At the time of the American Civil War (1861–1865), a great deal was known about closed head injury and gunshot wounds to the head. Compression was differentiated from concussion, but localization of lesions was not precise. Ether and especially chloroform were used to provide anesthesia. Failure to understand how to prevent infection discouraged physicians from aggressive surgery. Manuals written to educate inexperienced doctors at the onset of the war provide an overview of the advice given by senior surgeons.

The Union experiences in the treatment of head injury in the Civil War were discussed in the three surgical volumes of *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion*. Wounds were divided into incised and puncture wounds, blunt injuries, and gunshot wounds, which were analyzed separately. Because the patients were not stratified by severity of injury and because there was no neuroimaging, it is difficult to understand the clinical problems and the effectiveness of surgery. Almost immediately after the war, increased knowledge about cerebral localization and the development of antisepsis (and then asepsis) permitted the development of modern neurosurgery.
or mental health problems such as anxiety or suicidal thoughts and/or attempts. Incarcerated persons with disabilities, including TBI, regarding prisoners' legal rights, access to mental health services and/or medication, and the first 6 years after traumatic brain injury: cross-sequential analyses of Axis I disorders. At the Civil War era was an age-defining period in the history of the United States of America, the issue of head injury pervaded society. From the president of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, to the officers and soldiers of the Union and Confederate armies, and to the population at large, head injury and its ramifications gripped the nation. This article focuses on 3 individuals: Major General John Sedgwick, First Lieutenant Alonzo Cushing, and Harriet Tubman, as examples of the impact that head injury had during this era. The most common Civil War surgery was the amputation. A few words about why there were so many amputations performed. This is false. The medical director of the Army of the Potomac, Dr. Jonathan Letterman, wrote in his report after the battle of Antietam: The slow-moving Minie bullet used during the American Civil War caused catastrophic injuries. For example, the two minie bullets that struck John Bell Hood's leg at Chickamauga destroyed 5 inches of his upper thigh bone. This left surgeons no choice but to amputate shattered limbs.