

Conneaut Drummers

A Dramatic Reading



Setting: Conneaut, Ohio; Winchester Virginia

Characters

Ethan Parker- the drummer boy, around 16

Sarah Parker, his sister, the drummer girl, around 14

Ellie Parker, their mother, a nurse

Dr. Greenleaf Fifield

Dr. Amos Fifield

Captain Alanson Tubbs

Jonathan Parker, their father

Augie and Officer Rose

Dr. Amos Fifield



Narrator, Dr. Greenleaf Fifield: Hey there! You and your drumming woke me up! I've been sleeping here in Conneaut's City Cemetery since 1851 and here it is already 1862! They say dead men tell no tales, but they are wrong! I have a lot of Conneaut tales to tell and some Conneaut people I want you to meet, including my son Dr. Amos Fifield. And I want you to meet the Civil War in Conneaut. It was and still is a complicated event.

Listen to me! I saw Conneaut growing along with the United States and the events creating the Civil War. In the 1860s in Conneaut local industries boomed, including shipbuilding, a paper mill, a foundry, grist mills, and cheese factories. A fund drive successfully raised the money to build a new town hall. Brick blocks like the Cleveland block with its new hotel and Opera House adorned Main Street. New streets carved from the neighboring woods snaked through Conneaut and newly built homes including the David Cummins Octagon House where David

Cummins created his business found the Cummins Canning Company dotted the landscape. The Conneaut Reporter, the city's independent newspaper recorded the events in our growing city.

The Cleveland, Painesville & Ashtabula Railroad arrived in Conneaut in 1852 and the completion of the line implemented the first rail service in Conneaut during the 1850s. The railroad later connected with a line to Erie, Pennsylvania and eventually was incorporated into the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad.

The arrival of the railroad in Conneaut caused the shipping industry to decline, but the coming of the Civil War stimulated increased harbor activity. Shipbuilders built large vessels to ply the fresh water Great Lakes and salt water oceans.

In February 1861, President-elect Abraham Lincoln traveled through Conneaut on the Lakeshore and Michigan Southern Railroad on his way to Washinton D.C. for his inauguration. The train stopped for a few minutes at the depot and President -elect Lincoln addressed the crowd that had gathered to greet him. He apologized for the shortness of his stop and his weariness. From the crowd, Captain Appleby shouted, "Don't give up the ship!" According to the Conneaut newspaper, the President-elect had promised, "with your aid I never will as long as life lasts."

When the Civil War began in April 1861, Conneaut had already been divided in the decades before the war. Some citizens were Abolitionists, others favored slavery, and others were neutral or indifferent, not raising their heads from their daily lives.

They may have been fewer in numbers than uninvolved citizens, but Abolitionists made Conneaut and the surrounding Ashtabula County a vital part of the Underground Railroad. Reverend Rufus Clark of the South Ridge Baptist Church and Abolitionist Ralph Wright pioneered the founding of the Conneaut Anti-Slavery Society in 1839. Ralph Wright spread anti-slavery messages around Conneaut and the surrounding communities and the Anti-Slavery Society helped give fugitive slaves food, clothing, and a safe journey to Canada.

Underground Railroad routes often literally tunneled through Conneaut. Conneaut citizens hid fugitive slaves in safe houses in and outside of Conneaut, including the home of Hiram Lake and by local tradition the David Cummins house. When they could safely move on, they traveled from Conneaut Creek to Conneaut's Lake Erie port, where sympathetic captains like Conneaut's Calvin Appleby used their ships, in his case the Sultana, to ferry them across Lake Erie to Canada.

Conneaut sustained both home and battlefronts during the Civil War. Women kept the home fires burning when their sons, brothers, and husbands marched off to war. The 29th Ohio Volunteer Infantry also known as the "Giddings Regiment" after their founder Abolitionist Congressman Joshua Giddings, fought in strategic battles like Chancellorsville and Gettysburg.

After the Civil War, Conneaut citizens dedicated a monument to Civil War soldiers who were killed in action in Conneaut's City Cemetery. The federal government placed two cannons next to the monument in 1925. But here I am talking and you two should be the ones talking. What are you children doing here? You woke me up from a sound sleep!

Sarah: How do you know what happened after the Civil War? Your tombstone says you died in 1851.

Dr. Greenleaf Fifield, Narrator: Do you know Mr. Dickens story, the Christmas Carol?

Sarah: Miss Prentice is reading it to us at school.

Dr. Greenleaf Fifield, Narrator: Then you know about the ghost of past, present, and future. I am speaking to you in all three identities.

Sarah: Giving a drum roll. Pleased to meet you.

Ethan: Also giving a drum roll. We're here to say goodbye to our father. He's going to Virginia to fight with his regiment, the Ohio 29th Infantry.

Sarah: There he is! There's dad!

Ethan: Where? I don't see him!

Sarah: There he is! Right in front of the Lyon store. See the sign that says C. Hall, Shawls, Shawls, shawls. He's marching right by there.

Ethan: Stop being a girl, Sarah! I see the J.A. McKenzie's Ladies Furs. But I don't see Mr. Hill's shawls sign. Open your eyes, Sarah!

Sarah: The drum is right in front of it. And dad is playing the drum. Open your eyes, Ethan.

Ethan: My eyes are open. I'm watching Papa play the drum! I'm waving to him.

Sarah: He sees us. See him waving. Wave back, Ethan!

Ethan: He doesn't see us. He's too busy playing the drum.

Ethan: Will you be here when we come back?

Sarah: We won't be back until the war is over.

Ethan: Don't talk about the war being over. It might last a long time.

Sarah: We will last it out.

Ethan: We might not last.

Sarah: We will be as lasting as General Augie's tail wagging.

Ethan: I don't see father's regiment.

Sarah: Let's go! We can catch up to them.

Sarah: We have to be sure no one sees us.

Ethan: They have to stick to the road, but we can follow them through the woods.

Sarah: We have to be very careful. We can't let them catch us. Papa told us he was marching to Winchester, Virginia, with the rest of the soldiers to see Mama who is nursing there with Dr. Fifield. How far do we have to follow him?

Ethan: I looked it up on the map at school. It looks like it's about 313 miles to Winchester, Virginia.

Sarah: We can't march 313 miles. Our shoes will wear out!

Ethan: Not to worry, Sarah. I will play the drum for us all of the way. We'll make it.

Sarah: You can't play the drum all of the way to Winchester, Virginia! You'll have to let me play too.

Ethan: Girls aren't supposed to play the drums. And I only have to play to Erie, Pennsylvania where we catch our train!

Sarah: You shouldn't play! Papa and the rest of the soldiers will hear you!

Ethan: Not if I just echo what he is playing. I know most of his songs and the ones I don't I won't play.

Sarah: I can help. Let me play your drum.

Ethan: This is going to be hard. You have to let me help you.

Sarah: I will help you. My playing is just as good and loud as yours. It's how I play that counts.

Ethan: No, I'll play! We'll have to work hard to make it if we make it.

Narrator, Dr. Greenleaf Fifield: They made it, but it was hard. It took

some doing and distance! There wasn't a single, direct line from Conneaut to Winchester, Virginia. They had to use several trains and some ferry connections to finally reach Winchester. They connected with the Cleveland, Painesville & Ashtabula Railroad (Later the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad) and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. They took the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad that connected Ohio with the Atlantic states. At Harpers Ferry, Virginia, the Baltimore & Ohio crossed the Potomac River and there they boarded a car on the Winchester and Potomac Railroad which ran directly to Winchester. The Winchester and Potomac was the only railroad into Winchester at the time.

The shortest part of their trip was marching along the Ridge Road (now Route 20) which Lake Erie had shaped into an ancient beach ridge when it had been significantly larger. The Ridge Road, running south of the lake, connected east-west routes across the Western Reserve in Ohio and into Pennsylvania. The Ridge Road merged with the closer Lake Road near Conneaut.

Ethan and Sarah had a difficult journey because of the Civil War as well as the standard hardships of train travel. For much of the 1860s, routine and safe passenger service proved to be intermittent or nonexistent. Throughout the Civil War control of Winchester shifted back and forth between Union and Confederate forces multiple times. Confederate forces under General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson and other troops damaged rail lines, tracks, and rolling stock in the region to block Union movements, and in March 1862, the United States Army seized the Winchester and Potomac Railroad.

The Winchester and Potomac Railroad would be nearly destroyed by the end of 1863.

Ethan: That last train had hard seats. My bottom hurts and my legs are stiff.

Sarah: Did we beat the soldiers here?

Ethan: I saw father getting on the train ahead of us with some of the soldiers in his regiment. We have to catch up with them. Run after them!

Sarah: We don't have to run after them. Give me your drum.

Ethan: What are you going to do with it?

Sarah: I'm going to grab it and then play it. Father will hear it.

Narrator : Dr. Greenleaf Fifield: Ethan said no, but Sarah grabbed his drum and played it. Jonathan Parker heard the drum beat and he stopped so quickly that the soldier in back of him crashed against his back.

Ethan: Father, Sarah hit my arm and made me drop my drum out of the train window while I was trying to play it.

Sarah: Father! It's father! I knew we'd find you.

Ethan: Father. Look at my drum. It's squished!

Sarah: He hit my arm! I didn't mean to drop his drum.

Ethan: Sarah grabbed my drum and played it. She doesn't know how to make it talk.

Sarah: I can make a drum talk and I can voice talk too. We can voice talk, too. Father, we came to help you find mother.

Jonathan: We are headed for the Federal Courthouse in Winchester. The colonel said that it is on Loudoun Street which is two miles away. Are you prepared for a walk?

Sarah: I'm sorry your drum got squashed, Ethan. I'll carry it. Maybe we can fix it.

Ethan: It doesn't look like it is going to get fixed. You did that on purpose, Sarah.

Sarah: It was an accident.

Ethan: It wasn't an accident. You bumped my arm while I was balancing the drum on the railing.

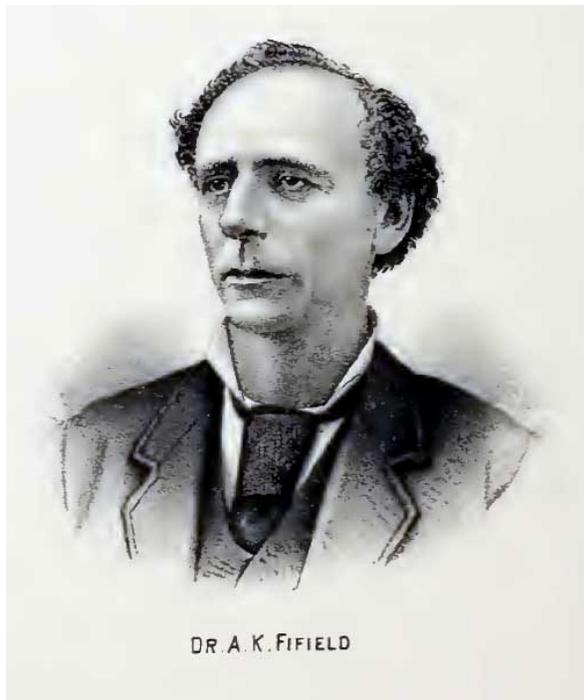
Sarah: I picked it up. And I know how to play it.

Ethan: Girls don't know how to play drums and they will never play
 better than boys.

Sarah: You'll see.

Dr. Greenleaf Fifield, Narrator: We all saw and heard! Here's how it
happened.

ACT II



Narrator, Dr. Amos Fiefield: My father, Dr. Greenleaf Fiefield, is a good narrator, and I am proud to be his son, Amos Fiefield. My time to join him in our family plot in City Cemetery arrived on April 21, 1892, and since we have suspended tune and space with our story, I will tell you my part in it with my own words. I marched out of Conneaut in May 1862 as surgeon of the 29th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. After I arrived in Virginia, I found myself in charge of the Old Frederick County Courthouse Hospital, one of several major Winchester buildings used as a medical facility during the Civil War. Both the Union and Confederacy used it to care for countless wounded soldiers. We had many battles and many wounded, the city bouncing back and forth between the Union and the Confederacy over 70 times. Since the city was so strategically important, many of its buildings, churches, homes, schools, had to be transformed to meet the medical needs of the soldiers from both sides of the War. Strategically important because it was located in the Shenandoah Valley, Winchester served as one of the vital transportation

links in the region known as the “breadbasket” of the Confederacy.



I know I will sound like I am lecturing at my alma mater, the College of Physicians and College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York, in March 1855. But Ethan and Sarah, I want you to know what you are facing, what you Jonathan may face, and what your mother Ellie faces. I look her straight in the eye every day at the hospital.

Sarah: Give me the drum, Ethan. I want to do a drum roll for mother. I can hardly wait to see her.

Ellie: I’m right here, Sarah.

Sarah: Where’s father? I saw him hugging you a few minutes ago.

Ellie: He said he had to go out on patrol and that he would be back later this evening. Come with me while Dr. Fifield and I make our rounds and then we can go back to my quarters to wait for him.

Ethan: I don’t see Dr. Fifield.

Ellie: He’s waiting for us at the hospital. Follow me.

Ethan: Why are there cobwebs hanging from the windows?

Ellie: Nobody has the time to clean the windows. We’re too busy taking care of the soldiers.

Sarah: Mother, that man is laying on a bare wooden door! We have to help him.

Ellie: I ordered a mattress to put underneath him and there is a burlap sheet that comes for the top of it. That's all we have for him.

Ethan: I can crush those cobwebs for you, mother.

Sarah: I see the mattress and the burlap sheet.

Ellie: We have to wash the door with soap and water. Here is some soap in this bowl and a clean rag.

Sarah: The door is clean, mother. Ethan, help me put the mattress on the door. It isn't that big.

Ethan: I will if you help me fix my drum!

Sarah: I'll help you later. Right now we have to put the burlap cover over the mattress.

Ethan: Why does it have to be so clean, mother?

Ellie: Because if the mattress or sheets are dirty, the soldiers get sick. And when one gets sick, many others get sick as well.

Ethan: What makes them get sick? Do they eat the dirt?

Sarah: Is there something in the dirt that they touch that makes them sick? Is it dirty clothes?

Ethan: Do you mean soldiers don't have to take baths?

Sarah: Look around. Do you see any bathtubs?

Ellie: We try to bathe them from wash basins, but there are so many of them and water is sometimes scarce.

Dr. Amos Fifield, narrator: There is a theory that there are small creatures in the dirt, smaller than a flea or ant that can travel from the dirt into a wound or an opening in the body and cause the person to fall ill. But it hasn't yet been proven.

Ellie: We need more nurses to wash the soldiers every day.

Sarah: I thought nurses just change bandages.

Ethan: And empty bed pans!

Ellie: Those things are part of being a nurse. But we do a lot more. We help doctors make soldiers better so they can go home.

Dr. Amos Fifield, narrator: Sarah, Ethan, as well as fighting a war with guns and bayonets, we are fighting a war with scarcity. We have limited supplies; we don't have enough good nurses; we don't have enough hospitals. We have to make hospitals in buildings that were never meant to be hospitals. Like this one.

Ellie: Things are improving, Dr. Fifield. Slowly, but they are improving.

Dr. Amos Fifield, narrator: Yes, the government is coming through with more supplies. Communities are offering buildings for hospitals, and excellent nurses like you are increasing in number. We are learning new medical techniques every day. We are developing anesthetics. We are designing and building hospitals that are built for better ventilation.

Ellie: And we are saving lives in the midst of a brutal war between states.

Sarah: Do you mean nurses don't have to change bandages anymore?

Ethan: Nurses should empty bedpans. Not people like us visiting soldiers.

Dr. Amos Fifield, narrator: Bandages and bedpans aren't the worst of it, Sarah, and Ethan. We are fighting both a war in our towns and cities, in our forests and fields, and we are fighting a war against invaders that enter our bodies and take our lives with them when they leave.

Ellie: You're talking about your idea that something invisible to our eyes, which come into our bodies and make us sick enough to die?

Sarah: Like drum beats. Fingers on sticks, music flowing from fingers to cells to pores, to toes, pulsing in time to heartbeats.

Ethan: If your drum beats have so much magic, you should be able to fix my drum that you squished like Dr. Fifield fixes broken legs and cuts and coughs.

Dr. Amos Fifield, narrator: medicine has some rosy days, but more thorns that have to be dulled before it can bloom. Since I have one foot into the future, I can tell you what we must and will do. We can continue to develop the germ theory of disease until we can antibiotic them to death instead of them infecting us to death.

Ethan: That soldier over there is coughing like a bullfrog. Why is he doing that?

Sarah: He's sick with some disease, right mother?

Ellie: He surely is. In this War Between States, 2/3 of soldiers die from disease, many more than those that die on the battlefield from battlefield wounds. But doctors don't always agree about which disease the patient might have.

Ethan: What kind of diseases were there?

Dr. Amos Fifield, narrator: Some of us doctors thought that "bad air" or miasma, caused illness. This bad air came from dirt and leaves and plants and other organic things like plants decaying. Army camps with cramped and dirty conditions could produce an endless supply of bad air.

Ethan: It smells like there is some bad air in this hospital.

Sarah: You mean a miasma.

Dr. Amos Fifield, Narrator: Yes, some doctors think miasmas cause disease. Others agree with the ancient Greek belief that diseases

are caused when the body's four humors= blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile- get out of balance with each other.

Ethan: Do humors have to balance like drumsticks balanced on my fingers? It takes me a few tries before I can balance them.

Dr. Amos Fifiel, Narrator: Some doctors and I am one of the some, believed that some invisible creature or creatures caused illnesses and infection, but we didn't make the connection between cause in effect. We didn't wash our hands or scalpels between operations. I am ashamed to admit that I was one of the doctors who believed in "laudable pus."

Ethan: What's that?

Sarah: Laudable means something good or praise. You know what pus is, Ethan. Pus is what came out of your arm when you cut it with your whittle knife.

Dr. Amos Fifiel, Narrator: Many of us surgeons believed that "laudable pus," a thick, white, substance oozing from a wound meant that the wound was healing well. My glance into the future showed me that pus is actually a sign of serious infection. I wish I had known better. And then there is bloodletting, cupping, and purging trying to rebalance the humors of the body. These practices usually make the patient worse. I wish I had understood better.

And then of course we often prescribed calomel, which is mercury chloride and arsenic, to treat typhoid fever and malaria. We prescribed morphine which ushered out the pain but ushered in the pains of addiction for many soldiers. Learning about addiction was as painful as the wounds that made our prescriptions necessary.

Then there was scurvy, particularly in the confederate army because they did not have as much good and plentiful food as the Union Army.

Ethan: What is scurvy? Is that a dance, or maybe a song we can play on the drums?

Ellie: If you eat your vegetables, you won't get scurvy. It is a disease that is caused by lack of vitamins.

Ethan: I will eat all of my vegetables except lima beans. I can't make any promises about lima beans.

Dr. Amos Fifield, Narrator: Doctors and nurses need to get more training and experience and despite our limited medical knowledge and the high mortality rate from disease and mini ball amputations, the Civil War inspired medical innovations. The Civil War produced medical innovations, including new systems of field transportation, hospital organization and medical record keeping. All of these innovations laid the foundation for modern medicine.

Sarah: I have an idea. Let's fix Ethan's drum. We've been talking about fixing soldiers with medicine, can't we fix our drum with hide glue like you just did on that soldier's crutch?

Dr. Amos Fifield, Narrator: We can and will do that, right now. After all, practice makes perfect.

Sarah: After we fix the drum I am going to practice and play it perfectly.

Ethan: Girls can't play the drums and they sure can't play them perfectly!

Sarah: Wait and see. And get gluing while you wait.

Ethan: It's glued. But I don't know how long it will stay glued.
Don't beat it too hard.

Sarah: I have to play hard. I'm Playing the Battle Cry of Freedom.

Act Three

Sarah: It's hard to believe we're going home. Ethan, stop banging on that drum. Can't you see all of the stretchers and the wounded soldiers?

Ethan: The drum song drowns out their moaning. It's hard to hear their moaning.

Sarah: We need to do something about it, not drown it out.

Ethan: What can we do? We can't stop the battle out there.

Ellie: We can help here in the hospital. Ethan, put down that drum. You can play the soldiers some music while they are convalescing. Right now, I need you to unroll these bandages for me. And Sarah, you can empty the bedpans in Ward two over there.

Sarah: Aw Mom! I hate emptying bed pans!

Ethan: I don't like unrolling bandages either.

Sarah: Can't we trade jobs?

Ellie: Did your father ask to change jobs?

Ellie: Sometimes soldiers from both sides desert but most of them stay and fight for themselves and their beliefs and their country. Your father did that.

Ethan: Do all of the soldiers do that?

Sarah: Father did.

Ethan: And look what happened to his leg. He lost it! Dr. Fifield amputated it!

Ellie: He had to do it, or your father would have died.

Sarah: Did you have to follow Dr. Fifield to the war?

Ellie: I didn't have to follow him, but there are so few nurses and so many wounded men, I believed I had a duty to my country and Dr. Fifield. And it was supposed to be just a three month term. And then your father was drafted and sent to the 29th Ohio , the same as the doctor's and mine, so I thought that you and Ethan wouldn't mind staying with Aunt Ruby for three months.

Sarah: And we followed father because we wanted our family to be together again.

Ethan: I came because I want to be a drummer boy in father's regiment.

Sarah: I can play the drum better than you, so I can be the 29th Regiment's drummer girl.

Ethan: I keep telling you and telling you. Girls can't be drummers. Girls can't be soldiers.

Ellie: You two can work together and share the drum. That way you both can play your best music together. Your father and I work together.

Ethan: Dr. Fifield, those two soldiers are bringing a soldier in on that stretcher. They said that the soldier had been hit in the leg by a mini ball. He's really bleeding.

Ellie: That's Jonathan! We have to save him Doctor Fifield!

Sarah: He's breathing! He smiled at me!

Ethan: I can't believe we are really on the train and on the way home. All of us.

Dr. Amos Fifield: We worked together and we created the best results. We saved your father and we saved a Confederate soldier the same day. Remember the soldier from the 7th Virginia cavalry? And as it turns out, we are united in another way. His leg was infected and I had to amputate it. I nicked my hand with my scalpel and it became infected. Now you and I have to go home to Conneaut to recover and we are blessed to take Ellie and Sarah and Ethan with us.

Ethan: This train ride is boring. Father is sleeping and mother is sitting beside him. Sarah is reading and you are staring out the window, Dr. Fifield. I don't have anything to do or anyone to talk to. And why is father so sad all of the time? Even when he's sleeping he has a frown on his face. Do you think his good leg hurts? Why did you have to cut off his leg?

Dr. Amos Fifield: A mini ball caused your father's leg wound. The most common wounds that Civil War soldiers suffered came from bullets fired from muskets. These bullets, called Minnie balls, were conical shaped with hollowed grooves. The large 58 caliber bullets weighed 1 ½ ounces and a black powder charge propelled them. The minnie ball caused a lot of damage, often flattening when they struck human flesh. Minnie balls could splinter bones, damage muscle and drive dirt, clothing, and other debris into the wound. In your father's case, it shattered his tibia and there was no other option. The Minié ball tended to cut a straight path and usually went all the way through the injured part; the ball

seldom remained lodged in the body. If a Minié ball struck a bone, it usually shattered it.^[6] The damage to bones and resulting compound fractures were usually severe enough to necessitate amputation

Ethan: Can he ever walk in the woods with me again or go fishing with me again?

Jonathan: No, Ethan I can't. I'm an invalid now, an amputee. I can't carry my own weight much less support my family.

Ellie: And how long have you been home to figure this out, Jonathan?

Jonathan: I didn't have to be home to figure it out. I've been talking to some of the other soldiers on this train. I've been getting letters from my Cousin Ezra who had his arm amputated and has been home for a year. People don't treat you the same way. They don't think you're a true man anymore if you come home injured. They don't think you can work anymore.

Ellie: Jonathan, I agree that some people have this idea that one of the many parts of manhood is supporting your family and when you have physical or mental problems this takes away from having the ability to support your family But I am a nurse. I can help. You are my husband. I love you. I can help. I am your wife. I WILL help!

Dr. Amos Fifield: Jonathan and Ellie, let me tell you this. The people who think that a man has to be the sole provider are wrong. That often isn't the case. Think about the mothers and sisters and wives who are keeping the home fires burning while their men are fighting the war. Think about the wives who take in sewing, and teach school and practice nursing during

peacetime. They help support their families. And the ones who think they are so smart to know that the word “invalid” in our time means a disabled soldier person who isn’t a valid member of society are really stupid! You are not invalidated or invalidated; you are a valid, valued veteran!

Ethan: You are valued veteran, and my hero father!

Sarah: You are a valued father and a validated veteran!

Dr. Amos Fifield: Some Civil War surgeons estimate that Minnie Balls will be responsible for thousands of amputations during the Civil War. I am one of these surgeons and I know I am right. They smiled and walked home together, walking in step with Jonathan. I watched them thoughtfully, an idea forming in my mind. The next day I talked to Captain Tubbs.

Captain Alanson Tubbs; I am glad you are back, Dr. Fifield. I have a heavy cough that follows me like a Lake Erie undertow. Please help me get rid of this cough.

Dr. Amos Fifield: Captain Tubbs, this is the sixth time I have seen you this week.

Captain Alanson Tubbs: I will keep coming until you give me something to stop this cough!

Dr. Amos Fifield: Actually I’ve seen you seven times, , because I heard you coughing in church. I can make you an extra strong mustard plaster. But don’t leave it on for more than 15 minutes. If you do, it will burn your skin.

Captain Alanson Tubbs: This plaster is raining mustard seeds. Is something wrong with the mortar and pestle or the hand that ground the mustard seed?

Dr. Amos Fifield: I did that on purpose. Growing a crop with one seed so to speak.

Captain Alanson Tubbs: Hurry up with that plaster. I'm coughing so hard I'm scattering those stray seeds all over the place!

Dr. Amos Fifield: That's the idea.

Captain Alanson Tubbs: I only need one mustard plaster, two at the most. What are you going to do with all of that mustard seed? You have enough mustard seed for the entire town.

Dr. Amos Fifield: I hope the town will spread it to the entire world.

Mustard plasters can be used to relieve pain, relieve chest congestion, warm muscle, and grow faith. I have lots of grinding to do before tomorrow to have enough to give everyone in town.

Captain Alanson Tubbs: Your mustard plaster is working. It really does help chest congestion and coughing. I'm not coughing much now. But what do you mean to grow faith?

Dr. Amos Fifield: I read somewhere that we should strive to have faith like a grain of mustard seed and use our lives to spread it.

Captain Alanson Tubbs: Even a crusty coughing captain like me know where you read about the grain of mustard seed.

Dr. Amos Fifield: I heard the pastor read it again Sunday between your coughs!

Captain Alanson Tubbs: You finally did something about my cough. You and your mustard plaster.

Dr. Amos Fifield: I understand you are something of a gardener Alanson. Tell me what is the definition of a mustard seed?

Captain Alanson Tubbs: Mustard seeds are very durable and can last for years if stored properly, but their flavor potency decreases over time. They remain safe to eat indefinitely.

Dr, Amos Fifield: Just remember mustard seed can divert the straight path of minnie balls. I'll see you tomorrow at the parade. The next morning, the morning of the parade, I rode my horse Old White over to Main Street, her saddlebags loaded with two large burlap bags. It was early but a crowd of people had already gathered to watch the parade. I had arranged to meet Officer Rose and Augie and Sarah, Ethan, and Ellie at the grandstand. Ethan and Sarah carried the glued drum between them. They played a drum roll, each with one stick.

Then I motioned to Officer Rose and he and Augie passed around little packets of mustard seed. This poem was written was written on the small package.

When a heavy cough,

Makes you feel off,

When hope is frayed,

Remember the mustard seed parade!

Sarah and Ethen play: Dixie, Bonnie Blue Flag, and the Battle Hymn of the Republic. Augie and Officer Rose beat time with them.

Dr. Amos Fifield: Never forget when life gives you minnie balls, plant a mustard seed.

Goodbye for now. I am going back to sleep.

Drum softly playing Taps