886 in Jefferson, IL. (It has to be pointed out that Ács and, probably based on his book, Bona claims that Kováts returned to Hungary in 1870, settled down in Gyula, and died in 1874. However, the available American sources suggest that they are mistaken here.)⁴²²

Kozlay, Eugene 

He was born János Kecskés or János Kozik in 1825 in Jászladány and baptized in Jászkisér. He spent some of his childhood years in the small town of Acsa, then attended high school in Aszód between 1837-1839. He enrolled at the institution under the name of János Kozik. His further education is not clear, but he probably attended a military school. According to his diary, he received his military education under the Austrians and became an officer while still a teenager. Following that he was admitted to the University of Pest, where he studied law. It was probably around that time that he changed his name to Jenő Kozlay.⁴²³

⁴²¹ Civil War Service Records. NA, M539 Roll 50; Pension Application File: Martha A. Kovats. NA, No 351.759 (March 14, 1887); *JEP, March 4, 1867- November 30, 1867* (March 28, 1867), 130.

⁴²² *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois* (Springfield, Baker and Co., 1867), I, 488; Andreas, *Cook County*, 762; For his death notice see, *The Daily Inter Ocean*, November 9, 1886, 8.

⁴²³ For some details on his life see, Janet Kozlay, "The writings of Eugene Kozlay: 19th-century Hungarian Emigré," *Vasváry Collection Newsletter*. (2003/1) (Hereafter cited as, Kozlay, "Eugene Kozlay"); For an informative article on his life and career see, Zsuzsanna Ágnes Berényi, "Hazakerült egy '48-as evangélikus honvédtiszt hagyatéka," *Evangélikus Élet*, March 26, 2006. Accessible at: <http://www.evelet.hu:8080/ujsagok/evelet/archivum/2006/13/051>. (October 10, 2007) (Hereafter cited as, Berényi, "48-as honvédtiszt")

He volunteered in the Hungarian War of Liberation in 1848, and he was a lieutenant in the 12th (Asboth) Division organized in Balmazújváros. Later he was transferred to Corps II. On September 22, 1849 he was 1st lieutenant at 25th Honvéd Battalion stationed at the fortress of Komárom and he was responsible for the provisioning of soldiers.⁴²⁴

After the fall of the Hungarian cause the Austrian government granted the defenders of Komárom a safe-conduct and Kozlay emigrated to the United States where he arrived in 1850. That was the time when he changed his name from Jenő Kozlay to Eugene A. Kozlay. He moved to New Orleans where he worked strenuously to learn English as quickly as possible, while he was employed by an exporter of cotton and sugar. Next year he returned to New York and resumed working in the export business hoping the some day he would be able to start his own business, which apparently never happened. He applied for American citizenship and he did become U.S. citizen in 1855. He continued his legal studies and he was admitted to the bar, although he never actually practiced law. In the second half of the 1850s, he was employed at the New York Customhouse as withdrawal entry clerk. His English improved remarkably throughout the decade and the best proof for that is that he wrote an English novel, frankly quite a mediocre one, entitled *Secrets of the Past: A Romance of the South*, which was serialized in the *United States Democratic Review* between September 1857 and June 1858.⁴²⁵

Kozlay received authority from the War Department on August 30, 1861, to recruit a regiment of infantry in New York City. He recruited mainly from among the German-Americans in Brooklyn, and the unit got the numerical designation 54th New York Infantry Volunteers on October 15, 1861. The regiment was named after Lutzow's 'Black Rifles' or 'Schwarze Jaeger', and wore a similar black-silver uniform. Another name for the regiment, Barney Rifles, came from Kozlay's boss at the Customhouse, Hiram Barney. The winter of 1861-62 was spent perfecting the men in drill and in April 1862 they were ordered to West Virginia to join the Mountain Department. While

⁴²⁴ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, II, 293.

⁴²⁵ Kozlay, "Eugene Kozlay"; I have gained much information about Kozlay from our correspondence with Janet Kozlay. I am very grateful for her devotion for preserving the memory of her ancestor and making the material available for the public; The full-text version of *Secrets of the Past* is available on the Internet as well: <http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/moa/moa-cgi?notisid=AGD1642-0041-71>; Some other works allegedly written by Kozlay include *The Treasuries of the Ruins*, *The Grandmother*, *The Two Sisters*, *We and They*, *The Two Idlers*, however, they could not have been located so far.

crossing the Shenandoah River, swollen by the melting snow, each man in one of the companies drowned in front of the horror-stricken eyes of their comrades unable to help. They participated in a number of battles under the command of Col. Kozlay including the battle of Cross Keys (June 8, 1862), 2nd Bull Run Aug 29-31, 1862 where heavy casualties were suffered. At the battle of Chancellorsville on May 1-3, 1863 the 54th New York held the extreme right of the 11th Corps. They had the very similar assignment in the battle of Gettysburg (July 1-3, 1863). At the end of the first day, they were forced to retreat and having run out of ammunition, quite a number, including four officers, were taken prisoners. Among the officers captured was a Hungarian officer, Major Stephen Kovacs.⁴²⁶

After the battle of Gettysburg, the regiment was assigned to the Department of South, and arrived at Folly Island in front of Charleston, SC on August 9, 1863. They took part at the siege of Fort Wagner, and later on they were involved in building fortifications, patrolling, and reconnaissance missions in the surrounding islands. On March 13, 1865, Kozlay was brevetted Brigadier General for his gallant leadership. In March, 1865, the Fifty-fourth entered Charleston, S.C., after which it was detailed in detachments for duty in the Freedman's Bureau throughout South Carolina, with headquarters at Orangeburg. Kozlay, along with his regiment, was mustered out on April 14, 1866.⁴²⁷

After the end of the Civil War, he returned to his previous job and worked at the New York Customhouse until 1869. Then he found employment in Brooklyn as a draftsman, surveyor and mapmaker and that is where he was working when the Census of 1880 was taken, however, he was sacked that very year due to cost-cutting measures. He became the Chief Engineer of the Coney Island Transit Company, and then joined the Brooklyn Elevated Railroad, which built the first elevated railroad in Brooklyn, although Kozlay did not live to see it completed.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁶ For details of his Civil War career consult, Kozlay, *Regimental Journal*; Civil War Service Records, NA, M 551, Roll 78; Lots of useful information can be found in: *Final Report on the Battlefield of Gettysburg (New York at Gettysburg)* by the New York Monuments Commission for the Battlefields of Gettysburg and Chattanooga. (Albany, NY: J.B. Lyon Company, 1902); Frederick Phisterer, ed., *New York in the War of the Rebellion* (Albany: J. B. Lyon Company, 1912); Fox, *New York at Gettysburg*, I, 402-405.

⁴²⁷ Kozlay, *Regimental Journal*, 65-74.

⁴²⁸ Kozlay, "Eugene Kozlay"; Berényi, "48-as honvédtiszt"; Census of 1880, NA, T9, Roll 843, 517.

Eugene Kozlay died on April 1, 1886 in New York, and he was buried at Evergreen Cemetery. His son, Charles Meeker Kozlay was a successful publisher and printer, patron of writer, Bret Harte.⁴²⁹

Kuné, Julian

We have unusually detailed information at our disposal about Julian Kuné's life as he published an autobiography entitled *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian Hungarian Exile* in 1911.⁴³⁰

Kuné was born in Belényes, in Bihar County in 1831. He was barely 17 years old, when, freshly out of college, he joined the Hungarian revolutionary army, and fought throughout the whole conflict.⁴³¹

After the collapse in 1849, he followed Kossuth to exile in Turkey, and later he was transported to Aleppo, Syria. According to his own account, he was employed as the Hungarian aide-de-camp to the governor general of Syria. Soon, however, more and more Hungarian exiles decided to emigrate to the United States, and Kuné joined a group of expatriates who left for New York City onboard the *Cornelius Grinnel* and set their foot on American soil on May 1, 1852.⁴³²

Similarly to many immigrants he had to face the difficulty of getting employment. He worked at a clock factory in Bristol, Connecticut, and later moved on to Hartford to teach German and French. Kuné got acquainted with Rev. Samuel W. Longfellow — the brother of Henry W. Longfellow's brother — who allegedly gave him the manuscript of "Psalm of Life." He must have read its lines very carefully as he was "up and doing,

⁴²⁹ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; We are fortunate as Kozlay's descendants, Janet and Douglas Kozlay made every effort possible to preserve the Kozlay material: they transcribed his regimental journal and got all his German and Hungarian letters translated into English. All these sources offer a unique insight into how an immigrant saw the United States at the time, but also intriguing details about the life of his regiment during the Civil War. Janet and Doug were generous enough to donate the entire Kozlay material to the Petőfi Sándor Museum of Literature in Budapest. For their efforts they were awarded the *Pro Cultura Hungarica* decoration by the Hungarian Department of Culture on March 15, 2006. (*Népszabadság*, March 11, 2006.)

⁴³⁰ Julian Kune, *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian Hungarian Exile* (Chicago, 1911) (Hereafter cited as, Kune, *Reminiscences*)

⁴³¹ Kune, *Reminiscences*, 1.

⁴³² Kune, *Reminiscences*, 62-69.

With a heart for any fate; Still achieving, still pursuing.” He learned to labor and to wait, by 1855, however, he realized that he could not make a living from teaching and made up his mind to try his luck in the West. His original plan was to move to St. Louis, but he eventually settled down in Chicago.⁴³³

In 1855 Kuné got a position in Jonathan Young Scammon’s law office who was very much interested in Hungarian exiles; his son, for instance, had a Hungarian tutor, a Prof. Beck. Later Scammon offered Kuné a job at Marine Bank which clearly meant better prospects for him, moreover, he instructed Scammon’s daughter to French. He got very actively involved in political life in Chicago and built very good connections with the leaders of the local German-American community. He supported the Republican Party, and, according to his own account, he took part at the Republican National Party Convention in Chicago. He first supported the nomination of Simon Cameron, but after Abraham Lincoln’s nomination, he worked extremely hard in Lincoln’s election campaign. He even insisted on going to Southern Illinois, where the Republicans seemed to have no support at all, and announced his determination to stand up for his constitutional right to speak and preach Republicanism wherever he chooses,” reported the *Chicago Press and Tribune* in October 1860. He even had a private interview with Lincoln in his Springfield office, and he gives the following account of his conversation with the future President:

I was prevented from speaking freely my sentiments regarding the extension of slavery beyond its present limits and [...] I was one of the Hungarian exiles. [Lincoln said] “No man has the right to keep his fellowman in bondage, be he black or white; and the time will come, and must come, when there will not be a single slave within the borders of this country.”⁴³⁴

When the Civil War came, he tried to make use of his political connections in order to acquire a permission to organize a regiment of foreigners in Chicago. He had an interview with the Secretary of War, then with Lincoln himself, but the enthusiasm with which volunteers thronged to the Union Army resulted in the offers for organizing

⁴³³ Kune, *Reminiscences*, 70; “Julian Kune and the Chicago Historical Society,” *Chicago History*, IL, (Spring 1949), 83-87. (Hereafter cited as, “Kune and CHS”)

⁴³⁴ Kune, *Reminiscences*, 72-85; *Chicago Press and Tribune*, Cairo, Oct. 5., 1860; Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 13; On his interview with Lincoln see, Kune, *Reminiscences*, 87.

regiments being twice as much as the actual quota for the specific states. Kuné was the one, who had presented a letter written by fellow Hungarian, Géza Mihálóty to Lincoln and induced him to give not only his consent to forming a militia unit comprised mainly of foreigners, but also his name: the unit was called the ‘Lincoln Riflemen.’ Kuné managed to convince Lincoln of the necessity of organizing an entire regiment of foreigners, and he was granted the permission to do so by the President personally. He also obtained the permission of Gen. George B. McClellan, whom he knew from his years back at Marine Bank, to release the militia unit and incorporate it, along with another one, the Union Cadets, into the newly-formed regiment, which was enumerated as 24th Illinois Infantry Regiment, soon to be called Lincoln Riflemen.⁴³⁵

When Kuné returned from Washington, D.C., much to his surprise he learned that Mihálóty was elected lieutenant colonel of the regiment, and Friedrich Hecker was elected colonel, while himself became the major of the unit. He was obviously very disappointed and thought it to be the work of Hecker. He wrote a letter to Illinois Governor Yates to relieve him from his duty at the 24th Illinois and let him organize a new regiment. His request was declined.⁴³⁶

He was mustered in as a major on June 17, 1861, but due to his personal grievances and continuous conflicts with Col. Hecker he resigned. In his reminiscences, he wrote that he was relieved of duty on account of his state of health by Hecker, although no medical examinations were actually carried out. Kuné rather saw the source of their conflict in his unwillingness to take part in “Hecker’s periodical drinking orgies.” However it might be, Kuné resigned on October 31, 1861.⁴³⁷

After leaving the army, he got involved in various business activities. He was member of the Chicago Board of Trade, and later he was a grain broker. He edited the musical column of the Chicago Evening Journal, and he even played a part in founding the Chicago Historical Society. After the Compromise of 1867, he paid several visits to Hungary: in 1869 he met Ármin Vámbéry, Francis Pulszky and Joseph Pulitzer. He covered the Franco-Prussian War for the *Chicago Tribune*. He was in Vienna when he

⁴³⁵ Burhop, *Twenty Fourth Illinois*;
Information on Kuné accessible: <http://www.burhop.net/24illinois/thebookpage.htm> (Hereafter cited as, Burhop, *Twenty Fourth Illinois*); Civil War Service Records, NA, M539, Roll 50.

⁴³⁶ Burhop, *Twenty Fourth Illinois*.

⁴³⁷ Kune, *Reminiscences*, 115-124.

heard news of the great Chicago fire: he organized a musical performance for the benefit of the sufferers of the fire. He died in Chicago in 1914.⁴³⁸

Lang, Henry 

Hardly anything is known about this Hungarian participant in the American Civil War. What we know for sure is that he was born in Hungary, and probably served in the Hungarian War of Liberation of 1848/49. After the Austrian-Russian coalition forces had crushed the Hungarian freedom fight, he fled to Turkey and wound up in Bucharest. After staying one and a half years there, he left the city on May 25, 1851 and moved to Giurgiu. He spent a short period of time in the Near East, then emigrated to the United States around 1854. According to his own account, he was working hard to learn the language, that is why he boarded with a natural-born American family, and when the Civil War came, he volunteered at an all-American regiment. He served at Company C at 48th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment as private. He got quite badly wounded in an engagement in early 1864 and was captured by the Confederates — he was a prisoner of war for nine months at the infamous POW camp at Andersonville, Georgia, then was exchanged. After the Civil War he directed a factory, then returned to Hungary. He published a number of articles in Hungarian newspapers on various aspects of everyday life in America. His widow applied for his Civil War pension in 1908, which means that he must have died prior to that.⁴³⁹

⁴³⁸ Census of 1880. NA, T9, Roll 186, 213; “Kune and CHS”, 86-87; Kune, *Reminiscences*, 125-128.

⁴³⁹ For a short biography of Lang see, Miklós Mihály Nagy, *Magyar hadiutazók* (Budapest: Kornétás Kiadó, 2001) (Hereafter cited as, Nagy, *Hadiutazók*), 23-31; *Vasárnapi Újság* (No. 7, 1876), 102; Civil War Service Records, NA, M 551, Roll 80; Henrik Láng, “Egy magyar hadifogoly a conföderált államokban,” *A Hon*, January 6, 1865, 2; *Vasárnapi Újság*, (No. 9, 1876), 135; *Vasárnapi Újság*, November 28, 1875, 762; Application Files for Civil War Pensions, NA, Application No. 666778.

Langenfeld, Francis

We do not have much information about Francis Langenfeld either. Based on the federal census of 1880, he was born in 1827. He arrived in the United States in 1855 and settled down in Chicago. In the Civil War, he joined the 24th Illinois Volunteers, the regiment organized by fellow Hungarians Col. Mihalotzy and Maj. Kuné in Chicago. He was mustered in as a sergeant, but he elevated to the rank of 1st lieutenant. On February 22, 1863, he was dismissed.⁴⁴⁰

After the conflict, he continued living in the Windy City and worked as a merchant. He was married, his wife Sophie gave birth to three children: Wilhelm (born in 1858), Fred (1863) and Martha (1862). His name appears in the Chicago Voter Registration in 1892, so he was alive then, but the exact date of his death is not known.

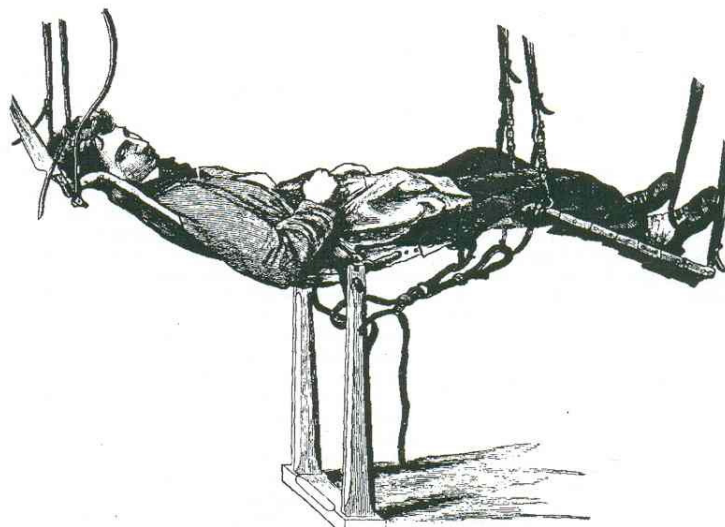
Langer, Ignatz, M.D.

Information does not abound, unfortunately, on Dr. Ignatz Langer. He was born in Arad in a Jewish family, and attended medical university in Hungary. He volunteered in the Hungarian Army in 1848/49 and served as a honvéd staff surgeon. Subsequently to the collapse of the Hungarian cause, he emigrated and was one of the Hungarian pioneers on the American Frontier. He tried his luck in Davenport, Iowa, and John Fiala recalled him as a person who helped them with important bits and pieces of advice on how to find employment, and he himself was offered boarding in Langer's house. Otherwise, he was farming and was practicing as physician for the small rural community.⁴⁴¹

In the Civil War he volunteered and was mustered in as a surgeon in the Union Army. His name is mostly linked to an invention of his which eased the sufferings of hundreds of wounded soldiers in the Civil War: a combined splint and fracture bed (1865).

⁴⁴⁰ Census of 1870, NA, M 593, Roll: 203, p. 279; Chicago Voter Registration (Illinois State Archives, Roll 25, 1888 and 1892).

⁴⁴¹ Beszedits, "Tauszky"; Ács, *Száműzöttek*, 229.



Dr. Langer's combined splint and fraction bed Source: *Medical and Surgical History of the Civil War* (Broadfoot Publishing Co., Wilmington, N.C., 1991), Vol. XI, 349.

Surgeon W. L. Faxon, 32nd Massachusetts, who was assigned to try out the invention in practice, wrote the following about it in his report:

I consider Dr. Langer's combined splint and fracture bed as I have seen it in operation at this hospital as the best appliance I have used, or seen used in the army. The patient can always be made comfortable; he seldom requires opiates to procure sleep [...]; the patients can always be kept clean; [...] one nurse can take care of as many cases as of simple wounds.⁴⁴²

Dr. Faxon concluded his report by requesting fifty of the new invention for his hospital. Moreover, Dr. Langer submitted the plan of an army wagon claiming:

This change of the army wagon would not interfere with its design of conveying forage or other articles to and from a camp; that when the wagon is used for carrying forage the twelve beds are packed under a movable bottom, and the railing supporting them is stowed away on the sides, so that the capacity of the wagon box is not impaired; that in ten minutes after the wagon is unloaded it is changed into an ambulance wagon with all the equipments for transport--six patients in a sitting posture, six in a lying, two of which, if necessary, suspended on fracture beds of Dr. Langer's pattern; that there is room for all the equipments of the patients, for a water-keg, and

⁴⁴² *Medical History*, XI, 349-350.

for boxes with provisions and bandages, and that the wagon can be loaded from the front as well 'as the rear.⁴⁴³

Despite its obvious superiority over ones already used, Langner's wagon never entered service.

After the Civil War, he returned to Hungary and died on April 2, 1879 in Arad.

Lederer, Emanuel 

He was born in Buda-Pest in 1841. He emigrated to the United States some time in the 1850s. When the Civil War broke out, he volunteered and was mustered on May 17, 1861 as a private at Company G 39th NY Infantry regiment, organized by another Hungarian, Col. Frederick George D'Utassy. He was promoted to corporal on October 1, 1861 and sergeant on November 1, 1862. He was transferred to Company B on May 31, 1863, elevated to the rank of 2nd lieutenant on November 13, 1863. *The New York Times* mentioned him as captain in his obituary, however, his service records show that he was discharged due to disability on March 21, 1864 while still a 2nd lieutenant.⁴⁴⁴

After the Civil War he was working as a newspaper man and he also ran a cigar shop in Chicago. Later he got interested in the theatre: he did some acting and was a manager both in the U.S. and Germany. Later he moved to New York and got involved in importing foreign plays. He was in a close working relation with Augustine Daily (1838-1899), one of the most renowned American theatre managers and directors in the 19th century.⁴⁴⁵

Lederer died on August 21, 1917 at his home 150 E 74 Street in New York in heart disease. One of his sons, W.J. Lederer became a well-known physician in New York City.

⁴⁴³ *Medical History*, Part III, Vol. II, Chapter XV—Transportation of the Wounded. Ambulance Wagons.

⁴⁴⁴ *The New York Times*, August 22, 1917, 7; Loretto Dennis Szucs and Sandra Hargreaves, eds., *Research in Directories. The Guidebook of American Genealogy* by Gordon Lewis Remington (Salt Lake City, UT, 1997); Civil War Service Records, M551, Roll 81.

⁴⁴⁵ *The New York Times*, August 22, 1917; Emanuel Lederer to Augustin Daily, Augustin Daily Papers, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C., Y.c. 4157 (1-8)

Lulley, Charles 

Son of Emanuel Lulley, also participant of the Civil War. He was born in 1845, in a Jewish family. Along with his parents and four siblings, he was among the passengers of the *Mississippi*. In the United States they could barely make a living, so he was sort of adopted by the well-known ethnologist, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft and his wife. He was very young when the Civil War started and he is the only Hungarian to serve in the Union Navy during the Civil War. However, he got wounded and was honorably discharged for bodily disability in 1863. He died at the age of 22 in a tragic fire in Washington, D.C. on March 8, 1867. Mrs. Schoolcraft wrote a tribute to him.⁴⁴⁶

Lulley, Emanuel 

Lulley Emanuel was born in an Israelite family in Baja in 1807. He was one of the most important spies of Kossuth during the Hungarian War of Independence of 1848/49. After the end of the conflict he escaped to Turkey and remained with Kossuth, although many of the Hungarian emigrés looked at him with suspicion.⁴⁴⁷

He arrived in the United States onboard the U.S steamer *Mississippi* with his wife and five children. They lived in grave poverty during most of the 1850s. They settled down in the federal capital in 1855. Károly László mentioned him in his diary, describing him as a Hungarian Jew “who could hardly speak Hungarian” and was involved in dealing with second-hand furniture.⁴⁴⁸

At the commencement of the War between the States, Lulley was among those planning to organize an all-Hungarian regiment. The meeting held on July 18, 1861 elected him to adjutant, and his responsibility would have been equipping the soldiers,

⁴⁴⁶ Stephen Beszedits, “Notable Hungarians of the Civil War”
Accessible at: <http://www.hccc.org/A2e/A20303c.shtml> (Hereafter cited as, Beszedits, “Notable Hungarians”); Census of 1860, NA, M 653, Roll 102, 576.

⁴⁴⁷ Beszedits, “Notable Hungarians”; Perczel, *Naplóm*, I, 157.

⁴⁴⁸ László, *Napló-töredék*, 82.

had the plan not fail. Lulley, however, took part in the Civil War as an agent of the Department of Justice in the rank of major.⁴⁴⁹

After the Civil War he returned to Washington, D.C. and worked as a tobacconist. Some sources claim that he was employed by the Secret Service at the Department of Justice. He died in 1895 in Washington, D.C.

Majthenyi, Theodore

Son of Joseph Majthenyi, prominent politician, former member and secretary of the Upper House of Hungary, Theodore was born in 1838, and was only 13 years old when he had to follow his father to exile. They settled down in New Buda, Iowa, where the young boy got accustomed to the hardships of frontier life, but they soon moved on to Davenport which seemed to be more civilized.⁴⁵⁰

When the Civil War came, Theodore volunteered in the 2nd Iowa Infantry Regiment where he held the rank of sergeant. While stationed in St. Louis, Missouri, however, he was transferred to the Frémont Body Guard, which had been organized by another Hungarian, Major Charles Zagonyi. He was promoted very quickly: he became a 2nd lieutenant and adjutant within a month. Besides Zagonyi, he was the only Hungarian to participate in the famous cavalry charge at Springfield, Missouri on October 25, 1861. His heroism was praised by Zagonyi in his official report of the battle.⁴⁵¹

When Frémont was removed from the Department of West, Majthényi managed to obtain a commission as a captain at Company K 1st Indiana Cavalry Regiment on April 17, 1862. He served in that regiment until he was mustered out on December 13, 1864.⁴⁵²

Majthényi was among the few Hungarian Civil War participants, who remained in service after the end of the conflict. He was appointed 2nd lieutenant at the 6th U.S. Cavalry in February 1866. He elevated to the rank of first lieutenant on October 20,

⁴⁴⁹ *New York Herald*, July 20, 1861, 5; Beszedits, "Notable Hungarians"; Census of 1870, NA, M 593, Roll 89, 142.

⁴⁵⁰ Beszedits, "Hungarians in Missouri"; Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 6.

⁴⁵¹ For references on Majthenyi's Civil War service see, OR, Series I, Vol. 40, Part III, Serial No. 82, 728; Civil War Service Records, NA, M 540, Roll 46.

⁴⁵² OR, Series I, Vol. 42, Part I, Serial No. 87, 215.

1866. After a little bit more than two years of service, on December 23, 1868, he resigned from the army.⁴⁵³

Most sources agree that he subsequently returned to Hungary with his wife and their son. He took part in the forming of the Hungarian national army and elevated to the rank of major. Later, however, he resigned and returned to the United States. We have no further information about him, except for the date and location of his death, which, according to Lillian May Wilson was November 6, 1909 at Good Hope, Missouri.⁴⁵⁴

Menyhart, John G.

John Menyhart was born in 1829 or 1830 in Arad. At the commencement of the Hungarian War of Liberation, he volunteered and was mustered in as sergeant at the 7th Honvéd Battalion in Szombathely. He was later transferred to the Honvéd HQ to Budapest. In January 1849 he was promoted to lieutenant and served at the 50th Hunyadi Battalion.

After the defeat of the Hungarian forces, he was captured and forced into Austrian service at the 42nd Infantry Regiment. He managed to flee, however, in Altona and emigrated to the United States.⁴⁵⁵

He settled down in New York City and, similarly to other Hungarians, was having a hard time finding employment. He joined the singer-group of Kossuth emigrés, named Magyar Dalárda [Hungarian Vocalists]. According to Dancs's book, the primary purpose of the group, formed on August 17, 1851, was to try to make a living. Their first and last performance at Castle Garden was a huge failure; the group was dissolved and Menyhart sought manual labor. Károly László also mentioned having met him in New York.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵³ Beszedits, "Hungarians in Missouri"

⁴⁵⁴ Lillian May Wilson, "Some Hungarian Patriots in Iowa," *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics* (October 1913) (Hereafter cited as, Wilson, "Hungarian Patriots"), 494.

⁴⁵⁵ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, II, 471.

⁴⁵⁶ Dancs, *Töredékek*, 29; László, *Napló-töredék*, 190.

In the Civil War he volunteered in the 45th New York Volunteer regiment, and was mustered in as a captain on October 6, 1861. He resigned on June 14, 1862, the reasons of which are not quite clear.⁴⁵⁷

After the Civil War he returned to New York. In the following few decades he worked as a silver plater in Brooklyn. He married a German woman, Emma and they had 5 children. He applied for a Civil War pension in 1892. According to Bona, he died in 1904 in New York.⁴⁵⁸

Meszaros, Emeric



Based on the information gained from the Federal Census of 1880, Mészáros was born in 1824. He studied law and was admitted to the bar in the beginning of the 1840s. At the commencement of the Hungarian War of Liberation in 1848, he became a captain in one of the militia regiments, and later he was mustered in as a sergeant at 39th Honvéd Battalion in Győr. On November 15, 1848 he was promoted to lieutenant. He elevated very quickly, in April 1849 he became 1st lieutenant, and at the time of the surrender of the Hungarian armed forces, he was captain.⁴⁵⁹

He fled to Turkey first, then he was among those — including Zagonyi and Grossinger — who left Constantinople for Britain. He was one of the cadets at the Hungarian Officers' School in London organized by Hungarian exiles. Eventually he made use of the opportunity offered them by the British Government that they received 12 pounds for transportation, for paying back their debts, and for living, etc., and set sail for New York on June 26, 1851. We know for sure that he was living in New York City in June 1852. István Kinizsi mentions him as his co-worker and foreman at Freund's marble factory that year, so it seems that Mészáros was also doing all sorts of menial jobs to make a living.⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁷ Civil War Service Records, NA, M551, Roll 95; 45th New York Volunteers Regiment Muster Roll (Accessible on the Internet: <http://www.enter.net/~alw/45th/images/45off.gif>) (March 8, 2006)

⁴⁵⁸ Census of 1880, NA, T9, Roll 870, p. 332; *Directory of New York City, 1890*. (Orem, UT: Ancestry, Inc., 1999); Bona, *Hadnagyok*, II, 472, Civil War Pension Application Files, NA, No 1106335, Date: 1892.

⁴⁵⁹ Census of 1880, NA, T9, Roll 131, 421; Bona, *Kossuth kapitányai*, 408.

⁴⁶⁰ For the conditions of leaving Britain for America see, Miklós Kiss to Lajos Kossuth (March 26, 1852) London. Jánossy, *Kossuth emigráció*, II, 709-711. Loosey's Report of the list of the Hungarian Emigrants –

When the Civil War started, Mészáros volunteered at the unit called Frémont Hussars. In February 1862, the unit, along with three companies of the Hollan Horse, was consolidated into 4th Missouri Cavalry in February 1862 and the Hungarian officer became captain, and soon after major of the regiment. He took part in the Battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas (March 6-8, 1862) and he managed to defeat a smaller Confederate detachment and capture 17 enemy of soldiers, including a captain and a lieutenant. Lt. William S. Burns of the regiment, heavily criticized Mészáros for his cowardly behavior, while he ordered an unnecessary retreat and disappeared from the scene at critical moments in the battle. Burns and other officers of the regiment attempted to have Major Mészáros court martialled, but while he was arrested and found guilty of disobedience, he was not found guilty of cowardice. The major resigned from the 4th Missouri Cavalry in July, 1862.⁴⁶¹

He got another commission at Company C 1st Florida Cavalry Regiment, but he had to make do with the rank of captain that time. He was mustered out after the end of the Civil War, on November 17, 1865 in Tallahassee, Florida.⁴⁶²

Subsequently, he decided to settle down in Florida. In 1875 he purchased 160 acres of land in Tallahassee, and on the basis of the federal census of 1880, he was engaged in orange growing. He was living alone, he did not have a wife or children. He probably died there, yet the exact date of his passing away is to be clarified.⁴⁶³

(June 23, 1852) To Buol (Bericht No. 638, Haute Police, Amerika, 1852. HHStA., Vienna.); Kinizsi, "*Sánta Huszár*", 81, 120.

⁴⁶¹ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; For Mészáros's Civil War service records see, NA, M 551, Roll 96; M 390, Roll 32; Report of Brig. Gen. Franz Sigel. Pea Ridge, AR, (March 15, 1862), OR, Series I. Vol. 8. Serial No. 8., 209; For Burns and Mészáros see, William S. Burns' Papers, William L. Clements Library, The University of Michigan, Schoff Civil War Collection, Soldiers' Letters. Subject Index, 11-15.

⁴⁶² Civil War Service Records, NA, M264, Roll 1.

⁴⁶³ US Bureau of Land Management. Gen. Land Office Automated Records Project. Florida Land Records. Doc. No. 535, Statutory Reference: 12 Stat. 392; Census of 1880, NA, T9, Roll 131, 421.

Mihalotzy, Geza 



Photo courtesy: *Military Images*, Vol. 12, No.3, (November, 1990): 24.

He was born on April 21, 1825 in Nagyvárad. His father was a major in the Imperial Army, but resigned and joined the Hungarian Army in 1848 and rose to lieutenant colonelcy in a militia regiment.

Géza followed his father's footsteps and attended the military academy at Wiener Neustadt between 1831 and 1841, and later saw service at the 9th Infantry Regiment.

The outbreak of the Hungarian War of Independence prompted him to join his father in the Hungarian Army, and he served in the militia unit of Óbuda. By September he elevated to the rank of lieutenant, and in February 1849 he was promoted to 1st

lieutenant and transferred to the 14th Honvéd Battalion in the Upper-Danube Region. In June he became captain at Corps VII.⁴⁶⁴

After the defeat of the Hungarian armed forces, Mihalótyz emigrated. He tried his luck in London. Dániel Kászonyi, who knew him very well, wrote that he was working in the book binding shop owned by a Zahnsdorf, but could barely make a living. Several sources gave an account of Mihalótyz's conflict with Francis Pulszky which almost ended in a duel between them. Pulszky insulted the Hungarian officer, but refused to stand up and fight him; eventually he was slapped two times in the face by him. Most of the authors describe Mihalótyz as a restless, quarrelsome and very proud person.⁴⁶⁵

Finally his financial difficulties forced him to emigrate to the United States. He settled down in Chicago, as reported by the spies of the Austrian Court.⁴⁶⁶

In February 1861, Mihalotzy asked fellow-Hungarian, Julian Kuné, who had got acquainted with Abraham Lincoln, the freshly-elected, not yet inaugurated President, to forward his letter to him. The letter read as follows:

We have organized a company of Militia in this city [Chicago] composed of men of Hungarian, Bohemian and Sclavonic origin. Being the first company in the United States of said nationalities, we respectfully ask leave of your Excellency to entitle ourselves 'Lincoln Riflemen' of Sclavonic origin.

If you will kindly sanction our use of your name, we will endeavor to do honor to it, whenever we may be called to perform active service.⁴⁶⁷

This letter is now in the custody of the Chicago Historical Society, and at the bottom of the page one can read in Lincoln's handwriting, "I cheerfully grant the request above made." Accordingly, the Lincoln Riflemen was formed as a militia unit with Mihalótyz as colonel and fellow Hungarian, Augustus Kovats as lieutenant. They, along with the all-German unit called Union Cadets belonged to the command of George B. McClellan.

⁴⁶⁴ Bona, *Kossuth kapitányai*, 411.

⁴⁶⁵ Kászonyi, *Magyarhon*, 291-292.

⁴⁶⁶ Loosey's Report of the list of the Hungarian Emigrants (June 23, 1852) To Buol (Bericht No. 638, Haute Police, Amerika, 1852. HHStA., Vienna).

⁴⁶⁷ The original of the letter is in the custody of Chicago Historical Society. Most of the secondary sources dealing with various aspects of Hungarian-American historical links, however, published a copy or the transcript of it: e.g. Lengyel, *Americans*, 74-75, About the letter, "Collector's Piece: Mihaloczy's Letter to Lincoln," *Chicago History*, Vol. II (Fall 1949), 134.

Later, however, Mihalóty expressed his wish that his militia unit be incorporated into the newly-formed 24th Illinois Infantry Regiment which eventually happened. He was elected lieutenant colonel of the regiment, with Friedrich Hecker as colonel, and his friend, Julian Kuné as major.⁴⁶⁸

The regiment saw its first combat duty in Missouri, then was ordered to Kentucky on September 29, 1861, and later on to Tennessee and Alabama. On December 13, 1861 Hecker resigned and Mihalotzy was assigned to replace him as colonel and commander of the regiment. During the Alabama campaign, on May 2, 1862 soldiers of the 24th participated in the sacking of the small town of Athens, Alabama which further intensified anti-foreigner feelings among Americans in the North and South alike. The Union Army started an investigation and — although not court-martialled — Mihalotzy was reprimanded for having "behaved rudely and coarsely to the ladies" of Athens.⁴⁶⁹

The 24th Illinois fought its first considerable battle at Perryville on October 8, 1862, and suffered heavy casualties: 28 killed and 79 wounded. Colonel Mihalóty did not participate in the battle as he was left behind in Louisville, severely sick. In the battle of Chickamauga (September 19-20, 1863), at the engagement at Lookout Mountain, he was shot through the hand, but was not seriously wounded. However, he was severely wounded in the clashes at Buzzard's Roost Gap on February 24, 1864 when he was hit by a stray Confederate shell. He was taken to the military hospital at Lookout Mountain, where Surgeon L.D. Harlow made the following diagnosis, "Deep gunshot flesh wound of the right arm above the elbow, Haemorrhage, amounting to 16 ounces, from the anastomatica magna, took place on March 2nd." Solution of perchloride of iron was applied, but Mihalotzy died on March 11, 1864 "probably from pyaemia which succeeded the haemorrhage." According to General Order No. 63 by the Headquarters of the Department of Cumberland, one of the forts in the defenses of Chattanooga, "on the spur of Cameron Hill, immediately south of the gap and of the summit of the hill, will be called Fort Mihalotzy, in honor of Col. Geza Mihalotzy."⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁶⁸ Burhop, *Twenty Fourth Illinois*.

⁴⁶⁹ Theorore J. Karamanski, "Civilians, Soldiers and the Sack of Athens, Alabama," *Illinois History Teacher*, Volume 4:2, (1997): 48-55.

⁴⁷⁰ For the regimental history of the 24th Illinois see, 24th Illinois Regiment History. Adjutant General's Report. Available on the Internet:

Mundee, Charles 



**Charles Mundee. Photo Courtesy: Brady Civil War Photograph Collection.
Library of Congress, Call Number: LC-B813- 1524 C[P&P]**

Charles Mundee is one of the most mysterious Hungarian-born participants of the Civil War, but there seems to be enough evidence suggesting that he was indeed Hungarian. However, his identity is very difficult to trace back. According to Gábor Bona, his original name was Károly Mandl, and he was born in Nagybecskerek in 1817 in an Israelite family. (Most American sources, however, agree that he was born in 1826,

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~ilcivilw/history/024.htm> (February 10, 2007); For Mihalóczy's Civil War service records see, NA, M539, Roll 61; Mihalóczy's Report on an expedition led by him in the vicinity of Chattanooga: OR, Series I, Vol. 32, Part I, Reports, Serial No. 57, 103; Case No. 1320, *Medical History*, IX, 457; General Order No. By Brigadier-General Whipple (June 29, 1864) OR, Series I, Vol. 32, Part III, Correspondence, Serial No. 59, 520.

whereas in the Federal Census of 1860, his date of birth was indicated as 1830.) He served as a corporal in the Imperial Army between 1835 and 1845, then joined the Hungarian Army in the War of Liberation of 1848/49. He elevated to the rank of lieutenant in the honvéd artillery. Bona claims that Mandl escaped to Turkey on September 11, 1849 and later became an officer in the Turkish Army with the name Ahmed effendi. Later he was employed as a railroad engineer in Constantinople.⁴⁷¹

What can be definitely know about him is that in 1850 he was living in Leavenworth, Kansas. On May 5, 1851 he married Alice Ryan in Missouri. They continued living in Leavenworth, and Alice gave birth to their first-born son in 1854, who was later followed by 5 children. Mundeel got involved in the public life of the city very soon, and became, for example, secretary of Leavenworth Association. On the basis of the federal census of 1860, by then Mundeel was the notary public of Leavenworth.⁴⁷²

In the Civil War Mundeel served in the rank of colonel in the Army of Potomac at Smith's Division from August 1861 to January 11, 1862. On January 17, 1862 he had to go on sick-leave, but recuperated soon. He resumed his service, but was wounded again a couple of times. At the battle of Wilderness he got shot in the right thigh, later was wounded in the shoulder, and a portion of his left ear was also shot off.⁴⁷³

He showed extraordinary courage at the capture of Petersburg and Brv. Major M. Barber praised him in his official report:

[...]Command was turned over to Bvt. Col. Charles Mundeel, assistant adjutant-general of the division, who led it in person with most conspicuous gallantry throughout all the subsequent movements. With perfect confidence that the troops under his command would follow wherever he would lead the way, he pressed forward in front of the line of battle with a perfect disregard of all danger, and by his example, as well as by the skill with which he handled the command, contributed in a very great degree to the glorious achievements that day performed by the Vermont brigade.⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷¹ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, II, 438-439; Census of 1860, NA, M653, Roll 350, 100; Census of 1870, NA, M593, Roll 131, 685.

⁴⁷² William E. Connelley, *Standard History of Kansas and Kansans* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1918), II, 909; *Leavenworth, Kansas Voter Registration, 1859* (Graden Debra. *Leavenworth Voters, 1859*) (Orem, UT: Ancestry, Inc., 1998), 96.

⁴⁷³ *American Civil War General Officers Historical Data Systems*. Kingston, MA; Civil War Pension Application Files, Charles Mundeel-Alice Mundeel. NA, File No. 325552.

⁴⁷⁴ OR, Series I, Vol. 46, Part I, Reports, Serial No. 95, 971.

On April 20, 1865, upon the recommendation of Brevet Major General Getty, 2nd Division, 6 Corps, Munde was promoted to Brigadier General by brevet “for gallantry and meritorious services in the assault on the enemy's line.”⁴⁷⁵

After the Civil War, Munde returned to the civilian life, and the family moved to Tallahassee, Florida. He regularly participated in the activities of veteran associations.⁴⁷⁶

His death took place under strange circumstances. In June 1871 he was on his way back to Florida from a reunion of the Army of the Potomac in Boston, when he stopped in New York. Nobody really knows why, but for \$250 he purchased an interest in a low drinking saloon at No. 110 West Street, and was later arrested on charge of cheating a customer. He was taken to the Tombs, the central prison in New York City. On the night of June 4, 1871, he died in his cell.⁴⁷⁷

Nagy, Alexander 

Alexander Nagy was born in 1827. No information is available about his life and career in Hungary. He probably took part in the Hungarian War of Liberation, as he emigrated right after the collapse of the Hungarian cause. He was staying in Britain for some time, but later he took the opportunity that the British government financed the voyage of the Hungarian emigrés and on April 2, 1852 left London for New York onboard the *Cornelius Grinnell*.⁴⁷⁸

Once in the United States, he moved to the West and he did all sorts of menial jobs. In 1860 he was employed as a day laborer in San Jose, California. He married an Austrian woman and their first child, Alex was born in 1860.⁴⁷⁹

At the commencement of the Civil War Nagy did not jump to arms right away. He volunteered in the Union Army and was mustered in as private at Company B 2nd California Infantry only on March 30, 1864. He rose to the rank of sergeant, and was

⁴⁷⁵ Bvrt. Major Gen. Getty to Major C.H. Whittelsey (April 20, 1865), OR, Series I, Vol. 46, Part I, Reports, Serial No. 95, 958.

⁴⁷⁶ Florida Census of 1870, NA, M593, 685.

⁴⁷⁷ For an account of his death see, *The Daily Gazette*, June 13, 1871.

⁴⁷⁸ Jánossy, *Kossuth emigráció*, II, 671-672.

⁴⁷⁹ Census of 1860., NA, M653, Roll 65, 289.

mustered out at Presidio, California on May 10, 1866. Of his Post Civil War career we do not have any information.⁴⁸⁰

Nemett, Joseph

Joseph Nemett was born in 1816 in Losonc. According to Géza Závodszy, he was a professional soldier in the 4th Cavalry Regiment in the Imperial Army with the rank of 1st lieutenant. When learning the news of the outbreak of the Hungarian War of Independence, he deserted along with some 500 hussars and returned to Hungary from Polish Galicia where they were stationed at the time.⁴⁸¹

He volunteered in one of the militia regiments and was mustered in as 1st lieutenant. Later he elevated to captaincy in the 62nd Honvéd Battalion. He participated in more than two dozen engagements and was wounded several times; finally he was discharged on July 14, 1849.⁴⁸²

Subsequently to the surrender of the Hungarian revolutionary forces, he fled to Turkey, where he remained in the closest circle of Kossuth. First he was the stableman of the Governor, but after the death of Károly Mertai, he became Kossuth's cook and served in this position throughout their stay in Turkey.⁴⁸³

Nemett arrived in the United States of America onboard the steamer *U.S.S. Mississippi* on November 10, 1851, and he settled down in New York for some time. His signature can be found among those Hungarians living in New York who let their voice heard in defense of Kossuth after the assaults against him in *Courier and Inquirer* on May 7, 1852.⁴⁸⁴

We can learn from Kinizsi that Nemett had to face almost constant unemployment in New York, therefore, some time after 1853 he decided to try his luck on the Frontier and moved to Missouri and settled down in St. Louis. He made excellent use of his experience with horses, and started a practice as surgeon and horse doctor. He married a

⁴⁸⁰ Civil War Service Records., NA, M533, Roll 5.

⁴⁸¹ Bona, *Kossuth kapitányai*, 441; Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*.

⁴⁸² Bona, *Kossuth kapitányai*, 441; Perczel, *Naplóm*, II, 229.

⁴⁸³ Kinizsi, "Sánta Huszár", 56-57.

⁴⁸⁴ *New York Daily Times*, November 11, 1851, 1; *New York Daily Times*, May 21, 1852, 2.

German woman from Hessen-Darmstadt and they had two children, while their youngest daughter, Gisella died when she was 11 months old in 1860.⁴⁸⁵

At the commencement of the Civil War, Nemett enlisted in the 5th Missouri Infantry Regiment as 1st lieutenant and adjutant, and was mustered out in August 1861 at the termination of their three-month contract. However, he re-enlisted as a major at the battalion named Benton Hussars and served as its commander until the whole unit became incorporated into 5th Missouri Cavalry on February 14, 1862. He was appointed colonel and the commander of the entire regiment. The regiment took part in the battle of Pea Ridge under his command on March 6-8, 1862. He was discharged on in November 1862, when the 5th Missouri Cavalry was merged in with the 4th Missouri Cavalry regiment.⁴⁸⁶

As far as his post-civil war career is concerned, Géza Závodszy claims that he settled down in Georgia and was involved in the creation of wine culture named 'Buda'. However, it seems that he is mistaken here, as Nemett settled down in Chicago, Illinois after the Civil War and continued his practice as a veterinary surgeon and he did live in the Windy City both in 1870 and 1880. One of his daughters became the first female special examiner at the request of Federal Court; based on an article published in the *Daily Inter Ocean* she was living with her mother at No. 151 Goethe Street in Chicago in 1895. Mrs. Nemett applied for her husband's Civil war veteran pension in 1881, so it is suspectable that Joseph Nemett died in 1880 or 1881 in Chicago.⁴⁸⁷

Perczel, Nicholas

Nicholas Perczel was born in Bonyhád on December 15, 1812 in a noble family. His father, Sándor, a veteran of the Napoleonic Wars had 21 children, among the nine boys.

⁴⁸⁵ Census of 1860. NA, M653, Roll 647, 247; Concerning Lina Nemett see, Census of 1920, NA, T625, Roll 116, 6a; Missouri Birth and Death Record Database, Permanent Record of Deaths, Missouri State Archives, St. Louis, MO, Roll C10364.

⁴⁸⁶ Civil War Service Records, NA, M390, Roll 35; Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; Frederick H. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion* (Des Moines, Iowa: Dyer Pub. Co., 1908), 1312; Nemett's report on the Pea Ridge Campaign. OR, Series I, Vol. 8, Serial No. 8, 245; Heitman, *Historical Register*, II, 132.

⁴⁸⁷ Perczel, *Naplóm*, II, 229; Census of 1880., NA, T9, Roll 192, 386; *The Daily Inter Ocean*, August 13, 1895, 8; Civil War Pension Application Files, Lina Nemett. NA, Application File No. 280554 (1881)

Nicholas, and his elder brother, Mór, one of the most renowned Hungarian generals in 1848/49. They were very close to each other, and there is no denying of the fact that the more dominant Mór had great influence on Nicholas: “With Móric we had been inseparable since our childhood. We fought side by side through all the hardships of private and political life. I took my share in his struggles and victories, I was his faithful companion and follower,” Nicholas wrote about his brother in his diary. They were both students of one of the greatest Hungarian poets, Mihály Vörösmarty, and Nicholas studied law at the University of Pest. After his graduation in 1832, he became a government official in Baranya and Tolna counties. He got involved in the political movement of the Reform Age and was elected Representative in the Parliament of 1848.⁴⁸⁸

At the outbreak of the War of Liberation, he became major of the militia of Tolna County, and participated in the fights in Bácska as commander of a militia battalion. In December 1848 he joined his brother, Mór, and commanded one of the battalions in his corps. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel on April 5, 1849. Between April and July 1849, he was the commander of the fortress at Pétervárad. On July 9, 1849 he was elevated to the rank of colonel, and Kossuth appointed him to the command of the fort in Arad. However, he got into disagreement with Major General János Damjanich, supervisor of Arad, who even locked him up for a short period. After his release, he joined his brother again and took part in the battle of Temesvár (August 9, 1849).⁴⁸⁹

Similarly to other high-ranking officers of the revolutionary army, he fled to Turkey and remained with Kossuth throughout their internment. (He was sentenced to death and formally executed in his absence in 1851 by the Austrian authorities.) He left the Ottoman Empire onboard the *U.S.S. Mississippi* and arrived in New York City on November 10, 1851.⁴⁹⁰

Being one of the most prominent and highest ranking of all the Hungarian exiles in the United States, he was introduced to the finest of the social circles of New York City. He made the best possible impression on whoever he got acquainted with: Miss Catharine M. Sedgwick, daughter of Theodore Sedgwick, leading lawyer in New York,

⁴⁸⁸ Perczel, *Naplóm*, I, 6; Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*.

⁴⁸⁹ Bona, *Tábornokok*, 563-564.

⁴⁹⁰ *New York Daily Times*, November 11, 1851.

who was a distinguished author herself, wrote about Perczel in a letter to her niece, Mrs. K.S. Minot:

We were all charmed by Colonel Perczel. He is about forty-five – a fine person, [...] having a certain tone expressing purity, refinement, manliness, health, and giving to beautiful and harmonious features just the ground they want. [...] His manners, too, have a high-bred quality, kindly and gentle, with a certain reserve of delicacy, and not hauteur.⁴⁹¹

Realizing that the initial enthusiasm Americans felt towards the Hungarian cause faded away, he let himself be convinced by his major American patron, Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, to start a language school where he taught German and French to a select group of upper-class New Yorkers including “3 Protestant preachers, two married women and a young lady.” However, being hardly able to make a living from teaching, he decided to move to the Frontier. Together with Nicholas Fejérváry, they traveled to Davenport, Iowa, where he purchased a considerable portion of land in September 1852 and joined the small Hungarian community there in the spring of 1853.⁴⁹²

Nevertheless, they did not remain settled for a long time. Having learned of the events foreshadowing the Crimean War in 1854, he hoped that it may mean some progress in the Hungarian cause, therefore, sold his farm and was about to move to Europe. Finally the family wound up on the Island of Jersey, where his brother, Mór was living, too. One of his neighbors was the famous writer, Victor Hugo. They spent five years there, and due to his disappointment in the treaty ending the War of 1859, in which he felt, the Hungarian Cause was disgracefully let down, he returned to the United States and settled down in Iowa.⁴⁹³

He actively participated in the political debates preceding the Civil War and delivered speeches at several political meetings expressing his sympathies with the Republican party; he was convinced that the Southern states did not have the

⁴⁹¹ Perczel also wrote about his encounter with Sedgwick, Perczel, *Naplóm*, II, 120, 123; Sedgwick quoted at, Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*.

⁴⁹² Perczel, *Naplóm*, II, 129, 161-162.

⁴⁹³ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; Perczel, *Naplóm*, II, 168-182.

Constitutional right to secede from the Union, and he pointed out to the grave economic consequences of a possible break-up of the republic.⁴⁹⁴

At the commencement of the War Between the States, Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood of Iowa, asked Perczel to organize a volunteer infantry regiment. Although he was first hesitant as he was close to 50 then, finally he agreed and raised the 10th Iowa Infantry Regiment.⁴⁹⁵

He was commissioned on September 1, 1861 as colonel and commander of the regiment. They took part in the skirmishes in Eastern Missouri, then participated in the capture of New Madrid and Island No. 10. They particularly performed splendid in the battle of Iuka, Mississippi (September 19, 1862): second-lieutenant L.D. Immel wrote to his superior about the Hungarian colonel and his unit, "I call your attention to the great bravery of Col. Perczel, his officers and men, the gallant manner in which they fought, supported the artillery, and repulsed the enemy with great loss."⁴⁹⁶

There seemed some chance that Perczel would be promoted to Brigadier-General, but it came to nothing. What is even worse, his continuous bouts with malaria finally let him no other option but to resign on November 1, 1862.⁴⁹⁷

After the end of the Civil War, he waited eagerly for the general amnesty to all participants of the Hungarian War of Liberation, which eventually followed the Great Compromise of 1867. In 1868 he returned to Hungary and spent the rest of his life holding important administrative positions in his home county. He also participated in the veterans' movements, and was member of the Honvéd Association in Tolna County. He died on March 4, 1904.⁴⁹⁸

An edited and somewhat abridged version of Nicholas Perczel's diary was published in Hungarian in two volumes in 1977 and 1979, entitled *Naplóm az emigrációból* [My Diary from the Emigration], and is one of the most important primary sources available on the history of the Kossuth emigration.

⁴⁹⁴ Perczel, *Naplóm*, II, 184-185.

⁴⁹⁵ *The History of Jefferson County, Iowa, 1879* (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1879), 235.

⁴⁹⁶ Report of 2nd Lieutenant L.D. Immel, 1st Missouri Light Artillery, Commanding 12th Wisconsin Battery. (September 20, 1862), OR, Series I, Vol. 17, Part I, Reports. Serial No. 24, 108; For Perczel's own report on the battle see, OR, Series I, Vol. 17, Part I, Reports. Serial No. 24, 109.

⁴⁹⁷ Beszedits, Hungarians in Missouri; Heitman, *Historical Register*, II, 136.

⁴⁹⁸ Bona, *Tábornokok*, 564.

Pomutz, George

Pomutz is one of the finest examples how historical figures can become victims of strife between various ethnic groups in the United States which tend to use them in order to legitimize their presence in America and also to strengthen group cohesion within themselves. The ethnicity of George Pomutz is debated by Romanians and Hungarians, although his life is actually quite well documented; it can be known that he was born on May 31, 1818 in Gyula, Békés County, but in an ethnic Romanian family. Maria Berenyi, in her article published in the *Transylvanian Review* refers to him as a Romanian from Gyula, disregarding the fact that none of the Hungarian emigrants ever referred to Pomutz as a Romanian person. Ladislaus Újházy in his letter written on November 27, 1850 gave an account of the newly-arrived in Iowa and wrote, “Of our Hungarians four more have arrived” and mentioned Pomutz as one of them. On the other hand, in a letter to Francis Pulszky Pomutz wrote as follows about himself, “I have been member of Orthodox Church and I know the language of *those* people, I am acquainted with *their* religious needs [...] I understand the operation of *our* [Hungarian] institutions for two decades and my commitment towards them have been proved by my determinate deeds.” In the Census of 1860 he gave his nationality as Hungarian in spite of the fact that officially it did not exist, and he might have as well indicated it as Romanian. However it may be, his memory is cherished by both Hungarians and Romanians, and this might promote historical accuracy.⁴⁹⁹

The young Pomutz probably grew up in Somogy County, as many fellow exiles remembered him as having lived there. Berenyi claims that he became a prosecutor and opened an attorney’s office. At the outbreak of the Hungarian War of Independence, he became lieutenant in a militia unit around Gyula and played an important role in organizing the volunteers. During the conflict he elevated to the rank of captain and was appointed police chief of the fortress of Komárom. He was, therefore, among those granted a safe-conduct from the Austrian authorities on condition that they leave the

⁴⁹⁹ Maria Berenyi, “A Romanian from Gyula — A freedom fighter for Hungary and an American General and Consul,” *Transylvanian Review*, Vol. 7, No. 4, (Winter, 1998): 133-139 (Hereafter cited as, Berenyi. “A Romanian”); Ladislaus Újházy to Ödön Beöthy First published in *Pesti Napló* (November 27, 1850) Cited in Perczel, *Naplóm*, II, 212; Pomutz to Pulszky (February 16, 1861) In Ács, *New-Buda*, 291-295.

country. He was elected road marshal by his comrades and they founded an Emigration Society, and it seems that they set off with a colonization scheme even at this early stage.⁵⁰⁰

Pomutz arrived in New York City in February, 1850 and soon decided to move on to the West. Along with other Hungarian emigrants, he followed Ladislaus Újházy and they wound up in Iowa, and founded a Hungarian settlement they named New Buda. Pomutz, “tall blond with full beard and mustachios and light wavy hair,” as Lillian May Wilson described him, was immensely popular among the local Hungarians. John Xantus, who also spent some time in New Buda, wrote about Pomutz:

Of all the newcomers, none knew how to till the land, and, losing patience, they were all desperate. Pomutz Gyuri realized that this would break up the colony. As one of its founders, he left his own place and helped the others. [...] When his own bones were freezing, he covered and warmed up the others, when he had no boots, he gave boots to the others. This is what [he] was like and this settlement is only due to his noble soul and spirit of sacrifice.⁵⁰¹

Similarly to many others, he applied for American citizenship and was naturalized in 1855, five years after his arrival in the country.

At the commencement of the Civil War, he enlisted as 1st lieutenant on December 23, 1861, and was mustered in at Company S 15th Iowa Infantry Regiment. On April 6, 1862 he was wounded in the shoulder in the battle of Shiloh, but recuperated relatively quickly. He steadily elevated through the ranks: on April 22, 1863 he was promoted to Major, on August 18, 1864 to Lieutenant Colonel after he had commanded the 15th Iowa at the siege of Atlanta. He was brevetted colonel, and on March 13, 1865 for his gallant and meritorious services during the war, he became brigadier general by brevet. Pomutz was mustered out on July 24, 1865 along with his regiment, in Louisville, Kentucky.⁵⁰²

After the end of the Civil War, President Andrew Johnson appointed him to be consul in St. Petersburg, Russia on February 16, 1866. He was serving in that capacity until September 30, 1870. He played an important role in American-Russian negotiations

⁵⁰⁰ Berenyi, “A Romanian”, 133-134; Ács, *New Buda*, 15-16.

⁵⁰¹ Wilson, “Hungarian Patriots”, 502; Quoted in Berenyi, “A Romanian”, 135; Census of 1850., NA, M432, Roll 183, 329.

⁵⁰² Civil War Service Records, NA, M541, Roll 21; *JEP* (February 13 to July 28, 1866), 790; Heitman, *Historical Register*, II, 137.

for the Alaska Purchase. On June 17, 1874 he was appointed Consul General also in St. Petersburg, and he remained in that post until President Rutherford B. Hayes called him back. It is not known why Pomutz decided to stay in Russia after this, but he did, although he was hardly able to make both ends meet; he died poor on October 12, 1882 and was possibly buried in Smolensk.⁵⁰³

In 1913 Congress issued a decree (No. 775) in which it was proposed that his remains be taken back to the United States and re-buried at Arlington. However, World War I came, and the whole initiative was simply forgotten. In 1944 a Liberty Ship was named after him: the *S.S. George Pomutz* was launched on October 1944 and served until 1970.

As I have already pointed out, Pomutz is remembered by both Hungarians and Romanians. In his hometown, Gyula a street was named after him and in 2006 the city and its Romanian ethnic community erected a statue together in commemoration of him. In 2004 another statue was unveiled at the Falling Asleep of the Ever-Virgin Mary Cathedral in Cleveland, OH by the local Romanian-American community.⁵⁰⁴

Pulitzer, Joseph

Pulitzer is definitely the most famous of all the Civil War participants of Hungarian origin, but this is neither due to his military career, nor his Hungarian birth. He became one of the greatest newspapers editors and moguls in the history of the United States and his name today is remembered through his sponsoring the founding of Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, the most prestigious institution of its kind in the world, and the founding of the Pulitzer Prize "as an incentive to excellence," as he put it in his will.

Joseph Pulitzer was born in a Jewish family in Makó on April 10, 1847. His father, Philip was a Jewish merchant in the city; his mother, Elize Berger also came from an

⁵⁰³ Homer L. Calkin, "Iowans in the State Department and in the Foreign Service," *The Palimpsest.*, February 1956, 104.

⁵⁰⁴ *The American Romanian Orthodox Youth News* (September, 2004)

Israelite merchant family. Her younger brother, Vilmos was an officer in a hussar regiment, and soon became a model to look up to for young Pulitzer.⁵⁰⁵

His early childhood was spent in a carefree manner – his father was one of the leaders of the local Israelite community and his trading business was prospering. Even the coming of the War of Liberation in 1848 brought about further opportunities for him: he made a contract on provisioning the Hungarian troops in Southern Hungary with the revolutionary government. After the fall of the Hungarian cause, he continued his business, yet this time he made a contract with the Imperial Army. However, the memory of 1848/49 had great influence on Joseph, who developed great interest in the military and talked highly of Kossuth and the Hungarian freedom fighters all through his life.

In 1855 his father moved to Pest seeking better business opportunities. Pulitzer was educated by private tutors until his father fell sick with tuberculosis and died in 1858. (The shadow of death was constantly hanging over the Pulitzers: out of the nine children only Joseph and his younger brother Albert lived adulthood.) Philip Pulitzer's enterprise quickly went bankrupt and his widow had a hard time trying to provide for her family. Joseph attended a prestigious trading school in Pest, but it turned out that he did not have much interest in this profession.⁵⁰⁶

Instead, he tried to volunteer in Maximilian's expeditionary force preparing for Mexico in the spring of 1864, but, as he had not seen military service, was turned away. (His uncle, William Berger was member of the contingent.) Being very persistent, he traveled to France to become a legionnaire, but he was turned down there too. He moved to London, but it seems that he ran out of money, so finally he set sail for the United States, probably at the encouragement of a Union recruiting agent. He arrived in New York City broke, so volunteering in the Civil War meant not only the realization of his dreams to become a cavalry soldier, but pretty much the only means of survival, as the young man spoke no English at all. He enlisted at the 1st New York (Lincoln) Cavalry, the reasons for which he summarized:

⁵⁰⁵ For reliable biographies of Pulitzer consult, Denis Brian, *Pulitzer: A Life* (New York: J. Wiley, 2001) and Nancy Whitelaw, *Joseph Pulitzer and the New York World* (Greenboro, N.C.: Morgan Reynolds, 2000); I also made use of András Csillag's excellent biography in Hungarian: András Csillag, *Joseph Pulitzer és az amerikai sajtó*.

⁵⁰⁶ Csillag, *Pulitzer*, 26-28.

I wanted to ride a horse, to be a horse-soldier. I did not like to walk. In Europe we knew the regiments by names of celebrities. They were named for Kings or Princes. We had in Austria a regiment, Maria Theresa, named after the great Empress. So I inquired for the names of some of the regiments of horsemen, and was told of one called Lincoln. I knew who he was and so went to that regiment. I did not have any idea what it was like.⁵⁰⁷

Many of the soldiers of the regiment were German, so Pulitzer did not have problems communicating, but his English proficiency did not develop at all during the Civil War. The frail, shortsighted young man was constantly ragged and hazed by his fellow troopers, no wonder that he was relieved when his regiment was mustered out on June 24, 1865 in Alexandria, Virginia. He remained a private throughout the Civil War. He was paid off on July 7, 1865 in New York City, and he was about to search for employment: he had no trade, hardly spoke English and had 13 dollars in his pocket. For a time he was homeless, and did all sorts of menial jobs, but his physique did not enable him to do hard physical labor. Later he recalled the nights he spent outdoors at Madison Square: "That is where I also slept many a night. I had no bed when I first came to this city; I had no roof over my head. Every pleasant night until I found employment I slept upon that bench, and my summons to breakfast was frequently the rap of a policeman's club." That was the main reason why he decided to move to St. Louis, which was called the capital of German-Americans at the time, hoping for an easier integration there.⁵⁰⁸

He started out with blue-collars work in Missouri, as well, but soon got employment as a freelance journalist at the St. Louis German paper, *Westliche Post*. In the meantime, he studied law, acquired his license, but failed to start a thriving practice.

He became interested in the political life and joined the Republican Party. What is more, he was elected to the Missouri State Assembly in 1869. Still interested in journalism, in 1872 he could afford purchasing the *Westliche Post* for 3,000 dollars. He broke with the Republican Party and he was elected to the State Assembly as member of the Democratic Party. In 1879 he purchased the *St. Louis Dispatch* and merged the two

⁵⁰⁷ George S. Johns, "Joseph Pulitzer," *Missouri Historical Review* (1930-31/5), 203.; Csillag. *Pulitzer*, 29-30.

⁵⁰⁸ "Joseph Pulitzer Dies Suddenly," *The New York Times*, October 30, 1911, 1.

papers into *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* which still exists today. Pulitzer had a deep interest in the common man which remained the main focus of his exposés.⁵⁰⁹

In 1882 he purchased the *New York World*, which was working with deficit at the time. By shifting his emphasis to scandal and sensationalism, he managed to increase the *World's* circulation from 15,000 to 600,000 making it the largest daily newspaper in the United States. His famous circulation war with William Randolph Hearst, owner of the rival *New York Journal* at the time of the Spanish-American War inseparably linked Pulitzer's name with yellow journalism.

He married the niece of Jefferson Davis, Miss Kate Davis of Washington, D.C. in 1877, and they had five children.⁵¹⁰

Joseph Pulitzer died aboard his yacht in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina on October 29, 1911. Hearst, his greatest rival, called him “the founder and foremost exemplar of modern journalism--the great originator and exponent of the journalism of action and achievement,” and concluded that “in his death journalism has lost a leader, the people a champion, the Nation a valuable citizen.”⁵¹¹

Radnich, Emeric

Brother of other Hungarian participant of the Civil War, Stephen Radnich, Emeric was born in 1824. Gábor Bona claims that he was a railroad engineer in Pest prior to 1848, but when the Hungarian War of Independence started, he enlisted as lieutenant first at the 3rd, then at the 2nd Sapper Battalion. In July he was promoted to 1st lieutenant and in August he was not only transferred to the Sapper Battalion of Komárom, but further elevated to the rank of captain.⁵¹²

After the collapse of the Hungarian cause, according to its promise to the defenders of the fortress of Komárom, the Austrian government granted him a safe conduct and he

⁵⁰⁹ Csillag, *Pulitzer*, 33-45.

⁵¹⁰ Census of 1880. NA, T9, Roll 734, 392.

⁵¹¹ William Randolph Hearst, “Praise of Pulitzer as a Journalist,” *The New York Times*, October 30, 1911.

⁵¹² There are several documents in the custody of the Vasváry Collection at Somogyi Library, Szeged, Hungary. Most of these pieces of information were collected by Spencer Radnich, a direct descendant of the family, and Stephen Beszedits, by whose courtesy the copies got into the possession of the Collection. I owe thanks to Mária Kórász from Vasváry Collection for securing me copies of the relevant documents; Bona, *Kossuth kapitányai*, 490.

escaped first to Hamburg, then to Britain. Along with the Újházy family he soon set sail for America onboard the *Hermann* and arrived in New York City on December 17, 1849, as one of the very first Kossuth emigrants in the country.⁵¹³

The time, when the Census of 1850 was taken found him in Prairie, Arkansas where he was farming. Soon, however, he decided to join Narciso Lopez's filibustering expedition to Cuba, together with other Hungarians: Lopez's chief of staff, for instance, was Col. John Prágay. The enterprise turned out to be a huge fiasco: the Spanish defeated the small army, killing or imprisoning many of the participants. (Col. Prágay committed suicide to avoid falling into the hands of the Spanish) Radnich belonged to the latter group and was sentenced to imprisonment and hard labor at Ceuta in North Africa. He spent one and a half years there, although he tried his best to get out of the prison. On May 2, 1852 he wrote to Kossuth asking for money which could have opened the prison-doors; Radnich complained that the Austrians applied pressure on the Spanish that the 8 Hungarians not be released. Finally his brother, John turned to D.M. Barringer at the legation of the United States in Madrid, asking for his intervention by calling his attention to the fact that Emeric had already applied for U.S. Citizenship. Finally, on January 28, 1853, Barringer could send the following letter to Emeric Radnich:

I have the satisfaction informing you that yourself and your seven Hungarian companions in prison have been pardoned at my solicitation, by Her Majesty, the Queen of Spain, and that the necessary orders for your release will be issued asap. If it is still your wish to return to the US, you will put yourself in communication with Mr. H.J. Sprague, Consul of our Gov. At Gibraltar, to whom I have written on the subject and who will extend to you all proper protection while making your arrangements to return to your adopted country.⁵¹⁴

Radnich, indeed, returned to the United States, and settled down in New Buda, Iowa, joining the small Hungarian community there. László Károly mentions meeting him in

⁵¹³ Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, NY, 1820-1897, NA, M 237, Roll 85, No. 3068579.

⁵¹⁴ Census of 1850. NA, M432, Roll 29, 294; For an account of a Hungarian participants in the expedition see, Louis Schlesinger, "Personal Narrative of Louis Schlesinger," *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, Part I. (September, 1852), 210-225; Part II. (October, 1852), 352-369; Part III. (November-December, 1852), 553-592; Emeric Radnich to Kossuth (May 2, 1852), Jánosy, *Kossuth emigráció*, II, 811-812; John Barringer's letter to Radnich was published in *The New York Daily Times* (June 15, 1853), 3.

1859 when he was working as an engineer. In 1860 he was one of the pall bearers of Emilie Zulavsky Kossuth (1817- 1860), sister of Louis Kossuth.⁵¹⁵

At the commencement of the Civil War he volunteered in one of the Iowa Home Guards regiments, but nothing specific can be known about his career. After the Compromise of 1867 he returned to Hungary and had a prominent career. He became inspector of the Hungarian State Railways and then director of the railway Győr-Sopron-Ebenfurt. He died on January 25, 1903 in Kálóz, Fejér County. His remains were later exhumed and transported to the cemetery of Zsámbék.⁵¹⁶

Radnich, Stephen

According to his obituary, he was born in Egra, Toker, but Stephen Beszedits is right when he states that this is probably confused with Egres in Fejer County. His date of birth is July 24, 1828. Basically nothing can be known about his life back in Hungary except for the fact that he took part in the Hungarian War of Independence: some sources claim that he served in a cavalry unit under General Bem, whereas other refer to him as an artillery lieutenant.⁵¹⁷

After the surrender of the revolutionary army, he decided to leave the country. First he moved to Britain, and even wound up in Scotland, but finally emigrated to the United States. He set foot on American soil in New York City on February 25, 1850, accompanied by one of his brothers, John. (His older brother, Emeric arrived some two months earlier.) Many sources claim that he was staying in New York for a longer time learning the trade of carpentry, but when the Census of 1850 was taken, he was already living in Prairie, Arkansas. There are some references that he spent longer time in New Orleans as well, however, what is absolutely sure is that in 1856 he settled down in

⁵¹⁵ *The New York Herald*, July 2, 1860; Ács, *Magyar úttörők*, 135.

⁵¹⁶ I have been able to reconstruct this phase of Radnich's life through my regular correspondence with Stephen Beszedits.

⁵¹⁷ Thanks go to Stephen Beszedits again who located the obituary it in the public library in Leon (seat of Decatur County). It is quite likely that it was published in a Leon paper, and written by Francis Varga (Hereafter cited as, "Radnich Obituary"); Ács, *New Buda*, 61.

Decatur County, Iowa. He soon became a model farmer and he was acknowledged as an excellent carpenter. (He built the old school building in New Buda.)⁵¹⁸

When the Civil War came, Radnich followed many of the Hungarians and volunteered in the Iowa Home Guards protecting local citizens from outlaws and guerillas.⁵¹⁹

After the Civil War he purchased a farm adjoining Davis City, and soon married Laura Hainer, the daughter of fellow Hungarian exile, Ignatz Hainer. His wife, however, died in 1871 (she allegedly committed suicide), but Radnich soon married again. Some sources claim that he married his former housekeeper, Sarah Boldwan, but census data reveal that his wife's name was Dallas. They had altogether 8 living children, Dallas well outlived his husband: she died in 1934. Stephen was member of the Davis City School board for more than thirty years and worked extremely hard to promote the importance of education. He got actively involved in political life as a radical Republican. Later he became President of the Farmer's Bank in Davis City. He visited his home country in 1896, but, unlike his brothers, Emeric and John, was never really considering returning to Hungary. He died in Davis City on September 13, 1912.⁵²⁰

Rombauer, Roderick E.



One of four brothers offering their arms for the Union cause in the Civil War, Roderick Rombauer was born on May 9, 1833 in Szelestö, in Bereg County, Upper-Hungary. His father, Tivadar Rombauer was a metallurgical engineer by profession who played a crucial role in the development of metal industry in Hungary. He was founder of the iron works at Rimamurány-Salgótarján. Roderick was educated by private tutors from the age of four. The family moved to Munkács in 1833 where he attended a private

⁵¹⁸ Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, NY, 1820-1897. NA, M 237, Roll 86, No. 3106388; Census of 1850., NA, M432, Roll 29, 295.

⁵¹⁹ "Radnich Obituary"; Civil War Pension Files, Application No. 1293899 (1902)

⁵²⁰ *Grave Stone Records of Decatur County, Iowa* (Des Moines, W.P.A., 1939), 110.

elementary school. His father became director of the local Styptic Works there, and in 1845 he was director of an iron works in Gömör County.⁵²¹

When the Hungarian War of Liberation broke out in 1848, he was offered a position at the Department of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce by Secretary Gábor Klauzál which he accepted and moved to Pest. He became director of the National Weapon Factory, thus responsible for the production of most of the war material in Hungary. Roderick attended military academy in Pest, and his father was considering sending him to Switzerland to the military academy of Thun. In January, 1849 he followed his father to Oradea.⁵²²

At the end of the fights, Rombauer had to escape. He wound up in the United States and his family joined him quite soon. Roderick arrived on December 16, 1851 in New Buda, Iowa. The entire family was engaged in farming, which, unfortunately, proved to fail, therefore, they first moved to the city of Davenport, Iowa, then to St. Louis, Missouri. Roderick got a job as a railroad surveyor for the Pacific railroad, then for the Northern Cross Railroad between Quincy and Galesburg in Illinois. In the meanwhile, in 1855, his father died in New Buda which even worsened his homesickness. He even wrote poems about his sufferings caused by his longing for Hungary: "And I am man, though in loving heart/ My fatherland's saint shrine may higher rise/ And for its sufferings my soul keener smart/ The world's my home."⁵²³

Roderick was studying law in Quincy, Illinois, at the office of Williams and Lawrence, and later attended Dane Law School of Harvard University. He hardly got any money, therefore, he had to give German and fencing lessons to make a living. He obtained his L.L.B in 1858, and having been admitted to the bar, started his practice in St. Louis. For some time he lived in his office, but his practice started to prosper and he was able to pay back his debts within two years.⁵²⁴

When the Civil War was approaching, the Rombauer brothers were doing their best to organize the Pro-Union forces in St. Louis into effective Home Guards units.

⁵²¹ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; The major source for Roderick Rombauer's life is his autobiography: Rombauer, *History of a Life*.

⁵²² Béla Forgáts, "Rombauer Tivadar, az 1848 - 49. évi szabadságharc fegyvergyári igazgatója és a Rimamurány-Salgótarjáni Vasmű Rt. Alapítója," *Bányászati és Kohászati Lapok*, June 1, 1940, 177-182.

⁵²³ Ács, *New Buda*, 62; Rombauer, *History of a Life*, 15-17.

⁵²⁴ Rombauer, *History of a Life*, 19; Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*.

Roderick became captain of 1st Regiment U.S. Reserve Corps in Missouri which was the very same three-month unit in which his brother, Robert served first as lieutenant-colonel, later as colonel. After the expiration of their three-month term, he took part in organizing a home guards unit and was involved in the fightings in Southeast-Missouri as captain. According to his memoirs, he contracted a violent fever of typhoid character and had to lie in bed for several months. Once he recuperated, he joined General Frémont and served on his staff at the Mountain Department.⁵²⁵

After the end of the Civil War, Rombauer was eager to continue his legal practice from where he left it, and he had a very successful career. He was judge of the circuit court of St. Louis County from 1867 to 1870. Between 1884 and 1896, he served on the bench of the St. Louis Court of Appeals, being presiding judge for nine years. According to the Harvard University Alumni Directory, he was still practicing law in 1913, at the age of 80. After a long and successful life, he passed away on March 26, 1924 in St. Louis. He had 6 children from his wife, Augusta Koerner, whom he married on December 28, 1865.⁵²⁶

Only a few people are familiar with the fact that in Missouri there is actually a city named after Roderick E. Rombauer in Butler County about 120 miles South of St. Louis. The directory of place names of Butler County told the following story behind the origin of the name of the city:

Some of the citizens wanted to name it for George Spangler, who gave the town site and right-of-way for the road, but a vote was taken for Judge Rombauer of St. Louis. A story is told that Judge Rombauer was on the train with the first inspection group. When they came to this place, all the members of the party got off except him, and someone remarked they should name the place for him.⁵²⁷

⁵²⁵ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; Rombauer, *History of a Life*, 20-21; For his Civil War Service Records see, NA, M390, Roll 41.

⁵²⁶ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; *Harvard University Directory, 1913* (Harvard University Press, Harvard Alumni Association: Boston, MA, 1913); Rombauer, *History of a Life*, 142.

⁵²⁷ Arthur Paul Moser, *Directory of Towns, Villages and Hamlets, Past and Present, of Butler County, Missouri* (S.I.: s.n., 1975), 36.

Rombauer, Robert Julius

He was born in Szelestó, Bereg County in 1832. At the time of the outbreak of the Hungarian War of Liberation he was a student in Pest, but joined the revolutionary army without hesitation. He became an artilleryman, and on February 24, 1849 he was promoted to lieutenant. By the termination of the fights, he elevated to the rank of 1st lieutenant.

Similarly to many who were captured by the Austrians, Robert was impressed into the 39th Infantry Regiment in the Imperial Army on September 9, 1849, but was lucky enough to be discharged in 1850.⁵²⁸

He joined his father and brothers in the United States, and settled down first in Iowa, then in St. Louis, Missouri. He became a prominent member of the German community, but this does not mean that he was not planning to return to Hungary. In 1859 he wrote a letter to Francis Pulszky in which he asked him to inform him "when the time comes, and Hungary will need the arms of her children within its borders." The quick termination of the War of 1859, however, meant that their hopes vanished.⁵²⁹

In 1861 he played a major role in rallying the Pro-Union elements in St. Louis and became lieutenant colonel of the 1st Regiment U.S. Reserve Corps in Missouri, later as colonel he commanded the 1st Missouri Infantry. Towards the end of his Civil War career he was the commander of the 5th Regiment City Guard in St. Louis which was organized in September 1864 to protect the city during major General Sterling Price's invasion of Missouri.⁵³⁰

At the end of the Civil War, he returned to civil life in St. Louis and worked as editor of the local paper, the *New World*. Robert was highly interested in education and was one the most devoted proponents of the founding of the St. Louis Public Library, which was opened to the public in 1874. Rombauer was even president of the library for some time, but also president of the Board of Assessors & a member of the Board of

⁵²⁸ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, III, 51.

⁵²⁹ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; Ács, *New Buda*, 272.

⁵³⁰ Civil War Service Records. NA, M390, Roll 41; Heitman, *Historical Register*, II, 142; For his service at 5th Regiment City Guard see, OR, Series I. Vol. 41. Part III, Correspondence. Serial No. 85., 657; Pension Application Files., NA, Application No. 1846169 (1906).

Education. He is the author of one of the best histories of the Union movement in St. Louis at the outbreak of the Civil War: *The Union Cause in St. Louis in 1861; an Historical Sketch* published in 1909, and it had favorable reception. In 1922 his autobiography was released with the title *Biographical Notes of Robert J. Rombauer, 1917*.⁵³¹

His wife was Emilie Dembinsky (they got married on May 2, 1857) and the couple had three sons. Robert Roderick died on September 25 in 1925 in St. Louis and is buried at the local Bellefontaine Cemetery.⁵³²

Rombauer, Roland

Roland Rombauer was born in 1837 in Munkács. He was still a young child when the Hungarian War of Liberation was raging, and he was taken to the United States by his mother, following the head of the family, Tivadar Rombauer. Roland arrived in New York aboard the Hamburg vessel *Copernicus* on September 6, 1851, at the age of 14. Not much is known about his teenage years, but we have information that he volunteered in the Civil War.⁵³³

Similarly to his brothers, Robert and Roderick, he enlisted at Company A 1st Missouri Infantry regiment as private for a term of three months. After the expiration of his term of service, he served as sergeant at Company A 1st Missouri Light Artillery regiment. Later he joined the 1st Florida Cavalry as captain (he was promoted on August 27, 1864) and first became assistant provost marshal of the District of West Florida, which belonged under the command of Brig. Gen. Alexander Asboth), and later provost marshal. He was mustered out on November 15, 1865 along with his regiment.⁵³⁴

⁵³¹ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; Census of 1870., NA, M593, Roll 811, 442; Rombauer, *Union Cause*; Robert Rombauer, *Biographical Notes of Robert J. Rombauer, 1917* (St. Louis, Mo.: R.J. Rombauer, 1922)

⁵³² For his marriage records consult, *St. Louis Genealogical Society. St. Louis Marriage Index, 1804-1876* (St. Louis, MO: St. Louis Gen. Society, 1999), VIII, 249; Bellefontaine Cemetery, St. Louis, MO. Plot: Block 24, Lot 2524. Accessible on the Internet along with photos of his gravestone: <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=18217>. (October 20, 2007)

⁵³³ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, NY, 1820-1897. NA, M237, Reel 104, List 1307 (September 6, 1851), Vessel: *Copernicus*.

⁵³⁴ Civil War Service Records. NA, M390, Roll 41; M264, Roll 1; For his promotion see, General Order No. 37. April 13, 1865. OR, Series I, Vol. 49, Part II, Correspondence, Etc. Serial No. 104, 354.

Subsequently to the Civil War, he first settled down in St. Louis and worked as a cashier in a bank. Later he moved further to the West and set off a mining enterprise in Montana, and later was an official in the forestry service. His sudden death on November 20, 1898 was probably caused by a heart attack, as his brother, Roderick recalls it, "on a solitary path in the wilderness near Missoula, Montana." Roland Rombauer was buried near Philipsburg, Montana.⁵³⁵

Rombauer, Raphael 

The youngest of the Rombauer brothers, Raphael was born in 1838 in Munkács. He was taken to American by his family and he followed his older brothers' footsteps when he volunteered in the Civil War. Similarly to them, he sought service at the 1st Missouri Infantry regiment in which he served as sergeant. After the termination of the three months he had signed, he became a lieutenant and adjutant to fellow Hungarian, Colonel Gustav Wagner, Chief of Artillery at Cairo, Illinois. They belonged under the supervision of General Ulysses Grant, Commander of the District of Southeast Missouri, which constituted to Gen. Frémont's Western Department. Frémont laid special emphasis on secrecy, therefore, much of his communication was conducted in Hungarian: it was Raphael's responsibility to do the translations from Hungarian to English for Grant. Later he became captain of the 1st Illinois Light Artillery regiment. On August 21, he took part in the attack on Memphis, Tennessee, and he deserved special mentioning from Lt. Col. William B. Bell in his report. On October 26, 1864 he was elevated to the rank of major. On February 11, 1865 he became chief of artillery at Memphis, and continued to serve in that position until he was mustered out on August 18, 1865.⁵³⁶

Subsequently to the War Between the States, he married a woman named Emma from Kentucky, and they had five children. He was involved with the expanding railroad business, and later he established his own enterprise, Rombauer Coal Co. in Missouri.

⁵³⁵ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; Rombauer. *History of a Life*, 142.

⁵³⁶ Civil War Service Records, NA, M390, Roll 41; M539, Roll 77; Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; William B. Bell's Report. (August 24, 1864), OR, Series I, Vol. 39, Part I, Reports, Serial No. 77, 479; Rombauer appointed chief-of-artillery at Memphis, TN (February 11, 1865), OR, Series I, Vol. 48, Part I, Reports, Correspondence, Etc., Serial No. 101, 815; On his muster-out see, Memphis, TN (August 18, 1865), OR, Series I, Vol. 49, Part II, Correspondence, Etc. Serial No. 104, 1102.

The beginnings were not easy for the company, they opened only one mine called Rombauer No.1, but as it was becoming more and more prosperous, Rombauer leased up further lands up the Davis Creek Valley and 3 further mines were opened. At this stage, a rival company offered Rombauer \$30,000 for his mines and holding, but he turned down the offer. The company continued to work very successfully until his death on September 15, 1912 in Kirksville, Missouri.⁵³⁷

Rozsafy, Matthias

Born in a family owning a small tobacco shop in Komárom, Matthias Rozsafy (his original name was Ruzicska) was born on November 29, 1828. He turned out to be a very bright student, therefore, his parents intended to educate him so that he could become a clergyman. He was indeed sent to study at Pazmaneum, a theological seminary in Vienna. However, as József Szinnyei, Sr., a former student of his recalled, "He made his little circles around the girls, just like we did. I noticed this, and it came to my mind that our friend, Matthias, would not make a good clergyman."⁵³⁸

At the outbreak of the Hungarian War of Independence, he indeed quit the order, and volunteered in the revolutionary army. He was sent to the fortress of Komárom where he was involved in editing a newspaper entitled *Komáromi Értesítő*, which played a major role in buoying up the defenders during the Austrians' siege.⁵³⁹

After the surrender of the Hungarian troops, he followed Kossuth to Turkey in his internment. Along with Joseph Mack he became one of the key secret agents of Kossuth and in disguise returned to Hungary and Transylvania several times on various missions. He was even captured by the Austrians, but managed to escape. He left for London and joined the Hungarian exiles there. He was one of the students of the short-lived Hungarian Military Academy organized in the British capital. Still in Britain, in 1854, he got married. Eventually he wound up in the United States of America — according to

⁵³⁷ Cyrus R. Truitt, *History of Novinger, Mo.* (Novinger, Missouri, 1972), 4.

⁵³⁸ For biographical notes see, Perczel, *Naplóm*, I, 165; József Szinnyei, Sr. *Id. Szinnyei József komáromi históriái* (Szüepex: Tatabánya, 1997), 195-201. (Hereafter cited as, Szinnyei, *Komárom*)

⁵³⁹ Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 14.

Edmund Vasváry he set foot on American soil in 1858. Vasváry claims that he settled down in Wilmington, North Carolina, and was engaged in farming.⁵⁴⁰

When the Civil War came, however, Matthias Rozsafy moved to the North and enlisted at the Union Army. (In the U.S. he used the name Ernest M. Rosafy) He was mustered in at the 1st West Virginia Light Artillery as captain and later he became ordnance officer.⁵⁴¹

After the Civil War, he returned to North Carolina and continued farming there until 1874, then he he took his family to Washington, D.C. First he worked as a government official, then he became a clerk at the patent office.⁵⁴²

He was actively involved in the life of the Hungarian-American community. Among his biggest plans special priority was given to bringing together the dispersed Hungarian-American community. In 1891 he was one of the founders of the weekly entitled *Szabadság* in Cleveland. He was hindered by his sickness due to which he almost went blind, but he somewhat regained his eyesight after he had been operated on. He was planning to visit his mother country one last time, but he never got to actually carrying this out. János Vadona mentioned him as one of the two Hungarian veterans living at Soldiers' Home at the very end of the 1880s. He died in Washington, D.C. on May 6, 1893.⁵⁴³

Ruttkay, Albert

Similarly to the four Zulavsky boys, Kossuth's seventh nephew (he had two elder brothers), Albert Ruttkay also saw service in the Civil War. The son of Joseph Ruttkay and Louise Kossuth, Albert saw service in the Hungarian War of Liberation. He volunteered in the Fifth Honvéd Battalion, and rose to the rank of lieutenant by October 1849. On February 9, 1849 he was captured by the enemy at Piski, and was impressed

⁵⁴⁰ Kinizsi, "Sánta Huszár", 108; Vasváry, *Magyar Amerika*, 122-124.

⁵⁴¹ Civil War Service Records. NA, M507, Roll 10.

⁵⁴² Szinnyei, *Komárom*, 200; Census of 1880. NA, T9, Roll 123, 460.

⁵⁴³ Vasváry, *Lincoln*, 14; Szinnyei, *Komárom*, 201; János Vadona, *Az öt világrészből* (Budapest: Hornyánszky V. Könyvny., 1893), 256.

into the 19th Infantry Regiment of the Imperial Army stationed in Italy. He managed to flee in April 1849 and emigrated to the United States.⁵⁴⁴

When the Civil War came, he decided to volunteer. He wrote about his motivations: "[I] joined the service out of pure motives of patriotism, at a time when our Country justly demanded the firm support." His military career started in Tennessee, and became captain of 1st Battalion, 3rd US Colored Heavy Artillery at Fort Quinby, Columbus, KY. In March 1864, at the age of 22, he was promoted to major at the 1st Regiment Colored Florida Cavalry at Barrancas, Florida, where he served under the command of fellow-Hungarian General Asboth. In September 1864 he was appointed assistant acting adjutant general at the HQ of the District of West-Florida, and in April 1865 aide-de-camp to Major Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks. He resigned on May 31, 1865.⁵⁴⁵

After the Civil War, he became involved in the cotton business in Texas. He founded his own company Ruttkay and Co. from the money he inherited, and apparently he was rather successful. The exact data of his death is not known: his wife Laura filed in his Civil War pension in 1899.⁵⁴⁶

Schoepf, Albin

There are many controversies surrounding the nationality of Albin Schoepf. In most sources, including census data and biographies, he is referred to as Hungarian, although he was born on March 1, 1822 in Podgorze, Poland. His father was Polish by birth, while it seems that his mother was of Hungarian origin.⁵⁴⁷

Schoepf similarly to many of his fellow countrymen, supported the Hungarian freedom fight in 1848/49 and he was allegedly major in the Polish Legion. Subsequently to the War of Liberation coming to an end, he fled to Turkey and there were rumors

⁵⁴⁴ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, II, 72.

⁵⁴⁵ McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*, 161-162; Heitman, *Historical Register*, II, 143; Civil War Pension Application Files, NA, No. 588.502 (1899)

⁵⁴⁶ *Houston Directory 1882-1895* (Houston, TX: Morrison and Fourmy, 1894), n.p.

⁵⁴⁷ Brian Temple, *The Union Prison at Fort Delaware* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Co., 2002) (Hereafter cited as, Temple, *Fort Delaware*), 32; Census of 1880., NA, T9, Roll 513, 28.

among his contemporaries that he served in the Ottoman Army for a while. He was with General Bem until his death in Aleppo in 1850, then emigrated to the United States.⁵⁴⁸

In America he was not too picky in order to make a living: he worked as a porter at a hotel in Washington, D.C., as a coastal surveyor, and later as a draftsman at the patent office. This latter job was secured through his acquaintance with Joseph Holt, who was made Secretary of War by President Buchanan in 1857. Holt then transferred Schoepf to the War Department.⁵⁴⁹

When the Civil War came, Holt arranged him an interview with General Winfield Scott who gave him a warm letter of recommendation:

I have had an interview with Mr. Schoepf. I have become so pleased with him that I am anxious he should be brought into the military service of the US. Mr. S is very intelligent, a scientific soldier, and evidently a most trustworthy man. I have no doubt that he would make an able and efficient brigadier-general.
Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War, Sept. 24, 1861, Winfield Scott⁵⁵⁰

Scott's support secured him a Brigadier-generalship on September 30, 1861. Most of the accounts describe him as a strict disciplinarian. General Felix K. Zollicoffer, after a series of successes against the Kentucky home-guards, attacked his fortified position, called Wildcat camp, on the hills of Rock Castle County, Kentucky, and was defeated on October 21, 1861. However, a few weeks later Schoepf retreated precipitately, by order of his superior officer, from London to Crab Orchard, which the Confederates called the 'Wild-Cat stampede.'⁵⁵¹

In early 1862, General George B. Crittenden was hoping to crush Schoepf's force at Fishing Creek, or Mill Springs, but encountered General George H. Thomas's entire army, and suffered a disastrous defeat on January 19, 1862. General Schoepf's brigade led in the pursuit of the enemy to Monticello. On June 1, 1862 he went on a sick leave due to the chronic enlargement of a testicle and due to deafness caused by neuralgia in the head. After his return he commanded a division under General Charles C. Gilbert at the battle of

⁵⁴⁸ Lengyel, *Americans*, 77-79.

⁵⁴⁹ Temple, *Fort Delaware*, 32.

⁵⁵⁰ Chaille-Long, Col, *My Life in Four Continents* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1912) (Hereafter cited as Chaille-Long, *My Life*), 9.

⁵⁵¹ Chaille-Long, *My Life*, 10n.

Perryville on October 8, 1862. In March 1863 he was examined again, and the commission found that although he was in general in good health, but had a large varicocele on the left side causing considerable pain when sitting in saddle. He also felt pain in the right upper abdomen, accompanied by a cough, when on horseback. The commission declared him unfit for field service, but he was given another commission: he was appointed commander of the prison at Fort Delaware, upon an island in the Delaware river opposite Delaware City, about 40 miles below Philadelphia, on April 14, 1863 and served in that capacity until January 1866.⁵⁵²

We have many accounts of him from these years as many of the inmates kept diaries, many of which were published after the Civil War. Of course, some held him personally responsible for their sufferings, but the majority of the prisoners liked him. One described him as a “tall, rather good-looking man, with pleasant manners, [who] had been in the United States for a number of years, but spoke very broken English.” Isaac Handy, another prisoner, wrote about Schoepf, “From all I can learn, he is a mere turnkey, who has no power or authority beyond the care of prisoners. He seems, however, to be a man of humane feelings, but coarse in manner and of variable temperament.[...] He was courteous, and I thought sympathetic. His tones were mild, and his address kind.” Abram Fulkerson, Colonel of the 63rd Tennessee Infantry, even offered an explanation why Schoepf was commanding the prison, “He married a Virginia lady [Julia Bates Kelsey] who was said to be a Southern sympathizer, and on this account, possibly, the General’s actions were closely watched.” But he also concluded that “Fort Delaware was one of the best of Northern prisons.” His superiors were of the same opinion, the inspection reports always found good general conditions. In September 1863, for instance, Charles H. Crane reported, “Gen. Schoepf appears to be very zealous and attentive in the discharge of his duties and gives all his time to a personal supervision of the wants of those under his charge and labors to improve their condition.” After the surrender of the Confederate troops at Appomattox on April 9, 1865, Schoepf could not agree more with President Lincoln that the U.S. should drive back the seceded states as soon as possible. He warned the Confederate prisoners-of-war in heavily-accented English: “Your confederacy is gone up and busted. De bottom it did fall de pot, an’ you’s better get out from under the rubbish.

⁵⁵² For his appointment see, OR, Series I, Vol. 25, Part II, Correspondence, Etc. Serial No. 40, 211.

Dat’s what I tink; Git out and take allegiance to de best government vat ever was.” He paroled the officers, and they were allowed to move freely around on the island. They were finally released on July 25, 1865. Schoepf himself was discharged in January 1866.⁵⁵³

He returned to the patent office in Washington, D.C, and was living in Hyattsville, Maryland with his wife and seven children. In the early 1880s he became unfit for work, and fell so seriously ill that he could not even get up from bed. He had been having stomach problems for about sixteen years in his life, and probably his death was also caused by cancer in his stomach. He passed away on May 10, 1886 in Hyattsville, Maryland. He is buried at the Congressional Cemetery in the federal capital.⁵⁵⁴



“Garrison Weekend” in Fort Delaware with reenactors impersonating General Albin Schoepf and his wife. Photo Courtesy: The Smithsonian Associates

⁵⁵³ Hamilton, DeRoulac J.G. “The Prison Experiences of Randolph Shotwell” *The North Carolina Historical Review* (July 1925), 345-346; Handy, Isaac W.K. *United States Bonds. A Journal of Current Events During an Imprisonment of Fifteen Months at Fort Delaware* (Baltimore: Turnbull Brothers, 1874), 28; “The Prison Experience of a Confederate Soldier’ By Abram Fulkerson, Late Col. 63rd Tennessee Infantry, Army of Northern Virginia,” *Southern Historical Society Papers* (Vol. XXII), 129; Crane’s report quoted in Temple, *Fort Delaware*, 46; *Ibid.*, 144.

⁵⁵⁴ Congressional Cemetery, Washington, D.C.: Range 84, Site 108.

Schoney, Lazarus, M.D. 

Dr. Schoney was born in Pest on October 18, 1838. According to his obituary he studied at the Kaiser Carl Ferdinand University in Prague and graduated in 1857. He went to the United States in 1860. He continued his studies in America as well and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1862. Upon his graduation, he volunteered in the Union Army and served in the positions of assistant surgeon and contract surgeon from 1862 to 1865. Later he elevated to Chief Contract Surgeon and had his office at the Senate Chamber, and he not only got acquainted with President Lincoln, but they became friends. He was employed at the Lincoln Hospital in the federal capital, but he did active field duty as well; for instance, he participated in the battle of Gettysburg.⁵⁵⁵

Subsequently to the Civil War, he went to Paris and Berlin to continue his studies, and after his return to America in 1868, he practiced medicine. He became professor of pathology and clinical microscopy at the New York Eclectic Medical College, was Fellow of the New York Academy of Sciences, of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and member of the American and New York State Medical Associations. He was one of the most prominent members of the New York Microscopical Society. He had a son, Emanuel, who was born in Washington, D.C. in 1863. Dr. Schoney died in New York on February 17, 1914.⁵⁵⁶

Semsey, Charles 

It is fortune that there are two excellent scholars who carried out extensive research on Semsey: József Pozsonyi, director of the Andor Semsey Museum in Balmazújváros

⁵⁵⁵ For biographical information on Schoney consult his obituary: *The New York Times*, February 19, 1914, 9.

⁵⁵⁶ Beszedits, "Tauszky"; *Medical History*, IX, 159; For information about Schoney's Civil War career consult: Civil War Pension Application Files, NA, No. 1027.898 (1914); Census of 1880. NA, Roll 896, 45; Schoney as member of the New York Microscopical Society: *The New York Times*, February 4, 1882, 2.

studied the origins of the Semsey family, whereas Stephen Beszedits focused on Charles Semsey himself.⁵⁵⁷

Thanks to their work, we have a very clear picture of Semsey's career. He was born in Bártfa, Sáros County in 1829. His family was one of the oldest noble families in the country, his father was a rich landowner and influential local politician.

Charles was studying to become a clergyman, but the revolutionary wave of 1848/49 captivated him and he, just like thousands of the finest of Hungary's youth, volunteered to serve in the Hungarian Army. He took part in a number of engagements and by the end of the conflict rose to the rank of 1st lieutenant.⁵⁵⁸

He fled the Austrian retaliation which followed the collapse of the Hungarian cause: he wound up in the Ottoman Empire. However, he gave credit to the word of Austrian government emissaries who promised him and other refugees amnesty if they return to Hungary. Instead of the promised amnesty, he was impressed into the Habsburg Imperial Army.

Luckily enough, he was able to desert in Hamburg and escaped to London. He made use of the British governmental support financing the Hungarian refugees' transatlantic voyage, and on April 7, 1851 he left Liverpool for New York.

Once in the United States, Semsey had a really hard time trying to find employment. Without any qualification and fluency in English, he was hired for menial works only. He worked as a carver, and along with a fellow Hungarian, John Menyhart, was employed at Beniczky's daguerreotype studio in New York City, where he chose to stay despite all the hardships.⁵⁵⁹

In 1853 he saw an opportunity in joining the German Legion of mercenaries recruited by the British government to supplement the regular troops in the Crimean War. Semsey moved to Britain, but never saw action. He married Franziska Haubold, a German immigrant from Dresden, and their first child, a girl named after her mother, was born

⁵⁵⁷ Beszedits's article is the definite source to turn to for information on Semsey: Stephen Beszedits, "Charles Semsey: Hungarian Patriot, Union Soldier, and Ellis Island Official," *Vasváry Collection Newsletter* (2004/1) (Hereafter cited as, Beszedits, "Semsey")

⁵⁵⁸ Beszedits, "Semsey"; Bona, *Hadnagyok*, II, 135-136.

⁵⁵⁹ Ács, *Kossuth papja*, 184.

while still in London in 1858. The family then returned to New York and that is where Semsey's son, Kálmán was born in 1859, followed by three brothers and a sister.⁵⁶⁰

At the commencement of the Civil War, Charles Semsey volunteered in the Union Army. He was mustered in at Company F 20th New York Volunteer Infantry regiment as captain on May 3, 1861. On July 6, 1861 he resigned and later joined an all-German regiment, the 45th New York Volunteers in which unit he was mustered in as major on October 7, 1861. Along with the regiment, he took part in several battles and engagements, but in June 1862 he resigned and was discharged on June 15, 1862.⁵⁶¹

Back in civilian life, Semsey continued his previous profession and was involved in photography. Later, mainly due to his service in the Civil War, he was awarded a position with the U.S. Customs Service. He also worked for the immigration bureau of the Port of New York at Castle Garden and on Ellis Island, and eventually he became member of the Board of Special Inquiry.⁵⁶²

Semsey was very actively involved in the life of the Hungarian-American community, he frequently published articles in the Hungarian-language newspaper, *Nemzetőr*. He was among the founders of the Hungarian Grant and Wilson Campaign Club at 26 Delancey Street. He was eager to participate in veterans' associations, too. He was elected president of the Veteran Association of the 45th Regiment New York Volunteers Infantry for the year 1882.⁵⁶³

Charles Semsey passed away on June 18, 1911 in New York City and was laid to rest at the Koltes Lot of Lutheran Cemetery.

Solyom, Louis

Although a scion of one of the oldest Hungarian families, he was born in Pienkowce, Poland in 1836. His father was Hungarian, whereas his mother was of Polish origin. The family had an estate at Antalfa – Solyom later named his own estate close to Washington, D,C, Antalfa.

⁵⁶⁰ Beszedits, "Semsey"; Census of 1860. NA, M653, Roll 798, 994.

⁵⁶¹ Heitman, *Historical Register*, II, 145; Civil War Service Records., NA, M551, Roll 126.

⁵⁶² Census of 1880. NA, T9, Roll 879, 17.

⁵⁶³ *The New York Times* (September 30, 1872), 1; *The New York Times* (September 23, 1880), 5.

In 1842 he joined the Imperial Army, served at a Lichtenstein hussar regiment and served for 8 years. He contemplated joining Garibaldi in 1859, but the war was over by the time he could have got to Italy.⁵⁶⁴

He arrived in the United States in June 1861. He joined the Union Army right away: he enlisted as lieutenant at 31st New York Volunteer Infantry. He participated at the battle of Antietam, and was even wounded. According to Vasváry, in May 1863 he escaped being captured by swimming across the Rappahannock. He was mustered out as 1st lieutenant in June 1863.⁵⁶⁵

After the Civil War, he worked as an accountant in New York City, and also at a second hand bookstore. In 1868 he was hired by the Library of Congress and he worked there in the next 46 years! He had a special talent with languages: he was fluent in 20 languages and could make himself understood in a dozen more. He translated books from Turkish into English, and he even received an award from the Sultan in 1899.

He was married. His wife, Sallie was from Maryland and they had four children.

Louis Solyom died in Bethesda, Maryland on April 23, 1913.⁵⁶⁶

Spelletich, Stephen

Son of Felix (Bódog) Spelletich, a prominent Hungarian politician of the age, member of the Hungarian Parliament, Stephen was born in 1844. His father participated in the Hungarian freedom fight in 1848/49 and he had no other option but to escape after the surrender of the Hungarian forces. (He was even hanged by the Austrian authorities 'in effigy'.) He took his family with him and they emigrated to America. Felix purchased a farm close to Davenport in Iowa called Hickory Grove. Compared to other emigrés from Hungary, they were relatively well off, as Nicholas Perczel concluded after his visit to them: "His [Spelletich's] house is a quite nice, one-storey brick building, which is very

⁵⁶⁴ Vasváry, *Magyar Amerika*, 148.

⁵⁶⁵ Civil War Service Records. NA, M 551, Roll 133; Civil War Pension Application Files, NA, No. 351622, (1880).

⁵⁶⁶ Eugene Pivány, "Sólyom C. Lajos emléke, 1836-1913," *Budapesti Hírlap*, April 8, 1914; Vasváry, *Magyar Amerika*, 149-150; Census of 1880. NA, T9 Roll 512, 408.

rare to see here, as most farm houses are log buildings. His land is about 430 acres, and he has a nice forest as well, which is very valuable as is a rarity again."⁵⁶⁷

Stephen was barely 18 years old, when the Civil War broke out, but he volunteered at once. He enlisted on April 24, 1861 at 2nd Regiment Iowa Infantry as private. He participated in a number of engagements, all of which the most remarkable was the capture of Fort Donelson (February 11-16, 1862). In this battle he distinguished himself so that he received a recommendation in the official report of Maj. Gen. H.W. Halleck (According to Vasváry he shot sixteen rebels single-handedly):⁵⁶⁸

Headquarters Dept. of Mississippi; St. Louis, April 1st 1862.

Hon. J. B. Leake—Sir, With the approval of the Secretary of War I have directed to be presented to Stephen Spelletich, of Co. C. 2d Iowa Infantry, the rifle which he so heroically captured at the battle of Fort Donelson.

Very respectfully your obedient servant,

H. W. Halleck, Maj. Gen.⁵⁶⁹

Spelletich soon joined the 14th Missouri Cavalry and served there until the end of the Civil War. He remained in the military even after the end of the war, and took part in the fights against various Native American tribes. However, his health was damaged by the harsh conditions during the years he spent in the army, and he died in 1868. He is buried at Oakdale Cemetery in Davenport, Iowa. His family returned to Hungary with the exception of his brother, Michael who stayed in Davenport and became a respected citizen: he was justice of peace and member of the school board. His descendants still live in and around Davenport.⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁷ Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 5; Perczel, *Naplóm*, II, 162, 241; Ács, *New Buda*, 61; Spelletich's letter to Kossuth (June 8, 1852); Jánosy, *Kossuth emigráció*, II, 913-914.

⁵⁶⁸ Civil War Service Records, NA, M541, Roll 25; Vasváry, *Lincoln*, 5.

⁵⁶⁹ Quoted in *Davenport Daily Gazette*, April 14, 1862.

⁵⁷⁰ Civil War Service Records., NA, M390, Roll 45; Stephen Spelletich, Oakdale Cemetery, Davenport, No Dates, Lot. 130, add. 13. *Tombstone Records Adm. Graves Registration Project*. (Washington, D.C., n.p.), 737.

Stahel, Julius H. 

For a detailed biography see, Chapter “The Triumvirate”

Szabad, Emeric 

Similarly to Charles Semsey, we are fortunate as we have two books at our disposal published with biographies of Emeric Szabad. What is more, one of them, is Szabad’s diary written at the Libby Prison, published by Stephen Beszedits. The Hungarian-born scholar devotes an entire chapter of the book to Szabad’s life and career, what follows here is mainly based on it.⁵⁷¹

Szabad was born Frereych in 1822, and changed his name in 1848. Having completed his studies, he started working as a language teacher and he became very successful, authoring two textbooks within three years. He was also involved in journalism, and got several articles published in magazines, among them the periodical *Életképek*.⁵⁷²

In 1848 he joined the Hungarian revolutionary army immediately, and he not only served in the armed forces, but was an official in the War Department, as well. He continued, however, writing and authored a series of articles analyzing domestic and foreign political issues.

After all hope of Hungarian independence vanished, Szabad chose to emigrate: he first fled to Germany, then moved to London. He continued his literary career, contributed to the 8th edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica* and in the 1850s authored three volumes: one on Hungarian history, another on state policy of the modern times, and the third on the two Napoleons and England.⁵⁷³

⁵⁷¹ Beszedits, *Libby Prison Diary*; Tibor Frank, “Marx egy anonim forrása,” In Tibor Frank, *Marx és Kossuth* (Budapest: Magvető kiadó, 1985), 107-127.

⁵⁷² Emeric Szabad, *Elméleti és gyakorlati angol nyelvtan magyar hangokkal kifejezett kiejtéssel* (1848) and *English and Hungarian Dialogues. For the Use of Travellers and Stuedents* (1851)

⁵⁷³ Emeric Szabad, *Hungary Past and Present: Embracing its History from the Magyar Conquest to the Present Times* (A.&C. Black, Edinburgh, 1854); *The State Policy of Modern Europe, from the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century to the Present Time* (Longman, Brown, Green, Longmand and Roberts, 1857); *Two Napoleons and England: Two Pages of History* (London, 1858)

In 1859 Szabad was attracted to Italy by the promise of a new freedom fight. He joined the Hungarian Legion in Garibaldi's army. He served in the rank of captain. He published a book in Italy as well on the events preceding and following the peace treaty of Villafranca in 1859.⁵⁷⁴

At the news of the outbreak of the Civil War, he crossed the Atlantic Ocean and soon joined the Union Army. Szabad joined fellow Hungarian emigés Charles Zagonyi, Nicolai Dunka and Philip Figyelmessy, who served in General Frémont's Mountain Department. When, however, Frémont was relieved from command in the summer of 1862, Szabad also became out of active service for a while. He made excellent use of this period and he wrote his first book in the United States: *Modern War: Its Theory and Practice* (1863). When he returned to service, he was assigned to the staff of Ge. Sickles. On October 27, 1863 he was captured by Confederates while performing scouting duty near Licking Run, Virginia. He was taken to the infamous Libby Prison, where he remained imprisoned until his exchange on March 15, 1864.

After his release it took him some time to recover, then he returned to active service to the 5th Army HQ under the command of Major General Warren. He performed meritorious service, and was brevetted major and lieutenant-colonel of volunteers on March 13, 1865, then, for his gallant service in the battles around Petersburg, he elevated to the rank of colonel-by-brevet of volunteers in March 26, 1865. He was severely wounded in the neck and right shoulder which had permanent effects on him. He was mustered out on October 7, 1865.⁵⁷⁵

Returning to civilian life, Szabad was appointed assistant collector of customs at the port of Galveston, Texas. He suffered a lot from the pains caused by his war wounds, but he continued writing. He published a book on General Grant's presidency in French in 1868. He authored a series of letters on army management for the *New York Tribune*.⁵⁷⁶

According to the Census of 1880, Szabad was living in Loredó, Texas and, although his occupation was not indicated, it can be known that he was engaged in various businesses involving estate transactions. He died on March 13, 1894 at Boerne, Texas in

⁵⁷⁴ *L'Europe avant et après la Paix de Villafranca* (Turin, 1859); On his service in the Hungarian Legion see, Lukács, *Magyar Légión*, 68-69.

⁵⁷⁵ Civil War Pension Application Files, NA, No. 119.305 (1886); Beszedits, *Libby Prison Diary*, 68-72.

⁵⁷⁶ Emeric Szabad, *Le Général Grant président de la république américaine par le colonel Émeric Szabad* (Paris, 1868).

a "dangerous and alarming malady." A monument over his grave was erected only on August 14, 1987.⁵⁷⁷

Szabo, Ignatz

Virtually nothing can be known about Szabó's life prior to his arriving in America. Based on Census data, he was born in 1834, whereas upon his enlistment in 1861 he was registered as being 29 years of age. Either way, he served in the Hungarian War of Independence as sergeant, being too young to be an officer.⁵⁷⁸

After the fall of the Hungarian cause, he fled to Turkey. He arrived in Britain in June 1851, then emigrated to America and joined the great number of Hungarians who decided not to stay in the East Coast, but moved to the Frontier. He wound up in New Buda along with the Rombauer brothers on December 16, 1851. Later he hoped to find better opportunities and moved to Ohio.⁵⁷⁹

At the commencement of the Civil War, he enlisted at Company E 106th Ohio Infantry Volunteer Infantry regiment as 1st lieutenant August 20, 1862. On December 7, 1865 he was promoted to captain and transferred to Company A. He was mustered out on June 29, 1865 in Nashville, Tennessee.⁵⁸⁰

All that we know about his life after the war is that he returned to Montgomery, Ohio and was farming. He died in 1875.⁵⁸¹

Szabo, Joseph

Even less information is available concerning Joseph Szabo, than about his namesake, Ignatz Szabo. All we know is that he was born in Hobály in 1817. A special report of the

⁵⁷⁷ Census of 1880. NA, T9, Roll 1332, 320; Texas General Land Office. Abstracts of All Original Land Titles Comprising Grants and Locations. Austin, TX, 19--., File: 16986. (May 26, 1886), Vol. 36, Patent: #127; Beszedits. *Libby Prison Diary*, 73.

⁵⁷⁸ Census of 1870 (<http://www.ancestry.com>) (February 10, 2007)

⁵⁷⁹ Kinizsi, "Sánta Huszár", 79; Ács, *New Buda*, 62.

⁵⁸⁰ Civil War Service Records., NA, M552, Roll 107.

⁵⁸¹ Census of 1870 (<http://www.ancestry.com>) (December 11, 2007); U.S. Veterans' Gravesites, 1775-2006. (<http://www.ancestry.com>) (December 11, 2007)

Hungarian emigrants in America, carried out for the use of the Austrian court, mentioned him living in New York City in 1852. In the Civil War he enlisted at Company I 39th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment under the command of another Hungarian emigré, Frederick D'Utassy. He served as a private. His Civil War pension application was filed in 1911.⁵⁸²

Szegedy, Matthias 

There is hardly anything we know about the life and career of Szegedy. Not even his exact date of birth is easy to identify: he was either born in 1825 or 1828. He is likely to have participated in the Hungarian War of Liberation, and was among the first to leave the country after the surrender of the Hungarian troops. He fled to Britain, but soon made up his mind to emigrate to the United States. He arrived in New York on July 3, 1850 onboard the vessel *Jamestown*.⁵⁸³

There is no trace of Szegedy in the archival sources in most of the 1850s. In 1860 he was living in St. Louis, Missouri and was employed as fencing master. He was single.⁵⁸⁴ No wonder that he decided to join the ranks of the Union Army, and tried to make use of his military experience. He was commissioned on December 27, 1861 as first lieutenant at Company A 1st Missouri Volunteer Cavalry. After a brief service, he resigned on February 28, 1862, the reason of which is not clear. No further details have come to the surface so far concerning his life in the Post-Civil War Era.⁵⁸⁵

Takats, Francis 

In the literature there is apparently some confusion, as there were two Hungarian soldiers in the American Civil War with the name Francis Takats. One of them served at

⁵⁸² Civil War Service Records., NA, M551, Roll 138; Civil War Pension Application Files, NA, No. 1 702.883 (1911); Loosey's report of the list of the Hungarian emigrants – June 23, 1852 To Buol (Bericht No. 638, Haute Police, Amerika, 1852. HHStA., Wien) Cited in Jánossy, *Kossuth emigráció*, II, 956-963.

⁵⁸³ Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, NY, 1820-1897. NA, M237, Roll 90, No. 14304175;

⁵⁸⁴ Census of 1860., NA, M653, Roll 652, 461.

⁵⁸⁵ *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of Missouri* (December 31, 1863), NA, M82, UA 43, 338.

the 39th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment as captain, whereas the other has remained unmentioned in the previous works. The journal *Hazánk s a Külföld* published a series of four articles in 1867 which were based on this latter Takats's diary and his letters sent to the editor.⁵⁸⁶

According to these articles, Takats was born in Békéscsaba in 1840. In his hometown he learned the trade of locksmith, and later worked as a bookbinder. His adventurous spirit attracted him to Constantinople, where he worked as a bookbinder and waiter during the two years spent there. He was contemplating with the idea of joining the Hungarian Legion in Italy, but eventually he decided to emigrate to the United States. He arrived in Boston on November 4, 1862. Within a couple of months we find him in New Orleans, where he decided to join the Union Army. He enlisted Company K 47th Massachusetts Infantry regiments as corporal on December 10, 1862. He often complained both about the inexperienced officers and men in the regiments. He served through his nine-month term without ever being engaged in battles — he was discharged on July 4, 1863. Scarcely a week later, he joined the 1st Louisiana Cavalry regiment in which he claimed to have met another Hungarian serving there named Eisner (also Aisner) with a pseudonym.⁵⁸⁷

His baptism of fire took place at Franklin on October 3, 1863, but he fought his first big battle at the Caloaso river on November 9, 1863. The regiment spent the harsh winter close to New Town, and in March he was transferred to an arms factory in Franklin for a brief period, then he returned to his unit. On May 14, 1864 he took part in a real cavalry engagement at Morganza in which his friend, Aisner was captured by the Confederates. On June 7, 1864 he was promoted to sergeant. In his diary he gives an interesting account on how he captured a Hungarian serving in the Confederate Army, named Szabo. He spent the Christmas of 1864 in New Orleans, and in January 1865 his regiment was stationed close to Baton Rouge. In February he was court martialled as he was accused of

⁵⁸⁶ “Egy magyar iparos Törökországban s Amerikában,” *Hazánk s a Külföld*, April 4, 1867, 214-216; April 11, 1867, 234-236; April 18, 1867, 247-251 and April 25, 1867, 267-268. (Hereafter cited as, “Magyar Iparos”)

⁵⁸⁷ “Magyar iparos”, I, 215-216; II, 234-236; Civil War Service Records., NA, M544, Roll 39.

murder, and the court sentenced him to death. Luckily, the real murderer was arrested and he escaped the gallows.⁵⁸⁸

The 1st Louisiana was then ordered to Alabama where they joined General Sherman's Army. That is where the end of the Civil War found them. However, they were first ordered to Austin, Texas, and then to New Orleans. Takats was mustered out on December 20, 1865.

After the Civil War he opened a small grocery in New Orleans, and he lived there in 1867. Nothing can be known about his further life.⁵⁸⁹

Takats, Francis

According to his Civil War muster roll files, Takats was born in 1826. However, Hungarians sources claim that he was born in Székesfehérvár in 1823. He studied the trade of joiner, and later enlisted in the Imperial Army. In 1847 he was corporal at the 1st Imperial Hussar Regiment. He deserted and joined the Hungarian revolutionary army in the fall of 1848. He was mustered in as sergeant, but on February 22, 1849 he was promoted to lieutenant. At the end of the conflict he was stationed at the fortress of Komárom.⁵⁹⁰

After the end of the war, he escaped from the country. He emigrated to the United States in September 1851. All that can be known about his career in America is that he participated in organizing the 39th New York Volunteers, nicknamed Garibaldi Guards, and on May 28, 1861 he enlisted at Company G, under the command of Col. Frederick D'Utassy, another Hungarian emigrant. He served in the rank of captain, and as adjutant paymaster.⁵⁹¹

Starting in June 1861, however, there developed a disagreement between the two Hungarians over rations and pay. On July 8, 1861 Takats convinced two other captains and 8 lieutenants of the regiment to sign a paper asking D'Utassy to resign, but the lieutenant colonel of the unit refused to present their petition to the colonel. Next day,

⁵⁸⁸ "Magyar iparos", III, 248-251; Civil War Service Records, NA, M387, Roll 4.

⁵⁸⁹ "Magyar iparos", IV, 268.

⁵⁹⁰ Bona, Kossuth kapitányai, 313.

⁵⁹¹ Civil War Service Records., NA, M; Catalfamo, *The Thorny Rose*, no pages indicated.

two companies refused to drill, and when D'Utassy ordered Takats to give up his sword and go under arrest. He resisted and ordered his men to load and follow him. He marched his company to Washington, and let themselves arrested at the order of General Mansfield. They were imprisoned at the Treasury Building, and following the investigations, Takats was discharged on November 19, 1861.⁵⁹²

We have no further information about his life except for an account that he was still alive in 1894, living in San Francisco.⁵⁹³

Tauszky, Rudolph, M.D. 

Rudolph Tauszky, one of the Hungarian surgeons serving in the American Civil War, was born in Pest in 1833. He started the medical faculty of the University of Pest before the outbreak of the Hungarian War of Liberation. One of his professors was Dr. Ignác Semmelweis (1818-1865), who discovered the cause of puerperal, or childbed, fever, which very often proved to be fatal at the time, and introduced antiseptic into the Hungarian medical practice. Tauszky was on the staff of the St. Rókus Hospital in Pest between 1850 and 1856, what is more, he became professor of obstetrics at the University of Pest in 1855. In Europe he was one of the pioneers of creating antiseptic conditions at operations. Tauszky obtained his medical degree in 1861, then went to Italy and joined Garibaldi's Hungarian Legion as captain and staff physician.⁵⁹⁴

He was one of the foreigners to be attracted to the United States by the Civil War. He volunteered in the Union Army as 1st lieutenant and assistant surgeon of volunteers on September 24, 1863. He worked as a hospital surgeon, but also performed field duty. Later he applied for a position as a regimental surgeon, however, when he was offered one as an assistant surgeon at the 1st Colored Regiment, he declined it without hesitation.⁵⁹⁵

⁵⁹² Takats to D'Utassy, (June 15, 1861), D'Utassy Papers, New York Historical Society, New York; About Takats's role in the mutiny see, *New York Herald*, July 16, 1861, 2; *The Washington Star*, July 9, 1861.

⁵⁹³ *Történelmi Lapok* (1894), 200.

⁵⁹⁴ The definite biography to turn to is Stephen Beszedits's "Dr. Rudolph Tauszky — a Hungarian Physician in the American Civil War" published in *Vasváry Collection Newsletter* (2003/1)

⁵⁹⁵ Rudolph Tauszky to the Surgeon General US Army (August 31, 1863) Personal Papers Tauszky, RG 94, National Archives.

He was honorably mustered out of service on July 27, 1865. He returned to Europe and continued his studies specializing on women's diseases in various hospitals of Vienna, Austria. Upon his return to America, he joined the regular army for a brief period, then, in 1868, he settled down in New York City.⁵⁹⁶

He started his medical practice which proved to be very prosperous. Tauszky became a highly respected member of the New York medical circles. He had a keen interest, however, in the situation of the needy in New York, and as a member the city's Board of Health, he could do a lot to promote sanitary reform. His pet project was a free warm bath system for the winter which would have been self supporting. Although there were many prominent citizens supporting the plan, it would have cost \$200,000, and it eventually came to nothing.⁵⁹⁷

Tauszky was affiliated with the Mount Sinai Hospital, originally founded as Jews' Hospital in 1852, the first Jewish institution of its kind in the United States, and was in charge of one of the gynecology clinics. Around 1880 he became interested in the field of mental illnesses and was soon acknowledged as an expert on insanity.⁵⁹⁸

In 1883 he married the barely 20-year-old Frances Rosenthal, who, however, did not understand her husband's devotion to his profession. Their regular arguments and the death of Tauszky's father possibly all contributed to his deep depression. On January 3, 1885 he shot at his wife and then attempted to commit suicide. Luckily the wounds of neither of them were serious. After a series of examinations Tauszky was declared insane and was to be confined at Bloomingdale Asylum. He stayed there for the rest of his life. He passed away on November 21, 1889.⁵⁹⁹

Tenner, Louis 

Not much is known about the early life of Louis Tenner. He was probably born in 1832 or 1833 in Hungary. He emigrated to the United States after the end of the

⁵⁹⁶ Beszedits, "Tauszky".

⁵⁹⁷ *The New York Times*, November 24, 1884, 2.

⁵⁹⁸ Beszedits, "Tauszky"

⁵⁹⁹ Tauszky's shooting was widely covered in the New York papers: "Dr. Tauszky's Two Shots," *The New York Times*, January 5, 1885, 8; His insanity: *The New York Times*, January 23, 1885, 8. and *The New York Times*, January 25, 1885, 4; For his obituary see, *The New York Times*, November 24, 1884, 2.

Hungarian War of Liberation, and all we know for sure is that he was in New York in 1852.⁶⁰⁰

What seems to be sure is that, similarly to many Hungarian emigrants living in New York, Tenner enlisted at Company G 39th New York Volunteer Infantry on May 28, 1861. He served as private and was discharged on July 26, 1861. A couple of months later, however, he volunteered again, and was mustered in as captain at Company B 7th New Jersey Infantry on November 4, 1861 in the place of Cpt. John Craven, who had been discharged the previous month. He resigned on April 15, 1862.⁶⁰¹

After the Civil War he returned to New York and lived there as a worker. He was actively involved in the life of the Hungarian-American community, and in 1902, at the centenary celebrations of Kossuth's birth, the *New York Times* mentioned him as one of the three Hungarian Civil War veterans in New York City still alive. The exact date of his death has not been identified.⁶⁰²

Toplanyi, Alexander

Toplanyi was born in 1825. He took part in the Hungarian War of Independence: he joined the 4th Honvéd Battalion in Pozsony. He fought in the campaigns in Southern-Hungary, and rose to the rank of corporal. In October he was promoted to lieutenant and transferred to the 26th Honvéd Battalion in Eger. Another unit in which he served was the 43rd Honvéd Regiment. In May 1849 he elevated to 1st lieutenant and was appointed on the staff of General Klapka. The end of the fights found him in the fortress of Komárom serving as captain.⁶⁰³

After the surrender of the Hungarian forces to the Austrian-Russian coalition forces, he left Hungary by making use of the safe-conduct granted by each defender of Komárom. He emigrated to the United States, but his name appears again in the sources at the outbreak of the Civil War.⁶⁰⁴

⁶⁰⁰ Census of 1870., NA, M593, Roll 791, 308; Ács, *Észak-amerikai polgárháború*, 49.

⁶⁰¹ Civil War Service Records., NA, M550, Roll 23; Stryker, *Record of Officers*, 309.

⁶⁰² *The New York Times*, September 19, 1902, 9.

⁶⁰³ Bona, *Kossuth kapitányai*, 610.

⁶⁰⁴ József Szinnyei, *Komárom 1848/49-ben: Napló-jegyzetek* (Budapest: Aigner Lajos, 1887), 318.

He enlisted at Company H 5th New York Heavy Artillery as private, but he rose to the rank of 1st lieutenant by February 24, 1862. However, in April 1863 he was summoned in front of an examining board which concluded about him,

[Toplanyi is] totally deficient in Infantry tactics and considering the length of time he has been in service deficient in Artillery tactics. He knows little or nothing about guard duty and very little about the internal economy of a company. He is a foreigner but understands the English language exceedingly well. Nothing has appeared unfavorable to his character as a man of honor, or to his general habits of life; but he does not seem to have shown the disposition to learn his duties and his course has been meddlesome and troublesome. He is not qualified to hold the position of first lieutenant in the Service of the United States.⁶⁰⁵

Toplanyi refused to accept the decision of the board, and asked for another examination. This second time he could answer all the questions, and Brigadier General Barry found him an excellent officer, "equal if not superior to any artillery officer." What is more, Col. William Birney proposed in his report: "It would gratify this command, both officers and men, to have him added to the list of our captains."⁶⁰⁶

Indeed, upon the recommendation of Colonel Birney, Toplanyi was elevated to the rank of captain at the 3rd Colored Infantry Regiment on August 21, 1863. However, in February 1865 he had to stand trial for assaulting one of his black soldiers. Pvt. John Banks testified that while he was on guard duty, Toplanyi, drunk, approached him and charged him with sleeping on the post. When he requested that witnesses be called, the Hungarian captain started beating him. It seems quite sure, however, that racist sentiments did not have anything to do with what happened. Toplanyi said that he had felt insulted by the soldier's lack of discipline and morale. All his officers substantiated that Toplanyi rejected corporal punishment, and his superiors praised him as a disciplinarian. Brigadier General E. P. Scammon wrote to the Hungarian, "[You managed to transform] a company of untaught Negroes into a highly disciplined and most efficient company of Artillery." This incident was revealed, however, a serious defect in Toplanyi's character: alcoholism. He had already had bouts with drinking in his former unit, and this seemed to be the

⁶⁰⁵ Civil War Service Records., NA, M551, Roll 141; Findings of a Board of Examination. (April 13, 1863), LR AGO V.S. 1863, NA, RG 94, M767.

⁶⁰⁶ Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 127.

gravest problem this time as well. The court found him guilty and dismissed him. His corps commander, Major Gen. Quincy A. Gillmore intervened and Toplanyi managed to obtain a pardon and retain his reputation.⁶⁰⁷

After the Civil War, he settled down in New York City. He got actively involved in the life of the Hungarian community in the city: he was elected president of the Hungarian Grant and Wilson Campaign Club. In 1869 he married Leila Blydenburgh in Brooklyn and the subsequent year their daughter, Leila Grace Toplanyi was born. In 1884 he got to visit his home country and spent some time in Budapest.⁶⁰⁸

Toplanyi's post Civil War career was not void of scandals either. He worked in the position of marshal at Marine Court, and he was charged by a Dr. Wells with disorderly conduct in 1872. According to the charges, Toplanyi was performing a levy upon the doctor's furniture, but he threatened that he would shoot him if he had not surrendered his watch. He also removed pieces of medical equipment without authorization. During his trial it turned out that there were more numerous complaints of him for extorting illegal fees, disorderly conduct, and several instances of intoxication. (His ex- brother-in-arms, William S. Andrews recalled that he liked Toplanyi "for his fine education and family." However, he added, "His one fault was his weakness for liquor.") On January 9, 1874, Mayor William F. Havemeyer removed him from office.⁶⁰⁹

Alexander Toplanyi died in 1886. His name is commemorated on the African-American Civil War Memorial in Washington, D.C.⁶¹⁰

Ujffy, John Henry

He was born on March 14, 1820. There are family stories that he fought for the Hungarian independence as an officer, in contrast to his father and brother who supported the Austrian cause. After the fall of the Hungarian cause, he emigrated to the United

⁶⁰⁷ Civil War Service Records., NA, M589 Roll 87; Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 127; Brig. Gen. E.P. Scammon to Alexander Toplanyi (December 7, 1879) Pension File Alexander S. Toplanyi, NA, RG 15.

⁶⁰⁸ Information on marriage and his child derives from *Genealogy of a Stanton family from New York City* (www. Stanton-IIc.com) (March 12, 2007); *The New York Times*, September 30, 1872, 1; *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, June 12, 1884.

⁶⁰⁹ *The New York Times*, December 2, 1873, 2; *The New York Times*, December 13, 1873, 5; *The New York Times*, January 10, 1874, 8; *The New York Times*, January 7, 1894, 10.

⁶¹⁰ African American Civil War Memorial – Alexander S. Toplanyi, Plaque A-9.

States in 1850. He settled down in Fayette County in Texas. He married Ida Hermine Walz in 1855, and they had 5 children. In 1857 the family purchased a 320-acre land in Bexar, Texas.⁶¹¹

They moved to La Grange, and opened a pharmacy. He was a charter member of the Fayetteville Masonic Lodge. In January 1863 he enlisted for 3 months and was mustered in as 3rd sergeant at the 22nd Brigade, CSA at La Grange and served in Columbus and Houston. His unattached company was undrilled, had no uniforms, and was armed with hunting rifles and shotguns. After the expiration of his term, he re-enlisted for 6 months as private at 1st Regiment Infantry, 22nd Brigade, Texas State Troops at Camp Columbus, TX.⁶¹²

After the Civil War, he returned to Texas. In 1867 he contracted yellow fever. The exact date of his death is not known.

Vandor, Joseph

There are quite a few references to the early period of Vandor's life, but the discrepancies are not at all rare. For instance, based on the Census of 1860, it can be inferred that he was born in 1824. There are, however, other sources claiming that he was born in 1822 or 1823. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that he was born on one of these three dates. *The Milwaukee Journal* wrote that his original name was Unteschield. His name probably derives from one of his father's estates, as he was the baron of Vándorhely.⁶¹³

According to the *Wisconsin Patriot*, Joseph attended the Imperial Military Academy in Vienna, and served in the Imperial Army under the command of Gen. Radetzky. When the Hungarian War of Liberation broke out in 1848, however, he joined the Hungarian Army. He served under General Bem and based on information gained from Mr. Roy Gustrowksy, it was widely known in his later Civil War regiment that he had participated

⁶¹¹ McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*, 146; Texas Land Title Abstracts, Certificate No. 697. (www.ancestry.com) (April 1, 2006)

⁶¹² Civil War Service Records., NA, M227, Roll 37.

⁶¹³ *The Milwaukee Journal*, October 24, 1891, 11; *History of Fresno County, CA* (Historic Records Co., 1919, Los Angeles, CA.), Vol. 2, 1311-1312.

in 19 battles. In one of the battles he was severely wounded in the left breast and leg and he was confined in a Russian prison, but eventually managed to escape. (The *North American and United States Gazette* gave an account of his impressment into the Austrian Army as a private, and also, how he managed to desert on the Bohemian border.)⁶¹⁴

He arrived in the United States in May 1850. Soon he started to study law under Chief Justice Parker in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and was admitted to the bar in 1854. The *Wisconsin Patriot* reported that about that time he was employed as an instructor at Maryland Military Academy, and also in Richmond. Afterwards he moved to Wisconsin and started a legal practice in the city of Milwaukee. In 1857 he appears as member of the law firm 'Corson&Vandor'. His overall conduct in his profession earned him excellent reputation. He got actively involved in the public life in Milwaukee. On August 2, 1857 he married Miss Paulina Knoblesdorff.⁶¹⁵

When the Civil War broke out, the best sign of Vandor's influence and popularity was that he was requested by Wisconsin Governor Alexander Randall to organize an infantry regiment and become its colonel. Vandor, who was recommended to the governor as "a brave man and a thorough disciplinarian", raised the 7th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment which was mustered into service in August 1861 with Vandor in command. According to sources, he still have problems in making himself understood in English which caused several instances of misunderstandings during the early drills. Also, he was described as extremely stubborn, and showing little patience towards amateur soldiers probably this resulted in the alienation of his officers from him to such an extent that they drafted a letter and presented it to him asking for his resignation. Vandor was actually wounded not much later; there are rumors that one of his own dissatisfied soldiers shot him in the shoulder. Anyway, due to the effects of his wounds, and his immense unpopularity, he resigned his command.⁶¹⁶

⁶¹⁴ *Wisconsin Patriot*, September 21, 1861; *North American and United States Gazette*, May 9, 1850.

⁶¹⁵ *North American and United States Gazette*, May 9, 1850; *Wisconsin Patriot*, September 21, 1861; *The Milwaukee Journal*, October 24, 1891, 11.

⁶¹⁶ Civil War Service Records, NA, M559, Roll 31; "The Stubborn Colonel," *The Union Standard*, Vol. 11, No. 9, (October 2003), 7; Pension Application Files, NA, Application No. 225 543 (1876); About the hearsay on the attempt to murder him consult: Vasváry Collection, V1a/22.

After his resignation, Abraham Lincoln appointed him U.S. consul to Tahiti in 1862. He served in this position for almost six years. Particularly in the first phase of his consulship, he was frequently criticized for not being effective enough in attracting business interests to Tahiti. His salary was \$1,000 which was barely enough to support his family. In 1868 President Andrew Johnson recalled him, and he returned to the United States. With his wife and children, he decided to settle down in San Francisco, California, and started a legal practice. Besides his thriving practice as an attorney, he had a deep interest in culture and education: in 1870 he was one of the initiators of establishing a public library in the city of San Francisco.⁶¹⁷

His health constantly deteriorated due to his wounds contracted in the Civil War, which gradually developed into a cancer. He died on May 7, 1873 in San Francisco, and was buried at the city's National Cemetery.⁶¹⁸

Varga, Alexander

He was one of the at least 5 sons of Hungarian-born master saddle and harness maker, Benjamin Varga and Vida Magdelene. According to James P. McGuire's excellent book *The Hungarian Texans*, he had participated in the Hungarian War of Independence in 1848/49 (no data confirms this statement) and sought refuge in the United States after the surrender of the Hungarian Army. First he settled down in Iowa, later started a business enterprise as a saddler in San Antonio, Texas. Having established himself in the United States, he sent for his sons living in Hungary in 1858 and they not only joined him, but worked in the saddlery as well.⁶¹⁹

Alexander, who was born in 1836, was one of them. When the Civil War came, he volunteered in the 3rd Texas Infantry Regiment (also designated as Lockett's Regiment), yet no further information is available on his military service.⁶²⁰

After the war, he returned to San Antonio, and founded his own harness and saddle company and opened a shop on Military Plaza. He married Natalie Kleabe from Prussia,

⁶¹⁷ *JEP*, (January 6, 1862), 71; *Daily Evening Bulletin*, December 13, 1862; *JEP*, (July 25, 1868), 359.

⁶¹⁸ *Daily Evening Bulletin*, May 9, 1873; San Francisco National Cemetery, Section OSA, Row 69, Site 8.

⁶¹⁹ McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*, 121.

⁶²⁰ McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*, 123.

and they had three sons: Howard, Alexander, Jr. and Leonel. After 1891 he managed the Lone Star Saddlery Company, which was taken over later by his son, Leonel. Alexander died on September 24, 1921, and was buried in the San Antonio City Cemetery.⁶²¹

Varga, John 

The eldest son of Ben Varga, John was born in 1833. Similarly to his brothers, he joined his father in San Antonio in 1858, and worked as a saddler in the family shop. At the commencement of the war of the rebellion, he joined the 3rd Texas Infantry Regiment, and was mustered in a private. In 1863-64 he performed service at the ordnance depot in San Antonio as a saddler in 1863 and 1864. In 1865 he was treated with rheumatism in the Confederate General Hospital at Shreveport, Louisiana. After the defeat of the Confederacy, he was paroled on June 8, 1865.

In 1866 he married Roselia Deák, who was a chambermaid from Transylvania, but his wife died soon, probably when giving birth to their first child. John Varga later married the German Katherine Keuppers. He remained a saddler and was also engaged in farming in San Saba County. On October 21, 1875, the *Galveston Daily News* reported that a John Varga was arrested because of murder and assault with the intent or murder, however, it is impossible to validate that this was indeed the very same person. In the 1890s he worked for C.J. Langholz in San Antonio. He died in San Antonio in 1915 and his body was buried at the local Confederate Cemetery.

Varga, Joseph 

Joseph Varga was one of the sons of Ben Varga. He was born in 1839, and emigrated to the United States at the age of 19. He also learned the trade of saddlery, but when the Civil War broke out, he followed the example of his brothers, and volunteered in the Confederate Army. He was mustered in as a private on March 27, 1862 at Captain

⁶²¹ Alexander Varga. Census of 1870, NA, M593, Roll 1575, 168; Census of 1880, NA, T9, Roll 1291, Film: 1255291, 583; *San Antonio City Directory, 1891, 1892-94* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler, 1891, 1892)

Maclin's Company at the 1st Light Artillery Regiment. The end of the war, however, found him serving as a sergeant at Company C, 8th Texas Field Battery.⁶²²

After the war he helped out in his father's shop, but in 1876 he opened his own saddlery. His saddlery and that of his brother's, Alexander's, were on the opposite sides of the same street. He married a German woman and they had six children. Joseph was actively involved in the life of the local community: for instance, he served on the jury a number of times. He died in San Antonio in 1898. By then, his son, Ben, had entirely taken over the family business.⁶²³

Varga, Paul

Born in 1843, Paul was the youngest of the Varga brothers to serve in the Confederate Army. He volunteered at Captain D. H. Ragsdale's Company, Texas Mounted Volunteers, 5th Texas Cavalry, and was mustered in as a private. He took part in a number of engagements in New Mexico including the battles of Glorietta and Peralta in 1862. He was captured by the Union troops at Santa Fe, where he was responsible for the Confederate wounded. He was later exchanged at Vicksburg, Mississippi. Upon returning to his unit, he became its saddler and remained in that position up to the end of the war.⁶²⁴

After the Civil War, he was farming in San Saba County, and in 1876 he owned a 160-acre farm. In 1888 he gave land to the Methodist Episcopal Church for the Richland Mission Church which named its chapel and the cemetery after him. Paul Varga died on August 5, 1912.⁶²⁵

Vertessy, John

According to Tivadar Ács, Vertessy was born on December 25, 1825 in Csákvár. He participated in the Hungarian War of Independence and was promoted to lieutenant on June 29, 1849 while serving at 91st Honvéd Battalion. After the collapse of the Hungarian

⁶²² McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*, 123.

⁶²³ Census of 1870, NA, M593, Roll 1575, 260; Census of 1880, NA, T9, Roll 1291, Film: 12555291, 83b; On him serving on jury see, *The Galveston Daily News*, January 21, 1892.

⁶²⁴ McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*, 124; Confederate Soldiers Civil War Service Records, NA, M227, Roll 37.

⁶²⁵ Census of 1870, NA, M593, Roll 1575, 119; McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*, 124.

cause, he was impressed into the Imperial Army as private on October 31, 1849, but much to his fortune, he managed to desert on September 1, 1850 in Tirol. He escaped to Britain and was involved in the activities of the Hungarian exiles in London. He was a cadet of the short-lived Hungarian Military Academy.⁶²⁶

Having received British governmental support financing the Hungarian emigrés' transatlantic voyage, Vertessy left Britain for New York onboard the vessel *Cornelius Grinnell* on April 2, 1852.⁶²⁷

All we know about his first eight years in the United States is that he worked as an assistant at a pharmacy and later he studied medicine and obtained a medical degree in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He started his practice there first, then, at the end of the decade, he moved to Dayton, Ohio. The Census data reveals that his parents, John and Theresa Vertessy were living there, and his father was also a physician.⁶²⁸

When the Civil War broke out, he joined the Union Army. He was mustered in as captain at Company E 106th Ohio Infantry Regiment on August 11, 1862. He served throughout the war, and was mustered out on June 29, 1865 in Nashville, Tennessee.⁶²⁹

After the war, he returned to his civil profession. He opened a pharmacy in Milwaukee, but, if Ács's information can be relied on, it went bankrupt. In 1880 he had a practice in Milwaukee as a physician. He never got married. He died in Milwaukee on March 23, 1903, and was buried at Wood National Cemetery in Milwaukee.⁶³⁰

Vidor, Charles



Vidor was born in Buda-Pest on October 16, 1834. There are some sources claiming that he was studying for priesthood, however, it is more likely that he attended military school. All that is certain is that he was among those who left Hungary after the collapse

⁶²⁶ Ács, *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban*, 104; Bona, *Hadnagykok*, III, 457; Kinizsi, "Sánta huszár", 108.

⁶²⁷ Jánossy, *Kossuth emigráció*, II, 671-672.

⁶²⁸ Census of 1860, NA, M653, Roll 1015, 36 and 49.

⁶²⁹ For Vertessy's Civil War service records see, NA, M552, Roll 112; Henry A. and Kate B. Ford, *History of Hamilton County* (Cleveland, OH: L.A. Williams, 1881) – For Vertessy's career consult, Chapter XI. "Military History of Hamilton County"

⁶³⁰ Ács, *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban*, 105; Census of 1880, NA, T9, Roll 1436, 400; Wood National Cemetery, Milwaukee, WI., Plot 13 167.

of the Hungarian freedom fight in 1848/49. He joined Ladislaus Újházy, probably the most prominent pioneers of the Kossuth emigration, and first he moved to Britain, then soon emigrated to the United States. His cabin mate onboard the *Mount Stuart Elphinstone* was another Hungarian exile, Eugene Kozlay, later also participant of the American Civil War. They set foot on American soil in New York on February 25, 1850. Unlike many Hungarians, including Újházy, who set out to establish a Hungarian colony in Iowa, Vidor stayed in New York City for at least 3 years. In the mid-1850s Vidor was living in Galveston, Texas. It is difficult to tell what exactly brought him to this city: he might have wanted to join Újházy who was living near San Antonio then, or he intended to move to San Antonio. Anyway, he settled down in this relatively small, yet thriving community in Texas.⁶³¹

In 1855 he gained employment as clerk by Lent Munson Hitchcock, a successful merchant and landowner, and he even married Hitchcock's daughter, Emily in 1858. Unfortunately, death cast its shadow on the family: both of their children passed away in infancy and Emily herself died in 1860 or 1861.⁶³²

When the Civil War was approaching, Vidor volunteered at the Galveston Lone Star Rifles, one of the most popular militia units in the state of Texas. The Hungarian was mustered in on December 3, 1860 as 4th sergeant. Later this unit became part of 1st Regiment Texas Infantry, and was assigned to Hood's Texas Brigade. In November 1862, Vidor was appointed clerk for the brigade and division quartermaster, while on February 9, 1864 he was promoted to the rank of captain in the Confederate Quartermaster Department. Eventually he was paroled at Greensboro, NC. on May 1, 1865.⁶³³

After the Civil War he got very actively involved in the business life and entered into a partnership at the firm of John Walston, Wells and Vidor, which lasted until 1885. A daily paper introduced them as, "one of the oldest and best houses in the cotton factorage business in Galveston, and handles as of the staple every year as any house, and always to

⁶³¹ For sharing me the text of his yet unpublished excellent biography of Charles Vidor, my appreciation goes to Stephen Beszedits: "The Life and Times of Charles Vidor" (Hereafter cited as, Beszedits. "Vidor"); McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*, 135.

⁶³² Beszedits, "Vidor", 3.

⁶³³ Civil War Service Records., NA, M227, Roll 37; General and Staff Officers, C.S.A., NA, M818, Roll 24; Vidor gained a special mention in Maj. Gen. Carter L. Stevenson's report of the campaign in Tennessee at the end of 1864: OR, Series I. Vol. 45. Part I, Reports, Correspondence, Etc. Serial No. 93, 698.

the best advantage of their patrons.” Vidor was also charter member of the Galveston Cotton Exchange. And he was also one of the founding members of the city’s very first volunteer firefighting companies organized in 1868.⁶³⁴

On January 23, 1866 he married the 16-year old Anna Walter, and the couple had altogether 10 children, out of which only 5 lived to see adulthood.

Vidor seemed pretty successful until his business partner, president of the Cotton Exchange, Clinton G. Wells committed suicide, on January 26, 1885. This event signaled the end of Walston, Wells and Vidor which went bankrupt. Vidor changed career and entered the insurance business as member of Hughes, Stowe and Co. in 1885 and this partnership lasted until 1901. Charles Vidor passed away on September 14, 1904.⁶³⁵

Vöneky, Louis

One of the least-known Hungarians who offered their arms to the cause of the Union, Louis Vöneky was born in 1830 in Ungvár. He claimed to have been a lieutenant at the 5th Radetzky Hussar Regiment, yet his name is nowhere to be found in the Pre-1850 rosters.⁶³⁶

At the commencement of the Hungarian War of Liberation, Vöneky deserted and enlisted at the Hungarian Army as lieutenant. He was soon placed on General Bem’s staff, and ended the war at the rank of 1st lieutenant.

Like many other soldiers of the revolutionary army, he was impressed into the Imperial Army as private at 5th Hussar regiment. When he was placed in the reserves at last, he immediately joined Garibaldi’s Hungarian Legion in Italy. He was bitterly disappointed over the Peace Treaty of Villafranca in 1859, and he emigrated to the United States.⁶³⁷

Once in America, he settled down in St. Louis, and got integrated into the German-speaking population of the city. In the Civil War, he joined the Union ranks relatively late: he became captain at 68th Colored Infantry regiment in 1864, later major of the 51st

⁶³⁴ McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*, 135.

⁶³⁵ Morrison and Fourmy’s *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1888-1889, 1890-1891* (Galveston, TX: Morrison and Fourmy Co., 1891), 209; Beszedits. “Vidor”, 5-6.

⁶³⁶ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, III, 491.

⁶³⁷ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, III, 491.

Missouri Infantry regiment. As a field officer at the latter unit, he had to face the lack of understanding between him and his subordinate officers. He attributed this to his outsider status of a foreigner in America: “I am so unfortunate as to be a German — a Dutchman; that I never do anything by halves and cannot conform myself to do business in a lackadaisical style, but follow up my purposes and duties without regard to persons or showing favor or affection to anyone.”⁶³⁸

This latter regiment of his was organized solely for the period of reconstruction, and he felt that all of his actions and initiations were thwarted because of his being an immigrant. Eventually, he made up his mind and resigned.⁶³⁹

Being disappointed with America, he returned to Hungary after the Compromise of 1867. He took part in the activities of veteran associations. The exact date of his death is unknown, but he was still alive in 1890. His name is commemorated on the African-American Civil War Memorial in the American federal capital.⁶⁴⁰

Waagner, Gustave

Gustave Waagner was born on May 5, 1813 in Peterswald-Schönwald, Bohemia in a German-speaking family. Between 1828 and 1830 he attended the Academy in Vienna studying military engineering. Having obtained a degree as an engineer, he served two years in the Imperial Army as an artillery officer, then worked as an engineer in Pressburg. When the Hungarian War of Liberation started, he joined the revolutionary army, and played a major role even in the first stage of organizing the Hungarian war machine, particularly of artillery forces. On December 2, 1848 he obtained the rank of 1st lieutenant, and barely a week later he was made captain in the regular army. He even elevated to the rank of major on March 8, 1849. He was the governmental supervisor of

⁶³⁸ For Voneky’s service records in the Civil War see, NA, M390, Roll 50 and M589, Roll 89; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of Missouri for the Year Ending December 31, 1865* (Jefferson City: Emory S. Foster, Public Printer, 1866), 580-581; Louis Voneky to Maj. H. Hannahs (June 28, 1865), Service Records Louis Voneky, 51st Missouri Infantry, NA, RG 94.

⁶³⁹ Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 227.

⁶⁴⁰ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, III, 491; Louis Voneky. African American Civil War Memorial, Plaque C-78.

gunpowder production in Southern Hungary, and on June 27, 1849 he was appointed director of saltpeter production in the entire country.⁶⁴¹

After the surrender of the Hungarian forces to the Austrian-Russian coalition, Waagner followed Kossuth and sought asylum in Turkey. The sources mention him in Viddin in Kossuth's closest circle, and in most of them he is referred to as Hungarian. He left the country with the Hungarian ex-governor onboard the steamer *U.S.S. Mississippi*. He arrived in New York on November 10, 1851. As one of the closest associates of Louis Kossuth, and probably the most experienced artillery officer among the Hungarians, he received a special task from him: Kossuth appointed him director of the ammunition factory established in Morningsville with the aim of producing war material for the new Hungarian freedom fight which they hoped would come soon. The factory was, however, soon closed down, along with the belt factory at Weaverton, under the directorship of Alexander Asboth.⁶⁴²

Practically nothing is known about Waagner in America in the rest of the 1850s. All we know for sure is that he offered his service at the Union Army in the Civil War, and he was mustered in as colonel under General B. McClellan. His first assignment was to go to Cairo, Illinois and supervise the training of the green troops. McClellan was very pleased with Waagner's performance; he was particularly impressed by the fortifications that had been erected according to the plans of Waagner.⁶⁴³

Soon General Frémont, who had recently become commander of the Western Department, appointed Waagner chief of artillery at Cairo, in which position his direct superior was Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. Waagner was highly suspicious of the military capacities of American volunteers. "It is most astonishing" he told William Howard Russell, correspondent for the *Times* of London, "how ignorant they are; there is not one of these men who can trace a regular work. Of West Point I speak not, but of the people about here, and they will not learn of me---from me who know [sic]." Waagner carried out numerous reconnaissance missions around Cairo, and captured Belmont, Missouri on September 2, 1861. He was soon transferred to St. Louis, Missouri, at Frémont's

⁶⁴¹ For an excellent brief biography of Waagner consult, Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; Bona, *Tábornokok*, 710; Kinizsi, "Sánta huszár", 182; Ács, *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban*, 19.

⁶⁴² *The New York Times*, November 11, 1850; Jánossy, *Kossuth emigráció*, II, 702-703.

⁶⁴³ Beszedits, *Hungarians in Missouri*; Heitman, *Historical Register*, II, 157.

Departmental Headquarters. Grant could not but praise him, “Col. Waagner, Chief of Ordnance, left here this evening in pursuance of orders telegraphed to him. His energy and ability have been of great service to me, particularly in directing reconnaissance, and his loss from this post will be felt.” However, when Frémont resigned, Waagner also found himself out of commission in the Western front. On March 5, 1862 he was appointed lieutenant colonel of the 2nd Heavy Artillery, and became colonel of the regiment just nine days later. He was mustered out on August 26, 1862.⁶⁴⁴

As far as his career subsequent to the Civil War is concerned, unfortunately not much has been discovered. It seems very likely that he was living in the National Home for Disabled Soldiers in Virginia in 1890 and he died on December 27, 1891. He was probably buried at Hampton National Cemetery in Virginia.⁶⁴⁵

Wadgymer, Arthur, M.D.



One of the most adventurous careers among Hungarian Civil War participants was definitely Wadgymer's. He was born probably in Debrecen on May 26, 1824. He attended high school in Pest, then studied medicine in Vienna (1839-1847). In 1848 he served as a surgeon at 35th Battalion. Later he moved to the Netherlands and became a surgeon in the Dutch Navy, serving between 1850-1852. According to L.E. Daniell, he participated in the Crimean War as well.⁶⁴⁶

James McGuire gives account of a strange story according to which Wadgymer and his father fell in love with the same ballerina, and the son finally killed his father in a duel. He mentions this event as the main reason for Wadgymer's leaving Hungary for the United States, and also the fact that his brother vowed to take revenge on him.⁶⁴⁷

⁶⁴⁴ Russell, *My Diary*, 341; For Waagner's report of the expedition on Belmont consult, OR, Series I, Vol. III, Serial No. 3, 152; John Y. Simon, ed., *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*. 24 volumes (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969), 295.

⁶⁴⁵ Ronald V. Jackson, Accelerated Indexing Systems, Comp. VA Census, 1800-1900 (Provo, UT, Ancestry.com, 1999-), 234; Hampton National Cemetery, Hampton City 23667, Virginia, USA. Plot 6562. Cemetery Road at Marshall Avenue. (US Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administration)

⁶⁴⁶ McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*, 164.

⁶⁴⁷ McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*, 164; L.E. Daniell, *Types of Successful Men of Texas* (Austin, Texas: Von Boeckmann, 1890), 241.

In the mid-1850s he was practicing medicine in Louisville, Kentucky. He fell in love with a woman, but her parents opposed their marriage. Wadgymer, however, eloped with his love and they got married. This marriage, unfortunately, also ended tragically: his wife fell overboard on a steamer on the Ohio River and drowned. In 1858 he married again, this time Maria Theresa Drewes of Bredenborn, Prussia. Later they had to leave Louisville, as, according to the sources, his brother was in hot pursuit of Wadgymer. The family moved to St. Louis, Missouri. There were 11 children born out of this marriage, but only four of them lived the adulthood.

When the Civil War broke out, the Hungarian physician became 2nd lieutenant of ordnance in the Provisional Army of Tennessee, and he also worked with the C.S. Laboratory in Nashville. (There are some claims that he served as a surgeon at the Memphis South Artillery in Chattanooga, 1862-63.) In 1863-64 he was already living in Cairo, Illinois, where he advertised himself as “Physician, Surgeon and Accoucheur. Women and Children’s Diseases on Specialty.”⁶⁴⁸

After the Civil War he got back to his practice as physician in St. Louis and he taught botany at a local pharmaceutical college. Later he even became professor of chemistry and botany at Humboldt Medical College, 1866-67, and he published several articles in medical journals.

At a later stage of his life, he moved to Texas and this period was full of scandals. He acquired a young man’s body to perform autopsy, which was illegal at the time, and when he was about to get started, it turned out that the person was not dead, but in a deep coma! At the end of the 1870s, the *Galveston News* gave account of Wadgymer’s performing an amputation on a wounded Mexican person. Next day, the locals found the limb at the doctor’s hog pen, while the hogs were eating it. The writer of the article expressed the common sentiment of the citizens that Wadgymer deserved to be “tar and feathered”, however, somehow he managed to escape punishment. But, of course, he had to move again. In 1882 he became first physician in Carrizo Springs, Texas.⁶⁴⁹

He published a report on the diseases of cattle and horses in Medina County in 1877, and another one on the agriculture of the same county for the United States Department

⁶⁴⁸ *Cairo Business Minor and City Directory for 1864-65.*

⁶⁴⁹ McGuire, *Hungarian Texans*, 164; *The Galveston Daily News*, April 13, 1878.

of Agriculture. He also authored papers in medical journals, such as the one entitled “Trichina spiralis, and its origin and development in muscle, and the disease trichinosis”, published in 1866-67 in the *St. Louis Medical Reporter*. Most sources mention that he had a keen interest in studying insects and plants in southwestern Texas. In 1899 both Dr. Wadgymer and his wife died in influenza.⁶⁵⁰

Weekey, Anthony

He was the younger brother of Sigismund Wekey, who achieved a distinguished career in Australia earning himself an entry in the Australian Dictionary of Biography, Anthony Weekey was born in 1831 or 1832, probably in Tokaj. Both of them were students at the college of Sárospatak, then Anthony continued his studies in Késmárk. He studied law in Pest, and was preparing for his bar examination in Zemplén County, when the Hungarian War of Liberation came in 1848. Similarly to his brother, he joined the Hungarian army. He volunteered at the 9th Battalion at Kassa. He was promoted to the rank of corporal in October 1848, and was transferred to the fortress of Komárom as lieutenant of the 98th Battalion on June 1, 1849.⁶⁵¹

After the Austrian-Russian coalition crushed the Hungarian freedom fight, he had to leave the country. As a defender of the fort in Komárom, he was granted a safe conduct by the Austrian authorities, and he left the country. First he went to Hamburg, then on to Britain. István Kinizsi lists his name among the cadets of the Hungarian military school in London. Some time in 1850, he emigrated to the United States.⁶⁵²

Barely anything can be known about his career in the United States in the 1850s. Vasváry mentions him as a civil engineer, but his name cannot be located elsewhere in the sources. All we know for sure is that he lived in New York, and he indicated his

⁶⁵⁰ W. S Geiser, “Notes on Some Workers of Texas Entomology,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Volume 49, No. 4. Accessible online at: http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v049/n4/contrib_DIVL8774.html. (June 21, 2008); Arthur Wadgymer, “Trichina spiralis, and its origin and development in muscle, and the disease trichinosis,” *St. Louis Medical Reporter* (1866-67/1), 97-109.

⁶⁵¹ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, III, 446.

⁶⁵² Kinizsi, “Sánta huszár”, 108.

profession as lawyer in 1861, yet we have no information on whether he did practice law in the United States or not.⁶⁵³

At the commencement of the War Between the States, Weekey followed several fellow Hungarians and joined the 39th New York Infantry Regiment and was mustered in as 1st lieutenant on May 1, 1861. He rose relatively fast in the ranks: on July 15, 1861 he was made captain and was promoted to major on February 1, 1862. Along with his regiment, he performed defense duty in the vicinity of Washington, D.C. in the spring of 1862, and he contracted some disease, which turned out to be fatal. Anthony Weekey died on April 28, 1862 at Winchester, Virginia. His body rests at Winchester National Cemetery.⁶⁵⁴

Xantus, John

Although John Xantus is by all means one of the best-known members of the Kossuth emigration, not many are familiar with the fact that he participated in the American Civil War, yet for an extremely short period of time, and in a dubious position.

Xantus was born in Csokonya on October 5, 1825. His father Ignatz Xantus was a solicitor, land agent, and a steward on Count Széchenyi's estate, who was one of the most influential nobilities in Hungary at the time. John attended the Benedictine high school in Győr, graduating in 1841, then he went to higher education at the Academy of Law in Győr. He served as vice-notary at Somogy County for three years. He took his bar exams in 1847, and returned to his home town.⁶⁵⁵

At the commencement of the Hungarian War of Liberation, Xantus joined the artillery as sergeant, and was later transferred to the infantry elevating to the rank of 1st lieutenant. Close to the end of the war, he was captured by the Austrians and imprisoned at Königgrätz. He was stripped of his rank and impressed into the Imperial Army as private. Finally his influential parents managed to secure his release. John, however, was infected with the liberal ideas of the Reform Age, and was heard making patriotic

⁶⁵³ Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 9.

⁶⁵⁴ Civil War Service Records., NA, M551, Roll 148; Winchester National Cemetery. Lot No. 16.

⁶⁵⁵ For details of Xantus's life see the introduction to both John Xantus, *Letters from North America*. (Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1975) (Hereafter cited as, Xantus, *Letters*) and Xantus, *Travels*.

declarations in Dresden, Saxony, and was arrested again. Much to his luck, he managed to escape this time, and he fled to the United States. On May 5, 1851 he sailed for America with only 7 dollars in his pocket.⁶⁵⁶

Xantus spent the next 13 years of his life in the United States, and gained fame studying natural history. His wrote loads of letters back to home which could serve as excellent sources, however, he seems to have been distorting the facts more often than not, particularly in the letters written to his mother. He gave account of his wonderful progress, while he was doing most menial jobs. In 1857 in his letter to István Prépost he was complaining, “[...] Speaking 6 languages, playing a piano and being a good topographical draftsman, after all efforts I could never bring my existence higher up than to 25 dollars a month.”⁶⁵⁷

Eventually, “[...] in a moment of utmost despair and under circumstances completely beyond [his] control,” as he described in a letter written to Spencer Fullerton Baird, renowned ornithologist, he joined the U.S. Army in 1855 as private under the assumed name Louis Vesey. He served at Fort Riley, Kansas, where he met naturalist Dr. William Alexander Hammond, and became his assistant in collecting species. Together they collected some 2,000 birds and 200 mammals for the Smithsonian. (There is actually a reptile named after him: *Lizard Xantusia*, and some fishes, *Labrisomus xanti* and *Umbrina xanti*.) Hammond arranged that Xantus was transferred to the medical department at the grade of hospital steward, the equivalent of sergeant, and was finally discharged in January 1859. (It is noteworthy that there is a painting showing him in full U.S. Navy uniform, which is fake, as he never served in the navy. He himself had the painting made.) Hammond secured him an employment as tidal observer for the U.S. Coast Survey, and he participated in an expedition to Cape San Lucas.⁶⁵⁸

In 1861 Xantus returned to Hungary, he was elected honorary president of Budapest Zoo, and became member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, but all these brought no employment for him. Therefore, disappointed, he returned to the United States in June 1862.

⁶⁵⁶ Bona, *Hadnagyok*, III, 497; Jánossy, *Kossuth emigráció*, II, 673.

⁶⁵⁷ Xantus, *Letters*, 18.

⁶⁵⁸ Sándor Mocsány, “In Memory of János Xantus,” *Hungarian Academy of Sciences* (1899/9), 234-235; Xantus, *Letters*, 18.

By that time, the Civil War had been raging, and his friend, Hammond became surgeon general. He secured Xantus the position of assistant surgeon general in the army on July 28, 1862, although he had no medical degree. In December 1862 he was appointed consul at Manzanillo in Mexico, although his consulship was really short lived: when he recognized Topaz, a rebel chief, the State Department recalled him and closed the consulate. Xantus became unemployed again, as Hammond himself was court-martialled and dismissed.⁶⁵⁹

The Hungarian returned to Europe spending some time studying Zoos in Belgium and Holland. In 1869-71 he led an expedition to Southeast-Asia collecting plants and animal species for Hungarian museums. Later he became curator of the ethnographic section of the Hungarian National Museum. He passed away on December 13, 1894.⁶⁶⁰

Zagonyi, Charles 

For a detailed biography see, Chapter “The Triumvirate”

Zerdahelyi, Edward 

In some sources, he is referred to as Charles Zerdahelyi. This reflects that there are many uncertainties concerning his life and career. He was born in 1821, and was a pupil and friend of Franz Liszt. Vasváry claims that he joined the Hungarian revolutionary army in 1848/49 and served as a recruiting officer. Vasváry's *Lincoln's Hungarian Heroes* is the only source at our disposal stating that Zerdahelyi was captured by the Austrians and imprisoned in Pest, Laibach and Olmütz for about two years.⁶⁶¹

After his release, he left the country. In 1851 he spent some time in Weimar with his mentor, and Liszt had a very high opinion of him, “I am very happy about Zerdahelyi's

⁶⁵⁹ Edgar Erskine Hume, *Ornithologists of the United States Army Medical Corps* (The John Hopkins Press: Baltimore, 1942), I, 511-512.

⁶⁶⁰ For an excellent overview of Xantus's career in Hungarian consult the Xantus exhibition site of the Somogyi Library in Szeged: <http://www.sk-szeged.hu/kiallitas/xantus>. (January 21, 2008)

⁶⁶¹ Vasváry, *Lincoln's Hungarian Heroes*, 165; Bence Szabolcsi and Aladár Tóth, eds., *Zenei Lexikon* (Budapest: Zenemű Kiadó, 1965), III, 703.

exertion and diligence,” he wrote, “and I will do my best to make sure that his stay in Weimar will prove to be fruitful for him.” Liszt dedicated the 1st Hungarian Rhapsody to him. Zerdahelyi went to Britain where he got involved in the infamous Baroness von Beck case. Mainly this was the reason why he decided to emigrate to the United States. He settled down in Boston, and soon became celebrated member of the artistic elite. He gave a series of concerts, all with great success.⁶⁶²

It is not quite clear, why made up his mind to take part in the American Civil War. Nevertheless he enlisted on July 30, 1862 at Company K 39th New York Volunteers as 2nd lieutenant. During the war, he regularly returned to Boston to give lectures on military art and field service, apparently with great success. *The Boston Daily Advertiser* refers to him in this period as captain. According to Vasváry, he authored a book entitled *Military Field Service*, but actually there is no trace of this book in the catalogues.⁶⁶³

After the Civil War he moved to Philadelphia, and worked as a music teacher. He died on August 16, 1906 in his home. He left a widow and a son.⁶⁶⁴

Zulavsky, Casimir

Casimir was born in 1841 or 1842, the second youngest son of Emilie Kossuth and Casimir Zulavksy, Sr. He was taken to America by his mother in 1852, and came to age exactly at the outbreak of the Civil War. He enrolled in Mound City, Kansas on July 24, 1861. He first became adjutant at 3rd Kansas Infantry, and later transferred to 10th Kansas Infantry.⁶⁶⁵

According to James McGuire he got involved in the robbery of an express office in 1862, and was sentenced to Kansas State Prison, but in the lack of documents, this cannot be confirmed. On April 13, 1864 he volunteered at Company F 25th New York Cavalry as private. He was mustered out on June 9, 1865 in Washington, D.C.⁶⁶⁶

⁶⁶² Franz Liszt to Joachim Raff (January 6, 1851) Mária Eckhardt, ed., *Liszt válogatott levelei (1824-1861)* (Zeneműkiadó: Budapest, 1989), 137.

⁶⁶³ Beszedits, “Notable Hungarians”; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, February 9, 1863.

⁶⁶⁴ Vasváry, *Lincoln’s Hungarian Heroes*, 165.

⁶⁶⁵ Ács, *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban*, 81; McGuire, *Hungarian Texan*, 161.

⁶⁶⁶ Civil War Service Records, NA, M542, Roll 10.

Zulavsky, Emile

One of the four Zulavsky brothers, nephew of Louis Kossuth, Hungarian governor during the War of Liberation, Emile was born in Sátoraljaújhely, Zemplén County in 1834. His father, Casimir Zulavsky, a frivolous Pole left his mother, Emilie Kossuth. Emile was still a student at the time of the Hungarian War of Liberation, so he stayed out of the fights. Nevertheless, after the surrender of the revolutionary army, he joined his family and they emigrated. They wound up in Britain and finally made their mind to cross the Atlantic and try their luck in America; they left Southampton for New York onboard the *Humboldt* on July 6, 1852. Overseas the family enjoyed the financial support of George L. Stearns and his “Hungarian Club”, and they managed to purchase a small farm. However, they soon went bankrupt, and their estate was auctioned off. Emilie moved to Brooklyn, tried her luck in opening a restaurant, but her health became more and more fragile. She was probably tubercular, and she eventually passed away on June 29, 1860.⁶⁶⁷

Emile tried himself in a number of occupations, but did not stick to any of them too long. In 1859 he went to Italy and joined Garibaldi’s Hungarian troops only to see all their hopes of a new Hungarian freedom fight fade away with the Treaty of Villafranca. Disappointed, Emile returned to America, and volunteered in the Union Army. He was mustered in as corporal, and later sergeant major at the 82nd Colored Regiment, the unit in which his brother, Ladislaus served. Having passed the necessary examination he became 2nd lieutenant of the same regiment.⁶⁶⁸

After the Civil War it was his “ardent wish to embrace Military life as a permanent profession,” as he put it in his letter written to President Andrew Johnson, but we do not know whether he managed to do so, as we have no information about the later phase of his life and career.⁶⁶⁹

⁶⁶⁷ Ács, *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban*, 80-81; Jánossy, *Kossuth emigráció*, II, 674; Kinizsi, “*Sánta Huszár*”, 135.

⁶⁶⁸ Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 97.

⁶⁶⁹ Emile Zulavsky to Andrew Johnson (January 10, 1866) Service Records Emile Zulavsky, 82nd USC Inf., NA, RG 94.

Zulavsky, Ladislaus

Ladislaus was born in 1837 in Szürte, Ung County. Similarly to his three brothers, he was still a child at the time of the Hungarian freedom fight in 1848/49, and was taken to America by his mother in 1852, after staying in Britain for a while. It seems that Ladislaus continued his studies in America, and Károly László mentions him as an engineer in 1859. Based on an article published in *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, it can be assumed that he was employed as inspector of pipelines and laying at Brooklyn Waterworks. However, in 1860 his mother died of tuberculosis, and the pain-stricken young man followed his elder brother, Emile, and left New York on September 22, 1860. He joined the Hungarian Legion in Italy and Dániel Ihász, commander of the unit wrote to Gyula Tanárky that Ladislaus was obviously not after ranks as he could join the legion only at the rank of private, as he was a *supernumerativus* (supernumerary), similarly to many other volunteers. Eventually he was mustered in at the 1st Hungarian Cavalry, the same regiment where his brother, Emile served, and later he was appointed lieutenant on the staff of General Antal Vetter. In October he was mustered out and soon returned to the United States.⁶⁷⁰

In America he applied for a commission to the U.S. Colored troops, and his personality and military experience secured him a lieutenant colonelcy at the 82nd Colored Regiment, at the age of just twenty-seven! The question can be raised what really motivated him when he applied for this position, but Martin Öfele seems to be right when he argues that Ladislaus saw a parallel between the freedmen's struggle and that of the Hungarians in 1848/49.⁶⁷¹

Although he was often mentioned as a soldier of proverbial heroism, organizing and drilling his new regiment gave Zulavsky a hard time. He undoubtedly laid much emphasis on the moral education of his men, but as far as military training was concerned, the regiment seemed to be lagging behind, and many criticized the Hungarian officer for this. Lt. Col. Isaac S. Bangs, for instance, thought that "Zulavsky especially

⁶⁷⁰ Jánossy, *Kossuth emigráció*, II, 674; László, *Napló-töredék*, 136; *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 14, 1859, 376; Ihász to Tanárky. Torino, Italy (July 8, 1860) Quoted in Koltay-Kastner, *Tanárky*, 351; Lukács, *Magyar Légión*, 70.

⁶⁷¹ Civil War Service Records., NA, M589, Roll 98; Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 136.

lacked the persistent discipline required in such an organization as the USC.” In December 1864 he faced court martial for negligence of duty, because it turned out that he had never instructed his regiment in battalion drill. Although Zulavsky himself often declared that he was not competent enough to command a regiment, the jury found him not guilty, and confirmed his rank and position. Although his further Civil War service was not entirely void of criticism either, Zulavsky did a good job in leading the regiment. Brig. Gen. William A. Pile mentioned the 82nd in his report on the battle of Fort Blakely (April 9, 1865): “Although in reserve and consequently late in starting on the charge, preserved their regimental organization throughout, the officers exhibiting both skill and bravery.”⁶⁷²

The Hungarian saw important connection between the military service of African-Americans and the final victory of the Union troops, and he linked the victory over secession to the final triumph over the institution of slavery. There are many excerpts from his speeches showing that he did believe in the equality of the African-American race: “The eyes of the world are upon you,” he exhorted his men, “to you the friends of your long oppressed race look for the proof of that manliness which they hold to be just as much your gift from Almighty God as that of any white man.” Apparently he managed to cope with the problem of black soldiers’ plundering and molesting white women. For Zulavsky, who represented the European style of code of honor for soldiers, felt these acts as personal insults. On one occasion he pointed out:

We are soldiers and not desperadoes [sic] and only men of that class will be guilty of insulting women especially when those poor women like these poor refugees, come to us of themselves asking for help and protection. Tis a crying shame that any one wearing a soldiers uniform, should so far forget himself, and the sacred cause he represents to be guilty of such atrocious brutality.⁶⁷³

In punishing the atrocities, he made no difference between blacks and whites.

⁶⁷² Bangs, *The Ullmann Brigade*, II, 290-310, 296; Ladislaus L. Zulavsky. NA, RG 153, M1669; Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 189.

⁶⁷³ Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, xi; General Order No. 25. By Col. L.L. Zulavsky. HQ 82nd Regt. US Infantry (Colored), Barrancas, FL (May 1, 1864) Document G-130, Freedom Archives, Freedmen and Southern Society Project, University of Maryland, College Park, MD.

Probably the best piece of evidence that he was an ardent supporter of the equality of blacks is his message to his soldiers right after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln:

The U.S. Colored Troops above all classes of men, must carry love and veneration of Mr. Lincoln's memory in their hearts. They owe freedom, justice, consideration, fame, and every other blessing they and their kindred enjoy to him above all other men. He has been the redeemer of the colored race in this country, and his name must be as sacred on their lips as that of mankind's Redeemer.⁶⁷⁴

After the Civil War, he played an important role in the life of the Hungarian-American community. He married Emma C. Norton, daughter of John Norton, a wealthy shipping merchant from New York on November 7, 1866. Many Hungarian emigrés were invited to the ceremony including Károly László. Something definitely went wrong with the marriage, as Ladislaus left the United States next year, and according to the Census of 1880, Emma was living in her parents' house, although her marital status was still indicated as married. We do not have any further information on their lives; all we know is that Ladislaus died in 1884 in New York.⁶⁷⁵

Zulavsky, Sigismund 

Sigismund, the youngest nephew of Louis Kossuth, was born in 1843 or 1845. He was the only son who stayed with their mother, Emilie to the very end of her life in 1860. He had a very hard time not only emotionally, but financially as well. His problems were finally solved by his adoption by a New Hampshire family, sympathetic to the Hungarian cause.⁶⁷⁶

When the Civil War came, he joined Company D 8th New Hampshire as private on December 3, 1861. About two years later, he made his mind to apply for a commission at the regiment of his brother, Ladislaus. He was found suitable for this and was transferred to the 82nd Colored Regiment in April 1863 with the rank of 2nd lieutenant.⁶⁷⁷

⁶⁷⁴ General Order No. 12. (May 18, 1865), OR, Series. 1, Vol. 49, 2, 833f.

⁶⁷⁵ László, *Napló-töredék*, 193.

⁶⁷⁶ Vasváry, *Lincoln and the Hungarians*, 9.

⁶⁷⁷ Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers*, 97.

He contracted typhoid fever when his regiment was transferred to Louisiana, and died at Port Hudson on September 16, 1863.

MOST-OFTEN-OCCURRING MISSPELLINGS OF HUNGARIAN NAMES IN AMERICAN SOURCES

Asboth, Alexander = Asbóth, Sándor
Barothy, Charles = Baróthy, Károly
Botsay, Alexander = Botsay, Sándor
Csermelyi, Joseph = Csermelyi, József
Debreczeny, Ignatz = Debreczenyi, Ignác
De Korponay, Gabriel = Korponay, Gábor
De Korponay, Stephen = Korponay, István
De Zeyk, Albert = Zeyk, Albert
Dobozy, Emeric = Dobozi, Imre
Dobozy, Peter Paul = Dobozi, Péter Pál
Dunka, Nicolai = Dunka, Miklós
D'Utassy, Anthony = Utassy, Antal
D'Utassy, Carl = Utassy, Károly
D'Utassy, Frederick George = Utassy, Frigyes György
Estvan, Bela = Estván, Béla (Heinrich, Peter)
Fekete (also: Feckete), Alexander = Fekete, Sándor
Fejervary, Nicholas, Jr. = Fejérváry, Miklós, Jr.
Fiala, John = Fiala, János
Figyelmessy, Philip = Figyelmessy, Fülöp
Finto, John = Finto (Finta?), János
Fornet, Cornelius = Fornet, Kornél
Gaal, Alexander = Gál, Sándor
Gallfy, Andrew = Gállfy (Gállik?), András
Gerster, Anton = Gerster, Antal
Grechenek, George = Grechenek, György
Grossinger, Charles = Grossinger, Károly
Haraszthy, Gaza = Haraszthy, Géza
Hillebrandt, Hugo = Hillebrandt, Hugó
Hollan, Hugo = Hollán, Hugó
Holmy, Johann Rudolph = Holmy (Halmy?), János Rudolf
Jekelfalussy, Alexander = Jekelfalussy, Sándor
Kappner, Ignatz = Kappner, Ignác
Kemenyffy, Joseph = Keményffy, József
Kiss, Anthony = Kiss, Antal
Knefler, Frederick = Knefler, Frigyes
Kovacs, Stephen = Kovács, István
Kovats, Augustus = Kováts, Gusztáv
Kozlay, Eugene = Kozlay, Jenő
Kune, Julian = Kuné, Gyula
Lang, Henry = Láng, Henrik
Langenfeld = Langenfeld, Ferenc
Langer, Ignatz = Langer (also Langner), Ignác
Lederer, Immanuel = Léderer, Emánuel

Lulley, Charles = Lülley, Károly
Lulley, Emanuel = Lülley, Emánuel (also Manó)
Majthenyi, Theodore = Majthényi, Tivadar
Menyhart, John = Menyhárt, János
Meszaros, Emeric = Mészáros, Imre
Mihalotzy, Geza = Mihalóty (also Mihalóczy), Géza
Mundee, Charles = Mándy, Károly
Nagy, Alexander = Nagy, Sándor
Nemett, Joseph = Németh, József
Perczel, Nicholas = Perczel, Miklós
Pomutz, George = Pomutz (also Pomuť), George (also Georghe)
Pulitzer, Joseph = Pulitzer, József
Radnich, Emeric = Radnich, Imre
Radnich, Stephen = Radnich, István
Rombauer, Robert = Rombauer, Róbert
Rozsafy, Matthias = Rózsafy (also Ruzicska), Mátyás
Schoepf, Albin = Schöpf (also Schöff), Albin
Schoney, Lazarus = Schöney, Lázár
Semsey, Charles = Semsey, Károly
Solyom, Louis = Sólyom, Lajos
Spelletich, Stephen = Spelletich, István
Stahel, Julius = Stahel (Számwald), Gyula
Szabad, Emeric = Szabad, Imre
Szabo, Ignatz = Szabó, Ignác
Szabo, Joseph = Szabó, József
Szegedy, Matthias = Szegedy, Mátyás
Takats, Francis = Takács, Ferenc
Tauszky, Rudolph = Tauszky, Rudolf
Tenner, Louis = Tenner, Lajos
Toplanyi, Alexander = Toplányi, Sándor
Ujffly, John Henry = Újffly, János Henrik
Vandor, Joseph = Vándor, József
Varga, Alexander = Varga, Sándor
Varga, John = Varga, János
Varga, Joseph = Varga, József
Varga, Paul = Varga, Pál
Vertessy, John = Vértessy, János
Vidor, Charles = Vidor, Károly
Vöneky, Louis = Vöneky (also Veneky), Louis
Waagner, Gustave = Wágner, Gusztáv
Weekey, Anthony = Wékey (also Vékey), Antal
Xantus, John = Xantus (also Xántus), János
Zagonyi (also Zagony), Charles = Zágonyi, Károly
Zerdahelyi, Edward = Szerdahelyi, Edward
Zulavsky, Casimir = Zsulavszky, Casimir
Zulavsky, Emile = Zsulavszky, Emil

Zulavsky, Ladislaus = Zsulavszky, László
Zulavsky, Sigismund = Zsulavszky, Zsigmond

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