WHERE HONOR AND PATRIOTISM CALLED: THE MOTIVATION OF KENTUCKY SOLDIERS IN THE CIVIL WAR

by

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Introduction

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, Kentuckians faced the same decisions that other men throughout the country faced: whether to fight in the war and for whom to fight. Yet the situation for Kentuckians proved much different than those in the Deep South or the North. Kentuckians held strong connections to both the North and South. Many soldiers in Deep South states did not even question whom they would fight for, knowing immediately after their states had seceded that they would serve in the Confederate army, but Kentucky faced the challenge of first remaining neutral and then siding with the Union. Still, this did not mean that Kentuckians automatically felt compelled to serve in the Federal army as the men of the North did. Although Kentucky remained a part of the Union, it was still a slave state. Many had familial ties to the South and were also linked by the institution of slavery. Kentuckians did not have the luxury early on of simply following their own state. The state itself would not take a stance one way or another until September 1861. As a result, the study of Kentucky soldiers in the Civil War is unique in that they could not simply follow the lead of their state. These men were forced to fight based upon their own belief system, and yet, they fought for many of the same reasons as soldiers from other states.

The men of Kentucky were left to form their own conclusions on the war. Some headed south to fight for the Confederacy, more chose to fight for the Union, and still others stayed home and took a personal stand for neutrality. Sometimes those who fought met brothers, relatives, or boyhood friends on the battlefield. The war divided communities and families within Kentucky. It literally pitted brother against brother.

This study seeks to determine what motivated Kentucky men to head south to join the ranks of the Confederate army or remain loyal to state and nation, fighting for the Union. Many have studied the common soldier during the Civil War and others have studied the soldiers from individual states. Yet, little has been written about the soldiers from this state. All that has been published about Kentucky soldiers are a few regimental histories and biographies. William C. Davis is the leading historian for Kentucky soldiers, yet his works focus primarily on the First Kentucky Brigade (Confederate) and John C. Breckinridge. A few biographies have been written on officers such as John Hunt Morgan and William Preston Johnson. Yet none have focused on the motivation of Kentucky soldiers as a whole. In a state that provided such a unusual situation, it is important to study these soldiers to get to the root of the beliefs that led them to fight. The declared neutrality of the state early in the war gave Kentuckians the opportunity to make their own decision, to decide independently which side to fight for, rather than simply following their state. This opportunity provides great insight into why common soldiers as a whole fought in the Civil War.

In 1943 Bell Irvin Wiley published the first in-depth study of the common soldier in the Civil War. In his book, *The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the* Confederacy, Wiley explains that these soldiers possessed differing motives. A deep hatred of the North, one present from the beginning of their earliest memories, compelled many to take up arms. These soldiers, along with countless other Southerners held to the position that northerners remained completely unreasonable in their attitude toward the Southern institution of slavery. In defense of this position they claimed that "the Yankees refused to live up to the Federal law requiring the return of fugitive slaves; they

closed their eyes to the beneficent aspects of slavery; they made heroes of such fantasies as Uncle Tom, and chose to look upon Christian slaveholders as Simon Legrees; they tolerated monsters like William Lloyd Garrison; they contributed money and support to John Brown, whose avowed purpose was the wholesale murder of Southern women and children, and when he was legally executed for his crimes they crowned his vile head with martyrdom."[1] They accused northerners of hypocrisy for keeping millions of white factory workers in conditions that the Southerners claimed were worse than slavery. To them, this Yankee society proved a godless one.[2]

Still, many Southern moderates hoped to give the Lincoln government a chance. Fort Sumter and Lincoln's call for volunteers ended any hope for this group and forced them to decide whether to fight with or against secessionists, an easy choice for most in the South. Many others who enlisted to fight for the Confederacy were not moved to action by a hatred or antipathy of the North. Wiley argues that a desire for adventure provided the leading motivation for these volunteers. War offered a chance to travel and a chance for an intimate association with a large group of other men. It offered glory as well as the excitement that battle could provide. Many volunteered simply because, at the time, enlistment was the prevailing trend.[3]

In the spring of 1861, Southerners entered the war with high spirits, believing in the rightness of their cause and confident in their coming success. The tide of Confederate patriotism that rose during this spring created a rush to arms. Yet as the weeks turned to months, enthusiasm dwindled and recruitment slowed to a trickle long

[1] Bell Irvin Wiley, *The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1943), 15.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid., 16-18.

before the first conscription act in April 1862. The morale of the soldiers always seemed to hold up better than that of the civilians, yet the army fell prey to a growing decline of spirit as the war continued. Within months of joining the service, a typical recruit began to express war-weariness in letters. This exchange of letters proved a very important part of a soldier's life, a communication that continued until his death, or war's end. Wiley pioneered the extensive use of letters and diaries to gain a deep understanding of those who filled the ranks of Civil War armies, and every subsequent historian of the common soldiers of that war has followed his example in mining those rich sources.[4]

In 1952 Wiley examined the northern soldier in *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union.* Just as in South, patriotic recruits turned out in throngs in the weeks that followed Fort Sumter. The problem that authorities encountered at this time was not to obtaining men but rather limiting the volunteers to manageable numbers. Still, as in the South, within a year volunteering had drastically slowed.[5]

Despite the surge of patriotism, motivation for enlistment could vary. Sometimes a man's reasons for volunteering might be economic. Although the thirteen dollars per month for an infantry private may not appear to be much, the first months of the war were a time of depression and unemployment often reoccurred until 1863, making the army's more or less regular pay attractive. For other men, love for country and hatred for those who seemed determined to destroy its institutions provided the motive to enlist. Yet Wiley argued that idealistic sentiments were comprehended only vaguely if at all. Soldiers who indicated their commitment to broad issues spoke of such concepts as law,

[4] Ibid., 123, 124, 127, 192.
[5] Bell Irvin Wiley, *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1952), 17, 18, 20.

liberty, freedom, and righteousness. Some fought to free the slaves, although these men made up only a small portion of the fighting forces.[6]

At the opposite extreme were Union soldiers who were not fighting for the good of the African Americans. A large number of Union soldiers' diaries and letters express hostility toward blacks. Such feelings ranged from blunt hatred to contempt, expressed in belittling remarks. Several factors contributed to these feelings. Many were prejudiced before they entered the service, especially if they came from border states, had a Southern background, were Irish, or came from a lower educational or economic group.[7]

In 1991 Larry J. Daniel examined the life of the Confederate soldier in the Army of Tennessee. In his book *Soldiering in the Army of Tennessee: A Portrait of Life in a Confederate Army,* Daniel explores two themes. First he focuses on the differences between eastern and western Confederates, although they were more alike than different. He considers how factors such as refinement and morale showed subtle variations between regions. The Army of Tennessee did not have the good fortune of maintaining its cohesiveness through soldiers' confidence in leadership and battlefield victories. It relied instead on other bonds to hold the men together at the lower ranks. Therefore the unity of this army can only be understood from the bottom up.[8]

The typical volunteer in the Army of Tennessee was in his early twenties, nonslaveholding, born in a small log cabin, enjoyed a limited public education, and farmed for a living. The difference in the character of these westerners remained more subtle. They often shared the same comments on rations, drills, and pastimes as those in

[6] Ibid., 38-40.
[7] Ibid., 109.
[8] Larry J. Daniel, *Soldiering in the Army of Tennessee: A Portrait of Life in a Confederate Army* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), xii.

the East, yet they had rougher edges, less self discipline, and fewer gentle refinements. They also had an intense racism that lay just below the surface. Although they shared these sentiments with eastern Confederates, the western soldiers' lack of self-discipline caused these feelings to emerge in dramatic fashion later in the war.[9]

The cohesiveness of this army rested mostly on the deterrent value of the punishments inflicted on deserters and a well timed religious revival stressing commitment, sacrifice, and patience under hardships. Out of the soldiers' suffering came a common bond. It had a grassroots unity with two factors contributing: protracted encampments and marathon troop movements. In these settings the army came to have a strong bond. Indeed, it became a family of sort.[10]

The influence of religion in this army extended through the ranks from the commanding general to the lowest private. In order to gain a full understanding of the cohesiveness of this army, Daniel argues that one must examine its evolutionary pilgrimage. Early in the war the soldiers grew indifferent to religion largely because of the festive atmosphere of camp. Then in the spring of 1863 revival broke out. In 1863 and 1864 the spiritual outpouring reached its climax at the Dalton encampment. Without any question, the fear of death moved many to the altar. Yet many others ignored the revivals, some soldiers even gambling within earshot of the worship. For most soldiers this was a genuine transformation and for others it proved the only thing that made life bearable and death hopeful even in the midst of a horrible war. Religion provided the main source of unity in the Army of Tennessee from 1863 until the end of the war.[11]

[9] Ibid., 13, 15.
[10] Ibid., 22-23.
[11] Ibid., 115-117, 119, 122, 124-125.

Still, these men needed a reason to fight amidst great battlefield losses and a lack of confidence in their leaders. Many western troops found their motivation in a different view of the results of battles than that of the modern historians. The perception, or maybe illusion, of battlefield victories kept these soldiers motivated. After they witnessed the fall of Atlanta, a desire to return to the army's birthplace and namesake, Tennessee, provided more motivation in times of peril.[12]

In 1993, James M. McPherson delivered the Walter Lynwood Fleming Lectures in Southern History at Louisiana State University. From these lectures came the book *What They Fought For, 1861-1865* in which McPherson presented the preliminary findings of research that would later form a second book. McPherson sought to find the motivation for the enlistment of Union and Confederate soldiers in the Civil War. Like Bell Wiley, McPherson sought out the letters and diaries of these soldiers to gain a true perspective of their motives.[13]

McPherson argues that Johnny Reb fought for liberty and independence from what southerners viewed as a tyrannical government, while Billy Yank fought for the preservation of the nation from dismemberment and destruction, the nation created by the founding fathers. In times of trouble, Confederate soldiers held on to the memory of the eventual victory of the American Revolution even after defeats. They filled their letters and diaries with the rhetoric of liberty and self-government as well as their willingness to give their lives for such a cause. This commitment simply came down to their patriotism

[12] Ibid., 148-150.
[13] James M. McPherson, *What They Fought For, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994), 1.

and their desire to defend the very existence of what they held to be their country, the Confederate States of America.[14]

The defense of their homes against an invading army created a concrete motive for Confederate soldiers, one that quickly turned for many into a hatred of the enemy and desire for revenge. These motives functioned more powerfully for the Confederacy than for Union soldiers. As the war escalated with mounting casualties and loss of property, such as slaves, an even deeper hatred grew within them. The desire for revenge became the passion of many Confederate soldiers, more powerfully so than for Yankee soldiers. The desire for vengeance for their comrades dead or wounded by Union bullets became an obsession for these rebel soldiers.[15]

Union soldiers held similar feelings of patriotism and also believed they fought with the same goals as their forbearers of 1776. These soldiers viewed secession as "a deadly challenge to the foundation of law and order on which all societies must rest if they are not to degenerate into anarchy."[16] Although they shared a common patriotism for their countries, the Union soldiers did not hold the same awareness of fighting to defend their home and family. Still, those Union soldiers from East Tennessee and border states, which were plagued with guerrilla warfare shared Confederate feelings of hatred and a desire for revenge. Many Union soldiers shared with their Confederate counterparts the same desire to avenge their comrades killed in the war.[17]

It seemed that hopes for a Confederate victory looked best in the months after the Emancipation Proclamation as it divided the northern people and created or intensified

[14] Ibid., 7, 10-11.
[15] Ibid., 18, 21.
[16] Ibid., 27, 32.
[17] Ibid., 38.

the morale crisis in the Union army. Confederate soldiers seemed unaware of the paradox, shared by Union soldiers and Americans in Thomas Jefferson's time, of fighting for liberty and still holding other people in slavery. Most Southerners believed that they were fighting for "liberty and slavery, one and inseparable."[18] Yet more Union soldiers than Confederates wrote about slavery, possibly because emancipation was so controversial. Few Union soldiers claimed to fight for racial equality or to free the slaves. "The cause of the Union united northern soldiers; the cause of emancipation divided them."[19]

James McPherson went on to publish *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* in 1997, the long-awaited book that went beyond his preliminary findings in *What They Fought For*. As in his previous book, McPherson focused on those who did the real fighting rather than those who tried to avoid combat. He also challenged the conventional wisdom about the motives of soldiers on both sides.[20]

The prevailing motivators for the soldiers lay with a sense of duty and honor. Some of the traditional reasons that have caused men to fight in other wars, such as religious fanaticism and ethnic hatreds, had little if any relevance in the Civil War. The consciousness of duty remained persistent in Victorian America, leading many Confederate soldiers to cite this as their reason for fighting. Yet more often they spoke of honor, which, according to McPherson, consisted of their image in the eyes of their peers. This emphasis on honor took place more often in the upper class soldiers or officers of the Confederacy. Yet in the Federal army these feelings ranged across the social scale.

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[18] Ibid., 49-51.
[19] Ibid., 54, 56, 61.
[20] James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), ix-x.

This concern with honor led to a desire to "see the elephant" – that is, to experience combat. A unit kept in the rear during the fighting felt dishonored.[21]

McPherson, like many other historians who have studied the common soldier of the Civil War, focused a good amount of attention on religion. He argued that the Civil War armies were the most religious in the history of America. Both sides tended to believe that God was on their side and thought that they were doing their duty to God and country in trying to kill the godless enemy.[22]

Although the principle sustaining motivations of Civil War soldiers were their convictions of duty, honor, patriotism, and ideology, they were motivated in combat through impulses of courage, self respect, and group cohesion. Yet without a firm support in their homes and communities, their morale would not have held up.[23]

Just as Larry J. Daniel examined the Army of Tennessee, J. Tracy Power studied the Army of Northern Virginia in *Lee's Miserables: Life in the Army of Northern Virginia from the Wilderness to Appomattox.* Power explained that in the spring of 1864 many voluntarily, and some involuntarily, reenlisted in the army. At this time the Confederate authorities were anxious to have as many troops as possible to oppose the Federals. They had worked throughout the winter to fill the Confederate ranks. Congress passed a law extending enlistments for the duration of the war and also drafting all white men between the ages of seventeen and forty five. This law retained many veterans who had fulfilled their original three year enlistment. Still, before word of the new law circulated, many individuals and units voluntarily reenlisted for the war. Many did so

[21] Ibid., 6, 22-24, 31.
[22] Ibid., 63, 72.
[23] Ibid., 131.

because of patriotism and a sense of duty while others reenlisted only to avoid the criticism of their comrades or families at home.[24]

As in the Army of Tennessee, so in the Army of Northern Virginia religious revivals were always full of emotion and evangelical fervor. Many Christians in the South believed that the military defeats, economic affliction, political clashes, and social upheavals were the result of the people's inability or refusal to obey God. Chaplains and ministers drew parallels between religious and patriotic responsibilities. They stressed that God remained on the Confederacy's side, but only the Christian soldiers could triumph over both their earthly and spiritual enemies.[25]

In spite of patriotic exhortations from the government and chaplains, one particular problem remained in early 1864. Desertion rates became alarming as war-weary veterans sought to return home. Some who had fulfilled their three-year enlistment period were encouraged by their family or friends to leave and let others continue the fight. The conscripts who had little desire to serve in the army often bolted at the first chance. The desertion numbers increased during the winter and grew again with the approach of the spring campaign, leading to Lee and the government's efforts to replace these troops through returning absentees, recruiting new troops, and limiting the exemptions from the army.[26]

According to Power, the soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia shared a simple but intense faith in Lee's ability to lead them to victories. These same soldiers came to the realization that they had found a formidable adversary in Ulysses Grant and

[24] J. Tracy Power, *Lee's Miserables: Life in the Army of Northern Virginia from the Wilderness to Appomattox* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 3.
[25] Ibid., 4-5.
[26] Ibid., 6-7.

knew that they had entered a new phase of the war in which intense fighting would last for days, weeks, or even months.[27]

Despite their faith in Lee, the men of the Army of Northern Virginia began to change. By the last half of 1864 the army needed a victory to renew its confidence, but the fact that it needed a boost in confidence spoke volumes about the state of the army at this time. Clearly, Lee now commanded an army far different from the one that he led in 1862 and 1863. The severe losses that Lee's army suffered included a loss of experienced officers. A disturbing incompetence among the new officers revealed another contrast between the army of old and that of 1864. Yet the soldiers still drew confidence from their faith in Lee's generalship and his efforts to take care of them.[28]

The Army of Northern Virginia then encountered the malady that had already plagued the Army of Tennessee, desertion. By January and February 1865 the flood gates had opened. Those who deserted responded to the conditions within the army or at home rather than the overall military or political situation of the Confederacy. Soldiers increasingly organized themselves in open defiance of authority. Some even threatened mutiny if attempts were made to stop deserters. Although there were striking differences between the Army of Tennessee and the Army of Northern Virginia, even an unwavering faith in their commander could not hold the eastern soldiers who did not want to remain in the army.[29]

James I. Robertson, Jr., a student of Bell Wiley, sought to recreate Wiley's study of the common soldier with diaries and letters not utilized by Wiley. In his 1998 book, *Soldiers Blue and Gray,* Robertson asserted that "the greatest tragedy of all was that both

[27] Ibid., 9, 22, 36.
[28] Ibid., 194, 196, 202.
[29] Ibid., 236, 262.

sides were fighting for the same thing: America, as each side envisioned what the young nation should be." In Robertson's view, patriotism contributed to enlistment on both sides. Other reasons included more basic human attractions. To impressionable young men the army offered a different way of life, free from struggling behind a plow or hunching over a desk. It could provide adventure normally unavailable in their everyday life. The army provided a chance to see new things and live an exciting lifestyle. [30]

As Robertson explains, both the Union and the Confederate armies were diverse collections of men. The Confederate army contained representatives of over one hundred different occupations. The Federal army proved even more diverse with over three hundred occupations among the ranks. Within the army camp these diverse men laid aside their civilian lives and learned about a soldier's life. Here the soldier grew to know the bugle call and drum beats. He learned of the military chain of command, discipline, and the importance of taking care of his equipment. The younger soldiers as well as those from rural areas especially enjoyed this life in the beginning.[31]

These soldiers from different civilian backgrounds provided the heart of the war, and their determination and devotion kept the war going. Yet homesickness eventually broke the moral fiber of many men. Most, away from home for the first time, believed the pain of their absence from loved ones, at first small and then growing to a chronic pain. Robertson asserted that the men in the ranks of the Civil War armies were the worst soldiers but best fighters America had seen. The men on both sides showed that they

[30] James I. Robertson, Jr., *Soldiers Blue and Gray* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 3, 6, 8.
[31] Ibid., 25, 41.

could be led but would not be driven. They believed that the American government rested on "the consent of the governed" and thought the army should too.[32]

Robertson also emphasized the role of religion. He argued that "faith in God became the single greatest institution in maintenance of morale in the armies."[33] If their side was winning, ministers told them it happened because the men continued to keep the faith, but if they were losing the temporary setback was a product of their sinfulness. Informal prayer meetings took place more often than structured service and were often held by a small gathering of soldiers who gave their testimonies.[34]

In his 2005 book *More Damning than Slaughter: Desertion in the Confederate Army,* Mark A. Weitz examined the problem of desertion in the South, seeking to answer the questions of whether desertion hurt the Confederate cause and, if so, how badly. Through answering these questions he also sought to explain the reasons for desertion. Lost in the discussion of unequal population growth and different development in the North and South between the Revolution and the Civil War, Weitz explains, was the question of what this meant in terms of both regions' ability to wage war. From a military standpoint the development that the North experienced meant that it would have a "disposable" male population by 1861. [35]

To find the common Confederate soldier, Weitz believes the student of Civil War history must, as it were, travel down the social food chain of the Old South to the yeomen and poor whites, who provided the backbone of the Rebel army. This was an army of farmers with lives governed by the seasons, just as their fathers and grandfathers had

[32] Ibid., 80, 102, 122, 124.
[33] Ibid., 172.
[34] Ibid., 181, 188.
[35] Mark A. Weitz, *More Damning than Slaughter: Desertion in the Confederate Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska press, 2005), viii, 11.

been before them. They were not "disposable" and, unlike the men of the North, could not be spared without seriously affecting their families' quality of life. This meant that once the hardships of war began to take their toll on the southern population, these farmer-soldiers began to look for the opportunity to escape as they became increasingly convinced that home and family stood on the verge of ruin. For these men, the nation they fought for proved either unable or unwilling to provide what their families needed once they went to war.[36]

Although training and drilling could make these soldiers more productive at killing their enemies, many of the men knew relatively little about discipline before the war and found it hard to embrace the strictness of army life. As early as 1861 deserters began to appear and although their numbers remained insignificant at that time, the fact that they occurred before the men faced the horrors of battle was very significant.[37]

Weitz believes conscription was also a factor in Confederate desertion. The draft represented one of the earliest and ultimate statements of the Confederacy's national action, and it became very controversial. The Conscription Act removed any doubt from the lower and yeoman classes that the rich expected the poor to fight. In addition to exemptions based on occupations the government viewed as crucial to its operation and that of the home front, the Conscription Act also created an exemption for those Southerners owning more than twenty slaves. The desertion that this act prompted was not that of the conscripts.[38]

By the end of 1862, desertion began to spread throughout the weakened Confederacy that had yet to feel the complete burden of war. Weitz argues that a spirit

[36] Ibid., 12-13.
[37] Ibid., 36, 43.
[38] Ibid., 78.

desertion spread from the army into the civilian population as citizens also began to believe that their government had broken the promise that lay at the heart of the common soldier's commitment to leave home and fight for his country, and that was to take care of those left behind at home. Some states tried to take care of the families of soldiers, but too often they lacked the necessary resources.[39]

According to Weitz, desertion took men from the army in two ways, those who deserted and those who served in state or county units to apprehend the deserters. By 1863 desertion had escalated and many of these deserters had crossed into Union lines and sworn an oath of allegiance to the United States. Other Confederate soldiers deserted while convalescing from wounds far behind the lines. Alhough at first glance this may have seemed a minor problem compared to those that deserted in the field, avoided conscription, or failed to return when exchanged, observations of military commanders showed a larger problem.[40]

Weitz acknowledges that the men who chose to stay and fight are often lost in the desertion story, and as much as it hurt anyone, desertion hurt those who stayed by the flag. Nevertheless, Weitz argues that desertion does not represent a failure of Confederate nationalism. Instead, Weitz maintains, it was the government and the rich that ultimately failed. The Confederacy convinced its population that the government could best protect their homes, and in order for the war to succeed ordinary men had to leave their homes and fight. In the idea of home, the Confederacy found a concept that could summon up the national will. Yet despite great efforts in the field, Confederate soldiers could not keep the northern army out of their home states. Confederate soldiers

[39] Ibid., 84.
[40] Ibid., 112, 117, 166-167.

deserted because they had accepted the notion that service in the army – service for the government – would best shield their hearths and firesides, but protection of their homes and families remained their most important goal and they eventually reached a point at which they no longer believed in the government's ability to live up to its promises. At that point a sufficient number of them determined to leave the army. Weitz argues that "desertion truly crippled the Confederate war effort and in the end hurt much more than slaughter."[41]

Military historians have addressed the issue of soldiers' motivations from varying perspectives. Another work on soldier motivation is John Keegan's 1976 book *The Face of Battle,* in which he studies the experience of soldiers in the Hundred Years War, the Napoleonic Wars, and the First World War. In the Hundred Years War, Keegan explains that for the English, the king's presence provided a very important moral factor. It was the bond between leader and follower that explains what happens or does not happen in battle. This bond, Keegan maintains, was strongest in martial societies such as England in the fifteenth century. When describing the situation for British soldiers at the Battle of the Somme in the First World War, Keegan explains what motivated them to fight in trench warfare. "Over and above its cohesion, sense of mission, mood of self-sacrifice, local as well as national patriotism, there were other elements in play. Self-confidence and credulity were certainly present, and powerfully effective at persuading the Pals to jump the parapet. But," according to Keegan, "to emphasize the populist character of the Kitchener armies is to minimize the importance which leadership played in taking it into battle. And arguments can be found to suggest that leadership – conscious, principled, exemplary – was of higher quality and greater military significance in the First World

[41] Ibid., 181, 293-294.

War, at least in the British army, than before or since." Keegan examines primarily the motivation of soldiers in battle, whereas this study will examine much different motivations that may come into play in leading a soldier to enter the army in the first place, or even to choose one side in the war over the other.[42]

Confederate soldiers from Kentucky had much in common with the soldiers previous historians have studied. They fought for their families and homes in a state overrun by guerrilla warfare. Many enlisted because of a sense of duty toward what they identified as their country. Some sought to defend their honor while others merely hoped for adventure. They also sought to liberate their country, the Confederate States of America, from what they considered a tyrannical government. Although all of them did not understand the true ideological basis of the war, they had ideologies of their own. All risked, and some gave, their lives to defend these ideologies and their homes.

One may wonder why Southerners were willing to fight for a country that had only recently come into existence. Even more so, why would Kentuckians fight for a country that their state did not even join? Many scholars have written about Confederate nationalism and how southerners identified with this new nation. In *After Secession: Jefferson Davis and the Failure of Confederate Nationalism*, Paul D. Escott describes how a devotion to the new Confederacy had to take shape in 1861 for what had been a region in the United States to become a country of its own. While he focuses on Jefferson Davis's effort to create a strong spirit of Confederate nationalism, he links the necessity of Davis's efforts to the new government's hope of survival. Although, according to Escott, the venture was a success in the first year, he maintains that the early enthusiasm quickly gave way to despair. "In a sense," in 1861 "the clash between two

[42] John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (London: Penguin Books, 1976), 114, 277.

entire regions reached its culmination in the minds and hearts of southerners, as they prepared to make a choice between American nationalism and southern nationalism." Most Southerners and many Kentuckians chose Southern nationalism, due to what Escott describes as a sense of regional identity which came out of "climate, geography, and social organization. But in addition, at some time in the preceding half-century, the spirit of southern nationalism had come into being." As a result, many believed that the South did not belong to the country but instead was a superior entity. [43]

In *The Confederate Nation, 1861-1865,* Emory M. Thomas explains that Confederate nationalism had its roots in the "raw materials of Southern life: slavery and race, planters and patricians, plain folk and folk culture, cotton and plantations." Still, to be successful, it had to win the hearts and minds of all, or at least most, Southerners. It came from a religious spirit and the southern lifestyle and had developed throughout the nineteenth century. Thomas also puts the Southern defense of states' rights in perspective when he states that "in 1860 state rights was a viable doctrine in Southern minds if only because it seemed the sole way to protect slavery."[44]

In their book *The Elements of Confederate Defeat: Nationalism, War Aims, and Religion*, Richard Beringer, Herman Hattaway, Archer Jones, and William Still, Jr., argue that one of the principle reasons Confederate soldiers lacked the motivation to pay the high price for independence was the lack of "the Confederacy's nationalism, that feeling of oneness, almost a mystical sense of nationhood." They argue that the Confederacy functioned as a nation only in an organizational sense, rather than in a mystical or

[43] Paul D. Escott, *After Secession: Jefferson Davis and the Failure of Confederate Nationalism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), ix-x, 19.
[44] Emory M. Thomas, *The Confederate Nation, 1861-1865* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1979), 16, 28, 32.

spiritual sense. The South's distinct identity came from slavery, and nothing else, despite the attempts of many to "pretend otherwise." Confederates, they argue, joined the Confederacy because they shared the fear of a society devoid of slavery and white supremacy, rather than sharing in a sort of unique nationhood. Whatever nationalism did exist, the authors contend that it proved weaker than Southerners' fear of a racially integrated society. They point to the delay of upper South states to secede from the Union as evidence that a strong Confederate nationalism did not exist. Had it existed, they maintain, these states would have seceded before Lincoln's call for troops.[45]

Drew Gilpin Faust contends in her book *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* that Confederate nationalism came from a movement to secure popular support for the new Confederacy and the war. "The formation of this new national ideology," Faust contends, "was thus inescapably a political and social act, incorporating both the powerful and the comparatively powerless into a negotiation of the terms under which all might work together for the Confederate cause." Still, this sparked debates and strengthened unresolved conflicts that had existed since before the war. In the end, Faust contends that the effort to create a Confederate nationalism resulted in "southerners struggling to explain themselves to themselves." The most fundamental contribution to Confederate nationalism came from Christianity. Southerners had thought of themselves as God's chosen people. Still, southerners pointed to slavery as the main reason for southern independence.[46]

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[45] Richard E. Beringer, Herman Hattaway, Archer Jones, and William N. Still, Jr., *The Elements of Confederate Defeat: Nationalism, War Aims, and Religion* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1988), 23, 25, 27.

[46] Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 7, 23, 59.

In his book *The Confederate War: How Popular Will, Nationalism, and Military Strength Could Not Stave Off Defeat*, Gary Gallagher takes issue with much previous scholarship about Confederate nationalism. "All too aware that the Confederacy failed in its bid for independence," Gallagher contends, "many historians have worked backward from Appomattox to explain the failure. They argue that the Confederates lacked sufficient will to win the war, never developed a strong collective national identity, and pursued a flawed military strategy that wasted precious manpower. Often lost is the fact that a majority of white southerners steadfastly supported their nascent republic, and that Confederate arms more than once almost persuaded the North that the price of subduing the rebellious states would be too high." Gallagher argues that even though class tensions, unhappiness with overreaching government policies, desertion, and weariness of war all contributed to the Confederate national character, this all must be looked at within the context of thousands of soldiers continuing to fight against the odds, civilians continuing to support the cause despite the great hardship, and a southern society that showed resilience until the very last stage of the war. The correspondence of these southerners showed a continued belief in Confederate success and "a popular will rooted in a sense of national community."[47]

Gallagher contends that a substantial number of Confederates identified strongly with their new nation, rather than giving their primary allegiance to their states. Strong feelings of Confederate nationalism contributed to the will that Confederates demonstrated during the war. According to Gallagher, too many scholars have pointed to the Union victory as proof that strong Confederate nationalism never developed. These

[47] Gary W. Gallagher, *The Confederate War: How Popular Will, Nationalism, and Military Strength Could Not Stave Off Defeat* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 3-5.

scholars overlook Confederates from all classes who strongly identified with the new country. They eventually accepted defeat once overrun by the Union army, but Gallagher maintains that we should not attribute this to a lack of Confederate identity. Instead, he argues that those Southern men who reached maturity during the sectional conflicts of the 1850s proved some of the most passionate Confederates.[48]

Anne Sarah Rubin contends that Confederate nationalism derived from a combination of southern institutions and symbols in her book *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy*. Rubin contends that the difficulty did not lie in the creation of Confederate nationalism. "The speed with which white Southerners, many of them staunch Unionists through the election of 1860, shed their American identity and picked up a sense of themselves as Confederates," she contends, "was startling. Southern whites embraced the idea of a Confederacy with a minimum of backward glances." She goes on to state that attachment to a symbolic or sentimental Confederacy existed separately from the political nation and therefore outlasted the nation itself. Almost from the moment that the Confederate States were created, the nation inspired loyalty among southerners. As a result, most Southerners seemed willing to turn their back on the Union. Ideas of honor and manhood influenced many southern men, as they viewed themselves as patriots fighting in an honorable war. Religion also played an important role, with many Confederates believing they were God's chosen people, more pious than their northern opponents. Slavery also held strong connections to Confederate nationalism, as it had been linked to Southern society for hundreds of years. [49]

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[48] Ibid., 7, 67, 72.
[49] Anne Sarah Rubin, *A Shattered nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 1-2, 11.

Unfortunately, many scholars focus much of their attention on how Confederate nationalism failed and ultimately, they maintain, led to the Union victory in the Civil War, losing sight of what made so many Southerners become Confederates. Gary Gallagher seems to be one of the few who do not buy into this theme of the failure of Confederate nationalism, and Gallagher has a very valid point. Kentuckians who fought for the Confederacy often did so until the end of the war. Yet if Confederate nationalism proved such a huge failure, they could have easily deserted, returned home to their families, and taken the oath of allegiance to the United States.

Kentucky soldiers fought in the Civil War for a multiplicity of reasons. Some enlisted in the Confederate army out of a deep hatred for Abraham Lincoln and a desire to defend what they described s states' rights and slavery. Others fought seeking adventure or revenge. Many more enlisted to defend their country and their honor, and out of a sense of duty to what they identified as their country and to God. Those who fought for the Union did so to defend their country. Still, each had different motives for this. Some believed it was simply the lesser of the two evils, while some believed slavery was best defended in the Union. Others believed that the United States provided the best form of government and the best chance of economic stability. One thing that these men shared is that they each chose for themselves which side to serve, because their state would not take a stand until several months into the war and they could not simply follow Kentucky's lead.

Chapter 1

A State Divided

In 1860 Kentucky had a population of 1,200,000 people making it the ninth most populated state in the country.[50] Slaves made up 19.5 percent of the state's population. This percentage had been on the decline for several previous decades, and few large slaveholders remained in the state in comparison to the Lower South.[51] Kentucky had more small slave owners than any other state except Virginia.[52] Still Kentucky remained a slave state, ultimately linked to the South.

The framers of Kentucky's 1850 constitution added a clause forbidding emancipation of slaves without their removal beyond state lines. The new constitution also prohibited any free blacks from entering Kentucky. Such laws expressed the fears that Kentuckians, along with many other Southerners, had of free blacks.[53] Kentucky shared the Deep South's dependence on slavery, though not to the same extent. Despite the institution's hold, few large plantations could be found in Kentucky, and it was uncommon to see large numbers of slaves tilling the ground of farms. The most common form of slavery in the state could be found on a medium-sized, master-directed farm, with typically five or six slaves. Many Kentucky farms produced hemp. The hemp was often used to make cloth that was used for holding bales of cotton together. The fiber was also used to make rope that would connect the cotton bales for shipment. This helped to connect the state to the cotton planters of the South. Still, the hemp crop was less labor-intensive than the Deep South's cotton, and Kentucky needed fewer slaves. Out of the

[50] *New York Times*, April 6, 1860, 4.
[51] Lowell H. Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky (*Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1975), 1.
[52] William C. Davis, *The Orphan Brigade: The Kentucky Confederates Who Couldn't Go Home* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 4.
[53] E. Merton Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1926), 6.

38,456 slave owners in the border state in 1850, only fifty-three owned between fifty to one hundred slaves and only five owned more than one hundred. As in the rest of the South, the greatest number of slave owners in Kentucky owned between one and five slaves.[54]

Kentucky's growing slave population and declining need for bondsmen created another link to the Deep South. As cotton production increased in the states bordering the Gulf of Mexico and settlers moved south and west, demand for slaves grew in that region. Some Kentuckians followed the migrations to the western areas of the Deep South taking their slaves to Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and later to Texas, in hopes of cashing in on King Cotton. However, as they began their operations they quickly realized that they did not have a sufficient number of slaves to work their plantations. To meet this need, and that of other Deep South planters, Kentuckians who had stayed home began to siphon off the excess slave population as they sold them south, where the bondsmen were in higher demand. As the importance of slave labor in the Deep South grew, so did the slave trade with Kentucky. The slave trade became a lucrative business for some Kentuckians, and as northerners began to see the evils of the slave trade so close to the North, the abolitionists began to make noise about it. Most white Kentuckians despised the abolitionists because of abolitionist speeches as well as stories that Kentuckians heard of northerners aiding runaway slaves.[55]

White Kentuckians' held a deep resentment of northern opposition to slavery, because many in the state felt as strongly about the defense of slavery as they did about the preservation of the Union. Kentuckians believed that a state should be able to

[54] J. Winston Coleman, Jr. *Slavery Times in Kentucky* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1940), vii, 44-45.
[55] Ibid., 142-144, 196.

exercise every power given in the Constitution without the interference of outsiders. To many Kentuckians slavery was more a Constitutional right than an economic necessity. "The very poor," Coulter explained, "who were better followers than leaders, owned few if any slaves; and at the same time many well-to-do Kentuckians did not own slaves – but not necessarily because they disagreed with the institution."[56] Although the poor may have actually had minds of their own, some aspired to be slave owners. Many Kentuckians who did not own slaves did not disagree with the institution.

Yet, more than slavery joined the state to the South. Originally part of Virginia, Kentucky bore the characteristics of "the mother commonwealth."[57] In addition, many Kentuckians could trace their ancestral ties to North Carolina and Tennessee to which they felt a strong bond.[58] The first generation of Kentucky statesmen took on the opinions of those in Virginia and imbibed the political creed of the Southern people. They were strongly attached to their state government.[59] In the early years of statehood, Kentuckians believed that only they had the interests of their state in mind, as the country seemed to ignore them, focusing much attention on the seaboard states. That era gave Kentuckians an individuality and self reliance. This went along with the mentality of many who came to Kentucky from other southern states that placed local interests above national affairs. The citizens of Kentucky shared a common struggle against adversity and were joined by a powerful pride in the progress of their state.[60]

Kentuckians not only felt the ties of blood and love; they also felt the pull of economic bonds. The state held connections to both the North and South commercially,

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[56] Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 7-8.
[57] Basil W. Duke. *A History of Morgan's Cavalry* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1960) 32.
[58] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 2.
[59] Ibid., 32 – 33.
[60] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 2-3.

and many Kentuckians could see nothing but disaster in the breaking of the Union.[61] After all, Kentucky was a border state, lodged between the two sections, and it traded with both sections of the country.[62] Manufacturing still trailed agriculture in economic importance. Kentucky farmers raised a variety of crops, including tobacco, corn, wheat, hemp, and flax. Yet the state ranked fifteenth in the annual value of products as well as in the capital invested in manufacturing.[63] Commercially the state identified more with the North.[64]

Historian E. Merton Coulter points out that in many ways "Kentucky was neither wholly Northern nor Southern, but that lying on the borderline of both, she partook of both."[65] The state came to possess characteristics stemming from the basic beliefs of the two sections, but which the North and South did not share. It was in the state of Kentucky that these principles merged together. States' rights convictions were as strongly entrenched as was love for the Union. So long as each was given what Kentuckians saw as its proper interpretation, there would be no conflict. This surfaced in Kentucky's attempts later at compromise, hoping to make each section realize this common ground.[66]

A change came to the political mind of Kentucky with the end of the career of Henry Clay. Clay taught his generation of Kentuckians to love the Union. He believed that the union of the states guaranteed their safety, honor, and prosperity. In passing on his love for the nation he also taught them to dread the evils of war. After his death and

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[61] Wilson Porter Shortridge. "Kentucky Neutrality in 1861," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 9, 4 (March 1923), 284.
[62] Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 15.
[63] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 2.
[64] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade: The Kentucky Confederates Who Couldn't Go Home*, 3.
[65] Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 17.
[66] Ibid., 17.

the passing of his influence, Kentuckians gradually began to forget these teachings.[67] Historian William C. Davis dates the beginning of Kentucky's eroding devotion to the Union with the passing of Henry Clay.[68]

In 1851, just one year before Clay's death, John C. Breckinridge, a young Democrat, won Clay's old congressional district. "The rise of a Democrat in Clay's home district signaled a slow explosion all over the state," wrote Davis.[69] Although these Democrats professed to love the Union just as much as Clay and the Whigs, there seemed more of an attachment to states' rights in them, as well as a closer identification with the South.[70] In 1856, when Breckinridge became Vice President, his influence had become predominant in the state. Troubles in Kansas and the agitation in the United States Congress led to a stronger Democratic presence, and Kentuckians grew more inclined to take a Southern view on debated questions.[71]

By 1860 it seemed as if there were three different Kentuckies. One lay along her southern border and also scattered throughout the state where her citizens embraced secession. At the northern border along the Ohio River lived the complete opposite, men whose allegiance would always remain with the Union. The third state of Kentucky could be found scattered throughout the boundaries of the commonwealth. Members of this third group would support the Union as long as they did not have to forfeit what they deemed their rights in the process.[72] An onlooker during this period in Kentucky's history, Thomas W. Riley, seemed to voice a similar opinion. In a letter to Senator John

[67] Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 34-35.
[68] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 4.
[69] Ibid., 4-5.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 36.
[72] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 5.

J. Crittenden, he described three groups in the state that were not established along party lines. On the southern border he described an interspersed group that wanted to push the state into secession. He described the group along the Ohio River as one that would apparently surrender all of their Constitutional rights, as he saw it, in order to hand over Kentucky to the North. The third group continued to support the Union and would "struggle to the last for the Union as it was."[73] Riley considered Crittenden to be the leader of the third group. Still, should Crittenden fail in his efforts to save the Union through compromise, Mr. Riley believed that this group would go South.[74]

With the election of 1860 came a major decision for Kentuckians. At the time the state had two working party organizations. The Democrats were powerful and largely pro-southern but were losing the support of the Union men. The Constitutional Union Party had a platform that was naïve and hoped, in William C. Davis's words, "that if everyone ignored the sectional crisis and stopped talking about it, maybe it would go away."[75]

The John Brown raid and his subsequent hanging drove those in favor of slavery and state rights further toward the Southern belief system, while the fire-eaters of South Carolina only made the Union men more determined.[76] The Democratic editor of the *Kentucky Statesman* addressed the problem that many Democrats had with the members of the Constitutional Union Party. On April 17, 1860, he wrote, "We can not suppose that an intelligent self-thinking Kentuckian would stand idly by while a battle was raging, the issue of which would be in fact the fate of his country. He would belie the

[73] Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 19-20.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 5.
[76] Ibid.

characteristics of his race, smother the impulses of a freeman & be faithless to all the obligations of a citizenship. No, there can be no neutrality in this struggle."[77]

A New York Times report from Louisville, Kentucky around the time of the Democratic Convention in Charleston, South Carolina demonstrates the sentiments of some Kentuckians with Southern sympathies.

> No man who does not regard African Slavery as a comprehensive and humanitarian, most beneficent and indispensable, stupendous and prodigious fact; recognized and especially favored by the fathers, and its security and permanence, indefinite increase and expansion provided for by the national Constitution; and to be forever the vital and absorbing subject of national concern, protection and advancement, will have the shade of a shadow of a chance at Charleston.[78]

With the approach of the Democratic National Convention, Kentuckians began to look toward being the peacemakers at the convention. Because of their geographical location, they were able to see the viewpoints of both the northern and southern Democrats. At the convention in Charleston they witnessed the southern delegates walk out, though the Kentucky delegates did not join them. When the convention reconvened in Baltimore, most of the Kentucky delegates joined the others from the South and withdrew. The northern Democrats then nominated Stephen Douglas. The Kentucky delegates came together with delegates from the other southern states and nominated John C. Breckinridge.[79]

With the breaking up of the Democratic Party, Kentucky also became split. In Louisville there was a strong Union presence. At a Douglas gathering there in July 1860,

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[77] Quoted in Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 20.
[78] *New York Times*, March 29, 1860, SU2.
[79] Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 22.

enthusiasm for Douglas seemed overshadowed by bitterness against Breckinridge. The issue at hand became Union or disunion and the Bell leaders were acknowledged to be loyal to the Union. The Unionist citizens of Louisville believed Breckinridge guilty of running as the candidate of a clique of secessionists and abandoning any aspect of the nationalism that he once had. Another Bell rally also condemned Breckinridge and lavished praise on Douglas, vowing "Let the conservative South beat Breckinridge, and Lincoln, if they can, but anyhow beat Breckinridge."[80]

In November 1860, Kentuckians faced the same difficult decision as other Americans, how to cast their vote for president. They could choose their fellow Kentuckian, Southern Democrat John C. Breckinridge; the Constitutional Union candidate from Tennessee, John Bell; the northern Democrat Stephen Douglas; or Republican – and Kentucky native – Abraham Lincoln. All knew that a vote for Lincoln risked the breaking up of the Union. Even though Lincoln himself posed no threat to slavery where it existed, many outspoken southerners threatened secession if Lincoln did win. Still many were not willing to make a move in the complete opposite direction to support their own John C. Breckinridge, the Southern candidate, which many believed also represented a radical party. The choice of many Kentuckians fell on Bell, who received 66,051 popular votes to 53,143 for Breckinridge, 25,638 to Douglas. Lincoln received 1,364.[81] Democrats' votes were divided between Douglas and Breckinridge and they therefore lost the state.[82] Had the Democratic vote gone to one candidate he could have beaten Bell by more than 12,000 votes, but with this division the vote of Kentucky went to the Constitutional Union candidate. Surrounded by abolitionists in the North and

[80] *New York Times*, July 17, 1860, 2.
[81] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 4-5.
[82] Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 36.

secessionists in the South, the state had apparently declared itself for peace and Union.[83] Although they voted for the least controversial candidate, the most controversial candidate won the election. Their votes simply revealed that they hoped to save the Union from the effects of Abraham Lincoln winning the presidency, which many correctly feared would tear their country apart.

Shortly after Lincoln's election South Carolina seceded and other states followed. Kentucky found itself caught in the middle. The North expected the state of Henry Clay to stand with the Union, while secessionists from the South came with high hopes to meet with the Bluegrass State's governor.[84] Governor Beriah Magoffin, a Democrat, had been elected in 1859 and bore much of the burden of deciding Kentucky's course during this crisis. A strong defender of slavery, he did not believe it to be a moral evil. He did believe in the right of secession and also that the rights of Southerners had been violated, but he remained opposed to immediate secession. He instead favored a conference of slave states to devise united demands.[85]

The majority of the state seemed to divide along party lines. The Breckinridge wing of Southern Democrats was anxious to take up the secession cause. The Douglas Democrats sympathized greatly with the South but shared in the governor's opposition to secession and disunion. Those who had supported the Bell-Everett ticket, a party composed of old Clay Whigs, not surprisingly felt a strong loyalty to the Union.[86]

[83] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 5-6.
[84] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 5-6.
[85] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 6-7.
[86] Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 36.

The impulse in Kentucky to follow the slave states into secession proved very strong in the beginning.[87] Yet most Kentuckians held the same view as the governor. They did not favor immediate secession, but neither did they approve of forceful coercion to keep the Southern states in the Union.[88] With the outbreak of the Civil War George W. Johnson fled Kentucky but returned to serve as volunteer aide to General Buckner. In December of 1860 Johnson, who was later elected the Confederate provisional governor of Kentucky, broached the issue in a letter to his brother. No immediate action should be taken, Johnson wrote. He believed that the action of the slave states in seceding and then meeting with other slave states to create their own union would prove a wrong course of action. Instead, although political affairs within the state remained in a critical condition, he favored "having a general consultation with all the southern states, before either acts separately. Having the same rights and interests at stake, I think it would be wrong in any one state to take such a position as would force others against their wishes to join her, without at least first consulting them on the propriety of the course."[89]

The young men of the state often had intense sympathies with the South, and many were connected to the State Guard, Kentucky's militia. These sympathies were spread among the classes, and many shared a strong conviction that an attack on any Southerners was an attack on Kentuckians. Even some Unionists thought the same. According to Basil Duke, himself a strong secessionist, one could often hear these men making such comments as "The Northern troops shall not march over our soil to invade

[87] Shortridge, "Kentucky Neutrality in 1861," 285.
[88] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 6.
[89] George W. Johnson to W.H. Johnson, 2 December 1860, Special Collections, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky, 83MO1.

the South," or "When it becomes apparent that the war is an abolition crusade, and waged for the destruction of slavery, Kentucky will arm against the Government."[90]

Secessionists in Kentucky spoke of the benefits to the state of joining the Confederacy. A correspondent for the New York Times declared, "They tell our merchants that the bulk of their trade is with the South, and that they must go for Disunion or break . . . . Secession would secure and perpetuate Kentucky Slavery, and make Louisville the New York City of the South! But our Unionists know better and talk better. They avow that their State and metropolis, out of the Union would gain nothing and lose everything; that all their interests and pursuits would be prostrated, paralyzed and ruined."[91] Torn as the state was, when the war started many there shared the governor's opposition to immediate secession, although he did not completely oppose secession, and held the opinion that the federal government should not use force to hold the Union together.[92]

Some Kentuckians felt dissatisfied with the society based on slavery. They, or their forbearers, had taken up land beyond the mountains where the poor man could attain something more than poverty and were innately suspicious of the slaveholding gentry. The state now boasted a number of thriving towns with lawyers, merchants, teachers, and mechanics who had very little property interest in slavery.[93] At the end of 1860 many in the industrial labor force gathered in Louisville for a Union rally. They emphasized their Union purpose as well as a belief that "in the Union's dissolution and the Constitution's destruction they can see nothing but inevitable and sweeping ruin, bankruptcy to the rich

[90] Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 36-37.
[91] *New York Times*, February 21, 1861, 2.
[92] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 8.
[93] Wm. T. McKinney, "The Defeat of the Secessionists in Kentucky in 1861," *The Journal of Negro History 1*, 4 (October 1916) 380-381.

and starvation to the poor, blood and carnage, civil war and servile insurrections."[94] They went on to urge all Louisville mechanics, artisans, manufacturers or working men to organize into Union Clubs.[95]

Kentucky held a strategic location in the Civil War, drawing much interest from both sides. Possession by the Confederacy would place the rebellion's northern boundary on the south bank of the Ohio River, a potential barrier against invasion from the North.[96] From this position the Rebels could threaten a drive to the Great Lakes, splitting the Union. Union leaders also sensed the significance of Kentucky to their cause. Lincoln stated, "I think to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game."[97] The transportation facilities offered by the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers would provide the key to the Union's plan to penetrate the South.[98] Otherwise, Kentucky's several hundred miles of accessible frontier on both north and south worried the people of Kentucky, who knew their homes would likely become battlegrounds if Kentucky chose to follow the other Southern states into secession.[99]

When Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers he informed Kentucky that her quota would be four regiments.[100] Governor Magoffin sent his reply to Secretary of War Simon Cameron: "In answer, I say, emphatically, that Kentucky will furnish no troops for the wicked purpose of subduing her sister Southern States."[101] With Lincoln's call for troops a second wave of secession swept over the upper South. Many of the states' rights men in Kentucky wanted to secede immediately and to send aid to the South. Still, they

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[94] *New York Times*, January 5, 1861, 8.
[95] Wm. T. McKinney, "The Defeat of the Secessionists in Kentucky in 1861," 380-381.
[96] McKinney, "The Defeat of the Secessionists in Kentucky in 1861," 377.
[97] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 2-3.
[98] McKinney, "The Defeat of the Secessionists in Kentucky in 1861," 377.
[99] Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 31-32.
[100] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 9.
[101] Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 41.

could not convince most Kentuckians that that was the best course of action. Instead, the majority seemed to be more determined than ever to maintain a position of compromise, even though previous efforts had failed. It was in this spirit that Kentucky would turn to neutrality, a method of protest against being forced into a war that many Kentuckians found detestable.[102] Thomas Speed defined the attitude of the Kentuckians during the secession crisis who did not favor secession, "They hope for a peaceable solution of the trouble upon the country; therefore they would do nothing to excite strife, but by precept and example would seek to serve peace. Failing in that, the Union must be adhered to. In whatever stand was taken, there was no thought of leaving the Union."[103]

On May 16 the state legislature endorsed Governor Magoffin's refusal to send troops.[104] On the same day the Kentucky House of Representatives resolved to take no part in the war being waged "except as mediators and friends to the belligerent parties; and that Kentucky should, during the contest, occupy a position of strict neutrality."[105] The Senate adopted a similar resolution and the governor announced the neutrality of the state on May 20, 1861.[106] With this decision the previously divided state government united on the unprecedented position of neutrality. Although the governor had favored the Confederacy and the legislature favored the Union, both now vowed that they would not tolerate either side sending troops onto Kentucky soil. Yet the decision would shortly prove unrealistic as the fighting inevitably breached the borders of the state. Neutrality simply could not last.[107]

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[102] Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 39-40.
[103] Speed, *The Union Cause in Kentucky,1860-1865,* 44.
[104] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade,* 10.
[105] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky,* 9.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Steven E. Woodworth, *Jefferson Davis and His Generals: The Failure of Confederate Command in the West* (University Press of Kansas: Lawrence, 1990), 35.

Radical Kentuckians wanted more aggressive policies. Fire-eaters wanted immediate secession.[108] Still, the idea of neutrality took such a strong hold that these men found it extremely difficult to make any headway at taking the state out of the Union.[109] Some Unionists wanted to stamp out the rebellion at once, but a majority of Kentuckians agreed with the policy of neutrality.[110] The case for neutrality had been stated well before Kentucky adopted that policy. A correspondent for the New York Times, writing from Frankfort, Kentucky, in January 1861, noted the state's opposition to any attempt to subdue the rebellious states in the South. Many Kentuckians had no intention of involving their state in a war, especially one in which they approved of neither side's conduct.[111]

Those who favored secession, but saw no immediate hope of it, also approved of neutrality, as it seemed the best arrangement that could be made. They knew if this neutrality was respected a vital portion of the South, a border of hundreds of miles, would be safe from invasion. They also believed that under the condition of neutrality more men could leave the state and enlist in the Confederate army.[112]

In the spring of 1861, the Kentucky state legislature called for a border state convention to be held in Frankfort. On May 27, 1861, the delegates to the convention issued an address to the people of Kentucky. The delegates were very disappointed that the only states to send delegates were Missouri and Kentucky. The address confirmed that the Kentucky representatives at the conference agreed with the legislature, declaring, "Your State, on a deliberate consideration of her responsibilities – moral, political, and

[108] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 8.
[109] Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 46.
[110] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 8.
[111] *New York Times*, January 26, 1861, 3.
[112] Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 46.

social – has determined that the proper course for her to pursue is to take no part in the controversy between the Government and the seceded States but that of *mediator* and *intercessor*."[113] They voiced the sentiment of many Kentuckians that the state was unwilling to fight against fellow Americans in the North or South. To them, this was the course of patriotism as well as regard for the state's own safety. Defending the action of neutrality they explained, "It does not result from timidity; on the contrary, it could only have been adopted by a brave people – so brave that the least imputation on their courage would be branded as false by their written and traditional history."[114] Kentucky stood for reconciliation and peace, and should it stray from such a position the delegates feared the state would face ruin. These delegates did not believe that secession was a constitutional right. Still, they did believe the right to revolution was just as valid as an individual's right to defend himself. Yet they maintained that revolution should be resorted to only when all other attempts at peace had failed. Whether Kentuckians believed in the right to revolution or not, they realized that the state would be secure only if peace were maintained. According to the delegates:

> Kentucky has not cause of quarrel with the Constitution, and no wish to quarrel with her neighbors; but abundant reason to love both. In all things she is as loyal as ever to the constitutional administration of the Government. She will follow the stars and stripes to the utmost regions of the earth, and defend it from foreign

[113] "Address to the People of Kentucky, By the Delegates to the Border Slave States Convention, Held in Frankfort, Kentucky May 27, 1861," Robert Carter Richardson Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky, 3.
[114] Ibid., 3-4.

> insult. She refuses alliance with any one who would destroy the Union. All she asks is permission to keep out of this unnatural strife.[115]

This statement sums up the dilemma of many Kentuckians. They loved both their neighbors to the north and to the south. Possibly because their ties to slavery were not as strong as those of the Deep South, many Kentuckians did not think that they had been wronged by the federal government in regards to the institution. It was with this belief that Kentucky continued to hold out hope for peace, hoping to soothe the ego of both sides and bring them to a reconciliation.

By August supporters of the Confederacy were the strongest advocates of neutrality, knowing that if the state moved from this stance it would do so only to reaffirm its loyalty to the Union. By this time secessionists in the state realized that their movement no longer had any hope of succeeding in Kentucky.[116] According to E. Merton Coulter, the Southern sympathizers came much closer to achieving secession before neutrality than they did at any time afterwards. Unionists used neutrality as a way to educate the people, hoping ultimately to convert them to complete support for the Union.

In the same month many in the North were sure of Kentucky's loyalty to their side. An article in *Harper's Weekly* commented on the intention of Union leaders in the state to prosecute the war vigorously. "This is a sort of Unionism that needs no explanation and leaves no loophole for treachery: it finds practical expression in the daily increasing volunteer force which is being assembled near Louisville. Kentucky, we think

[115] Ibid., 4-5.
[116] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 11-12.

we may now say, is not only safe, but is sure to contribute a fair share of soldiers to the Union army."[117]

Meanwhile, forces outside the state were about to put an abrupt end to Kentucky's neutrality. Confederate General Leonidas Polk set his sights on Columbus, Kentucky, located on the Mississippi River. He hoped to fortify the town and thus prevent Union gunboats from navigating down the river. Confederate attention had been directed toward Columbus for several months. Polk's subordinate, General Gideon Pillow, previously a professional politician, had first hatched the idea of seizing the town. The banks of the Mississippi south of the Tennessee and Kentucky line were too hard to defend, Pillow claimed, and therefore he must have Columbus, which perched atop high bluffs known locally as the Chalk Cliffs and the Iron Banks. With this in mind, he sent a messenger to Governor Magoffin in May 1861 asking permission to occupy Columbus. Anticipating that the governor might not comply, Pillow had also written to President Jefferson Davis, explaining the situation and warning that if Magoffin did not consent he, Pillow, would have to go ahead with his plan and take the responsibility. Pillow was somehow convinced not to go through with his plans at the time. That summer Polk, who had been sent to control Pillow, revived the idea. By the end of August, Pillow had begun to pressure Polk about seizing Columbus, and, after Pillow apparently made a convincing case for the invasion, Polk soon took hold of the idea. Neither informed Davis of their plan prior to taking action, and the Confederate president had even responded to a letter from Kentucky's governor on August 28 reassuring him that "the

[117] *Harper's Weekly*, August 24, 1861, 530ab.

Government of the Confederate States of America neither intends nor desires to disturb the neutrality of Kentucky."[118]

Ironically, it seemed at this point that Kentucky neutrality was about to end in favor of the Confederacy. John Charles Frémont, the Federal commander for a department encompassing Missouri and western Kentucky, made an ill-advised proclamation on August 30, 1861, declaring the end of slavery in the territories under his command and threatening to hang any rebel who had taken up arms. This announcement would not win the hearts of those undecided Kentuckians, who were still numerous within the state. Frémont then directed Ulysses S. Grant, one of his subordinates, to seize Columbus. Once word of these actions spread throughout the state, Kentuckians very well could have invited the Confederate Army into their state. With Kentucky joining the Confederacy, the position of the South could have been greatly strengthened, and Polk could have marched into the Bluegrass State as a liberator, welcomed by its populace. With this in mind Governor Isham Harris of Tennessee sent Polk a telegram on September 2 advising him not to send troops into the interior of Missouri but instead to maintain their readiness and keep a watchful eye on events within Kentucky. Polk did not heed Harris's advice. At the end of August, elements of Grant's force appeared at Belmont, Missouri, located directly across the river from Columbus.[119] With this General Polk became convinced that Union troops were in position to make a move.[120] He feared that they intended to occupy the city. On September 1, Polk sent a letter to the governor stating that it was "of the greatest consequence to the Southern cause in Kentucky or elsewhere that I should be ahead of the enemy in occupying Columbus and

[118] Woodworth, *Jefferson Davis and His Generals,* 36-37.
[119] Ibid., 38-39.
[120] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky,* 12-13.

Paducah." Paducah lay north of Columbus, located on the Ohio River at the mouth of the Tennessee River. Polk considered this location of strategic importance to block access to the Tennessee, and so he began making preparations to take both towns. On September 3, he set his plan into action, sending steamers with Confederate troops under Pillow's command up the Mississippi River to Hickman, Kentucky. There they landed and marched to Columbus in order to avoid any guns Grant might have at Belmont. When they arrived in Columbus they found the town unoccupied by any military force, and there they set up camp.[121]

In a letter sent to Governor Magoffin on September 9 Polk offered to withdraw his Confederate troops from the state if Federal troops were withdrawn simultaneously and with an agreement that the Federals would not be allowed to occupy Kentucky in the future.[122] After Pillow had seized Columbus, Union forces then moved in and seized Paducah. Magoffin denounced both sides for violating Kentucky's neutral rights and demanded all military forces withdraw at once. The Unionists by this time had made headway in the state legislature and instead demanded a complete Confederate withdrawal.[123] On September 18, 1861 the legislature voted to end neutrality and ally itself with the Union.[124]

The operation, according to Polk's plans, was a complete success, yet it also became one of the greatest catastrophes suffered by the Confederacy. The Confederate army moved into Kentucky, seized the town, and started work on fortifications within the town as if its purpose was to remain permanently. This final blow to Kentucky neutrality

[121] Woodworth, *Jefferson Davis and His Generals,* 39.
[122] Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry,* 48-49.
[123] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky,* 12-13.
[124] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade,* 12.

also destroyed any hope for the Confederacy to gain from the mistakes of Frémont. To compound this loss, when the Union seized Paducah, Polk's possession of Columbus became strategically useless.[125]

E. Merton Coulter states that the reason the state of Kentucky remained with the Union was because of its economic ties, "which may be translated into the political principle of Unionism."[126] Kentucky stood for the Union because many in the state believed that their prosperity depended upon the preservation of the United States. Ultimately, the South drew support based on the sentiment of Kentuckians, and the North pulled at their hearts through their wallets. In the end, according to Coulter, their pocketbooks won.[127] Coulter tends to look a little more favorably on the Southern cause in his writing, but whether it was their economic ties or the influence of Henry Clay, ultimately both contributed to their love and devotion to the Union which ultimately kept the state from seceding. Still, Kentucky's behavior after the war may give some credence to Coulter's argument.

The coming of the Civil War confronted the citizens of the Bluegrass State with stark choices, chief of which was where their loyalty should lie. The mood of some Kentuckians during these years is best illustrated by a statement made during the secession crisis by Philip Lightfoot Lee. A resident of Bullitt County, on the Ohio River just south of Louisville, Lee had a simple rule for determining his allegiance. Should the Union break up, Lee vowed to remain with Kentucky, if Kentucky split he would go with Bullitt County, if his county split then his sympathies would remain with Shepherdsville, his hometown. And if Shepherdsville should also be torn apart then he would stand with

[125] Woodworth, *Jefferson Davis and His Generals,* 39
[126] Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky,* 17.
[127] Ibid., 17.

his side of the street.[128] After the war William McCready wrote about what many Kentuckians faced when their state abandoned neutrality. He stated that when the dream of neutrality ended their eyes had been opened to the sad reality, "sad especially to the border States, as on every battle-field their sons would meet on opposite sides in the deadly fray."[129]

Amy Murrell Taylor confronted the topic of families split by the Civil War in her book *The Divided Family in Civil War America*. Taylor studies border state families that were split by their national loyalties. She explains that it was here that "slavery and abolitionism, Democrats and Republicans, industry and agriculture, urban and rural communities all existed side by side."[130] It was there, in the border states, that the cultures, politics, and economics of both regions overlapped. This merger of belief systems is what made it so difficult to draw a definitive political border between the two regions of the country during the war. It was here that the line between Confederate and Union split communities and families. Previous to the war most nuclear families were intact, sharing households and working the family land. Yet, once the war broke out, numerous sons, averaging age twenty-two in the border states, left home to volunteer for the Confederate army. They left behind them fathers who remained committed to the Union and advocated compromise. Taylor attributes this to a generational conflict that had been building up in the border states throughout the decade before 1861. Some of the most dynamic supporters of slavery and states' rights during the secession crisis had been born during the 1830s and 1840s. All of these men had known nothing outside of

[128] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade: The Kentucky Confederates Who Couldn't Go Home*, 1.
[129] William McCready, "Louisville During the War," *Southern Bivouac*, 1, 4, (December 1882), 57.
[130] Amy Murrell Taylor, *The Divided Family in Civil War America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 3.

the sectional conflict. They had lived through the political turmoil in Kansas and John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry. Throughout their entire lives they had witnessed conflict between the North and South over slavery, and in politics the division had been all they knew. Taylor contends that growing up in such an environment made it almost impossible for them to refrain from taking a spirited stance on the heated issue of their time. Their fathers, on the other hand, had been well established in border state politics. Most were either Whigs, and later Constitutional Unionists, or Democrats who were committed to creating compromises to prevent civil war. These men had not tried to suppress the radicalism that they saw early on in their sons, but instead they permitted open debates with them over the sectional issues of the time. By 1861 the tone had changed, and many of these men began trying to convince their sons of the error of their thinking.[131]

Union soldier Benjamin F. Stevenson credited the hard work of Henry Clay, John J. Crittenden, and Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge, uncle of John C. Breckinridge, for keeping Kentucky in the Union. Although Henry Clay had been in the grave for nearly a decade, he had instilled his love for and devotion to the Union in his generation of Kentuckians. During the secession crisis Clay's successor John J. Crittenden worked to find a compromise between the North and the South to stave off war. Stevenson stated that no one man within Kentucky did more to keep the state true to its national obligations. Even with everything that these three men did to keep Kentucky in the Union, despite their love and devotion for the United States of America, they could not keep their sons from fighting for the Confederacy. Two of Henry Clay's sons and two of his grandsons fought in the Rebel army. John J. Crittenden had one son in each of the opposing armies. Of

[131] Ibid., 3-4, 15-16.

Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge's sons, two fought for the Confederacy and two for the Union. Other well known and respectable families in Kentucky suffered the same fate, divided by an unwelcome war. Not only were the leading families of Kentucky divided by the war, but it also divided families of all classes throughout the state.[132]

For most Kentuckians the decision was not black and white, and proved to be much more complicated than the plan that Philip Lightfoot Lee had mapped out. Not only were communities and streets split but many families were as well, father against son and brother against brother. The decision for many Kentuckians proved difficult. Many left their homes for the adventure that the war might bring them, some thought the only true justice would be in the victory of the South, others believed they had a duty to fight for the South and their honor. Still others had more complicated reasons for leaving behind their family and friends, going against the stance of their beloved state and heading south to join the ranks of the Confederate Army. Some shared the devotion and love for their country that had been instilled in Kentuckians by the generation of Henry Clay. These men stayed true to their state and loyal to their country as they fought in the Federal army. Yet, there were also those who chose not to fight, whether because they did not know how to choose between the two regions or they refused to take up arms against their fellow countrymen. In the end Kentuckians had a choice to make, a choice that would determine their fate for the next four years of their lives. They were motivated by a multiplicity of reasons to fight or not to fight; no one reason explains their actions.

[132] Benj. F. Stevenson, "Kentucky Neutrality in 1861," (Cincinnati: H.C. Sherick & Co., 1886), microfiche, Civil War Unit Histories, Mary Couts Burnett Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 5-6.

Chapter 2

Recruitment

Even before neutrality had ended in Kentucky, volunteers began to slip away to join the opposing armies both sides were raising outside of the state. Some covert recruiting took place within the state as well. During this period each side organized its own military force. Early both the Federal army and the Confederate army respected Kentucky's neutrality. As it became more and more clear that Kentucky would not secede from the Union and join with the other Southern states in the Confederacy, neutrality became nothing more than a technicality. The Federal army began to recruit openly in the state, and those recruiting for the Confederacy found themselves having to do so in secret. Regardless of how they were recruited, the state of Kentucky sent thousands of men to serve in the ranks of both the Union and the Confederate army during the Civil War.

Prior to 1859 Kentucky had a state militia that had been declining for some time. John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, Virginia, convinced many Kentucky leaders that they could not risk a dilapidated military system any longer. Governor Beriah Magoffin pushed the legislature to reorganize the state militia in order to provide a military organization that could combat any insurrection within the state and to uphold the laws.[133] Out of this came the creation of the State Guard. With its origin in the fear of slave rebellion, the State Guard unsurprisingly expected the enemy only from the North, and its members felt animosity toward northern people as well as sympathy for the people

[133] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 6; Richard G. Stone, *A Brittle Sword: The Kentucky Militia, 1776-1912* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1977), 61.

of the South.[134] When the State Guard was created, as well as later during the Secession Crisis, many charged that Governor Magoffin and Inspector General Simon Bolivar Buckner were plotting to create a pro-secessionist military that would rule over those Kentuckians who remained loyal to the Union.[135]

In May 1861, the state legislature created a second militia, called the Home Guard. This move to counter the Southern leaning sentiments of the State Guard brought about the eager enlistment of many Union men in Kentucky. Of the two militia organizations within the state, Simon Bolivar Buckner's State Guards were largely Southern sympathizers, while the new Home Guards leaned overwhelmingly to the Union side. With the beginning of the war, both began an intense hunt for weapons.[136]

Like the state of Kentucky, the State Guard became trapped in the storm that would follow the fall of Fort Sumter in April 1861.[137] Once Lincoln called for troops and Governor Magoffin adamantly rejected the request, the state legislature created the new policy of neutrality. Still, Kentucky could not hope to enforce her neutrality without having a powerful State Guard. The threat of warfare had encouraged many to volunteer while the more enthusiastic Union men already in the Guard rethought their decision. Few companies remained the same in 1861 as they had been in 1860, and some companies altogether fell apart. Many men would not march under certain banners expressing sectional sentiments. Many of them took their weapons home and refused to

[134] Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 36.
[135] Stone, *A Brittle Sword*, 63-64.
[136] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 10; Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 9-10.
[137] Stone, *A Brittle Sword*, 63-64.

report for further duty. Some of them joined informal companies, leaving the state in May to join the Confederate Army in Virginia.[138]

At the same time these men were leaving to join the Rebel army, the legislature began looking upon the State Guard with mistrust. The legislators went on to deny additional arms to the Guard and also tried to recover the arms that were already in possession of the militia.[139] It was in this spirit of mistrust that they also provided for a second militia, the Home Guard. The Home Guard would receive equal funding, and volunteer companies throughout Kentucky that held Union sentiments were encouraged to enroll in the new militia. This move to counter the State Guard's pro-southern tendencies brought out many Union men, who were just as eager for their cause as Buckner's State Guard recruits of the year before had been – and still were – for the opposite side. Some of the existing State Guard companies proved that they were loyal to the Union. Three State Guard companies already existed in Lexington at this time, the Lexington Rifles, the Lexington Chasseurs and the Old Infantry. With the creation of the Home Guard, the two latter companies enrolled in the new militia.[140]

It did not take long for rival companies to begin parading through the streets of the same towns. Violence probably would have followed in short order had not both sides been so preoccupied with recruiting and finding arms. Both sections in the state abandoned restraint, and soon the race to arm and prepare for the confrontation became open and blatant. Union men began to smuggle guns to arm the Home Guard, and the federal government secretly assisted in the equipping of loyal citizens in the state. Soon

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[138] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade: The Kentucky Confederates Who Couldn't Go Home*, 10-11.
[139] Stone, *A Brittle Sword*, 65.
[140] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 10-11; James A. Rampage. *Rebel Rider: The Life of General John Hunt Morgan* (Lexington, The University Press of Kentucky, 1986), 45.

the state legislature demanded oaths of allegiance to the Union from the members of the State Guard. Late in the summer of 1861 the legislature took the further step of stopping all funds for the State Guard and calling for all arms in the hands of the Southern leaning militia to be returned to the arsenals.[141]

The dream of neutrality proved to be short lived. Early on, most Union recruitment of Kentuckians took place in camps north of the Ohio River. As Unionist sentiment seemed to grow in the state, Lincoln's administration began to open recruiting stations in the neutral state. They also began shipping guns to arm the new Union recruits. Then, after the August 1861 elections, which gave Unionists control of the state legislature, naval Lieutenant William "Bull" Nelson, a Kentucky native, established one of these Union recruiting stations, Camp Dick Robinson, which was located twenty-six miles from Lexington. The land for Camp Dick Robinson had been donated by a Unionist named Richard Robinson. Robinson turned over his farm to the United States for the country to use in the process of recruiting and training Union soldiers. For many weeks the citizens of Kentucky remained in a state of excitement about this Federal camp. Many moderate Unionists did not like the idea of a Federal camp in their state, as they still viewed neutrality as the best policy. John Crittenden, a strong supporter of the state's neutrality, voiced discontent with Nelson's camp. Nelson replied, "That a camp of loyal Union men, native Kentuckians, should assemble in camp under the flag of the Union and upon their native soil [and] should be a cause of apprehension is something I do not clearly understand." Governor Magoffin protested the breach of Kentucky's neutrality to President Lincoln. The president refused to close the camp or halt

[141] Ibid.

enlistments. Instead he pointed to Magoffin's lack of desire to preserve the Union. Lincoln continued,

> I also believe this force consists exclusively of Kentuckians, having their camp in the immediate vicinity of their own homes, and not assailing, or menacing, any of the good people of Kentucky….While I have conversed with many eminent men of Kentucky, including a large majority of her members of Congress, I do not remember that any one of them, or any other person, except your Excellency and the bearers of your Excellency's letter, has urged me to remove the military force from Kentucky, or to disband it.

By September 1, 1861, four Kentucky regiments were encamped at Camp Dick Robinson.[142]

The Confederate authorities were more cautious with their activities. As late as April 16, 1861 they were unwilling to accept troops that came from outside the borders of the Confederacy.[143] They remained in contact with those in the state sympathetic to their cause, and eventually a flow of Kentucky volunteers entered Camp Boone.[144] Three Kentuckians, James Hewitt, Robert Johnson, and William T. "Temp" Withers, selected the spot for the recruiting camp in Montgomery County, Tennessee. The location rested just seven miles from the city of Clarksville and, more importantly, only a few miles south of the Kentucky border, where it would be easily accessible for those Kentuckians eager to join the ranks of the Confederate Army without violating the neutrality of their

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[142] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 11-12; Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 47; Rampage, *Rebel Rider*, 43; Brian D. McKnight. *Contested Borderland: The Civil War in Appalachian Kentucky and Virginia* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky) 30, 34; Abraham Lincoln to His Excellency Governor B. Magoffin, 24 August 1861, S. B. Buckner Collection, 20003M03, Special Collections, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky.
[143] E. Merton Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 48.
[144] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 12

beloved state. The location attracted their attention for its wide, flat fields, very fitting for drilling new military recruits. Within days of establishing Camp Boone in July 1861, the Kentucky boys began to pour in. The Confederate Secretary of War authorized Withers to raise only one regiment. Yet he found that "a military spirit in Kentucky" had been awakened. By July 12 Withers had twenty companies of the twenty-six he was allowed and suggested that they should form a third regiment. By July 25 he had fifty companies applying for service. Union men in Kentucky complained of the recruiting, saying that "so many of our giddy young men have gone into the Southern army, that almost every man who goes into our army, knows that he has to fight a neighbor, a relative, a brother, son or father."[145]

The men who made their way to Camp Boone were mustered into Confederate service as the Second and Third Kentucky infantry regiments by mid July. Still, there remained more men in the camp, but not enough to form another regiment. With this, Robert Trabue, who would eventually command the new regiment, went to Louisville and arranged for his associate, Ben Monroe, quietly to recruit more soldiers around Frankfort. Trabue oversaw the transportation of the new recruits to Tennessee.[146]

One of the groups that arrived at Camp Boone later in the summer was organized by Joseph P. Nuckols. Nuckols had kept his State Guard company together and even recruited more men. His group numbered eighty-three men ready to cast their lot with the Confederacy. Although these young men were anxious to enlist, they waited until they could cast their votes in an election soon to take place in their community in Barren County. Once they voted, they set out for Tennessee. Contrary to the practice of most

[145] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 13-14.
[146] Ibid., 16-17.

other State Guard companies, Nuckols insisted they return their guns to the state of Kentucky, rather than keep them to aid the Confederate cause. This company arrived at Camp Boone on August 9, while others were still arriving as well. Trabue recognized a problem with the units arriving at camp. Many of the companies came in understrength, sometimes with as few as half the requisite number of men, yet with enough officers for a full company. Trabue's task was to organize these men into a regiment. He assembled his recruits a couple of miles from Camp Boone at a location known as Camp Burnett. Forming a regiment would require some of the newly minted officers agreeing to serve as privates. More than pride stood in the way. Many of these men had funded the trip they had made with their recruits. Some of the disappointed would-be officers talked about heading to Virginia to enlist in the Confederate army, joining the cavalry, or even returning to Kentucky. Yet, Trabue worked among the officers to convince them to act in the best interest of the Confederacy and reminded them that as the war progressed they would have the opportunity to advance in rank. On August 30, these men were mustered into the Confederate army and two days later became the Fourth Kentucky Infantry. With this, Camp Boone contributed three Kentucky regiments to the Confederate cause.[147]

For Simon Bolivar Buckner, previously inspector general of the State Guard, the invasion of Kentucky by the Confederate army proved a turning point. Up until this time, both the Union and the Confederacy had tried to recruit him. In August, President Abraham Lincoln had even sent him an unsolicited commission as a Union brigadier general, but to no avail. On the day after the legislature ordered the Confederates out of the state, Buckner issued a call for the citizens of Kentucky to defend their home against

[147] Ibid., 18-20.

an invasion from the North. Albert Sidney Johnston, commanding general of the Rebel army west of the Alleghenies, appointed Buckner a brigadier general. Johnston believed it vital that Confederate troops occupy Kentucky in order to protect Southern interest, and so he gave the order to seize the city of Bowling Green.[148]

On September 18, 1861, Buckner issued an address "To the People of Kentucky" from Bowling Green. In it he described the Kentucky legislature as "faithless to the will of the people. They have endeavored to make your gallant State a fortress," Buckner continued, "in which, under the guise of neutrality, the armed forces of the United States might secretly prepare to subjugate alike the people of Kentucky and the Southern States."[149] He defended Polk's actions in invading Kentucky, blaming the legislature for not enforcing the state's neutrality, failing to force both the Federals and the Confederates to leave, and he went on to announce his return to the state "at the head of a force, the advance of which is composed entirely of Kentuckians. We do not come to molest any citizen, whatever may be his political opinion. Unlike the agents of the Northern despotism, who seek to reduce us to the condition of dependent vassals, we believe that the recognition of the civil rights of citizens is the foundation of constitutional liberty."[150] Buckner next turned his pen to an attack on Lincoln's decision to suspend the writ of habeas corpus, and finally he declared the Confederate occupation of Bowling Green an act of self-defense.[151] Here, in Bowling Green, recruiting of Kentuckians for the Confederacy began once again.[152]

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[148] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 7 & 25-27.
[149] *Harper's Weekly*, October 5, 1861, 627.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 27.

On October 8, 1861, William T. Sherman took command of Union troops in Kentucky and felt much disappointment in the reaction of Kentuckians. He had expected them to repudiate secession and support the Union's efforts. Instead he complained that rather than helping the Union, the pro-Union Kentuckians called for the protection of Federal troops against secessionists. He also complained that the young men of the state were typically secessionists who had joined the Rebels, whereas the Union men were aged and conservative, and would not engage in the conflict.[153]

Union and state authorities had both authorized too many units to be raised. Would-be officers were plentiful but recruits willing to serve in the ranks were less so. By the end of the first year of the war Union authorities had authorized the recruitment of 42,000 Kentucky soldiers, but only 29,203 had enlisted.[154] That same month some two hundred men from the Louisville area enlisted for ten days, fearing a supposed attack on the city. Once their ten days had expired, none were willing to reenlist and serve with the Union army.[155]

On August 4, 1862, President Lincoln, as authorized by Congress, instituted the draft, calling for 300,000 men. Authorities in Kentucky introduced various methods to encourage men to enter the service voluntarily rather than wait to be drafted. Some men who had been indicted for a crime were given the chance to enlist in the army rather than face prosecution. Kentuckians, as with many other people in America, never looked too highly upon the draft. Eventually, the number of volunteers willing to enlist in the Union army slowed. Some Kentuckians tried to persuade the federal government to abandon the draft in their state. Even the state adjutant general, John Boyle, argued that the quota for

[153] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky,* 14-15.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 129.

troops assigned to Kentucky was too large, because it did not take into consideration the fact that many of the state's men of fighting age had already left to join the Confederate army and others had simply fled to escape the draft. Some of those fleeing the draft went to Canada, others chose the Confederate service instead. One man in particular was a Baptist minister who, upon being drafted, left the pulpit. He then raised a company for Confederate service and went south. Still, men such as this preacher made up a minority of those who were drafted.[156] Amy Murrell Taylor, in studying divided families, agrees with Coulter's assessment, stating that for many Kentuckians "the idea of being forced to join the Union army became an additional inducement to act on their Confederate sympathies and quickly head south." In addition, to the sons in divided families, the idea of their being forced into the Union army, by draft or even by their fathers, provided more incentive to act upon their Southern sympathies and join the Confederate army.[157] Although the state of Kentucky as a whole never resorted to offering bounties to new recruits, some local jurisdictions within the state did. Near the end of the war seventeen counties, along with the city of Louisville, passed acts that allowed the giving of bounties to aid in recruiting.[158]

Many Kentuckians of Southern sympathies had left to join the Confederate Army in the days immediately following the fall of Fort Sumter. Yet, the Confederacy did not push for enlistments in the state, both because of a shortage of equipment and because of Kentucky's neutrality. The number of pro-Confederate men leaving Kentucky increased after the establishment of Camp Boone as well as after the end of neutrality when Union

[156] Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 188, 190-191.
[157] Taylor, *The Divided Family in Civil War America*, 17-18.
[158] Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 188, 190-191.

authorities began to arrest Confederate sympathizers.[159] John Hunt Morgan was one of those who fled after the abandonment of neutrality. He had previously been captain of the Lexington Rifles, a volunteer militia company in Lexington absorbed by the State Guard upon its creation.[160] On September 20, 1861, Morgan slipped away with other members of the Lexington Rifles to southern Kentucky. John C. Breckinridge, former vice president and former presidential candidate also fled, instead to Virginia, where he joined the Confederate Army. Many Kentuckians would not see home again for years, including Breckinridge who did not return for eight years. Other distinguished citizens such as former Governor Charles S. Morehead were captured and sent to northern prisons.[161]

When John C. Breckinridge arrived in Bowling Green after Kentucky's neutrality had ended, Brigadier General Simon Buckner was struck with another way to recruit Kentuckians to the Confederate Army. He believed that if anyone could bring the Southern Rights faction under the flag of Dixie it would be Breckinridge. Buckner immediately wrote to Richmond, recommending that Davis commission Breckinridge a brigadier general and give him command of the First Kentucky Brigade. When the former vice-president went to Richmond in October rumors flew that Davis would name him to his cabinet where, critics claimed, the Kentuckian would bring some prominence to a group that was otherwise uninspiring. Instead, the Confederate president chose to stick with Buckner's original proposal, believing that Breckinridge could best serve the Confederate cause by returning to Kentucky. On November 16, 1861, he took command of the First Kentucky Brigade. Composed entirely of volunteers from Kentucky, the

[159] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 15-16.
[160] Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 88.
[161] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 16.

brigade was one of a handful of Confederate brigades made up entirely of soldiers from a state that remained in the Union. Most of them volunteered "for the war," instead of for a standard twelve months common in 1861.[162]

Many men looked for someone to follow to the Confederacy, afraid to go on their own. Humphrey Marshall had been a promoter of secession in the state. In the summer of 1861 he began to recruit young men in Owen County. By the fall of that year he led them out of the state to enlist in the Confederate army.[163] Another group of men joined John Hunt Morgan in his trek south. Only after the troops at Camp Dick Robinson and the Home Guard began showing hostility toward those not of Union loyalty and the Kentucky Legislature declared that the state would remain with the Union did Morgan make his decision to go south. Upon the disarming of the State Guard he decided to save the guns at all cost. Believing that his best chance of this was to make his way to Confederate lines, he resolved to head for southern Kentucky. Many of those he had commanded in the State Guard joined him in this venture. On September 20, 1861, John Hunt Morgan gathered the men of the Lexington Rifles at the armory. After sundown the doors of the armory were shut and many of the men participated in mock drills. The only sounds that could be heard from outside were those of marching feet and commands shouted by officers. While this small group of men carried out the charade of drilling soldiers, Morgan and the rest of the men loaded the militia's rifles onto two hay wagons. They went on to fill the empty crates with bricks, in order to make them appear to be full of rifles. The main body of men slipped out of the armory with Morgan, while the remaining men kept up their drilling. They marched up the Versailles Road on their way

[162] William C. Davis, *Breckinridge: Statesman Soldier Symbol* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1974), 294-297.
[163] Speed, *The Union Cause in Kentucky*, 32.

out of town with the rifle-loaded wagons covered with hay to conceal the weapons. When the guns were safe, Morgan went back into town to witness the fruits of his labor. He then contacted others who might go with him and left the next night with his following. A few miles from Bardstown he met up with Captain John Cripps Wickliffe who also had saved his guns and was leading the majority of his company to join the Confederate Army. Wickliffe turned over to Morgan the weapons of a neighboring Home Guard unit, which Morgan promptly distributed to the unarmed men in his camp, many of whom had come in that day as part of an unorganized band making its way to the Confederate lines. The men dubbed their bivouac "Camp Charity," and many new recruits joined the ranks there over the next few days. According to James A. Rampage, the biographer of John Hunt Morgan, the majority of State Guards from throughout the state of Kentucky volunteered for Confederate service. This proved to be the single greatest wave of Kentuckians to enlist in the Confederate Army.[164]

Upon assuming the Confederate command in Kentucky, Albert Sidney Johnston expressed the same feelings of disappointment about recruiting as Sherman had. He wrote to a friend that "there are thousands of ardent friends to the South in the state, but there is apparently among them no concert of action."[165] In the same letter he added that he could not go any further without receiving reinforcements, because it seemed apparent that he could not depend on the enlistment of Kentuckians.[166] Later when the number of volunteers rose to a more acceptable level, Johnston found that he lacked the capability to equip them.[167]

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[164] Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 89-91; Rampage, *Rebel Raider*, 45-46.
[165] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 17.
[166] Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 135.
[167] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 17.

In September 1862, General Braxton Bragg created another opportunity for recruiting as his Confederate Army invaded Kentucky. Dallas Mosgrove, only eighteen at the time, described this as a very exciting time with thousands of young Kentuckians eager to enlist in the Rebel army. In advance of Bragg's army, recruiting officers such as the trio of Henry Giltner, Tandy Pryor, and Nathan Parker entered the state. The three operated in the counties along the Ohio River, from Louisville to Cincinnati, and in those adjoining them. Colonel Pryor, shortly after the April 1862 battle of Shiloh, had visited his home in Carrolton, on the Ohio River northeast of Louisville, remaining for four days. On August 9, 1862 he visited again, this time in conjunction with Bragg's Confederate incursion into the state and in company with his fellow recruiters, Giltner and Parker. Their efforts resulted in the raising of the Fourth Kentucky Cavalry Regiment, C. S. A. The recruits were forced to stay quietly at home until they could marshal and organize the regiment. Union troops were in the neighborhood and posed a threat of capture, especially since unfriendly citizens might give information to the Federals. The new Confederate recruits had to be very discreet in their operations. On September 9, the regiment headed for Confederate lines.[168]

Confederate General Edmund Kirby Smith, operating in conjunction with Bragg, issued a broadside to Kentuckians during the Confederate invasion of the state. His army came to unite Kentucky with Constitutional liberty, he stated, adding, "I have no sentiment which does not befit a Kentuckian." Smith went on to attempt to convince the citizens of the state that his army was not there to disturb the peaceful and honest citizens. Instead he was there to defend them against the usurpers of power that he

[168] George Dallas Mosgrove, *Kentucky Cavaliers in Dixie: Reminiscences of a Confederate Cavalryman* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 15, 54.

believed had invaded the state as an irresponsible government that had destroyed American freedom. Kentuckians had heard such pleas before. Both Kirby Smith and Bragg expected to meet large numbers of Kentuckians seeking to enlist in the Confederate army. They anticipated being welcomed as liberators. Kirby Smith explained the state's need for liberation in his broadside to Kentuckians and looked for the men in the state to rally around the flag of Dixie. Unfortunately for Bragg and Kirby Smith, they did not meet with the reception they had expected and hoped for. [169]

Thomas Speed, who served in the Union army, argued that during Bragg's invasion, as the Rebel Army entered the state, Kentuckians actually went the opposite direction, enlisting in great numbers in the Union regiments. Although great numbers may have been an exaggeration, the Union army saw more recruits than the Confederates. The Unionists did this in response to the call of their governor, James F. Robinson who replaced Beriah Magoffin in the summer of 1862. The governor urged Kentuckians to rise up and repel the Confederate army that was invading their state. He went on to argue that "if there had been any doubt about the stand of Kentucky people, if they had had any inclination to join the Confederacy, the summer and fall of 1862 was the time that it would have been manifested, and it was not."[170] It was at this point during the Civil War that Kentucky proved its loyalty to the Union and that many men demonstrated their individual loyalty. No longer did Kentuckians flock to the Confederate army as many had at the beginning of the war, instead, Bragg's army entered a Union state with few men left that were willing to cast their lot with the Confederacy.

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[169] Edmund Kirby Smith, "To the People of Kentucky," Edward Owings Guerrant Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[170] Speed, *The Union Cause in Kentucky, 1860-1865*, 3-4.

In early 1863 an order came from Richmond for another round of recruiting. Each Kentucky regiment was to send a commissioned officer, a non-commissioned officer and two enlisted men into the state for the purpose of securing enlistments. The colonel of the Fourth Kentucky Cavalry selected Lieutenant Archie W. Smith of Company E, Sergeant Will Helm from Company H, and privates William J. Corbin and T.J. McGraw from Company D to go to Kentucky. On reaching central Kentucky the group split up for their different hometowns, where they thought they might be able to work more efficiently on familiar ground. All four of them were captured. They had risked much by entering Union territory. Pursuant to General Ambrose Burnside's General Order Number 38, Corbin and McGraw were ordered shot. Sergeant Helm "took the oath" (of loyalty to the Union) in order to avoid the same fate. Lieutenant Smith went to prison but escaped without forgetting his mission. Instead of returning to Confederate lines he did some of the war's most successful recruiting in Kentucky. When he arrived in Abingdon, Virginia to report to General William Preston he brought with him sixty four volunteers.[171]

Recruiting in Kentucky did not meet the expectations of other Union or Confederate states. Kentucky was an unusual case. The state did not declare which side it would fight for until September 1861. This prevented much of the open recruiting that took place elsewhere. In his two books on common soldiers, Bell Irvin Wiley describes many of the recruiting techniques used in the North and in the South. Throughout the South many men showed an eagerness to go off to war. They fought for many different reasons. According Wiley, "Most Southerners were convinced that Northerners were

[171] Mosgrove, *Kentucky Cavaliers in Dixie*, 121-122.

utterly unreasonable in their attitude toward the 'peculiar institution.'"[172] Despite a readiness to fight, there were moderates in the South who wanted to give Lincoln a chance. This is also very true of many Kentuckians. But for those in the South, Fort Sumter and Lincoln's subsequent call for troops ended their middle-of-the-road stance. For Kentuckians this simply led to a call for neutrality and strengthened the arguments of the more moderate voices in the state.[173]

Wiley contends that the dominant motivation for Confederate soldiers was adventure. War allowed them to travel, to associate with a large group of men, and provided them with the excitement of battle. There were many Kentuckians who sought adventure in war, but this did not motivate the majority of Kentucky soldiers. If they were seeking adventure, which army were they to join? They were tied to both sections in the war. Many who were motivated by adventure found it in the ranks of John Hunt Morgan's cavalry and his daring raids into Kentucky. This is not to say that there was no adventure to be found in the ranks of the Union army. War in and of itself provided these men with the adventure of a lifetime. Still, most had stronger motivations based on deep seated beliefs.[174]

Wiley argues that for the most of the war, recruiting was a painfully slow process. Nevertheless, in the weeks after Fort Sumter northerners flocked in great numbers to enlist. Although this may have been true of men in other Union states, Kentucky again proved to be the exception. Kentuckians did not flock to enlist in either army in numbers as great as in the northern states. Instead they sought to keep their beloved state out of

[172] Bell Irvin Wiley, *The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1943), 15.
[173] Ibid., 16.
[174] Ibid., 17.

the fight altogether. It was in response to Lincoln's call for troops that the Kentucky legislature declared neutrality. Many Kentuckians waited to see which side their state would choose before making their own decision. Over the course of the summer many did eventually begin to enlist, but the reaction in Kentucky never equaled that of other states. Indeed, within a year from Fort Sumter, volunteering for the Union army had begun to slow. With this authorities began to threaten drafting men into the army.[175]

Kentucky also showed similarities to the other states. In the North, most of the first men to enter the war had been members of the militia, much like the members of the State Guard and Home Guard from Kentucky who were mustered into the opposing armies. The vast majority of Yankee soldiers entered the army in volunteer regiments that were organized in their home state and then entered service in the Federal army for periods of three months to three years. The men that created such units were typically those who hoped to become officers. These men solicited others using simple personal appeals as well as broadsides and advertisements. Mass meetings would often be held where prominent citizens would give speeches, encouraging men to enlist. Similar events did take place in Kentucky, especially when Unionists tried to get men to enlist in the Union army. John W. Tuttle of Wayne County in southeastern Kentucky helped raise a company for the Union army. On several occasions Tuttle wrote in his diary about attending speeches given by Union men, particularly speeches by Thomas Bramlette who was raising a Union regiment and would be Tuttle's commanding officer early in the Civil War.[176]

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[175] Bell Irvin Wiley. *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1952), 17, 20.
[176] Ibid, 17, 20, 21; Ed Hambleton Tapp and James C. Klotter, ed., *The Union the Civil War and John W. Tuttle* (Frankfort: The Kentucky Historical Society, 1980), 24.

Kentucky sent 61,787 white males to fight for the Union, approximately twenty-five percent of men between the ages of fifteen and forty-nine living in the state. Although no numbers are completely accurate Kenneth Williams and James Russell Harris, in an article about Kentucky in 1860, argued that the most reliable numbers were those compiled at the end of 1864 by Kentucky Adjutant General D. W. Lindsey. The high-end estimates place thirty-five percent of Kentucky men of fighting age in Union ranks. This total includes black males, men serving in the Home Guard, and those in Kentucky State Forces. Unfortunately, there are no existing accurate figures for Confederates from Kentucky. Estimates range from 25,000 to 40,000. This would mean that somewhere between ten and sixteen percent of Kentucky men of fighting age fought for the Confederacy. Using these numbers, somewhere between forty and fifty percent of eligible men in Kentucky fought during the Civil War.[177]

Men in Kentucky were motivated to fight for many of the same reasons as any other soldiers, both North and South. They sought adventure. They fought for political reasons. Confederate soldiers fought for states' rights, to preserve slavery, and many fought in the opposing armies out of a sense of duty and love for their country. Many would describe their sense of duty as they fought against other Kentuckians on the battlefield. What is so astounding about these men is that, although they fought for many of the same reasons, they fought as enemies on the battlefields. These men were the product of their time, of their raising, and of their environment. There is no solid line that separated Confederate Kentuckians from those who remained loyal to the Union. Rebels and Yankees could be found in all regions of the state, among all classes and occupations.

[177] Kenneth H. Williams and James Russell Harris. "Kentucky in 1860: A Statistical Overview" *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society,* 103, 4, (Autumn 2005), 756-757.

Being a slave owner did not necessarily mean that one was also a Confederate sympathizer. Even more striking is the number of men in Kentucky who completely sat the war out, who made the conscious decision not to fight. If forty to fifty percent of men fought, then fifty to sixty percent of men made the decision to sit the war out. The situation in Kentucky was different from that of most southern and northern states. In being citizens of a border state, most Kentuckians had ties to both sections, and this led many men to not cast their lot with either side, to simply let the war be fought without them. For them, this seemingly proved easier than choosing where their loyalties truly lay.

Chapter 3

More "Lincoln Weather"

Political Motivations to Fight for the Confederacy

The election of Lincoln in 1860 meant the end of support of the Union for some Kentuckians. The tragedy of the Civil War was that "both sides were fighting for the same thing: America, as each side envisioned what the young nation should be." Many Kentuckians had opposing views of what the nation should be. For some, a deep hatred for the Republican Party and its antislavery ideology motivated them to cross state lines and enlist in the Confederate army. Others feared that the election of a Republican meant the end for states' rights, which to most southerners was tied directly to the right to own slaves. They feared that soon the federal government would increase its own power and thereby lessen the power of the states to govern themselves. To these Kentuckians this meant an end to slavery and the Southern way of life. Once the war broke out in April 1861 these men believed that Lincoln was trying to keep the country together through coercion, something that they would not stand for. Although there were multiple reasons why Kentuckians fought for the Confederacy, some were motivated by what they defined as politics. Whether a hatred of the North, contempt for Lincoln, or a fear of losing states' rights, the motivation for some Kentuckians to enlist in the Confederate army was founded in political ideologies.[178]

Kentucky's vote for John Bell in the 1860 Presidential election seemed to foreshadow a middle-of-the-road stance for the state, siding with the only candidate who

[178] James I. Robertson, Jr. *Soldiers Blue and Gray* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 3.

did not take a clear stance on slavery, but rather ran on a platform of simply preserving the Union.[179] Yet, the state did make one point clear. With only 1,364 of the 146,196 votes cast for Lincoln, the state showed that it knew what result the Republican's election would bring and wanted no part of it. On January 18, 1861 Mildred Fry Bullitt, the mother of three future Confederate soldiers as well as two loyal Union men, expressed the fear shared with many in her hometown of Oxmoor and surrounding areas. The slaves in that part of Kentucky near Louisville began to tell their owners of their coming freedom. They believed once Lincoln came to power that he would set them free. Mrs. Bullitt set her slaves straight when she told them that Lincoln did not have the power to set them free. Still, this only strengthened the concerns of many southern sympathizers about Lincoln's election.[180]

The hostility of many Kentuckians toward Lincoln was evident in Bullitt's son, Thomas Bullitt, who cast his vote for John C. Breckinridge in 1860, the first election he ever participated in.[181] Thomas concluded, upon his examination of the Constitution, that the secession of Southern states was "Constitutionally right – politically unwise."[182] He remained convinced that the purpose of the Republican Party was war and that the Democrats were too cowardly to resist them.[183] In the days before the First Battle of Manassas, Bullitt visited Washington D.C. During his time in the city he caught his first glimpse of President Lincoln and was not at all impressed. In his recollections of the war, written in 1907, Bullitt remembered his dislike of Lincoln's position and ideology.

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[179] Ibid., 4.
[180] Mildred Fry Bullitt to Tom, 18 January 1861, Bullitt Family Papers, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[181] Thomas W. Bullitt, "Some Recollections of the War", 29 August 29, Bullitt Family Papers, Filson Historical Society, Manuscript Collection, Louisville, Kentucky, 2.
[182] Thomas Walker Bullitt, Diary, Thomas Walker Bullitt Papers, Filson Historical Society, Manuscript Collection, Louisville, Kentucky, 9.
[183] Ibid.

Of that first sight of Lincoln he commented years later, "I did not understand the power which resided in that homely face and ungainly figure."[184]

Bullitt believed that the heart of the South was moved to action through the conviction that the war was one of conquest, designed to destroy the South's cherished theory of government and, if successful their independence and freedom too. He knew that the main political issue leading up to the war was slavery. Still, he held that a love of slavery and a desire to continue it did not motivate the South to resist northern aggression. Instead, the South's motivation came from the universal conviction that the forcible destruction of slavery also meant the destruction of the Constitution and the conquest of the South. To Bullitt and many other Southerners, the Constitution and freedom were directly related to the institution of slavery.[185] Although some recollections after the war were written for purposes of self-justification, Thomas Bullitt's were not written for publication. Regardless of his motives in writing after the war, he stated the truth when he wrote that the war was about slavery. Preserving the South's theory of government ultimately came down to preserving slavery. It is in such statements as these that we find the true motives behind the political arguments of Confederate soldiers.

At the time of the election, secession, and the outbreak of the Civil War, Thomas Bullitt resided in Philadelphia with his brother, John C. Bullitt, studying law. Although Thomas's sympathies lay with the South, John believed himself in a more difficult position. Although raised in Kentucky he had lived in Philadelphia for more than a decade and built up a large law practice. Politically John identified with the States'

[184] Bullitt, "Some Recollections of the War", 13-14.
[185] Bullitt, "Some Recollections of the War", 10.

Rights Democrats and held sympathies for the Southern cause in its struggle against what he perceived as northern aggression in the years leading up to the Civil War. Yet, his judgment led him to believe that secession was unwise and the wrong course of action for the South. He also condemned Southern leaders for "forcing secession."[186] Upon the outbreak of the war, since he was now a citizen of Pennsylvania, he felt bound to give his support to the government of the United States, and he continued to do so throughout the war. Although he remained loyal to the Union, he strongly disagreed with the policies of Lincoln. John fervently denounced the actions of the federal Government in forcing the South to remain a part of the Union and also resented Lincoln's suspension of the Writ of Habeas Corpus.[187] If men who remained loyal to the United States despised Lincoln for what they chose to characterize as his radical stance on slavery and the actions that he and his administration took against the Southern states, it is no wonder that John's brother Thomas, who had not resided in Philadelphia so long, or those who remained in his native state of Kentucky, could be motivated by their hatred of the president.

Thomas Bullitt had another brother, Joshua, still residing in Kentucky who sat on Kentucky's Court of Appeals and took a Union stance. He remained a strong supporter of the Union cause until after Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. Upon entering Kentucky on a raid in John Hunt Morgan's army, Thomas Bullitt came into contact with Judge Duvall, a friend of Joshua's. Duvall informed Thomas of his brother's change of heart in his absence. Joshua had turned an about face in his attitude toward the federal government and had become, in the words of Thomas Bullitt, "about as staunch a rebel as

[186] Bullitt, "Some Recollections of War", 2-4.
[187] Ibid., 5.

Judge Duvall or myself."[188] It seemed that Lincoln's proclamation on slavery, as well as other events, had convinced him that the war no longer sought to preserve the Constitution and the Union, but rather had become a conquest of the South. Thomas believed that Joshua could have done immense good for the Confederacy had he immediately gone south at this time and enlisted. At only forty or forty-one years of age he could have provided great influence, though Joshua instead remained in Kentucky.[189]

Thomas Bullitt along with many from Kentucky and throughout the United States had hoped that something might be done to end the war quickly or to find a compromise for peace. He even held out this hope after the First Battle of Manassas, believing that something could be done to prevent any further bloodshed. He became alarmed with President Lincoln's 1861 annual message to Congress and with the legislative branch's response. Those steps, Thomas later wrote, rid him of the illusion that reunion might be achieved peacefully by what would have amounted to a northern surrender to Southern demands. Now, as Thomas saw it, "War, war and war [was] the purpose of the administration in the North." Like his brother John, Thomas found great fault with Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus. "A Reign of absolute terror had been established," he later wrote.[190]

A judge in Philadelphia that Bullitt knew and respected, and who was a states' rights Democrat, explained the Constitutional situation. Bullitt later recalled the judge's argument:

> the Constitution of the United States was a treaty between Souverign [sic] States or nations. United States was a treaty for itself, subject however to responsibility

[188] Ibid., 48.
[189] Ibid.
[190] Bullitt, Diary, 11.

> to the other parties to this treaty. The South, according to the principles of International Law, had the right to declare the treaty abrogated if she conceived that in material parts it had been violated by the other party. The North had equally the right to declare that its abrogation was a violation of a solemn treaty obligation. The only arbiter between them, known to the law of nations was war. The Citizens of each State or Nation owed allegiance and loyalty to its soverign [sic]. War, therefore was the sole solution of the problem.

The two sides, whether logically or illogically, had come to this conclusion. Yet, from his own analysis of the Constitution, Thomas did not believe states had the right to nullify acts of Congress or to renounce the Union.[191]

Previously, southerners had fought such measures as the tariff in Congress and in the courts, yet during the nullification crisis South Carolina sought more drastic measures. Looking beyond simply economic reasoning, the institution of slavery provoked these actions. "A society reveals it deepest anxieties," historian William Freehling contends, "when it responds hysterically to a harmless attack." In the prenullification years many South Carolinians were in an uproar over the northern antislavery movement that was only beginning to gain strength and remained only a distant threat. South Carolinians reacted in such a way because the idea of emancipation brought about visions of plunder, rape and murder. Furthermore, "the slave, too barbaric and degraded to adjust peaceably to freedom, seemed certain to declare race war the moment he threw off his chains. Moreover, in South Carolina alone, 80 million dollars worth of slave property would be wiped out." This posed a greater threat economically than the highest protective tariff. It is this crisis that sheds light on the motivations of

[191] Ibid.

southerners in secession and the Civil War. They viewed a threat to the institution of slavery coming not only from the North but from the United States government. They had previously aimed at preventing this by protecting states' rights, but now it seemed that with Lincoln in office, states' rights could no longer be protected within the Union.[192]

Henry Lane Stone enlisted in the Confederate army to defend states' rights. A native of Bath County, Kentucky, Stone spent the second half of his childhood in Putnam County, Indiana. At the time of the 1860 presidential election he had lived in the state for nine years, and at the age of eighteen he campaigned heavily in his county for John C. Breckinridge. Stone proclaimed himself an intense supporter of states' rights and therefore, with the onset of war, enlisted in the Confederate army to serve "that cause, which I believed to be right." The entire family apparently did not share his sentiment, as three of his brothers served in the Federal army.[193] As historian Amy Murrell Taylor describes, when Stone joined the Confederate army he did not just turn against the Union, he also rebelled against his family. According to Taylor, Stone's parents were staunch Unionists and, as a result, when he left to enlist in the Confederate army he did so without even leaving a note. Unfortunately, Stone would not be the only Kentuckian to rebel against family as well as country.[194]

As did many other men at the time, Stone put aside his studies to fight. Like Thomas Bullitt, he had studied law, and both poured themselves into the study of the Constitution and believed in a political ideology they thought the Constitution supported,

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[192] William W. Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina, 1816-1836* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 25, 49, 51.
[193] Henry Lane Stone. *Morgan's Men*, Regimental Histories, Mary Couts Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 4.
[194] Taylor, *The Divided Family in Civil War America*, 13.

states' rights. Still, like Bullitt, Stone wrote this after the war. His arguments about the ideology of states' rights are similar to many who wrote about their war experiences and, again, felt the need to justify their choices.[195]

On September 18, 1862, Stone left the opposing views of his family and state to return to his native Kentucky in search of the Confederate army.[196] He disguised himself as a poor farmer in order to make his way past Union pickets.[197] By the following week he was in Bath County, the place of his birth. Then on October 7, 1862 Henry Lane Stone enlisted in the Confederate army at Sharpsburg, Kentucky, joining a company composed of his boyhood schoolmates that belonged to Major Robert Stoner's battalion of cavalry.[198]

At the beginning of the war Kentucky lost some men who had previously supported the Union but abandoned their earlier stance to fight for the Confederacy. In 1860, Robert W. Hanson won a seat in the legislature based on his strong support of the Union against Kentucky's fire-eaters. With the beginning of hostilities between the North and South, he spoke against secession. Yet, his fears of federal encroachments caused him to have a change of heart. Historian Richard H. Sewell explains the limited differences of the secessionists and their opponents in the South as they agreed on many important things, which often led men like Hanson to change their stance. Few Southerners looked "at disunion as an end in itself. Even ardent secessionists would have remained faithful to the Union had they been persuaded that Southern rights would be

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[195] Henry Lane Stone. *Morgan's Men*, Regimental Histories, Mary Couts Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 5-6.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Taylor, *The Divided Family in Civil War America*, 13.
[198] Henry Lane Stone. *Morgan's Men*, microfiche, Regimental Histories, Mary Couts Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 5-6.

respected. On the other hand, few unionists were willing to sacrifice Southern rights to the Union. Most vigorously defended the slave system and shared the belief that secession was a constitutional, not merely revolutionary, right and that no state should be forced to remain in the Union."[199]

Hanson first made the transition to neutrality and then eventually to support the Confederacy. He believed that the Southern people were his people, and he shared a belief in their institutions, most notably slavery. Before the Civil War had ended, Ed Porter Thompson, who had fought with the Orphan Brigade, began working on the first history of the brigade. Thompson wrote that Hanson "stood firmly by the Constitution of his country, and could not quietly submit to seeing its powers transcended for the purpose of achieving designs inimical to any section; and as events began to develop themselves, they unfolded to his clear insight the purposes of the administration. He now paused in his opposition to the Southern movement, and found himself compelled, as he seemed to consider it, to choose between two evils." Hanson made his choice for what he viewed as the lesser of the two evils. His connection to the Southern people and his support for slavery led him to side with the Confederacy. Then on August 19, 1861, this former Union man was commissioned a colonel in the Confederate army and, shortly after, took command of the Second Kentucky (Confederate).[200]

A Kentucky politician, John C. Breckinridge, also defended states' rights. Breckinridge lost his father at an early age, and his uncle Robert J. Breckinridge stepped in to help John's mother in raising him. Robert Breckinridge was a nationally known

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[199] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade,* 40; Ed Porter Thompson. *History of the Orphan Brigade* (Santa Maria: Janaway Publishing, 2004, 1898), 376; Richard H. Sewell, *A House Divided: Sectionalism and Civil War, 1848-1865* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press,1988), 80.
[200] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade,* 40; Thompson, *History of the Orphan Brigade,* 376.

Presbyterian minister and a strong supporter of emancipation and the Union.[201] At the outbreak of the Civil War he had two sons in the Confederate army and one in the Federal Army.[202] After the election of 1860, John C. Breckinridge was attacked as a secessionist and a friend of slavery, though according to his leading biographer, William C. Davis, neither charge was true.[203]

In July 1860, in the midst of the presidential campaign, Breckinridge wrote a letter to Caleb Cushing, the president of the Democratic National Convention, revealing his thoughts on slavery and states' rights. Writing of the western territories, Breckinridge stated that the territorial governments were subordinate and should not be able to impair people's property rights. He argued that the territories were under control of Congress, "but the Constitution nowhere confers on any branch of the Federal Government the power to discriminate against the rights of the states or the property of their citizens in the Territories."[204] The property to which Breckinridge referred was slavery. He went on to state that people should be able to enter the territories with their property without either the Federal government or the territorial governments hindering them in any way. "It is well to remember," Breckinridge continued, "that the chief divisions which have afflicted our country have grown out of the violations of state equality and that as long as this great principle has been respected we have been blessed with harmony and peace, nor will it be easy to persuade the Country that resolutions are sectional which command a majority of the States, and are approved by the bone and body of the Old Democracy, and

[201] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 41.
[202] John B. Castleman. Active Service, Civil War Unit Histories, Mary Couts Burnett Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 41.
[203] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 41-43.
[204] John C. Breckinridge to C. Cushing, 6 July 1860, Breckinridge – Marshall Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

by a vast means of the conservative opinion everywhere without regard to party."[205] The letter was not necessarily secessionist; he was not calling for secession if a Republican were elected, he simply laid out the wrongs he thought had been committed by the Federal government and urged that it was up to Americans from all states to come together and find a common solution. He sought to prevent Federal encroachments on the rights of the citizens to take their property into the western territories. Still, it is obvious that his solution to these wrongs committed by the Federal government would have had to be one that preserved slavery.

A month prior to this letter Breckinridge gave a speech in which he defended the Democratic Party. He told people that the party was not for disunion and had no intentions of breaking up the Union. He stated, "I cannot bring myself but to think that these fears are utterly groundless." He went on to tell the crowd that he could see nothing sectional in the position of the Democratic Party.[206]

After his term as vice president expired, Kentucky elected Breckinridge to the Senate.[207] During this stay in Washington D.C., Thomas Bullitt paid him a visit. Breckinridge thoroughly impressed Bullitt with his knowledge of his constituents and outlined to him with "what seemed almost prophetic foresight the course of events in Kentucky." He told Bullitt that the state would not secede, since too strong a division of opinion existed among Kentucky's leading men. He also thought that the young men of Kentucky would begin entering the opposing armies according to their own views.[208] Still, Breckinridge continued to speak often for calm, compromise, and for federal

[205] Ibid.
[206] John C. Breckinridge, Copy of speech delivered in Washington City, 25 June 1860, Breckinridge – Marshall Family Paper, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[207] Ibid., 42.
[208] Bullitt, Some Recollections, 12.

recognition of the southern view of states' rights. He promoted neutrality for the state and worked to maintain Kentucky's position. His son left for Camp Boone during this period of neutrality and enlisted in the Second Kentucky, C.S.A. against the wishes of his father. Around the same time John C. Breckinridge planned a series of "peace picnics" where he spoke for neutrality.[209]

Still, by the end of August, events spiraled out of control. As Breckinridge's sympathetic biographer, William C. Davis, explained the situation, although the former vice president did not identify with secessionists, powerful Union men within the state were convinced otherwise. Even if he was not for secession they did not want someone of his popularity to stand in their way of linking the state with the Union. They became determined to arrest Breckinridge early in September and although the plan failed and would not be renewed, he quickly found himself on the defensive. With this he left for Frankfort to meet with close friends, some of them Union men, where he revealed that he knew that the South could not succeed, yet he also knew that if he spoke in favor of the Lincoln administration he could expect to be rewarded, possibly with a command in the United States army. Regardless, Breckinridge thought that he could not do this. He believed he must stand for neutrality until the very end.[210]

The end of neutrality loosened the restraints that had bound Federal military men, and the day after it officially ended they issued orders for Breckinridge's arrest. He received a warning of this plan and escaped, forced to leave the Union that he had loved since his birth. He then saw no other home but the Confederacy. Left behind in Kentucky were the men who had forced him to leave and who, in Davis's account, then

[209] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 42-43.
[210] Ibid.

bragged that they had been right all along. Because he left they believed that his actions only confirmed their accusations. Still, no one seemed to take notice that Breckinridge had not previously left on his own accord, but, according to Davis, left the state only when forced to do so.[211]

Henry Boyd and his brother William, who grew up in Kentucky but lived in Texas at the time of the outbreak of the Civil War, also blamed Lincoln for the war and were motivated by this to enlist in the Confederate army. William saw the South and slavery as going together hand in hand; one simply could not exist without the other. In 1860 he hoped that whomever the Democrats chose to run for president would "be a good & true man possessing sound principals of Democracy and having an eye single to the welfare of our Southern institutions that he may be a man the whole South will concentrate on and vote as a unit."[212] William would not see the fruition of such a desire; the South would not unite behind one candidate. In February 1861, in a letter to his family still in Kentucky, Henry did not think that the bad political state of the country would ever cause the two sides to come to blows, that is, unless Lincoln interfered. He feared that Lincoln would try to coerce the Southern States, the outcome of which he believed would be war.[213] When Henry Boyd and his brother enlisted in the Confederate Army in May of 1861, he still believed that his services would not be needed. Instead, he believed that those closer to the "seat of war" would see the fighting and that a great amount of preparation would take place but with no fighting. A great amount of

[211] Ibid., 43-44.
[212] W. M. Boyd to Bro. and Relatives, 24 August 1860, Boyd-Wilson-Wherritt Papers, 97SC205, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky.
[213] Ibid., H. W. Boyd to Ma, 13 February 1861.

preparation did take place, but so did years of fighting. Boyd and thousands of other men would eventually see more than their share of war.[214]

Many Kentuckians were raised by parents who loved the Union and sought to instill the same love in their children. Yet their love for the Union never overcame their crusade to keep the institution of slavery. Many men born in border states were raised in a society that saw slavery directly linked to upward mobility. They viewed this as something crucial to their future independence. For them, the younger generation, a challenge to slavery seemed an attack upon their future and their way of life, and Abraham Lincoln seemed to threaten slavery. With this explanation, it is understandable that this generation of Kentuckians would seek to join the Confederate defense of slavery. Their fathers had seen threats to slavery before but had also witnessed the compromises between the North and South and had more faith that within the Union, slavery could still be preserved. This younger generation had seen no such compromise; they had only felt the threat to the institution.[215]

Born in Henderson County and raised in Louisville, Kentucky, Johnny Green learned at a young age to love the Union. His mother, from Boston, was the daughter of a United States congressman, and she instilled this love in her son. Green hoped that a fragmentation of the Union might be prevented, but he believed that coercion was "fratricidal and unconstitutional." When Lincoln issued a call for troops Green believed it was for unconstitutional oppression, and "sad as it made me to take up arms against the country I loved I recognized that my first duty was to the cause of Constitutional

[214] Henry W. Boyd to Mother and Family, 29 May 1861, Boyd-Wilson-Wherritt Papers, 97SC205, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky.
[215] Taylor, *The Divided Family in Civil War America*, 25.

government." With this, Green enlisted "for the right of a state to govern itself." He went on to fight the next four years in the Confederate army.[216]

In fact, however, Johnny Green's case – and his motivation – was a bit more complicated than that. His grandfather owned many slaves, and he grew up in close proximity to the institution. In a passage that revealed as much about his own attitudes as it did about the conditions on the Green plantation, he described his grandfather's slaves as the best and most intelligent sort, "whose lives were made happy by the comforts provided for them, freedom from all responsibility and the knowledge of the fact that their master was one of the best and most important men in the country." Green himself did not own any slaves at the outbreak of the war, as he was not even twenty years old when he enlisted, but the institution had already had a profound impact on him.[217]

Twice during the war Green's father was arrested as a Confederate sympathizer, and by December 22, 1864, Green had become very embittered that the Federal army had caused such devastation in the South. Yet, more than that he suffered almost unbearably at the thought that the Confederate army had failed so far to hurl the Yankees back and show them that coercion was a sin that a wicked and tyrannical majority can never force upon a liberty loving people. He believed that because the Confederate cause was just, God would not let it fail.[218]

A soldier in the Seventh Kentucky Infantry, C.S.A. quoted Horace Greely from the New York Tribune, reflecting the views of many Americans toward secession. In an article written just three days after Lincoln's election Greely wrote,

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[216] A.D. Kirwan, ed. *Johnny Green of the Orphan Brigade: The Journal of a Confederate Soldier* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1984), 7.
[217] Ibid., 3.
[218] Ibid., 184.

> If the cotton states shall become satisfied that they can do better out of the Union than in it, we insist in letting them go in peace. The right to secede may still be a revolutionary one, but it exists nevertheless. We must ever resist the right of any State to remain in the Union and nullify or defy the laws thereof. To withdraw from the Union is quite another matter, and wherever a considerable section of the Union shall deliberately resolve to go out, we shall resist all coercive measures designed to keep it in. We hope never to live in a republic whereof one section is pinned to another by bayonets.

According to this soldier, during the first century that the United States existed, this idea became prevalent. The idea is one that he took hold of and which led him to enlist and fight to prevent the South being forced to remain a part of the Union.[219]

One Kentucky Confederate, Lunsford P. Yandell, asserted that they were fighting for liberty and fighting against the tyrannical North. Yandell feared that if the Confederacy was destroyed that the republican form of government in America would have reached its end. He hoped instead that England or France would intervene, even going so far as to hope that one of these nations would take in the Confederacy as part of their empire, rather than living under the rule of Abraham Lincoln.[220]

Not all Kentucky Confederates fought for states' rights. Some Kentucky Confederates were motivated by a deep seated hatred of Abraham Lincoln. Such a hatred of the president was politically motivated. They despised Lincoln because he had been the candidate, and then the president, of a sectional party. They disagreed with his policy

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[219] Henry George. *History of the 3d, 7th, 8th and 12th Kentucky C.S.A,* microfiche, Civil War Unit Histories, Mary Couts Burnett Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 11.
[220] Lunsford P. Yandell to Sally, 16 February 1862, Yandell Family Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

on slavery and often blamed him for the state of affairs in the country. Edward O. Guerrant, a newly minted officer in the Confederate Army, followed the lead of one of his superiors and referred in his diary to rainy days as "Lincoln weather." With this, Guerrant expressed his disdain for both Lincoln and rainy weather by describing bad weather in such a way.[221] In 1862 he transcribed an account of the situation in Kentucky given by a fellow soldier, Josh. He described a scene of Lincoln rule in the state, in which the situation had become so bad that he believed it did not even permit exaggeration.[222] He even marked the second anniversary of the day Lincoln became President with a bitter outburst: "O what years! What ruin he has wrought! Centuries will not repair it. Only half his time expired. In the other half he may make Earth a Pandemonium."[223] Guerrant believed at first that the war would end with the expiration of Lincoln's term in office, as he considered Lincoln the cause. He thought Lincoln would not see the conclusion of the war in his term, so that the ending of the disgraceful war would remain on someone else's hands. He believed that Lincoln would leave office with the war still raging, but that the next president would be responsible for ending it. Guerrant could see no reason for continuing it other than for Lincoln's own desires.[224]

Even those native Kentuckians who had left the state to make their home elsewhere joined with their fellow Kentuckians to fight. Adam Rankin Johnson, born in Henderson, Kentucky, had moved to Texas in 1854, at the age of twenty. When Texas seceded from the Union and began forming military companies, Johnson's two brothers Ben and Thomas attached themselves to a local battery, while two of his friends left for

[221] William C. Davis and Meredith L. Swentor, ed. *Bluegrass Confederate: The Headquarters Diary of Edward O. Guerrant* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999), 69.
[222] Ibid.. 131.
[223] Ibid., 225.
[224] Ibid., 255.

their native southern states. Each told Johnson to remain home with his new wife, only sixteen years old. He did not heed their advice and instead made preparations to make her comfortable for at least a year and began his trip to Kentucky.[225]

He planned to visit his parents, still in Henderson, before doing anything else. They were both Unionists, and two of his brothers had enlisted in the Federal army. When Johnson arrived in Bowling Green, Kentucky he found a number of his old friends attached to Graves' Battery, C.S.A. His friends tried to convince him to cast his lot with them, but he declined and continued his trip. In Hopkinsville, Johnson came into contact with Nathan Bedford Forrest, in command of the cavalry force there. Colonel Forrest reminded him of his father and seemed like a born leader. At once Johnson decided to follow him. Johnson enlisted in the Texas Company of Forrest's command and eventually became one of Forrest's main scouts.[226]

When Johnson finally arrived in Henderson, he called on his two brothers in the Federal army. The three "walked and slept and talked freely together, there being no concealment on my part as to my military connections." Although in war they were enemies, nothing could break their familial ties, and they seemed to have a brotherly understanding that they would do all that they could to protect each other during the war.[227]

During this visit to Henderson, Johnson's true feelings toward Yankees came to the surface. One Sunday morning before he returned to the Confederate army he accompanied his mother to church. Along the way, part of the walkway was covered

[225] Adam R. Johnson, *The Partisan Rangers of the Confederate States Army,* microfiche, Civil War Unit Histories, Mary Couts Burnett Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 1-2, 38.
[226] Ibid., 38-39.
[227] Ibid., 48.

with a double row of planks. A number of ladies walked ahead of him and his mother. Ahead of the ladies, and moving in their direction, was a company of Yankee soldiers, marching by twos with locked arms. As they passed the women the soldiers forced them off of the walkway and into the mud. Johnson declared, "All the chivalry and gallantry of my nature and education as a Kentuckian rebelled at this indignity." Furiously he exclaimed to his mother that this revealed what kind of men comprised the northern army.[228]

On August 11, 1862, Johnson revealed his true sentiments as he returned to the state during his service in the Confederate army with only three men, bent on gathering enlistments for the Confederacy. He recruited a battalion called the Buckner Guards. Commanding the battalion, Johnson issued a proclamation to the citizens of Kentucky. "For the love of liberty, and the homes of those you hold dearer than all, will you stand still and inactive, while the enemies of your country are attempting to fetter your wrists and consign you to slavery…The Lincoln Government, while pretending protection, is despoiling you of your property, and robbing you of your liberty." A hatred of Yankees and their lack of chivalry coupled with a strong resentment for the Lincoln administration and what Johnson viewed as its tyrannical oppression proved motivation enough for Johnson to fight. Although he did not give his life for the cause he did give his sight, losing both eyes in the war.[229]

Many who left their homes in Kentucky to fight for the Confederacy did so based on their political ideologies. These men fought with "the conviction that the War was

[228] Ibid., 51.
[229] Ibid., 110, 174.

one of conquest, designed to destroy her most cherished theory of government."[230] Yet, these men rarely defined the South's theory of government, held so dear that they laid their life on the line for it. Although many expressed their strong support of states' rights and their fear that the South would lose its independence, most did not elaborate, although some admitted that the South and slavery went hand in hand. There seemed to be an unspoken understanding between these men of just what defined the Southern theory of government, states' rights, and Southern independence. The unspoken meaning can most likely be found in their support of the Southern institution of slavery. To these Kentuckians who fought for the Confederacy the Southern theory of government and slavery were one and the same.

Although each joined the Confederate army amid very different circumstances, this group of men fought for similar reasons. Kentuckians were motivated to join the Confederate army by multiple reasons and these men were motivated by political ideology and a hatred for President Lincoln. Many fought for the idea that they called states' rights. These men frantically clung to their peculiar institution and fought to save it. Some completely despised their northern counterparts, each for his own reasons. Still others simply disagreed with Lincoln and his administration, blaming his stance on slavery and his so called oppression for the war that they took part in, believing that had he only let the South be, there would never have been a war. Whatever their exact justification for enlisting in the ranks of the Confederate army these men shared a similar political vision that gave them a cause, and in their eyes, a cause worth giving their lives for.

[230] Bullitt, "Some Recollections of the War", 10.

Chapter 4

"The Bloody Altar of Freedom's Cause"

More Motivation to Enlist in the Confederate Army

Many Kentuckians enlisted in the Confederate army for reasons other than politics or contempt for Lincoln. Some enlisted in the Confederate army seeking revenge when they believed they had been wronged by the North or the Union army, and some enlisted for adventure. Others believed it their duty to God and their perceived country, the Confederate States of America. They sought to defend their home and therefore crossed enemy lines into the South, to be separated from their families for years in order to defend their country. Other Kentuckians thought that their honor was at stake and enlisted in the Confederate army to defend it. Kentucky men were motivated by multiple reasons to enlist in the Confederate army. In addition to enlisting because of political motives and a hatred of Lincoln, Kentuckians also joined the Confederate army because of revenge, adventure, duty to God and country, and honor.

A few Kentuckians enlisted in the Confederate army seeking revenge. William Milton began aiding the Confederate army before he formally enlisted. Along with other members of his volunteer militia company, the Lexington Rifles, he lent a hand in helping John Hunt Morgan and his unit, together with their weapons, to escape from the state of Kentucky. Still, Milton stayed behind not yet joining the Confederate army. Later, in response to General Braxton Bragg's invasion of Kentucky during September 1862, the Union army that had occupied the state began a hasty retreat. An Ohio regiment that fled Richmond, Kentucky had left behind tents, blankets, guns and

knapsacks. When examining the knapsacks Milton found in each a vial of what he took to be arsenic. Several cows belonging to a Mr. Adams, on whose land the Union regiment had encamped, had died after drinking water from the stock tank. Milton concluded that the Union soldiers must have thrown the arsenic into the tank in order to destroy the herd of cattle. This heinous, though almost certainly imaginary, crime prompted Milton to seek revenge. He first lent his aid to the Confederate army when he collected the supplies left behind by the Ohio regiment and passed them on to the colonel of the Thirteenth Arkansas. Although he was anxious to enlist in the Confederate army to have his revenge on the Yankee soldiers, he was only eighteen years of age and had promised his mother he would not enlist without telling her first. With that obligation fulfilled he took the next chance he got to enlist in Morgan's cavalry.[231]

Henry Bullitt also sought revenge for acts by Yankee soldiers. Federal soldiers robbed Henry Bullitt, the younger brother of Thomas Bullitt, twice in 1861 while encamped near Crescent Hill on the Shelbyville turnpike in Kentucky. They overcrowded his wagon on his way home from Louisville, stealing fifteen dollars the first time and eleven dollars the second. Henry quickly made a decision to even up the score with them at the first opportunity presented to him. His motive seemed to have been, at least in part, revenge. Historian James McPherson contends that the defense of home and hearth often transformed into hatred and a desire to seek revenge. Henry could not

[231] William Agan Milton, "Some Recollections of the War Between the States", Special Collections, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky, 3-4.

defend himself and his home from Federal soldiers while he remained in Kentucky, so he sought to do so as a Confederate soldier.[232]

Some Kentuckians set out for the adventure of a lifetime when the joined the Confederate army. According to E. Merton Coulter, "The cause of the South represented distinctly romance and adventure, and its appeal to the young and the intrepid was almost irresistible."[233] If duty called, it would at least fulfill the journey to manhood, and many feared that the war would end too soon. So they raced to enlist in the army and live the adventure of war. War seemed to offer adventure and these men chose to seek adventure in the ranks of the Confederate army. With a much stronger cavalry early on and the leadership of John Hunt Morgan and other daring cavalry commanders, the Rebel army attracted many who believed their thirst for adventure could be quenched by going south.

With Henry in the Confederate army, were many who had come as thrill seekers. These men typically entered the cavalry, some under the command of the famed John Hunt Morgan, accompanying him on raids into their native state and even into Indiana, while others enlisted in the cavalry commanded by Nathan Bedford Forrest. Still some sought adventure in the infantry. All of these men got more than they bargained for as the desire to get shot or killed did not motivate them to enlist, yet, if they sought adventure, they surely found it during their service in the Confederate army.

A desire for adventure also motivated Henry Bullitt, and he would eventually find both adventure and revenge through the Confederate cavalry. According to his older brother Thomas, Henry was at this time not yet twenty-one. Although, according to

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[232] Henry M. Bullitt, 2 October 1906, Bullitt Family Papers, Filson Historical Society, Manuscript Collections, Louisville, Kentucky, 1; James M. McPherson. *What They Fought For, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994), 18.
[233] Coulter, *Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 119.

Thomas, he was underage, he desperately desired to enlist in the army, but Thomas advised him that until he turned twenty-one he had to respect their mother's wishes. Reluctantly, Henry agreed to remain at home. The day before Thomas left to go south their mother asked if there was any possibility of changing his mind. When Thomas told her there was not, she decided that he should not go alone and withdrew her objection to Henry going. Their brother Jim came home to pursue his study for the ministry there, although he was destined to join the Confederate ranks as well.[234]

Henry headed south with Thomas, both looking for adventure, to join the Confederate army as soldiers in John Hunt Morgan's cavalry. Both planned to enlist as privates. Along their trip they encountered something they had not expected. While traveling through Tennessee they stopped for dinner at a house alongside the road. There they found a man, previously wounded at Shiloh or Fort Donelson. The young man described how a rifle ball had entered the upper part of the thigh, striking the bone and then scraped down it until almost to the knee. It then passed out, striking the bone of the other leg just above the knee and scraping it upwards towards the thigh. Both of his legs were withered, and to Thomas it seemed that nothing remained except the shriveled skin upon them. At this moment Thomas and Henry came to the realization that "War might mean something far worse than death," and it was obvious that many men would get more than they bargained for in the army. Still this did not deter them from their quest for adventure.[235]

After seeking out the Confederate army for adventure, the two finally reached the army, and having already decided which command to join before they left Louisville,

[234] Bullitt, Some Recollections, 23.
[235] Bullitt, "Some Recollections of the War", 28.

they sought out John Hunt Morgan. Once in Mississippi they learned that Morgan's command had gone to Knoxville, Tennessee. Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest was preparing to start for Tennessee, and Thomas and Henry joined his personal escort. During the trip Tommie Mayes, serving in Adams's Cavalry regiment under Forrest, tried to discourage them from joining Morgan. He explained how Adams had an easy going personality and did not give his boys any hard work, leaving them much freedom. In the country they had passed through of late, good food and pretty girls seemed plentiful. In stark contrast, Mayes explained, Morgan's command went around fighting all the time. This, to Mayes's surprise, proved an ineffective argument to those seeking adventure in the ranks of the Confederate army, as these men often enlisted under the command of a go-getter like Morgan.[236]

Soldiering in Morgan's cavalry proved both difficult and adventurous. Every man who served with him found Mayes's interpretation completely true. Service under Morgan required courage, "endurance, submission, hardship to labor," and loss of sleep.[237] Many of his cavalrymen proved wild and reckless, and had all the makings of adventurers. They rode day and night, often without sleep, food, tents, wagons or cooking utensils. Many times they would lie down on the wet ground already drenched, to steal a few hours of sleep.[238] Like Thomas and Henry, many of them had deliberately sought out service in Morgan's command. His career became known throughout the South and especially in Kentucky, drawing the admiration of many young Kentuckians, as well as the indignation of others. Fascinated by Morgan and his daring cavalry raids

[236] Ibid., 30, 32, 35.
[237] Thomas Bullitt, "Eulogy of Jim Mitchell", Bullitt Family Papers, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky, 3.
[238] Ibid., 3-4.

into Kentucky, Henry and Thomas made the decision to serve under him, largely in order to get in on that adventure.[239]

The cavalry seemed a favorite for many adventurous Kentucky youth – whether cavalry was what the cause needed or not. By September 1862 young Kentuckians had flocked to the cavalry in numbers the Confederacy found embarrassing. When Confederate general Humphrey Marshall sought to raise another regiment, Edmund Kirby Smith sent a sharp reply that more cavalry was already in the field than could be used advantageously. Instead, he told Marshall that he should attempt to enlist infantry and decline cavalry.[240] Five days later Marshall replied that President Davis had authorized him to raise a regiment of cavalry and if Smith had more men than he wanted, then he could turn the applicants over to Marshall. Marshall knew that many of these men would only enlist as cavalrymen, and he was not willing to turn them away. These men often found the cavalry more adventurous than the infantry and, as a result, did not desire to become foot soldiers.[241]

This problem of overly plentiful horsemen existed early in the war as many men sought the perceived excitement of mounted service. Even those who had fought in the infantry wished to make the move to horseback. Johnny Green's regiment, the Sixth Kentucky Infantry, originally enlisted for twelve months. After their initial enlistment ended, every man in the regiment wanted to join John Hunt Morgan. General John C. Breckinridge formed them on dress parade and proceeded to explain that their country could not spare them from the infantry service. One man cried out, "Lets reenlist for

[239] Bullitt, Some Recollections of the War, 32.
[240] Edmund Kirby-Smith to Brig. Gen. Humphrey Marshall, 7 September 1862, Edmund Kirby-Smith Papers, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[241] Humphrey Marshall to Edmund Kirby Smith, 12 September 1862, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

thirty years or during the war," and, though the man was exaggerating by declaring the desire to enlist for thirty years, the regiment met his declaration with a shout of approval. The papers were drawn up and each signed to remain for three years or during the war.[242]

Many Kentucky soldiers preferred the daring life of the cavalry, yet, because the Confederacy often did not furnish their necessities, they remained one lame horse away from having to enter the infantry. As George Dallas Mosgrove explained, many Kentucky boys found the thought of going into the infantry disgusting. The Confederate government rarely furnished the cavalryman with clothes or arms and never furnished his horse. The authorities expected the soldier to provide these things himself or obtain them from the enemy, which he usually did. Because he had to provide his own horse he typically took good care of it. The cavalryman often had four days rations in his haversack, but just as often ate them in one day. Yet, he remained "more provident for his horse than for himself."[243] The typical Confederate cavalryman as defined by Mosgrove "was a daring, reckless, happy-go-lucky, sufficient-unto-the-day-is-the-evil-thereof sort of a fellow."[244] Since the Rebel riders did not have their horses furnished for them, loss of a mount meant involuntary transfer to the infantry. That fit perfectly with Morgan's style of warfare. Besides that, the Kentucky cavalryman always longed to go into Kentucky, and Morgan often made this possible on his raids.[245]

Yet cavalry was not the only resort of Kentucky adventure-seekers. Some Kentuckians did not mind being in the infantry. In early 1861, C. A. Withers was the captain of a company of State Guard consisting of thirty-two boys from his hometown.

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[242] Kirwan, *Johnny Green of the Orphan Brigade*, 49-50.
[243] Mosgrove, *Kentucky Cavaliers in Dixie: Reminiscences of a Confederate Cavalryman*, 61.
[244] Ibid., 61-62.
[245] Ibid., 61-63.

At the age of eighteen, sensing that war could break out at any moment he spoke to his company inquiring who would go with him to join the Confederate Army. Eighteen other young men, all fearing the war would end before they could get there, hurried to Virginia. Along the way he recruited enough men to make up a full company which enlisted as part of the First Kentucky Battalion. As soon as Withers joined the army he went to have his first picture taken as a Confederate soldier with, as he put it, an "expression of gore and blood in my eyes, as if I wanted ten Yankees before breakfast, to give me an appetite!" Yet, a few months later the original lust for adventure that moved him to enlist in the Confederate army had worn off after a few skirmishes and one intense battle. Now he would exchange a pistol for a pair of boots, give another to a new comer, use his bowie knife to cut up salt pork, and rather than wanting ten Yankees before breakfast, "I wanted one after supper, and wanted him exceedingly small!"[246] When first ordered to Maryland Heights, the First Kentucky Battalion arrived without tents. Yet, coming from comfortable backgrounds Withers stated that "the boys enjoyed 'roughing it,' immensely." These men could have easily been roughing it in the ranks of the Union army. Yet, they had strong ties to the South and to many southerners, and it seemed that the South knew how to do adventure much better than the North. They had always looked down a little at what they took to be the softened city boys of the North. It is easy to conclude that even though they had family ties to the South and ties to slavery, they also had a slight prejudice against the North and whole heartedly believed that more adventure could be found in the ranks of the Confederate army than in the Union army.[247]

[246] C.A. Withers, "Humor and Pathos", C.A. Withers Papers, Southern Historical Collection, UNC-Chapel Hill, 4.
[247] Ibid.

John S. Jackman of the First Kentucky Brigade left home on a spur of the moment decision. On September 26, 1861, he left his home to go to the depot for the daily paper. There he met his friend William Stoner, who said to Jackman, "Let us go to Bloomfield to-night, and join the party going through to Dixie!"[248] Jackman had not considered going prior to this encounter, not knowing if his health would permit him to do so, but at once made up his mind to go with his friend. He went home and put on a heavy suit of clothes, trying to slip out without his parents knowing. The very next morning at Camp "Charity" Jackman's commanding officer assigned him to guard duty, and for the first time the new recruit proudly "buckled on my armor" – that is, put on the accoutrements of a soldier, marking the beginning of his adventure as a Confederate soldier.[249]

Whether they experienced it on foot or in the saddle, the war provided the opportunity for many events that were a far cry from the everyday lives of Kentuckians. If these men – and many others like them – had an idea of the ideological differences over which the Union and the Confederacy were waging war, they left no record of it in their letters and diaries. Adventure proved a strong motivation for some Kentuckians who served as Confederate soldiers. As a whole, it seemed to motivate Kentuckians less than other factors, though for this group it proved their main motivation. Still, those seeking adventure simply enlisted because of the times that they lived in. War broke out and they would not be left behind to hear the tales of war from others. In their youth these men sought what would become the adventure of a lifetime.

Although it is striking that these men no longer identified the United States of America as their country, their reasoning lay in the Southern way of life, in which they

[248] William C. Davis, ed. *Diary of a Confederate Soldier: John S. Jackman of the Orphan Brigade* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1990), 12.
[249] Ibid., 13, 15.

had come of age and which they desired to protect. These men, whether they owned slaves or not, had grown up believing that the institution of slavery was necessary for the South to survive. Not only that, but they had come to manhood during a period in America when it seemed the South was always on the defensive. They had heard the arguments for slavery and the accusations that northerners wanted to destroy the institution. The election of Abraham Lincoln and the beginning of the war only seemed to cement this belief. For these men, their sense of duty and defending their honor meant fighting for the South and, in essence, fighting for slavery.

Thirst for adventure was not the only non-ideological motivation for Kentucky Confederates. In the Southern culture in which they lived they had to fight as a matter of duty. Not to do so would have caused them a great amount of guilt. Southerners understood that duty was a binding moral obligation involving reciprocity.

In the years leading up to secession, a sense of nationalism had grown up in the South. Richard Sewell explains that this sense of Southern nationalism came out of more than just shared fears and resentments that Southerners held in common, but rather came from a unique cultural identity. He explains that "many Southerners had come to believe that theirs was a distinctive way of life. Just as northerners boasted of a social system that exalted free labor, unabashed materialism, and social mobility, so many Southerners had come to insist upon the superiority of a culture rooted in slavery, a culture which, it was said, placed honor, generosity, devotion to family and community, and the maintenance of social order above 'progress' and material gain." It was because of this

Southern nationalism that many Kentuckians thought that their duty lay with defending the Confederacy.[250]

The "Confederacy convinced its diverse and essentially 'local' population that the government could best protect their homes and firesides. To succeed in war, men had to be willing to leave home and fight in the Confederate army." These men not only fought out of a sense of duty to the South, but also out of a sense of duty to their families and homes, which they thought best protected under the flag of Dixie.[251]

Many Kentuckians not only enlisted to fulfill their duty to what they perceived as their country but also for a duty to God. From the state that sparked the Second Great Awakening came many religious men who believed their cause to be God's. If God believed the South's cause just, due to what they believed was northern aggression, then they could not lose. Southerners truly believed that their actions were justified, that had northerners ceased their attempts to interfere with slavery, then there would have been no war. Yet, both sides believed that they fought for a holy cause against an evil enemy and thought they were fulfilling their duty to God and country.[252]

Lunsford Pitts Yandell enlisted in the Confederate army because of a "high sense of duty."[253] As he saw it the Confederate cause was just and holy. He believed God was on the side of the Confederacy. Although he knew that he might not live to see victory, he stated that if he lost his life in battle he would "die with the proud conviction of having done my duty, and with an unwavering faith in the ultimate success of our cause."[254]

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[250] Sewell, *A House Divided*, 79.
[251] Mark A. Weitz. *More Damning than Slaughter: Desertion in the Confederate Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 294.
[252] Ibid., 72.
[253] Lunsford P. Yandell to My darling Pet, 22 April 1861, Yandell Family Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[254] Ibid.

Again and again in letters Yandell spoke of his belief that God was on the side of the Confederacy. By serving as a common soldier, rather than an officer, he maintained, he was showing his true devotion to the Confederate cause.[255]

Living in Tennessee during the secession crisis, Yandell enlisted in the army before Kentucky took a stand for the Union. In May 1861 he told his father that if only Kentucky would make up its mind and fight, he would somehow back out from his company and enlist in a company of Kentucky soldiers. He expressed his desire to fight alongside his friends, rather than strangers.[256] Even though he had hoped to fight amongst his fellow Kentuckians, he lamented that summer that Kentucky "was becoming more and more northern every day."[257] Although citizens of Kentucky remained divided throughout the war, Yandell's statement proved to be true as the state remained part of the Union. Despite this development, at the beginning of 1862 Lunsford wrote that he hoped he would not live to see the end of the war, should the Confederacy be defeated. He would rather see the annihilation of the entire southern population than see the Confederacy surrender.[258]

Both sides in the Civil War believed that God was on their side. Steven E. Woodworth notes that even Abraham Lincoln realized the situation. Lincoln expressed this in 1862 stating that "Each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both may be, and one must be, wrong. God cannot be for and against the same thing at

[255] Ibid., Lunsford P. Yandell to My dear Father, 22 April 1861.
[256] Ibid., Lunsford P. Yandell to Father, 10 May 1861.
[257] Ibid., Dr. Lunsford P. Yandell to Pa, 10 July 1861.
[258] Ibid., Lunsford P. Yandell to Sally, 27 January 1862.

the same time. In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party."[259]

C. G. Edwards described his desire to serve in the Confederate ranks to his mother in the summer of 1861. Edwards believed that he had joined a glorious cause. After the First Battle of Manassas he explained that he knew that someone would fall during the battle. Yet, he chose to face this head on and hoped that if someone were to fall that it would be him, and he determined to accept his fate and "bear it without a groan."[260]

Johnny Green believed that Southern men must do their duty to God and their country, the Confederacy, and that they fought for a just cause which God would not let fail. Green thought that the losses incurred at Vicksburg and Gettysburg did not hurt their faith. After all, their cause was just and therefore would surely prevail. He feared that the soldiers must have been "a little too puffed up with pride and confidence in our powers." What Green saw as justice may have been delayed but he remained confident that it would ultimately prevail. He thought that they should not hope to achieve their independence in less time than it took their forefathers to win victory over Great Britain. Historian J. Tracy Power explains that numerous Christians in the South believed that Confederate military defeat and economic problems all resulted from their inability, or possibly their refusal, to obey God. Whenever their side was winning, many chaplains would say it was because the soldiers were keeping the faith. Yet, if the Confederacy was losing they would offer than the setback had been caused by sinfulness.[261]

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[259] Steven E. Woodworth. *While God is Marching On: The Religious World of Civil War Soldiers* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 5.
[260] C.G. Edwards to Mother, 30 July 1861, Edwards Family Letters, 95SC22, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky.
[261] Ibid.; J. Tracy Power. *Lee's Miserables: Life in the Army of Northern Virginia from the Wilderness to Appomattox* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 5; Robertson, *Soldiers Blue and Gray*, 181.

On the night after the first day's bloody fighting at Chickamauga, Green lay awake thinking about the combat that lay ahead on the next day. In the day's fighting that had just ended, the men on both sides of him had been killed and he could not shake the feeling that in the next day's battle he would share their fate. He lay there and prayed that God would give him strength, so that when he met his impending death he would be found "gallantly doing my duty." He prayed also that he would not run from death but rather that it would help the cause to triumph. Green did not meet his death that day, nor any other day during the war. Yet, his willingness to give his life as his duty to his country mirrored the thoughts of many others who fought by his side on the bloody battlefields. Civil War soldiers linked courage in battle with godliness. They believed it was their faith in God that supplied their bravery.[262]

John Breckinridge Castleman, another Kentuckian motivated by a sense of duty, was born on June 13, 1841 in Fayette County, Kentucky. Although Castleman did not go into great detail, simply mentioning duty would bring him in line with many other soldiers who did not waste their time elaborating on the underlying motivations of their enlistment. Still, duty proved a strong motivating factor for many Kentuckians. Castleman thought that "nowhere is found a land with a people more attractive or more loyal. A Kentuckian is always a Kentuckian." Yet, in 1861 this meant very different things for different people. For Castleman and his two younger brothers it meant leaving home to fight for the Confederate army.[263]

In Lexington prior to the war there were two local volunteer military companies, John Hunt Morgan's Lexington Rifles and another commanded by Captain Sanders D.

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[262] Ibid,. 93; Gerald Linderman. *Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat Troops in the American Civil War* (New York: The Free Press, 1987), 8.
[263] Castleman, *Active Service*, 60

Bruce and called the Lexington Chasseurs. At the outbreak of war the two companies took opposite allegiance, with Morgan and most of his command going south, while Bruce's Chasseurs sided with the Union. Although the majority of the Chasseurs remained loyal to the Union, some, including Castleman, followed Morgan.[264]

Castleman, a corporal in the Lexington Chasseurs, prepared to give his "life to the Confederate cause." Once he returned to Bowling Green, John C. Breckinridge swore him in and Castleman set out to raise a company for John Hunt Morgan's cavalry. One by one he recruited soldiers from Fayette County and then set the date to meet at his mother's house. Forty-one men assembled – average age, less than twenty years old. His mother's only request was that John leave Humphreys, her next youngest son, and George, only thirteen, with her for the time. She expressed her purpose to send Humphreys later and then George as well, if the war continued, when he had grown big enough to carry an army rifle. It seemed that his mother was as loyal to the Confederate cause as Castleman.[265]

The night after Castleman left with his company, a detachment of United States infantry surrounded his mother's house. They arrested Humphreys and sent him to Johnson's Island as a political prisoner. While there he answered to a dead prisoner's name, was exchanged, and then served in Morgan's cavalry until the end of the war. His youngest brother George also eventually enlisted and served with his brother in Company D of the Second Kentucky Cavalry. All three felt a sense of duty to fight for the Confederacy.[266]

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[264] Ibid., 73.
[265] Ibid., 73, 77, 92.
[266] Ibid., 79, 100.

During the middle of July 1862, Castleman experienced his first independent command and fight. This fight, although in some ways much like others that he experienced throughout the war, was different in some ways. It occurred as Morgan's cavalry was in Kentucky on one of its famed raids. After Castleman's Company D had marched on the Iron Works Road for about two miles, they halted about eight hundred yards from an intersection known as Taylor's Crossroads near Lexington. There they encountered three boys known by Castleman who informed him a Union cavalry brigade was approaching from Lexington and was even now at the crossroads, less than half a mile ahead. The Federal horsemen numbered some 2,000, along with a battery of artillery, under the overall command of Colonel Leonidas Metcalf. The battery commander, Captain Henry T. Duncan, had been a boyhood friend of Castleman's. The Confederate officer described Duncan as a lovable boy and man who had grown up only four miles from Castleman's own boyhood home. Their experience in this fight was all too common for Kentuckians in this war, that of fighting against someone that they cared deeply about. As Castleman explained it, "we exemplified the horrors of a civil war by opposing each other in hostile armies, he with his Parrott guns to defend against the assault of the cavalry led by me, and with me were a number of Captain Duncan's neighborhood boy friends." Still, they remained friends and kept in touch after the war ended. Unfortunately, Castleman's encounter would not be uncommon for Kentuckians in the Civil War. They came from a state that was strongly divided by the war and would, on multiple occasions, meet friends, brothers, cousins, and other loved ones as enemies on the battlefield.[267]

[267] Ibid., 81-83.

A sense of duty to the South did not only pertain to common men, it was also felt by some politicians. In September 1861 as Kentucky abandoned its stance of armed neutrality, Union men forced John C. Breckinridge out of the state. In his farewell address Breckinridge told the people "I go where my duty calls me."[268] In this statement he shared a sentiment with many of the men who had already, or were destined to, leave the state for the Confederate army, many of whom had voted for him in the previous election. Breckinridge was destined to have a strong bond with these men, his fellow Kentuckians, who, unlike him, left of their own accord. Yet, although they ultimately left the state for different reasons, they enlisted in the Confederate army for many of the same. They shared a common patriotism for their Southern heritage and enlisted out of a sense of duty. They viewed the South as their country, having grown up with its institution of slavery and having been brought up to love the region as their own, this gave them the motivation to enlist in the Confederate army.

Even some who had moved beyond the place of their childhood returned to fight for the South. Thomas Bullitt had become a citizen of Pennsylvania while living there with his older brother and his family. Yet, he did not consider any allegiance due to that state, but instead explained "Kentucky was my birth place; the South was my home."[269] But he did not leave for Kentucky immediately. He later regretted his decision to respect the original position of neutrality in Kentucky, which he had done because, as he worded it, his loyalty to states rights could not allow him, at the time, to go against the voice of his native state. He also held out hope for a compromise between the North and South, preventing him from enlisting sooner in the Confederate army. Although he claimed to

[268] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 43.
[269] Bullitt, "Some Recollections of the War", 8.

support states' rights, he did not follow the path of his state. Ultimately he decided that the course of the Confederacy was one that would protect slavery and the way of life that his family had come to know. With this, Bullitt made the decision to become an enemy of both his country and his native state.[270]

Bullitt recognized the right of revolution and believed the South was in a revolution. Because of this view he eventually decided it his duty to cast his lot with the people of the South, the people of his home. Although his father also held southern sympathies, he had been writing to Thomas suggesting that he stay where he was. His father likely realized the difficulty in the situation. The United States had always been their country, one that Kentucky ultimately remained loyal to. Still, they were tied by both family and slavery to the South. It seemed the choice to fight for either side came at a price; there appeared no right course to take. Thomas followed his father's advice for a while but it could not last.[271]

Thomas believed that the talents which he possessed were strictly in the profession of law and so he had no desires to serve as an officer. He believed it his duty to serve the Confederacy which he looked upon as his country. Bullitt thought that he would fulfill this duty best as a private, offering his service and possibly his life in defense of his beloved country. He also commended the young men entering the Confederate Army which he believed typically did so with a complete disregard for rank, stating that it was common to see men in the army whose social position at home was above that of their officers.[272]

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[270] Ibid., 7, 9.
[271] Ibid., 7-9.
[272] Ibid., 31.

Edward O. Guerrant also enlisted in the Confederate army out of a sense of duty. On January 30, 1862, Edward O. Guerrant learned of a position secured for him as a secretary to General Humphrey Marshall. After much consideration and in "consulting my wishes more perhaps than judgment & friends" he made the decision to join the army with his friend Peter Everett, who had been in town on furlough.[273]

Guerrant had been teaching at a school with thirty-three students where he made fifty dollars a month and had a nice boarding house. He believed that he had everything his heart could desire, "except the consciousness of…fulfilling my duty to my country." Guerrant came from a highly educated family. His father was a doctor, and Edward Guerrant hoped to go into the ministry.[274] He did not identify with the South because of agricultural ties, but whether his family owned slaves or not, he grew up in a close proximity to them. He was a native of Bath County where slaves made up twenty percent of the population, although only four hundred and twenty-five men or three percent of the county's population owned slaves. Most of these men owned only a small number of slaves. Although slavery may have played a role in the motivation of many who fought for the Confederacy, it did not make Guerrant a Confederate, but rather patriotism for a region of the country with which he identified. His family had migrated to Kentucky from Virginia and therefore always maintained their Southern identity, leading him to call the Confederacy his country.[275]

On February 12, 1862, General Marshall swore Guerrant into the army of the Confederate States of America. The next morning he awoke as a soldier, although not

[273] Davis, *Bluegrass Confederate*, 14.
[274] Ibid., 4, 14-15.
[275] Kenneth H. Williams and James Russell Harris. "Kentucky in 1860: A Statistical Overview," *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*, 103,4 (Autumn 2005), 749.

feeling any more bloodthirsty than the day before. He continued to hold out much hope for the Confederate cause because of its justness. Guerrant quickly came to see the horrible nature of war, its trials, hardships, danger, and death. Should white Southerners gain what they believed to be their liberties, they would do so at a great price, as every day witnessed the sacrifices of hundreds, even thousands, "laid upon the bloody altar of Freedom's Cause." He believed the South could never be conquered, but Southerners could be slaughtered. He thought that the Kentuckians fighting for the Confederacy deserved a name "on the proudest page of our country's history" because of their self sacrificing patriotism, courage, and their endurance through the worst of hardships.[276]

Lot D. Young remembered that the history of Kentucky Confederates in most cases proved very similar. He explained that "All were imbued with the spirit of patriotism and love for the cause in which they had engaged, each determined to do whatever he could to promote and advance the cause in which he was enlisted." These patriotic men had a duty to the Confederacy and as a result joined the army to fight for their newly created country. Young enlisted in the Confederate army on September 8, 1861, just four months before his twentieth birthday. Yet, for two years before this Young had been a member of the Kentucky State Guard with the "Flat Rock Grays."[277]

On September 6, 1861, Young set out on his way to become a Confederate soldier. First he began by substituting his "pumps" for "brogans" which would be more suitable for a soldier's march. That night he stayed at the Louisville Hotel, but the night was filled with thoughts of the next morning. When morning came he went downstairs and flipped through the pages of the newspaper. Young felt terror stricken when he

[276] Ibid., 27-28, 31, 35, 37.
[277] Lot D. Young. *Reminiscences of a Soldier of the Orphan Brigade*, microfiche, Civil War Unit Histories, Mary Couts Burnett Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 11-12.

found that General William T. Sherman was stopping there. His fears were then intensified when a middle age man who had been eying him walked across the room, put his hand on Young's shoulder and asked him to a corner of the room. The man told him not to worry, but that the shoes he was wearing hinted of his desire to join the army. This man thought correctly that Young intended to go south. The stranger then told him that the train leaving that very morning for the South would likely be the last. Upon his advice Young made his way to the station and by that evening had safely reached his boyhood friends at Camp Burnett, Tennessee. The group became Company D of the Fourth Kentucky.[278]

Not all Confederate cavalrymen were adventure-seekers. Morgan's command also included men such as Thomas Bullitt and his friend Jim Mitchell who fought because of their concept of duty to their region and their southern brethren. Mitchell "when a boy abandoned the hope of the high education for which he had entered college and cast in his lot with the people he loved." His love for his fellow Southerners inspired him to fight for their cause. The men making up this command often came from a high position in society. Many men sought to enlist for the love of it and out of an eminent sense of duty to their country. This sense of duty kept these men going throughout their constant activity, day after day of demanding labor, and any day could demand the sacrifice of life. The duty to their country, rather than mere ambition, helped these men to continue to perform at their best.[279]

John Will Dyer felt motivated by a sense of duty not only to enlist but also to continue through cold, hunger and imprisonment, to face death in the hospital or on the

[278] Ibid., 12-16.
[279] Bullitt, "Eulogy of Jim Mitchell", 1, 3, 9.

battlefield. Dyer professed that his "only aim was to do my duty to the cause I had espoused along with thousands of other young men impelled by the same motive." He described an election, likely for the state legislature in August 1861, where Kentuckians chose between Unionists and secessionists. He believed that it had been held to discover the sentiment of the people of Kentucky in which they were asked, "Are you for the Union or State's Rights?" Against the vote of almost all of his family and friends, he voted for states' rights.[280]

Up to this point Dyer had always been a strong Union man. He had even tried to keep his friends from enlisting in the Confederate army. Yet, he realized that an attempt to maintain Kentucky neutrality could bring a two-fold disaster, forcing the state to fight two enemies instead of one. He also came to the realization that conflict was imminent, and he went where his sympathy lay and headed south. He then did what he had warned so many friends not to. He enlisted in the Confederate army and became a member of the First Kentucky Regiment, in which he fought under Ben Hardin Helm, the brother-in-law of President Abraham Lincoln.[281]

Dyer's father owned three slaves. He described the loyalty of the slaves that stayed with the defenseless women and children of the South, although this probably occurred more with those owning only a few slaves and therefore having a more meaningful relationship with them. He thought this told much about the slaves' character. He argued that although Lincoln had proclaimed their freedom, many chose to stay and refused to sever the ties which had bound them for so long to their owner's family. Such statements are telling of Dyer's views of slavery. Althought he wrote this

[280] John Will Dyer. *Reminiscence of Four Years in the Confederate Army,* Civil War Unit Histories, Mary Couts Burnett Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 5,14.
[281] Ibid., 15, 17.

after the war, and like many other Confederate veterans, sought to justify his actions, his words explain his favorable view of the institution of slavery. He thought that slaves were well treated in Kentucky and as a result were very loyal to their masters.[282]

These young men left behind their mothers, and no matter what side they fought for they could rest assured that they remained in her prayers. Dyer knew that at home his mother prayed "that he should do his duty to his God and his country." Not only did she pray for him to follow through on his duties but also that he would do the right thing. Often times when the men got a little too reckless or were tempted to overstep their boundaries, Dyer claims it was always their mothers' injunction, "do right, my son," that would bring them back and restrain them. These mothers did not push their sons to fight for one side or the other, but rather encouraged them to fight nobly and bravely for whatever side they chose. Many Kentucky mothers had sons fighting for both armies and they prayed this for all of their sons, not just those for the Confederacy. These women encouraged their sons to act as they were reared to do, in an honorable fashion as they dutifully fought for their country and their ideologies.[283]

Some residents of the Bluegrass State went to war because they believed that their honor was at stake. Confederate soldiers more often mentioned honor. To suffer dishonor meant to be publicly shamed. Still, they did not defend the flag under which they had lived. These men instead defended the Confederate flag. Their honor, they believed, could best be defended by joining the Confederate army, serving a country whose entire government was centered on the protection of slavery. Historian Bertram Wyatt-Brown argues "If honor had meant nothing to men and women, if they had been

[282] Ibid., 65-66.
[283] Ibid., 195.

able to separate it from slavery, there would have been no Civil War." Slavery was completely compatible with honor and in the end, honor and slavery became practically indistinguishable in the minds of Southerners. To them, the North was out to destroy the peculiar institution, thereby destroying the southern economy. Their failure to stand up and protect the South, they believed, would have been dishonorable.[284]

One has to question whether the slaveholders in the South would give up their world or not, which they identified with slavery itself, without armed conflict. "The slaveholders' pride, sense of honor, and commitment to their way of life," historian Eugene Genovese explains, "made a final struggle so probable that we may safely call it inevitable without implying a mechanistic determinism which man cannot avail." It was with for these reasons, the connection between honor and slavery, that many Kentuckians fought for the Confederacy.[285]

As early as December 1861, Sue Dixon, the sister of Henry and Thomas Bullitt, seemed very disappointed in the Southern sympathizers in Kentucky. These secessionists had looked forward to the arrival of the Confederate Army, but once the army arrived they began speaking of running from it. Of course Sue mentioned the "honorable exceptions," those men who would fight for their cause rather than just talking for it. Even the women, left behind in war so that their men could pursue their duty to fight, believed that those who did not stand up for their beliefs acted in a dishonorable manner. It is no wonder that men enlisted because they feared that their peers would look down on them as men without honor if they did not fight. After all, Historian John Hope Franklin

[284] McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 23; Bertram Wyatt-Brown. *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), xii.
[285] Eugene D. Genovese. *The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy & Society of the Slave South* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965), 8.

explained that "nothing was more important than honor." He argues that "while the concept of honor was an intangible thing, it was no less real to the Southerner than the most mundane commodity that he possessed. It was something inviolable and precious to the ego, to be protected at every cost." At the root of honor was the evaluation of the public. Wyatt-Brown describes three basic components of honor: self worth, one's self-assessment in front of the public, and the assessment by the public based upon one's behavior. He goes on to explain that "the internal and external aspects of honor are inalienably connected because honor serves as ethical mediator between individual and the community by which he is assessed and in which he also must locate himself in relation to others." In other words, "one's neighbors serve as mirrors that return the image of oneself." With this, many men enlisted in the army to fight for their honor.[286]

Lunsford P. Yandell, who fought for many reasons, expressed to his father the need to fight for his country, honor, and rights. Many men, like Lunsford, who left behind their Union state of Kentucky to fight for the Southern cause did so for honor. Many who had ties to slavery or hoped to own slaves someday identified the South as their country. If the South lost, the only way of life that they had known would be taken away. They fought to protect their adopted country, the Confederacy, with a government that sought to save their peculiar institution and with it the Southern way of life. In doing so their hopes of future prosperity through the institution would also be protected. Because they believed in these things, they thought that they had to enlist in the army and fight, if they did not they feared they would be dishonored. Edward Guerrant, another

[286] Sue Dixon to Tom, 22 December 1861, Bullitt Family Papers, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky; John Hope Franklin. *The Militant South, 1860-1861* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), 34-35; Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 14-15.

Kentuckian who enlisted for multiple reasons, chose to try his luck in a field "where honor & patriotism called me."[287]

Thomas Bullitt made the decision to return to Kentucky after Confederate general Albert Sidney Johnston took possession of Bowling Green. His brother released him from his obligation of working for him, and he wrote home informing his mother that he would be home for Christmas. His mother, Mildred Bullitt, either guessed his intentions or else figured that if he did come home the excitement would soon persuade him to join the army. As a result, she went to Philadelphia to join him. This forced Thomas to remain until her visit ended in April 1862, at which time he returned with her. Rather than going straight to the Confederacy to enlist in the army he went to Kentucky. He stated that did this in order to resume his citizenship in Kentucky so that he did not subject himself to the charge of entering the Confederate army while still a citizen of Pennsylvania, though one could question how that would be different from entering Confederate service as a citizen of Kentucky, as both states remained loyal to the Union. Previous to the battles that took place in the spring of 1862 at Fort Donelson and Shiloh, Thomas had believed that the Confederate army "was supplied well with men." Afterwards, he no longer believed that was true and became very anxious to join the Confederate forces. His mother continued to voice her opposition to him doing so and by this point his father told him that he would offer no advice, that Thomas should make his own decision based upon his own judgment. Still, he insisted that Thomas should also act the part of a man of honor.[288]

[287] Guerrant, *Bluegrass Confederate*, 14.
[288] Ibid., 21-22.

When Thomas and his brother Henry joined the ranks of Morgan's command, they believed they were following their father's advice and acting in an honorable fashion. For them to stay at home while others fought to defend a way of life that they valued would cause them to lose honor. When Mr. Bullitt told his sons to act in an honorable fashion he was telling them to stand and fight for what they believed in.[289]

Kentucky Confederates faced a hard road during the war. Adjutant General G. B. Hodge described this situation after the war, "The anomalous position which it [the First Kentucky Brigade] occupied, in regard to the revolution, in having revolted against both State and Federal authority, exiling itself from home, from fortune, from kindred, and from friends – abandoning everything which makes life desirable, save honor." It was the concept of honor that gave Hodge's brigade the motivation to enlist and to keep going at a time when they needed it the most, when they abandoned their native state. He remembered nothing sadder than the retreat of the Kentuckians from their home. There still remained hope for the rest of the army as their families lay further south, still in security. Between their families and the advancing enemy lay numerous places where a battle could stop the invader, but for the Kentuckians such hope was lost. Behind them lay the graves of their fathers and their homesteads full of childhood memories. Amidst the Union troops remained their wives and children. On February 13, 1862, the First Kentucky crossed the state line into Tennessee. They had left their homes and families and would trust their honor to sustain them for the next three years. Their deep convictions that the South depended on slavery tore them away from their homes and

[289] Ibid., 31.

families for four years. They believed that they had no choice but to fight because it was the honorable thing to do.[290]

Another Kentuckian who enlisted in the Confederate army for honor, John Lafferty, described the situation in Kentucky late in the summer of 1861 as one where men were expected to have by this point taken one of three positions. Men were either for Kentucky remaining neutral, or they were strongly for either the North or the South. Those that had taken the latter two positions began to make preparations for their service in the war. This created an interesting situation for Kentuckians as "neighbor was arrayed against neighbor, brother against brother and father against son." Lafferty continued, "This presented a situation altogether different from that north or south of us, where the people of each section were united solidly against the other." Lafferty chose to take a strong stance for the South and started his trek to Dixie on September 15, 1861. Then on October 1 he was mustered into service for the Confederate Army. At this time he enlisted for one year of service to his newly espoused country. On November 6, 1862, he met the terms of his original enlistment of one year and was discharged. Instead of heading home, he and his company immediately, and with few exceptions, reenlisted for a term of either four years or the duration of the war. He admitted that by this time all issues had been defined between the North and the South. With this they thought that they served a just cause and therefore willingly pledged their services, and quite possibly their lives, to the Confederate government. Lincoln had already issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, confirming that if the Confederacy did not win the war, then they would lose their slaves. Although Kentucky slaves were exempt from the

[290] Adjutant General G. B. Hodge. *Sketch of the First Kentucky Brigade*, microfiche, Civil War Unit History, Mary Couts Burnett Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 3, 10.

Emancipation Proclamation due to the state remaining in the Union, Lafferty realized that if the Confederacy lost and slavery was dissolved in the region, slavery in Kentucky would soon meet its death as well. With this, these men knew that their service was needed and determined to continue fighting for the Confederacy.[291]

George W. Johnson, who served as a volunteer aid to General Buckner early in the war, had a hard time thinking of the "crimes and follies" of the war. The price to protect their freedom was high, and he pondered, "Who can estimate correctly the amount of sorrow, and of misery to say nothing of the loss of money, caused by those who wantonly broke down the safeguards of our rights and who determined to make us submit to their will."[292]

Sometimes Johnson worried that the private citizens should be letting the government take care of itself, while they attended to their own business. Still, in January 1862 he believed that he held an unshakable nerve, whether the news he heard was good or bad his determination in the cause would not waiver. He credited his resilience to the inspiration of his honor and his duty to take up the fight for the Southern Cause.[293]

By February 1862, Johnson had determined that this honor and duty should also concern his son. During this month he sent a letter to his wife asking if she could spare the young man. Johnson told her to give their son up to his country and that God would bless her for doing so.[294]

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[291] John Lafferty, *John Laffery Narratives*, 99SC13, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky, 2, 8-9.
[292] George W. Johnson to _____[?], 15 October 1861; George W. Johnson to my Dear Wife, January 23, 1862, George W. Johnson Correspondence, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky.
[293] Ibid.
[294] Ibid., George W. Johnson to Wife, 15 February 1862.

Confederate soldiers from Kentucky lacked one single motivating factor between them, but instead had a multiple number of reasons to enlist in the army. Some sought revenge against the Union army while others were simply looking for adventure. The feeling of patriotism that arose among these Southerners instilled in them a desire to fulfill their duty to both God and country, leading many Kentucky Confederates to enlist. They identified the South as their home and therefore chose to join the Confederate army. Others fought in defense of honor.

Chapter 5

"The Shouts of Victory"

Kentuckians in the Union Army

Although men from Kentucky entered the Confederate army for many different reasons, those who fought in the Union army wrote of enlisting for one main reason: to preserve the Union. Still, these men had many reasons for wanting to defend the United States. Union soldiers from Kentucky believed that they had a duty to stand up and fight for the country that they loved, the country that they had grown up in, the United States of America. Male citizens during the Civil War era "had a responsibility to fight to defend the nation. Republicanism held as its highest virtue putting the good of the nation above one's own interests. To fight for one's country was a duty, it was also part of a man's self-definition." Bell Irvin Wiley explains the Union soldiers expressed a personal commitment to broad issues, they often proclaimed that they were fighting for "such concepts as law, liberty, freedom, and righteousness."[295]

Sergeant E. Tarrant of Kentucky explained it best. "War being inevitable, and hostilities already having commenced, the loyal men of Kentucky were eager to show their devotion to the cause which they espoused."[296] Tarrant also believed it his duty and served in the Union army. Although these men had grown up with others, sometimes even in the same household, who would enlist in the Confederate army, they felt a

[295] Thomas E. Rodgers. "Billy Yank and G. I. Joe: An Exploratory Essay on the Sociopolitical Dimensions of Soldier Motivation," *The Journal of Military History*, 69, 1, (January 2005), 112; Wiley, *The Life of Billy Yank*, 40.
[296] Sergeant E. Tarrant. *The Wild Riders of the First Kentucky Cavalry, A History of the Regiment, In the Great War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865* (Louisville: Press of R. H. Carothers, 1894), Civil War Unit Histories, Mary Couts Burnett Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 8.

stronger devotion to the United States. They had not been born and reared under the flag of Dixie. The Confederate States of America would not give them the freedom and protection guaranteed under the Constitution, and many thought that financially they would be safest in the economy of the United States. Therefore, their loyalty lay with the one country they had known all their life, the country that fellow Kentuckian Henry Clay had worked his entire political career to keep from breaking apart. Whether they owned slaves or aspired to, whether they considered themselves southerners, first and foremost, they were Americans. When their country was in peril, they did what thousands of men had done before them and even more have done since. They enlisted in the army to defend their country.

John T. Harrington of Harrison, Kentucky, located north of Lexington, enlisted in the Union army on November 16, 1861. In a letter to his sister in January 1863 he told her that he was fighting for the Union and the Constitution. Although Harrington knew what he was fighting for, he also knew about the determination of the Rebel forces. He had "seen war in all its horrors. I have been in the fierce charge amidst the shouts of victory and felt myself on the pinicle of glory. I have lain perfectly exausted among the wounded the dying and the dead. I have seen agony in its slightest as well as its most acute form, and I also have been among the number of those fleeing before a victorious enimy and all through the curssed blunders of a set of Political demagods with straps on their shoulders."[297] By this point Harrington had fought in several battles, and he told his sister that Southerners would not be overpowered or conquered. He had great respect for them as soldiers, describing the Rebels as men made of the same stuff as those who

[297] Stuart W. Sanders, Ed. "'I Have Seen War in all its Horrors': Two Civil War Letters of John T. Harrington, Twenty-second Kentucky Union Infantry Regiment," *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*, 105, 4, (Autumn 2007) 657-677.

fought in the American Revolution, who had their whole hearts invested in their cause and who believed that God was with them and would defend them.[298] Although he had respect for his enemy, he did not share their loyalty to the South. Instead, he remained loyal to his state and the flag he was raised under.

In a letter to an old friend, Harrington explained another reason why he enlisted in the army. A Mrs. Cleaver did not live up to a promise that she made to Harrington. Though he does not explain, it was possibly a promise of matrimony. With this, "rather than depend on the charity of any one or people I determined my Country called," and Harrington then enlisted in the Union army.[299] It was at this point that Harrington apparently made his choice to stop waiting on this woman. He realized that the Union was in peril and chose to enlist in the army to carry out what he defined as his duty to his country.

Benjamin Forsythe Buckner, a Kentucky lawyer and Union soldier, was concerned early on with what Lincoln's policy would be on slavery. Historian Bell Irvin Wiley contends that those Union soldiers who wanted nothing to do with a war of emancipation made up a large group of the soldiers, and Buckner was one such soldier. In a letter to his future wife in June 1862, Buckner tried to remind himself that he was not fighting for Lincoln or his administration, but rather "for a great government."[300] Throughout the letter he seemed to be trying to convince himself that Lincoln would leave slavery alone. Lincoln thus far had not permitted any generals to take antislavery measures, and until the point of no hope, Buckner believed the best course was to fight

[298] Ibid.
[299] Ibid.
[300] Benjamin Forsythe Buckner to Helen, 5 June 1862, Benjamin Forsythe Buckner Papers, Special Collections, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky.

for the side of peace, prosperity, and happiness. He feared that the alternative, fighting for the Confederacy, would only lead to lawlessness and commercial ruin. Although he fought for the Union, he was appalled by what he saw as the Constitutional violations committed by the Lincoln administration. Still, as he put it, he realized that in times of war "the laws are silent." Buckner thought that the only way to keep order in Kentucky was by remaining loyal to the United States. He, like many Kentuckians, believed that if Kentucky were to join the Confederacy that many battles would be fought within the borders of the state as they had been in Virginia. They believed that the United States provided a more stable economy than the Confederacy would.[301]

At one point Buckner reprimanded his future wife, Helen, for believing that he was a "damed abolitionist."[302] He told her that had he not been so in love with her and anxious to hear from her that he would have been very angry with her for such an insulting thought. He received five letters from her the previous day, and noticed that she no longer seemed to have Unionist sympathies. With this observation he asked her what had happened. She had previously professed being for the Union and denied being a Southern sympathizer, although he believed that her support of the Union had been very weak. Still, it did not seem to concern Buckner that she had become a Southern sympathizer. Instead, he told her, "You ought to have kept me better posted and have advised me of it."[303] For Buckner, it seemed that early on he enlisted to fight for the Union cause out of a sense of duty, and though he despised the Lincoln administration, the Union seemed the lesser of two evils. Early in the war it appeared that his loyalty was not with the South, but with the United States. However, he would later prove that

[301] Ibid.
[302] Ibid., Benjamin Forsythe Buckner to Helen, 10 August 1862.
[303] Ibid.

neither side held his loyalty. Instead, he was for the Union when it appeared he could have the Union and slavery too, but he was for slavery in any case.

In November 1862, after Lincoln had announced his Emancipation Proclamation, which Buckner vehemently opposed, Buckner told Helen, "We joined the people of the North (a people whom we did not love) to fight the people with whom" he and other Kentuckians felt more connected to through "the identity of our habits and institutions merely upon principle and to preserve that Constitutional form of government which was the wonder and admirations of the world."[304] Although he had familial ties to the South and a deep love for the region, he realized that the United States must be preserved. Unfortunately, by this time, Buckner regretted his decision to fight for the Union. Still, he did not wish to fight for the Confederacy because the Southerners had brought about war.[305] This was a time for Buckner to search his soul and truly decide what he believed in. Emancipation was not it. He had originally enlisted to fight for his country, the United States, to save the Constitution and American democracy. It was a form of government that had provided him with the freedom to own slaves. Yet had he fought for slavery he would have enlisted in the Confederate army. Still, though he loved the United States, his sense of duty to the country dissipated with the Emancipation Proclamation. Although he refused to become an enemy of the United States, he no longer desired to fight to preserve it. To him it was not the same country that he had been defending.

Isaac Johnston of Henry County was the son of a farmer who had received only minimal education. When the war broke out, he and one hundred other young men from

[304] Ibid., Benjamin Forsythe Buckner to Helen, 5 November 1862.
[305] Ibid.

his county enlisted in the Sixth Kentucky Volunteer Infantry to serve for three years. He thought that in an event like the Civil War, every man should have a reason for the course he took, for the sacrifices and personal danger that he encountered. Johnston enlisted to fight for the Union because, as he stated, he was a patriot. He loved his country in an unselfish way, not only in the days of peace and prosperity, but also when war clouds had settled over the country. Johnston thought that no freer government had ever existed, and therefore he had a duty to fight to preserve it. He did not seek adventure, as some Confederate soldiers had. Instead, he stated that "no love of war and bloodshed led me to the field; the charter of our independence was sealed with blood, the very blessings of civil and religious liberty which we enjoy I felt to be purchased by noble lives freely given; and to preserve them for generations yet to come I felt to be worth as great a sacrifice."[306] Johnston had no desire for the bloodshed of war or the experience of a soldier. He loved democracy. He loved the freedoms that came only with being a citizen of the United States of America, and he enlisted in the Union army to defend the liberty that had been bought with the blood of patriots in the American Revolution.

Despite being a slave owner, Benjamin F. Stevenson decided to fight for the Union. After the war he recounted the conversation with his older brother Tom, in which Benjamin told Tom that he was enlisting as a surgeon in the Union army. Tom was the editor of the *Frankfort Yeoman*, which Benjamin described as the "most pronounced, outspoken rebel sheet in the State."[307] Tom advised him to go home and take care of his family because the South could not be conquered. They walked through the streets of Frankfort, Kentucky, each pleading his case. Tom said that he was sorry to see his

[306]Capt. I. N. Johnston. *Four Months in Libby and the Campaign Against Atlanta*, Civil War Unit Histories, Mary Couts Burnett Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth Texas, 14, 15, 17, 18.
[307] Stevenson, "Kentucky Neutrality in 1861," 11-12.

brother willing to join in a war that was being waged to overthrow slavery. Benjamin replied, "You have known me for years as a slave-owning, anti-slavery man, and now I have to say that, so far as I am personally concerned, slavery may be damned."[308] Then Tom tried to convince his brother that there was no way that the North could conquer millions of people on their own soil. Benjamin reminded him that their grandfather had fought in the American Revolution. Their father had been a soldier in the War of 1812, and Benjamin argued that he would be a disgrace to the family if he did not follow in their footsteps. The two brothers, each realizing that he could not convince the other, finally agreed to disagree. With this decision, Tom gave his brother a pearl-handled pocket knife to help him along the way.[309] As with many families in the state, although they supported opposing sides in the war, they loved each other and would do anything in their power to protect their family.

Benjamin F. Stevenson argued that his owning slaves was due to birth, marriage, and the laws of descent. Although he owned slaves, he never tried to justify the institution of slavery. Stevenson did not oppose emancipation, and in 1849, he even voted in favor of a system of gradual emancipation within his state.[310] With this, it should not be a surprise that Stevenson enlisted in the Union army. Unlike many slave-owning Kentuckians who entered the ranks of the Confederate army, he was not willing to fight to keep slavery a permanent fixture in the South. Instead, he followed his state and fought for his country.

In December 1861 Stevenson wrote a letter to his sister informing her that he had enlisted in the Union army as a surgeon. He seemed to imply that he would not have

[308] Ibid., 11-12.
[309] Ibid., 12.
[310] Ibid., 12, 16.

enlisted in the army as an infantry soldier, but since the position of surgeon was offered to him, he took it, even though it was not the position of senior surgeon. Stevenson felt that the government had the right to demand the services of all American citizens and therefore did not drag his feet about enlisting in the army. He was mustered into the Twenty-third Kentucky Infantry on December 16, 1861. Stevenson worried about leaving his wife and children behind, "but an all-absorbing, all engrossing sense of duty, alike to country & family, impelled me to my present position."[311] He expressed to his sister the hope that his mother had reconciled herself to his duty in the army, believing that the country must be defended and that it was his duty as much as any to see to its defense. He also believed that he was honoring his father's memory, who was a veteran of the United States Army, by doing his part to preserve the United States government. Although he felt the pull of being the head of his household and being needed there by his family, he told his wife that he believed he was doing more to protect her in war than he could do from home.[312]

While stationed in Ashland, Kentucky in the eastern portion of the state, near the Ohio River, Stevenson commented on the lack of secessionists. The townspeople explained to him that after the August elections, in which a majority of Union men had been elected to the state legislature, a radical change had occurred in the public sentiment in town and the secessionists were silent. While stationed at another town in eastern Kentucky, Stevenson faced a situation that was quite the opposite. Piketon proved a hotbed of disunion, which appalled Stevenson. Still, by the end of April 1862 Stevenson

[311] B. F. Stevenson, *Letters From the Army, 1862-1864* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1886), microfiche, Civil War Unit Histories, Mary Couts Burnett Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 7-8.
[312] Ibid., 8. 103.

had traveled across much of the state with the army. By this time he told his wife that the more he saw of Kentucky the more he loved his state and the prouder he became of the position that it took. However, he remained unhappy with the position of his own county, Boone County, which he described as having a lack of loyalty.[313] Boone County is located in the northern portion of Kentucky, demonstrating that no part of the state was immune to southern sympathizers. Whether living in the north or south of the state, in areas with large numbers of slaves or in heavily commercial areas with few, no part of the state was free of people of either Unionist or secessionist sentiments.

Another Kentucky Union soldier, John Tuttle, was born in Wayne County, in southeastern Kentucky on August 6, 1837. He earned his law degree at the University of Louisville in 1860 and then returned to Wayne County. Many of the leading citizens in Tuttle's county were slave owners. Even those who did not own slaves were touched by the institution, as many had family members who owned slaves. Regardless, when the Civil War broke out, Wayne County was a Unionist stronghold.[314]

John Tuttle was the son of a slave owner. Yet, this did not lead him down the same path as others to fight in the Rebel army. On April 23, 1861, Tuttle campaigned for strong Union candidates to attend to the border state convention. From the beginning of the secession crisis and hostilities, Tuttle stood for the Union. Within a couple of weeks he was working to organize a company to help defend Kentucky against any outside invasion. He was able to enlist thirty men in just one day. The company that Tuttle had

[313] Ibid., 13,24-25, 60, 62.
[314] Tapp and Klotter, *The Union the Civil War and John W. Tuttle*, 1-4.

organized was known as the Wayne Guards, its members took their oaths as state militia on May 18.[315]

That summer, Tuttle's attention shifted from protecting his state to protecting his country. In July he went to Albany to attend a speech given by Thomas E. Bramlette. Bramlette appealed to the crowd on behalf of the Union, calling on the loyal citizens in the county to join a regiment that he was raising to help defend the Unionists of East Tennessee. That day thirty men enlisted as infantrymen and eighty-seven as cavalrymen. Tuttle described the sentiment that overtook the people: "The feeling for the Union is very strong and the most intense enthusiasm prevails. A Secessionist is not allowed to open his mouth." On August 3, Tuttle attended another of Bramlette's speeches, after spending the day trying to raise a company to serve under Bramlette in the Union army. Four days later Tuttle began his preparations for departure the next day to go to Camp Nelson and enlist. Along the way, the citizens of Kentucky provided for Tuttle and his fellow volunteers. The soon-to-be soldiers had made no arrangements for food along their journey, but the citizens of the communities they marched through kept tabs on them by means of mounted couriers. These couriers would keep them informed of the movements of Tuttle and his fellow recruits so that they would have meals prepared morning, noon, and night to feed the new soldiers in the Union army.[316]

Later in his diary, Tuttle explained the situation of slave holders in Kentucky, as well as the turmoil that first existed in the state during the onset of the Secession crisis and the Civil War. Kentucky slave owners maintained their slaves lived in better conditions than they would experience if freed and expected to care for themselves.

[315] Ibid., 4, 18-19.
[316] Ibid., 22-25, 41.

Kentuckians had been raised with the belief that no moral wrong existed in owning slaves. Their slaves had descended to them from previous generations, and they were not responsible for the kidnapping and selling of slaves brought over from Africa. To them, their slaves were as much their property as their horses, cattle, home, or any other property that they owned. Although they vehemently defended their rights to own slaves and resented those who spoke otherwise, the majority of them, according to Tuttle, remained devoted to the Union, or at least neutral in the beginning. Unfortunately, no statistics exist to either back up Tuttle's claim or prove him wrong. According to Tuttle, these men "were for the Union first, last, and all the time without proviso or condition." Still, Tuttle knew that if this were the case, many would be curious about why Kentuckians did not act sooner in defense of the country that he vowed they loved so dearly. Tuttle explained that no single purpose existed among Kentuckians as it had in the North but rather turmoil and confusion. Yet Tuttle contended that even then Unionists were struggling to prepare for their fight for the Union. Their efforts were hindered by difficulties that already existed in Kentucky, which could not be understood in the North. The political state of affairs in Kentucky had not been secured against Southern sympathizers. Tuttle argued that a large majority of the citizens of Kentucky were loyal to the United States government, but, as a result of accidents and plotting, the Secessionists held a great amount of control in the state government.[317]

Beyond this, Tuttle explained "Secessionist fever seemed to be contagious and epidemic. Men of apparently sound mind and principles would go to bed at night violent Unionists and without any apparent cause, woke up the next morning rabid Secessionists." Therefore, this brings into question Tuttle's insistence that most

[317] Ibid., 27-30.

Kentuckians were loyal. He and other Unionists did not understand such events and wondered not only who they could trust but also whether their followers would continue to be their followers or whether they would also switch sides. Every day public discussions took place between the two factions in the state. Tuttle summed up the arguments of the opposing sides:

> Those who favored secession and rebellion claimed…that each state was sovereign and free to take its own independent course, that the Northern States had combined to wage a fanatical crusade against the institution of slavery with an ulterior view to conquest and if successful would hold the Southern States as conquered provinces. They begged the people of Kentucky to stand by their Southern brothers in their struggle for their "rights" or if they would not do that, to at least stand off and let the two extreme sections have "an open field and a fair fight."[318]

Tuttle did not get wrapped up in this argument as many of the men within the state did. Instead, he agreed with the sentiments of the Union men who insisted that the North and the Federal Government had not done anything to justify the actions of the southern states. They thought that the United States still had a government which Kentucky remained part of and therefore could not lawfully see their state secede from it. Not only that, but even if secession was justified, they still believed it would be an unwise course of action for the state. The war would be fought to preserve the United States government and, according to Tuttle, for no other reason. These same men stated that if preserving the Union meant that they sacrifice slavery, then they would do so cheerfully. Although Tuttle did not own slaves, his family did, and it seems that the

[318] Ibid., 31-32.

slaveholders that surrounded Tuttle remained loyal to the Union. It was sentiments such as these that motivated Tuttle's service in the Union army to preserve the United States.[319]

If the South continued to force a war upon the country then these Union men declared their steadfast purpose to stand behind the Union. They did not share the animosities toward either the North or South that each region felt toward the other. They also did not want to break from the Union because they believed that they had nothing to gain by it but everything to lose. Like Benjamin Forsythe Buckner, Tuttle thought the Confederacy had nothing to offer Kentucky but chaos. Under the Federal Government they would still have order and a stronger economy. With this, he chose to defend the side of stability.[320]

It was not only native Kentuckians who fought in the Kentucky regiments of the Union army, but also immigrants to the United States who had eventually settled in the state. John Alexander Joyce was born in Ireland in 1842. In 1846, his father immigrated to the United States, seeking freedom that, as Joyce described it, had been denied him in his homeland. Shortly thereafter, John and the rest of his family left for the United States to join his father. They eventually settled in Owingsville, Kentucky, located in Bath County east of Lexington. It was here that Joyce lived when the Civil War broke out. That summer Joyce attended many picnics and barbecues where men gave speeches to recruit soldiers for the Confederate army, and as Joyce described, to prevent Unionists from making headway in their communities and the state. Joyce watched as many Kentuckians made the trek through his county on their way to join the Rebel army. He

[319] Ibid., 32.
[320] Ibid., 34.

determined early on that he would never desert the flag under which he had been not only raised, but protected. To him, it was "a flag which sheltered my exiled father from the heartless and cruel laws of British tyranny."[321] Not only did he think that it was his duty to defend the country that had given him freedom, but he also did not believe in the legality of secession. He could not see that there was any justice in the southerners leaving the Union to fight for their rights under a new, strange flag. Joyce did believe that states held supreme power in regards to local laws, but he also thought that the Union was greater than the sum of its parts. The United States, according to Joyce, had the right to force the rebellious South back into submission.[322]

In September 1861, Joyce made the decision to enlist in the Union army. He later explained,

> Northern people will never know how much Southern Union men suffered for their principles. It is easy enough to be brave and outspoken when the cheering crowd are unanimous and there is no danger of losing your life in the expression of an opinion. The people of the Northern States stood by the Union from self-interest. The loyal people of Maryland, Missouri, and Kentucky owned slaves in many instances, and had fathers, brothers, and sons who went out to fight and die for Southern rights. Yet, with all these material inducements to make them falter, they stood like a rock in mid-ocean against the roaring breakers of rebellion. The government owes everlasting gratitude for their fortitude and faith; yet I fear in

[321] Col. John A. Joyce. *Checkered Life* (Chicago: S. P. Rounds, Jr., 1883), microfiche, Civil War Unit Histories, Mary Couts Burnett Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 18-19, 46-48.
[322] Ibid., 48.

> many instances, the obligation has not been equal to the duty performed by the loyal citizens of the Border States.[323]

This was a sentiment that would live on and be shared by many Kentuckians who fought for the Union.

Upon the outbreak of the Civil War, English immigrant Robert Winn joined the Union army, enlisting in the Third Kentucky Cavalry. In a November 25, 1861, letter to his sister, Martha, he wrote that southern Kentucky seemed bound to join forces with the Confederacy, if the region had not already.[324] He declared that the people of the South were ignorant, and "ignorance brings vanity alike in nations and individuals. Nothing would break down the prevailing contempt of others, in either section of the country as giving either of them a good thrashing. Should the South conquer peace, a worse people would not exist. Should the North, Americanism would be stronger than ever, because it would increase the vanity."[325] Either way, Winn believed that people in general were not fit for democracy. He thought the South demonstrated that people unaccustomed "to rule will make a tyrant of the worst kind."[326] This ignorance, Winn believed, was the reason nonslaveholders in the South supported the war. He argued that the United States government raised them in ignorance by not furnishing the South with any teachers. Because of this it was left to the southern aristocracy to educate them, and they educated them to see only one side. They then enlisted in the war and fought for what the majority believed were the rights of their section.[327]

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[323] Ibid., 49.
[324] Robert Winn to Sister, 25 November 1861, Winn-Cook Letters, Transcribed, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[325] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 4 December 1861.
[326] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, April 1862.
[327] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 12 August 1862.

Upon seeing some Englishmen and Germans in a Confederate hospital, Winn voiced his opinion that most foreigners did not concern themselves much with the southern cause and they would desert the first chance they got. However, when looking at the native southerners he believed that they were determined to achieve their independence. The southerners, he argued, left the Union because they did not control the government. Although the United States was governed by a majority, the North, according to Winn, made up the majority. Because of this, southerners saw no difference between the position they held and that of the founding fathers.[328]

Winn often expressed his feelings toward southerners in his letters to Martha. While in Alabama he commented on people in the area being scared by the Union cavalry and flocking to take the oath to the United States. However, it was the women there who showed the true depths of their loyalty. They would curse the Yankee soldiers and steal for the Confederacy. He stated that they were for southern rights, "the chief of which is to live and loaf at the expense of unpaid negro labor."[329] He believed that the extension of the authority of the Federal government over the South must be done through war until southerners were educated to believe in the equality of man. Still, Winn did not believe that the Union army marching through the South would do much to eradicate the hatred that southerners felt for the North. He did, however, support the idea of a powerful armed military residing in the South for several years to maintain control and enforce the laws.[330] In fact, Winn believed that Kentucky needed an army of occupation even more than Tennessee did. Although Kentucky had never seceded, he thought it remained a

[328] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 29 April 1862.
[329] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 17 August 1862.
[330] Ibid.

Rebel state at heart.[331] After the war, when Kentuckians elected many ex-Confederates to the state government, Winn's words seemed to ring true.

Like most people early in the Civil War, Winn did not think that it would last long. On April 12, 1862 he had hopes that the war would quickly come to an end.[332] By that summer he began to fear the path that Kentucky was taking. Although the troops were able to receive only a few papers from the state, he found the picture they painted a dark one, and he feared that Kentucky would at last abandon loyalty and forsake those Kentuckians who had volunteered to fight for the Union.[333] Despite his fears, Kentucky as a whole would remain loyal to the Union at least until the end of the Civil War. Kentuckians supported their soldiers throughout the war, yet many believed that after the war's end, the Confederate veterans were the ones welcomed as heroes and the Union veterans denied the acclaim they deserved.

When it appeared that voters in the state of Kentucky were going to have to take a loyalty oath to the Union, Winn stated that he would not vote if placed in that position and that he would never take the oath again. He also thought that it was ridiculous to believe that the Union could be restored, other than as England and Ireland were. The Yankees had the strength to "conquer and reduce the South to their rule, but that would be like the monkey with his bags of nuts, when he had drove his enemies away with his nuts, he had none left."[334] In trying to preserve the integrity of the Constitution, Winn believed the federal government was actually destroying it, though he fought to protect it. To his sister he wrote, "Imagine a republican government over the South upheld by a few

[331] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 15 January 1864.
[332] Robert Winn to Sister, 12 April 1862, Winn-Cook Letters, Transcribed Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[333] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 12 July 1862.
[334] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 2 July 1862.

hundred thousand bayonets, against the will of her people!!"[335] The obvious irony was that this would not have been a republic.

When it came to the institution of slavery, Winn seemed indifferent. Still, he had opinions as to the effects of the war on the institution. In July 1862 he put these opinions on paper as he wrote his sister. Winn speculated that confiscation would not benefit the slaves, as they might be sold again. If sold in camp, Winn stated, they "would go as well here almost as hot cakes and butter, or furlough."[336] Winn claimed the Union's western army was devoted to slavery.[337] Of one thing he was certain: "Slavery or Liberty one or the other must fall if the Union be restored."[338]

Robert Winn worried that American liberties were being trampled during the war. He was disturbed by reports he heard of men imprisoned on suspicion of treason, then denied the writ of habeas corpus, not given a speedy trial, but finally set free, so long as they took the oath of allegiance. He argued that these actions were contrary to the very spirit of the Constitution, the same Constitution that he and thousands of others were laying their lives on the line to defend.[339]

By August 1862, Winn had made a dramatic change and decided that slavery must end. White southerners, he believed, just needed a good thrashing. Along with the thrashing, the North needed to colonize the South and the slaves emancipated, with military occupation of the region for several years. Although he strongly believed that this is what was needed to end the war and teach the South a lesson, he did not place the blame solely on the South for the outbreak of the Civil War. He believed that the entire

[335] Ibid.
[336] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister 25 July 1862.
[337] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 12 July 1862.
[338] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 25 July 1862.
[339] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 17 August 1862.

nation was to blame, that both sides deserved punishment for their actions, and that both sides were being taught a terrible lesson.[340]

By May 29, 1864, Winn had had his fill of politics. More importantly, he was growing tired of democracy. Not having anything to offer as a substitute for democracy, he simply decided to remain aloof from American politics.[341] That summer he went on a rant about black suffrage in a letter to his sister. "I am for liberty," Winn wrote,

> but not for equality – nor fraternity except in the limited sense. We have had too much equality before the war – the fool and philosopher – the learned and ignorant – the rich and poor – the good and bad – the thief and the honest man – were all equal – only a rascal under such a system has the best chance to rule – and to elevate the negroes to suffrage – would be topping off the Democratic institutions of the U.S. with a load hevier [sic] than they could bear, for more than a very limited period.[342]

Although Winn felt tired of democracy, it was democracy that he continued to fight for. Even though he realized that the government was not perfect, it remained worth protecting.

By January 1864, Winn's soon-to-be brother-in-law, Matthew Cook, had made up his mind that he was done fighting, growing tired of bearing the load while many men remained at home. Cook was illiterate, but would have other soldiers pen letters to Winn's sister for him. While others were reenlisting in the army he decided that he had fulfilled his duty. He, like others, expressed his frustration that they were pushed to reenlist, while there were many at home who had not fought, who would provide fresh

[340] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 12 August 1862.
[341] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 29 May 1864.
[342] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 13 July 1864.

bodies to the Union cause, men who were not worn out by war. Unfortunately, Kentuckians were no longer flocking to either side to fight. With this, Cook decided that when his term of enlistment expired he was going home.[343]

German immigrant Gottfried Rentschler also enlisted in the army to preserve his newly adopted country. Joseph R. Reinhart transcribed the letters and diaries of two German immigrants from Kentucky in his book *Two Germans in the Civil War: The Diary of John Daeuble and the letters of Gottfried Rentschler, 6th Kentucky Volunteer Infantry*. Thanks to Reinhart's work, we have a record of the sentiments of these two German-speaking Union soldiers, unfortunately; only Rentschler discussed why he fought in the Civil War. Both men were in their early twenties and living in Louisville, Kentucky, when the war began. The two enlisted in what many thought would be the First German Kentucky Regiment. Instead they were mustered into the Sixth Kentucky Volunteer Infantry Regiment. This regiment turned out to contain four German-speaking companies and six companies made up primarily of native Kentuckians.[344]

Gottfried Rentschler was mustered into the Sixth Kentucky on December 24, 1861. A highly educated man, Rentschler wrote letters that he intended for the public and sent them to the editor of a German newspaper in Louisville. In January 1864, Rentschler wrote a letter describing the carnage the war had left in the South. He spoke of the devastated and deserted towns and the burned buildings. According to Rentschler, all the southerners wanted was peace, yet they wanted it only "under the condition that their demands are accepted, i.e., with slavery the South will make peace.…Many have

[343] Matthew Cook to Friend, 28 January 1864, Winn-Cook Letters, Transcribed, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[344] Joseph R. Reinhart, Ed. *Two Germans in the Civil War: The Diary of John Daeuble and the Letters of Gottfried Rentschler, 6th Kentucky Volunteer Infantry* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2004), xxii.

nothing more to lose than their lives, which half of these are also prepared to sacrifice for their erroneous opinion."[345] His opinion of southerners was none too high by this point in the war, mostly because they seemed irrational to him.

On January 20, Rentschler described reenlistment in the Army of the Cumberland as coming along very slowly. The reason for this was not because Union soldiers were tired of living the life of a soldier. Their morale was still high and these soldiers still hoped the Union could hold out against the Confederate army, but they wanted the stay-at-homes to take their turn in the ranks. According to Rentschler, the soldiers would say "First let the young men sitting at home come out and carry their share of the load; send volunteers and, if there are none, enough conscripts to fill our ranks that have been thinned through iron, lead, and sickness; then we would gladly stay to the last man."[346] This was the reason that many were not eager to reenlist, and those that did, only did so in defense of their country against the irrational southerners that he had described. He believed that one day those who did not take up arms and fight for their country would be embarrassed by their lack of action. "When a scarred veteran next to him calls out rejoicefully, 'I have been there,'" Rentschler wrote, the stay-at-home would have to "say to himself: 'I was not there, when my fatherland stood in flames; I was not there, when those brave men extinguished the fire with their hearts' blood.'" In true German fashion Rentschler snorted that the soul of such a man "smells of cheese!"[347]

Even though Rentschler shouldered a weapon to fight for his new country alongside many other German immigrants, he believed that these German soldiers did not receive the treatment they deserved from many soldiers who had been born and raised in

[345] Ibid., xxv, xxxiii, 30-31.
[346] Ibid., 41.
[347] Ibid., 41, 66.

the United States. He strongly believed that German soldiers were not usually respected or treated as equal.[348] Even though these men thought that they were not treated the same as American-born soldiers, they still felt a sense of duty and fought hard for their country.[349] Historian Murray M. Horowitz notes the large number of German immigrants that fought in the Civil War in his article "Ethnicity and Command: The Civil War Experience." Horowitz explains that immigrants made up thirteen percent of the population in 1860, many of them having immigrated to the United States in the decade of the 1850s. He contends that the ratio of German soldiers in the Union army was higher than that of the general population, totaling "176,817, though 118,402 would have been expected from the ratio of the German population." He also explains that German immigrants often had more military training. C. Eugene Miller writes about the German Turners in Kentucky. Many Turners had been trained before moving to the United States. After fleeing Europe and settling in the United States many kept their training up. These German immigrants, Miller argues, "had a strong devotion to their adopted country, made sacrifices freely, organized regiments promptly, and fought heroically."[350]

Many foreign born Kentuckians enlisted in the Union army to fight for their adoptive country. These men had sought refuge in the United States and had found a Constitution under which they felt protected. Many came for economic opportunity, which they believed would be destroyed if Kentucky became a Confederate state. It is no wonder that these immigrants felt a sense of duty to the Union. The country had offered

[348] Ibid., 67.
[349] Ibid., 97.
[350] Murray M. Horowitz. "Ethnicity and Command: The Civil War Experience," *Military Affairs*, 42, 4, (December 1978) 182-183; C. Eurene Miller. "The Contribution of German Immigrants to the Union Cause in Kentucky," *The Filson Club History Quarterly*, 64, 4, (October 1990), 462.

security and opportunity and they repaid their debt by offering their own protection to the country as soldiers.

Unfortunately, Union soldiers from Kentucky did not leave the same record that Confederate Kentuckians left. Possibly they did not write as many letters because they were often stationed closer to home. Some, such as Matthew Cook, were illiterate and could only send letters home when others wrote them. They also did not leave much of a record following the war. The Union proved victorious, and as a result Union soldiers did not feel the same need to defend their actions as Confederate Kentuckians did; as a result, they did not leave behind the same number of war recollections. Yet in the letters that they did leave behind, Union soldiers from Kentucky did not express ideologies as frequently as did Confederate soldiers. Somewhat remarkably, none of them spoke of seeking the adventurous life of a soldier as a reason for enlisting. They were much more likely to state that they were fighting simply because they saw it as their duty. As they spoke of their duty to their country, the one thing that their letters lacked was any talk of defending their honor. Their service to the Union was not about them or their reputation, it was about preserving a form of government that they loved and believed in. Many Confederate soldiers from Kentucky wrote of defending their honor, which went hand and hand with defending slavery. It is striking that the Union men did not speak of their honor at all, but rather their country.

Along with their love of country went a love of freedom and democracy and it troubled them to think that those who had died in the American Revolution might have done so in vain. Some of these men were slave owners. Some felt the same hatred for Abraham Lincoln that Confederate soldiers expressed. Although they felt ties to and love

for the southern people, they had not been born and raised in the Confederate States of America and therefore would not fight for it. They differed from those Kentuckians who fought for the Confederacy in that they believed their way of life would be best protected under the Constitution. They believed that the United States brought stability and a strong economy and that the Confederacy would only bring chaos. Not only did they love their country, but they loved their state and believed that the safest place for Kentucky, and them, to remain was in the Union. Union soldiers did not have an easy choice. No soldier from Kentucky did. They knew upon enlisting in the Federal army that they would be fighting against a brother, cousin, father, neighbor, or boyhood friend. There is no doubt that each of these men knew somebody who, virtually overnight, became their enemy. Yet they had a duty, and that was to defend their country against the actions of the southern states. They believed it their responsibility to fight to preserve the Union.

Chapter 6

"Because it Gives us Safety, Happiness, and Liberty"

Kentucky Men Who Did Not Fight

Even after neutrality had ended, the underlying feelings that brought about the policy had not disappeared. Chief among these sentiments was abhorrence of civil war. Once forced to take sides, many people were, as E. Merton Coulter maintains, "carried by the momentum of a long-standing Unionism to embrace the cause of the National government, without realizing what it would finally lead to. The first immediate thought was to stand by the Union and do whatever fighting was absolutely necessary and no more. But from the very beginning there were a large number whose sympathy for the National government was not sufficient to cause them to join the Federal forces."[351] These men made up the large number of Kentuckians who chose to sit the war out, unwilling to put their lives on the line and fight, for either side.

John F. Jefferson, a merchant in Louisville, was one of the men in Kentucky who chose not to fight. In November 1860, Jefferson cast his vote in the presidential election for Stephen Douglas. Bell finished first in Louisville with 3,823 votes, Douglas received 2,633, Breckinridge, 854, and Lincoln 91. As a result, Jefferson proudly proclaimed that Louisville gave no encouragement to disunion. When South Carolina began agitating for secession, Jefferson hoped that the president would do something to silence the state. He

[351] E. Merton Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 145.

was later very alarmed when it became evident that the state was preparing to secede from the Union.[352]

He began to fear for the country when he realized that the Republicans were not willing to make any concessions to the South in order to restore peace and that even Congress would not be able to save the country. He did not think that Lincoln was doing much to help, stating that a wiser course of action would be for the president-elect to just stop talking. After Lincoln passed through Baltimore in a disguise, due to fear of an assassination attempt, Jefferson concluded that he was a coward and feared that "Lincoln is not the man for the times."[353]

Two conventions were organized in Louisville by what Jefferson called the Union and the Douglas parties. He was a delegate to the Douglas party convention. They met on January 9, 1861 and voted on resolutions that proved similar to the Crittenden Compromise. By the end of February, he believed that Louisville was completely for the Union. The next month a meeting was held at the courthouse by southern sympathizers, but Jefferson proudly stated that the Union men of the city broke it up. Despite his apparent support for the Union, on March 23, 1861, Jefferson confided in his diary that he had sold his first goods to the Confederacy that day. It seemed that sitting the war out would be more profitable for Jefferson[354]

Jefferson's diary did not mention much sentiment on the war again until April 1865. On that day he proudly proclaimed that General Lee's army had surrendered. The city was full of excitement, as was Jefferson, that the war was coming to a close. A few

[352] John F. Jefferson, Diary, 6, 7, 9, 12 November 1860, Transcribed, John F. Jefferson Papers, Special Collection, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[353] Ibid., 27 December 1860, 7 January, 16, 25 February 1861.
[354] Ibid., 8, 9 January, 22 February, 23 March 1861.

days later he reported on the assassination of President Lincoln. Over the course of four years his opinion of the president had drastically changed. He wrote that "suddenly and unexpectedly falls the Head of a great nation and one of the notable of men."[355] Jefferson, like most men who chose not to fight, never explained his actions, or lack thereof. He was born in 1833 and clearly within the age of fighting men. Although Jefferson claimed to be a Unionist, he did not feel it his duty to defend the country he professed to love and hoped would win the war. His actions as a merchant and his willingness to do business with the enemy suggest that the most profitable course of action for Jefferson was to sit the war out and conduct business with both sides. Apparently his only duty was to his pocketbook.

John Caperton was also a businessman in Louisville in 1861. He did not believe that Lincoln intended to use coercion to keep the Union together. He suspected that northerners would give in to any reasonable compromises that the South would ask for. Although fighting was a possibility, he strongly believed that the two factions would ultimately reach a settlement. When Lincoln had first taken office, Caperton believed that the new administration would be peaceful and that North Carolina and Tennessee would remain part of the Union.[356] Although Caperton supported the Union, when the war came he did not fight.

Samuel Haycraft also did not fight in the Civil War. However, being born in 1795 it was likely his age that kept him from shouldering a rifle and fighting for his country. On the last day of the year in 1860, Haycraft wrote his plea to God in his diary, that He would save the Union and help Kentucky to act with integrity. Although he

[355] Ibid., 10, 15 April 1865.
[356] John Caperton to Andrew, 6 March 1861, Caperton Family Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

prayed for a resolution and that the Union would be saved, he blamed northern abolitionists for the crisis. Haycraft thought that the "unjust conduct toward the Slave States" had forced the southern states to take such a desperate action as secession. Still, he prayed for Kentucky to remain part of the Union.[357]

Haycraft hoped that Congress would meet and find a solution, although he thought that men had lost their senses and were being driven to anarchy by their passions. Haycraft believed strongly that Kentucky should remain part of the Union, repeating this numerous times in his diary. He declared that the majority of people in Kentucky wanted to stay in the Union, but that a majority among the young and thoughtless wanted to join the Confederacy.[358]

George H. Whipple a musician living in Louisville also sat the war out. He was born in 1822. In a letter to his wife on July 6, 1861, Whipple noted that he had just read Lincoln's speech given to Congress on July 4. He appreciated that Lincoln was not going to back down on the matter of secession and decided that "'Old Abe' is all right."[359] Later that month he wrote of how absurd it was that many northerners believed that Kentucky would secede. He thought there was less prospect of it then, than there had been since the secession crisis had begun.[360] In October 1861, Whipple mentioned Simon Bolivar Buckner, who had by this time become a Confederate general, in a letter to his wife. Buckner, according to Whipple, had been responsible for burning down the houses of Union men and robbing them. The belief that Buckner was the worst kind of

[357] Samuel Haycraft, Jr., Diary, 31 December 1860, 3, 4 January 1861, Transcribed, Samuel Haycraft, Jr. Journal, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[358] Ibid., 10 February, 4 August 1861.
[359] H. G. S. Whipple to My dear wife, 6 July 1861, H. George S. Whipple Letters, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[360] Ibid., H. G. S. Whipple to Wife, 16 July 1861.

traitor becomes apparent when Whipple told his wife that Buckner "has made Judas Iscariot and Benedict Arnold respectable gentlemen by comparison. God grant that some bullet may find a sure road to his black heart in the first fight."[361] Although Buckner may have been a traitor to his state and his nation, he was at least willing to back up his words with the actions of fighting for the Confederacy, unlike Whipple who remained at home.

In August 1864 Whipple commented on a speech that he had heard the night before at the court house. The speaker spoke of the downfall of slavery, and his remarks were met with tremendous applause. When speaking of Lincoln the "crowd was perfectly wild with enthusiasm and gave three hearty cheers for Lincoln." He wrote that he could hardly believe that the scene he described had occurred in Louisville.[362] However, that is one of the few places in the state where such a speech would have been warmly welcomed or where Lincoln would have received three cheers. This was obviously a crowd of men who had chosen to stay at home, and by cheering for Lincoln believed that they were somehow contributing to the Union cause. Whipple gives no inclination that he ever even considered enlisting in the army. It could not have been because he had a new daughter and did not want to part from her or his wife, because throughout much of the war they were indeed separated. He spent the war years communicating with his wife through letters while he lived in Louisville and she close to her family. It appears that Whipple supported the Union, though he never felt a sense of duty to fight for the country, to keep it from being broken apart, or to restore it.

Unlike many other Kentucky politicians, Cassius Clay, a Kentucky politician and abolitionist, did not enlist in either army upon the outbreak of the Civil War. Instead he

[361] Ibid., George to Mary, 5 October 1861.
[362] Ibid., George to Wife, 26 August 1864.

served as the United States minister to Russia from 1862 to 1869. In January 1861, Clay explained that he loved the Union, "because it gives us safety, happiness, and liberty."[363] Although he knew that the Union was threatened he argued that "20 millions of homogeneous people, the most intelligent, the most powerful, on earth, are not going to be ruined because 8 or 10 millions of semibarbarians with 4 or 5 millions of slaves are bent on their own destruction!"[364] Clay favored compromise, but he believed that southerners did not want a true compromise, but rather wanted supremacy over the North. Still, he remained in favor of conciliation if it was possible without abandoning his principles; after all, he was not the enemy of slave owners, but rather of slavery.[365] Although he did not fight in the Union army during the Civil War, he did support the Union through his service as an ambassador to a foreign country. While he may not have faced the dangers of the battlefield, he did not sit idly by at home while other men gave their lives for the country.

For some, age proved a likely determining factor to not fight. John J. Crittenden had previously been a United States senator, representing Kentucky. Amy Murrell Taylor describes Crittenden as well respected for his integrity and cautious political skills. He had been a close friend to Mary Todd Lincoln's father and was even a groomsman at his wedding to his second wife. Crittenden had also been a friend of Abraham Lincoln's. Throughout his life, Crittenden had thought slavery wrong. Yet he thought that forced emancipation would be worse. Although he disagreed with slavery, he owned nine slaves during his lifetime, all of which were inherited. Still, as early as

[363] C. M. C. to Mollins, 8 January 1861, Cassius Marcellus Clay Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[364] Ibid.
[365] Ibid.

1833 Crittenden voted to restrict the importation of slaves into Kentucky. He eventually began to fault both the Republican and Democratic parties for the sectional strife that existed in the country, believing that the leaders had acted selfishly and that their intolerance would eventually break up the Union. By this time saving the Union became his main purpose in life. In 1858, Crittenden helped to create the Constitutional Union party. This party provided a middle ground for those who opposed the Republicans and Democrats and also a means to defend the country against not only the two main parties but also sectionalism and all disunion tendencies. Many who joined Crittenden in the Constitutional Union party had expected him to run for president in 1860. He was their leader, and they desired him to be their presidential nominee as well. Yet Crittenden had already made the decision that he would not seek the presidency. When John C. Breckinridge became the presidential nominee of the southern Democrats, Crittenden spoke out against his fellow Kentuckian. He charged that even if Breckinridge was not a secessionist he was the candidate of disunionists. Not only that, but those who nominated him did so only to draw Kentucky out of the Union. These men knew that Breckinridge would not win the election, but, according to Crittenden, they would rather have had the state of Kentucky as their ally than John C. Breckinridge as their president. After Lincoln was elected and the southern states began to secede, Crittenden continued trying to save the Union. He achieved national recognition for his efforts in trying to find a compromise to prevent war.[366]

Crittenden had passed his prime by the time that the Civil War rolled around, but he did have sons who fought. His eldest son, Thomas, fought in the Union army during

[366] Taylor, *The Divided Family in Civil War America*, 29; Albert D. Kirwan. *John J. Crittenden: The Struggle for the Union* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1962), 338, 344, 347, 349, 351-352, 361.

the Civil War, but his youngest son, George, did not believe that his duty lay with the Union cause.[367] In April 1860, he wrote a letter to George, telling him that Kentucky loved the Union and expressing his belief that the state would never secede. He also hoped that his son would stay loyal to the Union. He begged George to be true to the stars and stripes and not to resign from the United States army without first consulting his father. He advised him that "there have been so many instances of distinguished treachery, & dishonor in the Army, that I would be proud to see you distinguished by exemplary loyalty & devotion to your Flag & to your country, the country that commissioned you."[368] He feared that the spirit of disunion had reached far in the country and that it might even have affected some officers close to his son. With this he told George to be "vigilant, very vigilant, and with all your energy & courage, if need be, to resist every attempt at treachery or rebellion against the government."[369]

He told George that he was prompted to write the letter by his anxieties alone. Crittenden explained to his son that the state of affairs in Kentucky were bad. All that was spoken of was war, and the whole country was preparing for it. He no longer could see how war could be prevented. He hoped that Kentucky would continue to stay out of the conflict completely, to bear arms only to defend the state against an invasion, and to play the role of a mediator between the two warring factions.[370] In another letter to George that summer, he voiced his opinion that the Rebel cause was hopeless and that the sacrifices of many southerners was useless.[371]

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[367] Ibid.
[368] J. J. Crittenden to Son, 30 April 1861, John Jordan Crittenden Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[369] Ibid.
[370] Ibid.
[371] John J. Crittenden from George, 19 July 1861, John Jordan Crittenden Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

George did not heed his father's warning, but instead resigned from the United States army and joined the ranks of the Confederate army. In May 1862, George Prentice published an article in the *Louisville Journal* about George Crittenden's resignation. As far as Prentice was concerned Crittenden had "joined its [the Union's] malignant enemies and became one of the most malignant of these enemies."[372] Not only had Crittenden caused pain for his former friends, but he had also left himself without a country, since Prentice believed the Confederates did not truly trust him.[373] As any good father would, John Crittenden replied to Prentice's article. Crittenden knew his son was a Rebel, and did not write to defend that he was, but he questioned what good could come from Prentice's drawing attention to it. Crittenden stated that the article's "exaggerations & misstatements, make it ungenerous & unjust even as to my guilty son, and, as to his family, most cruel. Such a blow from such a source has been felt with particular force. It was useless for any purpose of public good, & could inflict wounds upon friends only."[374] He defended his son's past, saying that George, with the exception of his joining the rebel army and occasional drinking, was loved by his family as one of the noblest of their lineage and that his family held on to the belief, "as it is quite natural they should, that he was <u>deluded</u> into the Rebellion. And that of the thousands who were so <u>deluded</u>, not one acted from more honorable motives than he did, however irronious, or unjustifiable their reasoning may have been."[375]

[372] Copy of Article by George D. Prentice, 5 May 1862, *Louisville Journal*, John Jordan Crittenden papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[373] Ibid.
[374] John J. Crittenden to George D. Prentice, 8 May 1862, John Jordan Crittenden Papers, Special Collections, Filson historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[375] Ibid.

Ironically, even though George Prentice wrote about prominent Unionists in Kentucky whose sons had enlisted in the Rebel army, he believed that there should be a distinction between his own public and private life, though apparently nobody else deserved this distinction. Prentice had even gone so far as to suggest that a son of the United States assistant surgeon general be hanged so that the family's honor may be restored. Yet, his own two sons opposed his Unionist stance and enlisted in the Confederate army.[376] One can be certain that Prentice did not suggest that they hang themselves so that his own family honor would be restored, nor did he believe that such an event as his own children fighting for the Confederacy should be publicized.

Some who sat the war out had sons that fought and, though they themselves did not fight, they encouraged their sons in choosing which side to fight for. On May 12, 1861, Hector Green wrote a letter to his son, Johnnie, who would eventually join the Confederate army. Hector told his son that he was grieved by what was occurring in the country and that he did not hold sympathies for either the North or the South, "as I hold that both are, and have been acting directly in opposition to the letter & spirit of our ever to be loved constitution."[377] Green thought that Abraham Lincoln was a traitor because he was departing from what he had said in his inaugural address, which Green believed was filled with a strong sentiment of peace, but Lincoln's actions spoke of war. Green wondered why Lincoln did not immediately deal with the root of the problem, "the unfriendly non slave holding traitorous [sic] legislative enactments & have fully carried out the fugitive slave law? It matters not whether this would have given satisfaction to S. Carolina or not this was the great grieveance [sic] complained of by the whole South (and

[376] Taylor, *The Divided Family in Civil War America*, 30.
[377] Father to Johnnie, 12 May 1861, Green Family Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

justly) and if S. Carolina did not then come in let her have gone out and have starved, as I really believe she would have done…."[378] He desired that Kentucky remain neutral in the war, though he rightly feared that it would not be possible. He advised Johnnie to spend time reflecting before deciding which side to support. Hector did not want his son to be led astray simply by any misconceived ideas of the Union, just because it was his country. Hector feared that only sectionalism could be found in the Union. He knew that his own fate would be tied to which ever position Kentucky as a whole would take.[379]

In August of the same year he informed Johnnie that he did not like the Confederacy, but at times in his letters he seemed to like the Union even less. He still hoped that Kentucky would remain neutral in the conflict, which he viewed as nothing more than a "Sectional quarrel."[380] To Hector, neither side provided any advantage worth fighting for, and he again urged his son to think dispassionately about the issues before choosing a side. Like most Kentuckians, Hector Green rode the fence, not knowing which side he truly stood for. In the end he concluded that "our greatness as a people has passed away, never to be restored, United, we have stood, divided we must fall."[381] Although he never considered entering the war, most likely due to his age, he seemed to have thought that his son had a duty to fight for one side or the other, encouraging him to take time to decide which side he should serve. Still, one wonders if he would have fought, should he have been young enough, as he never seemed to support one side or the other.

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[378] Ibid.
[379] Ibid.
[380] Father to Johnnie, 14 August 1861, Green Family Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[381] Ibid.

Between fifty and sixty percent of Kentucky men of fighting age sat the war out. It is unlikely that Kentucky had more cowards per capita than other states. Instead, it illuminates the difficult position that these men faced. To most sitting the war out was not the honorable thing to do, and many Kentuckians looked down upon those who refused to serve their country. Even many Unionists looked more favorably on those that fought for the Confederacy than those that did not fight at all. Unfortunately, these men left little record of themselves during these years, one reason being that they were not separated from their family by the war and thus forced to rely on letters to keep in contact with their loved ones, as soldiers did. Yet it also seems plausible that these men were not necessarily proud of their lack of action and therefore did not want to leave record of it. They surely were not proud that they did not serve their country; none bragged of this in their letters or diaries. Still, the question remains, why did such a large portion of Kentucky men not fight during the Civil War? Many of these men had always considered themselves southerners. Most Kentuckians did not like Abraham Lincoln and feared his policies toward slavery. Yet they also could not see themselves fighting against their country. They had grown up in the United States, not the Confederacy, and it was the only country that they had ever known and the one that they loved. Although they also loved the South and most had familial ties to the region, they could not shoulder a rifle against their country. Still they could not fight against their southern brethren either. For these men the easiest course of action proved not fighting at all.

Chapter 7

"When Will the Measure of Your Woe be Complete?"

Kentucky Women During the Civil War

Most women in Civil War America remained at home, caring for the family and the home while the war raged. Some watched their husbands or other men they loved go off and fight, even give their lives for either the North or the South. Although these women did not fight, many held very strong opinions about the war, the Union, and the Confederacy. They could not fight, but they did not hesitate to take a stand. They did what was expected of them as southern women, which according to Bertram Wyatt-Brown was to "show courage and to remind men of their martial, protective duties."[382]

Martha Jones remained at home near Versailles, Kentucky while her husband fought in the Confederate army. In December 1862 she wrote her father upon hearing that he planned to send a letter to her husband in order to persuade him to return home. She thanked her father for what she hoped were his good intentions. However, she believed it was her responsibility

> to place before you as briefly as possible my reasons for not concurring with you and why I believe this movement will not meet the approbation of Willis or his friends. My husband is no refuge from justice, and no traitor, a rebel I admit he is, from the whole abolition faction and dominion and had it not been opposed to his feelings and principles, he could have taken the oath of allegiance to that people, and <u>remained</u> at home. He has linked his fortunes with the southern

[382] Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 51-52.

people, from an unalterable conviction of the justice of the cause and believing that the principle for which they are fighting must ultimately triumph.[383]

She went on to express frustrations with apparent rumors about her husband, Major Willis Field Jones. "I have heard with profound disgust, (but no surprise)," she wrote, "that his enemies are circulating rumors of his discontent, his dissatisfaction with the south &c &c, I know how vain and profitless any would be, to trace these slanders to any authentic source, but they bear falsehood on the face."[384] She knew not to expect sympathy from her father on the subject, but she felt confident in the impending success of the Confederate cause. Unfortunately, her husband died for that cause in Petersburg, Virginia, during 1864. Although Jones did not leave her home and fight for the Confederacy, she threw her complete support behind her husband. She stood by his side and even defended his actions when she deemed it necessary, even to her own father.[385]

Mildred Fry Bullitt also threw her support behind the men in her life that fought, her sons. The mother of three Confederate soldiers, she was already grieved by the situation in December 1860, as the Union was being broken apart. She did not blame southerners for the split, but instead blamed fanatical abolitionists. While the secession crisis continued many wondered what stand Kentucky would take. As many in the state began to take a stand either for or against secession, Bullitt thought that the people who spoke out loudest for the Union were the bitterest people in the state. She believed that they would do anything to remain in the Union. Referring to a well-known passage in the biblical book of Matthew, she hoped northerners would see the plank in their own eyes,

[383] Martha B. Jones to My Dear Father, 21 December 1861, Jones Family Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[384] Ibid.
[385] Ibid.

rather than blaming only the South for the events taking place in the country. If this were to happen it would have been a blessing beyond all blessings to the South. Still, she thought that the North "will not be answerable for our sin if it be to continue the institution of slavery. The north according to my poor judgement, are much more culpable and will have a larger amount to settle <u>for not minding their own business.</u>"[386] It was clear that she blamed not only northern abolitionists, but the North as a whole for the secession crisis. Had the North kept the abolitionists in check, then the South would not have felt the need to secede from the Union, and in not doing so, the sins of northerners were far worse than any possible sins that southerners committed by owning slaves.

She told her son of his father's thoughts on secession, his belief that there would not be a war, and his assessment that the Confederacy had an even better Constitution than the United States, beliefs that Mrs. Bullitt shared. Her husband considered secession and the creation of the Confederate constitution, without bloodshed, the greatest events he had ever seen, though bloodshed would eventually come. Mr. Bullitt would be proven wrong about the likelihood of war, as the first shots would be fired at Fort Sumter less than a month after his wife wrote this letter. By June 1861, the Bullitts had become anxious about their son, Thomas, and wanted him to remain where he was. Mildred Bullitt wrote to Thomas, who was living with his brother in Philadelphia, many times early in the war to say that she was grateful he was not in Kentucky and that she hoped, as her husband had, that he would stay in Philadelphia and continue to work.[387] They did

[386] MFB to Tom, 13 December 1860; MFB to _____[?], 18 January 1861, Bullitt Family Papers, Manuscript Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky; Matthew 7:3-5.
[387] Ibid., MFB to Tom, 23 March 1861; MFB to Tom, 18 June 1861; MFB to Tom, 7 October 1861; MFB to Children, 11 May 1861.

not want their son to become involved in the war, yet when he eventually made his way back to Kentucky and then went on to join the Confederate army, they did not try to talk him out of it. Although Mrs. Bullitt did not originally want him to fight, she was proud of all three of her sons in the Confederate army. During the Civil War, one did not need to be a man to hold strong convictions. Mrs. Bullitt felt strongly in her disdain for the North and supported her husband's opinion about how great the Confederacy was. She was also willing to allow her sons to fight in the Confederacy, never trying to prevent their enlistment. Bullitt acted as many women did during the Civil War; she simply supported the men in her life and the cause for which they fought.

Lucinda Rogers Boyd had great respect for the soldiers in the Civil War. She was born in Ohio, but her family later moved to Kentucky while she was still a young girl, which is where she experienced the war. During the Civil War Boyd lost her brother in the Battle of Augusta in September 1862. After the battle, she recalled the Federal troops taking possession of Cynthiana. Although the townspeople were strangers to the soldiers, Home Guards, the Union state Militia, informed the Union army who the southern sympathizers were, and some women took it upon themselves to point out where these Rebels lived. She stated that the responsibilities of the Home Guards were simply to be good spies, to search houses, and to make themselves feared. She had more respect for the Federal soldiers who risked their lives for the Union than the Home Guards who she believed enlisted for different reasons. Eventually the Yankee troops stationed around her community stopped being cross with the Rebel women in town because they had tended to their sick and laid flowers on the nameless graves of both Confederate and Union soldiers. It seemed that some women were compassionate enough to take care of

anybody who was sick or wounded and mourned all dead, not just those of the side which they supported.[388]

Despite her feelings about Yankee soldiers, Boyd did not celebrate when the Union won the war. The day that Lee surrendered at Appomattox, April 9, 1865, the mayor of Cynthiana ordered a celebration. After dark there were bonfires and people placed candles in their windows. Boyd and a woman who rented a room at her house chose instead to draw the curtains and disobey the mayor, rather than "rejoice at our own defeat which is worse than death."[389] Boyd was still a young woman at the time, and she felt crushed by the defeat of the South, for which many of her friends had died. After the war she refrained from spending time with the wives and daughters of men who sat at home during the war, choosing not to fight, but she came to respect the veterans of the Union army who, she believed, had "learned to respect their Southern neighbors" on the battlefield and who offered her aid when down on her luck after the war.[390] Boyd, like many during the Civil War era, seemed to have lost respect for those who did not fight, viewing them as cowards. Although she had strongly supported the Confederacy throughout the war, she came to respect all Kentuckians who had fought.

Ellen Kenton McGaughey Wallace made it clear in the beginning that she supported the Union, though that would not last. She was a member of a slaveholding family in southwest Kentucky whose opinions evolved throughout the war from Unionist to staunch Confederate supporter. In early 1861 she expressed her dread of the future. Wallace feared that Kentucky would follow the same path as other southern states,

[388] Lucinda Rogers Boyd. "The Naptha Lamp," Lucinda Rogers Boyd Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[389] Ibid, Chapter X, 1.
[390] Ibid, Chapter X, 2-3.

though she thought that the state had nothing to gain but ruin from doing so.[391] Early on she took a stand for the Union and against secession, though these sentiments would not survive the war.

In September 1861, Confederates invaded Kentucky and neutrality came to an end. By the beginning of October, Confederate troops had possession of Wallace's town. Yet Wallace could not "look upon my country men as enemies, I pity the poor soldier from the depth of my heart. His is a hard lot."[392] The Union victories at Fort Donelson, Fort Henry, and then at Shiloh, led Wallace and many in her community to believe that peace and Union would soon be restored. Although she hoped for a quick Union victory, she did not support the Republican Party and believed that if it continued in power the United States would remain fragmented. In August 1862, Federal forces were stationed in her town and were set to remain there until after elections. This led Wallace to declare "how sad to think that in this formerly peaceful and free country the elections now have to be sustained by an armed force."[393]

Wallace's husband did not enlist in the ranks of the Union army, but when necessary he was willing to stand and fight for their home and community. In August 1862, they feared an invasion of the Confederate army. Federal forces had left the town, leaving it open to roaming bands of guerilla forces. One night, the townspeople were awakened from their sleep by the sound of one of these groups of men riding through the streets. The guerilla force demanded the surrender of the town, which was adamantly refused. The town was not defended by an organized military force, but rather by the

[391] Journal of Ellen Kenton McGaughey Wallace, 19, 29 April 1861, Transcribed, Wallace-Starling Family Diaries, Special Collections, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky.
[392] Ibid., 18 September, 9 October 1861.
[393] Ibid., 11 May 1862, 2 August 1862.

men of the town who had not enlisted in the army. Ellen Wallace's husband was among these men, and they succeeded in keeping the town safe.[394]

In August 1862 there were rumors, which proved to be true, that the Confederate forces were planning to invade the state of Kentucky. Although Wallace was a Unionist, this was not the subject that filled her diary upon learning of the invasion. Instead, she focused on her hatred of President Lincoln. Wallace considered Lincoln and his cabinet a disgrace to the nation declaring that "nothing but a mean low party spirit seems to dictate their operations. There is a few determined patriotick men from the border states trying to turn their weak and ruinous policy, but it is feared in vain. If the president had been made of such material as Washington or Jackson or Fillmore the condition of the country would have been very different."[395] Two days later the town surrendered to the Rebel army, which had overpowered the Home Guard. The Confederates then searched the homes of Unionists for guns. During this period the newspapers had been stopped, and Wallace was not able to learn much about the events occurring in the country. She did, however, hear that Governor Beriah Magoffin had stepped down and was replaced with a man that Wallace thought was of "the Crittenden stamp."[396] She was glad to hear of this event but wished that the news had been that the president had also stepped down.[397]

While the Confederates controlled her community, Wallace feared that they would enforce Confederate conscription there. She feared this most because of her brothers, who had not enlisted in either army and who she did not want to see fight in the war. Wallace seemed torn between the opposing factions. She loved her government but

[394] Ibid., 5, 8 August 1862.
[395] Ibid., 14 August 1862.
[396] Ibid., 16, 27 August 1862.
[397] Ibid., 27 August, 25 September 1862.

despised the man running it. She also believed that the Confederacy would not succeed, though she also loved her fellow southerner. With such a dilemma it is understandable that she would support her brothers' decision not to fight. It appears that no matter which path men took during this period, most of the time the women closest to them strongly supported their actions, or lack thereof.[398]

At times during the Civil War, Wallace's husband would leave their home and stay overnight at the farm they owned outside of town. November 6, 1862, was one of these nights, and in her journal Ellen expressed her discomfort. The Union soldiers had taken the town back over, and she did not feel the sense of security that she would have if they had been Rebel soldiers. By this point, her sentiments were slowly beginning to shift to support of the South. Still, any troops provided protection from the bands of robbers and guerillas that plagued Kentucky throughout the Civil War. Every time troops left the town, she confided her fears in her journal. In July 1863, the people in the community went so far as to take all of the money out of the bank, fearing that robbers would come and plunder the town. Mrs. Wallace feared that if things continued as they were, women would have to begin carrying daggers or guns in their girdles. By 1864, she could barely recognize her town, feeling as if she were in some foreign country. People no longer walked easily through town as they had before, but instead hurried about their business and back to the security of their homes.[399]

Late in August 1864, rumor had it that Confederate cavalry, led by Joseph Wheeler and Nathan Bedford Forrest, were headed into Kentucky. Merchants in town began to sell off their goods at low prices in order to prevent their being stolen by the

[398] Ibid.
[399] Ibid., 6 November 1862, 9 July 1863, 28 January 1864.

Rebels. The community was not just vulnerable to be robbed by guerrilla fighters, but also by both armies.[400]

Wallace felt much grief for the situation in her state. "Kentucky, Kentucky," she cried out in her journal, "torn within and threatened without. When will the measure of your woe be complete? Which will triumph on your soil, southern treason or northern abolition, both of them demons are now drenching our land with human gore. Surely the evil one has been unchained from the bottomless pit and is making his abode with us. How long, Oh Lord, how long will the curse be upon the nation."[401] By the end of 1863 she still believed times were dark and troubled, even more so because abolitionists were trying to entice their slaves to run away. This resulted in a lack of trust between masters and slaves. The owners had become suspicious that their slaves planned to escape to try to find freedom, and the slaves began to act disrespectful towards their masters.[402]

The increasingly pro-Confederate Wallace always feared the draft. She had two brothers and constantly worried that they would be forced to fight for the Union. This fear grew in December 1863 when men could no longer pay three hundred dollars to escape the draft, but instead had to find a substitute. With this development, her anxiety for her brothers increased. In June 1864 she lay awake in bed, sleepless once again over the coming draft. Conscripted men again would not be permitted pay to be released from the draft, but would have to find a substitute or would be forced to shoulder a weapon, as Wallace pointed out, next to black troops. She described the situation for the white troops, "the master and his former slave must keep time to the same musick, share the same rations if there is any advantage the Negro must have it." In September 1864, she

[400] Ibid., 31 August 1864.
[401] Ibid., 23 April 1863.
[402] Ibid., 8 November 1863.

worried once again for her brothers as another draft took place. A number of prominent men in her community did not escape this draft and she feared for her brothers because, by this time, substitutes cost anywhere from one thousand to three thousand dollars. In April 1865, Wallace's fears were realized when her brother, John W. McGaughey, was drafted into the Union army. Still, the war was almost over, and he would not step foot on the battlefield; he had been spared the horrors of war.[403]

Wallace's disdain for Lincoln did not waver during the war. In February 1864, she expressed her hope that Lincoln would not be reelected and that his administration and policies would be "consigned to the infamy they deserve."[404] Among the better class of citizens in the country, according to Wallace, there was a burning fury against Lincoln. Despite these feelings, they did not voice them in public because his soldiers were "stationed on the corner of every street and every by way in the country, exciting the Negroes to leave their owners and all manner of high handed insolence."[405] She claimed that a slave could have his master jailed very easily at this time over the smallest cause.[406]

The loss of slaves continued to bother Wallace throughout the war, not only for herself but for other Kentuckians and southerners. In June 1864, she worried about those Kentucky women with delicate health and a large number of small children. These women were suddenly forced to take the place of a number of servants to perform duties to which they simply were not accustomed. Wallace also worried about the women and children in Georgia as Sherman marched his army across the state to the Atlantic Ocean.

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[403] Ibid., 21 December 1863, 7 June, 29 September 1864, 10 April 1865.
[404] Ibid., 4 March 1864.
[405] Ibid.
[406] Ibid., 16 September 1864.

Along the way, according to Wallace, his army was "burning and destroying everything in his path, cities, towns and private farm houses are all left a heap of smoking ruins." More than the ruins he left in Georgia, she worried that the "helpless women and children accustomed to all the refinements of life are driven from their homes to perish."[407] Although it seems hard to feel sorry for these women who had lost their unpaid domestic servants, Wallace understood their situation and the work that they were having to do, possibly for the first time in their lives.

At the beginning of the war, Wallace would have considered herself a Unionist. However, by May 1864 it became clear that she had begun to strongly favor the Confederacy. This change in sentiment was a direct result of Lincoln's policies toward slavery. In May 1864 she heard that General Ulysses S. Grant had inflicted a defeat on Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. She did not react with the enthusiasm of a Unionist, but instead stated that nobody in her community showed even the slightest indication of pleasure. She blamed Lincoln's "negro administration" for the community's sentiment and support of the Confederacy at this point. She went on to mention that a regiment of black troops were set to be in town the next day, a source of much humiliation for her. Although Lee's army had faced a series of setbacks, she believed that he was the best general that had ever walked the earth and hoped that even if his army did not succeed in winning the war, it would at least teach the Yankees a good lesson. At this point, Wallace knew that only a miracle would keep the Confederacy from falling.[408]

[407] Ibid., 1 June, 30 November 1864.
[408] Ibid., 9, 24 May 1864.

Upon hearing the news that Sherman had taken Atlanta, Wallace concluded that it was a result of God's anger at the South. Writing in her diary she confided, "If God in his anger has made Abraham Lincoln president of this nation, well has Lincoln fulfilled his mission." She went on that day to mention the "meanest of all classes" in the South, referring to southern abolitionists. She did not like abolitionists, but could tolerate those who took their stance based on morals and conviction. The abolitionists that she complained of were those in the South who opposed slavery only in order to see their rich neighbors' land lying waste after their slaves had been taken from them. These abolitionists, she thought, did not oppose slavery because it was wrong; they did so out of envy and a desire to see those around them fall.[409]

Wallace learned in September 1864 that George McClellan would challenge Lincoln for the presidency. Still, she feared that there was little chance of his success, as Lincoln had the Union army and the money of the government behind him. In September 1864, Wallace again mentioned the upcoming presidential election. Although she hoped that George B. McClellan would defeat President Lincoln, she feared that it would not come to fruition. Instead, she suspected that the army would go for Lincoln, giving him the victory, because the soldiers would do as their officers told them. Wallace believed the officers would "sustain Lincoln because he sustains them." In the middle of October she still believed that Lincoln would be reelected, but she took comfort in reflecting that if it was God's will He would give her the ability to handle it. Just days before the election, Wallace wrote of the whole country holding its breath in suspense of the coming event. Business seemed to be at a standstill, waiting to see what the outcome would be and, as a result, if the war would continue. On November 11, she declared, "The deed is

[409] Ibid., 22 September 1864.

done. The terrible truth settles down upon us like a black, heavy pall. Abraham Lincoln is again elected or rather made president or tyrant. As the nation knows no law now, but his will and the will of his supporters. Farewell Liberty."[410]

Kentuckians faced the added threat of guerilla warfare as the Civil War went on. In October 1864, Wallace stated that there were bands of men throughout the countryside that had been murdering, burning buildings, and robbing people. It had become dangerous to travel in the state because of the threat of meeting these criminals. Worse was women's daily fear that these men would come to their house, as they had others in the community, and rob them. Not only did they face theft from bands of guerillas, but also from the opposing armies. In December 1864 some Yankee soldiers took the Wallace's old buggy horse while one of their slaves was removing the buggy harness after taking Wallace's daughter to school. Although she and her children pled with the soldiers, they still took their horse. A few days later Confederate forces were rumored to be on their way into town. A few black soldiers then took another one of Wallace's horses to flee on. This time Wallace believed that the community would rejoice if the Rebels took the town, yet she knew the army would not be strong enough to hold it against the Federal forces. On December 14, Rebel soldiers took the last two horses on the Wallace's plantation, the very last two her family owned. Sometimes men would come claiming to confiscate crops, horses, or anything else they needed for the government when, in fact, they were nothing but thieves. At this point Wallace concluded that if things were to get any worse they would have to leave Kentucky.[411]

[410] Ibid., 16 September, 13 October, 1, 8 November 1864.
[411] Ibid., 18 October, 7, 11, 14, 23 December 1864.

After Lincoln's reelection, Wallace observed that nobody laughed except the black people in town and the Republicans, or as she called them "Abe Lincolns hirelings bayonets." Although Kentuckians were filled with anger and indignation, such feelings could change nothing. Sherman had begun his march through Georgia, and she no longer saw much hope for the South.[412]

As 1865 began, Wallace noted that the "New year opens upon a gloomy distracted, oppressed people, dissension within and war bloody terrible unrelenting war without." She anticipated that the North would crush out the life of the South with mere brute force. Yet, the South had bravely stood up to the North "with more than Roman fortitude fighting with unflinching determination for every inch of her sacred soil. Her troops half clad, half fed, poorly mounted and badly armed yet fight on [as] if every advantage was in their favor." She did not, however, hold Federal soldiers in such high regard. They always rode the finest horses, which she believed were probably stolen from the stables of local citizens by telling them that the horse would be used for government service. These soldiers also were dressed in the warmest clothes, well fed, armed with the finest weapons and "when they can number ten to one of the poor rebels, have all the artillery, good horses and the advantage of ground, maybe, perhaps they will consider whether they will stand a fight or evacuate. The latter is generally decided upon." Even when she believed that there was almost no hope for the South to win the war, Wallace still looked upon the soldiers in the Confederate army with more respect and admiration than the Federal army.[413]

[412] Ibid., 30 November 1864.
[413] Ibid., 1 January 1865.

Although most believed the Confederacy was on its last legs when Lincoln was reelected, Wallace still believed Lee was the greatest general of his time and his that officers were men of unwavering courage and great ability. Because of this she believed that there was reason for hope until the very end. After Richmond fell to the Union forces, Federal forces in Wallace's hometown ordered a general illumination in celebration of the victory. Wallace did not put lights in her window until Yankee soldiers came by and made her. She did not do so before because "there was no corresponding light in the soul." Although she desired that God's will be done, she did not see any reason to celebrate the fall of Richmond.[414]

Three days after word of Lee's surrender, she began to wonder what would become of the country. In the absence of great leaders with big enough hearts to embrace the whole country, both North and South, she wondered, "What will become of the fragments? Will they be again united in one glorious bond that has been purified by fire and blood never more to be severed, forever on and the same in prosperity and honour? Or shall the bayonet of a tyrant pin them together the bonds of eternal revenge and hate."[415]

Although Wallace had started the war as a self proclaimed supporter of the Union, such loyalty would not last, though one may question her loyalty altogether. She despised Lincoln from the very beginning and agreed with few of his policies. This disdain for the president and his policies toward slavery ultimately led her to throw her support behind the Confederacy. None of the men in her life were fighting in the war and demanding her support, so the switch from Unionist to Confederate sympathizer proved

[414] Ibid., 4 March 1865.
[415] Ibid., 10, 13, 14 April 1865.

an easy transition. Still, regardless of which side she supported, she still had to face the experiences and horrors of living in a war-torn society.

Grown women were not the only ones to be effected by the war or to hold strong sentiments. Francis Peter was only seventeen when the Civil War broke out. A native of Lexington, Peter remained loyal to the Union throughout the war. Her father was a doctor who served as the chair of the chemistry and pharmacy department at Transylvania University. When the war began, he became a surgeon in the United States army, though remaining in Lexington. Francis suffered from seizures and therefore did not have the social life that most seventeen year old girls in Lexington did. Often confined to her home, she conversed with her family and took on many of her father's opinions. In her diary of the war years, she often comes across as heavily influenced by him.[416]

Francis held a very negative opinion of Confederate troops and the southern sympathizers in Kentucky from very early on in the war. On September 18, 1862, she recorded in her diary the rumors that Morgan and his cavalry were headed to Lexington to enforce the Confederate draft. Upon hearing this, her brother and other young men left to join the Union forces. She never looked highly upon Confederate soldiers, thinking that they had almost brought Lexington to ruin and were always stealing from free blacks. Southern sympathizers in town acted much worse, she thought, and were bitterer than any Confederate soldier. When Confederate General Edmund Kirby Smith controlled Lexington during the Confederate invasion of Kentucky in 1862, Francis blamed the "secesh" in the community for instigating any of the things that he did to the

[416] John David Smith and William Cooper Jr., eds. *A Union Woman in Civil War Kentucky: The Diary of Francis Peter* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 2000), x.

Unionists in town. Typically, she believed he had been a very peaceable man who did not make trouble with anybody in town, so long as they did not with him.[417]

She did not hold a very high opinion of the women in town who supported the Confederacy either. This was not necessarily because she had differing views, but because of their actions. When some Union women went to the hospital to feed the Union sick and wounded, the southern soldiers begged them for food. These women asked if the "secesh" ladies in town did not give them anything, and the soldiers replied that they had stopped coming. Francis thought that such women were more concerned with flirting with the officers than taking care of the common man.[418]

Many in her town worried about the effects of the war on their slaves. Yet it was not only the southern sympathizers that worried, but the Union men of Kentucky also worried that the Confederates would run them off as they moved through the state. Although they were not encouraging them to escape, many of the slaves were afraid of being kidnapped and sold to white men in the Deep South.[419]

When General Humphrey Marshall's Confederate troops were marching through Kentucky, Francis could not help but comment on them. She believed they were a pitiful sight. She described a pride that filled Americans which made her sad and ashamed to see the country in such a state of war and wretchedness, even though they had apparently brought it on themselves through ignorance and foolishness. She thought many of the common soldiers in the Confederate army were just as ignorant as the slaves working on

[417] Ibid., 46-47, 49-50.
[418] Ibid., 51.
[419] Ibid., 51.

the plantations. She had previously heard of how ignorant the southern people were, though she did not believe it until she saw it for her own eyes.[420]

Francis lived in Kentucky, but she did not consider herself a southerner or identify with the people of other southern states. The ignorance of southerners seemed to her to explain why a few men could hold so much influence over the entire South and convince thousands of men to fight against the Union. She wondered how "could unlettered men judge of the right or wrong of such a question as was put to them by these politicians? How could men who had never read the Constitution or heard it read by a faithful interpreter know whether what they did was constitutional or not." She believed that they had put all of their trust in politicians and therefore were easily deceived.[421]

Not only were they too easily deceived, but it was too great a temptation for the politicians, who eventually began to push their own selfish interests. Francis believed that "so artfully did they go to work and so speciously did they talk that they, poor deluded people, believed it was all their own action and rubbed their hands joyously over the great plan they thought they had hit upon for restoring the constitution which had never been so nearly destroyed, or so terribly violated as by this very act of secession they were so jubilant over, as being such a great stroke of policy." Such sentiments would not be surprising if Francis had grown up in a northern state. However, for a Kentuckian to express such strong convictions that southerners as a whole were completely ignorant is very striking. Possibly it was her father's level of education that

[420] Ibid., 53-54.
[421] Ibid.

made her look down upon others who were not fortunate enough to receive such an education. One wonders if she also looked down on uneducated Kentuckians as well.[422]

Had these self-serving southern politicians used their influence for a good cause, Francis believed, they would have deserved praise. Instead, she thought they had used their platform to bring about misery and death to the loyal citizens of the Union. She believed the leaders of the Confederacy were "vile men" who had deluded "a people as to make them think that they were thereby releasing K[entuck]y from bondage, and pity for the deplorable ignorance of a people that could be so deluded. For these poor common soldiers firmly believed they were conferring a great favor in driving the Federal troops from among us and were no doubt surprised and disappointed that we did not treat them with more consideration and attention." Francis had been right about one thing, the Confederate soldiers had been expecting to be welcomed as heroes and liberators by the people of Kentucky. They were not. Instead, they were forced to leave the state defeated and with Kentucky firmly in Union hands.[423]

One reason that Francis may have looked upon Rebel soldiers with such animosity was that she blamed southerners for the war. In February 1863, she spoke of the hardship and suffering that the war had brought about and wondered how, with such destruction, anybody could have sympathy for the Confederates "who brought all this on the Country!" Still, there were northerners that she also despised. A speech given by Henry Ward Beecher was published in a local newspaper. Francis stated that she rarely read his speeches because he was too much of an abolitionist for her. Beecher had argued that the war should be continued, whether the Confederates surrendered or not,

[422] Ibid., 53-54.
[423] Ibid., 54.

until slavery was completely eradicated from the country. However, Francis had always believed that the war was only fought to suppress the rebellion and save the Union, not to abolish slavery. Not only that, but such remarks by Beecher "that this war is carried on for the purpose of abolishing slavery is to give the rebels just cause of complaint and give them a strong point to base a case on. The rebels say, 'the Yankee government is fighting to take away our negroes.' Mr. Beecher says we are carr[y]ing on this war to abolish slavery, which is the same as saying that we intend to take away the southerners negroes and we are fighting for that purpose." Francis believed that a man such as this, who would not have the Union unless the slaves were freed, was just as bad as the southerners who would not return to the Union unless they could keep their slaves. She thought the Union army should beat the Rebel forces, and then the slavery issue should be decided at the ballot boxes.[424]

Francis did not think that Union soldiers should socialize with the southern sympathizers in Lexington. One day in November, Mrs. William Preston, the wife of a Confederate officer, had cooked supper for a couple of Union officers. Just before they sat down to eat they received a message that they were to report immediately to headquarters. Francis declared this served them right because "Union officers have no business keeping company with the secesh. If we fight them on the field we should keep them down at home too." She also worried that these women, who where southern sympathizers, were known to give information to the Confederates. Many in town suspected that a rider would leave every night with mail heading south, which included

[424] Ibid., 95, 169-170.

information from rebel women, but up to this point they had not been able to figure out who was taking it and where it was being sent from.[425]

Francis Peter was a strong Unionist in the heart of the Bluegrass region of Kentucky. Like most Kentuckians, Peter did not support Lincoln, but she did not seem to completely deplore him as most did. She was not able to attend many of the Union speeches in town early in the war, but she read them in newspapers and had political conversations with her family at home. Peter held a strong love for her country and disdain for those who sought to do it harm. Even though she was only a teenager, the influence of her family weighed heavily on her sentiments; her strong loyalist attitude was a result of being raised by two people who loved their country and stayed true to it throughout the war. Sadly, Francis Peter died from a seizure before the Civil War ended and did not get to see the Union victory.

Unlike Francis Peter, Josie Underwood would have to deal with the repercussions of having a Unionist father in southern Kentucky. Underwood was born in Bowling Green, Kentucky, in 1840. The Underwood farm, Mount Air, had twenty-eight slaves on it, valued at $45,000 in 1860. The year before Josie was born her father, Warner, a lawyer in Bowling Green, bought their plantation, Mount Air. He had been raised in a slaveholding family in Virginia, before marrying Kentucky native Lucy Henry and settling in Bowling Green. In the summer and fall of 1860, Warner Underwood spent much of his time campaigning for John Bell in the presidential election. [426]

Josie Underwood began her diary in December 1860. Her mother had given her the diary before she left to visit her sister in Memphis, Tennessee, so that she could write

[425] Ibid., 82.
[426] Nancy Disher Baird, ed. *Josie Underwood's Civil War Diary* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2009), 2-4, 6.

about her experiences and therefore tell her mother upon her return to Kentucky. During her stay in Memphis, Josie debated the secession crisis with many people, mostly men, who strongly supported secession. She, like Francis Peter, took on many of the ideologies of her father and even used the arguments that he would make in speeches to debate with others on secession. She was shocked to hear the way these men would talk. On hearing a conversation between her brother-in-law, Mr. Western, and another man, she wrote, "It was dreadful to hear how they talked. Mr. Western and Mr. Grafton did not hesitate to say they would be glad to see the country divided – that there was no similarity of interest in the two sections North and South – no love between them and the sooner separated the better – worse than useless to be trying to live as one country and forever working against each other." Her father had encouraged her before she left not to get involved in political conversations. However, Josie could not contain herself when men spoke about the Union in such a way. In this case she was glad that she had read her father's most recent speech, which gave her the arguments that she made for saving the Union. As historian Drew Gilpin Faust explains, many southern women during this period found politics irresistible, and Josie Underwood was no exception. These women realized the women's sphere that they belonged to, they nevertheless resisted being left out of political debate, even if only in a private manner. Still, though they desired to participate in politics they also longed to act as ladies, which often left them feeling conflicted. According to George C. Rable, women had followed politics long before the Civil War, developing strong opinions on both men running for office and the measures that they sought to pass. It is no wonder that by this point Underwood felt conflicted,

struggling to act the part of a southern lady, yet holding such strong views that she could not keep them to herself.[427]

It seemed that no matter how hard she tried, Underwood could not keep from discussing politics. She attended a ball in Memphis on New Year's Eve with the pro-secession Mr. Grafton. Although they tried to avoid talking about the crisis going on in the country, it seemed that they could not avoid the subject, especially with the two holding such opposite views. While they were arguing about secession a man came to Josie's rescue, Governor Henry Foote of Mississippi, who had previously served in Congress with her father. He told Grafton that his speech was treasonous. After Foote had walked off, Grafton explained to Josie that the older men did not understand what would happen to the South if Lincoln were able to carry out his principles, implying that Lincoln would get rid of slavery and thereby destroy the southern economy. Grafton was prepared to fight to prevent that from happening. Josie, on the other hand, could not understand why these men would not fight for their rights in the Union, rather than destroying the country that their forefathers had fought so hard to establish.[428]

Josie's cousin, John, had an experience similar to that of many during the Civil War. A graduate of West Point, he had been a major in the United States army commanding an arsenal in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, which state troops eventually seized. John was engaged to Lucy Gwin, the daughter of a Louisiana senator. Lucy and her family were strong secessionists, while John stood for the Union. Lucy pled with him to resign from the army, but John believed he could never forgive himself if he did.

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[427] Ibid, 9,30-31; Drew Gilpin Faust. *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 11-12; George C. Rable. *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989) 40.

[428] Baird, *Josie Underwood's Civil War Diary*, 34.

Although Josie was never engaged during the war, she received many affectionate letters from Grafton, who had expressed his love for her before she left Memphis. She, however, did not love him in return but thought that had he not been a secessionist, eventually fighting in the Rebel army, she might have felt differently. Unfortunately, the two would not have a chance to find out, as Grafton was one of the many casualties of war, losing his life in 1862 at the Battle of Fair Oaks in Virginia.[429]

Josie mentioned multiple times in her diary the dilemma of Kentucky Unionists. They faced a situation where, although they stood for the Union, they were just as opposed to Abraham Lincoln and his policies as the secessionists were. They were forced to fight Lincoln and the secessionists at the same time. Although her father had campaigned for the John Bell in 1860, according to Josie

> he is no less a lover of his country because a party he regards untrue to the constitution were successful. He thinks for that very reason all true patriots should stand true to the old flag and to the whole country and he says – he opposes secession *most* – out of his love for the South, for disunion will be her ruin – for if there is war – it will surely be in the South and the whole land desolated and laid in waste and slavery will certainly go if the Union is dissolved.

Warner Underwood believed that the actions of the southern states in leaving the Union were unwise. Instead of seceding, he argued, their best chance lay in fighting for their rights in Congress.[430]

[429] Ibid., 36, 46, 200.
[430] Ibid., 38-39, 51.

As is often the case, it was not the voice of the majority that was loudest in Kentucky during the secession crisis. Josie complained that although the majority of Kentuckians supported the Union, "the Rebels have so many rowdies they make the most noise." She also spoke of the advantage held by the southern sympathizers in Kentucky. They had the advantage of enthusiasm for Jefferson Davis and his administration, while Kentucky Unionists only had Abraham Lincoln, whom they despised and whose policy they feared. She believed that "it is doubly hard to stand firm for a principle and true to the Union under these circumstances and requires a high order of patriotism to be a Kentucky Union man." Perhaps Underwood was correct, and this is why many younger men went south to fight for the Confederacy, because it was an easier choice to make. When Kentucky men fought for the Confederacy they did not have to defend something or someone that they did not truly believe in. They supported slavery and supported Jefferson Davis. Many Kentuckians owned slaves or aspired to and found it hard to fight for an administration that many accused of plotting to free the slaves.[431]

Her father hoped that if the border states remained in the Union they would be able to save their country. Her uncle and a number of other prominent Kentuckians who had retired from politics sought election into the state legislature in 1861 in order to keep Kentucky from seceding. These men, according to Josie, wanted Kentucky to remain neutral. She knew this would be a hard thing to do, as there was so much excitement in the state. Her mother and brother-in-law, Mr. Grider, believed that this would be impossible. Her mother also thought it was "a shame for any state to stand neutral when

[431] Ibid., 61.

the destruction of the Union is at stake." To Josie's father, on the other hand, neutrality seemed the only way to keep Kentucky in the Union.[432]

Even if the state itself remained neutral, Josie argued, "Every man woman and child is either 'Rebel or Union.'" She thought all of the older men, and those who thought things through, knew that disunion meant that the South would be ruined, slavery would end, and a horrible war would be fought. This group wanted to save the Union. However the "unthinking hot-heads and blather-skites" were for secession. This group hoped for change, excitement, and war.[433]

Her parents both deeply loved the South. Her mother had always hated abolitionists and said that she had no use for anything north of the Mason Dixon Line. Yet, for the South to be foolish enough to break up the Union and give up the flag to the Yankees, rather than remaining part of the Union and defending their rights under the Constitution, was more than she could bear. Mr. Underwood, having grown up in Virginia, did not even have a relative in the North. Still, his patriotism was not sectional; he was not a patriot of the South, but rather of the United States of America. Because of this, he was able to see clearly the destruction that would be brought about by breaking up the country. He knew that "the doctrine of secession once admitted and established means continuous deteriorations" and he could only see "evil to the whole country and absolute ruin to the South – in a division of country – on the basis of any state seceding whenever they have a real or supposed grievance."[434]

In February 1861, Josie's father received a letter from Wint, his wife's brother. Wint was a student at West Point and stated that the Kentucky cadets were anxious to

[432] Ibid., 58.
[433] Ibid., 58-58.
[434] Ibid., 59-60.

know what Kentucky was going to do. He also wanted Warner's advice on what he should do if the state seceded. Josie's father wrote him back, advising Wint to stay true to the Union and telling him that he should never help to destroy the government that his father and grandfather had fought to establish. Wint went on to fight for the United States army early on in the war in Missouri. Then, while on leave from the army in August 1861, he passed through Bowling Green on his way to Hot Springs, Arkansas. He was crippled with rheumatism and was going to the hot springs to help heal his body. While the young officer was in Kentucky, Josie's father had a talk with him, fearing that when he arrived in the South where his secession relatives lived, they would persuade Wint to resign from the United States army. Wint stated that he could never advocate secession and that they could not persuade him. However, just twelve days later Josie's family learned that Wint had done exactly what Mr. Underwood had feared, and resigned from the U. S. army. Wint stated that he had previously not fully understood the conditions of the conflict, but once these had been fully explained to him he believed he had to resign. Josie's mother was devastated. Although she loved her brother, she grieved for him as though he were dead, even stating that "if he had only died or been killed defending the flag and country for which his fathers fought – before he turned traitor." She asked her family not to mention his name again, he was dead to her.[435]

It seemed that others in the family were more willing to defend the Union. Warner, Josie's younger brother got in a fight with another boy at school when he was called a "Yankee and Abolitionist." Although Warner was only fourteen, he held his father's Unionist sympathies, but to the secessionist school boys Unionist and Lincoln supporter were synonymous. His father told him that a boy who considered himself a

[435] Ibid., 65-66, 91-92.

gentleman should not be having fights with such low fellows. However, his mother told him to "knock anybody down who called him such names." He apparently followed his mom's advice, as this would not be his last fight.[436]

After the firing on Fort Sumter, Josie's father was disappointed to find that a number of wavering men in the town had become secessionists. They argued that no chance remained to save the Union. When Lincoln called for troops, Josie's father still hoped that Kentucky would remain neutral, though she did not think it would last. Nearly every day they would hear of someone leaving to go to Tennessee to join the Confederate army or crossing the Ohio River to join the Union army. By the end of April, Josie commented on friendships breaking apart quicker than the Union over the secession crisis. The situation when the Civil War broke out was strikingly different for a state that was so divided over which position to take. Secessionists argued that it was simply the North against the South, while Unionists argued that it was the South against the established government. Josie contended that it was the fanatics in both the North and the South who were trying to overthrow the government and destroy the nation. Although her father advised her to avoid political discussions, she, like most of her friends, could not. It was such discussions which led to arguments, eventually pitting friend against friend.[437]

Family members also took opposing sides. Josie's brother-in-law, Mr. Western, who lived in Memphis, was a strong secessionist. After a visit to Bowling Green, Mr. Western and his wife left to return home. Before Mr. Western left he told Mr. Underwood that "No matter how we all differ or what comes – nothing can ever happen

[436] Baird, *Josie Underwood's Civil War Diary*, 68.
[437] Ibid., 76-77, 79.

to lessen my love for you all." Mr. Western eventually enlisted in the Confederate army, serving in Nathan Bedford Forrest's cavalry. Although Josie did not support his actions, she declared that nothing he could ever do would alter her love for him. Regardless of his service in the Confederate army, such sentiments did not change in the family throughout the war. With the exception of Uncle Wint, they were able to look beyond the differences and hold on to their familial bonds. Her mother, Wint's sister, refused to forgive him for enlisting in the Confederate army, as she seemed to hold her blood relative to a higher standard, and the rest of the family supported her in this. One uncle refused to tell Josie which side he supported, knowing the problems that such talk could bring about. When she asked him, he told her, "I deplore the condition of affairs and hope I may never do anything to add to the trouble, but talking too much does a great deal of harm."[438]

Many in Bowling Green feared that if Kentucky neutrality ended, Rebel soldiers at Camp Boone and Union soldiers across the river from Louisville would all converge on Bowling Green for a great battle. Although there would not be a great battle in the town, the Confederate forces did move into Bowling Green when neutrality ended. This proved a horrible event for the Underwood family, holding Union sentiments.[439]

Josie knew many men in the Rebel army in Bowling Green. Several of these asked to call on her at her home, which she refused out of respect to her father's Union stance. One day she went into town and a man in a captain's uniform approached her carriage. She recognized him as a friend from her school days in Russellville. He had attended college there at the same time. After asking if he could call on her she replied,

[438] Ibid., 80, 84, 89.
[439] Ibid., 93-94, 99.

"Not in that uniform." He was very surprised, as he said that he had assumed she was a Rebel. She asked him what would make him think that, "Did you ever in the old days hear me express great admiration for Benedict Arnold?" Josie stuck to her guns and never did let Rebel soldiers call on her at her house, not even friends that she had known for a long time.[440]

On September 29, 1862, the Confederate soldiers began a series of events that would leave the Underwoods' lives in shambles. On this day, they marched through the yard at Mount Air and pitched their tents near the barn and in one of the orchards. The soldiers began marching into the kitchen to get food and took the best stalls in the barn for officers' horses. The soldiers also chopped down many of the trees at Mount Air, burned the rails from their fences, and used their fields for drilling.[441]

By October 3, Josie's fourteen-year-old brother Warner was anxious to cross through the Rebel lines to enlist in the Union army. Their father, however, thought he was too young. Their thirteen-year-old brother Henry declared that he could shoot as good as Warner, and if Warner enlisted, he would too. Mr. Grider had by this time left for Louisville with the regiment of Union troops that he had organized. On October 20, his wife, Fanny, Josie's sister, was able to get a pass for her and her children to cross Rebel lines. One of the Underwoods' slaves, Uncle Lewis, was driving the carriage taking them to Louisville, but the family thought they would be better off if Warner went with them. Because of his age he could pass as one of the children on the pass. Warner did not plan on just escorting his sister to Louisville and then returning home; he knew that once he crossed the Rebel lines he could enlist in the Union army. Josie suspected

[440] Ibid., 102-103.
[441] Ibid., 105.

that these were his intentions, but did not mention it to their parents. When Uncle Lewis returned home, the family learned that Warner had joined the army. After Fanny and Mr. Grider failed to talk him out of it, Grider insisted that Warner enlist in his regiment. Warner was shot in the arm at the Battle of Shiloh and returned home to heal. Later he was able to attend West Point. His father pushed him to go and get his education so that he could be an educated soldier, rather than just a soldier.[442]

After Warner had left to fight, the family was dealt the hardest blow yet. In December Mr. Underwood received a note ordering him to the Rebel headquarters. Upon his arrival he found that Albert Sidney Johnston had taken command. Mr. Underwood knew Johnston well and had thought very highly of him. After Johnston had spent some time trying to persuade Mr. Underwood to give up on the Union, Mr. Underwood informed him that, though it may be to his personal advantage to support the Confederacy, he would "forever scorn himself if for the sake of personal advantage he were induced to advocate session, which he thought a wrong and destructive plan." Upon such a declaration, Johnston informed him that he could not be permitted to maintain such an attitude much longer in the face of the Confederate army. The family worried about what such a statement would lead to.[443]

They found out just a couple of days later when Mr. Underwood received an order to vacate Mount Air; it would seem that Johnston was not the man that Underwood had believed him to be. They were required to move out by January 4. The family moved to a rented a cabin fifteen miles away and was forced to leave many of their possessions behind. One Rebel officer asked Josie's mother to leave her room furnished. His wife

[442] Ibid., 109, 119, 172-173, 177,178.
[443] Ibid., 135.

would be coming and he would like her to stay there and he offered to pay for the furniture. However, when Henry returned the day after they moved to collect the money, the officer told him that the furniture had been confiscated and he would not give money to a Union sympathizer.[444]

Toward the end of January matters worsened for the family. A friend of Mr. Underwood's, who also happened to be a strong secessionist, arrived one night to warn Mr. Underwood that he was to be arrested the next day. Although the man was a secessionist he cared deeply for Mr. Underwood. He advised Mr. Underwood that Rebel soldiers would be coming the next day to get him and he would be sent south to prison. Her father did not want to leave, but he realized that it would be worse for the family if he were in prison, so he mounted his horse and road away.[445]

On February 12, 1862, Josie and her mother received notice that they could return to Mount Air. The next day when they arrived, they found that as the Rebels had begun to evacuate they burned the house down. They came upon the smoldering remains just in time to see the last standing wall fall upon the heap of ashes. The family had no other choice but to move to the home of Mr. Grider and Fanny, as Mr. Grider insisted that they live there until the end of the war.[446]

That, however, would not be necessary. Josie's father had returned to Bowling Green when the Union troops moved into town. On June 25, he received a letter from John J. Crittenden and Henry Grider, Josie's brother-in-law's father reporting that they had spoken with President Lincoln and had explained the loyalty of Mr. Underwood and the sacrifices that he had already made for the Union. Crittenden and Grider insisted that

[444] Ibid., 138-140.
[445] Ibid., 150.
[446] Ibid., 154-156.

Mr. Underwood go to Washington D. C. After receiving the letter, he and Josie left for Washington whereupon Lincoln appointed him consul to Glasgow. Josie met Lincoln while in Washington D. C. and thought he was a very common looking man, but "I must confess there was a kindliness in his face" which she believed did not fit the image of him as a "tyrant – unfair man" that she previously held.[447]

Before they left for Scotland, Josie realized that she had to say goodbye to her best friend, Lizzie. Lizzie was a southern sympathizer, and the two had not spoken for months. Fanny's house, where Josie and her family had been living, was across the street from Lizzie's house. The two would often sit outside on their porch in the evening, right across the street from one another, without saying a word. However, Josie knew she had to say goodbye. When she crossed the street she received a warm welcome from Lizzie, who was grateful that her friend extended an olive branch. Although the friendship had been strained for months, to Josie's relief, it had not been broken.[448]

Josie's diary ends upon the family's departure to Scotland. Although her family had suffered greatly for their loyalty to the Union, their patriotism did not waver. As a result, they were rewarded for their loyalty. Josie hated to leave at such a crucial time, but her family was able to escape the possibility of more hardships of war.

The record left behind by Kentucky women sheds additional light on just how divided the state was. Even though some remained loyal to the Union early in the war, such sentiments did not always last. Although these women were able to think for themselves most seemed to share sentiments of the men closest to them, whether it be their fathers or their husbands. It is not surprising that many daughters shared their

[447] Ibid., 181-182, 185.
[448] Ibid., 199.

fathers' stance on the war, as children are raised with the values, beliefs, and traditions of their parents. The loyalty that these women had towards their families showed the strength of the bonds that they shared, which even war could not tear apart. Many women faced hardships of their own at home. Although they did not endure the hard life of a soldier or participate in the bloody battles, they faced their own share dangers at home. Often they were left to fear roaming bands of guerilla fighters. They were even helpless when it came to soldiers from both armies who often stole their livestock and food. Still, these women supported the men fighting for a cause that they believed in and endured such hardship with all the grace that they could muster.

Chapter 8

"A Most Abominable Infamous Document"

Kentucky Reaction to the Emancipation Proclamation

From the beginning of his presidency, Kentuckians were suspicious of Lincoln's policy toward slaves. Early in the Civil War problems arose in Kentucky when some antislavery Union officers felt disinclined to return runaway slaves to their owners. Also, the demand for slave labor in the army, which at times resembled a draft, caused apprehension for many Kentucky slave owners. Their fears were intensified when Lincoln began to recommend that border states show their loyalty to the Union by freeing their slaves. When they did not, Lincoln asked Congress in March 1862 to provide federal funds to states that adopted gradual emancipation. The joint resolution passed by the national legislature called on the states to stipulate a date or age at which slaves within their borders would be freed. Lincoln believed that the fastest way to bring about an end to the Civil War was to gain a commitment from the border states to voluntarily end slavery in order to preserve the Union. Lincoln thought this would force the Confederates to realize that the border states would never join them. Kentuckians, however, refused to give up their slaves, even with compensation. They clung as tightly to the institution as any other southerner would and would not free their slaves until they were forced to do so.[449]

In July 1862, Lincoln met with his cabinet to read them a draft of the Emancipation Proclamation. He hoped that his actions would help to bring the war to a

[449] Harrison, *The Civil War in* Kentucky, 92; Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005), 459.

more rapid conclusion. While most supported it, Montgomery Blair was quick to point out the effect it might have on the loyal population in the border states. He feared that it would push them to the side of the secessionists. Lincoln had already considered this possibly, and this was one reason he had tried to get them to accept compensated emancipation. Under the advice of William Seward, Lincoln waited until the Union army had accomplished a victory on the battlefield to announce the Emancipation Proclamation. Otherwise, Seward feared, it would appear as the last desperate efforts of a defeated government.[450]

Following the Army of Northern Virginia's forced retreat from Antietam, Lincoln decided this was the victory he had been waiting for, and on September 23, 1862, Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. It gave warning to the Confederate states, offering them one last chance to lay down their arms and return to the Union with their peculiar institution intact. If they refused, all slaves in all states still in rebellion as of January 1, 1863, would be free. While many in the North celebrated Lincoln's action, Kentuckians, though the proclamation did not apply to them, were filled with indignation, rather than jubilee. They rightly argued that if some slaves could be freed at the time, then in the future all slaves could be freed.[451]

On January 1, 1863, Lincoln followed through, announcing that all slaves in areas that were still in rebellion were free. Governor Robinson of Kentucky denounced the Emancipation Proclamation in a message to the state legislature the same month. The legislature also denounced it, struggling to find the appropriate wording to express the intensity of its disapproval. Some in the legislature discussed recalling all Kentucky

[450] Ibid., 466, 468.
[451] Ibid., 481-482; Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 93.

troops that were fighting for the Union, while a minority called for secession. Lincoln was so concerned with the situation in Kentucky that he hesitated sending guns to the Home Guard, fearing they would be used against the government.[452]

The president also took the proclamation one step further, announcing the authorization of recruiting black men into the Union army. Most Kentuckians not only opposed emancipation, but they adamantly disagreed with the enlistment of black men in the Union army. They did not believe that former slaves and their former masters should march side by side, and they did not trust the abilities of African Americans to stand up and fight in battle. As a result of the Emancipation Proclamation, many in the state felt as though they had been punished for remaining loyal to the Union. Some who had enlisted in the Union army immediately sought to resign. Others voiced their disgust, but continued fighting against the Confederacy, as the Union still remained the lesser of the two evils. Those who had left their state and enlisted in the Rebel army believed their actions had been justified again when Lincoln published the Emancipation Proclamation. This is exactly what they had expected out of him. Whether Rebel or Unionist, the majority of Kentuckians did not welcome the Emancipation Proclamation.[453]

Lawmakers in the state realized early on that slaves fleeing southern states would pass through Kentucky on their way to the North. As a result, the legislature passed a law on March 2, 1863, forbidding any free black people, or those pretending to be free, as a result of the emancipation proclamation, from entering the state. Any persons in the state matching that description were to be arrested and placed in jail as runaway slaves.[454]

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[452] Goodwin, *Team of Rivals*, 482; Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 93.
[453] Goodwin, *Team of Rivals*, 497.
[454] Ibid., 164

On January 9, 1863, John T. Harrington of the Union Twenty-second Kentucky Regiment wrote that by enforcing the Emancipation Proclamation, Abraham Lincoln had changed what the Civil War was fought for. Instead of fighting for the preservation of the Union, he had Federal soldiers fighting for "his Abolition Platform, and this making us a hord of Subjugators, house burners, negro thieves, and devastators of private property." Harrington became very disappointed that the war aims had changed. He had enlisted in the army to help save the United States, not to end slavery. He shared a sentiment that became common among many Kentucky soldiers in the Union army.[455]

In another Union Kentucky regiment, Private John Joyce of Owingsville, Kentucky described the impact the Emancipation Proclamation had on Kentucky troops. Many men in his regiment had a stake in slavery. Many owned slaves and others aspired to, and while they were fighting to save the Union, Joyce thought Lincoln had, with one stroke of his pen, taken away their property, thereby putting them in the same position as many fighting in the Rebel army. He believed many Kentucky Unionists became lukewarm in their support after the proclamation and very bitter against northern politicians who they believed had no problem with taking the property of Union men without compensating them. Although the Emancipation Proclamation did not apply to the state of Kentucky, it eventually led to the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, freeing all slaves and causing many Kentuckians to lose money they had invested in their slave property.[456]

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[455] Stuart W. Sanders, Ed. "'I Have Seen War in all its Horrors': Two Civil War Letters of John T. Harrington, Twenty-second Kentucky Union Infantry Regiment," *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*, 105, 4, (Autumn 2007) 657-677.
[456] Joyce, *Checkered Life*, 75.

Though Kentucky did remain in the Union, a number of Union soldiers from the state deserted from the army and many Kentucky officers also resigned. Some did not desert, but still sought to get out of the Federal army. In July 1862 Benjamin Forsythe Buckner responded to a letter from Helen, his future wife, on the subject of emancipation. She had believed he would advocate emancipation in order to save the government, and Buckner was offended by such a belief. He scolded her, "You must believe I have changed most sadly from what I was if you believe that I would ever consent to anything so cowardly and mean." When Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, Buckner adamantly opposed it and had no desire to continue fighting for his country or fighting to end slavery. He wrote to Helen that he was anxious to leave the army and that the Emancipation Proclamation was

> a most abominable infamous document and falsifies all [Lincoln's] pledges both public and private. The Union Kentuckians are most shamefully treated, and by reason of the president's want of good faith, which is only equaled by his lack of good sense, we find ourselves in arms to maintain doctrines which if announced 12 months ago would have driven us all notwithstanding our loyalty to the Constitution and the Union into the ranks of the Southern Army.[457]

Buckner declared that by issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, President Lincoln had negated all that many Kentuckians had been fighting for, and instead Lincoln's administration was simply continuing a war that would result in the ruin of both the North and South. Union soldiers were no longer fighting for the constitutional form of government that nations around the world admired. Buckner believed there was

[457] Coulter, *Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, 161, 163; Benjamin Forsythe Buckner to Helen, 8 July 1862, 5 November 1862, Benjamin Forsythe Buckner Papers, Special Collections, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky.

no longer a country where he belonged. He still thought that southerners had brought the war upon the country and did not deserve his support and that the Confederacy could not guarantee his protection. If Kentucky were to secede, as a result of the Emancipation Proclamation, he predicted that the ruin and slaughter which had taken place in Virginia would also be seen in Kentucky. Instead, Kentuckians could only hope that common sense would return to the administration and they might realize their error. Regardless, Buckner planned on resigning from the Union army.[458]

On December 2, 1862, Buckner wrote of many officers wanting to resign their commissions. Some had already done so because they had been fighting in the South "when their property and that of their friends is being stolen by our supposed friends." This complaint was directed toward the Union army stealing from their families back home, even though they were away fighting for the same cause. Another officer, Colonel Hanson, said that he intended on leaving the service because he was not willing to fight in order to free his own slaves. As for Buckner, he intended to resign because "I can't fight against my principles and those of my friends in order to satisfy the absurd desire of a faction at the North. I will probably be discharged in disgrace from the army but my determination is firmly made up and regardless of the consequences I will leave the service. While I am this utterly indisposed to fight for Lincoln abolitionism I am further from joining the Confederates." Although he desperately disagreed with the new position of the Lincoln administration and no longer wanted to fight for the Union, he could not completely abandon his country. He believed that the South had caused the war, and he would not risk his life for a cause that he did not believe in.[459]

[458] Ibid., Benjamin Forsythe Buckner to Helen, 5 November 1862.
[459] Ibid., Benjamin Forsythe Buckner to Helen, 2 December 1862.

At least fifteen officers had signed their resignations when the division commander suggested that they withdraw their resignations and unite in proposing to General Rosecrans that their regiment be sent to Lexington. They all agreed, but Rosecrans told them that, though he would like to, it was not in his power at the time to do so. All believed they had been deceived. Colonel Hanson told General Rosecrans that he owned several thousand dollars worth of slaves and was not happy with fighting for a cause that was "so detrimental of his own interests." Rosecrans advised him to turn his slaves over to the quartermaster, take a receipt for them, and he would later receive payment for them. Buckner was very upset with this situation when he believed that they were supposed to be fighting for the maintenance of the Constitution. He did not trust "Lincoln's slavish abolition congress" to actually compensate Colonel Hanson for his slaves. By this point Buckner thought that

> A Union man engaged in the service is given to understand by the General commanding the army that his rights of opinion and of property are held as naught, and that he and his friends are to be sacrificed in this crusade against slavery notwithstanding his undoubted loyalty. It is absolutely disheartening To men who not only have no sympathy with the rebellion, but who have periled their lives for the preservations of the government and the constitution to hear from the likes of the commanding general such a sentiment fills me with apprehension for the future.

Needless to say, many Kentucky soldiers in the Union army felt betrayed, as though they were being punished for their loyalty to the Union. Abraham Lincoln and the Republican party had deceived them, they asserted, and they became opposed to both sides. They

disagreed with the act of secession, but at the same time adamantly disagreed with what they believed the war had become for the North, a contest for abolition.[460]

At the beginning of 1862 Robert Winn considered emancipation a bad idea. He feared that it would only prolong both the war and slavery. However, by June 15 of the same year, if allowed to vote on emancipation, he believed that he would have voted in favor of it. Before Lincoln formally issued the Emancipation Proclamation, Winn discussed the thought of many Union soldiers from Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. These troops denied the right of the Federal government to free slaves, even those owned by Confederate soldiers. If such an event did take place, they believed it would justify a revolt by the Union army. Winn thought that the hold slavery had over these men was very strange. Still, it was not strong enough to stage the revolt that they had threatened.[461]

By 1864 Winn believed that if slavery could be eradicated, this would eventually force the rebellion to die, due to lack of support, though it would not really be eradicated in the South until the war ended. The same year he commented on the increasing number of emancipationists in the Union army, and surprisingly enough, even in the Kentucky regiments.[462]

Benjamin F. Stevenson, a surgeon in the Union army, witnessed Kentucky men trying to get out of the Union army after the Emancipation Proclamation. He wrote of soldiers wanting him to sign certificates of sickness, stating that they were not well enough to continue serving in the army. Stevenson refused to do so. These men did this

[460] Ibid., Benjamin Forsythe Buckner to Helen, 7 December 1862; Benjamin Forsythe Buckner to Helen, 1 February 1863.
[461] Robert Winn to Sister, 21 February 1862; Robert Winn to sister, 15 June 1862; Robert Winn to Sister, 21 July 1862, Winn-Cook Letters, Manuscript Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[462] Ibid., Robert Winn to Sister, 27 January 1864; Robert Winn to Sister, 26 May 1864.

because of their beliefs about the Emancipation Proclamation. Still, Stevenson did not believe that the proclamation had any major effect on the army. He told his wife that there was no demoralization in the army and that "The proclamation has not diminished the ardor or will of any but cowards and renegades." He spoke disparagingly of those who did seek to resign, stating that they abandoned positions of which they were unworthy to begin with.[463]

John Jefferson believed Lincoln finally revealed his abolitionist sentiments. Jefferson, who did not fight in the Civil War, but was a Unionist in Kentucky, wrote about the Emancipation Proclamation in his diary. Although Kentucky was exempt from Lincoln's proclamation, he thought Lincoln had finally shown his true colors, it proved "beyond doubt that Lincoln is an abolitionist of the deepest dye." He did not own slaves and still strongly condemned Lincoln's proclamation. One did not need to be a soldier or a slave owner to oppose whole heartedly the freeing of slaves.[464]

Kentucky women also had strong opinions about the Emancipation Proclamation. Ellen Wallace thought the proclamation was deplorable. The consequences of such an act, according to Wallace, were too awful to think about. "The blood of women, children, and helpless aged will flow in torrents if its carried into effect." Wallace did not elaborate on why she thought the proclamation would lead to violence against women and children, but possibly she feared that the former slaves would wage a race war against white people. In November 1862, Wallace commented on Federal forces marching through town with a large number of African Americans following. She dreaded the effects of the Emancipation Proclamation on the slaves in Kentucky, fearing

[463] Stevenson, *Letters From the Army*, 190, 208-209.
[464] John F. Jefferson, Diary, 2 January 1863, Transcribed, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

that they would run away from their masters. Later on in November she commented on the number of slaves fleeing to the Union army. Almost every slave owner in her community lost slaves who decided that freedom awaited them if they could get to the Union army.[465]

Wallace believed that Lincoln and his cabinet had nothing on their minds except freeing the slaves, no matter the cost. It seemed to her that they were more concerned with the black man's place in society than upholding the Constitution. In the summer of 1863, Lincoln set aside August 4 as a day of thanksgiving for the victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg the previous month. Wallace wished that someone would "set apart the 7th as a day of humiliation and prayer that Abe Lincoln is chief magistrate of the United States." She wished nothing more than to see Lincoln leave office, as did many people in Kentucky. That, she believed, was the only way that the war would end.[466]

One morning two Yankee soldiers joined Wallace's family for breakfast and stated that they were in favor of freeing the slaves. In her journal, Wallace wrote, "Poor ignorant wretches, they know not what they do. The great mass of negroes are better provided for and happier than the poorer classes in yankee-dom or Europe. God have mercy on both the negro and his owner for they both equally need his compassion."[467]

Wallace commented on several slaves being stopped by pickets one night in November 1863. They were mounted on fine horses which they had stolen from their masters, in order to escape to the Federal army. "The poor Negro is the innocent victim of this war," Wallace wrote. "They are decoyed from their homes by promises of

[465] Ellen Kenton McGaughey Wallace, Journal, 29 September, 5, 8 November 1862, Transcribed, Wallace-Starling Family Papers, Special Collections, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky.
[466] Ibid., 17 February 1863, 4 August 1863.
[467] Ibid., 9 November 1862.

freedom and then left to starve and die without shelter or any earthly comfort in the most miserable manner by thousands and tens of thousands." She did not wish any harm on black people as a result of all of this, but she did wish that the Yankees would manage their own affairs and leave "Kentucky institutions" alone. Although she obviously did not know what the future held for the black people who found freedom, she believed at present they faced a horrible situation. The road for many freedman would not be easy, but eventually many would obtain much better lives.[468]

As the slaves eventually began to abandon the Wallace family's plantation, Mr. Wallace instructed the female slaves that when all of the male slaves had left the plantation, they would also have to. With the plantation idle due to lack of labor, he would no longer be able to support the remaining slaves: the women and children. Ellen Wallace hoped that they would all leave that night because the slaves had become so unmanageable that she believed it would be a relief for them to be gone. Even if they did not produce anything on the plantation she believed that the family would need relatively little with no slaves to care for. Wallace strongly believed that to the slaves freedom meant "to have all the luxuries and comforts of the wealthy whites and no work." By July 1864, many farmers faced a good wheat crop without enough labor to harvest it. So many slaves had run away that they could not get their crops out of the field. Even the slaves that remained, according to Wallace, worked only as they wanted to, rather than as their master wanted. The Emancipation Proclamation left them believing that they could leave if they wanted to, so they would only work as much as they thought necessary.[469]

[468] Ibid., 12 November 1863, 14 February 1864.
[469] Ibid., 20 February, 1 July 1864.

Kentucky did not support Lincoln before the war, and that did not change as the conflict progressed. In the presidential election of 1864, Lincoln received 26, 592 votes and George B. McClellan received 61, 478. Although Lincoln received a significantly higher number than he had in 1860, there was still no doubt that the majority of people in the state did not support him.[470]

After the Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln also began to allow black men to enlist in the Union army. Lincoln was often a good judge of Kentuckians. Yet, Lincoln believed Kentuckians would not object to the enlisting of free blacks in the army, since it did not affect slaves. He was mistaken. Coulter reveals that this resulted in a panic by Kentuckians who realized that "once the bars were lowered to free negroes, slaves would speedily follow." By the end of 1863, black men were being recruited from Kentucky and, whether they were free or slave, recruiters did not discriminate. Coulter claims that during 1863, 10,000 slaves left the state. Slaves began to run away and desert the farms. In some cases recruiters took them forcibly from their owners. In other cases they heard of bounties being offered and left of their own accord. Regardless, Kentucky slave owners were severely affected when Lincoln decided to let black men enlist in the Union army.[471]

Robert Winn, unlike most Kentuckians, thought that recruiting black man for the "Corps d'Afrique" was a wonderful idea. He wished the government would set up large recruiting stations in Kentucky and apply the draft to slaves. For Winn it was a matter of simple logic. If the government could increase the number of Union soldiers through

[470] Coulter, *Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky,* 187.
[471] Ibid., 197, 204, 247.

enlisting black men, then possibly the Union could quickly defeat the South and end the war.[472]

Many in Kentucky did not look on black troops as favorably as Winn. In November 1862 when Federal troops marched through her town, Ellen Wallace saw something very offensive to her and other Unionists in town, "The contraband negroes in a body with a banner. Only two had guns. We cannot guess what the result of this thing will be, but we anticipate great trouble in the management of our servants to say the least." Black people in the state had begun to follow the Union army, an event that would take place throughout the South. Wallace knew that the notion of freedom would reach her slaves and that they might not be as inclined to do as they were told.[473]

In December 1863 she wrote about the situation in town. People were rarely walking the streets anymore, except occasionally a man on horseback or a group of black men debating whether they should remain or enlist in the Union army. She contended Lincoln had made the slaves masters of the white man by putting so much power in their hands. There were black soldiers stationed as pickets "where they defy their former masters to pass on peril of their lives. The white man has to turn his horse's head and obey Lincoln's negro troops with clenched teeth." Although the proclamation did not apply to Kentucky, she suspected that recruiting stations had been established along the southern border of Kentucky in order to entice the state's slaves to leave their masters and enlist in the Union army.[474]

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[472]Robert Winn to Sister, 3 January 1864, Winn-Cook Letters, Manuscript Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[473] Ellen Kenton McGaughey Wallace, Journal, 6 November 1862, Transcribed, Wallace-Starling Family Papers, Special Collections, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky.
[474] Ibid., 25 December 1863.

On September 22, 1864, Wallace wrote of the dreaded event that had finally occurred: black troops occupied her town. Wallace feared that she would have to take her children out of school and that it would no longer be safe for women to walk the streets of town. Although no incidents occurred against women or children that Wallace recorded in her journal, she did write of another event. Later in September gangs of black soldiers were going from plantation to plantation, apparently forcing and persuading slaves to abandon the farms and enlist in the Union army.[475]

Francis Peter wrote of several Union officers in Lexington who were arrested for running slaves off from their owners. Toward the end of 1862, the jails in town were also filled with slaves from Tennessee and Alabama who had runaway and were trying to make their way North. Although still a Union state, Kentuckians did not like the idea of runaway slaves. Francis had heard both favorable and unfavorable reports of how black regiments were performing in the war. Some of the good reports spoke of how patriotic the soldiers were, which Francis doubted. She believed that the accounts of their refusing to work and deserting were more likely true. She wrote that from all she had seen of slaves, they were indisposed to work, too timid for the likes of a soldier, and had it in their heads that liberty was synonymous with doing nothing. Francis thought that making black men into soldiers went against the Constitution and that it was simply a waste of time.[476]

Francis saw a change in many of the black people around Lexington the longer the army was there. Early on they had been inclined to work hard for the Union army. Yet, "Sambo doesn't like hard work especially if it has to be done regularly." Because of

[475] Ibid., 22, 30 September 1864.
[476] Smith and Cooper, eds, *A Union Woman in Civil War Kentucky*, 86, 96.

this sentiment, she believed that many had come to realize that the soldiers made them work just as hard as their masters, if not harder. This led many to lose interest in working for the Union soldiers and they were no longer as willing to do things for the soldiers as they had been when the troops first arrived in town.[477]

Francis worried about the former slaves being armed as soldiers. She had heard of mutinies in black regiments resulting in the injury or death of white Union officers. She feared the "negroes have got arms in their hands, and so many notions of freedom in their heads that before the war is over it is not improbable that we may have to fight them as well as the secesh." This fear of a war against freed blacks seemed to be fairly widespread in Kentucky.[478]

As the war continued and it began to look as though the Confederacy would lose, the price of slaves significantly declined. Then on January 31, 1865 the United States Congress passed the Thirteenth Amendment to end slavery. Governor Bramlette proposed that it be ratified only after Kentucky's receipt of thirty-four million dollars, the estimated value of Kentucky slaves in 1864. Both houses of the legislature rejected Bramlette's proposition. In December 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment went into effect, but according to Kentucky historian Lowell H. Harrison, Kentuckians still clung to slavery. The loss of the institution proved the worst economic detriment of the war years. Had Kentucky accepted compensated emancipation in 1862, slaveholders in the state would not have faced the economic hardship that came with losing so much of their investments. Harris contends that "their failure to anticipate the end of slavery and to prepare for it caused Kentuckians many problems during the postwar era." Their loss of

[477] Ibid., 118.
[478] Ibid., 136-137.

slaves also changed their view of the Union and their support quickly waned as a result.[479]

Whether they were prepared for the end of slavery or not, one thing is clear, most Kentuckians adamantly opposed emancipation. From Union soldiers to women at home, Kentuckians believed that the Federal government should leave the institution alone. Many Union soldiers from Kentucky came to believe that Lincoln did not have them fighting to defend the Constitution and preserve their country, but instead sent them to battle to eradicate slavery.

[479] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 94.

Chapter 9

"The Long Struggle Ended Forever"

Kentuckians After the War

Early in the war Kentucky did not respond the way many from both sides had expected. In the beginning, many, especially in the South, thought Kentucky would secede. Even after the state chose to remain with the Union, southerners continuously thought Kentuckians needed to be liberated from the Union and they wanted help from the Confederate army for this purpose. Kentucky always seemed to be doing the unexpected, even during Reconstruction. During this period, he contended that the state consistently did the opposite of what the North had expected, according to E. Merton Coulter, "As was often remarked at the time, she [Kentucky] waited until after the war to secede." Yet, regardless of how the state as a whole reacted to Reconstruction, Kentucky soldiers from both armies returned home, to begin the rest of their lives.[480]

When the last shot had been fired and the war had ended, the Kentucky soldiers who had enlisted in the Confederate army set off for home. For some it took a little longer to get there. A group of Kentuckians gave John C. Breckinridge an escort as he fled the South to escape Federal forces. The former vice president would not return to his beloved state until 1869, after an absence of eight years. Those who returned to Kentucky contributed to the rebuilding process. Some went back to their studies, some practiced law, others worked their farms, and still others went into public office. No matter how these men lived out the rest of their lives, they never forgot the four years of

[480] Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky*, vii.

their life that they gave to the Confederacy. Although they ultimately failed in their defense of their cause they moved on and adjusted to a new life, free from slavery.[481]

John B. Castleman stated after the Civil War that "Kentucky from its admission to the Union of states has been at fault in not being positive in state matters, and in being injudicious in its law's enforcement." Even when it came time to determine the attitude of Kentucky toward the war, the state failed to issue a positive declaration. Because of this, the sons of Kentucky, without guidance and in accordance with their accustomed habit of individual action and self-reliance, were left to choose their own direction. This split households, with many families contributing men to both the United States army and the Confederate army. Kentucky also provided the leaders of both governments. Both Jefferson Davis and Abraham Lincoln were natives of the state.[482]

Those from Kentucky who identified themselves with the southern cause believed it a just one with a higher purpose and in a sense thought themselves invincible in fighting for such a cause.[483] Yet to their dismay, their faith could not make such dreams into reality. Although Kentucky received far less physical damage than many other southern states, the war affected the lives of most of its citizens.

Throughout the war many Confederates held out hope that they could bring Kentucky into the Confederate fold. In 1862 Braxton Bragg invaded Kentucky, expecting that the appearance of a Confederate army within the state would cause many of Kentucky's men to flock to the Confederate banner, ready to fight for the southern cause. Then once the state had become Confederate it would provide a bulwark against the North for the entire southern heartland. Bragg knew there would be added

[481] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 255, 265-266.
[482] Castleman, *Active Service*, 60, 63.
[483] Bullitt, Diary, 13.

advantages for his campaign if prominent Kentucky generals and their troops marched with him into the state. Of course John C. Breckinridge was his first choice, but Bragg wanted Breckinridge to leave behind his Orphan Brigade and come by himself. This Breckinridge refused to do. As a result, on August 18 an order from Bragg reached the Kentuckians' camp, the men of the Orphan Brigade raised a great cheer as they heard the news that they would soon return to their beloved state. At one point all of the regimental bands joined together, playing "My Old Kentucky Home." Yet they were destined for disappointment.[484]

Despite Bragg's order, district commander Earl Van Dorn had his own campaign to fight and did not want to let the Kentuckians to go. Bragg gave Van Dorn peremptory orders to release the Kentuckians, but in the end it took a mandate from the Secretary of War to finally get Van Dorn to cooperate. As a result, it was a full month before the Orphan Brigade started toward Knoxville and, somewhere beyond, a link-up with Bragg. On September 19 the troops boarded the train that took them away from Van Dorn and toward home. Twelve days later they arrived in Knoxville, and Breckinridge immediately wired Bragg. By that time, however, Bragg and his army were already deep in Kentucky. The next day, September 20, they captured Frankfort, the capital city, and for a time the Confederate conquest of Kentucky seemed within their reach. Then the fortunes of this highly fluid campaign shifted against them even more rapidly than Rebel hopes had risen during Bragg's rapid northward march. Within hours of the Confederate occupation of Frankfort, an advancing Federal army forced the gray-clad ranks to turn their backs and march out of the city on what turned out to be the first leg of a retreat that would take them out of the Bluegrass region and, finally, out of Kentucky. With the tide

[484] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 120-121.

of war flowing back toward them, Breckinridge and his men never got beyond Knoxville. The Orphan Brigade would not return to Kentucky until after the Civil War ended.[485]

The Kentucky campaign had been problematic from the beginning. Edward Guerrant was one of the Kentuckians that did enter the state during Bragg's campaign. As a secretary on the staff of Brigadier General Humphrey Marshall on September 9, 1862, he "walked part of the way up the mountain. On the top of the mountain I crossed from the territory of the gallant old Dominion, into the 'sacred soil' of our own Kentucky. The shackles so long binding the vigorous limbs of Hope fall from her, & she steps forth free into the boundless realm of enticing & promising possibilities. May her fondest & most cherished aspirations be fully realized. The long looked-for 'Good Time' has at length come, & we see the end's beginning." Yet, by October 11 Guerrant and other Kentuckians had become completely disillusioned with the men who remained in the state. Many of the generals he encountered expressed disgust with Kentucky. General William C. Preston defined Kentucky's position as one of "General *Sympathy* & Feeble *Resistance*!" Guerrant went on to mention that "Tom Marshall said 'did ye never call the spirits from the vasty deep, & they *didn't come*'! So of K'ys volunteers! God help our native State. We came & offered her help! She refused & *we go away*!" Later Guerrant offered that the women of the state were the only remaining "diadem in the once illustrious Crown of old Kentucky." On October 21 he expressed more disappointment in his home state. As the army fled he realized what this meant for the Kentucky. He could not believe that the southern army had come to save them and Kentuckians had not responded. He wrote, "Our footfalls have died away along the beautiful landscapes of Kentucky and now astonished at the suddenness of our advent &

[485] Ibid., 123-124, 126.

the unexpected & unexplained exit of our armies – we leave Kentuckians *NOT where we found them!* That is what we accomplished!! We solved the problem – long in solution – as to whether Kentuckians will defend their liberties or not: *whether they are fit to be free or not!!* It is answered! And oh! The answer!!!"[486] Edward Guerrant, like many Kentucky Confederates, felt highly disappointed by Kentucky's response to the Confederate army. Still, in 1865, in the face of defeat he returned home to Kentucky with other former Confederates to a much more welcoming citizenry.

During the campaign Bragg gained only 2,500 recruits. These men did not even compensate for the casualties inflicted on his army.[487] It hit Guerrant hard that the army lost more than twice as many soldiers as it gained.[488] Other Confederates felt these same pains and needed someone on whom to place the blame for the failure of this great scheme. In particular, Braxton Bragg blamed the failure on "the unsympathetic people of Kentucky, their self-important generals in his Army, and particularly the foremost Kentuckian of them all, John C. Breckinridge."[489] Many Kentucky Confederates were heartbroken about the reality. Kentucky was in fact a Union state. Although the state remained divided, the Unionists were firmly in control and would remain so until the end of the war.

Even though the men of Kentucky did not flock to the Confederate army as Bragg had hoped, they were not happy with the Union army or government either. Much of the bitterness toward the federal government that existed within the state after the war came from problems that developed during its last two years. Kentucky's resentment of

[486] Davis, *Bluegrass Confederate,*144, 157 164-165.
[487] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky,* 55.
[488] Davis, *Bluegrass Confederate,* 159.
[489] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade,* 126.

suppression of secessionism and the anger felt over the freeing of the slaves shaped the state's political stance. Kentucky did not experience physical damage to the extent of the states in which most of the war was fought, but the conflict did change lives because of the great demands placed on Kentuckians throughout the war.[490]

In 1861 a pro-Union legislature was elected. Late that year and in early 1862 it passed a number of measures in an attempt to curb Confederate support within the state and lend assistance to the Union. These laws required loyalty oaths from all teachers, ministers, and jurors in addition to political leaders. They also created severe penalties for those Kentuckians who invaded the state, enlisted in the Confederate army, or tried to entice others to enlist. Governor Magoffin, a Confederate supporter elected on the Democratic ticket in 1859, became a problem for the Kentucky Unionists. After the election of 1861, Magoffin could do little more than delay the actions of this hostile majority, who with little effort overrode his vetoes.[491]

The refusal of antislavery Union army officers within the state to return fugitive slaves to their masters created unrest in Kentucky. The army's demand for slave labor, often resembling a draft, only heightened the fears of many slaveholders. This concern grew when President Lincoln suggested that the borders states show their loyalty to the Union through freeing their slaves. On March 6, 1862, Lincoln recommended that Congress provide compensation in order to encourage the border states to follow his suggestion. Kentucky officials angrily rejected his proposal and their response reflected majority opinion in the state.[492]

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[490] Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky*, 78-80.
[491] Ibid., 80-81.
[492] Ibid., 92.

In 1864 it seemed that some in Kentucky may have regretted their original Union stance. When William Preston Johnson returned to the state that year he encountered men who he believed would have cut his throat at the time he left the state. Yet, these same men were the first to greet him and welcome him home. In Johnson's opinion Kentucky had become just as much southern as Virginia.[493]

Toward the end of the war, many Confederate Kentuckians expressed the same disappointment in the men of their state that Guerrant had felt in 1862. Henry Bullitt remembered hearing a speech given by President Jefferson Davis and another by John C. Breckinridge, then secretary of war for the Confederacy. Although Bullitt thought their speeches grand, they simply could not bring soldiers into the field. Still, this problem existed throughout the South, and not just in the Bluegrass State.[494]

By midsummer 1865 most of the formerly Confederate Kentuckians who wished to do so had returned home. What they found when they returned to Kentucky seemed to justify the anguish they had felt for the state during their years in exile. Their state had suffered during the occupation of federal forces, although not as badly as those in the Confederacy. Trade, industry, and agriculture all suffered greatly during the war. The Emancipation Proclamation, though it liberated no Kentucky slaves, infuriated the state's slaveholders, and then the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment freed more than two hundred thousand slaves, including all of those in the Bluegrass State. This wiped out a capital investment of over $34,000,000 in Kentucky alone. Although never fully in rebellion, Kentuckians still encountered what many saw as a rigid federal military regime within their state. As was typical of Kentuckians, they felt different from other

[493] William Preston Johnston to Basil Duke, 22 June 1864, William Preston Johnston Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.
[494] Bullitt, October 2, 1906, 22.

Americans and therefore considerate themselves entitled to different treatment. Instead, many believed they were dealt with as felons.[495]

During the war guerrillas and other irregulars roamed the mountains and preyed on Kentuckians of both Union and Confederate sentiments. Group and individual violence overwhelmed the state for years. Later it would become a byword that Kentucky had waited until after the war to secede. The bitterness that grew out of the war, which pitted families and friends against each other, did not lighten until many years after the once Confederate states had returned to relative quiet. Kentucky quickly fell into the hands of ex-Confederates controlled the state's government for many years.[496]

Some had a hard time grasping that the war was over. The cause for which they had fought for so long, for which they had sacrificed and suffered, was lost. "God and the world apparently against us," wrote Lot Young, "without country, without home or hope, the old family being broken up and separated forever, our very souls sinking within us, gloom and sorrow overhanging the world; what would we do; what could we do?" Groups of men that had grown close for almost four years of war were then broken up. Young commented that "The eyes that gleamed defiance in the battles' rage were now filled with tears of sorrow at parting. The hand that knew no trembling in the bloody onslaught now wavered and trembled – the hour for the last parting had arrived, the long struggle ended forever." As Lot Young made his way back to Kentucky he worried about his and other former Confederate soldiers' status as citizens and how their community

[495] Davis, *The Orphan Brigade*, 260-261; Harrison, *Kentucky in the Civil War*, 94.
[496] Ibid., 261.

would receive them, as they returned defeated. Still, they knew that their loved ones, if not Kentucky society, would welcome them home lovingly and with open arms.[497]

In Thomas W. Bullitt's mind, the fact that the Civil War was one of ideas led to the passing away of the passions and prejudices after it ended. Once each side began to understand the motives of the other, Bullitt believed, they came to give and accept a mutual respect. In his post-war view of the matter, the conflict began because the North and South held different ideas in government and loyalty, as well as a misconception on the part of each side as to the character of the people in the other. The North looked at the South with a sort of contempt for what northerners perceived as weakness. Yankees might respect individual southerners, but they saw the South as a whole as haughty, domineering, vain, and weak. The South in turn regarded the North as lacking in courage and having more interest in money than justice or honor. Southerners believed northerners inferior in talent and courage and unable to resist southern arms. Yet Bullitt believed the events of the Civil War proved the assumptions of both sides wrong.[498]

John Will Dyer understood that the men of both the North and the South disagreed on public policy and, having failed to settle their differences peaceably, took up arms and fought. After the end of the war the same men came together in order to form a new nation out of the wreckage of the old. Dyer contended that "The civil war cost us millions of treasure, oceans of blood and tears, untold suffering and misery and the lives of thousands of our best men; yet it has been worth to our country all it cost." From people divided on sectional lines they emerged a united people, proud that they had the greatest country "and grandest record of any nation on the globe." Dyer believed that

[497] Young, *Reminiscences of a Soldier of the Orphan Brigade*, 19, 22.
[498] Thomas W. Bullitt, "1907", Bullitt Family Papers, Special Collections, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky, 1.

because of the high moral and patriotic training and the general agreement in their declaration of political and religious liberty, the American people fought in the greatest civil war the world had ever seen on such a high plane as to enable victor and vanquished to unite for the common good when the war was done and work together with equal fervor for the advancement of a united country.[499]

In the years after the war Henry Lane Stone, like many others, remained proud of those Kentuckians who had fought beside him for the Confederacy. He believed they deserved the highest praise, for good soldiers in time of war made good citizens in time of peace. The hardships they had endured in the army prepared them for the battles they were to face in their civilian life. Kentucky elected from Morgan's men many legislative, judicial, and executive officials.[500]

On October 26, 1892, William C. P. Breckinridge delivered an address to the Association of the Army of Northern Virginia entitled "The Ex-Confederate, and what he has done in Peace." Breckinridge realized that they had fought, in a sense, for a lost cause, stating

> The formation of a separate confederacy bounded by the geographical boundaries of those States which attempted to establish it has forever passed away. It would now be an anomaly; it would not receive the support of those who survived that war, the cause which made that geographical boundary important having passed away. When the surrender took place at Appomattox, when the greatest of

[499] Dyer, *Reminiscence of Four Years in the Confederate Army*, 100, 313.
[500] Stone, *Morgan's Men*, 33.

modern soldiers laid down the noblest of modern swords, the hope of the South for a separate independence was forever ended"[501]

Although they had fought bravely, they did not succeed and all reason for war had ended. It had, after all, been fought over the institution of slavery, which was the cause that made the geographical boundary of the Confederacy so important, and slavery no longer existed in the United States.

Breckinridge also commended the ex-Confederates for the way they lived their lives after the war. Although they faced hardships brought on by the war and were met with great devastation when they returned to their homes and their families, these men worked to pick up the pieces. Breckinridge, as have many others, gave credit to the women of the South who kept life going on the home front as best they could, "When we recall what the women of the South did during those times, we can scarcely repress our tears." The men who had fought for the Confederate cause, moved on to give their services to the communities in which they lived.[502]

Although these men could have lived the rest of their lives bitter over the outcome of the war, they instead chose to have a life worth living. In the twenty-seven years after the war that led up to Breckinridge's speech these men realized the flaw in their plans. Breckinridge came to realize that had their dreams become successful they would have had a country built upon sand. They were simply dreamers, men without "knowledge of technical principles, and ignorant of the practical affairs of life; that we were a race of planter gentleman, living in pastoral retirement; and that the government we founded would have been swept away at the first phrenetic impulse from within."

[501] William C. P. Breckinridge. *The Ex-Confederate, and What He Has Done in Peace,* Microfiche, Civil War Unit Histories, Mary Couts Burnett Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 5.
[502] Ibid., 8, 14.

They had established a government based upon the protection of slavery and many men fought in order to preserve it, though years after the war they came to realize the foolishness of such a plan.[503]

At a reunion of Morgan's cavalry a letter was read in regards to the flag that these soldiers followed for four years, stating best the sentiments of the men who gave their all for the southern cause.

> It was the national emblem of a free republic, whose life, though brief, was long enough to leave to State and country and to humanity and to the world an imperishable record of glory and renown. It was followed by the great principles of American constitutional government and the Declaration of Independence. It went down in sorrow, but not in shame. No more as a national banner will it wave on land or sea; no more will it be followed by the bravest armies ever enlisted in liberty's cause. Henceforth it shall be used on occasions like this or when it moves in the funeral procession of some old soldier who in life honored it and in death is honored by it.
>
> As the flag of the southern Confederacy, it shall wave no more, but this we will say: 'No breeze ever wafted, no sunlight ever kissed a flag that represented a better cause.' We will ever love it. We loved it in the hour of the most glorious victory that ever perched upon banner; we loved it as it has withdrawn from before superior numbers and as it went down in final defeat. We loved it from Sumter to Appomattox. Living we loved it, dying we will love it, and I know of no human law that can or divine law that will forbid us to love it when we reach the other shore.

[503] Ibid., 9.

Although they failed in the defense of their cause, their ideologies only a distant memory of the past, they chose to look back upon their experience with pride rather than regret. They did their duty, they defended their honor, and their self proclaimed country. They also defended their ideas of how their country should be governed and what institutions it should hold, and they had failed. Although they lost the war they did not regret their decision to fight and they would not forget either. Whether right or wrong, they continued to defend their actions and many defended their cause until their dying day. Many came to respect their former enemies and ultimately joined together in celebration of their country.[504]

The Union soldiers did not write about their experiences after the war as much as the Confederate veterans did. They did not leave the same elaborate record, detailing their exploits as soldiers and heroic acts of war, quite possibly because they did not have the same need to justify their actions. After all, it was their side that proved victorious. Still, some Union veterans found it unsettling that the record of Kentuckians in the Civil War was mostly being written by ex-Confederates who were leaving, the Union veterans believed, inaccurate accounts of the situation in Kentucky. Thomas Speed wrote a book because of this, in order to describe Kentucky's role in the Civil War as he believed was true. He believed that too often it appeared that a majority of Kentuckians were in favor of the Confederacy, when in fact, that was not the case. He even explained in the introduction of his book that "It is the purpose of the author of this book to give a narrative of the struggle of the Union men in the State of Kentucky to hold their State in the Union, when other States were seceding and strenuous efforts were made to carry

[504] Unidentified United Daughters of the Confederacy Publication, Simon Bolivar Buckner Collection, Special Collections, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Kentucky into the Southern Confederacy….Histories of Kentucky have been written since the war, but in them injustice is done to the Kentucky Unionists." Speed contended that Kentucky, after all, was a Union state and that Kentuckians manifested their support for the Union cause by going to the polls and electing Union men to office.[505]

To Speed, the beliefs of Confederate Kentuckians that a majority in their state wanted to secede and join the Confederacy were nothing but hallucinations. They simply refused to accept that Kentucky took its stand, and it was for the Union. Many Confederate Kentuckians claimed the people of the state had been deceived. Speed contends that this was not the case, that the state firmly remained a state in the Union due to the will of the people.[506]

Although Kentucky did belatedly take a stand for the Union during the Civil War, events following the war seemed to justify the beliefs of many ex-Confederates that the state had been deceived. Many Kentuckians whole heartedly supported the Union, yet events during the war, such as the Emancipation Proclamation and what many viewed as overzealous Union commanders in Kentucky, led many to become more pro-Confederate.

Long before the Civil War ended, Union support in Kentucky had begun to dwindle. By the end of the war even many Union men thought ex-Confederate soldiers should have been restored to their prewar position in the state, socially, economically, and politically. This greatly aided the southern sympathizers in Kentucky politics. Conservatives had often led the way in Kentucky, and it was no different after the Civil War. Former Unionists and former Confederates joined forces to form a coalition in Kentucky politics, former enemies on the battlefield, working side by side in the state

[505] Speed, *The Union Cause in Kentucky, 1860-1865*, ix.
[506] Ibid., 277.

government. These Kentuckians accomplished this by a combination of animosity from harsh treatment by Union officials and the policy of the Federal government, as well as sympathy towards the defeated southerners. Many returning Confederate veterans were aware of the climate in Kentucky at the time and were able to play on that in favor of their political ambitions. Many of these men would have been content to return to the way Kentucky had been before the war, including slavery. With this, Kentucky became not only anti-North, but made the complete transition to a pro-southern viewpoint.[507]

Kentucky veterans, who had fought for four years for causes that they deeply believed in, returned to their homes after the war. Whether they had fought in the Union or Confederate army, they sought to pick up the pieces and try to return to the life that they knew prior to the conflict, but life had changed and they adjusted as best they could. They never forgot what they fought for. Some Confederate veterans realized that it had been a foolish dream. Foolish or not, they held a deep pride in the country for which they had fought and sacrificed so many friends and family members. Many Union veterans came home proud of their service; others had become disillusioned by the policies that the Federal government adopted. In the end the Union state of Kentucky took a stand for the South, though it would wait until after the war to do so.

[507] Hambleton Tapp and James C. Klotter. *Kentucky: Decades of Discord, 1865-1900* (Frankfort: The Kentucky Historical Society, 1977), 4-5, 11.

Conclusion

Kentucky soldiers during the Civil War were extremely complicated in their motivation for enlisting in the opposing armies. They did not have the luxury of simply following the lead of their state, community, or even their families. They had no easy way out. Instead, these men were forced to look deep inside themselves and decide what they believed in and stood for.

Even though they were had to make this decision on their own, they often fought for the same reasons as soldiers from other states. Those who enlisted in the Confederate army did so for multiple reasons. Some headed south seeking nothing more than adventure or to get revenge for being wronged at the hand of northerners or the Union army. Others did so because they despised Abraham Lincoln and could not fight to defend a country with a man that they hated leading it. Many Kentuckians spoke of defending states' rights which is synonymous with slavery, after all it was this right to own slaves within the state that they so desperately defended. Still, others clung to southern honor and believed it was under attack. With this, they enlisted in the Confederate army. Other Kentuckians felt a sense of duty to the newly formed southern Confederacy. This duty to what they viewed as their new country led them to cross enemy lines and become an enemy to their state. Whatever their reasoning, it is clear that no one reason brought Kentucky men into the Confederate fold.

For Kentuckians who enlisted in the Federal army they did so for only one reason: to preserve the Union. These men were not patriots of the South, but rather of the United States of America. Though they enlisted for the same reason, these men had different

reasons to want to preserve their country. Some were immigrants to the United States who sought the American dream and did not want to see it destroyed by the breaking up of their newly adopted country. Others decided that their economic interests were best protected under the stars and stripes and could see nothing but financial ruin for them if they fought for or lived in the Confederacy.

Even those who stayed at home during the war were forced to choose a side, and it was not any less complicated for them. The men who remained in Kentucky often had sons who fought and to whom they offered advice. Some were even forced to defend the actions of their sons or other family members. Others simply sought to profit off of the crisis. Even the women in Kentucky faced a tough situation. Most supported the men in their family whether they fought or stayed at home. These women typically supported the same side as the men closest to them. Still, some saw brothers choose, in their opinion, the wrong side. Yet it was not an easy situation for these women. Many saw relationships break apart because of conflicting view points. Some witnessed and suffered from the horrors of war, though the state and Kentucky women were not alone in this.

In the end Kentucky as a whole provided a very complicated situation during the Civil War. Kentucky began the war as a neutral state, but then became a Southern slave state that remained a part of the Union. Slaveowners and southerners within the state were forced to decide to whom their true loyalties lay: the slave South or the Union. In this state this decision was the responsibility of the individual. Slaveowners, wealthy, poor, educated, uneducated, farmers, lawyers, doctors, and entrepreneurs, men of all walks of life, fought for both sides. For Kentuckians there can be no simple

categorization of who would fight for what side. Instead, it was solely the individual who made this decision.

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Abstract

WHERE HONOR AND PATRIOTISM CALLED: THE MOTIVATION OF KENTUCKY SOLDIERS IN THE CIVIL WAR

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When the Southern states began to secede from the Union after the election of Abraham Lincoln in November 1860, the South expected Kentucky to join them. The North also worked hard to keep Kentucky in the Union. The state originally took a stance of neutrality but in September 1861, chose to remain with the Union. Still, Kentuckians remained greatly divided over the matter.

Many men from this Union state chose to go south and fight for the Confederacy, often against the wishes of their community, family, and friends. These joined the Confederate army for a number of different reasons. Some fought due to their hatred of Abraham Lincoln and in defense of states' rights, or slavery. Others simply sought the adventure that only army life could provide. In true southern form, many of these men enlisted in the army in defense of honor.

Others remained loyal to their state and country as they enlisted in the Union army. These men did so out of a deep devotion for and love of their country. They did not fight to rid the United States of slavery, but rather to preserve United States. Because of this, the Emancipation Proclamation had a great impact on all Kentuckians and their stance on the war.

Whether they fought or not, the Civil War affected every citizen of Kentucky in one way or another. Even the men who chose not to fight at all and the women who were left behind were still held strong opinions on the war, which are briefly covered in this paper. Many families were divided within the state and Kentucky soldiers often found themselves fighting against their cousins, fathers, brothers, and boyhood friend.