



# ILLUSTRATED PRINTS

*Personal Observations &  
Public Communication*

TEACHER'S GUIDE & MATERIALS

## THE CIVIL WAR VOICES FROM BROOKLYN

This curriculum was developed in commemoration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Civil War and highlights collections from Brooklyn Historical Society and Green-Wood Cemetery. These letters, cartes de visite, wartime illustrations, and broadsides document visual and print communication made by and for Brooklynites during the American Civil War.

The Civil War coincided with innovations in photography, print media, and postage systems. The primary sources highlighted in this curriculum speak to an explosion in personal communication between battlefield and home and to the rise of a mass culture meant to solidify national identity and patriotism. They have been paired with adaptable handouts and strategies for critical thinking across the humanities and social sciences, designed for grades 4–12.

The sources highlighted here and their accompanying critical-thinking strategies offer a rich entry point into the following topics and themes:

- Life as a soldier
- Life on the home front
- The draft in New York City
- Women and relief efforts
- Technological advancements in communication
- The use of propaganda

School groups in and around New York City can deepen their study of the Civil War through onsite programs at Green-Wood Cemetery and Brooklyn Historical Society. At Green-Wood, burial ground to many Civil War soldiers, they will unpack themes of commemoration and memory. At Brooklyn Historical Society, founded during the Civil War in 1863, they will explore archives and museum collections for what they contain as well as probe their omissions. Both this curriculum and visits to these institutions will push students to move past epic, patriotic narratives of the Civil War and to consider the powerful forces and personal experiences that defined this transformative era.

**The Civil War: Voices from Brooklyn** was created by Rebecca Krucoff in collaboration with the Education Departments of Brooklyn Historical Society and Green-Wood Historic Fund.

### Visit Us! Bring your class on a tour!

Contact us to schedule a tour or an in-class program.

At Brooklyn Historical Society:  
**education@brooklynhistory.org**  
**www.brooklynhistory.org**

At Green-Wood:  
**contactus@greenwood.com**  
**www.green-wood.com**

Education programs at Brooklyn Historical Society and Green-Wood Cemetery are designed to support the Common Core Learning Standards and the NYC DOE Scope and Sequence.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Context</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Tips for Teaching with Illustrated Prints</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Lesson 1: Capturing the Civil War in Illustrated Prints</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Lesson 2: Life for Civil War Soldiers Through Letters, Prints &amp; Photographs</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>List of Primary Sources</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>List of Handouts</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Biography of Edwin Forbes</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>13</b>
 <b>HANDOUTS</b>	
<b>Close Reading Sources</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Connecting Sources: The Life of a Soldier</b>	<b>15</b>
 <b>PRIMARY SOURCES</b>	
<b>Forbes Prints</b>	<b>16</b>

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# ILLUSTRATED PRINTS

*Critically examine prints for objective evidence of camp life and subjective perspectives on the war.*

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## CONTEXT

The Civil War was the first war to be extensively photographed. However, the medium's early technology required that a photographer's subject remain still. The bulkiness of camera equipment at the time, moreover, made it difficult for photographers to travel easily and quickly set up a shot. Because of this, most publications relied on illustrators to capture images of battles and everyday camp life during the Civil War.

In 1862, newspaper publisher Frank Leslie hired artist Edwin Forbes to venture south to capture the Civil War on paper. Over the next few years, Leslie published 178 of Forbes' illustrations of Civil War battles and camp life. Forbes followed the Army of the Potomac and depicted key battles. But Forbes' particular talent lay in portraying the everyday experiences of camp life in a simple but romantic style. These prints were among 40 featured in *Life Studies of the Great Army*, a collection of Forbes' Civil War-era scenes published in 1876. A later set of prints was created in his Brooklyn Studio. This particular set of prints is housed in the archives of the Green-Wood Historic Fund.

Forbes' drawings and prints are representative of a type of war documentation that would soon be replaced by photography as cameras became more portable. Images such as these were printed in periodicals such as *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* and *Harper's Weekly*, allowing citizens across the country to keep track of the news and to humanize events far from home. War illustrators in the Civil War depicted a range of moods, from monotony to brutality. These prints help us to imagine the daily grind of a soldier's life, including disease, boredom, fear of death, lack of good food or food at all, lack of supplies, back-breaking engineering duties, and picket duty. They are, however, a subjective rendering by an individual artist and not an exhaustive documentation of Civil War camps or battlefields. Viewers should look critically at the composition of the illustrations — especially the artist's perspective, background elements, and the race and class of people depicted — in order to read the overall mood they convey.



## TIPS FOR TEACHING WITH ILLUSTRATED PRINTS

Edwin Forbes' illustrations were widely distributed. As an illustrator for *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* — a popular periodical of news and prints capturing current events of the day — Forbes was tasked with documenting his observations of camp life, battles, and soldiers, to share with the periodical's broad audience. Since Forbes was making these images for a national magazine, it is all the more important to consider how his audience — including the periodical's publishers and its wide national readership — would have responded to viewing the scenes of battle and camp life from the home front.

In contrast to 21<sup>st</sup>-century forms of war documentation, which often produce an instantaneous image for online distribution, Civil War illustrations were rendered over time. This means that artists such as Forbes had time to consider what to include in the image, and what not to include. Their illustrations, while subjective, yield important clues about a certain time period, such as how people dressed and what kinds of technology, transportation, and buildings existed. Furthermore, the images here convey subtexts through their composition. For example, an expansive sky lends an air of inevitability or divine will to a battlefield.

Questions to consider when looking at an illustrated print:

- **Who or what is the subject of the illustration?**
- **Is there an action or activity being depicted?  
If so, what is it?**
- **What is in the foreground and background? What is the overall effect of that compositional choice on the mood of the illustration?**
- **What is the relationship between people and nature?  
People and animals?**
- **What kinds of observations or facts about the time do you think you can gather from this illustration (for example, soldier's clothing, housing, food, transportation, ways of socializing, ways of posting letters)?**
- **What kinds of feelings or inferences do you have about life for soldiers during the Civil War after investigating this illustration?**
- **When was this illustration made and by whom?**
- **For what purpose was this illustration made?**
- **Who was the intended audience?**
- **What do you learn from a print that you wouldn't learn from a textual primary source (e.g., letter or broadside)?**

# LESSON 1 CAPTURING THE CIVIL WAR IN ILLUSTRATED PRINTS

45 MINUTES

## AIM

How did wartime illustrations depict conditions and camp life during the Civil War for a mass audience?

## THEME

Reading Art

## BIG UNDERSTANDINGS

- Though the war did not take place in Brooklyn, many Brooklynites were affected by and contributed to the war.
- Some experiences of the war were shared, and some were individual.
- When examining visual primary sources, it is important to consider what is not included in the image as well as what is included.
- Edwin Forbes' illustrated prints capture one person's perspective of an experience shared by many. There is a difference between representing your own experience and having someone else represent it for you.
- Artists express meaning through the way they lay out and frame a scene in an illustration.

## OBJECTIVES: SWBAT

- Gather ideas about life for Civil War Union soldiers by examining illustrated prints.
- Closely analyze a primary source, drawing observations and inferences from it.
- Consider the subtextual themes in an illustration.
- Use a source to provide evidence for their ideas.

## MATERIALS



- 1 Projection of one of Forbes' prints to model with students
- 2 Copies of Forbes' prints (two for each student or student pair) and/or laptops for students
- 3 Copies of Close Reading handout, two for each student

## VOCABULARY

**Illustrated print, historical actor, picket, cavalry, fortified lines, truce** (see glossary)



# LESSON 1 PROCEDURE

**Note:** For this exercise, students can work individually, in pairs, or in small groups.

## INTRODUCTION

Introduce the exercise by explaining that students will be examining prints of soldiers' experiences in the Civil War. The prints were made by Edwin Forbes, a professional illustrator. He created these images to be shared in a national magazine. By examining these prints we can learn facts about the Civil War and life for soldiers. We also need to consider the point of view of the illustrator and how the intended audience might have responded to the images.

## MODELING

Project a copy of the Close Reading handout at the front of the room, along with one of the Forbes images. Ask students to help you fill out the top of the handout. Explain that they will receive two images and handouts to fill out. Once they have filled in the boxes at the top of the handout, they should answer the questions that follow.

## APPLICATION

Hand out two of the Forbes images to each student, pair, or group. If working in groups, you might consider giving a copy of the image to each student, or using more than two images.

Using two copies of the Close Reading handout, students observe and take notes on their images.

## LESSON 1 PROCEDURE

(cont.)

### DISCUSSION

Debrief as a whole group, using some or all of these questions:

- **What was depicted in your images?**
- **What new information are we learning about the Civil War and experiences for soldiers?**
- **What do you think were the overall messages of the prints?**
- **What were some of the most important images or words that you observed?**
- **What do you think was the purpose of these images? What makes you say that?**
- **Who do you think was the audience for these images? How do you think the audience might have felt upon seeing these images?**
- **Who were the “historical actors” portrayed in these images?**
- **How might different groups of people respond to these images (those at home vs. those at war, Northerners vs. Southerners, men vs. women, enslaved vs. free persons, etc.)?**
- **What do you believe was the illustrator’s point of view? How might his point of view influence our understanding of the image?**
- **What are some questions that this document sparks in your mind? How accurate do you think these prints were? What makes you say that?**
- **Is there anything about soldiers’ experiences you think might be missing from these?**

Ask students to write answers to one or two questions, using full sentences.

### EXTENSION



#### WRITING YOUR REACTION

Imagine you are a Brooklynite at the time of the Civil War. You may imagine yourself with a different lens than you have normally—perhaps as a German immigrant Union soldier, a black soldier, the wife of a soldier (white or black), a child of a Union soldier, a drummer boy, a wealthy merchant who paid to avoid the draft, a dressmaker thinking about her brother in the war. Describe who you are and write your reaction, in journal style, to what you are viewing in one of these images.



# LESSON 2 LIFE FOR CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS THROUGH LETTERS, PRINTS, AND PHOTOGRAPHS

45 MINUTES

## AIM

How did Brooklynites experience the Civil War, and what perspectives do different primary sources bring to this inquiry?

## THEME

Reading Primary Sources

## BIG UNDERSTANDINGS

- Events in history are experienced differently by different groups of people and individuals; race, class, ethnicity, geographic region, and gender are lenses through which individuals experience major events.
- Different sources communicate different information.
- Though the war did not take place in Brooklyn, many Brooklynites were affected by and contributed to the war.
- When researching an event, it is useful to draw from more than one source.

## OBJECTIVES: SWBAT

- Synthesize ideas about a soldier's life during the Civil War from a variety of primary sources.
- Consider how different resources provide different information.
- Consider the accuracy of prints, photographs, and letters.

## MATERIALS



- 1 Excerpts from letters by different soldiers and their transcriptions
- 2 Cartes de visite photographs
- 3 Edwin Forbes prints
- 4 Copies of Connecting Sources handout

In groups, students receive a packet of resources (alternatively, each student receives a packet). Every student receives a copy of Connecting Sources handout.

## LESSON 2 PROCEDURE

### INTRODUCTION

Introduce the lesson by explaining that students will be looking at a variety of primary sources from the collections of BHS and Green-Wood Cemetery that were made by and for Brooklyn soldiers during the Civil War. Students will use the sources to help them learn what life was like for a soldier during the Civil War. They will be looking at photographs, prints, and letters. For each document, they will gather information using close reading and observation.

### MODELING

Choose two sources that students will find in their packets, for example, a print and a letter excerpt. Project these documents at the front of the room. Using a copy of the Connecting Sources handout, ask students to make observations about the projected sources in one of the categories listed on the handout. Fill that in as a class and allow students to write the information on their chart, making note of the source name or number.

### APPLICATION

Hand out materials to groups.

### REVIEW DIRECTION

Students' task is to discover what life was like for soldiers during the Civil War based on the primary sources provided. They will examine the sources and record information on the Connecting Sources handout. As a whole group, discuss students' notes. Ask students to give specific evidence from the resources they examined. Chart their responses to the various categories in the front of the room.

### DISCUSSION

Suggested follow-up questions:

- **How did the resources provide different information?**
- **Which resource do you feel provided the most useful information? Why?**
- **What other type of research material would be helpful in helping us to get a better picture of life for soldiers during the Civil War? Why?**
- **Why use primary sources? How might secondary sources (such as a textbook) provide us with different information than these primary sources?**
- **Which do you feel is more accurate? More helpful?**

Ask students to write answers to one or two questions, using full sentences.

### EXTENSION



Write a journal entry as a soldier. Describe your experiences. Choose one of the images to illustrate your experience, or make one of your own.



## PRIMARY SOURCES



### LESSON 1

#### *Forbes Prints*

→ **PAGE 16**

- "The Reveille on the Line of Battle" and "Tattoo"
- Untitled
- "A Christmas Dinner"
- "A Flank March Across Country During a Thunderstorm"
- "Fall in for Soup"
- "A Cavalry Charge"
- "Coming into the Lines"
- "The Supply Train"
- "The Lull in the Fight"
- "Trading for Coffee and Tobacco Between the Fortified Lines During a Truce"

### LESSON 2

Choose from a variety of sources from other packets: broadsides, cartes de visite, and letters (see **Letter Writing** Packet for letter summaries)

## HANDOUTS



### CLOSE READING

→ **PAGE 14**

This strategy asks students to observe and analyze visual materials. Once students have written observations of their source, it uses a series of leveled questions to help them consider audience, tone, and point of view.

These strategies align to the following Common Core Standards: **CCRA.R1, CCRA.R4, CCRA.R5, CCRA.R6, CCRA.W9**

### CONNECTING SOURCES

→ **PAGE 15**

This strategy helps students gather information on one topic from a variety of source material. It asks them to chart evidence about the topic and cite the source from which they gathered their evidence. In this way, students begin to understand that different sources provide us different perspectives.

These strategies align to the following Common Core Standards: **CCRA.R1, CCRA.R7, CCRA.R9, CCRA.W8, CCRA.W9**

## BIOGRAPHY OF EDWIN FORBES

Born in New York City in 1839, Edwin Forbes studied painting under Alfred F. Tait. When the Civil War began, he was assigned to follow the Army of the Potomac as a staff artist for *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. His sketches of camp life and battlefields appeared in that weekly throughout the war. They were later made into copperplate etchings, published as *Life Studies of the Great Army*, and were awarded a medal at the Centennial Exposition of 1876. The original prints were purchased by General William Tecumseh Sherman and decorated his office in the War Department in Washington, D.C. After 1878, he devoted himself to landscape and cattle pictures, working from his studio in Brooklyn. A bill was introduced in Congress in 1884 to authorize the purchase by the government of his original Civil War drawings. However, the appropriation of \$7,500 was never approved. He spent his last years tapping his war experiences for illustrations for several children's books, including *General William T. Sherman, His Life and Battles, Mostly in One Syllable Words* (1886), written by his wife Ida B. Forbes, *Our Naval Heroes in Words of Easy Syllables* (1886), by Josephine Pollard, and *H. W. Pierson's Life and Battles of Napoleon Bonaparte* (1887). He died in Flatbush, Brooklyn in 1895.

*By Jeff Richman, Green-Wood Historic Trust historian*

# GLOSSARY

**Abraham Lincoln** — 16<sup>th</sup> president of the United States, who served from March 1861 until his assassination in April 1865; was president during the conflict called the Civil War

**Accurate** — free from mistakes or errors, recording factual evidence

**Artisan** — a craftsperson in a skilled trade, often someone who makes things by hand

**Broadside** — a large, one-sided poster advertising or announcing information

**Brooklyn Academy of Music** — a major performing arts venue in Brooklyn, founded in 1861

**Brooklyn and Long Island Sanitary Fair** — a successful fundraising event in support of soldiers and families of the Union, organized by women's civic groups in Brooklyn in February and March of 1864

**Caption** — words next to a picture that describe what it shows

**Carte de visite** — a small paper photograph mounted on a card, popular in the 1860s and notable for its low cost and easy accessibility

**Cavalry** — troops mounted on horseback

**Citizen** — a person who legally belongs to a country and has the rights and protections of that country

**Citizenship** — the fact of having the status of a citizen

**Civil War** — an armed conflict that took place between 1861 and 1865 in the United States, between the Northern and Southern states to determine the survival of the Union or the independence of the Confederacy

**Colored citizen** — a term that referred to African-Americans during the time of the Civil War

**Confederate** — someone who fought for or allied themselves with the Confederacy during the American Civil War

**Confederacy** — the organization of Southern states that seceded from the Union during the time of the Civil War

**Depict** — to show something in a painting, photograph, print, or drawing; to show something in words in a story

**Document** — a paper, map, image, or other source about something that provides evidence

**Draft** — a system for selecting men for required service in the armed forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines)

**Economic** — relating to the system of how goods and services are produced or bought; relating to the role of trade and money in society to purchase and produce goods and services

**Engineer** — a person with science training who designs and builds complicated machines, systems, or structures

**Enlist** — to sign up to join the armed services

**Ephemera** — collected materials such as posters, tickets, flyers, and more, which were expected to be discarded after use

**Fortified lines** — defensive positions that have been reinforced by man-made or natural protection, such as hills, mounds of earth, or walls

**Gallatin Rifles** — a group or company of Union soldiers that was

organized by Major Theodore Lichtenhein, a New York merchant, internationally known chess master, and recent Prussian immigrant; the Gallatin Rifles joined other ethnic companies to form the 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment, New York Infantry

**Gender roles** — cultural standards that determine how males and females should think, dress, act, etc.

**Historical actor** — someone who lived in the past

**Illustrated print** — an image, often created by hand, and meant to be reproduced multiple times through printing it

**Illustrator** — someone whose job it is to draw pictures or create prints in order to describe events or ideas, such as a story-book illustrator, cartoonist, or print-maker

**Image** — a statue or picture that is made to look like a person or thing

**Immigrant** — someone who comes to a new country with the intention of living there

**Inferences** — conclusions made from facts and evidence; what you think about what you see

**Mobilize** — to bring people together for action

**Observation** — what you see; a statement you make based on what you notice; facts about something, as opposed to an inference

**Objective** — factual

**Picket** — a soldier or group of soldiers assigned to stand guard

**Primary source** — a first-hand account or document made at the time period you are studying

**Portrait** — a painting, drawing, or photograph of a person

**Portraiture** — the art or practice of making portraits

**Race** — a culturally constructed way of grouping people by physical characteristics such as skin color or facial features

**Recruit** — to find and encourage people to join a group, such as the armed services

**Recruiter** — someone whose job it is to recruit people to the armed services

**Regiment** — a military unit generally made up of groups of soldiers and led by a military officer

**Secession** — the act of separating from a nation or state to become independent

**Subjective** — one's personal opinion, based on feelings rather than fact

**Transcription** — a typed, word-for-word copy of someone's words; used with handwritten letters and interviews

**Truce** — stopping fighting (as in a war)

**Ulysses S. Grant** — the commanding general of the Union Army during the final years of the American Civil War; later the 18<sup>th</sup> president of the United States

**Union** — the term used to describe the states fighting to preserve the union of Northern and Southern states in the American Civil War, located primarily in the northern and western sections of the country

# CLOSE READING SOURCES

## OBSERVATIONS

Identify the caption or title of the document:

.....

Identify what objects, people, and actions you see in the image:

OBJECTS	PEOPLE	ACTIONS

## Inferences

1 What in this image do you think is most important? Explain.

.....  
.....

2 List adjectives for the tone (the feeling you get) of the document:

.....  
.....

3 What message do you think the creator of this document is trying to send? Explain.

.....  
.....

4 Who do you think this document was made for, and how were they supposed to react to it?

.....  
.....



# CONNECTING SOURCES: THE LIFE OF A SOLDIER

**DIRECTIONS**

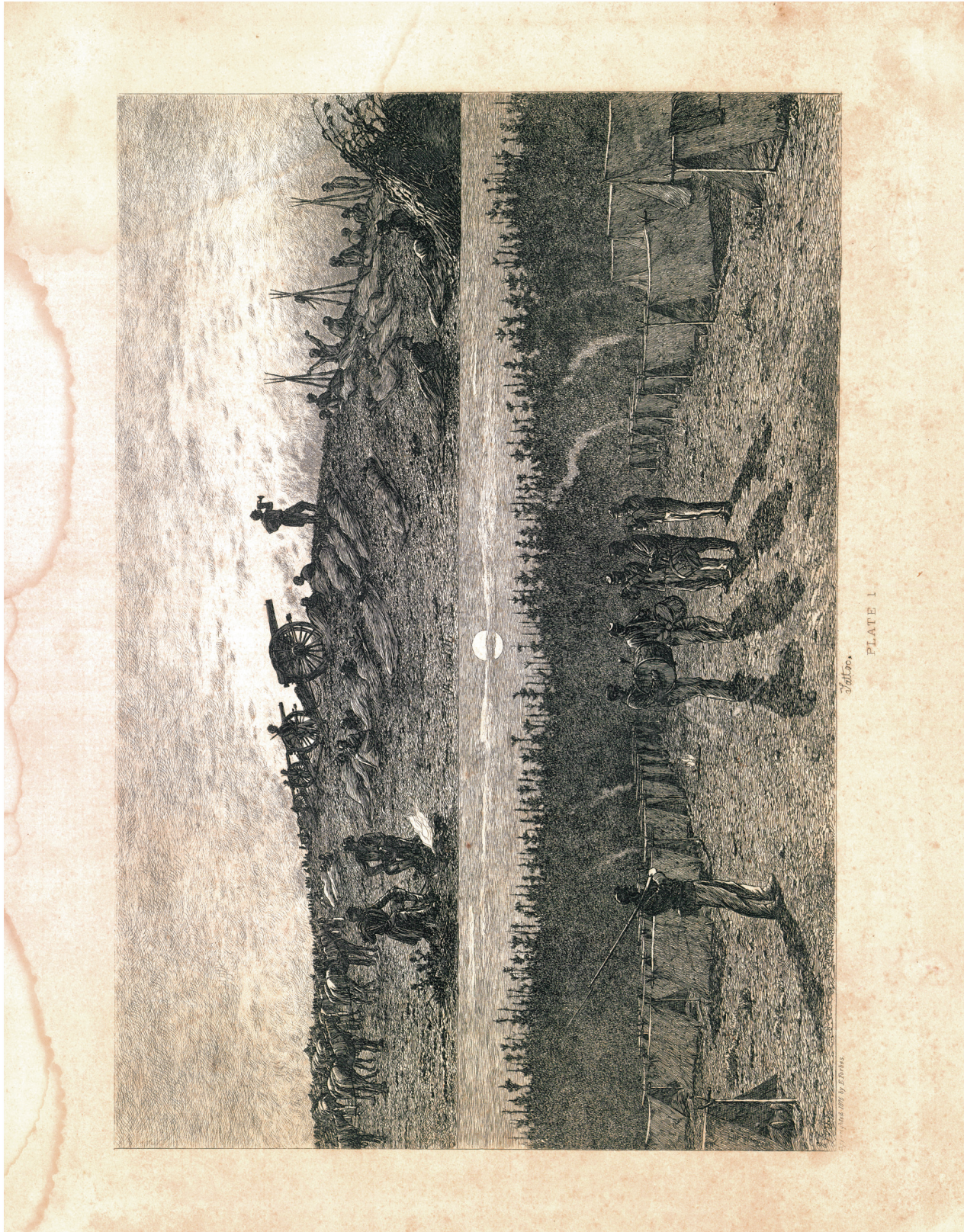
Search your documents for information about the life of a Civil War soldier. Record the facts you find in the chart below, writing them under the category you think is best. In parentheses, make note of which document you got the information from.

(More than one document may be used for each category.)

TOPIC	FINDINGS
Housing & Clothing	
Food	
Natural & Physical Environment	
Health	
Time Spent not in Battle	
Feelings Towards War	
Experiences in Battle	



## EDWIN FORBES PRINTS



Edwin Forbes, The Reveille on the Line of Battle and Tattoo, 1876; Green-Wood Historic Fund Collection





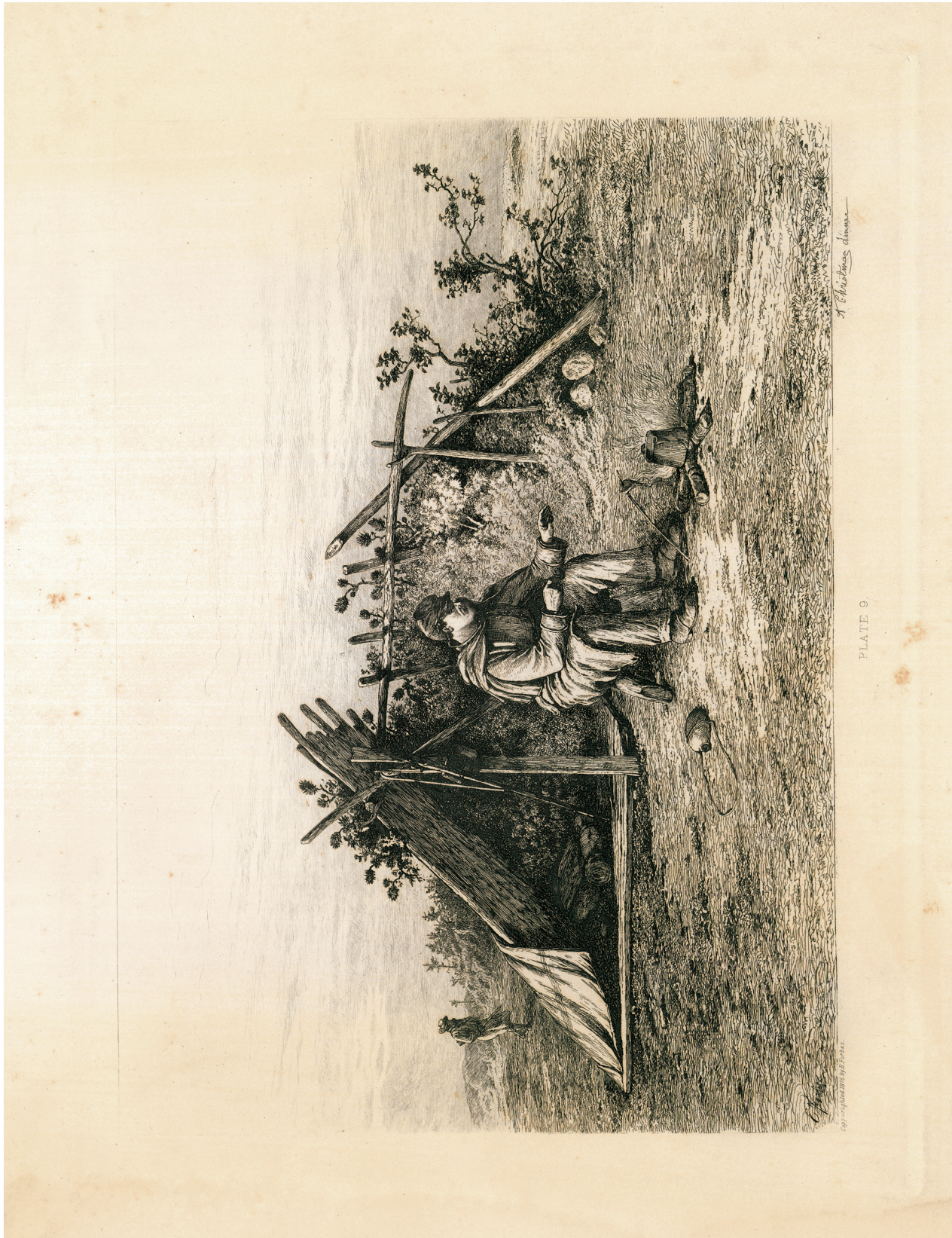
## EDWIN FORBES PRINTS



Edwin Forbes, Untitled, 1876; Green-Wood Historic Fund Collection



## EDWIN FORBES PRINTS



Edwin Forbes, A Christmas Dinner, 1876; Green-Wood Historic Fund Collection



# EDWIN FORBES PRINTS

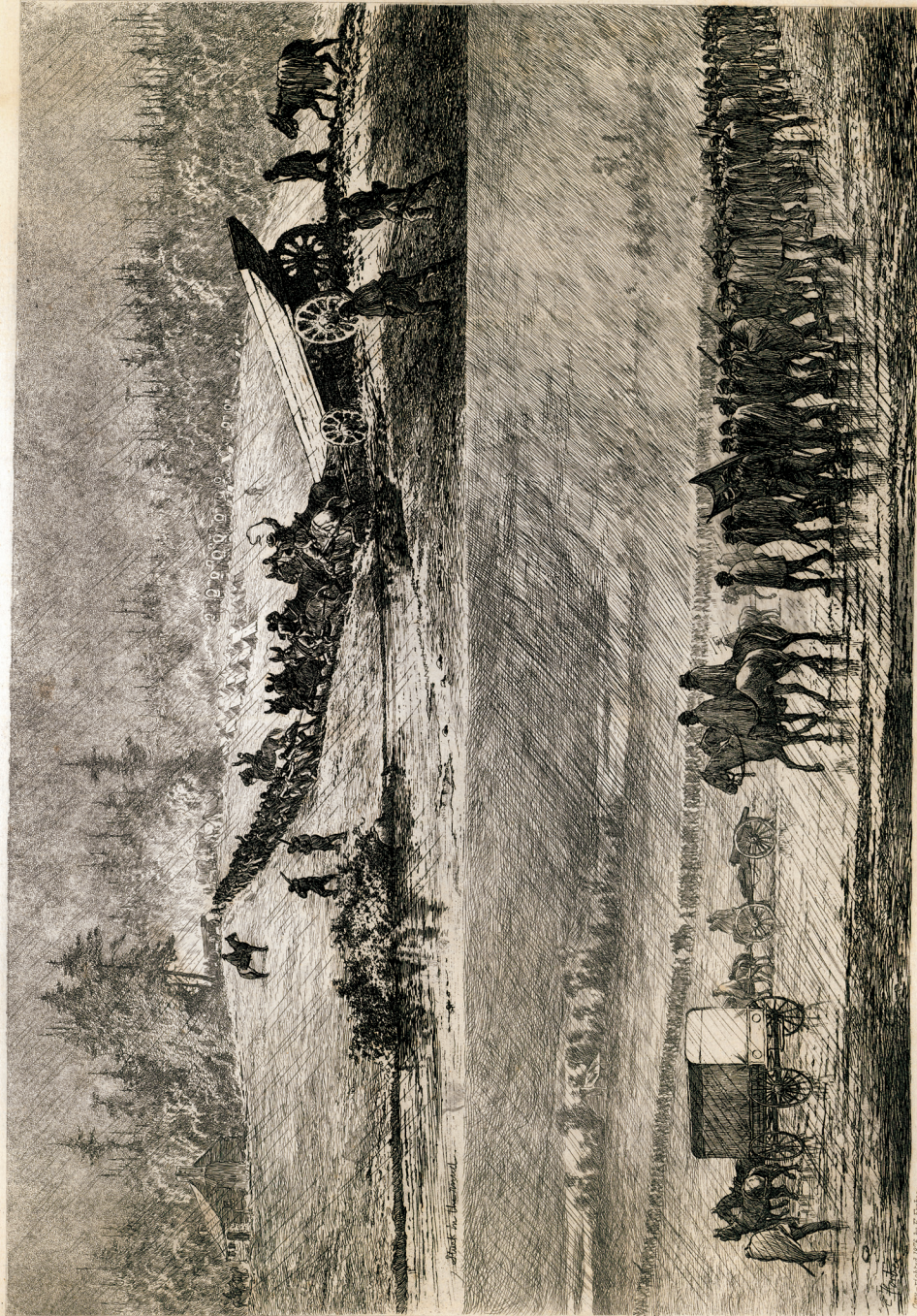


PLATE 19.

*A flank march with infantry during a thunderstorm.*

Edwin Forbes, A Flank March Across Country During a Thunderstorm, 1876; Green-Wood Historic Fund Collection





# EDWIN FORBES PRINTS



Edwin Forbes, Fall in for Soup, 1876; Green-Wood Historic Fund Collection





# EDWIN FORBES PRINTS



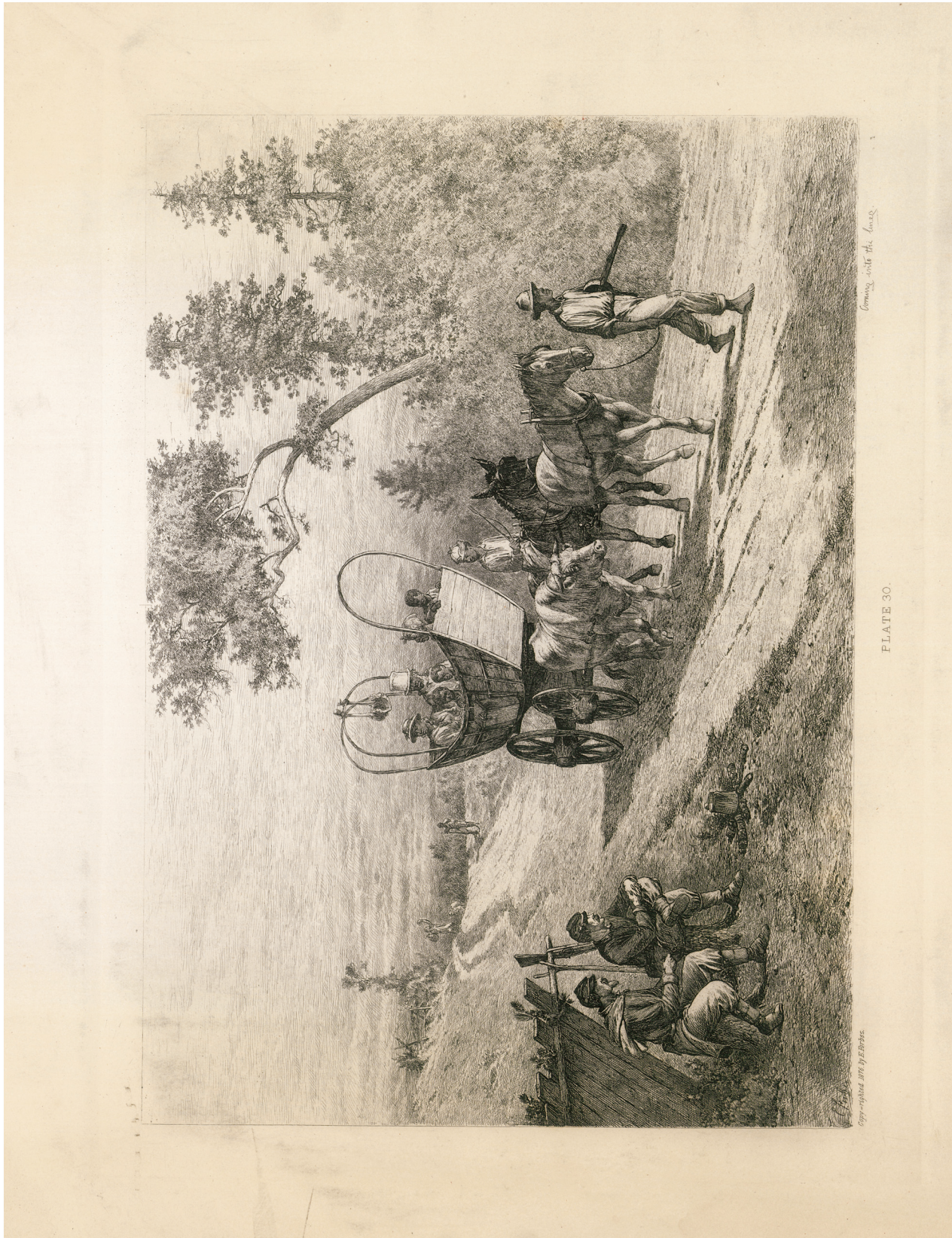
*A Cavalry Charge*

PLATE 26.

Edwin Forbes, A Cavalry Charge, 1876; Green-Wood Historic Fund Collection



## EDWIN FORBES PRINTS



Edwin Forbes, Coming into the Lines, 1876; Green-Wood Historic Fund Collection



## EDWIN FORBES PRINTS



Edwin Forbes, The Supply Train, 1876; Green-Wood Historic Fund Collection





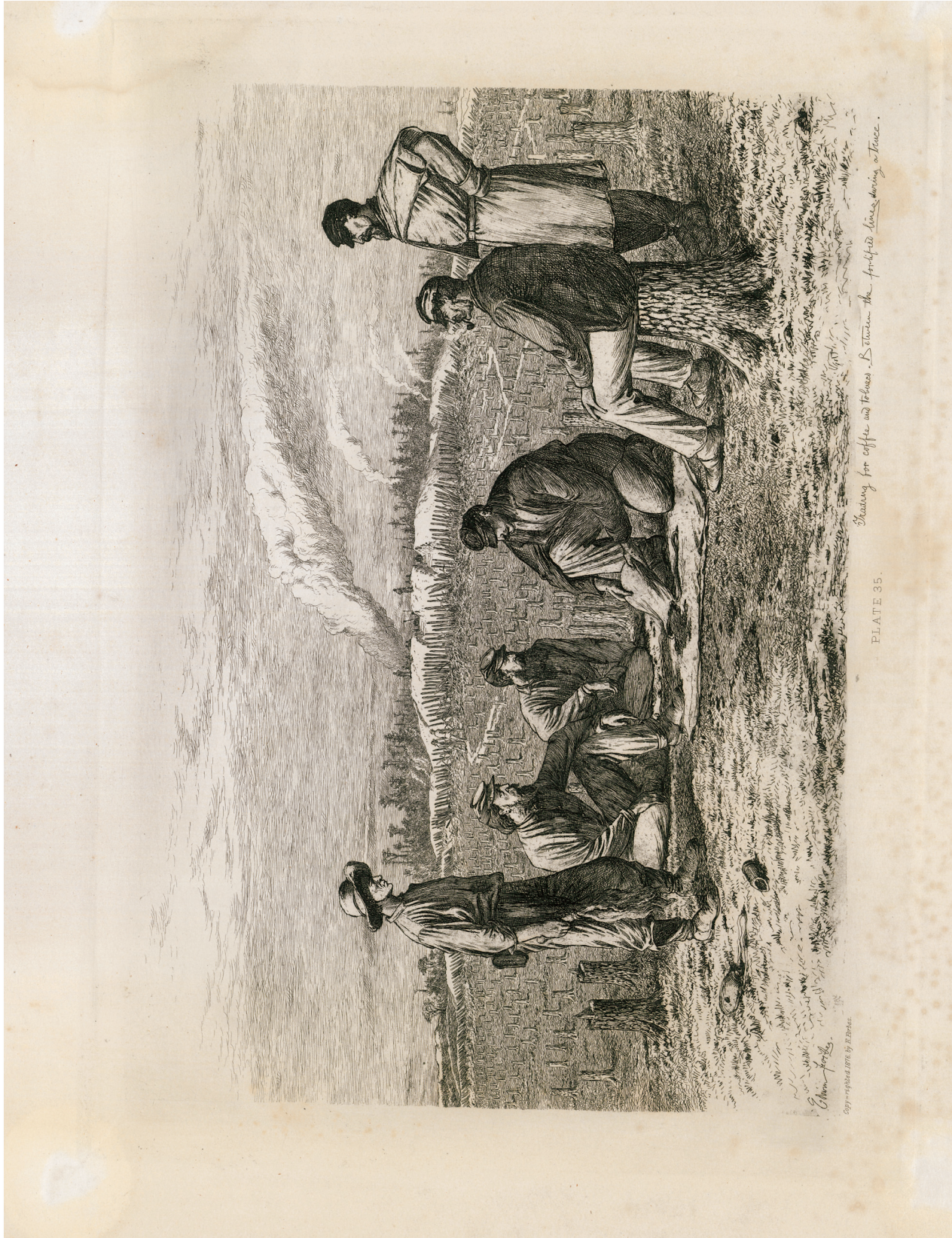
## EDWIN FORBES PRINTS



Edwin Forbes, The Lull in the Fight, 1876; Green-Wood Historic Fund Collection



## EDWIN FORBES PRINTS



Edwin Forbes, Trading for Coffee and Tobacco between the Fortified Lines During a Truce, 1876; Green-Wood Historic Fund Collection