

Student Name:			
	Date:	Class Period:	

Teacher's Handout 3: What happened to wounded soldiers during and after the U.S. Civil War?

Instructions: Respond to the following questions based on the materials presented in the

"Honorable Scars" and "Sacrifices Forgotten" exhibition sections

(http://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/LifeandLimb/honorablescars.html and http://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/LifeandLimb/sacrificesforgotten.html).

"It is not two years since the sight of a person who has lost one of his lower limbs was an
infrequent occurrence. Now, alas! There are few of us who have not a cripple among our friends, if
not in our own families." Whose quote is this? Oliver Wendell Holmes, Union officer and later
Supreme Court Justice

What does the quote tell you about what living in post-Civil War America was like? Responses will vary.

2. What were the conditions of and attitudes toward disabled soldiers during and after the Civil War?

Leaders wanted to prevent idleness and immoral behavior and worried about economic hardships for the veterans. There were many solutions: wartime work in the Invalid Corps as cooks, clerks, hospital attendants, and prison guards for those who could work; pensions, convalescent homes, and funds for the purchase of artificial limbs for those who couldn't work.

But despite the hard work of the Invalid Corps, members were not given the same compensation as others and were treated with ridicule and suspicion. Because of negative attitudes toward charity, many disabled veterans didn't get artificial limbs and pinned up their sleeves and trouser legs instead, displaying their "honorable scars." Many prosthetic devices hurt, especially for wounds that hadn't healed properly, or were too expensive to repair or replace.

Americans eventually wanted to put the war behind them so the disabled veterans came to represent money-grabbing dependents, and Americans increasingly ignored the aging, disabled, poverty-stricken veterans.

3. Examine the photos and illustrations in the "Honorable Scars." Explain what these images tell you about the experiences of disabled soldiers during the civil war that the words alone could not?

Responses will vary.





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4. Examine the photos and illustrations in the "Sacrifices Forgotten." Explain what these images tell you about the experiences of disabled soldiers after the Civil War that the words alone could not?

Responses will vary.

5. What new understanding have you gained about treatment of wounded soldiers during and after the Civil War?

Responses will vary.