

The background of the entire page is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in warm, golden-brown tones.

Kentucky

\$5

Fall 2013

Kentucky Humanities Council, Inc.

humanities

A State Divided: The Civil War in Kentucky

Civil War in the Bluegrass



Ben Chandler

Executive Director

Kentucky Humanities Council

Ben Chandler

We are 150 years removed from the Civil War, yet it still creates strong emotions in many Americans. The War Between the States split the nation deeply and divided Kentucky, pitting friend against friend, neighbor against neighbor, brother against brother, and even father against son.

Kentucky's future was forever changed by the events of the Civil War. In commemoration of the Civil War's sesquicentennial, we are pleased to share with you a wide array of Kentucky perspectives and issues that developed throughout the war.

What would Abraham Lincoln say about slavery and the Civil War if he were alive today? Stephen A. Brown conducts a "conversation" with President Lincoln through chronicled speeches and writings. His article is on page 7.

Camp Nelson played a pivotal role in the destruction of slavery in the Commonwealth. W. Stephen McBride shares the history of Kentucky's largest recruitment and training center for African American soldiers and what remains of Camp Nelson today.

John Hunt Morgan is widely known for his Confederate Cavalry raids, overshadowing fellow Kentuckian George Martin Jessee, known as "Naughty Jessee." Mark V. Wetherington tells us about the lesser known Confederate Cavalryman on page 15.

While Kentucky's men were off fighting for both the Union and the Confederacy, their wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters were left to take care of the family and home. On page 18, Nancy Baird shares the stories of several Kentucky women who bravely kept the home fires burning during the Civil War.

President Abraham Lincoln was known for many things — his leadership throughout the most tumultuous time in America's history, his unique appearance, and his Emancipation Proclamation. However, President Lincoln is rarely remembered for his sense of humor. William Ellis gives us a look at the evolution of humor in America during the Civil War on page 23.

Politics and the media have long been intertwined. Berry Craig tells us the story of Len G. Faxon, editor of the *Columbus Crescent* during the Civil War, a time when media bias was rampant and objectivity almost nonexistent. Faxon may have been the most southern sympathizing editor and his readers knew it with every word he published.

Most Kentuckians are familiar with the state's largest Civil War battle — the Battle of Perryville. Stuart Sanders shares what happened in Springfield in the days following the infamous battle. The sacrifices and bravery of many in Springfield prevented further death and destruction in the Commonwealth.

Although the Civil War officially ended with Lee's surrender at Appomattox on April 9, 1865, peace was not instantly achieved. Kentucky remained under martial law for six months and the Commonwealth experienced great disorder for nearly a year after the surrender. James Prichard goes inside the days following Grant's victory at Appomattox and how the war's aftermath influenced Kentucky's future.

John O. Scott began as a volunteer for the Confederate army, and went on to serve as an assistant surgeon of First Kentucky Brigade and the Third Infantry Regiment, known as the Orphan Brigade. Hugh Ridenour details the Civil War journey of this Kentucky native, whose life included participation in many historical events and encounters with well-known historical figures.

Many of us learned about the Civil War through textbooks, teachers, or historians. Richard Taylor was no different. But he also learned about the War Between the States from his father, who knew some of the war's survivors. Read about Taylor's Civil War education beginning on page 40.

Music has long been an important part of Kentucky culture. Many Civil War events, battles, and military leaders were documented through fiddle music. Nikos Pappas shares a unique perspective — commemorating the Civil War through fiddle music. Check it out on page 46.

Lastly, Georgia Green Stamper reveals how the Civil War brought us the nationally observed holiday, Memorial Day. A day now recognized as one to remember and pay homage to the sacrifices of all of those who have fought for the United States of America.

I am delighted to join the Kentucky Humanities Council and serve as the executive director. I hope you enjoy this Civil War issue of *Kentucky Humanities*. It is our privilege to share these Kentucky stories with you. If you have a Kentucky story to share, please contact our magazine editor, Marianne Stoess, Marianne.Stoess@uky.edu.

Kentucky

Fall 2013

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Mark Wilden elected to Board of Directors



Mark A. Wilden

Mark A. Wilden was elected to the Kentucky Humanities Council board of directors at the April, 2013 Board Meeting. He will serve a three-year term, with a second three-year term optional. As a member of the twenty-three-person volunteer board of directors, Wilden will help set council policies, award project grants to community organizations, and participate in fund-raising to help the Council meet the growing demand for its programs.

Wilden has worked as an investment advisor since 1985. He is a graduate of Duquesne University with a degree in political science and business as well as a graduate of the College for Financial Planning in Denver, Colorado. He holds certifications in both financial planning and wealth management. He also holds the Certified Investment Management Analyst designation from the Wharton Business School. Wilden is a CFP and a portfolio manager. He and his wife, Margie, live in Lexington with their two children, Hope and Austin. He is also the president of the board of the Emerson Center.

Correction

In the Spring 2013 issue of *Kentucky Humanities* we mistakenly reported that new board member, Elaine A. Wilson, served on the University of Kentucky's Board of Directors. That organization should have been listed as the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees. Ms. Wilson served as a member of the University of Kentucky's Board of Trustees and was elected to the board's executive committee where she served as secretary.

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Photos by Virginia G. Carter

On Friday, September 27, 2013, the Kentucky Humanities Council, in partnership with Lake Barkley State Resort Park, hosted an “education excursion” for more than 1,000 students (grades 4-8) from the far western part of the Commonwealth. Kentucky history, heritage, and culture including four Kentucky Chautauqua presenters (Grandpa Jones, Simon Kenton, Lucy Audubon, and Henry Clay), music, nature, and local inhabitant presentations were among the interesting stations that students and educators alike visited.

In the evening, as the sun set on Lake Barkley, members of the local community came out for an evening under the stars — and under the big tent — and were joined by some of Kentucky’s most famous historical and humorous figures. Kentucky Chautauqua’s Henry Clay, Mary Todd Lincoln, Mark Twain, and Grandpa Jones entertained and the crowd was treated to Bluegrass music performed by Logan Oakley and friends.



Samuel Perkins Gilmore prints, courtesy of the University of Kentucky Archives

A Conversation with Abraham Lincoln

By Stephen A. Brown

This being the sesquicentennial observation of the Civil War, who better to interview than Kentucky's native son, Abraham Lincoln?

"Impossible," you say.

"Not so," I reply.

Abraham Lincoln's words live on, carefully chronicled in collections of his speeches and letters. Previously asked questions bear repeating during this heightened awareness of the Civil War that dominated his presidency. I'll start by asking Mr. Lincoln if he remembers his early experiences in Kentucky, and consult a letter he wrote to Samuel Haycroft on June 4, 1860.

"The place on Knob Creek, ... I remember very well; but I was not born there. As my parents have told me, I was born on Nolin, very much nearer Hodgins's-Mill than the Knob Creek place is. My earliest recollection, however, is of the Knob Creek place."¹

You were born at the Sinking Spring Farm in Hodgenville on February 12, 1809, but problems with obtaining a clear title to the land forced your family to move. On May 11, 1811, your

father, Thomas Lincoln, published a notice of a stray horse he found near the Knob Creek farm where you had relocated.

The first school you attended was two miles from the Knob Creek Farm. Zachariah Riney and Caleb Hazel taught in a one-room cabin in what is now Athertonville, Kentucky. Peter Atherton owned the ferry you would have had to use to cross the Rolling Fork River when going north. Mr. Atherton owned seven slaves in 1813 and eight slaves from 1814-1816.² Were your early experiences in Kentucky influential in your decision to abolish slavery?

"I am naturally anti-slavery. If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. I cannot remember when I did not so think and feel."³

Well, since you said your earliest memories are of the Knob Creek place, perhaps you witnessed the inequalities and hardships of slavery through proximity to slave-owning neighbors. Your father never owned slaves, but your neighbors, Daniel Waide, William Brownfield, and Isom Enlow were slave owners.⁴

"I have always hated slavery, I think as much as any Abolitionist."⁵

¹Lincoln, *Speeches and Writings, 1859-1865*, Don E. Fehrenbacher, Lincoln's letter to Samuel Haycroft, circuit clerk in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, June 4, 1860.

²Tax Roles: Hardin County, Kentucky, 1802-1817, Roll 008013, Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives, Frankfort, Kentucky.

³Fehrenbacher, Lincoln's letter to Albert Hodges, editor of the *Frankfort Commonwealth*, April 4, 1864.

⁴Tax Roles: Hardin County, Kentucky, 1802-1817, Roll 008013, Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives, Frankfort, Kentucky.

⁵Lincoln, *Speeches and Writings, 1832-1858*, Don E. Fehrenbacher, Speech at Chicago, Illinois, July 10, 1858.

Know all Men by these presents
 that I William M. Glapton of the
 county of Hardin and State of Kentuck-
 =ky, for and in consideration of two
 hundred and thirty dollars to me in
 hand paid by Abraham Enlow of
 the county of Hardin and State afores-
 said, have bargained, sold and
 delivered and by these presents do grant
 bargain, sell and deliver unto the
 said Abraham Enlow, one certain
 negro girl named Fanny of about
 nine or ten years of age. For which con-
 =sideration I do hereby bind myself
 my heirs &c. to the said Abraham
 Enlow his heirs and assigns to warrant
 and defend said negro girl against
 the claim of all and every person
 of slavery whatsoever: under the
 penalty of four hundred and
 fifty dollars. As witness my
 hand and seal this third day of
 November 1814 — William M. Glapton

Exhibit 1. Isom Enlow: The Enlow family have several primary source, handwritten documents establishing the presence of slave-owning neighbors while Abraham Lincoln was living in Kentucky. (The Enlow family are still living next to Knob Creek where the Lincoln family resided from 1812–1816.) Note the date: “the third day of November 1814.”

Daniel Waide owned five male slaves over the age of 16, and seven slaves total from 1814–1816. Instead of physical addresses, tax roles used waterways, so his location is listed as “Nob Creek.” Similar to the truncated spelling used in today’s fast-paced texting, spelling was subject to personal interpretation during the early days of record keeping when everything was hand-written.

Mr. Lincoln, since we are on the topic of ‘Nob Creek,’ I have another question about your Kentucky home and the issue of slavery. Direct descendants of your neighbors, the Enlows, still live next to the Knob Creek farm. Between 1811 and 1816 while you were living at Knob Creek and attending blab school,

Isom and Mary Enlow owned between nine and 10 slaves.⁶ In addition, during the time of your formative years in Hardin County, Kentucky, there were 1,007 slaves compared to 1,627 White Males.⁷ How did this proximity to slavery influence your views regarding slavery?

“...those white people who argue in favor of making other people slaves. I am in favor of giving an opportunity to such white men to try it on for themselves.”⁸

From 1812 to 1816 while living at Knob Creek, you probably witnessed slave coffles passing up and down the Cumberland Trail. The Cumberland Trail was the main road between Louisville and Nashville, linking the two cities with Natchez and Mobile. These four cities were major slave trading centers, and runaway slave advertisements for slaves escaping south of Knob Creek were advertised in the Louisville paper, north of Knob Creek, thus establishing the likelihood of slaves passing through the area: south to north.

Could this early exposure have been a contributing factor in the decision to emancipate the enslaved? In 1841 Mr. Lincoln shared a memorable experience with his Kentucky friend, Joshua F. Speed.

“You may remember, as I well do, that from Louisville to the mouth of the Ohio there were, on board, ten or a dozen slaves, shackled together with irons. That sight was a continual torment to me; and I see something like it every time I touch the Ohio, or any other slave-border.”⁹

At a particularly low point in life, you returned to Kentucky. While in Louisville, you stayed with Joshua Speed, who was a slave owner. Would you care to read an excerpt from the same letter you wrote to him in 1855?

“You know I dislike slavery; and you fully admit the abstract wrong of it... a thing which has, and continually exercises, the power of making me miserable... Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation, we began by declaring that “all men are created equal.” We now practically read it “all men are created equal, *except negroes.*”¹⁰

Also in Kentucky, Alexander Hunter lived in Bardstown (eight miles north of Knob Creek) and began selling enslaved people in Natchez (south of Knob Creek) as early as 1807. He and his son continued slave trading well after 1830.¹¹ It is quite likely that slave coffles, or groups of slaves chained together in a line, passed by the front door of the Lincoln Family cabin at Knob Creek.

⁶Tax Roles: Hardin County, Kentucky, 1802 – 1817, Roll 008013, Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives, Frankfort, Kentucky (See also Exhibit 1.).

⁷Hardin County Tax Lists and Census Records: KHS # 73-0151-73-0158.

⁸Fehrenbacher, Speech to 140th Indiana Regiment, Washington, D.C., March 17, 1865.

⁹Fehrenbacher, Letter to Joshua F. Speed, Springfield, August 24, 1855.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Alexander Hunter: Advertisement in the *Mississippi Messenger* [Natchez], 7 April 1807, announcing the sale of “15 likely American born Negroes, Men, Women, and Boys” Filson Historical Society library has a copy of this ad, but it is in text, only.

\$ 100 REWARD!
RANAWAY from Glasgow, Barren county, Kentucky, in August, last, a negro man named DAVID, who, it is supposed, will attempt to get into some of the Northwestern territories; he is 22 or 23 years of age, about 5 feet 10 inches high, well-made, has a scar on his nose, small eyes, and complexion, rather darker than common; he can read and write, and has, in all probability written himself a pass, as issued from the Clerk of Surry county, Virginia, purporting his freedom; he will, I expect, pass himself as a painter, having lived with one for several months previous to his elopement, and done some of the coarsest work. The above reward will be given for delivering said fellow to me in this place, or fifty dollars and all reasonable charges paid, for securing him in any jail in the United States so that I can get him again.
 32-2.w* **B. B. WINN.**

Figure 2. April 1816, *Western Courier* - David, age 23, escaped from B. B. Winn in Glasgow. Knob Creek, where Abraham Lincoln was living at the time, is roughly halfway between Glasgow and Louisville, indicating a south to north route passing directly in front of the family cabin at Knob Creek.¹²



\$100 REWARD.

ON the 14th September last, a negro man named Frank, ran away from me. He is a black negro, weighs about 147 pounds, and reads very well, is about five feet five or six inches high, has a scar above his left eyebrow, and several wrinkles in his forehead. His transgressions impelled me, some years since to take him to New Orleans and sell him, where he became the property of a Spaniard, who branded him on each cheek, thus, , which is plain to be seen when said negro is newly shaved. I went to New Orleans again last May, where, having my feelings excited by the tale Frank told me, I purchased him again. One hundred dollars reward will be paid by the jailor for the delivery of said negro in the jail at Louisville, Kentucky; or, if the person who may apprehend and deliver him in Louisville, should prefer it, he shall be sold at public sale, and the money received be equally divided between the person who may deliver him and myself. Frank is about thirty years of age, and probably aimed to get on board a steam boat, as he endeavored to do so about the first of October last.
 N. B. Any information of said negro will be thankfully received. Address, A. Barnett, Greensburg, Ky.
 nor 3-1162m3w* **ANDREW BARNETT.**

Figure 3. Escape notice posted by Andrew Barnett.¹³

“Has anything ever threatened the existence of this Union save and except this very institution of slavery? What is it that we hold most dear amongst us? Our own liberty and prosperity. What has ever threatened our liberty and prosperity save and except this institution of Slavery?”¹⁴

In April 1816, an escaped slave notice appeared in the *Western Courier* newspaper. David, age 23, escaped from B. B. Winn in Glasgow. (Figure 2) In addition, Andrew Barnett (Figure 3) was a wealthy Green County plantation owner located south of Knob Creek who sold slaves as well as produce in New Orleans. He may have sent slave coffles north along the Cumberland Trail to Louisville, at the time one of the largest slave markets. Slaves escaping from Andrew Barnett would certainly have headed north, toward the Knob Creek Farm. Mr. Lincoln, your family cabin at Knob Creek is roughly halfway between Glasgow and Louisville.

“We believe that the spreading out and perpetuity of the institution of slavery impairs the general welfare. We believe — nay, we know, that that is the only thing that has ever threatened the perpetuity of the Union itself.”¹⁵

William Brownfield, also a slave-owning neighbor, was named in the Ejectment notice filed against Thomas Lincoln, et al.¹⁶ that forced your family to move from Knob Creek.

“My father, at the death of his father, was but six years of age; and he grew up, literally without education. He removed from Kentucky to what is now Spencer County, Indiana, in my eighth year.”¹⁷

You moved from Indiana to Illinois, yet maintained your Kentucky ties. Did your early experiences in Kentucky influence your decision to abolish slavery? I ask this because neither Indiana nor Illinois were slave-owing states, yet efforts to emancipate enslaved people dominated your political career.

“We were proclaiming ourselves political hypocrites before the world, by thus fostering Human Slavery and proclaiming ourselves, at the same time, the sole friends of Human

¹²Kentucky African American Heritage Commission Study, escape slave notices in Louisville, KY newspapers, 1801–1861, Bogert, Pen.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Fehrenbacher, Seventh Debate: October 15, 1858.

¹⁵Ibid. Speech at Cincinnati, Ohio, September 17, 1859.

¹⁶P4-6: Hardin Circuit Court Order Book E, 1814 TO 1816, Order Book F 1817 TO 1819, And Order Book G, 1819 TO 1820 Thomas Stout, et al. V. Thomas Lincoln, et al., Rolls 989539 and 989540 Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives, Frankfort, Kentucky (This is the law suit ejecting Thomas Lincoln from the Knob Creek Farm in which his neighbor William Brownfield is mentioned.).

¹⁷Fehrenbacher, To Jesse W. Fell, Enclosing Autobiography, Springfield, December 20, 1859.

¹⁸The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln edited by Roy P. Basler, Volume II, Speech at Springfield, Illinois, October 4, 1854.

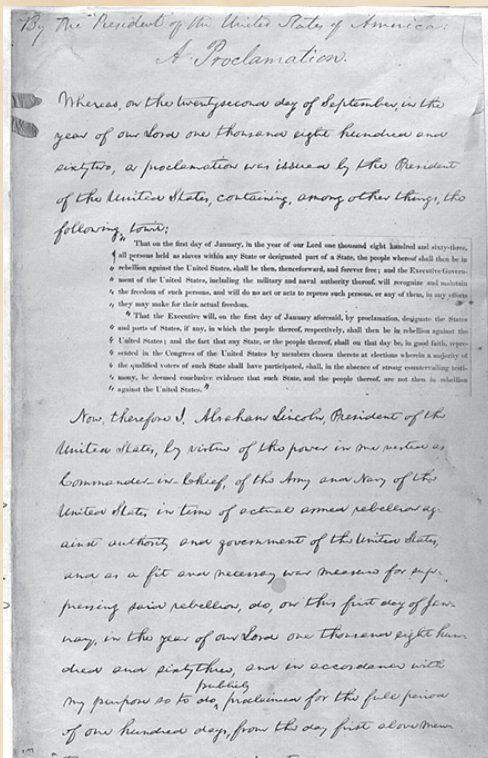


Figure 4. Photograph copy of President Abraham Lincoln's draft of the final Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863. Original destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871. The Robert Todd Lincoln Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Freedom.”¹⁸

Yet this stance may have cost you reelection in the House of Representatives. On January 10, 1849, you introduced, “A bill for an act to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, by the consent of the free white people of said District, and with compensation to owners.”¹⁹ The House never voted on this proposal and you failed in your bid for reelection. This represents one of the few political setbacks of your career.

“I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence.”²⁰

You refer to the Constitution in many of your speeches, especially when slavery is the topic. Although your earliest effort at emancipation failed, ultimately, you were successful. Would you care to comment?

“Fellow citizens of the Senate, and House of Representatives. The Act entitled, ‘An Act for the release of certain persons held to service, or labor in the District of Columbia’ has this day been approved and

signed. I have never doubted the constitutional authority of congress to abolish slavery in this District; and I have ever desired to see the national capital freed from the institution in some satisfactory way.”²¹

You issued a similar national proclamation five months later, on September 21, 1862, only this time it was nationwide. On January 1, 1863, however, after the immortal words of the Emancipation Proclamation, you mention that you are, “Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against authority and government of the United States” (Figure 4) Thomas Jefferson invoked his treaty powers as President when he felt making the Louisiana Purchase was not within his constitutional rights. Might Thomas Jefferson have influenced your decision to use the title, “Commander-in-Chief” when proposing the Emancipation Proclamation?

“All honor to Jefferson — to the man who, in the concrete pressure of a struggle for national independence by a single people, had the coolness, forecast, and capacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document, an abstract truth, applicable to all men and all times....”²²

And this abstract truth you are referring to...

“This is a world of compensations; and he who would be no slave, must consent to have no slave. Those who deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves; and, under a just God, can not long retain it.”²³

Thank you, Mr. Lincoln. You are, and will always be Kentucky's son. Any last thoughts?

“Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition. Whether it be true or not, I can say for one that I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. How far I shall succeed in gratifying this ambition, is yet to be developed.”²⁴

About the Author

Stephen A. Brown is currently working on his third historical fiction novel. He is a member of the Kentucky Humanities Council's Speakers Bureau. He organized living history events while serving as the Education Specialist at the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace in Hodgenville, Kentucky. A research grant from the National Park Service sparked his interest in the untold stories of the Civil War. He enjoys demonstrating rail splitting, and delights in sharing the fascinating history of Kentucky with people across the state.

¹⁸Abraham Lincoln, [January 1849] (A Bill to Abolish Slavery in the District of Columbia) The Abraham Lincoln papers at the Library of Congress, Series 1. General Correspondence. 1833-1916.

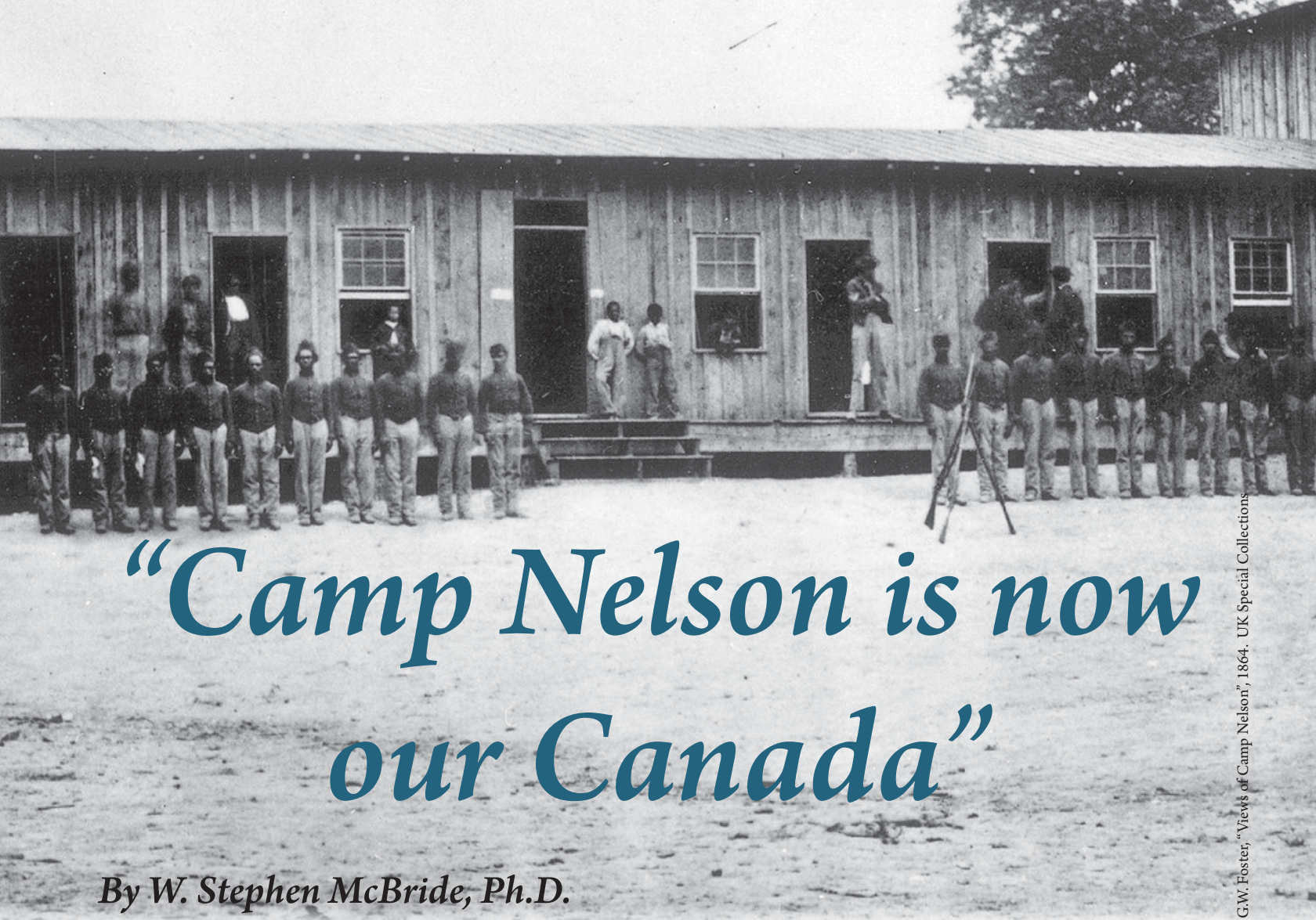
²⁰Fehrenbacher, Address in Independence Hall, February 22, 1861.

²¹National Archives & Records Administration, The District of Columbia Emancipation Act.

²²Fehrenbacher, To Henry L. Pierce and Others, April 6, 1859.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Fehrenbacher, To the People of Sangamo County, March 9, 1832, first political speech.



G.W. Foster, "Views of Camp Nelson", 1864. UK Special Collections

“Camp Nelson is now our Canada”

By *W. Stephen McBride, Ph.D.*

The title of this article is from a quote by an anonymous African American soldier and reflects his, and many African Americans’ feelings toward Camp Nelson as a place of freedom, in a sense their Canada. This soldier, whose whole recorded statement was, “See how much better off we are now than we was four years ago. It used to be five hundred miles to get to Canada from Lexington, but now it is only eighteen miles! Camp Nelson is now our Canada,” captured the essence of the camps’ most significant story; that is its role in the destruction of slavery in Kentucky. It was the state’s, and one of the nation’s, largest recruitment and training centers for African American soldiers and the state’s largest refugee center for African American women and children, who were all actively seeking freedom. The emancipation of the men, women, and children did not come without a struggle, however. Initially the men had to nearly force the army to enlist them and the women and children had to endure much hardship, disease, and even death before they were emancipated.

Kentucky and African American Troops

When the Civil War began, President Lincoln and the federal government resisted the enrollment of African Americans into the military despite intensive pressure from abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass. The government was cautious against antagonizing the pro-Union slave states such as Kentucky. This situation began to change in summer and fall 1862 with the passage of the Second Confiscation Act and the Militia Act, which allowed for the employment or even enlistment of African Americans into the military, and the issuance of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. The organization of African American regiments accelerated after January 1863 with the passage of the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared that "Such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States..." In May 1863, the Bureau of Colored Troops was created to oversee and encourage the organization of Federal African American regiments, known as United States Colored Troops (USCT).

Following the creation of this Bureau, the organization of Federal African American regiments began in all Union and Union held states except one, Kentucky. Kentucky politicians and powerful loyal slave owners successfully lobbied Washington to exempt their state. Since Kentucky was not affected by the Emancipation Proclamation, the vast majority of Kentucky's African American men were still enslaved. Federal authorities continued to fear Kentucky's possible secession from the Union and initially bowed to the state's wishes. The government's need for soldiers continued to grow, however, and by February 1864 an amendment to the Federal Enrollment Act was passed, that allowed for the drafting of both free blacks and enslaved men nationwide. This caused a crisis among the white population in Kentucky and the Federal government eventually agreed that, while they would continue to place African Americans on their enrollment lists, they would not draft any as long as Kentucky's whites filled their required quotas. By spring 1864 pressure mounted from the federal government to begin enlisting African Americans in Kentucky, so Maj. Gen. Stephen G. Burbridge, Commander of the District of Kentucky, issued General Order 34 on April 18, 1864. This order allowed provost marshals to enlist free blacks and enslaved men that had the approval of their owners. Enslaved men were emancipated upon enlistment. This enlistment policy continued in most areas of Kentucky until late May 1864, when 250 escaped enslaved men entered Camp Nelson to enlist. According to Thomas Butler of the U.S. Sanitary Commission,

"On the 23rd of May 1864, about two hundred and fifty able-bodied and fine-looking men assembled in Boyle County, Ky., at the office of the Deputy Provost Marshal, all thirsting for freedom... On their arrival at Camp Nelson, they created great excitement, for they were the first body of colored recruits that had yet come forward. Reporting to Colonel A. H. Clarke, Commandant of the Post, he refused to accept them, stating that he had no authority for so doing."

The Kentucky policy was now being severely challenged by the sheer numbers of enslaved men (without permission) that entered Camp Nelson. Within a few days this number reached 400. A frustrated Col. Andrew H. Clark, commander of Camp Nelson, wrote to his commander that "Unless the Recruiting business is better managed it will cost the Government a great deal of money and very few Negroes will be recruited."

A week later Col. Clark began enlisting the African American men at Camp Nelson, who by early June had reached 1,500 men. On June 13, 1864 the army officially removed the earlier restrictions and took any able-bodied African American man of suitable age. Upon enlistment these former slaves were emancipated and eventually more than 5,700 men joined the army and were freed at Camp Nelson, making it one of the largest recruitment camps, and emancipation centers, for African American soldiers in the nation. Eight USCT regiments were organized at Camp Nelson and five others were stationed there. The Camp Nelson regiments were the 5th and 6th U.S. Colored Cavalry, the 12th and 13th U.S. Colored Heavy Artillery, and the 114th, 116th, 119th, and 124th U.S. Colored Infantry. Those stationed at the camp but organized elsewhere were the 72nd, 117th, 120th, 121st, and 123rd U.S. Colored Infantry regiments. We are fortunate in having some narratives and letters by members of the 12th U.S. Colored Heavy Artillery.

Private Peter Bruner described his escape experience as follows:

"The next morning about five o'clock I had gone twenty-one miles and had arrived at Richmond. After I had left Richmond I came upon sixteen colored fellows who were on their way to Camp Nelson and of course I did not get lonesome. Just a half hour before sundown we arrived at Camp Nelson and had come forty-one miles in that day. The officers asked me what I wanted there and I told them that I came there to fight the rebels and that I wanted a gun."

What this opportunity meant to these soldiers and former slaves was perhaps best stated by Corporal George Thomas,

"I enlisted in the 12th U.S. Colored Heavy Artillery in the Fall of 1864, and my only sorrow is that I did not enlist sooner... I see, as it were, a nation born in a day- men and women coming forth from slavery's dark dungeons to the noonday sunshine of the greatest of God's gifts- Liberty."

Sergeant Elijah Marrs stated,

"I can stand this, and like a man... This is better than slavery, though I do march in line at the tap of a drum. I felt freedom in my bones... Then all fear banished. I had quit thinking as a child and had commenced to think as a man."



G.W. Foster, "Views of Camp Nelson", 1864. UK Special Collections

Camp Nelson was Kentucky's largest refugee center for African American women and children actively seeking freedom.

Camp Nelson's USCT saw action in the major battles of Saltville, Marion, Petersburg, and Richmond, Virginia, as well as numerous skirmishes in Kentucky. As Col. James Brisbin of Camp Nelson's 5th U.S. Colored Cavalry stated after the October 1864 Battle of Saltville, Virginia,

"Of this fight I can only say that the men could not have behaved more bravely. I have seen white troops fight in 27 battles and I never saw any fight better. ... On the return of the forces, those who had scoffed at the colored troops on the march out were silent."

Regarding battles in Eastern Virginia, including Petersburg, Sergeant Major Thomas Boswell of Camp Nelson's 116th USCI agreed when he stated,

"We are Kentucky boys, and there is no regiment in the field that ever fought better. We can boast of being the heroes of eight hard-fought battles..."

By the end of the war, nearly 24,000 Kentucky African American men had joined the army, the second-largest number (behind only Louisiana) of any state, even though it was the last state to begin enlistment. This enlistment began the destruction of slavery in Kentucky. The creation and success of African American soldiers also had tremendous symbolic and political, as well as military, value. As Confederate General Howell Cobb stated,

"You cannot make soldiers out of slaves or slaves of soldiers. The day you make soldiers of them is the beginning of the end of the revolution. If slaves will make good soldiers, then our whole theory of slavery is wrong."

Women and Children Freedom Seekers

The emancipation story of Camp Nelson is not restricted to the African American soldiers. When these men escaped slavery to join the army, they were often accompanied by their wives and children, who were also attempting to escape slavery. In addition, African American women and children entered the camp separately from their husbands. Sometimes this was following threats and beatings by their owners.

Although the men were emancipated upon enlistment, their wives and children were not. The women and children nevertheless entered camp with the intent of finally escaping slavery, to gain control of their labor, and to create a new life. The journey toward this goal, although ultimately successful for most, had many barriers and even death for some. The women and children did have allies, however, particularly abolitionist reformers such as The Rev. John G. Fee and the Rev. Abisha Scofield of the American Missionary Association, members of the U.S. Sanitary Commission, abolitionist members of Congress, and even some U.S. Army officers, particularly Captain Theron E. Hall, Chief Quartermaster of Camp Nelson, and later, Superintendent of Camp Nelson's Home for Colored Refugees.

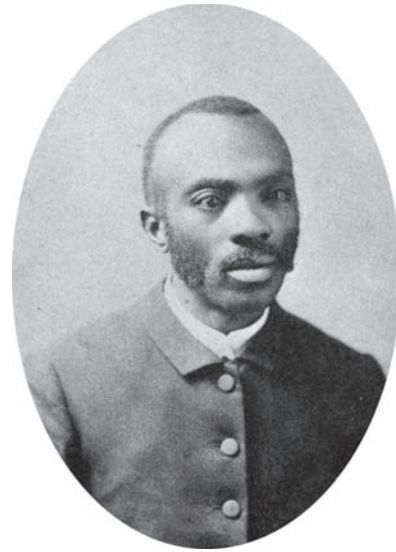
Although the federal government, and therefore U.S. Army, had early in the war established policies of accepting escaped enslaved people (legally classified as "contraband of war") within army bases within the seceding states, these policies did not extend into Kentucky or other loyal slave states. Initially, the army did not have a clear policy for these refugee women and children but allowed them to establish their own encampments and even live in tents with their soldier husbands/fathers. But, soon the army began

ordering that “the negro women here without authority will be arrested and sent beyond the lines.” The army did not want legally enslaved women and children in camp. Camp Nelson was caught in the paradox of Civil War Kentucky; a slave state in a war, at least after the Emancipation Proclamation, to end slavery.

By July 1864, orders originating with Brig. Gen. Lorenzo Thomas, who was in charge of African American recruitment in the Mississippi Valley, and carried out by district commander Brig. Gen. Speed Fry clarified that only women “in Government employ” were allowed to stay in camp. All others were ordered or escorted back “home” to slavery, where, according to Brig. Gen. Thomas, “Under the state law their respective masters are bound to take care of them.” But the women and children kept coming into and returning to Camp Nelson, and ejection orders had to be reissued at least seven times between July and November 1864, when a more dramatic ejection occurred.

Exactly how the women and children were able to remain or return to camp is unclear, but there is mention of the women bribing guards and it is probable that the women and sympathetic officers and employees used the “government employ” exception to stay in camp, although camp employee lists do not include any African American women at this time. Only two legitimate employment opportunities for women are mentioned in the documents; washerwomen and cooks.

Archaeological excavations at a refugee encampment site within Camp Nelson strongly support laundry as a major activity



“Life and History of the Rev. Elijah P. Marrs”, 1885.

Born in Shelby County, Kentucky, Elijah Marrs trained at Camp Nelson. He participated in minor engagements at Glasgow and Big Springs and rose to the rank of sergeant.

performed by the women. The large quantity and variety of buttons, eyelets, and seed beads, as well as a sad iron, indicate that the women did laundry for men and women, civilians and soldiers, including officers and enlisted men. At Camp Nelson, the demand for washerwomen made these women indispensable and gave them a legitimate reason for staying in camp. It gave them the power to stay in camp and create and economically support their own homes and community.



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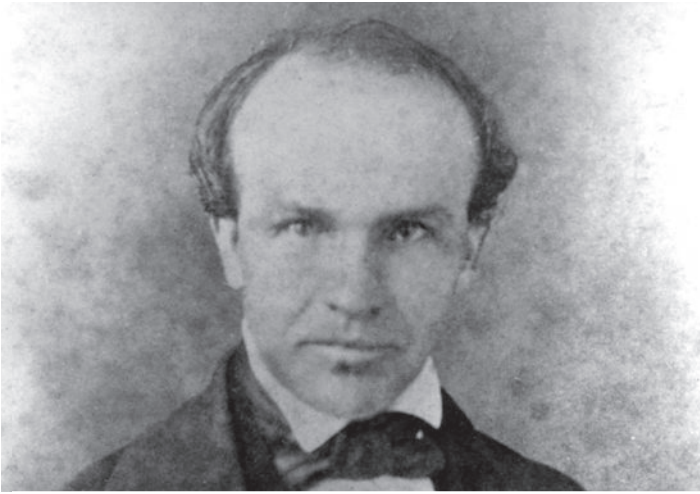
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The Rev. John G. Fee and his wife, Matilda, purchased the “Home for Colored Refugees” and resold it to refugee families.

Unfortunately this adaptation, by itself, could not overcome the politics and legal situation of Kentucky. On November 22-25, 1864, District Commander Brig. Gen. Speed Fry succumbed to pressure from the Army and slave owners, and expelled all of the 400 enslaved women and children from Camp Nelson. Fry utilized armed white troops to forcibly load the women and children onto wagons and escort them out of camp. Following the ejection, white soldiers destroyed and burned the refugee cabins, which is also evidenced archaeologically.

The harshness of the November ejection, which led to the death of 102 refugees from exposure and disease, caused a national uproar, including an article in the *New York Tribune*, and reached the ears of high-ranking Washington officials. Ultimately, these actions were reversed and army policy amended so that refugees were resettled in a newly constructed “Home for Colored Refugees” within Camp Nelson. The Camp Nelson refugee ejection also led directly to the March 3, 1865 Congressional Act which freed the wives and children of U.S. Colored Troops. This act continued and accelerated the destruction of slavery in Kentucky. Following this act and the creation of the Home, Sergeant Marrs stated,

“Thousands of people are coming in [to Camp Nelson] from all directions, seeking their freedom. It was equal to the forum of Rome. All they had to do was get there and they were free.”

The “Home for Colored Refugees” as conceived by Superintendent Capt. Theron E. Hall and the army consisted of communal barracks, a mess hall, and a school. This plan was fought by The Rev. John G. Fee, and probably the refugees, who wanted them to live as family units in individual houses and prepare their own food. As The Rev. Fee stated,

“Let the government give title and protection and then hands off. The habits of these people must be considered. They have been accustomed to the fireplace and cabin [and]...basic foodstuffs [should] be distributed to each family to cook themselves.”

Eventually, a compromise was reached with the refugees being housed in duplex cottages (one family in each half), but without chimneys, and they were required to eat in the mess house and prohibited from cooking for themselves. A total of 97 duplex cottages were eventually built and the original barracks used for single women and as hospital wards. As the number of refugees increased to more than 3,000 people, many had to live in army tents and eventually built their own cabins, with chimneys. Interestingly, the refugees in these cabins were allowed to cook their own food and as a result, they were found by a U.S. Sanitary Commission inspector Dr. George Andrew to be much healthier than those people in the cottages, who typically ate army rations.

After the war, the “Home” was taken over by the Freedmen’s Bureau, whose ultimate goal was to break it up and resettle the refugees as farm laborers in the Midwest and surprisingly, in the Lower South. This resettlement was bitterly fought by Rev. Fee, Rev. Abisha Scofield, and the refugees, most of whom wanted to stay until their husband returned. Although some refugees were resettled, this struggle was eventually won, and the “Home” continued, first being operated by the American Missionary Association, then purchased by John and Matilda Fee and resold to the refugee families and eventually becoming the community of Ariel, now Hall, which still exists today.

Camp Nelson Today

Today, the former Camp Nelson is mostly agricultural land, but, Camp Nelson National Cemetery and the Hall community remain, and Camp Nelson Civil War Heritage Park has been created to preserve much of the site and tell its story, a story that until recently was not known or had been forgotten by much of Kentucky. Hopefully, continued research, preservation, and interpretation will make Camp Nelson a nationally known place of history — to inscribe in our collective memories, and in our history texts.

As the Rev. John G. Fee stated,

“Camp Nelson was the rendezvous of soldiery and birthplace of liberty to Kentucky. It is hallowed in the minds of thousands.”

About the Author

Dr. W. Stephen McBride is the director of interpretation and archaeology at Camp Nelson Civil War Heritage Park, Jessamine County, Kentucky. Dr. McBride received his bachelor’s degree in anthropology from Beloit College (WI), and his master’s and doctorate degrees in anthropology from Michigan State University. Dr. McBride has directed many excavations on historic sites and has authored or co-authored numerous articles for journals and edited volumes, and co-authored the booklets, *Frontier Forts of West Virginia: Historical and Archaeological Explorations* (2003) (with Kim McBride and Greg Adamson) and *Seizing Freedom: Archaeology of Escaped Slaves at Camp Nelson, Kentucky* (2010) (with Kim McBride). Dr. McBride also co-edited (with Kim McBride and David Pollack) *Historic Archaeology in Kentucky* (1995). He has taught at Georgetown College, Centre College, University of Kentucky, Concord University (WV), and West Virginia University.

Naughty Jessee!

George M. Jessee and his Kentucky Mounted Rifles

By Mark V. Wetherington

Driving along Interstate 64 between Lexington and Louisville, most travelers have little idea that they are passing across the landscape of an “inner” Civil War that raged in Kentucky 150 years ago. When we think of the Civil War in Kentucky, we remember a few battles, notably Perryville, Richmond, and Mill Springs, and conclude not much happened after the fall of 1862 except for some raids by Confederate cavalry led by John Hunt Morgan. But warfare waged by guerillas and partisan rangers was a daily occurrence on the Kentucky landscape.

Guerilla activity in Kentucky and the Ohio Valley region took place in a contested borderland between slave and free states. Although most of the guerilla activity occurred on the Kentucky side of the Ohio River, raids by John Hunt Morgan carried the fear of Confederate cavalry and guerrilla attacks north of the river. There pro-Confederate sentiment existed among many residents in southern Illinois and Indiana, who migrated there from Kentucky and Tennessee. Indiana Governor Oliver Morton did not trust southern Indiana home guard units to do the job of protecting his state’s southern border and suspected that many of them were members of secret pro-Confederate organizations such as the Knights of the Golden Circle and the Sons of Liberty.

There were never enough Union soldiers to protect the Kentucky or southern Indiana countryside. Furnishing the Union army with soldiers for its drive through Tennessee and Georgia was the first priority where manpower and material were concerned. Federal strategists focused on protecting garrison towns and cities such as Frankfort, Lexington, and Louisville, as well as railroad bridges and ferry crossings. The Louisville and Nashville Railroad, for example, was a key line of transportation and communication to be protected at all costs. The remainder of Kentucky’s landscape was a “no man’s land” up for grabs. Caves, forests, hollows, and mountains were favorite haunts of guerillas and partisan rangers as well as gangs of deserters and bandits. Formerly peaceful pathways, roads, and villages became the scenes of brutal attacks, robbery, and murder.



The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, KY

Churches, courts, and schools closed. Rural neighborhoods emptied out as families sought refuge in larger protected garrison towns.

The players in this “inner” war story can be divided into several different groups. Confederate cavalry units such as the one led by John Hunt Morgan often worked in support of regular Confederate army units unless detached for special operations. Partisan Rangers such as John Singleton Mosby operated behind enemy lines but with specific goals set by a higher command to which they reported. And guerillas such as Sue Mundy and William Quantrill, who were once attached to Confederate forces, eventually operated independently with little or no control from superiors.

In the spring of 1862, the Confederate Congress passed the Partisan Ranger Act. Partisan Rangers were “official” government sanctioned units and, unlike guerillas, they were expected to obey army regulations and coordinate their movements with local and district military commanders. Rangers usually were organized at company and battalion levels and were detached from regular army commands to scout, conduct raids, and attack small groups of enemy soldiers.



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George M. Jessee married Elizabeth Foree and they had three sons: Virgil McCracken Jessee, John Foree Jessee, and William Jessee.

Although a leader of Confederate cavalrymen, George Martin Jessee used many of the tactics of partisan rangers when he operated in Kentucky. Little remembered today and overshadowed by names such as cavalryman John Hunt Morgan and guerillas Marcellus Jerome Clarke (“Sue Mundy”) and William Quantrill, Jessee had quite a reputation in his day. Pro-Union newspapers described him as “guerilla chief,” “notorious,” and “Naughty Jessee!” At the height of his wartime career in 1864, Jessee commanded about 250 men and his “Confederates have almost complete control of Owen, Henry, Carroll, and Gallatin counties, and are recruiting rapidly.”

Jessee was born in Kentucky in 1830 and grew up in Henry County. He married Elizabeth Foree. By 1860 the family consisted of the couple and three sons Virgil, John, and William. Their personal property included 17 enslaved African Americans valued at \$10,000 and \$15,000 in real property, much of it coming through Elizabeth Foree’s father’s estate. A total wealth of about \$25,000 made them a very well to do household for a “farmer” which was his occupation listed in the census, but small planter would have been a more accurate description. Active in local politics, he was a Democrat and was elected to the state legislature in 1857. As a slaveholder, Jessee was pro-southern in outlook but he did not join Confederate forces in 1861.

In the spring of 1862, however, Jessee organized a company of about 100 men from Henry, Carroll, and Trimble counties and was leading them south to be mustered into the Confederate army when they were captured at Mt. Sterling by Union forces. Jessee escaped and returned home, where he raised another company, which successfully passed through Shelby, Nelson, and other Kentucky counties and reached Knoxville, Tennessee. There it was accepted for Confederate service. Jessee’s command evolved into a battalion by the end of 1862 and in May 1864 he was made lieutenant colonel of Jessee’s Kentucky Battalion, Mounted Rifles, 6th Kentucky

Cavalry Battalion (CSA). The unit saw action at Perryville and fought rear guard action after the Second Battle of Cynthiana. At the age of about 32, Jessee was older than most Civil War soldiers. Many of the cavalrymen in his unit were in their early twenties and were farmers and laborers.

For Confederate units behind the lines in Kentucky their enemies were Unionist neighbors and informants, who were frequently members of the local home guards, and the Federal infantry, cavalry, and provost marshals sent out to find, capture, or kill them. It was extremely difficult to catch partisan rangers because local pro-Confederate citizens sheltered, fed, and clothed them. They also passed on important information regarding the whereabouts of Federal units and the names of the Unionist neighbors who threatened them. The local landscape was also in their favor. Jessee’s men came from Henry and surrounding counties, which often was their area of operation. Because of their intimate knowledge of the terrain, even groups of 200 mounted men could screen their movements from the enemy by using hills, hollows, creek and river bottoms, and woods.

These Southern sympathizers included women, who often formed the majority population in many wartime neighborhoods. Soldiers’ wives, mothers, sisters, and loved ones passed letters, food, medicine, and verbal information on to their soldiers, assuming the roles of informants, spies, and smugglers. In the tradition of officers’ wives serving as the source of information, aid, and comfort to the wives and families of the men in their husband’s command at home, Elizabeth was probably fulfilling some of these roles. Newspaper accounts suggest she played some role in his surrender to Union forces.

Part of the Confederate strategy behind the lines was intended to interrupt soldiers and supplies moving south toward the front lines. These activities forced the Union Army to divert soldiers from the battlefield to protect railroads, bridges, and garrison towns and cities. These men otherwise would have been fighting Confederate armies farther south. Each new year demanded more Union infantry and cavalry companies to protect the lengthening logistical line, and each company raised drew about 100 more pro-Union men off the rural landscape toward training camps and garrison towns. Jessee’s actions and those of others like him prolonged the war.

The longer the war lasted, the fewer pro-Union men there were at home to defend their families and friends. Confederate leaders hoped that the northern public would grow tired of the war and its costs and demand a negotiated peace with the South. As Virginian John Singleton Mosby wrote: “The military value of a partisan’s work is not measured by the amount of property destroyed or the number of men killed or captured, but in the number” of Union soldiers “he keeps watching” for enemies at home. The activities of a few hundred Confederates behind the lines could tie down thousands of Union soldiers.

Part of the Union army’s answer to guerilla and partisan ranger raids was the establishment of U.S. Army provost marshal’s commands in key towns, where they were supported by pro-Union militia and home guards. These local units were formed by old men, young boys,

and convalescent soldiers. Poorly armed, equipped, and trained, they were often outmatched by Confederate partisan ranger units.

Jessee's unit made numerous raids into north central Kentucky. One of them occurred in September 1862, when the unit attacked Newcastle, not far from George's home. During the months leading up to that raid U.S. Gen. Jeremiah T. Boyle, a former attorney and Mercer County native, and now military commander of Kentucky, issued from his headquarters in Louisville an order barring known southern sympathizers from running for office, describing such action as "treasonable" and threatening them with arrest. Robert Morris, as provost marshal at Newcastle, was charged with enforcing such orders along with 170 home guards. Jessee attacked this force, overwhelmed it, and captured horses and arms. Jessee's raids were not always successful. In September 1864 he saw seven of his men captured in a skirmish near La Grange, and the following December, Kentucky state troops and Henry County home guards defeated Jessee's unit near Newcastle and forced them to retreat "with serious loss."

At first glance it seems odd that Jessee attacked his own county seat. But such leaders made their plans based on information received from local sources and from their superior officers. It is likely that Jessee was made aware that conditions among pro-Confederate civilians were becoming more harsh because of provost marshal and home guard actions. After defeating the home guards at Newcastle, Jessee received reinforcements from Edmund Kirby Smith's command and raided Bedford, where they captured more men and arms. Union volunteering and the draft after 1863 continued to deprive the countryside of pro-Union men, leaving the area west of Frankfort more vulnerable to attack.

On August 12, 1864, Capt. J. S. Butler, Assistant Adjutant General of the 1st Division, District of Kentucky, at Lexington wrote to Col. John Mason Brown, the Union officer commanding the 3rd Brigade, U.S. Infantry then at Eminence, Kentucky. Brown previously had asked Butler about the limits of his authority in the field to arrest and punish guerillas. By now the distinction between guerillas and partisan rangers was lost on frustrated Union commanders. Butler's answer was short and clear:

"You will be fully sustained ... in carrying out the order of Genl Sherman in relation to Guerilla's...treat them as wild beasts You are directed to shoot well-known guerillas anywhere and at any time and will be doing a service to the citizens and the army by this course."

This exchange between Butler and Brown reflected growing frustration over the Union Army's inability to control widespread raiding and guerilla activity in Kentucky and the occupied Upper South after three years of warfare. Such activity in the Ohio Valley region, far behind the front lines in northern Georgia by 1864, continued to demoralize Unionist citizens and questioned the ability of federal forces to protect them from hundreds of miles away on the Lower South's battlefields. Eventually, Union forces made little distinction between guerillas, partisan rangers, and bandits.

In addition to posting provost marshals and home guard units at key towns, Federal forces had another solution to the guerilla problem: deportation of known Confederate sympathizers. On August 2, 1864, Union Col. Brown forwarded to Capt. J. S. Butler a list of people's names in Henry County and at Eminence compiled in July by troops of the 45th Kentucky Mounted Infantry (USA). "Enclosed you will find names of parties whom I would recommend to be arrested and sent south into Dixie." There were 24 names; three of these were physicians.

Three of the most interesting portraits in The Filson Historical Society's collection document the wartime appearance of the family of George and Elizabeth Jessee. Donated to The Filson by Jessee descendants in 1997, the likenesses were painted by itinerant artist Reson B. Crafft in February 1864, as the portraitist noted on the back. Jessee was far behind enemy lines as he and his family sat for these paintings that winter.

Jessee continued to operate in central Kentucky off and on for the remainder of the war. A document in the John Mason Brown Papers in The Filson's manuscript collection dated August 14, 1864 was sent from the deputy provost marshal at Carrollton to John Mason Brown:

"I just received information that George Jessee is in Trimble County about five miles from here with at least two hundred men they are in a thicket near Riddles Mill."

The provost marshal gave the messenger Jack Taylor no letters "for fear he would be captured. You can trust him."

Early in 1865, Lt. Colonel Jessee remained in Kentucky. His mission was to gather up and carry into Virginia all the soldiers and recruits he could persuade to join him to help the Confederacy. When generals Robert E. Lee and Joseph E. Johnston surrendered, Jessee was still in Kentucky, where he surrendered on May 5, 1865. After the war George Jessee continued to live in Henry County and farm among neighbors he previously raided with the men of his battalion. Ironically, he was elected to the state legislature in 1869, reflecting a postwar trend that put former Confederates in charge of the state's politics for much of the remainder of the century. When Jessee died in 1896 due to an "abscess of the stomach," he was remembered as a "brave soldier, a colonel in the Confederate army, and Master Commissioner" of Henry County "esteemed by the entire community."

The Jessee family portraits as well as some of the documents mentioned are on display in The Filson's exhibit "United We Stand, Divided We Fall: The Civil War in Kentucky and the Ohio Valley Region," which is free and open to the public through April 2014 at our headquarters, 1310 South Third Street, Louisville, Kentucky, or visit our website at www.filsonhistorical.org.

About the Author

Mark Wetherington is the Director of The Filson Historical Society in Louisville, Kentucky. He is the author of two books that explore the Civil War and post-Civil War South.

Kentucky Women and the Civil War

What is our country coming to? The people seem possessed with a spirit of madness and delusion. They will not listen to reason but are rushing on blindly to ruin....

— Kate Jacobs

By Nancy Baird

More has probably been written about the American Civil War than about any other event in our nation's history. Most of the studies, however, concern battles, military leaders, and the various activities of men. But what did Kentucky's female population say about the nightmare that split the nation in two and took their fathers, husbands, and sons off to war? What was their role in the war while they remained at home? Most letters, diaries, and reminiscences written by Kentucky's women report the activities of the military stationed in the area — or repeat rumors and news coming from battlefields and camps. Occasionally, however, their writings provide interesting opinions and comments about problems experienced by civilians and created by soldiers stationed nearby and of the women's efforts to aid the men in uniform. The quotations used in this brief study do not represent the feelings and activities of all Kentucky women; they merely provide a few more "voices" regarding the conflict.

To understand the sentiments of Kentucky's residents, one must keep in mind the state's unique political and geographic status. In the presidential election of 1860 Kentuckians supported John Bell of Tennessee and the Constitutional Union party. (Lincoln received a mere 1,364 votes in his native state.) One of every four Kentucky households owned a few slaves (5.4 average) yet Kentucky remained part of the Union. Thus, Kentucky was a pro-Union, anti-Lincoln, slave state — yet most families provided soldiers for both sides.

Kentucky was strategically important to both belligerents. Rivers served as the commercial "highways" of mid-nineteenth century America, and Kentucky controlled most of the midwest's navigable rivers. The Ohio River flows along the state's entire northern border and then into the Mississippi, which winds along Kentucky's western boundary. The Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers, both navigable by steamboat into Tennessee and Alabama, pass through the Bluegrass State before emptying into the Ohio; steamboats also enjoyed a busy route on the Green-Barren tributary to Bowling Green, 30 miles north of the Tennessee border. Furthermore, the

October 1859 completion of the L&N Railroad and the March 1861 opening of the line from Bowling Green to Memphis connected the upper South's three most important trade and population centers and linked the industrial upper Ohio with the lower Mississippi. Thus, control of Kentucky, and most especially of the Louisville-Nashville-Memphis railroad line, guaranteed access to invasion and supply routes into and out of the Confederacy. Lincoln certainly understood the commonwealth's importance when he told a friend that "to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game..." Someone suggested that the president hoped that God was on his side, but that he must have Kentucky.

As southern states separated from the Union in the spring of 1861, Kentucky's women reacted to the departures and the problems facing the commonwealth. Kate Jacobs of Lexington asked a friend:

What is our country coming to [?]. The people seem possessed with a spirit of madness and delusion. They will not listen to reason but are rushing blindly to ruin, in the South anarchy and terror reign and in the north fanaticisms and absolutism—and should these two extremes meet, a war must ensue more fierce and terrible than has ever taken place on earth.

Ashland's Hattie Means also expressed her concern about the varying — and volatile — opinions of her friends. In a letter to her mother in Ohio she discussed her neighbors' diverse views and then remarked that "I would not dare to give a large party now, for fear the ladies would all get into a free fight." The members of Frances Collins' prayer group in Maysville apparently also discussed the nation's frightening condition. At their mid-April 1861 meeting, "church affairs...seem to have swallowed up all other troubles" and had thrown politics "in the shade." A few days later, however, she mourned that politics ruled and "there seems little hope now, for reason instead of passion."

Josie Underwood of Bowling Green also noted the madness that had seized everyone following the secession of South Carolina and other states. When Lincoln called for troops after the firing on Fort Sumter, she predicted that although Kentucky wished to remain neutral, "that position can't be held much longer...for every man, woman, and child is on one side or the other." As spring advanced into summer, the 21-year-old noted that Bowling Green's streets were "crowded with farmers and country folk who ought to be plowing their fields and working their gardens — but how can they go quietly about such occupations 'til they have come to town to get the news..."

Perhaps with tongue in cheek, Bevie Cain suggested a solution. In a letter to one of her male correspondents, the Breckinridge County teenager mentioned that perhaps the ailing corn crop might save the Union.

The dung worm is at work and may soon destroy [the corn] and famine may be expected...which would not be unacceptable to some...as the only hope of putting a stop to this dreadful Civil War which is now upon us.



Image courtesy of UK Archives

While their husbands, fathers, and brothers were fighting for the Union and the Confederacy, Kentucky women remained at home, where opinions varied and tempers were volatile.

Although the legislature proclaimed that Kentucky would "occupy a state of strict neutrality" in the ensuing conflict, that impossible status melted away in the early days of autumn. On September 4, 1861, Confederate forces moved into the Mississippi River town of Columbus and three days later a Federal army took nearby Paducah. On September 17 the first of about 20,000 Confederates arrived in the Bowling Green area to guard the railroad into Tennessee and a few days later Union forces took the Elizabethtown-Munfordville area to protect the Green River railroad bridge near Muldraugh's Hill. By the year's end soldiers of one side or the other occupied many of the state's towns and crossroads. During the conflict's four long years, nearly every community in the state played "host" for a few days, weeks, months — or longer — to groups of one or both belligerents. And all suffered similar ills.

On the day the first Confederates arrived in Bowling Green, Josie penned in her diary that the "Philistines are upon us! Kentucky's neutrality is over!" A few days later she began recording a long litany of problems resulting from the presence of a large rebel army for five months, and then a Union army of similar size for three years. Soldiers camped on private land, drilled in the clover fields, cut down trees, burned fences, robbed smoke and hen houses, commandeered whatever they needed, and created major health and sanitation problems. In the Munfordville area, Maria Knott likewise complained that the "rebels are destroying all the property both public and private." Within a few months of their arrival in the area, Mildred Fox of Rochester in Muhlenberg County, wrote that the Lincolnites "had stolen most everything" she possessed. In neighboring Butler County, Molly Fox complained that supplies were very scarce. "We can't get a thing. No sugar left, no tea — nothing."

Hattie Means heard so many stories about theft by the military that when she learned a regiment was en route to Ashland she “took up and hid” all her carpets, lest they be “carried off.” During their stay in the community some of the rebel companies commandeered “everything, even children’s clothes & women’s under clothes.” After the military departed, Hattie visited their camp site and “there were chicken heads and feathers from the river to the camp a mile off — the soldiers helping out their breakfast with every chicken, duck, turkey they could catch.” Matilda Hooks likewise mourned that Trigg County was “overrun with every manner of people, thieves, tramps and refugees...who claimed the right to everything they saw and wanted in the name of the government.”

The Shaker communities at Pleasant Hill and South Union were frequent victims of passing military groups. Sometimes the soldiers came “in groups to the well for water, to the kitchen to get bread, to the milk house for milk and after supper they honored us with a splendid serenade from the brass band.” More often, however, the military visitors simply helped themselves to whatever they needed. Eldress Nancy complained that since their arrival nine months earlier the Union army had taken 12 tons of hay, 245 bushels of corn, 4800 bundles of fodder, 500 bundles of oats, etc.” She also complained that passing soldiers often “demanded” meals and “the sisters had to get up from their beds and go to cooking for these rough and unfeeling men.” The Pleasant Hill settlement experienced similar troubles.

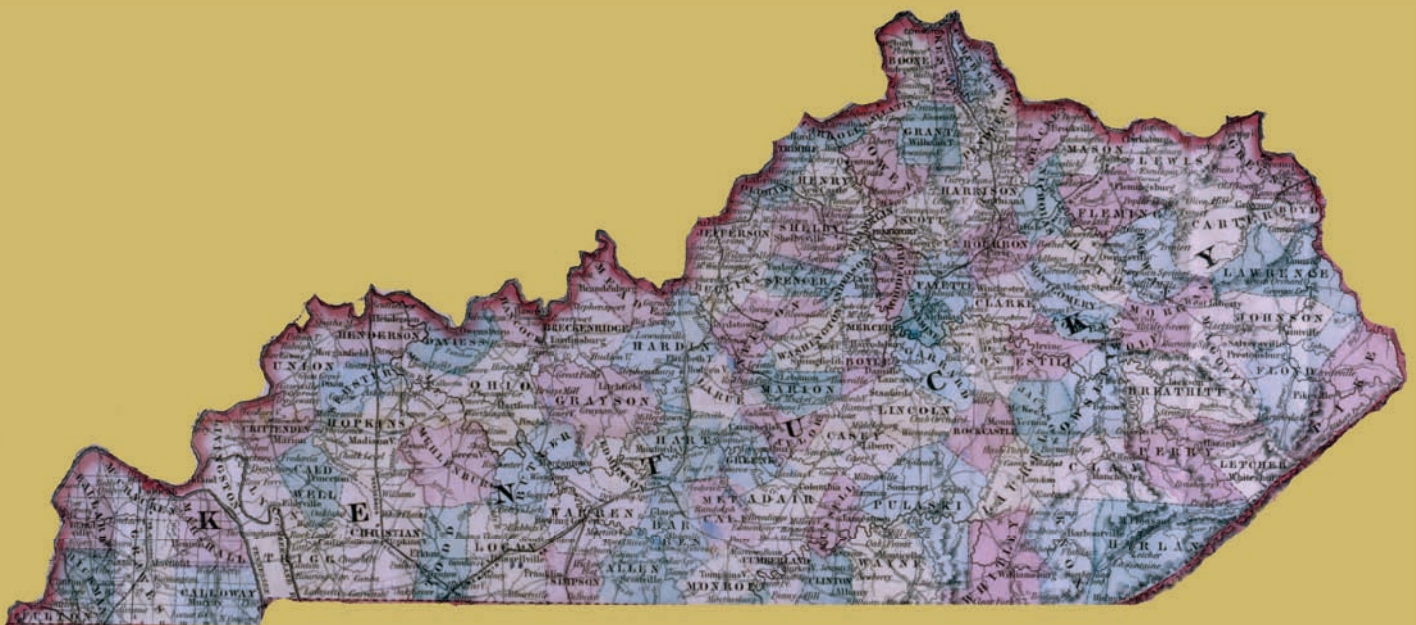
By the war’s end serious financial problems plagued not only the Shakers but many private individuals. Valuable property, including homes and business structures had been destroyed by intent or accident. Writing to her father in London, Josephine

Covington of Bowling Green reported that she and family had not been molested but that their farm suffered very much in loss of timber for fire wood. “\$5000 would not re-numerate the loss,” she estimated. Josie Underwood’s family was even more unfortunate. She told of returning to her home on the edge of Bowling Green just in time to see “the last standing wall [fall] with a crash...both orchards were cut down — the avenue of big trees...were all gone — not a fence left on the entire 1,000 acres... Ruin, devastation, and desolation everywhere.”

To her husband in the military, Eliza Veluzat of Barren County also complained about the couple’s financial — and emotional — loss...“I never new [sic] anything about trouble till now,” she penned. (In another note she admitted that “home is a lonesome place to me now. I go to bed lonesome and get up the same way.”) The absence of the family bread-winner — and the pittance with which soldiers were paid, caused financial distress for many of the gals at home. “There is no fund here,” Hattie Means complained, “for the families of volunteers, so when they don’t send money home, their wives and children have to suffer.”

In addition to lack of respect for personal property, some members of the military exhibited no appreciation for the personal privacy of area civilians. Josie wrote of a captain and lieutenant who had entered her family’s home uninvited and seated themselves in the two big rocking chairs by the fireplace in her mother’s bedroom. One of the officers explained: “We were taking a short cut through the hall and this fire looked so tempting we just came in to enjoy it awhile.”

“This is my mother’s room and she is ill, in bed,” I said with all the dignity and sternness I could...but the Capt said, “Yes, I see — but we won’t disturb her” and rocked on ..How long O Lord how long!”



Easy access to the river and the railroad made Kentucky extremely important to both the Union and Confederacy.

Elizabeth Gaines of Bowling Green wrote of a similar incident of soldiers who entered her home uninvited.

"...the door opened and several soldiers came in with a man who was sick they put him in my mother's bed with [out] asking permission they said he was sick and must have a warm place to stay...and from that time until they left our house was never clear of soldiers. They took all the chickens and killed a young cow...and when the Yankees came we had another siege."

Lack of proper manners also stirred female ire. Josie Underwood labeled a Confederate officer whose rudeness displeased her as probably being "from Missouri." But she suggested that a group of soldiers from Mississippi were better mannered — and "better looking! — than...[rebel troops] from Missouri!" Her prejudice was not merely geographic, for when a Wisconsin regiment marched through town, she labeled them a "fine-looking body of men.

All of our troops look splendid — so well equipped and comfortably clothed but it seems to me the Wisconsin men are larger — more stalwart and healthy looking than any. Poor Confeds! My heart goes out to them."

Mildred Fox of Butler County informed her relatives that the soldiers in a Michigan unit "get drunk and want to fight. Yesterday one came over [the Green River], got drunk and attacked a lady on the street." Mildred's niece, living in neighboring Muhlenberg County, also complained about drunks from Michigan. "Yesterday one came to our house & when we asked him what he wanted, he said he wanted to know our names!"

Whatever their prejudices and politics, the state's women provided much of the nursing care needed by the soldiers of both sides. Illness was a major problem. Soldiers lived in drafty tents, marched for hours in the rain and freezing weather, drank polluted water, and ate food of questionable purity cooked by novices. Many developed intestinal problems and pneumonia. Measles, smallpox, and other contagious maladies also visited the camps. The death rate was exceedingly high. Every available structure — vacant homes, schools, even stables — became hospitals. Maria Knott noted that "our meeting houses are turned into hospitals so there is no preaching." Josie wrote about passing a barrel-maker's shop that served as a hospital.

"It was pitiful to hear the poor fellows in the hospital coughing and to see the pale forlorn men who were regarded able to be up and to think how little of needed care they could have in such conditions."

Thousands of Kentucky's women volunteered to aid the sick. As early as September of 1861 the *Louisville Journal* suggested a meeting at which the ladies of the area might learn how to prepare bandages for wounded soldiers. A Louisville lass "like many other ladies who are loyal to our state but who nevertheless feel a strong sympathy for our southern friends," attended the meeting. She felt that their

presence needed "no apology as we were sure that we had quite as much claim to the name of humane ladies as any..."

Maria Knott and her friends formed a Relief Society (as did women in many of Kentucky's cities and towns) and made "considerable progress getting donations in clothing" for soldiers stationed in the Munfordville area. She and friends also made tents for the military. The ladies of Ashland likewise organized a sewing society, ordered 190 yards of muslin and made bed shirts for the sick. Within a few weeks they had made "fifty shirts and fixed 30 others — and 37 pairs of drawers and 7 pairs of slippers." In the last weeks of the war that town's makeshift hospital still housed more than 200 soldiers and most of their care and comfort resulted from the efforts of local women.

For Thanksgiving, 1863, a group of Lexington lasses prepared and served a feast for the numerous sick who were confined in one of the town's hospitals.

"The tables were loaded with provisions of all kinds, and the kitchen shelves and tables were piled up with pies and cakes and such things as there was no room for on the dinner table...the soldiers were delighted..."

Matilda Hooks mother "always fed Yankees or Rebels when they told her they were hungry." On numerous occasions a squad of Union soldiers stopped by her house and "ordered" meals for ten to twenty five men. While their meal was being prepared one group "ransacked and rummaged all over the place." On another occasion an escaped Rebel stopped and her mother "fed the lad, hid the horse...stuffed the boy's pockets full of grub and as twilight was deepening, with many thanks he rode away." Josie's mother and several friends provided a New Year's Day meal for Union prisoners incarcerated by the Confederates — a feast of turkey, gumbo soup, beaten biscuits, and all the trimmings.

"The prisoners had a feast such as they never had before...The Rebel prisoners (in for misdemeanors of various kinds) crowded to the door of their rooms holding out tin cups and dirty hands. 'We are Union prisoners too, give us some soup.' — which we gladly did."

Although the area's military commander issued an edict that sewing for "Jeff" was not to be allowed, a group of Lexington's "Secesh ladies" nevertheless organized a sewing society to supply clothing for "rebel soldiers only." But most women's groups aided whatever army was in the area. They probably held sentiments similar to those expressed by Eliza Underwood of Bowling Green. A staunch Unionist who had disowned a brother for joining the rebel army, Mrs. Underwood nevertheless made cough medicine (hoar hound syrup) and soup for the ill and even offered to care for a few sick soldiers in her home during the Confederate occupation of Bowling Green. Asked why she would aid ill enemy soldiers, the mother of eight replied that she was very glad to do anything she could for sick men, no matter who or what they were; "but when they are well enough to fight against their country, I want nothing more to do with them."

Maria Knott also praised the caregivers but expressed pity for the poor fellows who died “without a sister, mother or relative to sooth their pillow but had friends, “though strangers,” to nurse them. She likewise expressed pity for the surviving “wives and children [left] to battle with hardships in their absence while they are suffering in a distant state — this cruel war that brings so much misery to our nation. When is the end to be?”

Because families and communities were divided in their sentiments, the war added an emotional difficulty for young folks. Bevie Cain was very sorry to hear that her friend James’ sentiments were “almost as far North...as I am South,” yet, unlike many, they continued their correspondence. During the Confederate occupation of Bowling Green, Mattie Cook, who lived with her Unionist Hobson relatives, allowed “a great many rebel officers [to] visit her in spite of her Uncle’s opposition.” Twenty-year-old Josie felt obligated to shun the attention of former friends and acquaintances who openly advocated the Confederate cause. When a rebel soldier she had known during her school days in Russellville asked if he could call on her, she answered “not in that uniform!” The surprised fellow said he had assumed she was a rebel, to which Josie rather indignantly answered, “Did you ever in the old school days hear me express great admiration for Benedict Arnold?”

When Anna Dicken’s beau favored the “wrong side” she urged him to “exercise discretion” when discussing politics with her father, who couldn’t “converse calmly” on any war-related subject. “Humor him until we are married” she suggested. Eventually the couple changed their wedding date, then modified their guest list and finally cancelled their plans altogether. After the war Anna married a man whose politics probably were similar to those of her parents.

Groups of soldiers stationed in areas with limited entertainment facilities sometimes enjoyed festive occasions sponsored by civilians and the military. Hattie Means and her Ashland friends attended military drills and sham battles. “It is a great amusement to the children to watch and look at the soldiers.” Mary Starling frequently entertained small groups of Union soldiers stationed in the Hopkinsville area. They were appreciative, and easily pleased, and

unlike civilians, they “did not criticize the table arrangements,” she informed her officer-father. In areas where the military remained for an extended period, community groups and the military sometimes planned social events. Agatha Strange recalled that during the Confederate occupation of Bowling Green, “entertainments were frequently given at private homes followed by receptions and cotillions at the encampments...cotillions at Camp Hardy [and] at the boatlanding...” Many of the soldiers also visited her home and in doing so, she claimed, they made it “the home of the intellect and chivalry of the South...These were days of happiness.”

Days of happiness or a four year nightmare? Both, perhaps. Civil War statistics are notoriously inaccurate, but the conflict left untold thousands of mothers, widows and orphans grieving for the 30,000 Kentucky men who died of disease and on the battle fields. Undoubtedly, most of the state’s women experienced great relief when the war ended. Some, like Matilda Whitaker of Russellville, may have wondered what “General Washington’s feelings would be if he could return to earth and see the sad state of affairs in this country.” Certainly a large portion of Kentucky’s population would have agreed with Rebecca Gray of Lexington who wrote that if all who “were dissatisfied with our government had emigrated [to Brazil]...before the war, it would have saved a vast amount of blood and treasure.” And perhaps more than a few of the widows and orphans might have supported a comment made early in the war by Maria Knott. She suggested that “the movers in this inhumane rebellion should all be at the common site and be blowed [sic] to atoms rather than so many should die to gratify their proud ambition.”

About the Author

Dr. Nancy Baird is retired from Western Kentucky University where she served as the special collections librarian and professor in the history department. Baird holds master’s and specialist degree in history from Western Kentucky University. She is the author of five books and numerous articles about Kentucky history.

More on the Civil War from these Kentucky women:

Bevie Cain Collection, Special Collections, WKU
Collins Family Papers, Special Collections, UK
Dicken-Troutman-Balke Family Papers, UK
Elizabeth Gaines Reminiscences, Special Collections, WKU
Hay Family Collection (R. Gray’s Diary), Special Collections, WKU
Matilda Cunningham Hooks Recollections, Special Collections, WKU
Jacob-Johnson Family Papers, The Filson Historical Society
Knott Collection, Special Collections, WKU
Lewis-Starling Collection, Special Collections, WKU
Means Family Collection, Special Collections, UK
Agatha Strange’s Journal, Special Collections, WKU

Further Reading

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Glenn Clift, ed., *Private War of Lizzie Hardin* (KHS, 1963)
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Lincoln, the Civil War, and the Evolution of American Humor

By William E. Ellis

Lincoln once said, “Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.”

Whether by friend or foe, the 16th President was not only eminently caricatured, satirized, and mocked by humorists in print and in political cartoons, but was himself a man of humor for much deeper reasons than most thought or realized at the time.

If Mark Twain was “the Lincoln of our literature,” according to William Dean Howells, because he democratized literature by giving humor a legitimate place in American letters, then could Lincoln also have been of as much importance in American humor? Constance Rourke declared: “In Lincoln, two of the larger strains of American comedy seemed to meet. He showed the Western ebullience, even in brief fragments...But his economy of speech and his laconic turn seemed derived from the Yankee strain that belonged to his ancestry, and no doubt was strengthened by many encounters with Yankees in the West...No doubt the Bible had a deep influence upon Lincoln’s style in speech and in writing; perhaps it was from the Bible that he drew his deep-seated sense of fable and figure.” Therefore, he personified several strands of humor and exemplified the humor that Mark Twain made famous.¹

In many ways Lincoln was the quintessential “American” of the mid-nineteenth century. He was born in a slave state, Kentucky, and grew to manhood on the Midwestern frontier. He was to a great extent self-educated with only rudimentary public schooling, was religious in a mildly village agnostic manner, and became a self-made man working his way from farming to storekeeping to practicing law. Though a man of strong opinions he became a pragmatic politician, steering a middle path that led to a resolution, however painful, to the institution of slavery and the question of secession.²

Although most people would never think of the 16th President of the United States as a humorist, he was, for many reasons. Lincoln came of age in a time when humor of the homespun sort was popular and commonly employed in everything from local meetings to minstrel shows to the theatre. More importantly, Lincoln was afflicted with some sort of mental distress: melancholy, as it was called in his day, or clinical depression in our own time, for most of his life. Lincoln used humor as a form of therapy to get through each day, many of which were excruciating for him. He read whatever he could get his hands on and wrote poetry, usually doggerel or



Image courtesy of UK Archives

¹David E. E. Sloane, “Samuel Langhorne Clemens” in *Encyclopedia of American Humorists*, 83-90; Robert Keith Miller, *Mark Twain* (New York, 1983), 1-32; Constance Rourke, *American Humor: A Study of the National Character* (New York, 1931), 152-55.

²Merrill D. Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory* (New York, 1994), passim; David Herbert Donald, *Lincoln* (New York, 1995), passim.



Though it began as an on-again-off-again romance, Mary Todd Lincoln and her husband had a complicated relationship throughout their lives.

something of the type, at night. As a youth he wrote: “Abraham Lincoln, His Hand and Pen, He Will be Good, But God knows when.”³

Joshua Wolf Shenk explained in *Lincoln’s Melancholy: How Depression Challenged a President and Fueled His Greatness* that the 16th President “had long understood himself to be one whose heart was uncommonly affected by the pain of life.” Contemporaries as well as modern historians and others usually point out that the dark moods of Lincoln were only offset by his ability to rise above the melancholy that threatened his life. Scholars continue to debate the cause of his unhappiness. Was it medical, the result of Marfan’s syndrome or bipolar disorder, or situational owing to the death of his mother, the loss of Anne Rutledge, the deaths of children, or most likely a combination of circumstances that we, as modern problem-solvers, will never totally understand? Lincoln was president during perhaps the most trying years of American history with more than 600,000 men dying. Like many others, I believe that only Lincoln, or some one very much like him, could have pulled all of this together to assure the united future of the American experiment. Lincoln could outthink his critics, outmaneuver his opponents, and bring together a coalition that ultimately brought victory in the Civil War. How did he do this while often distressed about not only his own life but that of the nation? A good part of the answer is that Lincoln depended on humor to assuage his darker moods and moments. And, he could always make fun of himself. When he was once accused of being two-faced, Lincoln replied, “If I had another face, do you think I would wear this one?”⁴

During the perilous railway journey for his inauguration in Washington through Baltimore, where a plot to kill him had been hatched, Lincoln relieved the tension by telling jokes. Hidden behind a curtain with only a few guards, including the famous detective Allan

Pinkerton, the latter reported, “Mr. Lincoln remained quietly in his berth, joking in rare good humor.” It was a pattern of what was to come. The 16th President saw humor even in the darkest days of the war when things did not go well for Union forces. He had come to expect the worst that life had to offer when he wrote in 1841, “I am now the most miserable man living... I must die or be better it appears to me. I awfully forebode I shall not.” He chose life as excruciating as it could be sometimes. And, it benefited not only him but his country as well.⁵

In his better moments he was quick-witted. For example, when asked for a pass to go to Richmond by one of the constant throng that besieged him after McClellan’s failed campaign, Lincoln replied, laconically: “Well, I would be happy to oblige, sir, but my passes are not respected. In the last year and a half I have given passes to two hundred and fifty thousand men to go to Richmond, and not one has got there yet.” Another time when a young officer ran into the president on the steps of the Old War Office, he was so startled he asked for “ten thousand pardons,” to which Lincoln replied: “One’s enough; I wish the whole army would charge like that.”⁶

The most widely reported example of Lincoln’s zest for humor, and best documented, came at a salient moment in American history. When he convened a meeting of his cabinet on September 22, 1862, he first asked if any one had ever read Artemus Ward, the pen name of Charles Farrar Browne, a well-known but critical Yankee humorist. Apparently no one had. Then the president read a story called “A High Handed Outrage in Utica.” The tale was about a “big burly feller” of that “trooly grate sitty,” who bashed in the head of a wax figure of Judas in a Last Supper scene to prove that the culprit “can’t show hissef in Utiky with impunerty by a darn site.” At the conclusion of his reading Lincoln laughed “heartily.” According to Salmon P. Chase, everyone but Stanton, “managed a smile. Laying the book aside, Lincoln said, ‘Gentlemen, why don’t you laugh? With the fearful strain that is upon me night and day, if I did not laugh I should die, and you need this medicine as much as I do.’ Then, gravely he laid before the cabinet the Proclamation of Emancipation, which it approved for preliminary issue. The incongruity of the comic with the solemn on this historic occasion epitomized the action of humor in Lincoln’s character and politics,” according to one of his finest biographers, Merrill D. Peterson.⁷

Lincoln must have read humorous writings whenever possible. During the tense days before the 1864 presidential election, after reading some of the Nasby Papers, he told Secretary Sumner, “For the genius to write these things I would gladly give up my office.” He apparently used such readings to offset his melancholy. However, there was always the practical hard-headed political side of his character. To increase his chances of re-election Lincoln made sure that many Union soldiers were

³Alexander K. McClure, *Lincoln’s Yarns and Stories* (Chicago, ca. 1910), 369-70; Joshua Wolf Shenk, *Lincoln’s Melancholy: How Depression Challenged a President and Fueled His Greatness* (Boston, 2005), 113.

⁴Shenk, *Lincoln’s Melancholy*, 212-13; Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory*, 24, 27-29, 333, 254-55.

⁵Daniel Stashower, “Lincoln Must Die,” *Smithsonian* (February 2013), 74-89; Shenk, *Lincoln’s Melancholy*, 212.

⁶Keith W. Jennison, *The Humorous Mr. Lincoln* (New York, 1965), 104; McClure, *Lincoln’s Own Yarns and Stories*, 366.

⁷Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory*, 97; Jennison, *The Humorous Mr. Lincoln*, 99-100; Donald, *Lincoln*, 374-75.

given passes, a move that assured his election to a second term because they voted “overwhelmingly Republican.”⁸

Lincoln used humor to get across a point, deflect a criticism, or ease friction when he could not satisfy an office seeker or, for example, to mollify a delegation from Kentucky when he could not help them. In his folksy way he told a story about a farm family that moved often. “The chickens got so used to being moved that when they saw the wagons being readied, they’d lie on their backs and cross their legs. ‘If I listen to every committee that comes in that door,’ Lincoln said, ‘I had just as well cross my hands and let you tie me.’ The visitors left empty-handed, but in good humor.”⁹

His on-again-off-again romance with Mary Todd eventually led to their marriage on November 4, 1842. Just before the wedding a friend was surprised to find a nervous bridegroom dressing and “blacking his boots.” Speed Butler, his landlord’s son, asked where he was going, and Lincoln replied — I think mostly in jest, laconically — “To hell, I suppose.” A lifetime could be spent studying the sometimes tumultuous marriage of Abe and Mary Todd, but it should never be forgotten that he had engraved on her wedding ring, “Love is eternal.”¹⁰

Lincoln delighted in lewd or coarse jokes, and even told them about his

wife. In public praised his wife’s appearance, her clothes, even one time when the first lady’s “neckline plunged to a stylish, though perhaps inappropriate, décolletage,” cites one of her biographers, Jean Baker. “Whew, our cat has a long tail tonight — if some of that tail was nearer the end, it would be in better style,” he said, I am sure with a smile of resignation on his face.¹¹

“The most fundamental purpose of humor in any war is to define the enemy, to put him in his comic, satiric place and thus make him and the cause he stands for laughable,” explained Cameron C. Nickels. As in all wars, propaganda, even humor becomes a method of ridiculing the enemy and building up the spirits of the warriors as well as those on the home front. American Civil War humor served these purposes. Music, newspapers, magazines, minstrels, plays, as well as the jokes told between soldiers, and those on the home front served this vital purpose: to make light of the war, bolster spirits, and try to find purpose in all of the blood-letting. Civil War humor was impolite, vicious, racist, bawdy, irreverent, and more. Serious songs, of which there were many, were parodied. For example, to lampoon the maudlin lyrics, “Just before the battle, Mother, I am thinking most of you,” someone penned, “Just before the battle, Mother, I am drinking mountain dew.” More so than ever before this was a “visual war,” with newspapers and magazines working hard on

⁸Donald, *Lincoln*, 543; The comment by Lincoln about Petroleum Nasby is also quoted as, “I am going to write ‘Petroleum’ to come down here, and I intend to tell him if he will communicate his talent to me, I will swap places with him!” Caroline Thomas Harnsberger, editor, *The Lincoln Treasury* (Chicago, 1950), 143.

⁹Shenk, *Lincoln’s Melancholy*, 182.

¹⁰Donald, *Lincoln*, 93.

¹¹Jean H. Baker, *Mary Todd Lincoln: A Biography* (New York, 1987), 196. Donald, *Lincoln*, 312; Lincoln’s humor is so well-established in American lore that at least 11 books in print associated with only his humor are available to the public today.



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both sides of the divide to entertain and propagandize.¹²

Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis were prime subjects for humorous attacks owing to their positions as the chief executives of not only two competing nations but two irreconcilable world views. The North portrayed Davis as a traitor, humorless, and inhumane while Southerners portrayed Lincoln as ape-like, or “the leanest, most ungainly mass of legs and arms and hatchet face ever strung on a human frame,” and “sooty,” a thinly disguised allusion that he had Negro blood. Two of the most famous and humorous examples of the partisan wit of the war follow. *Southern Punch* on April 30, 1864, ran an illustration with Lincoln being hoisted on Rebel bayonets with the caption: “The Way Lincoln Will Be Lifted out of Washington City by General Lee.” For Yankees nothing exceeded lampooning President Davis when he was captured after the surrender at Appomattox with an illustration showing Davis wearing a dress: “Jeff Davis Caught at Last. Hoop Skirts and Southern Chivalry.” Words took on new meaning. Southerners referred to Northerners as “mudsills,” even beneath slaves owing to their being “bottom-feeding wage slaves,” while northern popular literature referred to “southrons” rather than Southerners, “Secesh” instead of secessionists. Sut Lovingood from the Knobs of Tennessee, Bill Arp of Georgia, Nasby in Wingert’s Corner, Ohio, as well as others added their snipes at North and South depending on their political persuasions with appropriate dialect.¹³

George Washington Harris’ Sut Lovingood, as part of the Southern “propaganda humorists” genre poked fun at Lincoln as a man who looked like “a yeller ladder with half the rungs knocked out.” Charles H. Smith’s Bill Arp also took many verbal swipes at Lincoln, for example, commenting on the Emancipation Proclamation, he wrote sarcastically that slaves “will rush frantically forth into the arms of their deliverers, and with perfumed and sented gratitude embrace your exsolvency, and Madam Harriet Beechers toe.” “Southern” writers perpetuated this style of humor well into the later nineteenth century, stigmatizing first slaves and then freedmen as slothful and unworthy of citizenship.¹⁴

On the home front of both sides, humorists and illustrators made fun of profiteers, draft-resistors, army contractors, speculators, and others. The cost of the war in lives and the privations of civilian life was great on both sides, but even more so in the South because of its smaller population and the fact that most of the battles were fought there. A Milledgeville, Georgia, paper reported that because of wartime shortages dog skin made excellent shoe leather. “We don’t want to kill the dogs, but we want their skins, and if they can live without it, they are welcome.”¹⁵

African Americans from the time they entered the American colonies

through the Civil War maintained, or at least tried to, a subculture of their own. It was often expropriated by whites, both North and South. “American minstrelsy” had its origins on the plantations where, James Weldon Johnson explained “every plantation had its talented band that could crack Negro jokes, and sing and dance to the accompaniment of the banjo and the bones.” The plantation owners would often call on their slaves to entertain guests. Early in American Colonial history whites began to mimic African Americans, in such stereotyped impersonations as “Sambo.” “The Negro Boy,” became a popular minstrel song around 1800, written by a German immigrant. Thomas Dartmouth in blackface became “Jim Crow” with his performances. While Jim Crow was the “raggedy slave” in caricature, “Zip Coon,” a “black urban dandy,” became another addition to minstrel shows. Dan Emmett, composer of “Dixie” is often cited as “initiating the true blackface minstrel show” which lasted into the twentieth century. Seen as blatantly racist today, such shows lasted into the early years of the author’s life when these were held by an all-white service club in Shelbyville as a fund-raising device into the early 1950s. Long before that a Jewish singer, Al Jolson, in blackface, performed in movie houses across the nation in the first “talkie” motion picture.¹⁶

In 1865 Abraham Lincoln was assassinated and the Civil War ended with Union victory and the nation slipped into the Reconstruction Era. Over the next decade the gains of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments eroded as Southern “redeemers” asserted themselves, regaining control of their state governments and solidifying their rule. Though technically free, African Americans faced renewed assaults on their civil rights, ending with state laws and court decisions solidifying de jure segregation.¹⁷

American humor evolved into the late nineteenth century with many of the elements that Lincoln would have appreciated. He, like all of us, was a product of his time. Sadly, white Americans in both the North and South continued to use stereotypical racist and ethnic humor to elevate their sense of superiority over African Americans, immigrants, and the world at large. Although now seen by many people as politically incorrect, that style of humor persists.

About the Author

A native Kentuckian and graduate of Georgetown College, Eastern Kentucky University, and the University of Kentucky, William Ellis is the author of 35 journal articles and six books, the most recent, *A History of Education in Kentucky*. He taught for 29 years in the Department of History at EKU. Ellis is currently writing a biography of Kentucky’s most famous humorist, Irvin S. Cobb of Paducah.

¹²Cameron C. Nickels, *Civil War Humor* (Jackson, Mississippi, 2010), 3-15, 17, 96; Doris Benardete, ed. *Civil War Humor* (Mt. Vernon, New York, 1963), 5-62.

¹³Nickels, *Civil War Humor*, cover and frontispiece, 17-52; Walter Blair, *Horse Sense in American Humor* (New York, 1942), 149-71.

¹⁴Wade H. Hall, *Reflections of the Civil War in Southern Humor* (Gainesville, Florida, 1962), 1-12.

¹⁵Nickels, *Civil War Humor*, 56, 102, Chapter Two.

¹⁶Blyden Jackson, “The Minstrel Mode,” in *The Comic Imagination*, 149-56; Richard K. Barksdale, “Black America and the Mask of Comedy,” in *The Comic Imagination*, 349-60; Nickels, *Civil War Humor*, Chapter Four.

¹⁷C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge, 1951), 1-74; Jeanne Boydston, et. al., *Making a Nation: The United States and Its People* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, 2002), 449-77.

A postcard depicts the summer view of the great Civil War trenches at Columbus-Belmont Battlefield Memorial Park in Columbus, Kentucky.

Len G. Faxon:

Never Let the Truth Stand in the Way of a Good Story

By Berry Craig

Image courtesy of the Kentucky Historical Society

Yankees weren't just the enemy to Len G. Faxon, Civil War editor of the *Columbus Crescent*. They were "bow-legged, wooden-shoed, sour crout stinking, Bologna sausage eating, hen roost robbing Dutch sons of ---." Their commander was a thieving, lying lush who "embodied the leprous rascalities of the world" and deserved to be hanged.

Objectivity was not a hallmark of Civil War journalism. America's bloodiest conflict was a mother lode of media bias. Vitriol and vilification were the stock-in-trade of editors, North and South. But few verbal broadsides were as withering as Faxon's 1861 *Crescent* blast.

It even amazed the "world's first and greatest" war correspondent, Sir William Howard Russell of the *London Times*. Russell preserved Faxon's fulminations in *My Diary North and South*, his American Civil War journal. The Yankees especially vexed Faxon when they captured a Confederate flag in his hometown on June 12, 1861.

The incident didn't make many Civil War history books. But it fired up Faxon, who might have been Kentucky's most Southern-sympathizing editor.

There is no doubt that he spoke for most of his readers. Few Kentucky towns were more pro-Confederate than Columbus, a busy Mississippi river port and railhead of about 1,000 souls when South Carolina forsook the Union in December, 1860. As other cotton states seceded in early 1861, the weekly *Crescent* trumpeted for Kentucky to follow.

The General Assembly spurned secession; Faxon scorned the Unionist majority as traitors and craven "submissionists." Faxon hated President Abraham Lincoln and his "black Republican" party even more. He charged that the President provoked the Confederates into firing on Fort Sumter and starting the Civil War in April, 1861.

When the upper South seceded afterwards, Faxon again demanded that Kentucky join the Confederacy, a stand approved by nearly all Columbus residents.

Again, Kentucky refused to give up the Union. In May, the legislature called for neutrality; Governor Beriah Magoffin, though a Southern sympathizer, duly proclaimed it.

Meanwhile, Faxon was particularly perturbed by the big Union camp at Cairo, Illinois, at the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Influential Columbus citizens, including Mayor B.W. Sharp, had begged the Confederate army to deliver them from the "abolition invaders" in Illinois' southernmost city.

But the Rebels stayed away, not wishing to upset Kentucky neutrality. Likewise, the Yankees remained on their side of the Ohio River.

No matter, neutrality did not stop Columbus from showing its colors. In the spring of 1861, pro-Southern citizens hoisted a big Rebel stars-and-bars over the town.

Even before, Columbus' sympathies were hardly a secret to the Union soldiers at Cairo. The post commander, Col. Benjamin Prentiss, suspected citizens of Columbus were spying on his troops and trading with the Confederate enemy.

Naturally, he kept a wary eye on the port town with its 100-foot dirt bluffs from which an army could command the river for miles around. Prentiss knew pro-Confederate State Guard troops were in town, reportedly with long-range artillery, and that Rebel regulars were at Union City, Tennessee, on the railroad only 30 miles south of Columbus.

In early June, Prentiss got word that the Confederates were about to capture Island No. 1, a half-dozen miles down the Mississippi from Cairo. As it turned out, the Rebels weren't coming. Prentiss, of course, didn't know that, so on June 12, he sent the steamer *City of Alton* to scout for the enemy.

The paddle wheeler carried Col. Richard Oglesby and two companies from his regiment, the Eighth Illinois Infantry. A six-pound and a twelve-pound howitzer on deck provided more potent firepower, according to Private Charles W. Wills, who was aboard the boat.

As the Alton chugged past Columbus, the Yankees spotted a fifteen-by-seven-foot Confederate flag “with eight stars and three stripes” fluttering over the town, Wills recalled. The boat continued downriver for about two miles where Oglesby, a future general and Illinois governor, “expected to find a secesh force.”

No Rebels were detected, so the Alton came about and headed for home. This time, the boat paused at Columbus, where Wills claimed “the flag was still waving,” all the stores were closed and a large crowd had gathered on the levee. The Union soldiers espied just one “gun,” presumably meaning an artillery piece.

In any event, Oglesby shouted to the townsfolk to take down their flag. When they refused, the colonel “said he would do it himself then.” The crowd dared him to try. Wills explained what happened next: “We were drawn up then round the cabin deck guards next [to] the shore in two ranks, with guns at ‘ready,’ and the captain jumped ashore and hauled down the serpent. We were all sure of a skirmish but missed it... They raised another flag one hour after we left and sent us word to ‘Come and take it.’”

The Union troops did not return. But Wills immensely enjoyed the adventure, writing home that “the ride was the best treat I’ve had for two years.”

A Mr. Davis, who ran the Columbus telegraph office, related a slightly different version of what happened. According to the *New Orleans Daily Delta*, Davis declared that the Yankees, about 500 in number, ripped down the flag, “spit and trampled upon it, and after playing various other childish tricks put back to Cairo... taking with them their trophy.”

The *Louisville Courier*, Kentucky’s leading secessionist paper, provided yet another account, citing a June 13 letter to the *Cincinnati Enquirer* in which the author claimed the officers aboard the Alton, which stopped about ten o’clock in the morning, told “the citizens and volunteers, several thousand” strong on the bank, to take the flag down, but got no reply. So they called on a Union man to lower the flag, offering him protection.

When no one obliged the Yankee brass, the Alton’s skipper, mate and cooper went ashore, cut down the flagpole and carried the

offending banner on board “amid much cheering from” the Yankees. *The Enquirer* correspondent added that Oglesby and a Col. Morgan wanted “to shoot the flag down, but Capt. Hopkins, in command of the guns, told them he could not do it without damaging property and probably spilling innocent blood.” The citizens did not resist, but a woman defiantly told the unwelcome visitors “she had material left to make another flag of the same description, and that it would be flying before sundown.” The letter-writer added that when the Alton arrived at Columbus, a railroad hand car left town for the Confederate army camp at Union City. “No doubt had the boat and crew remained a few hours there would have been a warm time.”

When the Alton got back to Cairo, the soldiers and civilians went “wild with excitement. All wanted a piece of the captured flag, a small piece of which was several times sold for a dollar, and five dollars was offered for a star of the same.” As a sort of postscript, the correspondent said that the railroad transfer steamer P. B. Cheney had just come in from Columbus, bringing “reports that they have another Secession flag afloat on the same spot that the old one was on. Immense excitement prevails there and at Union City.”

The correspondent also claimed that when the hand car rolled into town with the men aboard bearing tidings of the Alton’s advent, the Confederates broke camp and boarded a train “for Columbus, but the invasion order was countermanded.” The flag snatching aside, the Alton affair raises interesting questions. What happened to the pro-Confederate Kentucky State Guard troops and artillery that allegedly had been sent to Columbus? Was the militia not in town? Were they the “volunteers” mingling with the townsfolk? There are no specific references to the guardsmen in any accounts of the flag’s capture. Had they been present and resisted, June 12, 1861, might have the day when the war started on Kentucky soil.

There are no specific references to the militia men in any accounts of the flag’s capture. Had they been present and resisted, June 12, 1861, might have the day when the war started on Kentucky soil.

Blood might have been spilled anyway had Oglesby tried to blast down the flag with his cannons. What might have happened to Kentucky neutrality then? The secessionist Southern Rights party certainly would have played up such a shootout for all it was worth, branding the Yankees as the aggressors and portraying the Guards as brave men defending Kentucky homes and firesides. Doubtless, too, the secessionists would have howled in outrage had Oglesby fired at the flag and ended up killing or injuring civilians. Would waxing Kentucky Unionism have waned?

Meanwhile, back in Columbus, Faxon sharpened his poison pen and cut loose against the Yankee flag stealers and their commander. If not for Russell, Faxon’s fusillade might have been lost. No copies of the 1861 *Crescent* are known to survive. Russell, who reported the Indian Mutiny and the Crimean War for the *Times*, was at the Union camp at Cairo on June 20 when he came by a copy of the *Crescent* with Faxon’s version of the Alton’s unfriendly visit.

Russell had passed through Columbus on his way to Cairo, where Faxon had been a newspaper editor before the war. The Englishman said in Cairo,

Image courtesy of the Kentucky Historical Society



An anchor and chain were placed across the Mississippi at the beginning of the Civil War by the Southern Military Forces in Columbus, Kentucky.

he found himself amidst what Columbus folk had decried as “abolitionists, cut-throats, Lincolnite mercenaries, foreign invaders, assassins, and plundering Dutchmen.” His informants did not include Faxon, who was away in the Confederate army and missed the flag grabbing.

Russell identified him as “Colonel L.G. Faxon of the Tennessee Tigers.” In any event, he soon returned home and opened fire in the June 19 *Crescent*. According to Russell, Faxon apologized “for the non-appearance of the journal for several weeks.” Faxon explained that before he left, he had “engaged the services of a competent editor, and left a printer here to issue the paper regularly.”

Though Faxon’s absence was longer than he expected, the editor maintained that “the aforesaid printer promised faithfully to perform his duties, but left the same day we did, and consequently there was no one to get out the paper.” Faxon concluded, “We have the charity to suppose that fear and bad whiskey had nothing to do with his evacuation of Columbus.”

Russell quoted Faxon’s observation that “the Irish are for us, and they will knock Bologna sausages out of the Dutch, and we will knock wooden nutmegs out of the Yankees.” He added his wish that the folds of the captured flag “had contained 1000 asps to sting 1000 Dutchmen to eternity unshriven.” The Yankees probably would have been too besotted to feel it, according to the editor:

“The mosquitoes of Cairo have been sucking the lager-bier out of the dirty soldiers there so long, they are bloated and swelled up as large as spring ‘possums. An assortment of Columbus mosquitoes went up there the other day to suck some, but as they have not returned, the probability is that they went off with delirium tremens; in fact, the blood of these Hessians would poison the most degraded tumble bug in creation.”

With that, Faxon reloaded and fired again:

“When the bow-legged wooden shoed, sour craut stinking, Bologna sausage eating, hen roost robbing Dutch sons of -- had accomplished the brilliant feat of taking down the Secession flag on the river bank, they were pointed to another flag of the same sort which their guns did not cover, flying gloriously and defiantly, and dared yea! double big black dog-dared, as we used to say at school, to take that flag down.”

The bluecoats declined, Faxon claimed. “The cowardly pups, the thieving sheep dogs, the sneaking skunks, dare not do so, because their twelve pieces of artillery were not bearing on it.”

After flaying the Federal soldiers, Faxon lambasted their leader Prentiss, a tough as boot leather Illinois soldier who would make brigadier general in August, 1861, and become a Union hero at the battle of Shiloh in April, 1862. Faxon dismissed him as “a miserable hound, a dirty dog, a sociable fellow, a treacherous villain, a notorious thief, a lying blackguard, who has served his regular five years in the Penitentiary and keeps his hide continually full of Cincinnati whiskey, which he buys by the barrel in order to save his money — in him are embodied the leprous rascalities of the world, and in this living score, the gallows is cheated of its own.”

Finally, Faxon hurled down the gauntlet: “Prentiss wants our scalp: we propose a plan by which he may get that valuable article.” The colonel could choose 150 of his best fighters “or 250 of his lager-bier Dutchmen.” Faxon would recruit 100 Columbus worthies as challengers.

“Then let both parties meet where there will be no interruption at the scalping business, and the longest pole will knock the persimmon,” Faxon vowed. “If he does not accept this proposal, he is a coward.” Prentiss ignored Faxon. But Russell guessed that Prentiss was more wounded by the editor’s poison pen than the colonel cared to admit.

In the fall of 1861, Faxon swapped his pen for a sword. The editor gave up the *Crescent* to raise a company of guerrilla scouts for the Confederate army. After the war, he edited the *Paducah Herald* for a time. He died in 1895.

Prentiss, the object of his disaffection, was captured at Shiloh, released in a prisoner of war exchange and was promoted to major general. He lived until 1901.

After Faxon left for the Rebel army, Edward I. Bullock took over the *Crescent*. He was so grateful the Rebels beat the Yankees to town in early September, 1861, that he renamed the paper *The Daily Confederate News*.

Meanwhile, the Yankees seized Paducah. The Unionists in the legislature — their House and Senate majorities enhanced by August elections — abandoned neutrality for outright support for the Union war effort.

Bullock blasted the Unionist lawmakers and the Yankees on Kentucky soil, to boot. He, too, was partial to blood and thunder editorials: “We make known to all that should the Yankees attack Columbus we are ready and willing, and will be in the fight, although we are no volunteer.

“We want to kill a Yankee — must kill a Yankee — never can sleep sound again until we do kill a Yankee, get his overcoat and scalp. Indian-like, we want a scalp, and must have it. We’d think no more of scalping a dead Yank than cutting the throat of a midnight assassin — not a shade’s difference between the murderer and the deceptive Yank.”

After the Yankees captured Forts Henry and Donelson in Tennessee, in February, 1862, the Confederates forsook Columbus. Discretion being the better part of valor, Bullock skedaddled with the retreating Rebels.

His press didn’t remain idle. Some troopers from the 2nd Illinois Cavalry — the first Yankees into Columbus — took over the *Crescent*-turned-*Confederate News*. They put out the *Federal Scout* and flayed the Rebels with the same zeal Faxon and Bullock summoned to smite the Yankees.

About the Author

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Image courtesy of UK Archyves

“Many Instances of that Terrible War:” Springfield and the Battle of Perryville

By Stuart W. Sanders

The day after Kentucky’s largest Civil War battle raged at Perryville, the 12-year-old William Caldwell McChord rode the 15 miles from his home in Springfield to the battlefield. McChord had hoped to experience “real war.” Upon riding past the Henry P. Bottom house, which was pockmarked by bullet holes and shell fragments, McChord witnessed the conflict’s harsh reality.

Bottom’s home had been hastily converted into a makeshift hospital. “A large hospital tent was erected in the yard with ordinary tents at different places,” McChord wrote. “Here we saw the first evidence of real war. The house, tents, and yard were full

of wounded Federal and Confederate soldiers. I can never forget the groans, wails and moans of these hundreds of men as they lay side by side, some in the agony of death, some undergoing operations on the surgeons’ table in one corner of the yard. Near the table was a pile of legs and arms; some with shoes on, others with socks, four or five feet high.”

The young McChord was not the only Springfield resident to endure the aftermath of the Battle of Perryville. With more than 7,500 soldiers killed and wounded, Perryville’s 300 residents were overwhelmed by the thousands of casualties. Food, water, and shelter were in scant supply, and most surrounding communities

became full of the ill and injured. In Harrodsburg, for example, the town's population doubled when 1,700 wounded filled the courthouse, churches, businesses, and private homes. The same was true in Danville, which held 3,500 sick Union troops.

Springfield, the county seat of Washington County located west of Perryville, quickly became occupied. The town had already experienced the Civil War firsthand. Residents knew that President Abraham Lincoln's parents had been married outside of town, yet few citizens had voted for him during the 1860 election. Others had enlisted in the contending armies, with many filling the ranks of the 10th Kentucky Union Infantry Regiment. Furthermore, in July 1862, when Rebel cavalryman John Hunt Morgan raided Kentucky for the first time, his troopers rode through the community, sending some townspeople into hiding. Two months later, Confederate and Union troops, destined to fight at Perryville, marched through Springfield. Several skirmishes erupted in the area as the Southern rearguard tried to slow the Federal pursuit.

After the fight at Perryville, curiosity drove some Springfield residents to the battlefield. E. L. Davison, a prominent cattle breeder and businessman, followed the Union army, watched part of the conflict, and stumbled upon an improvised hospital. As doctors amputated limbs, Davison acted as a surgical assistant, cutting clothing to expose wounds and administering chloroform. In one instance, Davison helped a soldier with a leg wound when his minister, the Reverend Miles Sanders, arrived to help. Davison wrote that during the operation, "the bone was sawed off and naturally flew up (it not being held tight enough) spinning blood over everything; Sanders fell over in a faint." Later, Davison mourned over the corpse of his college friend, the Kentucky-born Union Brigadier General James S. Jackson, the highest-ranking casualty of the battle.

William McChord, the adventuresome 12-year-old, witnessed more than the amputated arms and legs at the Henry Bottom house. After touring Bottom's farm and seeing rows of dead soldiers awaiting burial, McChord continued his trek. "At this point," he wrote, "crossing a space a quarter of a mile wide, the Federal dead were so thick that we could not ride across the battlefield without our horses stepping on the dead bodies as they were [strewn] promiscuously on the ground. One Federal officer was shot and fell in a fence corner which was overgrown with bushes. This poor fellow was still alive but desperately wounded. I can never forget the terrible exclamations and manifestations of intense suffering when it was attempted to remove him to the field hospital. This is one of the many instances of that terrible war."

Nuns from St. Catharine's, located just outside of Springfield, traveled to the battlefield to help the wounded and transport them back to the convent. As Perryville's buildings became crammed with the sick and the hurt, scores of injured soldiers were left in Springfield's courthouse and other buildings.

Wounded troops were also placed in houses along the Perryville-Springfield road and the route from Springfield to Bardstown, which held more than 2,000 casualties. Although it is unknown how many wounded convalesced in Springfield, it is likely that many public buildings became full of the ill and injured.

Sadly, many of these troops died, including Christian Weinman of the 21st Wisconsin Infantry Regiment. His unit, which had been in the service for two months, was thrust in a cornfield on the northern end of the battlefield. Hit hard by veteran Confederates, these neophyte soldiers suffered 42 men killed, 101 wounded, and 36 missing.

Weinman was one of the casualties taken to Springfield. Shot in the torso, he died there on November 9, a month after the battle. Three days later, one of his comrades wrote the soldier's friends and family about Weinman's death. "It is with great sorrow I write to inform you of the death of Christian Weinman," he wrote. "He died in Hospital No. 1 in Springfield, Washington County, Kentucky, on the 9th of November. He was shot through the side at the Battle of Perryville and we all thought he was getting better, but he began to be worse and he was out of his mind, but before that, we sent for a priest of the [church] and he came and the members of the church got him a good coffin and he was buried in the church yard and they got him a good cross made and lettered and he was buried with all the honors of the church so that will be one consolation to know that he is buried as he ought to."

While Weinman was fortunate to be buried with a church service, one casualty from the 50th Ohio Infantry Regiment received formal military honors in Springfield. Having been removed to a relative's home there, the mortally wounded officer died shortly after the battle. According to one soldier, 100 men from the 50th Ohio took wagons from Lebanon to Springfield to "bury him with all the honors of war." The troops "were all furnished a pair of white gloves and made quite a nice appearance. When we returned to the house from the graveyard, we were given a fine lunch."

Because of Springfield's proximity to Perryville, many of the town's buildings became makeshift hospitals. Local residents experienced the battle by following the armies, witnessing the fight, and by playing an important role as caregivers. Had these men and women not made sacrifices, whether by providing food, shelter, or medical attention, the suffering and death after Kentucky's largest Civil War battle would have been much more severe.

About the Author

Stuart W. Sanders is the author of *Perryville Under Fire: The Aftermath of Kentucky's Largest Civil War Battle*. His most recent book is *The Battle of Mill Springs, Kentucky*.

Darkness Before Dawn: The War's Closing Days

Image courtesy of UK Archives/Confederate and Union Generals Photographic Collection, ca. 1860s



Image courtesy of UK Archives/Thompson Civil War Cartes-de-visite Photographic Collection, ca. 1860-1870



By James M. Prichard

For most Americans the Civil War ended with Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox on April 9, 1865. However peace did not come overnight to the strife torn land — particularly in Border States like Kentucky. Federal and State Troops remained on duty in the Commonwealth throughout the summer and fall of 1865. Desperate bands of Confederate holdouts remained at large and Military Commissions tried numerous guerrilla prisoners, some of whom were executed. In fact, Kentucky remained under martial law until October 12, 1865. In some areas of the state disorder prevailed until the spring of 1866.

Lee's surrender was followed by the surrender of all Confederate forces east of the Mississippi in late April and early May. The largest Confederate surrender on Kentucky soil took place at Mt. Sterling between April 30th and May 2nd. From their base in southwestern Virginia, Col. Henry L. Giltner of Carroll County led more than a thousand men who once rode with Humphrey Marshall and John Hunt Morgan through the mountains of eastern Kentucky to lay down their arms.¹

Two weeks earlier Col. James Q. Chenoweth of Louisville negotiated the surrender of his command with the Federal commander at Paducah. Chenoweth's men were the remnants of the force raised by Brig. Gen. Adam R. Johnson for duty in western Kentucky during the summer of 1864. Once the terms were agreed upon, Chenoweth returned to his base camp in Paris, Tennessee where his men soon disbanded.²

Operating behind the lines since the summer of 1864, Lt. Col. George M. Jesse of Henry County at times virtually controlled the backcountry between Covington, Frankfort, and Louisville. Attached to the forces in southwestern Virginia, he was completely isolated when the Confederacy fell. On May 5th, convinced that further resistance was futile, he surrendered his command at Eminence.³

For most, the Civil War ended when Robert E. Lee (left) surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant (right) and the Union Army at Appomattox. However, six months later Kentucky was still under martial law.

Nevertheless, small bands of holdouts scattered throughout the state grimly refused to surrender. On the night of May 5, 1865, a heavily armed band of rebel partisans robbed the west bound express train just outside of Cincinnati. They escaped across the Ohio River on skiffs and disappeared into the Kentucky hills. On May 31st, three alleged members of the band were captured by a detachment of the 54th Kentucky Mounted Infantry near Frankfort.⁴

The notorious Missouri partisan, William C. Quantrill, went down fighting in a clash with Union scouts near Taylorsville, on May 10th. Mortally wounded, he afterwards died in the U.S. Military Prison Hospital in Louisville. His followers, Missourians all, remained at large until they surrendered at Samuels Depot in Nelson County on July 26th. Among them was Alexander Franklin James, who with his younger brother Jesse, would make Kentucky part of their outlaw trail for years after the conflict.⁵

The border region of eastern Kentucky, which was ravaged by guerrilla warfare throughout the conflict, continued to witness military operations. In late July, detachments of the 39th and 53rd Kentucky mounted infantries, based at Louisa and Mt. Sterling, respectively, conducted search and destroy missions against guerrillas deep into southwestern Virginia.⁶ The daring partisan, Col. William S. "Rebel Bill" Smith, who commanded a battalion of Kentuckians and Virginians in the Big Sandy Valley, was foremost among those who remained in arms in the rugged mountains. His officers at one time included "Devil Anse" Hatfield, the notorious feudist of the post war era. Smith was finally captured in September and like other holdouts was soon en route to the Louisville Military Prison to stand trial.⁷

About the time "Rebel Bill" was being escorted to Louisville in irons, Capt. John T. Williams of Morgan County declared a personal war against his Union neighbors. Since 1862 Williams had frequently dashed out of southwestern Virginia to wage war against the Union men of the upper Licking River Valley. Like Nelson County in central Kentucky, Morgan County, thanks to the boldness of Williams and other daring raiders, became a Confederate haven for guerrillas and partisans that threatened Kentucky's entire northeastern region. Unwilling to accept defeat, Williams arrested

his wartime foe Joel Gorden in the early fall of 1865 and forbade him to collect Federal taxes. Unionists who had filed claims for damages against Confederates in the local courts were likewise "persuaded" to drop their suits.⁸

With State Troops virtually disbanded and the enrolled militia eliminated, Gov. Thomas E. Bramlette had to rely on a newly created force, the Kentucky National Legion. Capt. H. H. Johnson's company was ordered from Lexington into the mountains to break up Williams' band. A veteran of partisan warfare, Williams easily eluded his Federal pursuers. When Johnson returned to Lexington in late September he reported his men were fired on twice from ambush. He also stated another band of holdouts under the notorious Bath County partisan, Tom Greenwade, were likewise terrorizing local Unionists from their refuge on the Morgan-Rowan county line.⁹ A report in the *Louisville Daily Journal* claimed that, Capt. Johnson "found the utmost terror prevailing among the inhabitants" due to the "lawless bands of rebel robbers which infest the whole country."¹⁰

During the course of his Last Kentucky Raid in June of 1864, John Hunt Morgan's command was routed and scattered to the winds. Cut off from the main column men such as Jerome Clark, later to become notorious as "Sue Mundy" and Samuel O. "One Armed" Berry sought refuge in Nelson and neighboring counties. For the rest of the conflict they waged merciless guerrilla warfare in the very heart of the state. One by one these grim chieftains either fell in battle or were taken prisoner. Clark himself died on the gallows in Louisville less than a month before Lee's surrender.¹¹ By the late spring of 1865, only One Armed Berry remained at large. One night in early May he attacked a detachment of black troops in Bardstown before disappearing into the darkness. Later that same month he barely escaped capture by the notorious Capt. Ed Terrill's Union scouts.¹²

Orphaned at an early age, the 29-year-old Berry had been raised by the Shaker Community near Harrodsburg. The loss of his right arm just above the wrist in a pre-war accident did not preclude military service and he rode with Morgan in the early days of the war. By June of 1865 he rightly sensed further resistance was futile and opened negotiations with Federal military authorities in Louisville for the surrender of his men. A parole was duly granted on June 2nd but Berry

¹George D. Mosgrove, *Kentucky Cavaliers in Dixie*, (Jackson, TN: McCowat-Mercer Pr., 1957.): 262-65. (Reprint, 1895.)

²William J. Davis (Ed.), *The Partisan Rangers*, (Louisville, Ky.: George G. Fetter Co., 1904): 194-96.

³*Louisville Daily Democrat*, May 3, 1865 and *Louisville Daily Journal*, May 6, 1865.

⁴*Louisville Daily Journal*, May 9, 1865 and *Louisville Daily Union Press*, June 6, 1865.

⁵Paul R. Petersen, *Quantrill of Missouri*, (Nashville, Tn: Cumberland House, 2003):409.

⁶John Britton Wells III and James M. Prichard, *10th Kentucky Cavalry C.S.A.* (Baltimore, MD: Gateway Press, Inc., 1996): 96.

⁷John David Preston, *The Civil War in the Big Sandy Valley of Kentucky*, (Baltimore, MD: Gateway Press, 2008): 226.

⁸Joe Nickell, *Raid and Skirmishes: the Civil War in Morgan* (West Liberty, Ky: Nickell Genealogical Books, 1991): 10-12. *Louisville Daily Journal*, Sept. 23 and 27; Oct. 5, 12, 25, 30 and 31, 1865.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Thomas Shelby Watson and Perry A. Brantley, *Confederate Guerrilla Sue Mundy*, (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Co., Inc., 2008): 33, 44, 172-74.

¹²Steven L. Wright, *Kentucky Soldiers and Their Regiments in the Civil War*, (Utica, Ky: McDowell Publications, 2009), V:134, 153.



Following John Hunt Morgan's Last Kentucky Raid in June of 1864, his command, which included Samuel Oscar "One Armed" Berry and Marcellus Jerome "Sue Mundy" Clark, was scattered.

was not absolved of any violations of the laws of war.¹³ The Lebanon (Kentucky) *Loyal Enterprise* reacted to the news by publishing a lengthy list of killings, robberies, and rapes of local black women by Berry's band. Within days the charges were reprinted by the Louisville press and Berry apparently led his small band into hiding. Sometime in late August Berry's men rode into Bardstown and went on a drunken spree but avoided any acts of violence.¹⁴

Later that fall, Berry and his followers apparently decided to leave Kentucky and make their way to Mexico. On the night of October 23rd, Berry, his brother Thomas F. and another member of the band robbed the toll gate-keeper and a passing traveler outside of Bardstown. Although the attackers were never identified, a band of guerrillas, perhaps Berry's men, gunned down four recently discharged black soldiers returning to their Nelson County homes on October 27th.¹⁵ At the head of a dozen well mounted and finely dressed followers Berry passed through Meade and entered Breckinridge County two days later. Their path was reportedly marked by the indiscriminate plundering of civilians.¹⁶

On November 2nd, Berry's band plundered Stephensport on the Ohio River and then swooped down on the village of Union Star. Capt. George Hammers, who lost a leg fighting with Sherman in Georgia, grabbed his Henry rifle and gravely wounded Thomas F. Berry with the first shot. The rest of the band, who were about to burn the town, beat a hasty retreat. They were overtaken by a party of civilians who killed one of the guerrillas and wounded another by the name of Bill Merriman. One Armed Berry, King C. White of Louisville and the survivors were forced to return to Nelson County while Merriman and Tom Berry were conveyed to the Louisville Military Prison.¹⁷ According to one contemporary newspaper source, Berry and White,

who actually visited Louisville in disguise, spent several days in an abortive attempt to break their comrades out of prison.¹⁸

However on or about November 30th the duo rode into Bloomfield and entered the Tinsley Hotel. The proprietor, Henry Tinsley had not only fed the guerrillas in the past but used his tailor shop to provide them with flashy uniforms. Berry and White had reportedly threatened to beat Tinsley because they had heard he had loudly complained about their unpaid debts. A heated argument erupted almost immediately and shots were fired. As they fled out of town Tinsley's son gravely wounded Berry with a parting shot. Berry made his way to the home of Mark Thomas in the Salt River hills and received medical treatment.¹⁹

Word of the Bloomfield incident spread to Louisville where shortly afterwards Federal authorities learned of Berry's whereabouts. Early on Friday, December 8th, Major Cyrus J. Wilson rode out of the city with 12 mounted men from the 2nd U.S. Infantry. They took King White near Brunerstown and captured the bedridden Berry at the Thomas residence. Wilson led the prisoners through the streets of Louisville to the headquarters of Maj. Gen. John M. Palmer, Kentucky's military commander. Berry, who was conveyed in a covered wagon, asked to see Palmer and asked for mercy. It was reported that Palmer looked the wounded guerrilla in the eye and walked away without a word.²⁰

One Armed Berry had good reason for concern. The military commissions that tried alleged guerrillas throughout the war remained very active after Lee's surrender. John T. Bishop was hanged in Lexington on August 18th for the murder of a Bourbon County civilian.²¹ On August 21st, Dow Nailen and George Naiven, two African Americans who rode with guerrillas in Hickman County, were hanged at Paducah for rape.²² At the same time many more alleged guerrillas were sentenced to lengthy terms in both Federal prisons and the Kentucky State Penitentiary in Frankfort. By the time Berry and King were captured 26 guerrillas had been sent to Frankfort in irons. Finally, as Berry was no doubt keenly aware, his fellow guerrilla chieftain, Henry Magruder, was hanged in Louisville on October 29th.²³

¹³Watson and Brantley, *Confederate Guerrilla*, pp. 44, 190-91.

¹⁴Wright, *Kentucky Soldiers*, V: 170, 201.

¹⁵Ibid, V: 233-34. *Louisville Daily Union Press*, Nov. 2, 1865.

¹⁶Wright, *Kentucky Soldiers*, V: 234.

¹⁷Ibid, V: 236-39.

¹⁸Ibid, V: 245-46.

¹⁹Ibid. *Louisville Daily Journal*, Dec. 4, 1865.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Military Commission Judgements, "U.S. vs. John T. Bishop", Union Provost Marshal Citizens Files", www.Fold3.com. See also, Wright, *Kentucky Regiments*, V: 200.

²²Military Commission Judgements, "U.S. vs. Dow Nailen" and "U.S. vs. George Naiven", Ibid. See also, Wright, *Kentucky Regiments*, V: 200.

²³Watson and Brantley, *Confederate Guerrilla*, pp.194-95. Register of Prisoners Confined in the Kentucky Penitentiary (1859-1866), Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives, Frankfort. (Hereafter cited as KDLA.)

Berry faced a lengthy trial by a military commission which convened on January 13, 1866, in Louisville. The guerrilla chieftain was charged with more than 14 murders, six counts of robbery, and two charges of rape against black women. Although acquitted of the rape charges, he was found guilty of one count of robbery and 11 counts of murder. The Judge Advocate sentenced him to hang on March 2nd but the sentence was afterwards commuted to 10 years at hard labor in the penitentiary at Albany, New York. In the years that followed many prominent Kentuckians sought his release but Berry died in his cell on July 4, 1873 at the age of 36.²⁴

No charges were filed against his brother Thomas F. Berry alias Thomas Henderson who was finally set free on April 22, 1866. In his 1914 wartime reminiscences, “Colonel” Berry falsely claimed that he had cheated the gallows by killing his guards in a daring escape. He also falsely denied his role in the Breckinridge County raid and claimed that King White was the “Judas” who revealed his brother’s whereabouts to the Federal authorities.²⁵ If so, young White was poorly rewarded. He languished in the Military Prison awaiting a trial that never took place. On April 30, 1865, he was turned over to the civil authorities of Hancock County where he was under indictment for his role in the plundering of the steamer *Morning Star* on December 21, 1864.

Another cellmate of the Berry brothers and King White, James Harvey Wells, alias William Henry, was likewise found guilty of being a guerrilla, and sentenced to a term at hard labor in the Ohio Penitentiary in Columbus. These four were the last known guerrillas to be imprisoned or tried by Federal military authorities for deeds committed during the war. By the spring of 1866, Kentucky’s civil and military leaders sought to restore peace, as well as law and order, to the Commonwealth. In fact, virtually all of the guerrillas confined in the Kentucky penitentiary had already been released at intervals by Gen. Palmer’s orders.²⁷

Nevertheless the seeds of violence and lawlessness sowed by civil war had already taken firm root in Kentucky soil. In the words

²⁴John Sickles, *The Legends of Sue Mundy and One Armed Berry: Confederate Guerrillas in Kentucky*, (Merrillville, IN: Heritage Press, 1999), pp. 66-67 and Watson and Brantley, *Confederate Guerrilla*, pp. 196-98.

²⁵Col. Thomas F. Berry, *Four Years With Morgan and Forrest*, (Oklahoma City, OK: The Harlow-Ratliff Co., 1914), pp. 462, 473-75. However, see the *Louisville Daily Journal*, April 24, 1866 for a report of Thomas F. Berry’s release from the Louisville Military Prison.

²⁶*Louisville Daily Courier*, April 25, 1866.

²⁷Register of Prisoners Confined in the Kentucky Penitentiary (1859-1866), KDLA, Frankfort.

²⁸James Klotter and Hambleton Tapp (Eds.), *The Union, The Civil War and John W. Tuttle* (Frankfort, Ky.: The Kentucky Historical Society, 1980): 266-67.

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of prominent Kentucky historians the post-war years were marked by “decades of discord.” While he scoffed at the reports, John W. Tuttle of Wayne County duly noted in his diary that a wave of mass hysteria swept central Kentucky in early 1866. The Devil himself had reportedly risen from the depths and was leaving a path of death and destruction in his wake.²⁸ In reality there was little need for his Satanic Majesty to trod Kentucky soil. Guerrilla warfare had unleashed many devils in human form and their bloody deeds and brutal violence would darken Kentucky’s future for years to come.

About the Author

James M. Prichard, who currently resides in Louisville, supervised the Research Room at the Kentucky State Archives from 1985-2008. A part-time employee at the Filson Historical Society, he is presently completing a history of Frankfort in the Civil War.

John O. Scott:

A Young Kentuckian's Journey through the Civil War

By Hugh Ridenour

After having written a rather detailed biography of the three generations of the Green family that occupied the mansion at Falls of Rough, Kentucky, I was still intrigued by what might remain in the soon-to-be sold 22-room structure. The house had already relinquished numerous pieces of family history, such as missing bank records from an old pie safe and general store ledgers from under a pile of debris, but I wanted to be certain I had not missed some historical treasure. As a result, I decided in the late 1990s, with the mansion now nearly void of furniture and with the owner's continuing offer of free access, to make one last thorough foray through the building.

This time I found myself searching musty closets, rummaging through discarded boxes, and peering into any nook or cranny where something might remain hidden. While perusing the abandoned library, I was drawn below the empty shelves to the rows of built-in storage cabinets. One after another, I opened the small doors and reached into the dark, dusty interiors to pull out long-forgotten stacks of yellowed and fragile papers, mostly old newspapers of no particular consequence. Then, from among additional deteriorating material and more dirt, cobwebs, and mice droppings, I withdrew several oversized, loosely bound volumes. Excitedly wiping away years of accumulated dust, I turned the leaves of first one book and then another to read names I recognized: John J. Crittenden, Basil W. Duke, John C. Breckinridge — all signatures on letters glued to the fragile pages. Scrapbooks! Old scrapbooks! Had I found my long lost “treasure”? The collection seemed to belong to a John Orlando Scott. Although I recognized the name from previous family research, I had no idea why the scrapbooks would be at this location. More family research revealed the answer.

John Scott, born June 10, 1837, was the third child of Robert W. and Elizabeth Brown Scott of Kentucky's Franklin County, brother-in-law to Lafayette Green of Falls of Rough, and great-grandfather to the last relative to reside in the Green mansion. The elder Scott was a distinguished Bluegrass farmer and stockbreeder, and his wife, Elizabeth, descended from the eminent Browns of Frankfort.



Image courtesy of Hugh Ridenour

John Orlando Scott (1837-1904) served as surgeon to several different regiments of the famous First Kentucky (Orphan) Brigade.

After attending the highly acclaimed private school of B. B. Sayre in Frankfort, John Scott enrolled in Centre College in Danville, where he graduated in 1856. He then sought a teaching position in a Lexington-area preparatory school, going so far as to obtain several letters of recommendation from former teachers, relatives, and friends, including B. B. Sayre, Mason Brown, Robert J. Breckinridge, and Governor Charles Morehead. However, available records fail to validate whether Scott was successful in obtaining a teaching position.

Although he entertained ideas of moving to Texas, in the late 1850s Scott enrolled in the Louisville School of Medicine, of which his older brother, Preston, was a graduate. While in medical school, John proved such an astute scholar that he tutored fellow students in Latin and English. No records remain regarding the specific courses he attended; however, the school catalogue of this period indicates

an emphasis on “military and surgical anatomy.” In addition, during his last term at the institution, he completed several courses at the Long Island College Hospital in New York. These comprehensive courses comprised subjects such as surgery, anatomy, obstetrics, as well as chemistry and toxicology.

Upon graduation in January 1862, with the Civil War in progress and an eagerness to join the effort, Scott and several comrades traveled in early February to Henderson, Kentucky, where they bribed their way through the Federal troops that surrounded the city. Scott and his companions then walked some 70 miles to Hopkinsville and subsequently traveled to Nashville, where they volunteered for service in the Confederate army. As they passed through Clarksville, Tennessee, on or near February 15, Scott said they could hear the artillery firing at Fort Donelson, “perhaps the last guns before the white flag hung from the battlements of that fort.” Upon arrival in Nashville, Scott headed directly to the office of Dr. David W. Yandell, medical director for Confederate General Albert Sidney Johnston’s Army of the West. Yandell immediately assigned Scott the task of unloading the wounded, both Confederate and Federal, from boats arriving upriver from the battles occurring in western Tennessee. After working throughout the night, Scott witnessed Confederate soldiers the next morning retreating across the Cumberland River Bridge into Nashville.

When Johnston realized he could not hold Nashville, Scott accompanied the General’s army as it evacuated the city and moved south toward Murfreesboro, Tennessee. During this movement, Scott found his first night with the army a memorable, though not a pleasant, one. A tremendous thunderstorm with lightning and rain struck the camp, and Scott found his bed “knee-deep” in water. The novice soldier had apparently placed his tent in a “wet weather stream.”

Now attached as assistant surgeon to Bryne’s Artillery Battery, First Kentucky Brigade (the Orphan Brigade), Scott moved with Johnston’s army to northern Mississippi, where Johnston hoped to keep Union Major General Ulysses Grant from taking control of the Mississippi River. To accomplish this goal, Johnston attacked Grant’s forces on April 6 just across the Tennessee border near a small Methodist Episcopal South church named Shiloh. During the ensuing battle, Scott witnessed the death of Kentucky’s newly elected provisional Confederate governor, George W. Johnson. Scott had found himself only hours earlier sleeping under the same tree as Johnson. After waking, asking Scott for a comb, and engaging in a brief conversation, Johnson realized and acknowledged that he knew Scott’s father. Later that day, Johnson joined the Fourth Kentucky Infantry as a private and promptly received a mortal wound during the retreat from Shiloh. When Union Brigadier General Alexander McCook found Johnson the next day still alive on the battlefield, he directed the wounded Kentuckian’s transport to the hospital boat *Hannibal*, where he died a day later.

The circumstances surrounding another of the battle’s casualties, the seemingly unnecessary death of General Albert Sidney Johnston

during the first day’s fighting, much affected the young physician. Scott was troubled that those attending Johnston did not realize that the general carried a tourniquet in his pocket, a life-saving device in this case, which would have stopped the fatal loss of blood from his wounded leg. Scott’s concern might have been heightened by the fact that Johnston was formerly married to Scott’s distant cousin, and the two men had become acquainted several years earlier. The occasion was a party to acknowledge Johnston’s forthcoming departure to Utah in 1857 to discipline the Mormons for their refusal to honor federal government authority. During this party, Scott also met three young military officers who would later become famous in their own right: John B. Hood, William J. Hardee, and George H. Thomas.

Scott had little time, however, for such memories in Shiloh’s aftermath. He quickly moved with Johnston’s army, now under the command of General P. G. T. Beauregard, to Corinth, Mississippi, where he first encountered Nathan Bedford Forrest. As a college man, Scott was unimpressed by Forrest’s bad grammar, but did conclude that he knew how to use the English language to the best advantage. Scott was also in Forrest’s presence sometime later at a reception given in Forrest’s honor by the people of Marion, Alabama. At the affair, Scott observed that Forrest’s hair had “turned white, but his chin whiskers were as black as a raven’s wing.” Scott recounted Forrest’s retort when a town prater boldly confronted the cavalry officer concerning the reason for such a contrast: “Madam [,] because I use my brain more than my jaws.”

Scott became the assistant surgeon to the Third Infantry Regiment when Bryne’s Battery disbanded in May 1862, but after only a short time he moved to Robert Cobb’s Artillery Battery, also a part of the First Kentucky Brigade. While with Cobb’s Battery, Scott participated in the battle at Hartsville, Tennessee. Confederate General Braxton Bragg was convinced that a quick strike was necessary to prevent Union Major General William Rosecrans from taking middle Tennessee, a particularly important area for its productive cropland. With this strategy in mind, Bragg allowed Confederate Col. John Hunt Morgan and other partisan rangers to harass the enemy in the area. When Morgan decided to attack the Federal forces stationed at the small community of Hartsville, just east of Gallatin, he attached to his command several regiments, including Cobb’s Battery. Morgan’s forces struck quickly on December 7, routing the Federals, and then retreated, leaving Scott as the only surgeon on the battlefield to care for the wounded, both Confederate and Federal. Scott feared he would shortly be captured by Federal forces stationed only a few miles away at Castilian Springs, but when these forces arrived, he was pleasantly surprised to find that the commander was Kentuckian Col. John Marshall Harlan, a friend of his father. Harlan, in fact, did not take Scott prisoner, but instead supplied the wounded with medicine and food and allowed Scott to return to his unit in Murfreesboro. Scott’s most vivid memory of the battle was finding the body of a young private named Thomas Watts from Paducah, Kentucky. Only minutes before, Scott had seen him riding atop a caisson that subsequently

Cincinnati, O. Oct 27 1866

My dear Dr
 Have just recd your letter -
 I have written the chapter ~~to~~ in
 which is described the Hartsville
 fight, but will be very glad to have
 your sketches with the standing - please
 forward them - If I get them in time
 I may get work them in -
 I would have been delighted
 to have had your contributions
 while my book was in progress, not
 only regarding ~~that~~ particular affair
 to which you refer, but many others, ~~also~~
 - but like the rest of my friends
 you have "held off" almost too long -
 If I did not know the stuff of which
 my friends are made - I would think that
 they did not wish to assist me. Will you
 please, at once - and believe me -
 Very truly your friend
 Basil W. Duke

Basil W. Duke, Scott's comrade at the battle of Hartsville, Tennessee, wrote a history of Morgan's Cavalry after the war. In this letter he responds to Scott's offer to contribute his own battle recollections.

exploded. Now the only way he could identify the victim was by the tiny artillery cap he had been wearing.

Just three weeks later, on December 31, 1862, Scott participated in the battle of Stone's (Stones) River. He remembered that soon after the soldiers received the order to charge, ambulances began conveying wounded to the rear. Among the wounded was Brigadier General Roger Hanson, commander of the First Kentucky Brigade, who suffered a severed artery in the thigh. Scott met the ambulance carrying Hanson and rendered assistance to the General by first giving as a stimulant a drink of "pure French brandy." After accompanying Hanson in the ambulance a short distance, Scott indicated that Major General John C. Breckinridge rode up to inquire about the officer's condition. When Scott advised him that the wound was dangerous, Breckinridge's face grew sad and he immediately rode away. Because Hanson also realized his wound was grave, he instructed Scott to return to the wounded on the battlefield. Although Hanson died the next day from shock after having his leg amputated, Scott expressed the belief that Hanson's life could have been saved if he, or another surgeon, had accompanied the ambulance back to Murfreesboro.

Another particularly poignant incident that Scott recalled from the Stone's River engagement involved the death of Corporal J. F. Hawes, who was acting as Scott's druggist. When the young man decided to return to his more gallant duty as a gunner, he told Scott as he left, "If I get killed, tell my sweetheart that I died like a hero." Only moments later, as Hawes sighted his weapon, a Parrott gun "took his head off as smooth as if it had been severed by a guillotine."

By late June 1863, Scott had become ill. Consequently, on July 3rd he received relief from his duty in the field with an appointment

to a hospital in Marion, Alabama, where he remained for the next 15 months. On October 11, 1864, he accepted promotion to full surgeon, and on November 2nd he reported for duty with the Seventh Kentucky Cavalry Regiment, where he apparently remained until the end of the war.

Shortly after the war's end, Scott sailed in June for Europe on board the *New York*, his primary purpose to visit several of the continent's more prominent medical facilities, including the Invalides in Paris. And although he had indicated no previous interest in botany, one of Scott's scrapbooks contains several pages filled with the pressed leaves of various plants. According to their handwritten labels, the specimens came from the grounds of famous buildings, such as Notre Dame, Buckingham Palace, and the Crystal Palace. Scott returned to the United States in December 1865 on board the *Bolivia*, on which he obtained free passage in return for his services as a doctor.

After three years in the service of the Confederacy and six months abroad, Scott prepared to resume his civilian life and begin his career as a private physician. He married Ellen Melvin of Marion, Alabama, whom he had met during his war service there, and established a new home in Owensboro, Kentucky. There he joined the practice of Charles H. Todd, a fellow Sayre graduate. Scott served as the city and county physician in Owensboro until 1874 and later practiced medicine briefly in Frankfort and then Covington, Kentucky. Sometime between 1875 and 1877 Scott, at least partially for health reasons, moved to Sherman, Texas, where he spent the rest of his life. Many years earlier, Scott, just out of college, had entertained ideas of moving to Texas, even going so far as to obtain a letter of introduction from Kentucky's U.S. Senator John J. Crittenden to Governor Sam Houston of Texas. In the letter, Crittenden acknowledged knowing Scott's father and characterized the young Scott as an intelligent, well-educated individual who would certainly be a great asset to the state of Texas.

Although Scott devoted his life to medicine, he did not relinquish the relationships he had forged during the war. His postwar correspondence included letters from several of his fellow comrades-in-arms. For the most part, these letters began by recalling the friendships of the war years and then continued to address either requests for or offers of assistance of various forms. For example, Scott received a letter in 1866 from Basil W. Duke thanking him for his offer to provide "sketches" of the Hartsville battle. The former second-in-command to John Hunt Morgan indicated that, although he had completed the chapter dealing with the battle, he would welcome Scott's accounts and do his best to include them in the book he was writing about Morgan's cavalry. In an 1866 letter from his distant cousin John C. Breckinridge, at the time a political exile in Canada, Scott learned that Breckinridge had been unable to satisfy his request to locate certain Canadian property owned by Scott's wife. Correspondence from Edmund Kirby Smith, written sometime between 1867 and 1874, while the ex-general was president of the Western Military Academy in Nashville, included

circulars that Scott had promised to distribute in hopes of “securing a few recruits” for the school. Smith also confirmed the safe arrival of a book from Scott and issued an invitation to his Nashville home with a promise of “an oldfashioned [sic] Va. welcome.”

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Scott served many years as historian of Camp Mildred Lee of the United Confederate Veterans. While acting in this capacity, he wrote numerous articles about his Civil War experiences for southern journals and newspapers, especially the Sherman, Texas, *Daily Register*. These articles were either accounts of his personal war experiences, general histories of different battles, or glorifications of the feats of many Texas regiments.

John Orlando Scott died at age 66 on March 8, 1904, in Sherman, Texas, after undergoing a surgical procedure. He had lived a life rich in historic figures and events. Because of his family’s prominence, the young Scott encountered many of the time’s noteworthy men and later, as a Confederate surgeon, served under some of the Civil War’s most famous officers in several significant battles. Then, as an older man, he continued his devotion to the Confederate cause by celebrating in print the glories of his comrades.

Scott’s published articles provided his contemporaries with one man’s account of an era. However, it is his scrapbooks, filled with letters, war documents, mementos of travel, and annotated articles, that offer a more personal glimpse into history. His pasted and clipped collection, likely transported to Falls of Rough by his

grandson’s widow when she moved there to live with her daughter in the 1970s, identifies Scott not only as a keen observer and accomplished chronicler of life, but also as a historian who realized the importance of recording impressions and experiences. Scott’s foresight ensured the preservation of an additional perspective, that of a Kentuckian actively engaged in his state’s and the nation’s history.

About the Author

Hugh Ridenour, a resident of Hanson, Kentucky, is a 28-year veteran educator in Kentucky’s public school system and, since 1997, a member of the Kentucky Humanities Council’s Speakers Bureau. He received bachelor’s and master’s degrees in history from Western Kentucky University. In 1999, the Kentucky Historical Society selected Ridenour’s book, *The Greens of Falls of Rough: A Kentucky Family Biography 1879-1965* as one of the 10 best books published on Kentucky history in the previous four years. He has been published in several history journals, including the Kentucky Historical Society’s *Register*, the Filson Historical Society’s *Quarterly*, and the Wyoming Historical Society’s *Annals of Wyoming*.

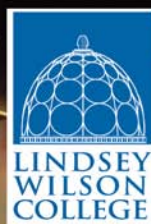
The Kentucky Historical Society first published the original full-length version of this article, John Orlando Scott: Scion of the Bluegrass in Peace and War, in the spring 1999 volume of its Register. That article received the Society’s Richard H. Collins Award.

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My Civil War Education

By Richard Taylor

Growing up in the Louisville during the 1950s, I often heard that Kentucky had waited until the Civil War ended before seceding, as though one had the benefit of watching a horse race and then the privilege of betting on the loser. I could not, beyond some vague notions of romance and contagious veneration of the Lost Cause, understand why. Was it because of our collective sympathy for the underdog or the romanticizing of the agrarian South by writers like Thomas Nelson Page or Margaret Mitchell, whose work was part of the regional sanctification of the Confederacy after its demise? Wasn't slavery as fundamentally wrong, as servile and immoral as I had come to think of it? When I was old enough to start asking whether Kentucky's switching of loyalties was true and, if so, why, I settled first on the knowledge that Kentucky during the war had remained in federal hands and that most Kentuckians were loyal to the Union though regarding itself, and regarded by others both North and South, as Southern in its sentiments and allegiances, which included an economy that had slavery near its heart. Though Kentucky's agriculture did not rely on great numbers of slave laborers, slaveholding in Kentucky had been a tradition since its earliest settlement. It had a total of 225,483 slaves in the 1860 census or 19 percent of its total population, making it ninth among the 15 slaveholding states. The Bluegrass and Lexington as well as western Kentucky held concentrations of slaveholders. Louisville itself was an anomaly, the state's center of commerce and manufacturing. A railhead and major supply center for the Union Army, it was one of the only Southern cities actually to prosper during the war.

As a teenager, I had read about Appomattox and Gettysburg as well as biographies of Grant and Lee in the now out-of-print series of Landmark Books produced by Random House, a series that covered almost every important phase of America's past and gave me a love of history. When I was 12 or 13, my uncle subscribed me to the series, and I read each book as it arrived in the mail. My interest piqued, I read Robert Henry's *The Story of the Confederacy* and then Robert Penn Warren's *Wilderness and the Cass Mastern* episode in that great American political novel, *All the King's Men*. And then reading such works as *I'll Take my Stand* by a group of agrarian writers and *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* by James Agee, realizing that the agrarian way of life in the South had diverged from the vision of American life

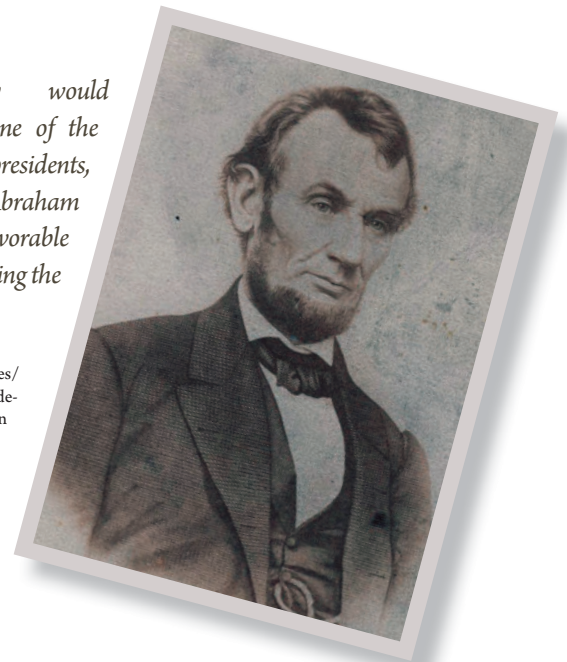
that Jefferson imagined and was spoiled by the exploitation of slave labor as well as poor whites in the tenant system. And then for most of my life reading books on the Civil War as they came to me, not quite comprehending my sympathy for the South in the face of the stupendous bigotry and wrongness of slavery. Some of my teachers were apologists for the South, citing states rights and sectionalism as the primary causes of the war. In 1974 I inherited two large, framed, memorial prints of Lee and Jackson that I keep even now — figures revered in the South and by my father's generation — though the way of life for which they fought was fundamentally flawed.

Born in 1905, my father arrived soon enough after the war to know some of its survivors. Raised on a family farm near the now-eclipsed farming community of Worthington in eastern Jefferson County, he moved in his early teens to Crescent Hill in Louisville by way of Pewee Valley with his mother and three siblings after his father died in 1917. In the sleepy Louisville suburb of Pewee Valley he lived for a time next door to the Confederate home. When I asked him whether he could recall any stories, he said that he had been too young and could remember only some slack old-timers sitting in rockers on the porch. Fifty-two years after Appomattox, these would be among the last survivors on either side during our most destructive and defining war.

When I asked him and my Uncle Orin about family connections to the Civil War, I was first told that none of our direct ancestors

Although history would recognize him as one of the country's greatest presidents, Kentucky native Abraham Lincoln was not a favorable figure in the state during the Civil War.

Image courtesy of UK Archives/
Thompson Civil War Cartes-de-
visite Photographic Collection



fought in the war. I had read a memoir of a Southern general named Richard Taylor, but he was from another branch of the family and had spent most of his life in Louisiana. But I did hear a sketchy tale of one Taylor who had been shot out of a tree in an orchard behind the family house at Shop Spring near Worthington. When I asked why, Uncle Orin said for “singing Rebel songs,” which I now understand as shorthand for stirring up secessionist sentiment in the neighborhood and, as I learned even more recently, violating his signed parole. My father’s own father had died relatively young, and he was 10 or 12 when he lived next to the aging Confederates, just enough time to break the transmission of more vital family history. The story my uncle told was that the victim’s mother had seen a federal patrol coming up the lane to their farmhouse and that she had alerted her convalescent son, who bolted out the back door to hide. He had climbed a tree in the orchard and was shot out of it when he refused to come down. Uncle Orin told another story, this one even less detailed, involving a Taylor who had been captured and sent to a prison camp where he was struck on the head by a pistol or rifle butt. He survived many years after the incident but was what his people delicately described as “touched.”

That was the substance of what I had learned from my elders and was not even sure what the relatives’ names were or what their exact relationship to me was until very recently when out of the blue a kind stranger directed me to a monograph written by Russell Chamberlain, a local historian who wrote a genealogy of his family that was also a mini-history of the Worthington community. The Taylors and Chamberlains, one of whom ran a blacksmith shop that I remember as a child, had been neighbors and friends for several generations. Knowing my interest in the Taylor family, the donor kindly permitted me to make a copy of his spiral-bound copy (not found at that time in any library) that had been given him by Mr. Chamberlain, who was by then nearly 100 years old and a resident of an assisted living home in Middletown. As far as my father knew, no one in our family had fought on either side of the conflict. In fact, there had been participants on both.

Captain Reuben Taylor (1757-1824) had served in the American Revolution, built a cabin in the Worthington area in 1778, and immigrated there from Virginia in 1797. Two of his grandsons, Reuben (called Ben) and Henry, enlisted in the Confederate army early in the war. Henry was wounded at the battle of Shiloh (April 6-7, 1862), taking one shot in the shoulder and another that broke his leg above the knee. Led on a horse from the battle by his slave, he was hidden in a thicket until he could receive medical attention. When he was able to travel, he returned home by river steamer, having been required to sign a parole that he would not serve again in the Confederate army. After a slow recovery, he supposedly violated his parole by drilling some young boys in the area. One day, in the post office at Harrods Creek a few miles from Louisville, he witnessed a federal patrol of four cavalymen leading a prisoner, remarking, as Chamberlain reports, “By Gawd, it would take at least ten Damnyankees to carry me to town.” Warned that riders in blue were in the front yard, Henry,

according to this account, strapped on his gun belt and ran from the house, hiding in a plum thicket. The federal detachment consisted of ten men commanded by a Captain Riddell. When Riddell and his sergeant approached the thicket, Henry, knowing that they were coming for him, attempted to fire his pistol, but it misfired. Before he could fire again, the sergeant shot him through the heart with his carbine, killing him instantly.

Apparently feeling some conscience about killing a man in the presence of his mother, Riddell returned to the house and had his men carry in the dead man and place him on a bed. When the horrified mother accused the captain of murdering her son, he replied that he had been shot in self-defense. Then, one of the detachment rushed up to report that a body of armed men was approaching the house. Captain Riddell had his men lined up in front of the farm entrance with their guns leveled on the oncoming riders, who turned out to be Union men returning from a nearby church. One of them was Henry’s cousin, Manlius Taylor, wearing his federal uniform. The others were Billy Chamberlain, 16th Indiana, and two other local men named Dorsey, all of them on leave from the Union army. Manlius Taylor defused the situation by stating that they were returning from church and were unarmed. Shortly after the Union detachment left for Louisville, a party of nearly two dozen neighbors arrived at the house, their leader hot-headedly intent on pursuing the detachment and shooting or hanging them all before they could reach the safety of Louisville. A cooler head, Jacob Chamberlain, acknowledged that the detachment could be caught but that given any provocation, Colonel Dent, the area commander, would ride out in force and not leave a house or barn standing and who knows how many hanging. The party dispersed.

These accounts provided more grist for my speculations. First was the idea of the brothers’ war, the often-invoked drama of divided loyalties within a single family, as in the case of Manlius and Henry. After this incident, however, Manlius renounced his ties to the Union, as history tells us many other loyal Kentuckians did for a variety of reasons, including the enlistment of African Americans into the military, an idea many Kentuckians were not prepared to accept. In Manlius’s case, it was, in his eyes, the unjust death of his cousin by those who presumably were his comrades fighting to preserve the Union. His conversion may have also resulted from the zeal and mindlessness with which martial law was administered in the state as well as the bitterness harbored by both sides for real, and sometimes imagined offenses. The right to speak one’s mind freely was the birthright of every American. An atmosphere in which a non-judicial authority could intervene to punish alleged slanders to him and most other Kentuckians was unimaginable and abhorrent. Behind the provost marshal’s decision to send ten and only ten men per Henry’s boast bespeaks a perverse malice and personal spite that goes beyond our ordinary understanding of the usages of war. In Manlius’s eyes, this offense was real. The fear of reprisals on a civilian population was also real and hardly isolated under the military authority that governed Kentucky

Image courtesy of Richard Taylor



Marcellus Jerome Clark, a.k.a. Sue Mundy, was the most notorious Confederate guerrilla in Kentucky during the Civil War.

during the later stages of the war. This brand of suppression through a show of force must have soured the loyalty of many, as it apparently did Manlius. Though his family owned slaves and he was probably pro-slavery, Manlius had enlisted as private in the 3rd Kentucky Cavalry (Union) in December of 1861. Ironically, he had served at Shiloh and could, in theory, have fired one of the shots that wounded his cousin.

Less obvious are the subtexts. One is that the tellers of the account that had been passed down orally through several generations remembered the names of the informer and those who commanded the arrest. Whether Union or Confederate in their loyalties, they were steeped in the Southern perspective that dominated the Kentucky mindset during the post-war era and this, to some extent, colored their perceptions. It's also significant that the tale-tellers knew and added what became of Captain Riddell. According to the account, Riddell was killed a few weeks later by one of his own company. Halting his men near a farm pond, Riddell had ordered his men to stay out of the water, though the day was hot and the men and horses were suffering from thirst. Returning from a nearby farmhouse, Riddell discovered one of his men had disobeyed his order and was standing waist-deep in the water. In a rage, Riddell drew his pistol and shot the man. An instant later, a cousin of the dead soldier reciprocated by shooting Riddell himself. Blood, as the story and its sequel relate, is stronger than political allegiance. And memory is long.

The second account points to the tragic senselessness of this war. Ben, or Reuben Taylor, grandson of the Revolutionary War Reuben, had been captured at the Battle of Chickamauga Creek (September 19-20, 1863). Some time after Henry Taylor was killed, his mother received a message from the federal authorities

at the compound where her son had been imprisoned, directing her to send for her son. According to the account, the unnamed camp contained guards who were "cruel and brutal." Although there was abundant water available, prisoners were forbidden to drink except at given times of the day when, as the account states, they were driven like herds of cattle to drink. Again, the weather being hot and dry, prisoners suffered severely from dehydration. Ben Taylor asked one of the guards for permission to go to the spring for water. When his request was denied, Taylor cursed the guard and started toward the spring. The guard quickly followed and struck Taylor on the head with the butt of his rifle, fracturing his skull and rendering him unconscious. He was given up for dead and left where he fell, but hours later, as he was being moved, he was found to be still breathing.

Ben Taylor was sent home after some weeks and lived for many years though his mind was deranged from the injury and the wound never healed completely. Having the mental capacity of a small child, he was said to spend summers fishing from the banks of Harrods Creek.

It was when I started researching material on the life of Confederate guerrilla Sue Mundy that a fuller, less fragmented image of the Civil War in Kentucky began to take form. I had seen an image of a young man in a Confederate uniform in a photo collection called *Views of Louisville*, published by the *Courier-Journal* in 1971 and edited by the late Sam Thomas. The portrait, an enlarged daguerreotype, depicted a handsome young man sitting with legs crossed, armed and wearing a Confederate uniform topped by a hat with a plume in it. He was staring into the camera lens and appeared self-assured and, oddly, given later knowledge of his experience, innocent. That photo instantly sparked my interest and led to every print source I could find — articles in history journals, references in Civil War histories and biographies, diaries, memoirs, and finally military records and accounts of courts martial held in Kentucky and housed in the National Archives. Over a period of nearly 30 years, on and off, I worked to shape the material into a novel, *Sue Mundy: A Novel of the Civil War*.

Here was a young man, Marcellus Jerome Clarke, the product of a middle-class Kentucky home who idealistically joined the Confederate army, was captured, escaped, and served meritoriously with John Hunt Morgan's cavalry until Morgan's death in September 1864. Returning to Kentucky disillusioned and dislocated, he joined a band of guerrillas and eventually became their leader — at least the person by whom they were identified. He himself became the victim of notoriety and politics when the pro-Union editor of the *Louisville Daily Journal*, George D. Prentice, sought to depict him as a woman in order to embarrass the Union authorities in whom, along with other Kentuckians, he had lost confidence. Prentice's two sons had joined the Confederacy, and one was killed riding with Morgan. When Clarke, whom Prentice recast as the infamous Sue Mundy, was captured in a barn where he had hidden to nurse a wounded comrade, the Union authorities in Louisville lost little

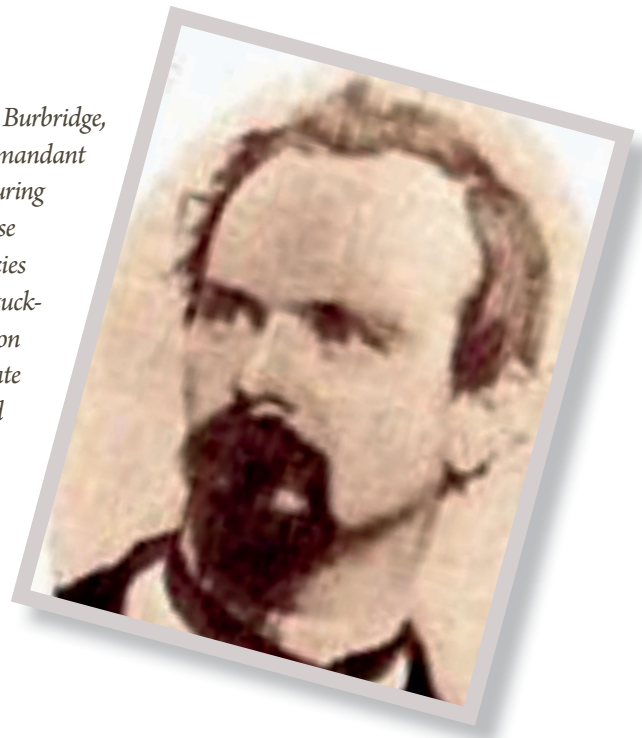
time in finding him guilty before a military tribunal, which denied him the right to summon witnesses and publicly hanged him two days after his capture, still shy of his 20th birthday. I read accounts of courts martial in which witnesses described the murders, rapes, and robberies that went on under the guise of fighting a war.

But it was research at the time of the Lincoln bicentennial for a commissioned 10,000-word article examining the president's Kentucky connections and, later, a collection of sonnets that led to my discovering some of the ironies and tragic consequences of the war. In Kentucky, Lincoln was, and to some extent still is, its least favorite son. Why? His political maneuvering to keep Kentucky in the Union were every bit as sensitive and artful as those depicted in Spielberg's *Lincoln* in which the president shepherded the Thirteenth Amendment into law. It is arguably Kentucky that shaped the character that emerged in our greatest president, for his impressionable earliest years were spent in Kentucky, and Kentuckians and former Kentuckians, including his wife Mary Todd of Lexington, influenced him as friends and mentors through the remainder of his life. These included his three law partners, his best friend Joshua Speed of Farmington, his political beau ideal Henry Clay, and many other former Kentuckians with whom he was associated in Illinois and Washington City. His father's scorn for slavery prompted a move to the free territories and states that gave Lincoln a distaste for slavery that seasoned into the complex forces leading to emancipation. An autodidact, Lincoln overcame the limitations of his childhood on the frontier, including lack of formal schooling, a fully literate household, and extreme poverty until he was in his 20s and practicing law. On one of his rare visits to Kentucky in 1847, he witnessed the inhumanity of slavery at slave pens within blocks of his in-laws' home. In his debates with Stephen Douglas he grounded his position on slavery in morality since slavery predicated its treatment of blacks on the supposition that they were not fully human but simply transferable property and that they existed only to serve their betters. Lincoln's taste for oratory and storytelling as a device of persuasion had their roots in the traditions of speech-making and advocacy so central to the Kentucky of his day.

Not all of Kentucky's folkways and political views were compatible with Lincoln's own sense of justice and morality. One of the ironies of his career is that he never within his lifetime won the full allegiance and support of Kentucky, his native state. So strong was antipathy for the man in the South that the harlequin cabbage bug, a common garden pest, was known as the Abe Lincoln bug. Even today, that respect from many seems grudging. Despite his successes in the Northeast and Midwest, from the time he revived his political career on the eve of the Civil War until his untimely death, neither he nor the fledgling Republican Party was ever popular in Kentucky, in part owing to the commonwealth's deep emotional and familial bonds with the South but largely because of his stands on slavery. During the 1860 presidential election, for example, in his native state Lincoln polled the fewest votes of four candidates, receiving only

Stephen Gano Burbridge, Military Commandant of Kentucky during 1864-65, whose repressive policies alienated Kentuckians, both Union and Confederate toward the end of the war and decades after.

Image courtesy of Richard Taylor



three in his home county of Larue only five in his wife's home county of Fayette. In the presidential election of 1864 he was out-voted by his Democratic opponent, Gen. George B. McClellan. His views on slavery threatened what many Kentuckians regarded as the state's economic well being since it would illegally deprive slaveholders of what they regarded as their property.

Lincoln supported the doctrine of neutrality early in the war to keep Kentucky within the Union, skillfully steering political sentiment in Kentucky to keep it from defecting, realizing that many Kentuckians straddled the issues, being both pro-Union as well as pro-slavery and pro-states' rights. His policies succeeded in preventing Kentucky from joining the Confederacy, at least until the Confederacy ceased to exist as a political entity. Later in the war, the president adopted a policy of emancipation and sanctioned the enlistment of blacks in the Union army, an act that outraged many Kentuckians, including respected Union war heroes like Colonel Frank Wolford, who was arrested for his alleged treasonous protest against validating African Americans as fully human and reliable as soldiers. These policies created a radical shift in loyalties among former Unionists in the state, and Lincoln, to quote one critic, became a "tyrant and a usurper," undermining basic constitutional concepts of property that underlay prevailing notions of white superiority. Added to other real and perceived abuses of constitutional law, Kentuckians felt betrayed and shifted their allegiance to the Southern cause, largely on the issue of slavery. Many felt that emancipation was a state matter, deeply resenting any interference by the federal government. The anti-federal fallout set a political tone that defined a political mindset in Kentucky, and, for better or worse, in part defines it today.

But the price for the state and its future was high. Emancipation created a massive defection not only from the Republican party but also cost decades of progress during the post-war boom that saw the country grow, for the most part, into an industrialized powerhouse with widespread educational opportunities and rewarding careers

that had an increasingly urban orientation as well as a higher standard of living for most of its neighbors, north and south. Tied to its lifeblood in agriculture, the state that was economically strong and forward-looking before the war lagged in education and adapting to a manufacturing economy. Progress was impeded by one-party rule, reflecting the electorate's disdain for the Republican Party during the period of Radical Reconstruction. With few exceptions, the state also suffered from a lack of strong leadership that did comparatively little to produce an educated citizenry adapted to the demands of the twentieth century. The state that showed such promise before the war lost its stride. It had lost some of its most talented youth to the war and others in failing to promote public well being after the war. In the eastern portion of the state where an economic bonanza came to the mountains, few of the natives prospered as timber and coal interests in effect made a colony of much of the region in which too little of the wealth trickled down to its producers.

A portrait of Kentucky before and after the Civil War represents a study in contrasts. Before the war it ranked eighth in population among the 32 states. Louisville, with a population of 43,000 was the 10th largest urban area in the country and the third largest city in the South. Its population ranked ninth in the nation and seventh place in the value of farms. The third largest slave-holding state, Kentucky was one of the most prosperous, based largely on its diversified agriculture — first in hemp production, second in tobacco and corn. The value of its livestock, including horses, mules, and hogs, ranked high, sixth in the nation. It was more important to the nation in 1860 than it has been any time since. In the area of education, Kentucky had one of the best public education systems in the South. It excelled in higher education, having early established law and medical schools at Transylvania University, the sixteenth oldest college in the country. On the eve of the Civil War, there were other strong colleges like Centre, Georgetown, and St. Joseph's. As state historian James Klotter has pointed out, Kentucky was renowned as the nursery of national leaders, including Henry Clay, Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, John C. Breckinridge, Richard M. Johnson, John J. Crittenden, and Zachary Taylor. At the same time it was one of the largest slave-holding states, one of every five Kentuckians being held in bondage.

Strongly rooted in the idea of Union, Kentucky's business, blood, and cultural ties gave it strong associations with the South, accounting for its ambivalent and unusual political stance of loyalty to the Union but strong endorsement of states rights and slavery, property in human beings serving as one of the chief but unsustainable sources of its economic wealth. As President Lincoln so memorably said, in regard to Kentucky's strategic importance to the Union, "I think to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game." Or, more famously, "I would like to have God on our side, but must have Kentucky." Kentucky was more important to the nation in 1860 than it has been any time since, and not simply because of its strategic geo-political position. The question to answer is why.

By the fall of 1864 Kentucky, though no longer a battlefield where armies clashed, was fighting its own uncivil war of neighbor against neighbor in a nineteenth-century preview of Iraq. A guerrilla war threatened every aspect of public life, one in which people were separated not by religion or ethnic origins but by political ideology and family loyalties. Church congregations split on the issue of slavery. Families split, sometimes even changing the spelling of their names to indicate sides. The splits fueled the guerrilla war in which opponents as often as not knew the persons they were shooting at. In this war without two armies, the most notorious Confederate guerrilla was Marcellus Jerome Clarke, alias Sue Mundy, whose band terrorized much of the central region of the state. In order to quell this "little war" and keep Kentucky in the fold, President Lincoln lighted on Stephen Burbridge, a young war hero who distinguished himself at Vicksburg and later surprised and scattered John Hunt Morgan's raiders at Cynthiana in June of 1864.

A Kentuckian, a graduate of Georgetown College and the Frankfort Military Institute, Burbridge was appointed by President Lincoln as commander of the Military District of Kentucky on August 7, 1864. Among his duties was to win the war against guerrilla bands that terrorized the state. His method was to meet violence with violence. On October 26, 1864, he issued an order to shoot any guerrillas encountered on sight, earning himself the name "Butcher" Burbridge. He arrested several newspaper editors critical of President Lincoln. He enacted a series of repressive measures that had little effect on guerrillas or outcome of the war but outraged the civilian populace, alienating many by his unreflecting brutality, including reprisal shootings, for the deaths of Union men at the hands of guerrillas. Under his infamous Order 59, four guerrillas were to be executed for every Union man killed. Many of those executed were bona fide Confederate prisoners of war, selected at random from military prisons. He later ordered that any Confederate sympathizer within five miles of a guerrilla raid be subject to arrest and banishment.

Over-zealous and insensitive to the effects his actions had on ordinary citizens, Burbridge did much to alter public opinion in Kentucky for a whole generation of Kentuckians. In addition to suspending civil rights, he became implicated in what has been described as the "Great Hog Swindle" in which all surplus hogs in Kentucky were to be sold to the U.S. Government, prohibiting their export from the state. Though Lincoln finally removed Burbridge from command in February 1865, the damage had been done, especially since the president had appointed another radical Republican, General John Palmer, to replace him. The collective result of these measures was a general antipathy for the federal government, the legacy of which arguably persists in Kentucky politics. In serving the nation so ably by keeping Kentucky in the Union, Lincoln lost the allegiance of many in his home state through Burbridge's repressive policies. Divided first by allegiances to one government or the other, Kentucky for a time suffered under a harsh military regime that severely limited the constitutional rights

of free speech and conscience, of habeas corpus, liberties that most Americans took for granted. Such measures chafed against patriotic and freedom loving Kentuckians. Newspapers were suppressed for their editorial views. Citizens were imprisoned or deported from the state. Historian Lowell Harrison summarized the effects of martial law in Kentucky during the final year of the war:

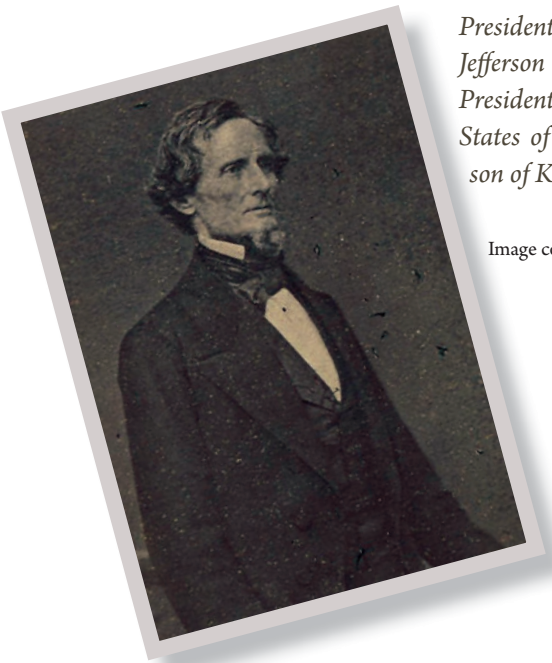
Intense hatred of the federal interference in state and national elections, extortion by Federal officers, suppression of the press, slave stealing, the use of black troops, the institution of martial law, and theft of all that was edible — treatment like that of a conquered province.

The presidential election of 1864 reflected this widespread disaffection for its native son, now regarded as perhaps our nation's greatest president for preserving the federal Union and manumitting four million persons from the onus of slavery. When free elections resumed, Kentuckians showed their disdain by voting consistently Democratic, siding with her sister states in the defeated South. Many perceived emancipation as unlawfully depriving citizens of their property. It is a sad reminder of the perceived betrayal of trust that Kentucky did not ratify the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery until 1976. This perception of injustice by slave owners and their sympathizers so stained the legacy of Lincoln that Kentuckians voted overwhelmingly with the Solid South for decades, identifying themselves with their Southern neighbors. One-party rule was costly, for it stymied progress and encouraged complacency and a false sense of well being. Kentuckians did not elect a Republican governor until 1896 when William O. Bradley, defeated by Confederate general Simon Bolivar Buckner in the previous election, electioneered his way into office.

Because I am not caught up in the urgencies of the Civil War or its aftermath, my own transformation has been more evolutionary, more ambivalent, less grounded in certainty. Causes are never quite so explainable or definitive as history tends to paint them. Human motivation to choose one loyalty over another is as complex and

President Lincoln's nemesis, Jefferson Davis, who served as President of the Confederate States of America, was also a son of Kentucky.

Image courtesy of UK Archives



diverse as each of our individual lives, though the atmosphere in which those choices are made owes much to what's in the air, the mood, world view, and attitudes of the people around us as well as the experiences that shape our own lives. As I think of my Taylor antecedents and relations — Henry, Ben, Manilius, Hancock, and others — I recognize their insistence on self-determination as a guiding force though they did not extend that right to those they owned. I admire their adherence to their values and their willingness to act on them — something our own era seems to discount in a world that is more determined by events we neither control nor even fully understand. Col. Wolford had the luxury and will to act on his convictions regardless of consequences though few, including me, would laud his views today. I also recognize that however right the Union cause as framed by Abraham Lincoln and the policies executed by his generals, abuses and injustices occurred such as those described in the rural community of Worthington. I know that the unnamed federal prison certifiably had its counterpart in Andersonville, Georgia, and that Burbridge to some degree had duties imposed on him from above, however draconian the way in which he chose to perform them. Like many Kentuckians, I lament the loss of the seemingly simpler world that bred people who knew who they were and worked hard to extract a living, making a way of life from the soil. Looking for lessons, I turn to the question of how the past forms and affects our present.

I am waiting to read a last installment of Civil War history that will analyze the effects of Kentucky's nearly full turn to the South in the post-war years. What was gained and what was lost? To what extent did events during the Civil War in Kentucky shape its future? To what extent was the development of the state thwarted by its belated "secession"? To what degree has the disillusionment with one president and his policies fostered a national perception of Kentucky as rigidly conservative and often reactionary in its choice of political leadership? To what extent do inherited attitudes about race impede our progress? To what extent did the commonwealth's slippage in education and economic development add to the hardships now encountered by many of its citizens? These are some of the questions that need to be answered fully to understand the role of the Civil War in shaping Kentucky's destiny. Whatever the answers, it is clear that the past is still with us. It shapes our beliefs, attitudes, and politics. It also shapes our opportunities and vision for the years to come. It can bind or limit us or become the scaffolding on which to build a full and sustainable future.

About the Author

Richard Taylor, a former Kentucky poet laureate, is Kenan Visiting writer at Transylvania University. He has published eight collections of poetry, two novels, and several books relating to Kentucky history. One of his novels focuses on the life of Sue Mundy, the most notorious Confederate guerrilla in Kentucky during the Civil War.

The background of the page features a soft-focus image of a violin on the left side and a sheet of music with a treble clef on the right side. The title is written in a large, elegant, dark red serif font, centered on the page.

Commemorating the Civil War through Fiddle Tunes in Kentucky

By Nikos Pappas

Of all the events in our nation's history, few evoke such a strong image as the Civil War. Galvanizing the entire country, the war spurred the creation of some of the first national battlefield monuments, cemeteries, and parks because of the effect it had on the lives of all Americans during the later nineteenth century. This spirit of commemoration permeated every level of society and extended to all forms of artistic expression. Perhaps in its most unaffected but expressive manifestation, the average soldier and citizen of the day even commemorated important events, actions, and military leaders through musical pieces on the one musical instrument of social equality: the fiddle. All types of Americans played the fiddle, extending from the most privileged and prosperous to the working class poor, to any social or cultural background, and any social status, including both the free and enslaved. These pieces continue to remain a vital part of the American consciousness because musicians throughout the world are still performing these Kentucky tunes more than 150 years later. Entering into the mindset of the common citizenry through its fiddle music allows not only for a rare glimpse into the personal ramifications of this conflict, but also perhaps a more nuanced understanding of the Civil War itself. The particular events and people commemorated in fiddle tunes from the Commonwealth comprise a motley assortment of Confederate raids, Eastern Kentucky battles, and generals from both sides. Together they portray a fascinating lens by which to understand the impact of the Civil War among the common citizenry.

The Fiddle and its Repertory During the Nineteenth Century

In the first half of the nineteenth century, many instruments had several different functions or purposes. For instance, the piano was a symbol of wealth, prominence, and fashionableness both as an expensive and oftentimes ornate piece of furniture and musical instrument, and as a symbol of status and class because of the amount of leisure time necessary to learn to play it. The fiddle, in contrast, was a bit of a chameleon. The same instrument served as the most common instrument heard in the formal ballroom as well as the local tavern. The music the fiddle player performed also ranged in purpose and function. On the one hand, the fiddler often played music intended specifically for dancing. In this sense the music served a specific function, or what is termed functional music. However, this role was not the only one given to the fiddle. Fiddlers also often played ballads or songs instrumentally, a tradition extending back to the earliest known uses of the violin in Europe. In Great Britain and Ireland, these tunes are called airs. Airs are intended more as listening pieces, either for the amusement of the fiddler or for the entertainment of the audience. Not unexpectedly, the rich and varied heritage of Kentucky fiddle music produced examples of both types of tunes, some meant for dancing, others for listening.

A tune could commemorate a specific event or person as a piece of functional dance music. Often its title would reflect a special musical effect heard in the piece, such as a number of tunes in different guises and variations called the "Indian War Whoop." All call for the fiddle

player to sing a sustained high pitch or whoop over a part of the melody. Other pieces incorporate a variety of traditional techniques appropriate for their commemoration's namesake. With dance tunes, these effects had a direct appeal because of their catchy and distinctive sound. Outside of the dance repertory, other pieces such as the airs allowed for a more personal act of commemoration both on the part of the composer of the tune, as well as the performer. Among old-time musicians, the version of a particular tune associated with a specific musician remains as distinctive as the tune itself. The combination of a rich heritage of Kentucky fiddling with the cataclysmic events of the American Civil War produced a number of tunes that reflect a vibrant and sensitive tradition of folk art.

Civil War-Related Commemorations in Kentucky Fiddle Tunes

Kentucky musicians commemorated a number of Civil War-related topics including battles and raids, Union and Confederate generals, and other related events. Often, a number of these themes would be found within a single tune title, identifying a specific individual with a specific action. Just as Abraham Lincoln is reputed to have famously said, "I hope to have God on my side but I must have Kentucky," the Commonwealth remained a crucial border state for the Union. During the early part of the war, Kentucky played its most pivotal role in defining the trans-Allegheny theater. Kentucky-born Jefferson Davis appointed Kentucky-born Texan, General Albert Sidney Johnston to defend the entire border of Tennessee and Kentucky, stretching from the Mississippi River to the Appalachian Mountains. Though Johnston was killed on April 6, 1862, in the Battle of Shiloh or Pittsburg Landing in Tennessee, depending on your political alliance, other Confederate forces initiated a series of attacks and invasions in southern and eastern Kentucky beginning in that year, and culminating in the Battle of Perryville on October 8. Confederate raiders, however, continued isolated strikes into the final months of the war. Because of their geographic proximity, fiddle players in Eastern Kentucky and the Cumberland Plateau created most of the tunes inspired by these conflicts and military engagements.

Raiders

A few Kentucky fiddle tunes attempted to capture the essence of Confederate raids and the terror they wreaked on civilians and soldiers alike. Two of the more famous raiders active in Kentucky were Nathan Bedford Forrest, the Confederate cavalry officer known for his exploits in Mississippi and western Tennessee, and Lexington resident John Hunt Morgan. Morgan, in particular, was known as a notorious womanizer and gambler who began a series of cavalry raids on Union supply stations after his service in the Battle of Shiloh, earning him the rank of Colonel. The first of these raids took place in Monroe County, Kentucky, outside of Tompkinsville, on July 9, 1862. Morgan's cavalry unit attacked Major Thomas Jordan's 9th Pennsylvania Cavalry unit at the Union garrison. After their initial success, they moved on to Glasgow and other Kentucky towns before returning to Tennessee. Morgan continued his raids as far north as New Lisbon, Ohio. These



Image courtesy of UK Archives/Cooper-Phillips family papers

Known as a notorious womanizer and gambler, General John Hunt Morgan (pictured with Martha Ready) and his Confederate raids inspired a few Kentucky fiddle tunes.

acts of terror were an offensive tactic used by Confederate and Union cavalry officers alike, including Confederate officer J. E. B. Stuart in Virginia and Union officer Philip Henry Sheridan. For Kentuckians, Confederate raiders were instrumental in spreading fear among local citizens and the Union army alike. Morgan would later be pressed with charges of vandalism and plundering of goods from private homes.

Two eastern Kentucky tunes attempted to capture the spirit of these raids. Both are named because they feature a musical ornament called a trill that is supposed to represent through musical tone painting the famous Rebel Yell described by Union and Confederate soldiers alike. "Rebel's Raid" comes from Lakeville, Magoffin County resident, William H. Stepp. Stepp was the illegitimate son of a man well-known and respected in his local community and a half-Native American woman who supported herself through prostitution. Stepp grew up with his mother in a cave located outside Beattyville, Kentucky. Stepp learned to play the fiddle when he was taken in as a foster child in the home of Asa Smyth. Under Stepp's fingers "Rebel's Raid" conveys a mournful but grand effect, being an air with the distinctive Rebel Yell heard in the first section. In contrast, "Rebel Raid" from the blind fiddle player Ed Haley was played as an up-tempo dance piece where the distinctive trill forms the main melodic motive for the second part of the tune. The trill then becomes a hook for the listener, performer, and dancer, allowing for it to readily stand apart from other tunes. Haley was born in Logan County, West Virginia, but moved to Catlettsburg in his early 30s. Haley and his wife, Martha Ella, earned their living and raised a family through busking in various towns throughout the coal camps of West Virginia, as well as those connected to the Big Sandy and

Ohio River valleys. Though Haley lived in the northeastern part of the Commonwealth, he learned local tunes wherever he travelled in order to appeal to residents of that particular town or community. His wife, who was also blind, accompanied him on mandolin and keyboard. Ed was arguably the most influential fiddle player of his generation, assuming legendary status throughout Kentucky, West Virginia, and Ohio.

Generals

Other Kentucky tunes commemorate military officers, both Union and Confederate, who became distinguished through their service in eastern Kentucky. From the Confederate side came a tune dedicated to Felix Kirk Zollicoffer, a Tennessee-born newspaper editor and local Whig politician. He first became distinguished following his service in the Seminole War in 1836, and later as a two-term United States Representative of the state of Tennessee in the 1850s. Appointed a Brigadier General of the Confederate States of America by A. S. Johnston, Zollicoffer was placed in command of the District of East Tennessee, which at that time was based in Knoxville. In September of 1861, Zollicoffer and his army invaded Kentucky through the Cumberland Gap and along the older Wilderness Road first cut by Daniel Boone. Repelling a weak Union assault outside of Barbourville on September 19, Zollicoffer pushed on to Wildcat Mountain in Laurel County to attack a military camp held by Union Brigadier General George H. Thomas. This early victory was soon turned to defeat and forced Zollicoffer to retreat back to Tennessee following the battle of Camp Wild Cat on October 21.

On January 19, 1862, following an extended encampment in Mill Springs near present-day Nancy, Kentucky, Zollicoffer suffered a final defeat. At the Battle of Mill Springs, or the Battle of Logan's Crossroads, depending on your perspective, Zollicoffer found himself and his army pinned against the Cumberland River, which was not fordable at the time. Thinking that he would be in a better defensive position below

a rock bluff than above it, his brigade inadvertently found themselves among Union forces, which they took to be Confederate. Immediately, Union forces fired on Zollicoffer and his troops, killing Zollicoffer in the process. This battle became known as Zollie's Folly or Zollie's Retreat.

Monticello, Kentucky, fiddle player Clyde Davenport, now living in Jamestown, Tennessee, played a tune learned from area fiddlers called "Zollie's Retreat" that could commemorate either of these two defeats. This particular tune uses a type of cross tuning, or a retuning of the instrument to emphasize a certain chord, that was most often associated with Napoleon Bonaparte and his retreat at Waterloo. Colloquially, fiddlers call this tuning "Dead Man's Tuning" on account of its distinctive low-pitched fourth string used as a drone resembling the effects of a bagpipe. Perhaps because of its association with funerals and defeats, the tune commemorates his final defeat and death in battle. Many alternate tunings for the violin are keyed to specific chords, most often A and D and often feature the performer playing upon multiple strings at once. As a result, the retuning of the fiddle gives the instrument a more full and resonant character. As with some of the variant settings of "Bonaparte's Retreat," "Zollie's Retreat" is neither a dancing nor marching tune. It is a slow air to commemorate the fallen general, resembling an older ballad song.

The tune "Blackberry Blossom," according to oral history, was inadvertently composed by General James A. Garfield, the future president of the United States. After receiving his orders from Brigadier General Don Carlos Buell to attack Confederate forces under Brigadier General Humphrey Marshall, Garfield drove Confederate forces out of Prestonsburg, Kentucky. On his way to Middle Creek along the Big Sandy River, where Union forces would route Confederate forces at the Battle of Middle Creek on January 10, 1862, Garfield was reputed to be an avid whistler and a prodigious chewer of tobacco. Along the way, a local musician heard Garfield whistling this tune. Liking it, he asked General Garfield what was the name of the tune. Supposedly, Garfield spit out a wad of tobacco juice on a blackberry bush, and said: "It's called 'Blackberry Blossom.'" However, the story contradicts the facts. It seems impossible for someone to whistle and chew at the same time, let alone spit on a flowering bush in January. However, a good story often outweighs historical fact.

Versions of "Blackberry Blossom" come from the northeastern, eastern, and Cumberland Plateau areas of the Commonwealth. This particular tune differed the most among fiddle players in Kentucky. In the hands of Ed Haley the tune could become a mournful showpiece requiring an advanced technique and precise playing despite it being a listening piece. His version of the tune influenced other musicians such as Santford Kelly of Lawrence and Morgan counties. Ed Morrison of Boyd County, whose father was the supposed musical witness to Garfield's whistling, played the tune as an up-tempo dance number that eerily imitates the sound of whistling unlike any of the other versions. Other fiddlers played the piece as a typical dance tune such as Owen "Snake" Chapman of Canada, Kentucky, and Alva Greene of Sandy Hook. In the eastern part of the state, "Blackberry Blossom" was performed almost exclusively in the unusual key of G minor, imbuing



According to oral history, General James A. Garfield (who went on to become president) composed the tune "Blackberry Blossom."

the tune with its signature mournful sound. However, throughout the Cumberland Plateau area of south central Kentucky, fiddle players played it in a more-sprightly manner in a major key as heard by the blind banjo and fiddle player Dick Burnett of Monticello, Kentucky, a friend of Clyde Davenport, who also played a version similar to Burnett.

A (somewhat) Legendary Battle

One of the more popular Kentucky fiddle tunes associated with the Civil War commemorates a battle that remains somewhat shrouded in mystery. According to fiddler Hiram Stamper of Knott County, who learned the tune from Civil War veteran Shade Sloan, the battle was supposed to have taken place in Pike County, along the Brushy Fork of John's Creek. Unfortunately, no record of a battle exists at this location. There was, however, a skirmish recorded by the 39th Regiment Kentucky Volunteer Infantry of Peach Orchard at Brushy Creek outside of Paintsville in 1864. Versions of the Brushy Fork of John's Creek are found among fiddle players active in eastern Kentucky as well as one from the West Virginia side of the Big Sandy River. As with "Blackberry Blossom," this tune was subject to a great deal of artistic license among fiddlers and with much variation among the fiddlers who played this piece. Most musicians played the tune as an up-tempo dance piece with a varying number of parts or sections, including that by Ed Haley, "Snake" Chapman, as well as John Morgan Salyer of Salyersville. Despite his abilities and local esteem as a musician, Salyer refused to make commercial recordings because of a mistrust of the music industry. However, his playing resembled that of more well known regional fiddlers such as William Stepp and Luther Strong, both of whom were recorded by Alan Lomax for the Library of Congress in the the 1930s. Conversely, Stamper played the tune as an air, holding certain notes in the opening section for an extra half of a beat, a common technique of the more archaic solo fiddlers of eastern Kentucky. Stamper's version uniquely conveys the solemnity of a battle and its effect in the hearts and minds of the participants. Regardless of whether or not the battle actually happened, this version captures the spirit, if not the substance, of the horrors of the Civil War.

A Prisoner of War

Occasionally, tunes are named for a noteworthy individual who was not necessarily a musician, criminal, or person of great renown. In many cases, the identity of the individual is lost even though tunes named for this individual might appear over a wide geographic area. Such is the case with two tunes "The Last of Sizemore." Although completely different from one another, both apparently commemorate a Civil War soldier whose last name was Sizemore. Typically fiddle tunes with the word "Last" in the title, such as the "Last of Callahan," or the "Hanged-man Reel," were named after the final tune played by a fiddling criminal before they were hung. In this instance however, Sizemore was a soldier captured on the field of battle, and according to Stamper, was taken up a hill and shot to death.

The title, "Last of Sizemore," is what is known as a floating title, in that several unrelated tunes are named for this particular individual. Both of



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these tunes feature some of the most archaic styles of playing captured on audio recordings. However, their archaic techniques remain distinct from one another. The first tune with this title comes from Stamper, who learned a few tunes directly from a Civil War veteran. In the hands of Hiram, "The Last of Sizemore" resembles a march with his distinctive style of playing that features a strong pulse on the beat combined with a plastic or meandering sense of phrasing that varies each repetition of the tune. This style of playing is not just a hallmark of Stamper, but also that of many recorded older fiddlers in eastern Kentucky who were active or born in the nineteenth century.

A completely unrelated "Last of Sizemore" comes from the playing of Luther Strong of Breathitt County, who was recorded by Alan Lomax of the Library of Congress during his tour of eastern Kentucky in 1937. In contrast to Stamper's tune, Strong's piece is lively and upbeat, suitable for square dancing, though irregular in its phrasing. It also is a type of tune similar to other old-time breakdowns such as "Cotton-Eyed Joe," "Sourwood Mountain," or "Sally Gooden" in that the violin is cross-tuned to an open A chord, or what is known as high bass tuning, and the melody likewise is set almost exclusively within

an A chord. The contour of the melody follows what is sometimes termed a “sawtooth” pattern in that one of the parts revolves around three or four notes against a constant drone on one or more open strings. Although not related to one another, these tunes share a common form of expression, characteristic of archaic solo fiddling descended from the Scottish settlers of the Appalachian Mountains. Both use different alternate tunings of the fiddle that are first found in Scottish fiddle manuscripts in the eighteenth century.

Whether named for or connected to a person, battle, or any other event, Kentucky fiddle tunes bearing Civil War-themed titles testify to the widespread influence that the Civil War exerted on Kentucky society. Although not as readily in the public’s eye as a stone memorial in a town square, these tunes offer a much more flexible medium of expression. Throughout the history of fiddling in America, each fiddler personalized a tune both according to their place of origin and the community of fiddlers surrounding them, as well as their personal approach to music and their sense of beauty. A fiddle tune remained a much more plastic medium that allowed for personal expression by each person that played any of these pieces. Perhaps because of its plasticity, these tunes continue to remain in the hearts and minds of people around the world, allowing new generations to discover old traditions and their history.

This communal sense of tune ownership combined with the desire to commemorate important events and people helps to

explain part of the vibrancy of American fiddling. Although discussion has focused largely on musicians who have since passed on, living musicians of all ages continue to play many of these tunes, teaching them to still younger generations of fiddlers. Rather than a fixed tradition, the emphasis on each individual’s unique interpretation has kept old-time fiddling from being relegated to a historical artifact. It is in this spirit that the history of Civil War continues within living memory and expression of traditional musicians. Though the tunes originated in the nineteenth century, their interpretation and performance is placed firmly in the present. Perhaps this phenomenon is the most fitting type of commemoration. It is one that resonates among many generations of people, and reminds them simultaneously of the errors of the past all the while gazing hopefully towards the future.

About the Author

Nikos Pappas, an assistant professor of musicology at the University of Alabama, is actively engaged as a scholar and performer of American music from the colonial, early nationalist, and antebellum periods. A recognized Kentucky master traditional musician, he is currently preparing a database of Southern and Western sacred music from 1700 to 1870. His research has received support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, American Council of Learned Societies, the American Musicological Society, the Bibliographic Society of America, the Music Library Association, and the American Antiquarian Society.

Discography of tunes discussed in the article: many of the tunes listed in this discography include website URLs for digital copies of these historical source recordings. A number of other tunes provide information on locating modern re-printings of early commercial and field recordings.

1. Blackberry Blossom

Dick Burnett and Ruttledge, Blackberry Blossoms (Columbia Records, 1930, 5561). This track is available on Kentucky Mountain Music: Classic Recordings of the 1920s and 1930s (Yazoo Records, 2003, Yazoo 2200).

Owen “Snake” Chapman, “Garfield’s Blackberry Blossom” on Up in Chapman’s Hollow (Rounder Records, 1996, 0378).

Clyde Davenport, “Blackberry Blossom,” recorded at the Berea College Celebration of Traditional Music in 1984, hosted by the Digital Library of Appalachia (<http://dla.acaweb.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/berea/id/714/rec/3>).

Alva Greene, “Oldtime Blackberry Blossom,” recorded by John Harrod, Sandy Hook, Kentucky, Harrod Collection 027-01.

Alva Greene, “Blackberry Blossom,” recorded by Kevin Delaney 1973 in Elliott County, Kentucky, hosted by the Digital Library of Appalachia (<http://dla.acaweb.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/berea/id/1537/rec/8>).

Ed Haley, “Blackberry Blossom,” home recording, Ashland, Boyd County, Kentucky, 1946. Reissued on Ed Haley, Grey Eagle, 1 (Rounder Records, 1998, 1133/1134).

Santford Kelly, “(Original) Blackberry Blossom,” recorded by Peter Hoover, Lawrence County, 1961, John Harrod Collection, JH-039. Recording housed at Berea College.

Santford Kelly, “Blackberry Blossom,” recorded by John Harrod, Morgan County Kentucky, n.d., John Harrod Collection, JH-CT-039-02-A, hosted by the Digital Library of Appalachia

(<http://dla.acaweb.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/berea/id/3533/rec/3>).

Ed Morrison, “Blackberry Blossom,” recorded by Jean Thomas, Boyd County, LC AFS 0300A. This track is available on Kentucky Mountain Music: Classic Recordings of the 1920s and 1930s (Yazoo Records, 2003, Yazoo 2200).

2. The Brushy Fork of John’s Creek

Ed Haley, “The Brushy Fork of John’s Creek,” home recording, Ashland, Boyd

County, Kentucky, 1946. Reissued on Ed Haley, Forked Deer, 2 (Rounder Records, 1998, 1131/1132).

John Salyer, “The Brushy Fork of John’s Creek,” home recording by Grover and Glen Salyer, Salversville, c. 1941, AC003, vol. 2, hosted by the Digital Library of Appalachia (<http://dla.acaweb.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/berea/id/1461/rec/4>).

Hiram Stamper, “The Brushy Fork of John’s Creek,” recorded by Bruce Greene, Knott County, Kentucky, 1977, hosted by the Digital Library of Appalachia (<http://dla.acaweb.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/berea/id/136/rec/2>).

3. Last of Sizemore (a)

Hiram Stamper, “The Last of Sizemore,” recorded by Bruce Greene, Knott County, Kentucky, 1977, hosted by the Digital Library of Appalachia

(<http://dla.acaweb.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/berea/id/140/rec/1>).

4. Last of Sizemore (b)

Luther Strong, “The Last of Sizemore,” recorded by Alan and Elizabeth Lomax for the Library of Congress, Hazard, Perry County, 1937, AFS 153782, hosted by the Digital Library of Appalachia

(<http://dla.acaweb.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/berea/id/327/rec/1>).

5. Rebel Raid

Ed Haley, “Rebel Raid,” home recording, Ashland, Boyd County, Kentucky, 1946. Reissued on Ed Haley, Grey Eagle, 2 (Rounder Records, 1998, 1133/1134).

6. Rebel’s Raid

William H. Stepp, “Rebel’s Raid,” recorded by Alan and Elizabeth Lomax, Magoffin County, Kentucky for the Library of Congress, 1937, AFS 1573 B2, hosted by the Digital Library of Appalachia (<http://dla.acaweb.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/berea/id/330/rec/1>).

7. Zollie’s Retreat

Clyde Davenport, “Zollie’s Retreat,” recorded at the Berea College Celebration of Traditional Music in 1984, hosted by the Digital Library of Appalachia (<http://dla.acaweb.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/berea/id/2982/rec/2>).

Memorial Day

By Georgia Green Stamper

Yesterday, Memorial Day, I stood at the graves of my great-grandfather, John William Green, and his brother Joseph, who fought for the Confederate States of America in the Civil War. Unlike Veterans' Day, full of parades and medals and ceremonies, Memorial Day is mostly about cemeteries, seems to me. No wonder Americans have turned it into a national picnic celebrating the arrival of summer. Otherwise, it would be the most depressing day of the year. Conceived in grief, birthed in our nation's anguish, Memorial Day is the child of the Civil War, reminding us that war is, after all, about blood sweat and tears, whether one is right or wrong, wins or loses.

Johnny and Joe Green both managed to get back home to Owen County after the war, albeit with tuberculosis and other wounds to the soul. Their brother, George W. Green, with the "grey eyes, fair complexion," did not. He died in a Military Hospital at Rye Cove, and lies, I presume, in an unmarked grave in a Virginia field. How am I to feel about their sacrifice? I've long since given up trying to understand why poor Kentucky farm boys like the Green brothers gave their all to split the country in half.

In an undated daguerreotype, the only picture of him that survives, my John William has a merry look on his face. I wonder if he is the source of the Green family's famous sense of humor, and I realize I've heard no stories about him. I know only that he lived though the war to die of consumption when my Pawpaw Green was eight years old. All of his children, including my grandfather, were born after his surrender and pardon at the end of the war. That's justification enough in my opinion for our annual family picnic on Memorial Day weekend.

A number of towns across the nation, from the Deep South to the Northeast, claim the distinction of holding the first Memorial Day ceremony, and there seems little doubt that spontaneous observations did occur in multiple places about the same time at the end of the Civil War. I read various stories about these early Memorial Day events, but the two I liked best are these because they focus on healing the wounds of the war.

On May 5, 1868, three years after the Civil War ended, the first "Decoration Day" observance was held in Arlington National

Cemetery on the veranda of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's family home, Arlington. Union General and Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant presided. The U.S. Veterans Department's website says, "After speeches, children from the Soldiers' and Sailors' Orphan Home and members of the GAR made their way through the cemetery, strewing flowers on both Union and Confederate graves, reciting prayers and singing hymns."

Two years earlier, on April 25, 1866, a group of women in Columbus, Mississippi, had gone to the cemetery where many Confederate soldiers who died in the Battle of Shiloh were buried. They went with flowers to decorate the Confederate graves, but were so moved by the nearby neglected graves of the fallen Union soldiers, they decorated those, too. I think that is a beautiful story, even more impressive than the later ceremonial one at Arlington, because it surely must have been spontaneous and genuine, and was offered up by women who knew the harshness and divisiveness of the Civil War firsthand.

If we must have wars, as it seems we are doomed to endure until the end of time, let us then continue to have Marshall Plans in peacetime — at least old women and children strewing flowers on both friend and foe.

And let us have picnics, too, I thought, as I bent to place a red rose on Private John William Green's grave.

About the Author

Georgia Green Stamper is a seventh generation Kentuckian. A graduate of Transylvania University, Stamper is a former high school English and theater teacher and speech team coach. Her work has been published in the literary anthologies *New Growth*, *Tobacco*, *Daughters of the Land*, *Motif I & II*, and *The Journal of Kentucky Studies*. She writes a bi-weekly column, "Georgia: On My Mind," for *The Owenton News-Herald*. She has been a regular commentator for NPR member station WUKY affiliated with the University of Kentucky and a popular member of the Kentucky Humanities Council's Speakers Bureau.



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