

For his composition class, Daniel Matthews was assigned a paper using a few sources. He was to write about an “urban legend,” a widely accepted and emotionally appealing—but untrue—tale about events. The following selection from his paper, “The Truth about ‘Taps,’” introduces his topic, briefly explaining the legend and the true story about it. The first draft illustrates macro revisions (highlighted in the margin) and micro revisions (marked in the text); the clear and concise final version follows.

FIRST DRAFT

*Anyone who has ever*  
As you know, whenever you have attended the funeral services for a fallen veteran of the United States of America, you have stood fast as a lone bugler filled the air with the mournful and sullenly appropriate last tribute to a defender of the *nation* United States of America. As most of us know, *T* the name of the bugle call is “Taps,” and the *legend* story behind its origin is *has* one that is gaining *ed* a popularity of its own as it is *has* more and more frequently being circulated in this time of war and terror. Although it is clear that this tale of the origin of a beautiful ode to a fallen warrior is heartfelt and full of purposeful intent, it is an “urban legend.” *As such, i* It fails to provide due justice to the memories of the men responsible for the true origin of “Taps.”

Avoid “you” in case readers have not shared this experience.

Rework paragraph to summarize legend when first mentioned.

INSERT:  
According to this story, Union captain Robert Ellicombe discovered that a Confederate casualty was, in fact, his son, a music student in the South. The father found “Taps” in his son’s pocket, and the tune was first played at a military burial as his son was laid to rest (Coulter).

General Daniel Butterfield is the *true* originator of the bugle call “Taps,” *o* formerly known as “Lights Out.” Butterfield served as a general in the Union army during the Civil War and was awarded the Medal of Honor for actions during that time. One of his most endearing claims to fame is the bugle call “Taps,” which he composed at Harrison’s Landing in 1862 (Warner 167). The bugle call “Taps” originates from another call named “Lights Out”; this call was used by the Army to signal the end of the day, Butterfield, wanting a new and original call unique to his command, summoned bugler Oliver Willcox Norton to his tent one night. *R* and, rather than compose an altogether new tune, he instead modified the notes to the call “Lights Out” (US Military District of Washington). *Shortly thereafter* Then this call could be heard being used up and down the Union lines as the other commanders who had heard the call liked it and adapted it for their own use. This call, the modified version of “Lights Out” is also in a way a derivative of the British bugle call *and itself* “Tattoo,” *a* which is very similar in both sound and purpose to “Lights Out,” (Villanueva). notes this as well in his paper “24 Notes That Tap Deep Emotion.”

Group all the discussion of the versions in one place.

Divide long sentence to keep it clear.

Strengthen paragraph conclusion by sticking to its focus.