

CIVIL WARS AND CIVIL BEINGS: VIOLENCE, RELIGION, RACE, POLITICS,
EDUCATION, CULTURE, AND AGRARIANISM
IN PERRY COUNTY, ALABAMA, 1860-1875

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Bertis Deon English

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The years 1860 to 1875 were of immense importance to Alabama history. Following a controversial secession debate, its residents faced a life-changing war. In the aftermath of war, Alabamians wrestled with the changes that accompanied the Union victory. Like the rest of the South, cultural, economic, educational, ethnic, racial, and religious issues beset Alabama during Reconstruction and the early Redemption years. Wartime and immediate post-wartime changes were difficult for most of the state's citizens, but the Postbellum period was particularly challenging for black Alabamians, especially those who lived in the racially divided and often violent Black Belt. But one of the region's localities was different. In Perry County, black agency, or self-help,

thrived on the heels of the Civil War. Interestingly, a principal factor to black Perry Countians' self-help was the tremendous antebellum concentration of white educational and religious institutions in the county seat, Marion, a phenomenon that softened local whites and became a model for black liberation and biracial cooperation. In a region where political- and race-based violence was widespread between 1860 and 1875, hostility was noticeably slighter in Perry. Consequently, it became one of the most progressive counties in Alabama during the Civil War, Reconstruction, and early Redemption periods.

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STYLE MANUAL

Style Manual Used

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Computer Software Used

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PROLOGUE

In *The Oxford Book of the American South*, historian Edward Ayers and political consultant Bradley C. Mittendorf recall how “much Southern writing is about memory, about imagining and reimagining the past.” This dissertation is not an attempt to imagine or re-imagine the past of Perry County, Alabama, a rural, predominantly black locality nestled in the heart of the Black, or Cotton, Belt (see Appendix A).¹ Rather, it is an attempt to flesh out what Weymouth T. Jordan, Peter Kolchin, William Rogers, Jr., Jonathan Weiner, and other historians have written about the county’s cultural, economic, educational, political, religious, and social pasts between 1860 and 1875. But, unlike

¹ Edward L. Ayers and Bradley C. Mittendorf, eds., *The Oxford Book of the American South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), x. Throughout the text, biracial, bi-ethnic, African American, black, Negro, European American, Caucasian, white, and the like are used interchangeably because “race” as a scientific phenomenon is nonsensical to the author, an outgrowth of sociology, socialness, ignorance, convenience, or perhaps history but not of nature and science, as Barbara J. Fields, Manning Marable, Joel Augustus Rogers, and several other persons have shown. See Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 1. See also David Brion Davis, “Constructing Race: A Reflection,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 54 (January 1997): 7-18; Charles A. Gallagher, *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*, 2d. ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004; *Martha J. Hodes, White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the Nineteenth-Century South* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); Manning Marable, *Race, Reform, and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction in Black America, 1945-1990*, 2d. ed. (Jackson, Miss.: University Press of Mississippi, 1991); William C. Kvaraceus, “Poverty, Education and Race Relations,” in *Poverty, Education and Race Relations: Studies and Proposals* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1967), 8-9; J. A. Rogers, *Sex and Race: A History of White, Negro, and Indian Miscegenation in the Two Americas*, vol. 2: *The New World* (1942; reprint, St. Petersburg, Fl.: Helga M. Rogers, 1984), iii, iv.

theirs,² this study seeks to explore the Civil War, Reconstruction, and early Restoration (Redeemer, Bourbon) years in Perry County from the perspectives of the persons most affected by those revolutions, blacks.³

Accordingly, this work is a social, cultural, and political history written largely from the bottom up, utilizing a combined chronological-topical arrangement. Chapter one examines the major expectations, motivations, and deeds of the thousands of white Perry Countians who sided with the Confederacy during the Civil War. The Union position is generally omitted because few remaining primary or secondary sources impart local Unionists' views. Their sentiments are conveyed in this work through the actions and articulations of black Perry Countians, white Unionists from elsewhere in the state,

² See Weymouth T. Jordan, *Hugh Davis and His Alabama Plantation* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama, 1948). See also Peter Kolchin, *First Freedom: The Responses of Alabama's Blacks to Emancipation and Reconstruction* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972); Raymond T. Smith, "Race, Class, and Gender in the Transition to Freedom," in Frank McGlynn and Seymour Drescher, eds., *The Meaning of Freedom: Economics, Politics, and Culture after Slavery* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992), 257; William Warren Rogers, Jr., *Black Belt Scalawag: Charles Hays and the Southern Republicans in the Era of Reconstruction* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1993); Jonathan M. Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South: Alabama, 1860-1885* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1978).

³ See, for example, Willie Lee Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, William W. Freehling, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 93. "Bourbon" democracy" is rooted in a comment that the French Bourbon Charles X might have made. Reportedly, the king called the French Revolution insignificant, arguing that French society would be the same during the latter half of the 1820s as it had been during the pre-Revolutionary period. In Alabama, Republicans began to call the anti-progressive, ultraconservative Democrats who led the state after 1874 Bourbons. According to the Republicans and to the relatively few Democrats who adopted the term, Alabama would be the same once restored, or redeemed, as it had been during the Antebellum period. See Allen J. Going, *Bourbon Democracy in Alabama, 1874-1890* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1991), xvii. See also "To the Wh[i]te Men of Alabama," *Alabama State Journal*, 6 September 1874, hereinafter cited as "To the Wh[i]te Men of Alabama."

Several historians have deemed Bourbon an inappropriate label for most late nineteenth-century Democrats. According to C. Vann Woodward, Democratic solidarity in the South was exaggerated, Bourbon being used indiscriminately to describe all southern Democrats. For Woodward, Redeemer was a more appropriate term for the varied interests who made up the regional Democratic party. See "The Redeemers," chap. 1 in *Origins of the New South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 1-22, 75 (text and footnote 1). See also Samuel L. Webb, "A Jacksonian Democrat in Postbellum Alabama: The Ideology and Influence of Journalist Robert McKee, 1869-1896," *Journal of Southern History* 62 (May 1996): 239-240. For a northern understanding of the southern "white types," or Bourbons, see "Studies in the South, II," *Atlantic Monthly* 49, 2 (1882): 191-192.

and the northern soldiers and military officials who were stationed in the county during and following the Civil War.

Chapter two focuses on African Americans' attempts to form a new culture in Alabama during the immediate postwar years, the period to which their general discontent during subsequent eras can be traced. It was during the earliest part of Reconstruction that black persons' legal status was changed and confirmed from subject to citizen via the Thirteenth Amendment and the federal Civil Rights Act of 1866, respectively; but time soon proved what numerous black people had always feared: most whites' mindsets could not be legislated, so attempts to control blacks in virtually every aspect of their lives continued. When traditional controls, such as flogging, were outlawed, white lawmakers enacted oppressive "black codes" to manage freepersons. Consequently, black Alabamians often found themselves trapped economically, psychologically, and physically, the victims of widespread fraud, intimidation, and extra-legal violence.⁴

The Black Belt was a hub of such activity. It was also a hub of Republican support, but the power of most black Republicans did not square with their numbers. This had a lasting effect. Blacks' inability to display their newfound rights and privileges en masse during the early freedom years, when the Republican party and the federal government controlled much of the state, spilled over into the Bourbon period, when conservative Democrats regained almost complete control of the state government.

⁴ See, for example, "Patrols," chap. 3 in *The Code of Alabama. Prepared by John J. Ormond, Arthur P. Bagby, George Goldwaith. With Head Notes and Index by Henry C. Semple. Published in Pursuance of an Act of the General Assembly, Approved February 5, 1852* (Montgomery, Al.: Britain and De Wolf, 1852), hereinafter cited as *1852 State Code*. See also Richard Bailey, *They Too Call Alabama Home: African American Profiles* (Montgomery, Al.: Pyramid Publishing, 1999).

Blacks' displeasure continued throughout the Gilded and Populist eras. Indeed, black dissatisfaction and the threatened exodus out of the state Republican party during the last quarter of the nineteenth century was rooted in Reconstruction politics, especially Radical (Congressional, "Black-basis") Reconstruction, and for that reason merits further attention.⁵

Most modern-day historians agree that "Radical Reconstruction in the South was shown to be a time of progress for African-Americans and the region as a whole." However contestable, this contention is central to the once "new scholarship" that William Edward Burghardt Du Bois helped develop during the early 1900s. In "Reconstruction and Its Benefits," a 1909 address that Du Bois delivered before the American Historical Association, the Fisk and Harvard graduate asserted that Reconstruction was not as radical or as tragic as Columbia Professor of History and Political Philosophy William Archibald Dunning and his disciples had proposed. Rather than being a period of widespread corruption and misrule, Reconstruction had given birth to democratic government, free public schools, and unprecedented social legislation in the South. Du Bois expounded on these beliefs in a 1924 tome entitled *The Gift of Black Folk* and in his 1935 masterpiece, *Black Reconstruction*.⁶

⁵ "Black-basis" Reconstruction is taken from Milton J. Saffold, *Address to the Native White Republicans. Vindication and Appeal! Heretofore Unwritten Incidents of Reconstruction* (Summerfield, AL: [n.p.,] 1870), 9, 10, 11, 13. Evidently, "White-basis" Reconstruction was President Johnson's plan.

⁶ Eric Foner and Olivia Mahoney, *America's Reconstruction: People and Politics after the Civil War* (New York: Harper-Perennial, 1995), 13. See Horace Mann Bond, *Black American Scholar: A Study of Their Beginnings* (Detroit: Balamp Printing, 1972), 26, and *Negro Education in Alabama: A Study in Cotton and Steel* (1939, reprint, Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1994), passim. See also Claude Bowers, *The Tragic Era: The Revolution after Lincoln* (Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1929); Lonnie A. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword: John Forsyth of the Mobile Register* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2006), 145-146, 153; John Witherspoon DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade: Ten Years of Alabama, 1865-1874*, James K. Greer, ed. (Birmingham, AL: Webb Book Company, 1940); Vincent P. Franklin, "Changing Perspectives on Afro-American Life and Education," introductory essay to *New Perspectives on Black Educational History*, Vincent P. Franklin and James D. Anderson, eds. (Boston:

Though plausible, Du Bois' assertions were largely ignored by academicians until the nation's "Second Reconstruction," the modern Civil Rights movement. Today, few scholars doubt the wisdom of Du Bois and his followers. Everyone agrees, avow historians Eric Foner and Olivia Mahoney, that the traditional (Dunning, racist) view of First Reconstruction as a period of white Carpetbag and Scalawag unscrupulousness and black ignorance is "dead...and unlamented." Kolchin is less confident about the total demise of the "old history," but he agrees that nineteenth-century Reconstruction needs to be conceptualized in new ways.⁷

It is hoped that chapters three through six answer Kolchin's call. Chapter three examines two critical areas of early Perry County Reconstruction: politics and race-based violence. Chapter four focuses on education and religion, emphasizing Lincoln School of Marion from its 1867 founding as a black missionary school through its development into a bona fide university for blacks during 1873-1874. White nostalgia,

G. K. Hall and Company, 1978), 4-5; David Levering Lewis, introduction to W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880* (1935; reprint, New York: Free Press, 1992), vii; W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, "Reconstruction and Its Benefits" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in New York, N.Y., on December 1909), reprinted in *American Historical Review* 15 (July 1910): 781-799; Robert Glenn Sherer, Jr., "Let Us Make Man: Negro Education in Nineteenth Century Alabama" (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1970), iii-vii; Straughton Lynd, ed., *Reconstruction* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 46-65; W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Gift of Black Folk; the Negroes in the Making of America* (1924; reprint, New York: Johnson Publishing, 1968); William A. Dunning, *Essays on the Civil War and Reconstruction* (1897; reprint, New York: Harper and Row, 1965) and *Reconstruction, Political and Economic, 1865-1877* (1907; reprint, New York: Harper and Row, 1962); Walter Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* (1905; reprint, Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Company, 1978); Eric Foner and George E. Walker, eds., *Proceedings of the Black Nation and State Conventions, 1865-1900*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), xiii-xvii. Cf. Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, 99-100.

⁷ Foner and Mahoney, *America's Reconstruction*, 13. See *History and Hope in the Heart of Dixie: Scholarship, Activism, and Wayne Flynt in the Modern South*, Gordon E. Harvey et al., eds. (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2006), 26. See also Robert C. Kenzer, *Enterprising Southerners: Black Economic Success in North Carolina, 1865-1915* (Charlottesville, Va.: University Press of Virginia, 1997), 1, 2, 4-6; Peter Kolchin, "The Tragic Era? Interpreting Southern Reconstruction in Comparative Perspective," in McGlynn and Drescher, *The Meaning of Freedom: Economics, Politics, and Culture after Slavery*, 291-311; C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974).

particularly the Old South myth and partisan attempts to revitalize the Democratic and Conservative party at the local and state levels, are the central themes of chapter five. Chapter six surveys the culmination of these efforts, Alabama's first redemption.

Democratic rule was restored throughout the state in 1870, but in most places, it was temporary. Two years later, David P. Lewis—a Republican judge from Lawrence and Madison Counties, avid reader of literature, Democrat, and secession opponent who nevertheless became a member of the Confederate Provisional Congress and the Democratic National Convention—was elected governor. Chapter seven explores politics, religion, and society in Perry County during his 1872-1874 tenure. Chapter eight discusses agricultural and industrial reform, civil rights, unionism, and white supremacy during the early 1870s, concluding with an examination of the historic 1874 campaigns that culminated in the state's second nineteenth-century restoration, while chapter nine looks at Perry County at the outset of Redemption.

The primary purpose of the epilogue is twofold: to summarize my contribution to scholarship in this dissertation and to buttress an already cogent, though sometimes ignored, assertion that historian Armstead Robinson made in the *Journal of American History* twenty-five years ago: “Only by integrating analyses of the causes and consequences of the Civil War and Reconstruction era into the very center of our study of the middle period” will historians be able to “comprehend how this critical age of transition helped to wrench America from the rural-agrarian world of the Revolution and to move it into the urban-industrial milieu” of modernity. This and future studies will

undoubtedly show that Robinson's assertion is truly applicable to Perry County, Alabama.⁸

⁸ Armstead L. Robinson, "Beyond the Realm of Social Consensus: New Meanings of Reconstruction for American History," *Journal of American History* 68 (September 1981): 277.

AN ATMOSPHERE OF AGRARIAN UNREST

“...the question of the existence of slavery was involved directly in this war. We went into the struggle for the d[ef]ense of the institution. We fought, to be sure, for self-government, but it was because the United States Government, in violation of the Constitution, interfered with, and threatened the destruction of slavery.”

—Charles Carter Langdon, 1865¹

“The people of the South have shown a high spirit of resignation—almost indifference—to the loss of their slaves, and this astounds those who measure every principle by its weight in gold, but while they have done this, they care for their status in the social life, and still place a value on intelligence, enterprise, and, virtue and color. We cannot agree to admit the negro to social or political equality with us. He is free, and is at liberty, if he is so inclined, to go to those States where he may find his level amongst those whose miscegenating instincts are as strong as those of his own, but if he remains with us this cannot be. We must now, and forever hereafter, ignore equality with the negro.”

—The *Daily Selma Times*, 1865²

Ulrich B. Phillips, a well-known twentieth-century historian, once stated that the “central theme of southern history is reflective of the belief that the South shall be and remain a ‘white man’s country.’” Phillips’ contention was founded in nineteenth-century fact. Throughout that century, white Americans had attempted to control black people in every way possible. Some methods had been subtle, others obvious. But not one of them

¹ “Speech of the Hon. C. C. Langdon of Mobile,” *Daily Selma Times*, 30 September 1865. Charles Langdon was born in Southington, Connecticut. In the 1820s, he and brothers Giles and Levi moved to Marion in Perry County. There, they built one of largest stores in the area. Levi helped found the Presbyterian Church of Marion and was a Marion Female Seminary, or Institute, director. Charles ran for the state senate in 1838 before Moving to Mobile, where he edited the *Mobile Advertiser*, served as mayor (1849-1855), and represented the port city in the state legislature in 1855, 1856, and 1862. See W. Stuart Harris, *Perry County Heritage* (Summerfield, Al.: W. Stuart Harris, 1991), 30. See also Samuel A. Townes, *The History of Marion: Sketches of Life in Perry County, Alabama* (Marion, Al.: Dennis Dykous, 1844), reprinted in *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 14 (1952): 171-229.

² “The State Convention,” *Daily Selma Times*, 13 September 1865.

had caused more controversy than slavery, a controlling mechanism that had ultimately catapulted the nation into a bloody civil war.³

In the aftermath of war, thousands of moderate and liberal white politicians, educators, ministers, and employers worked hard to help black people transition from slavery to freedom. White moderates and liberals, usually Republicans, worked even harder to get white conservatives to understand that blacks were no longer slaves. In Alabama, as elsewhere in the South, this was a difficult task. Still upset about the Confederate defeat that the subsequent military occupation symbolized and facing political uncertainty, embittered whites refused to recognize black Alabamians' newfound legal status. Agricultural and economic problems exacerbated matters. Barely able to sustain themselves because of wartime devastation and the inclement weather that followed, numerous whites vented their frustrations by harassing, intimidating, or physically assaulting blacks. Other whites made it difficult for blacks to purchase land and homes, secure employment, or socialize. Once black men were granted voting privileges, traditionalist whites tried to sabotage blacks' attempts to organize or attend political meetings, register to vote, or hold important political offices.

“Black Reconstruction,” Real and Imagined

Black politicians' inability to enter the upper echelons of Alabama politics had dire consequences for the state's black populace. Without adequate representation in Montgomery, black concerns were usually ill addressed or not addressed at all. Although innumerable scholars have blamed ultra-conservative white Democrats for blocking black

³ Ulrich B. Phillips, quoted in Emory Thomas, *The Confederacy as a Revolutionary Experience* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1991), 10.

upward mobility, the “Negro dilemma” transcended party lines. Although the number of white persons who populated the state Republican party constituted perhaps ten percent of its total membership, blacks were often denied meaningful positions.⁴ Hence, if Reconstruction in Alabama was carried out under the aegis of “Carpetbaggers,” “Scalawags,” and moderate Democrats,⁵ then it was hardly as radical as the Dunning, or Racist, school scholars and, more recently, neo-Confederate, “Southern movement” writers such as R. Gordon Thornton, James and Ronald Kennedy, Michael Hill and Thomas E. Woods (founding members of the secessionist and often racist League of the South), Michael Grissom, Frank Connor, and Charles Adams have claimed.⁶

⁴ Emma Lou Thornbrough, ed., *Black Reconstructionists* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972), 7. For an extensive statistical appraisal of white Alabama Republicans during Reconstruction, see William McKinley Cash, “Alabama Republicans during Reconstruction: Personal Characteristics, Motivations, and Political Activity of Party Activists, 1867-1880” (Ph.D. diss., University of Alabama, 1973) even though the title is misleading. Cash discusses white Republicans’ extra-political activities in great detail, but he fails to examine many of their most important political endeavors. See Sarah van Woolfolk Wiggins, “The Role of the Scalawag in Alabama Reconstruction” (Ph.D. diss., Louisiana State University, 1965).

⁵ “Jacobins” was one of many other derogatory terms used to describe white Republicans during the Postbellum period. See *Mobile Daily Register*, 4 and 24 July 1875. See also Carl Grafton, “Community Power Methodology and Alabama Politics,” *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 38 (winter 1976): 276; Malcolm C. McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama, 1798-1901: A Study in Politics, the Negro, and Sectionalism* (Durham, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1955), 187. The terms Scalawag and Carpetbaggers’ historical roots are found in, among other sources, James Alex Baggett, *The Scalawags: Southern Dissenters in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 1-2; William Little, prep., *Oxford Universal Dictionary on Historical Principles* 3rd ed. (1933; reprint, revised and edited by C. T. Onions, New York: Clarendon Press, 1955), 268, 1798; Mitford M. Matthews, ed., *A Dictionary of Americanisms on Historical Principles* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 273, 1465; *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, vols. 2 and 9 (New York: Clarendon Press, 1933), 129-130 (vol. 2), 169 (vol. 9); Ted Tunnell, “Creating ‘the Propaganda of History’: Southern Editors and the Origins of Carpetbagger and Scalawag,” *Journal of Southern History* 72 (November 2006): 789-822; Sarah Van Woolfolk, “Carpetbaggers in Alabama: Tradition Versus Truth,” *Alabama Review* 15 (April 1962): 133-134, 138, 142; Sarah Van V. Woolfolk, “Five Men Called Scalawags,” *Alabama Review* 17 (January 1964): 45-47; Peter Kolchin, “Scalawags, Carpetbaggers, and Reconstruction: A Quantitative Look at Southern Congressional Politics, 1868-1872,” *Journal of Southern History* 45 (February 1979): 63-66, 72-73.

⁶ The League of the South was created between 1988 and 1994 as the Southern League. In 1997, its founders had to change the name of the organization to the League of the South because an Atlanta-based Minor League baseball team was called the Southern League. See Charles Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events: Arguing the Case for Southern Secession* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000). See also Frank Connor, *The South under Siege, 1830-2000: A History of the Relations between the North and the South* (Newnan, Ga.: Collards Publishing Company, 2002); Michael Grissom, *The Last Rebel Yell* (Wynnewood, Ok.: Rebel Press, 1991); Michael Hill, “What is the League of the South?”;

During the 1960s, Alabama historian Sarah Van Woolfolk began to challenge the Racist school of Reconstruction historiography. In several essays that examined the state's Republican leadership during Reconstruction, Woolfolk correctly noted that Carpetbaggers did not comprise the most prominent body of Republicans in the state during that period. Not one of the party's gubernatorial candidates was from the North. Nor was any northern-born Republican a state supreme-court justice. Most of Alabama's most prominent Republican officeholders were from the South. Even so, the notion that Carpetbaggers were the most powerful, as well as the most corrupt, figures in Alabama Reconstruction was not a figment of white Southerners' imaginations, supposed Woolfolk. Instead, it derived from the "notoriety attracted by the dramatic exploits" of a handful of white politicians from the North and "a few colored rascals."⁷

Woolfolk's partial refutation of Dunning and like-minded writers was also fallible. The "colored rascals" about whom she wrote executed few "exploits" during Alabama Reconstruction, and even fewer of them were "dramatic." As historians such as Richard Bailey, author of *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags: Black Officeholders in the Reconstruction of Alabama, 1867-1878*, have pointed out, several African American politicians were able to eke out a political existence locally; but few African Americans

available via Internet @ <http://leagueofthesouth.net/static/homepage/ls-intro.html>; accessed 16 July 2006; James Ronald and Walter Donald Kennedy, *The South was Right* (Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing, 2000) and *Why not Freedom! America's Revolt against Big Government* (Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing, 1995), 11-12, 23-32; Walter D. Kennedy, *Myths of American Slavery* (Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing, 2003); League of the South, "Statement on 'Racism,'" 21 June 2005; available via Internet @ <http://www.leagueofthesouth.net/static/homepage/racism.htm>; accessed 16 July 2006; Southern Poverty Law Center, "A League of their Own," *Intelligence Report* 99 (summer 2000): 1; R. Gordon Thornton, *The Southern Nation: The New Rise of the Old South* (Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing, 2000); Thomas E. Woods, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to American History* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 2004). Cf. DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*; Dunning, *Essays on the Civil War and Reconstruction and Related Topics and Reconstruction, Political and Economic, 1865-1877*; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*.

⁷ Sarah Van V. Woolfolk, "George E. Spencer: A Carpetbagger in Alabama," *Alabama Review* 19 (January 1966): 41; "Carpetbaggers in Alabama," 144. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 251-252.

were powerbrokers on the state, regional or national level. In point of fact, one can count the number of truly influential black Reconstruction-era politicians from Alabama on two hands.⁸

Nationally, Congressmen Jeremiah Haralson, James T. Rapier, and Benjamin S. Turner stand out. On the state and regional levels, Black Belt freedmen Charles O. Boothe, Alexander H. Curtis, the Reverend Dr. John C. Dozier (or Dosier), Peyton Finley, James K. Green (or Greene), William Henry McAlpine, and William V. Turner were among an infinitesimal group of individuals who wielded significant power in Alabama and elsewhere in the South during Reconstruction. Reverend Boothe, whose *Cyclopedia of Colored Baptists of Alabama* remains one of the most comprehensive state studies about black southern Baptists ever written (as well as a possible motivation for W. E. B. Du Bois' *Encyclopædia Africana*), worked in North Alabama with William H. Councill, founder of Lincoln Normal School of Huntsville and Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University, before moving to Montgomery. There, Boothe became the pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church and taught school. Curtis, a former slave and Baptist from Raleigh, North Carolina, was the only black man chosen to preside over the Alabama Senate during the nineteenth century. Curtis was also instrumental in the development of Lincoln School of Marion and Selma University in Dallas County. Reverend Dozier, one of Boothe and Curtis' most erudite black Baptist colleagues, was a multilingual church builder, educator, physician, and politician. Finley, the only black man to sit on the Alabama Board of Education during the nineteenth century, was a

⁸ See Richard R. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags: Black Officeholders in the Reconstruction of Alabama, 1867-1878*, 3d. ed. (Montgomery, AL: R. Bailey Publishers, 1995). See also Eric Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers: A Directory of Black Officeholders during Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). Cf. Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, 102-104.

central figure in the formation of Alabama State Lincoln Normal School. Green, a one-time slave and 1870s congressional candidate, was an outspoken civil-rights advocate and union leader. Reverend McAlpine, another well-known educator and pastor of Dexter Avenue, issued the 1873 resolution to the Black, or Colored, State Baptist Convention (1870) that helped give birth to Selma University. Turner, a Wetumpka school founder and politician, was one of Alabama's most respected black orators.⁹

All of these men had common ties, but five of them shared a truly unique bond. In addition to their education advocacy and similar political, religious, and social backgrounds, Boothe, Curtis, Dozier, Green, and McAlpine either lived or worked in Perry County during the Reconstruction and early Redemption years. The fact that five of the state's most powerful black postbellum leaders resided or toiled in the same county is remarkable, but the importance of their relationship extends beyond this phenomenon. Perhaps more than any other county in the state between 1865 and 1875, Perry County was a place where "Negro rule," or "black Reconstruction," did occur. But even there, the relatively affluent blacks who constituted the county's numerical majority never had complete control of local affairs.

⁹ Alexander Curtis was president pro tempore of the state senate. See *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience*, Kwame Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates, eds. (New York: Basic/Civitas Books, 1999), xiii. See also Charles O. Boothe, *The Cyclopedia of Colored Baptists of Alabama: Their Lives and Their Work* (Birmingham, Al.: Alabama Publishing Company, 1895); Richard D. Morrison, *History of Alabama A&M University 1875-1992* (Huntsville, Al.: Golden Rule Printers, 1994); Eric Foner, *Forever Free: The Story of Emancipation and Reconstruction* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 128, 134-135, Robert G. Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama, 1865-1901*, also titled *Subordination or Liberation? The Development and Conflicting Theories of Black Education in Alabama* (Tuscaloosa, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 1977), 98, 178 (footnote 16), 179 (footnote 52), hereinafter cited as *Black Education in Alabama*. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*; Bond, *Black American Scholars*, 171, 172, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 16; Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, 51, 56, 65, 75, 90-91, 217-218; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 141-183, 427-443, 454-455, 465.

As was the case throughout the South, black Perry Countians had to work with their white contemporaries if they wished to fulfill any one of their educational, judicial, political, or social dreams. In doing so, leading and ordinary citizens seemed more willing to cooperate with each other than did other Black Belt residents. Conflict did exist in Perry, but it was not as common there as it was in neighboring Black Belt counties.

Perry County's uniqueness was not limited to the general demeanor of its white citizens. For most of the Reconstruction years, the county was governed chiefly by white Northerners and ex-slaves who belonged to the Republican party. Conservative white Democrats attempted to check the Republicans' power, but without requisite numbers, the Democrats were largely unsuccessful. White conservatives faced similar difficulties when they tried to stifle blacks' economic and educational opportunities or their attempts to establish religious autonomy. White centrists, on the other hand, worked tirelessly to help black subjects become citizens. Because of their efforts, Perry County—in the heart of the racially divided Black Belt—became one of the best examples of black economic, educational, political, and religious activism and bi-ethnic cooperation that postbellum Alabama had to offer. Yet, no one has fully elucidated the county's importance to Alabama, southern, or United States history.

This study is an attempt to fill this void. Because Perry County was predominantly black, particular emphasis will be placed on African Americans. But the county's white residents will not be overlooked. They, after all, controlled its economic and educational institutions and, for a short period of time, its religious institutions as well. More important, with the overthrow of race-based slavery in 1865, local whites

found themselves living not in an “Old South” in which virtually every black person was a slave but in a “New South” in which all black persons were legally free. Although the post-Civil War period was not as new or as progressive as many writers have claimed, it was new in the sense that African Americans were not bound by an oppressive, state-sanctioned cultural, economic, political, religious, and social system that relegated them to the “lower orders of animal life.” For the first time in United States history, African Americans could claim that they, too, were theoretically free.¹⁰

¹⁰ Allen W. Trelease, *White Terror: The Ku Klux Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971). During the 1960s and 1970s, Henry Steele Commager, William E. Leuchtenburg, Samuel Eliot Morison, and C. Vann Woodward suggested that the pre-Civil War myth of glory and glamour was developed during the 1880s by individuals like Henry M. Grady of Georgia, who sought to attract northern capital and industry to the South. Over time, the idea became “a legend of incalculable potential” as white Southerners imposed it on the South as well as the North. But, according to Richard Edmonds, New South had been used in Port Royal, South Carolina, during the Civil War. Writing during the 1890s, Edmonds insisted that New South had become an immensely popular term everywhere in the nation except the South before the 1880s. The author cannot confirm Edmonds’ contention about the general use of the term, but there was a wartime newspaper called the *New South* that was published in Port Royal. Samuel Eliot Morison et al., *The Growth of the American Republic*, vol. 2, 6th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 60. See Richard Edmonds, *Facts about the South* (N.P.: [Richard Edmonds,] 1894), 1. See also Willie Lee Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction: The Port Royal Experiment* (1964; reprint, Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 418-419. Cf. Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 155.

Old South-New South literature is extensive. See, for example, John W. Abercrombie, “Education in the Old South and in the New South” (address delivered to the Southern Educational Association in Memphis, Tennessee, 29 December 1899), 8, Alabama Pamphlets Collection, LPR 131, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama, hereinafter cited as ADAH. See also Lewis H. Blair, *The Prosperity of the South Dependent upon the Elevation of the Negro* (Richmond, Va.: Everett Waddey, 1889); James C. Cobb, *Away Down South: A History of Southern Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Paul M. Gaston, *The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969); Harvey H. Jackson, III, *Inside Alabama: A Personal History of My State* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 144; Michael Magaul, *The Eternal Education Natural and Demonic Abolitionists* (Montgomery, AL: Anti-Christ Publishing Company, 1889), 41; Raymond B. Nixon, “The New South and the Old South,” *American Missionary* 46 (May 1892): 141-143; Henry M. Grady: *Spokesman for the New South* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1943). Cf. Weiner, 4, “The Struggle for Hegemony” chap. 7 in *Social Origins of the New South*, 186-221.

“A Tariff War?”¹¹

Of course, freedom came at great economic, human, and political costs. From 1861 until 1865, Americans waged an official war on each other for professed reasons too numerous to enumerate, let alone discuss, in a single work. But slavery was of utmost importance, especially in the Deep, or Lower, South. As William Lowndes Yancey—a mediocre attorney but an excellent orator, journalist, politician, leader of the Montgomery-based League of United Southerners, and one of Alabama’s most influential secessionists—explained to a group of Georgians on 14 December 1860, or almost one week before South Carolina left the Union:

Alabama will, most assuredly, secede first.... No proffered compromises, no amendments to the Constitution, no proffered additional agreements, can delay her action for independence a moment. There is no alteration. The great defect in the Union is the public conscience and education of the Northern masses upon the slavery question, which begets an irreconcilable and irrepressible conflict between them and that institution, and of course between them and all constitutional provisions [that protect slavery. When] parties and rulers can control such conscience and eradicate such education, and can then propose new guarantees, it might be worth our while to pause and consider them—but not till then.¹²

¹¹ Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, 79, quoting Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Civil War in the United States* (1861; reprint, New York: [n.p.,] 1961), 58.

¹² W. L. Yancey to Messrs. H. R. Jackson, J. M. Guerard, and S. Y. Levy, 14 December 1860, quoted in “A Capital Letter from Mr. Yancey,” *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 2 January 1861, and in Clarence P. Denman, *The Secession Movement in Alabama* (Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1971), 96. See “1837-1860: America in Transition” and “1861-1865: Civil War and a New Birth of Freedom,” chaps. 5 and 6 in *Our Nation’s Archive: The History of the United States in Documents*, Erik Bruun and Jay Crosby, eds. (New York: Tess Press, 1999), 293-444. See also Irvin Wiley Bell, *Confederate Women: Beyond the Petticoat* (1974; reprint, New York: Barnes and Noble, 1994), 52; Thomas J. DiLorenzo, *The Real Lincoln: A New Look at Abraham Lincoln, his Agenda, and an Unnecessary War* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2002), 2; Patience Essah, *A House Divided: Slavery and Emancipation in Delaware, 1638-1865* (Charlottesville, Va.: University Press of Virginia, 1996); William Warren Rogers, Jr., *Confederate Home Front: Montgomery during the Civil War* (Tuscaloosa, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 1999); Hugh Thomas, *The Slave Trade—The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade: 1440-1870* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 765; Jay Winik, *April 1865: The Month that Saved America* (New York: Harper-Perennial, 2001); “Resolution of the Democratic State Convention,” *The Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*,

The following day, Alabama attorneys James F. Bailey and William M. Brooks sent a letter to the editor of a newspaper called the *Confederation* in which they corroborated Yancey's claim regarding slavery, the "black demon of Abolition," and secession. Evidently, the editor had accused the two candidates for the upcoming state constitutional convention of being cooperationists (persons who were willing to wait for all Cotton States to withdraw from the Union) rather than immediate secessionists, or normative nationalists (persons who supported the secession of individual states independent of others).¹³ In response, Bailey and Brooks made it clear that they, like Yancey and at least 100 Methodist preachers from Alabama, favored immediate secession: "In our judgment, separate State action and secession is the rightful remedy, and Alabama should adopt it without waiting upon the action of any other State. *Secession first*, and co-operation afterwards, is the only practicable plan." Expounding, Bailey and Brooks stated that no respectable white Southerner would ever submit to "Black Republican rule" or support a new government in which former slaves would be on an equal social or political footing with whites.¹⁴

23 April 1860; Mr. Yancey's Speech" and "Mr. Yancey's Speech in the Convention," *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 9 May 1860; "Speech of James Q. Smith, Esq., at Watts Hall, on the Evening of the 30th of August," *Daily Selma Times*, 1 September 1865; "Gen. L. P. Walker against Submission," *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 10 October 1860; B. F. Hallett, "Is Slave Labor Property?" *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 17 October 1860; "Declaration of the Immediate Causes which Induce and Justify the Secession of South Carolina from the Federal Union," *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 2 January 1861.

¹³ "Important Letter from Hon. James L. Pugh," *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 26 December 1860 (first quote); Allen Buchanan, *Secession: The Morality of Political Divorce from Fort Sumter to Lithuania to Quebec* (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1991), 48 (second quote). See, for example, "Remarks of Thos. H. Herndon, Esq., on the Subject of Co-operation," *Greensboro Beacon*, 21 December 1860. Brooks also practiced law in Dallas, Lowndes, Marengo, and Pickens Counties.

¹⁴ "The Position of Hons. Wm. M. Brooks and Jas. F. Bailey," *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 26 December 1860. See "Mr. Yancey's Speech in Mobile," *ibid.* See also "Substance of the Speech," *ibid.*, 30 May 1860; Mary Boykin Miller Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie, as Written by Mary Boykin Chesnut, Wife of James Chesnut, Jr., United States Senator from South Carolina, 1859-1861, and Afterward an Aide to Jefferson Davis and a Brigadier-General in the Confederate Army*, Isabella D. Martin and Myrta Lockett

Andrew Barry Moore, Alabama's 1857-1861 governor, confirmed the attorneys' position. On 14 November 1860, Moore said northern slavery opponents had effectively robbed white Southerners of their most valuable commodities (slaves) for years. Among other things, northern lawmakers had nullified fugitive-slave laws by enacting personal-liberty laws, fined or imprisoned persons who had attempted to capture runaway slaves, and prohibited southern whites from using northern prisons to house the runaways who were captured. Now, northern abolitionists and abolition-minded Republicans were attempting to control every branch of government, asserted Moore. If they succeeded, a person would have to be blind not to see that slavery would be abolished, cringed Moore.¹⁵

Although many people, including United States President James Buchanan, agreed with Moore's assertion, it remains moot. As matters stood, proslavery Democrats controlled Congress, Buchanan was a Democrat, and President-elect Abraham Lincoln had displayed little interest in interfering with the "peculiar institution" where it already existed. Lincoln had been more concerned about its expansion. As president, he supported a thirteenth amendment to the United States Constitution that, if ratified, would have perpetuated slavery in states where it was lawful. He also thwarted Union Generals John C. Frémont and David Hunter's 1861 and 1862 attempts to free slaves by declaring them contrabands of war. Though slavery was monstrous in Lincoln's personal opinion,

Avary, eds. (1905; reprint, New York: Peter Smith, 1929), 1; Charles B. Dew, *Apostles of Disunion: Southern Secession Commissioners and the Causes of the Civil War* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001), passim; Lewy Dorman, *Party Politics in Alabama: From 1850 through 1860* (Wetumpka, Al.: Wetumpka Printing Company, 1935), 155. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 102, 106-108, 124; Cobb, *Away Down South*, 50; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 180-181; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 10-11, 154-155.

¹⁵ See Philip Gerald Auchampaugh, *James Buchanan and His Cabinet* ([N.P.]: Philip Gerald Auchampaugh, 1926), 186-187. See also "Letter from Gov. Moore," *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 21 November 1860.

the president, as the executer of laws, felt obligated to enforce federal fugitive-slave statutes and to abide by the 1857 *Dred Scott* ruling. Lincoln also recognized citizens' constitutional right to own slaves and denounced racial equality on several occasions. Nevertheless, in two epistles penned from Alabama's state capital on 21 and 24 December 1860, A. B. Moore announced that the election of the "Black Republican" (Lincoln) by a wholly sectional vote—Lincoln's name had not appeared on the state ballot—and the suspected eradication of slavery were forcing him and other southern lawmakers to do whatever was necessary to preserve the honor, interests, peace, and security of the South.¹⁶

¹⁶ A. B. Moore, "Commission of Jno. Gill Shorter as State Commissioner from Alabama," Alabama Governor's Administration Files, 1857-1861: Moore; and "Proclamation," 24 December 1860, Military Correspondence, 1860-1861, SG24882, ADAH, hereinafter cited as Military Correspondence; *Greensboro Beacon*, 4 January 1861; William Russell Smith, *The History and Debates of the Convention of the People of Alabama, Begun and Held in the City of Montgomery, on the Seventeenth Day of January, 1861 in which is Reserved the Speeches of the Secret Sessions, and Many Valuable State Papers* (Montgomery, Al.: White, Pfister and Company, 1861), 13-16, 24-25, 35-36, (quote), 197-200, 451; "An Ordinance to Dissolve the Union between the State of Alabama and Other States United under the Compact Styled 'the United States of America,'" in "The Act of Secession," *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 12 January 1861, hereinafter cited as 1861 Secession Act. See "The Black Republican Ticket," *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 23 May 1860. See also "Lincoln an Abolitionist—The Proof from his Own Lips" and "To the Southern States," *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 14 November 1860; Michael Wright, *What They didn't Teach You about the Civil War* (New York: Ballantine Books, 24-25. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 62; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 102, 106-108, 124; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 10-11, 154-155; Winik, 234-236, 242-243.

In a December 1860 letter to a Springfield, Ohioan by the name of Therenia Bates, John G. Nicolay, one of Lincoln's personal secretaries, explained:

Now all the excitement and anger [over slavery and secession] is very foolish, and very unreasonable.... True the [Republicans] have succeeded in electing their president. But neither Lincoln nor the party have ever avowed any purpose to interfere with, or deprive [southern slaveholders] of any recognized right, and as both Houses of Congress have a Democratic majority they could not do so if they wanted to. They cannot, for two years at least, even restore the prohibition of slavery in the territories, much less attack it in the States.

James Buchanan felt the same way. John G. Nicolay to Therenia Bates, 2 December 1860, as quoted in *With Lincoln in the White House*, Michael Burlingame, ed. (Carbondale and Edwardsville, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 13. Cf. Adams, *When in the Course of Human Development*, 4; Auchampaugh, 186-187; DiLorenzo, 10-32, 257-258. For one of several different opinions about Lincoln's slavery views, see Thomas and Debra Goodrich, *The Day Dixie Died: Southern Occupation, 1865-1866* (Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 2001), 36.

Governor Moore's sentiments were echoed repeatedly in coming months. On 21 December 1860, the *Greensboro Beacon* printed a 21 November letter that Jabez Lamar Monroe Curry, an ardent Alabama secessionist and slaveholder, had written to John Haralson, a Dallas County attorney. In it, Curry, whom Haralson had asked to "guide the storm of States Rights," avowed that white Alabamians would never subject themselves to the abolitionist dynasty that the Republican party would undoubtedly build. Curry then addressed taxation and other economic issues. White Southerners, he said, had not only participated in wars to protect Northerners and their property; white Southerners had also paid egregious taxes to build northern industry and commerce.¹⁷

According to Curry, who omitted the fact that southern merchants had bought supplies and trade goods from the North, in excess of \$1 billion had been shelled out in iron collections to shield northern manufacturers from their European competitors. By his estimation, most of that money had come from the South. Likewise, most of the revenues that had been collected to build northern customhouses and post offices had come from the South, argued Curry before returning to the slavery issue. Abolitionist Northerners, he declared, had complained of their "assumed responsibility for the sin of African slavery" while reproaching, slandering, and stigmatizing the slaveholding South. Northerners had also characterized all southern whites as barbaric; incited arson, murder, and treason; violated the United States Constitution; and elected the "chief of a rebel section" to lead the South. Then, when a number of Southerners proposed to withdraw

¹⁷ J. L. M. Curry to John Haralson, 21 November 1860; "Letter from Hon. J. L. M. Curry," *Greensboro Beacon*, 21 December 1860, hereinafter cited as Curry-Haralson Letter. See William H. Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black: Education Ideology and Power in America, 1865-1954* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2001), especially 162. Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 200; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 120; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 36-37.

from the Union, Northerners threatened them with “coercion, subjugation, with the sword and halter!”¹⁸

After reaffirming the normative-nationalist position regarding Alabama having a right to secede without the approval or the cooperation of any other state, Curry affirmed his faith in a unified southern independence movement: “When the proper time arrives for an election between the North, with a hostile population, and antagonistic interests, and sister Southern States, with homogeneous population and kindred interests, no sane man can doubt the ultimate union of *all* the slaveholding States in one Federal Republic.” In war, a southern republic would be able to “cope with a world in arms”; in peace, it would “illustrate the prosperity that must attend a popular government of white people, resting on the substratum of African slavery.”¹⁹

Such ideas were discussed widely when Alabama lawmakers met in convention at Montgomery between 7 January and 21 March 1861. According Gappa T. Yelverton, a delegate from Coffee County, the slavery question was “the rock upon which the Old Government split.” Despite what any person professed about high tariffs, state sovereignty, federal laws that had given northern fishermen and merchants virtual monopolies on coastal fishing (via bounties) and shipping, the selling of public lands, the Pacific Railroad Bill, free trade, competing cultures, incompetent leaders, and other

¹⁸ Curry-Haralson Letter. See J. L. M. Curry, “Legal Justification for the South in Secession,” in *Confederate Military History: A Library of Confederate States History, in Twelve Volumes, Written by Distinguished Men of the South, and Edited by Gen. Clement A. Evans*, vol. 1 (1899; reprint, New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1962), 3-58. Weymouth T. Jordan examines southern merchants’ dependence on northern goods in “Purchase of Supplies and Subsistence Farming,” chap. 6 in *Hugh Davis*, 113-130. Hodding Carter mentions northern supplies in *Their Words were Bullets: The Southern Press in War, Reconstruction, and Peace* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1969), 21. Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 200-201; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 10-11.

¹⁹ Curry-Haralson Letter.

peripheral issues, Yelverton was certain that slavery was the principal cause of secession.²⁰

Yelverton's beliefs are feasible. Wealthy and well-educated white Southerners might have been concerned about the high revenue, or protective, tariff that United States Congressman Justin Smith Morrill—a one-time Whig and independent Republican from Vermont whom Allan Nevins, a prolific twentieth-century author and historian, considered “sharp-eyed, sharp-nosed [and] sharp-witted”—had reintroduced into Congress, but its enactment was not certain. As late as 20 February 1861, thousands of Border State Unionists, eastern and northern merchants, southern farmers, and western and northwestern Democrats opposed protectionism. In addition to being consumers, they had depended on inexpensive foreign imports to sustain their operations. Moreover, President Buchanan, the man who actually signed the Morrill Act (Tariff, Tax) into law, was never completely satisfied with it. And even if Buchanan had adored the measure, the Democrats who had controlled both houses of 36th United States Congress since 1859 could have postponed or blocked its implementation—if, that is, they had kept their seats. In other words, southern secession did not occur because the Morrill Act was able to

²⁰ G. T. Yelverton, quoted in Smith, *The History and Debates of the Convention of the People of Alabama*, 229, 231, and Jesse T. Carpenter, *The South as a Conscious Minority, 1789-1861: A Study in Political Thought* (1930, reprint, Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1963), 245. See *The Congressional Globe* (Washington, D.C.: John G. Rives, 1860-1861), 15-16, 42-45, 65-71, 169, 171, 191, 297-300, 544, 638-639, 880-882, 1048-1058, hereinafter cited as *1860-1861 Congressional Globe*. See also Frank L. Owsley, “The Fundamental Cause of the Civil War: Egocentric Sectionalism,” *Journal of Southern History* 7 (February 1941): 3-18; Marshall L. DeRosa, *The Confederate Constitution of 1861: An Inquiry into American Constitutionalism* (Columbia, Miss.: University of Missouri Press, 1991), 92-96; John Inzer Freeman, transcriber, “Inzer's Recollections: Scenes and Incidents which Occurred in Convention of 1861,” SPR 187, ADAH; Little Geneva—Reformed Confederate Theocrats, 24 September 2001; available via Internet @ <http://www.littlegeneva.com/?m=20010927>; accessed 15 July 2006, hereinafter cited as Little Geneva. Cf. Cobb, *Away Down South*, 39; Connor, *The South under Siege*, passim; Dew, *Apostles of Disunion*, 10; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 102, 154-155.

make it through Congress; the Morrill Act was able to make it through Congress because southern secession occurred.²¹

History is even clearer on states' rights, or self-determination. Clement Clay, David Clopton, J. L. M. Curry, Jefferson Davis, and other affluent, well-informed white Southerners might have been concerned about states' rights as a general principle, but they and ordinary whites were even more concerned about a state's ostensible right to permit or prevent slavery, the cornerstone of the southern economy and a key component of the typical southern white psyche. If the majority of white Southerners were true states-rights advocates, then why did so few of them back northern personal-liberty laws, which epitomized the self-determination principle? The same is true of protectionism. Moderate-to-high revenue tariffs and other manifestations of the South's late-antebellum financial condition were certainly important to upper-class, knowledgeable Americans, but the protective tariff that Republicans placed in their August 1860 platform to deal with the nation's on-going recession was too cold and too complex an issue to provoke much thought by the average American.²²

Recently, a number of economists and economic historians have rekindled the debate over whether the tariff or race-based slavery was the main cause of the American

²¹ Allan Nevins, *The Emergence of Lincoln* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), 114, 124, 175, 193 (quote), 304. Auchampaugh, 186-187; Marx and Engels, *The Civil War in the United States*, 59. See James A. Henretta et al., *America: A Concise History*: vol. 2: Since 1865, 3rd ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006), 569. Cf. Essah, *A House Divided*, 183; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 18.

²² See David Donald, *The Politics of Reconstruction, 1863-1867* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1965), 102; Gene L. Howard, *Death at Cross Plains: An Alabama Reconstruction Tragedy* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1984), 20; Kenneth M. Stampp, "The Fraud of the Conciliators," chap. 9 in *And the War Came: The North and the Secession Crisis, 1860-1861* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950), 159-178. Cf. *1860-1861 Congressional Globe*, 46, 517, 518-519, 521, 898-891, 1051, 1052-1053, 1064, 1065, 1150-1151, 1190-1191; Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, 12, 14, 15, 94-95; Bell, *Confederate Women*, 39, 52-53, 95, 96; Cobb, *Away Down South*; 39-40; Curry, "Legal Justification for the South in Secession"; DiLorenzo, 62-67; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 10-11, 154-155; Winik, *passim*.

Civil War. In a 2000 work entitled *When in the Course of Human Events: Arguing the Case for Southern Secession*, economic historian Charles Adams contends that economic issues—most notably, the Morrill Tariff—caused the Civil War. Slavery, he argues, was a tangential issue, a ploy to which leading southern politicians resorted to help Robert Barnwell Rhett, Jr.’s *Charleston Mercury* stir southern white emotions.²³

Adams’ hypothesis has been repeated in, among other works, *Tariffs, Blockades, and Inflation: The Economics of the Civil War*, a 2004 tome written by economists Mark Thornton and Robert Ekelund, Jr. The authors agree that greedy Northerners were extremely jealous of the South’s antebellum prosperity and acted selfishly on the tariff issue. Wealthy southern politicians were also driven by economic self-interest, explain Thornton and Ekelund, but the Southerners knew that most of their slave-less constituents would not support an economic protest in which they had no direct financial stake. The *North American Review* had reached the same conclusion in October 1862. Slavery, it said, did not cause the rebellion. Rather, slavery was the means “through which the greatest degree of unanimity can be produced.... Mr. [John C.] Calhoun, after finding that the South could not be brought into sufficient unanimity by a clamor about the tariff, selected slavery as the better subject for agitation.” Scores of Southern movement and neo-Dunningite writers have concurred.²⁴

²³ See *North American Review* 95 (October 1862): 525. See also Mark Thornton and Robert B. Ekelund, Jr., *Tariffs, Blockades, and Inflation: The Economics of the Civil War* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, Incorporated, 2004). Cf. *1860-1861 Congressional Globe*, 1064; Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, 4; Buchanan, *Secession*, 45, 48-52; Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 14; Grissom, *The Last Rebel Yell*; James and Walter Kennedy, *The South was Right*; Thornton, *The Southern Nation*, passim.

²⁴ October 1862 *North American Review*, 525. For noticeably antithetical beliefs by unabashed neo-Confederate writers, cf. Little Geneva. One of them concedes that universal equality was the principal issue that caused the American Civil War: “Yankees affirmed this doctrine with the Jacobins in France; [American] Southerners denied it and stood with the American Founders.” Economics, the writer continues, “certainly had a part in escalating the War, but it was on the pretext of universal equality (and

Mississippi Planters' College President E. N. Elliott explored these ideas in 1860. In *Cotton is King, and Pro-Slavery Arguments, Comprising the Writings of Hammond, Harper, Christie, Stringfellow, Hodge, Bledsoe, and Cartwright on this Important Subject*, Elliott explained how southern opposition to high revenue tariffs was caused by the desire of large-scale southern planters and merchants to secure foreign cotton markets, especially in European countries such as England. By doing so, southern cotton producers could lessen their dependency on northern manufactures, expand their market bases, and increase their profit margins. The Southerners also wanted to acquire provisions cheaply, wrote Elliott, who believed that they could not do so unless their servants' food, clothing, and other necessities were reasonably priced. Likewise, cotton had to be produced in a manner that would allow southern agriculturists and commercialists to undersell their competitors in the Baltic, Egypt, India, and elsewhere in the world.²⁵

Despite declining textile production in England, agribusinessmen in the American South were certain that their aims could be achieved if labor was kept free and the prices

specifically the application of Southern slavery) that hostilities between generally Christian and Unitarian sections of the country boiled over.” Accepting this idea, Michael Hill has claimed that the day of southern white guilt for race-based slavery and the Civil War has passed. Incorporating the title of one of James and Walter Kennedy’s neo-Confederate works, Hill exclaims: “THE SOUTH WAS RIGHT—and let us not forget that salient fact: NO APOLOGIES FOR SLAVERY should be made.” Distorting biblical scripture, Hill concludes: “In both the Old and New Testaments slavery is sanctioned and regulated according to God’s word. Thus, when practiced in accord with the Holy Scripture, it is NOT A SIN. Our ancestors were not evil men because they held slaves.... After all, what we are really upholding is GOD’S WORD.” All statements can be found in Little Geneva. Cf. Kennedy and Kennedy, *The South was Right*.

²⁵ See E. N. Elliott, *Cotton is King, and Pro-slavery Arguments, Comprising the Writings of Hammond, Harper, Christie, Stringfellow, Hodge, Bledsoe, and Cartwright on this Important Subject*, by E. N. Elliott, LL.D., President of Planters' College, Mississippi, with an Essay on Slavery in the Light of International Law, by the Editor (Augusta, Ga.: Abbott and Loomis, 1860). See also Ephraim Douglass Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War* (New York: Russell and Russell, [1924]), 19-22; *Speech of Hon. William D. Kelley, of Pennsylvania, on Protection to American Labor; Delivered in the House of Representatives, January 31, 1866* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Globe Office, 1866), 5-7. Cf. Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, 5.

of needed provisions remained low. But it was believed that Congressman Morrill's tariff, if enacted, would raise production costs and thus decrease profit margins. But if southern growers and merchants could establish a low or completely free trade system on their own terms, continued Elliott, they could guarantee that foreign markets would receive southern cotton and tobacco in exchange for inexpensive European manufactured goods. Concurrently, home manufactures would be repressed, Northerners would be forced to abandon industry and take up agriculture, the costs of clothing and feeding black laborers would diminish, and the economic profits that the laborers' work enabled would increase. Southern secession might have been rooted in economics, conceded Elliott, but it was the economics of slavery and cotton, not some lofty ideological principle, that caused southern states to secede.²⁶

Noted European intellectuals Karl Marx and Frederick Engels had the same opinion: "The war between the North and South—so runs the first excuse—is a mere tariff war, a war between a protection system and a free trade system," they avowed. "Shall the slaveowner enjoy the fruits of slave labor in their entirety or shall he be cheated of a portion of these by the protectionists of the North? That is the question which is at issue in this war."²⁷

John Stuart Mill, another European intellectual, and Confederate Vice-President Alexander Stephens were two of the thousands of individuals who agreed with Elliott, Engels, and Marx. In 1862, Mill reminded people that Confederate leaders had constantly told their followers that they had "separated on slavery" despite Jefferson

²⁶ Cf. Cobb, *Away Down South*, 39; Elliott, *Cotton is King*; Wright, *What They didn't Teach You about the Civil War*, 175.

²⁷ See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Civil War in the United States*, 2d. ed. (New York: International Publishers, 1940), ix-xxv, 58-59 (quote), 72-73. Cf. Henretta et al., 569.

Davis' discernible exclusion of the topic during his inaugural address. At times, Stephens was equally shifty. In an 1870 work entitled *A Constitutional View of the Late War between the States*, he rejected the idea that "African subordination" had been the reason that the Confederate States of America had been formed even though he had espoused this idea on numerous occasions before 1870. In his 21 March 1861 "Cornerstone" speech, for instance, Stephens had acknowledged that the tariff was a central reason that he and his colleagues had formed a new nation, but the perpetuation of slavery was much more important than the "old thorn" (tariff):

[The Confederacy] has put to rest *forever* all the agitating questions relating to our peculiar institutions—African slavery as it exists among us—the proper *status* of the negro in our form of civilization. *This was the immediate cause of the late rupture and present revolution.... Our new Government[']s] cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and moral condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.*²⁸

Stephens' 1861 pronouncement and his 1870 reversal raise interesting questions.

Since the 1810s, the tariff question had been a part of a largely sectional conflict that had been heavily debated on the local, state, and national levels. But each time the issue had

²⁸ J. S. Mill, "The Contest in America," *Fraser's Magazine* (February 1862): 262 (first quote); Alexander H. Stephens, *A Constitutional View of the Late War between the States*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: National Publishing Company, 1870), 12 (second quote); Alexander H. Stephens, "The Chief Stone of the Corner in Our New Edifice," in Edwin C. Rozwenc, ed., *Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War* (Atlanta: D. C. Heath and Company, 1963), 43, 44, 45 (third and fourth quotes). Mill's essay can also be found in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 14 (December 1861-May 1862): 677. Stephens attempted to rebut his critics in *The Reviewers Reviewed; A Supplement to the "War Between the States," Etc., with an Appendix in Review of "Reconstruction," So Called* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1872). See *Constitution of the Confederate States of America with the Inaugural Address of President Jefferson Davis Delivered at Montgomery, Alabama* (Willits, Cal.: British American Books, [n.d.]). Cf. Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, 91-96; Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 10-11 (footnote 2), 49, 50; DiLorenzo, 125. Lonnie Burnett spells Stephens Stevens in *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 152.

come before federal lawmakers, they had resolved it through compromise. Why, then, was compromise unachievable—for some persons, unthinkable—during 1860-1861? As important, why did Stephens and other ex-Confederates feel the need to reverse their position on the primary cause of southern secession only after the Civil War had ended?²⁹

The secession conference that was held in Montgomery, Alabama, during the winter of 1861 sheds light on the tariff and slavery. At the meeting, few people mentioned the tariff, but slavery was mentioned continually. If delegates felt so strongly about Morrill's tax proposal, which would have benefited Louisiana sugar growers, then why did they not discuss it at length? Behind closed doors and among persons of like mind, attendees were free to speak freely about the real issue or issues that had caused them to champion the free and independent South that they were attempting to create.³⁰

The Confederate Constitution that was approved on 8 February 1861 provides further support for the notion that slavery was a more important impetus for southern secession than the tariff. Whereas the framers of the United States Constitution made no direct references to slavery, tepidly incorporating the phrase “those bound to service for a Term of Years” (a category could have included white apprentices, indentured servants, and prisoners as well as black slaves), the individuals who drafted the Confederate Constitution mentioned slavery by name. In fact, the term slavery appears twice as many times in the document as do duties, tariffs, or taxes. Furthermore, when most southern states ceded, the nation's revenue tariff was a moderate twenty percent. Morrill's 50

²⁹ Cf. Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War*, 19; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*; Essah, *A House Divided*, especially 3, 5, 54; Henretta et al., 569; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 18, 25.

³⁰ Cf. Marx and Engels, *The Civil War in the United States*, 59; Rogers, *Confederate Homes Front*, 154-155. For an interesting statement about the intentions of the southern statesmen who convened in Montgomery on 4 February 1861, see William C. Davis, *Lincoln's Men: How President Lincoln became Father to an Army and a Nation* (New York: Touchstone, 1999), 21.

percent tariff did not become effective until March 1861, and its enactment worsened few, if any, rank-and-file white Southerners' economic situation.³¹

For the vast majority of ordinary white Southerners, who outnumbered their upper-class contemporaries by a large margin, support for an independent South was not economic; it was psychological. Most southern whites believed the sole aim of Northerners in general and northern Republicans in particular was to elevate former slaves to a point where they were equal to white people. This, after all, is what leading white citizens had told them. Often illiterate and financially poor-to-middling, ordinary whites supported secession because, through it, the lowest white man, woman, or child would always occupy a higher position in the South's pecking order than the most privileged black person. White fears of blacks becoming equal to or surpassing them persisted throughout the rest of the nineteenth century, proving that for many whites slavery was not essentially a "relationship...of class power in racial form," as historian Eugene Genovese has argued, but a relationship of racial power couched in class and caste.³²

³¹ Article I, sec. 2, United States Constitution, hereinafter cited as US Constitution. Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and others also waffled when it came to the international (African, European) slave trade. Rather than mentioning it outright, they used evasive language: "The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person." Article I, sec. 2, US Constitution. Delegates to the Confederate constitutional convention also discussed whether to reopen the African slave trade. The consensus was that it should not be reopened, but delegates decided to allow the Confederate Congress to decide its ultimate fate. Delegates were less permissive about slavery itself however. Everyone agreed that the peculiar institution would continue. See Article I, sec. 2, 8, 9, 10, Article II, sec. 1, Article IV, sec. 2, 3, Confederate States of America Constitution. Cf. Cobb, *Away Down South*, 55-57; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 154-155; Winik, 50.

³² Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (1972; reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 1976), 4. Cf. Essah, *A House Divided*, 3, 4, 6, 8, 54, 168-172, 184; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 4; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 11, 91, 101-102. For conflicting views about the Confederacy's principal *raison d'être*, cf. Winik, 54, 62.

J. D. De Bow, once one of the United States' most recognized Old South publishers, communicated the thoughts of thousands of whites when he asserted: "[T]he humblest white man feels...that when there are slaves he is not at the foot of the social ladder, and his own status is not the lowest in the community." South Carolina's John C. Calhoun had conveyed a similar thought on Capitol Hill. For most whites, society's two greatest divisions were not poor and rich but black and white, he argued. Whether flat broke or unimaginably prosperous, all whites belonged to the upper class and were considered equal because European Americans had a "pride of character" that poverty could not diminish. They all, in other words, belonged to the *Herrenvolk*, or master race.³³

Alabama's G. T. Yelverton spoke similarly. "Slavery and Cotton go hand in hand," he acknowledged:

Strike down Slavery, the subordinate, and your haughty "King Cotton," as you proudly call him—that monarch who has been the great architect of our fortunes, and who has erected in our midst such a power that we have grown, in our own estimation at least, to be invincible—will dwindle into a petty tyrant, under whose... administration our grandeur will subside and our [white] civilization will perish.

That being the case, Yelverton asked his fellow delegates to the 1861 state constitutional convention to "leave it no longer doubtful, nor in a condition to bring our New Government into new troubles. In framing a new Government, let us avoid the errors of

³³ Allan Nevins, *Ordeal of the Union*, vol. 1 (New York: Scribner, 1947), 419 (quotes), 422, citing *De Bow's Review* XX, 622 (first quote), and *Congressional Globe*, 30th Congress, 1st sess., 1848, 876 (second quote). See Edward Pessen, "How Different from Each Other Were the Antebellum North and South?" *American Historical Review* 85 (December 1980): 1124, 1127-1129, 1136. See also Frank L. Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1949); Frank L. and Harriet C. Owsley, "The Economic Basis of Society in the Late Ante-Bellum South," *Journal of Southern History* 6 (February 1940): 24-45. Cf. Tunnell, "Creating 'the Propaganda of History,'" 803, citing Pierre L. van den Berghe, *Race and Racism: A Comparative Perspective* (New York: [n.p.,] 1967), 77-94.

the old; and we can best do this with success by laying our foundation in *principle* rather than in *policy*.” In short, slavery, which Yelverton considered a moral, political, and social blessing, had to be preserved given that no sensible white person would tolerate the “free negro rule of Lincoln.”³⁴

Alabama’s 11 January 1861 secession ordinance did leave no doubt as to the principal reason for the new government to which Yelverton referred. As per section two, it was the “desire and purpose of the people of Alabama to meet the slaveholding States of the South,” whose leaders had vowed to perpetuate de jure slavery. Because Perry County had depended on slave labor to secure a position as one of the wealthiest, most productive cotton-growing areas in the South before 1861, it should be of little surprise that slavery, secession, and related issues were heavily discussed in the county during the late Antebellum, Civil War, Reconstruction, and early Redemption periods.³⁵

Unbeknownst to many people, some of Alabama’s most influential decision makers during these years were from Perry County. Governor Moore and J. L. M. Curry lived there. Other important figures include Attorney William M. Brooks, who presided over the 1861 state constitutional convention; Andrew T. Craig, possibly Alabama’s first Confederate wartime death; and Confederate Generals George D. Johnston and Isham W. Garrott. Alexander H. Curtis and John C. Dozier, two of the state’s most important black postbellum politicians were from Perry County, which was also home to two of the

³⁴ G. T. Yelverton, quoted in Smith, *The History and Debates of the Convention of the People of Alabama*, 229, 231, and Carpenter, *The South as a Conscious Minority, 1789-1861*, 245 (first two quotes); “Alabama will Secede,” *The Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 9 January 1861 (third quote). See *Remarks on the Existing Rebellion* (St. Louis: [n.p.,] 1866), 3-5, 13. Cf. Elliott, *Cotton is King, and Pro-slavery Arguments; Speech of Hon. William D. Kelley*, 6.

³⁵ 1861 Secession Act. Cf. Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 22, citing Charles S. Davis, *The Cotton Kingdom in Alabama* (Montgomery, Al.: Alabama State Department of Archives and History, 1939), 40, 42, 194-196, 199.

state's oldest white Baptist churches, Ocmulgee and Siloam; two of the South's most prominent nineteenth-century white Baptist colleges, Howard and Judson; and the nation's first state-sponsored liberal-arts institutions for the higher education of blacks, Alabama State Lincoln Normal School.³⁶

By no means is this dissertation an exhaustive history of these events, individuals, and institutions. It is, however, the first attempt by any lay or professional writer to spell out Perry County's importance to the state, region, and nation's 1860-1875 history by employing, describing, and analyzing the words and actions of the county's black residents as well as prominent white conservatives. For both groups, the cultural, economic, military, political, and social battles of the middle nineteenth century proved that wars were rarely civil. But black and moderate-to-liberal white Perry Countians' general respect for each other and for postbellum law also proved that for people who were allegedly "so distinct in character as to render coalescence impossible," they could be quite civil beings.³⁷

³⁶ At a Democratic convention that was held on 17 October 1859, William M. Brooks and other local party leaders passed a resolution in which they demanded that their choice for president support the preservation of slavery. Brooks reiterated their position when he attended the 1860 Democratic National Convention. See *Montgomery Advertiser*, 2 November 1859, citing *Marion Commonwealth*, [n.d.]. See also "Hon. Wm. M. Brooks of Alabama, on the New York Contesting Delegations in the Charleston Convention," *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 9 May 1860. Cf. Dorman, *Party Politics in Alabama*, 154; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 174-183, 213-214; Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black Education*, 166-167; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 7.

³⁷ William A. Dunning, "The Undoing of Reconstruction," *Atlantic Monthly* 88, 528 (October 1901): 449; Straughton Lynd, ed., *Reconstruction* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 65. See, for example, Forrest G. Wood, *Black Scare: The Racist Response to Emancipation and Reconstruction* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), 193 ff.

**A TOUGH DECISION: CHOOSING “BETWEEN THE CONFEDERATE
STATES OF AMERICA AND ABRAHAM LINCOLN”—PERRY
COUNTY DURING THE CIVIL WAR YEARS, 1861-1865**

“Nothing could be holier than the cause, nothing more imperative than the duty of upholding it. There were those in the South who, when they saw the issue of the war, gave up their faith in God, but not their faith in the cause.... That the cause we fought for and our brothers died for was the cause of civil liberty, and not the cause of human slavery, is a thesis which we find ourselves bound to maintain whenever our motives are challenged or misunderstood, if only for our children’s sake.”

—Basil L. Gildersleeve, 1915¹

In a letter dated 1 May 1861, Private James G. Hudson—a Perry County resident and the chaplain-treasurer of the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards, a Confederate outfit belonging to Company D of the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment—conveyed the thoughts of thousands of white Southerners when he asserted that the Civil War was not a battle between the North and the South or the South and the federal government. Rather, the war was a battle between the Confederates States of America and one man, Abraham Lincoln. As Perry Countian Ella Storrs Christian would later recall, the fall of 1860 was

¹ Basil L. Gildersleeve, *The Creed of the Old South, 1865-1915* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1915), 38, 51.

“one of great unrest, very different from the easy and careless life of the Old South, for we realized that if Lincoln was elected it meant secession.”²

Of course, Lincoln’s election was not the real reason for southern secession or the Civil War. His 1860-1861 ascendance to the White House was merely the pretext for these occurrences. The orator, railroad attorney, and astute politician represented a perceived threat to the nation’s antebellum hierarchy, particularly in the South, and the rise of “new something.” No one in the South really knew what new something was, but thousands of Southerners could feel it. And to many of them, it felt bad.³

Lincoln was the embodiment of this unfamiliar air. Standing 6’4” and weighing 180 pounds, the Hodgenville, Kentucky, native was an enigma to many white Southerners—but not because of his stature or his birthplace. Try as they might, white Southerners could never peg Lincoln’s position on important issues such as slavery. In retrospect, this is no surprise. Few people, including some of Lincoln’s most trusted confidants, could.⁴ A consummate lawyer, politician and statesman, Lincoln often

² Ella Storrs Christian, “The Days that are No More” or “Plantation Life as It Was,” *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 14 (1952): 331-360, *loc. cit.*, 332. See James G. Hudson Diary, 1861, SPR 327, ADAH, hereinafter cited as Hudson Diary. Alma H. Pate edited the 1 May 1899 transcript of the 1861 diary that was written by Private Hudson’s relative, Thomas. Either the younger Hudson or Editor Pate altered some of the original author’s spellings and prose—undoubtedly to help readers understand the diary’s content because Private Hudson’s penmanship is, on occasion, difficult to understand. Fs, Ps, Ss, and Ts are particularly troublesome. Although the edited version of the diary does facilitate reading, it does not have the same feel as the original document. Hence, the author uses the 1861 diary, supplementing it only when some of Private Hudson’s words are completely undecipherable. See James G. Hudson, “A Story of Company D, 4th Alabama Regiment, C.S.A.,” *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 23 (spring 1961): 139-179. See also Kenneth W. Jones, “The Fourth Alabama Infantry: First Blood,” *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 23 (spring 1961): 47. Cf. Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 89-91.

³ Magaul, *The Eternal Education*, 41.

⁴ On more than one occasion, Lincoln was asked to explain how he felt about slavery. Oftentimes, he said he did not condone any person being enslaved but, for the sake of the Union and republicanism, would not attempt to interfere with a state or a region’s constitutional privilege to allow slavery within its boundaries. Such communications are too numerous, as well as too paradoxical, to discuss here, but a few of Lincoln’s exchanges might flesh out the author’s contentions. See Abraham Lincoln, “Draft of Speech on Popular Sovereignty, May 18, 1858”; Abraham Lincoln, “Resolution on Slavery, 1863”; Abraham Lincoln to James N. Brown, October 18, 1858; Abraham Lincoln to James T. Hale, 11 January 1861; Abraham Lincoln to

tailored his words to satisfy his audience. Privately, publicly and politically, Abraham Lincoln was a Machiavellian character.⁵

The Republican party was also perplexing to many white Southerners. Created during 1854 in the midst of the “Bleeding Kansas” episode and the same year that the Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed, the Republican party was founded in large part on free land, free labor, and preventing the spread of slavery. Although Lincoln usually avoided the third and most controversial topic, slavery, during his 1860 campaign speeches and other public appearances, persons on all sides of the cultural, economic, political, and social spectrum were confident that legal slavery would be abolished if Lincoln were elected president. This was utterly unacceptable to innumerable white slave owners, aspiring slave owners, slave traders, merchants, and commoners because the peculiar institution could not only continue; it could expand as a result of large tracts of land that the federal government had acquired from Native Americans, Mexicans, and Europeans during the nineteenth century. In the opinion of countless proslavery advocates, the acreage that had been acquired via God’s will (“Manifest Destiny”) consisted of prime cotton-growing areas. And whether acknowledged or simply understood, thousands of the whites who supported the “southern cause” that Confederate leaders vowed to protect took part in the Civil War to preserve, if not expand, slavery.⁶

William L. Speer, October 23, 1860; and Abraham Lincoln to Horace Greeley, 22 August 1862. Each one of these documents can be found in Papers of Abraham Lincoln, 1774-1948, Series 1-3: General Correspondence, 0507P, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., hereinafter cited as Lincoln Papers and LOC, respectively. Cf. DiLorenzo, *The Real Lincoln*, 10.

⁵ According to William Henry Herndon, Abraham Lincoln’s law partner, and Judge David Davis, Lincoln was “the most secretive—reticent—shut-mouthed man that ever lived.” Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, 16, quoting Edgar Lee Masters, *Lincoln the Man* (New York: [n.p.,] 1931), 138. Cf. Winik, 229, 230-231, 234-236, 269-270.

⁶ *Canebrake Herald*, 1 February 1861. See Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970). See also Ward M.

Alabama aided the Confederacy in a number of ways. More than sixty of the new nation's infantry regiments came from the state. The first Confederate capital was located in Montgomery, which was also a key departmental and transportation junction. Georgia-born William Lowndes Yancey, the "Silver-tongued Orator of Secession," represented Alabama in the Confederate Congress. Alabamians produced Confederate tents, and Cleburne County was one of the Confederacy's major wagon producers.⁷ Selma in Dallas County was a principal source of raw goods and food, and Nicola Marschall, a Perry County artist-educator, designed the Confederacy's first national flag, "Stars and Bars"—which was fashioned from the French-imported, white silk dress of Perry County gentlewoman Mrs. Henry Lea (or Lee)—as well as the gray uniforms that Confederate soldiers wore.⁸ Some of the iron that the Confederate government used to complete the Alabama and Mississippi Railroad that linked Selma to Meridian, Mississippi, came from an area south of Marion Junction in Perry County, which also provided the Confederacy its most vital resource, humans.⁹

McAfee, *Religion, Race, and Reconstruction: The Public School in the Politics of the 1870s* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1998), xi, 2-3, 111. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen makes a Good Sword*, 126.

⁷ Because of his secession agitation and outstanding oratorical ability, Yancey has several monikers, including "Prince of the Fire-eaters," "Demosthenes of the South," and "Patrick Henry of the Second Revolution." Joel Campbell Du Bose, "The Story of the States: Alabama," *Pearson's Magazine* 13, no. 78 (June 1902): 571. Cf. Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, passim.

⁸ "Stars and Bars" was reportedly presented to Confederate soldiers at Confederate Oak, a tree located on the campus of Judson College. Nicola Marschall lived across the street from the campus. The flag flew from 4 March 1861 until May 1863, when it was replaced by the Confederacy's second national flag, "Stainless Banner." Confederate leaders decided to create a second flag because "Stars and Bars" looked too much like the Union's "Stars and Stripes." See Elizabeth A. Hall, "The Henry C. Lea Home, Marion," *The Heritage of Perry County, Alabama* (Clanton, AL: Heritage Publishing Consultants, Incorporated, 1999), 17. See also "Marion Railway Depot," *ibid.*, 8; "Who Designed the Confederate Flag," in J. L. Martin, *Confederate Scrapbook of Margaret Kinnaird* (N.P.: n.p., n.d.), Martin Family Papers, PB, Range H, Section 7, Shelf A, ADAH; "Stars and Bars: Designed by Nicola Marschall Formerly of Marion"; Ben H. Severance, review of John Michael Burton, *Gracie's Alabama Volunteers: The History of the Fifty-ninth Alabama Volunteer Regiment* (Gretna, La.: Pelican, 2003) in *Alabama Review* 59 (October 2006): 293.

⁹ Cf. Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 127.

From the eve of the war onward, the cataclysmic events of 1861-1865 shaped Perry County's white and black populations, setting the stage for what would follow. To many of the county's most affluent white citizens, the Civil War and Reconstruction were not separate events. Rather, the revolutions of those years constituted one hellacious nightmare in which friendships were severed, lives were lost, and the economic, educational, religious, and political strongholds that white Perry Countians had held on African Americans were broken. As for local blacks, the Civil War might have been nightmarish, but Reconstruction was the fulfillment of a long deferred dream: legal and, moreover, psychological freedom.¹⁰

The Secession Movement in Perry County

Perry County was not home to many "straight-out," or immediate, secessionists during 1860-1861. Support for severing the Union was particularly scant among the sixty-nine percent of landowners who did not have any human property. As William Brooks explained to Jefferson Davis on 13 May 1861, there were almost 20,000 slaves in the county, but only 913 of the 9,476 whites who lived there were slaveholders. Their chattel had increased, but their numbers had shrunk since 1850. That year, there were 1,081 slave owners in the county, and 419 of them owned at least ten slaves. By 1855, there were 8,121 white and 14,661 blacks living in the county, and 457 male adults owned ten or more slaves. By the eve of the Civil War, property holding had dropped slightly to seventy-nine percent, down five percent from 1850, and slaveholding had

¹⁰ See, for example, Horace Mann Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* (1934; reprint, New York: Octagon Books, 1966), 14-15. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 19; Goodrich and Goodrich, especially 128-129; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 4.

become more centered, with only six-one families owned slaves (see Appendix Ba). Sixty-three individuals had between fifty and 100 slaves, ten between 100 and 200, and Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus DeYampert, cofounder of Southern University of Greensboro in Hale County (later Birmingham-Southern), had 245 slaves, the largest number in Perry County history.¹¹

With most whites possessing land but no free laborers to work it, the slavery debate caused “improper and unfounded jealousies” among non-slaveholders, according to Attorney Brooks (see Appendix Bb). White objection was heaviest in the slave-less Hills region of the county. There, the consensus was that nothing was in jeopardy except the titles master and slave, explained Brooks. And unable to sympathize with the slaveholders, most of the working-class, poorly educated whites who resided in the Hills had developed incorrect ideas about the war’s causes, several men declaring that they would never “*fight for no rich man’s slaves.*”¹²

¹¹ See William M. Brooks to Jefferson Davis, 13 May 1861, in *The Papers of Jefferson Davis*, vol. 7, Lynda Laswell Crist and Mary Seaton Dix, eds. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1992), 164, 165, 166 (footnote 9), hereinafter cited as 13 May 1861 Brooks to Davis Letter. See also The Alabama Civil War Message Board; available via Internet @ http://history-sites.com/mb/cw/alcwmb/archive_index.cgi?noframes;read=14447; accessed 9 March 2006; Bissie Martin, *A Rich Man’s War a Poor Man’s Fight: Desertion of Alabama Troops from the Confederate Army* (1932; reprint, Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2003), 55-57. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 125; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 121, 122, 178, 183, citing William E. W. Yerby, *History of Greensboro, Alabama* [N.P.: n.p., n.d.], 86; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 22, 49; Frank and Harriet Owsley, “The Economic Basis of Society in the Late Antebellum South,” 31-32, 37; Nevins, *The Emergence of Lincoln*, 423. For a different view, cf. Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 7, including footnote 6. Brook’s statement was somewhat misleading. According to census data, there were between 18,206 and 18,245 slaves in Perry County in 1860, and sixty-one percent of white families owned slaves. Cf. Jordan, *op. cit.*; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 20.

¹² 13 May 1861 Brooks to Davis Letter. See Hugh Bailey, “Disloyalty in Early Confederate Alabama,” *Journal of Southern History* 23 (November 1957): 522-528. See also David H. Donald et al., *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 262-263. Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 34; Denman, *The Secession Movement in Alabama*, especially 123-253; *History and Hope in the Heart of Dixie*, 7; Martin, *A Rich Man’s War a Poor Man’s Fight*, 48 (citing William Brooks to Gov. Watts, 29 March 1864, and A. Q. Bradley to Adj. General Watson, 7 September 1864), 121-159, 171-172.

What Brooks called “treasonable sentiments” were less frequent among DeYampert, Drs. Francis A. Bates and R. D. Jackson, and other “favorite[s] of fortune.” Although Governor Moore had once hoped that prevailing sectional issues could be resolved without bloodshed or disunion, Moore was confident that the Republican victory of 6 November 1860 had nullified any possibility of a peaceful reconciliation. The governor therefore resolved to provide for a free and independent state.¹³

Actually, Alabama lawmakers had begun to prepare for the sovereign state to which Governor Moore referred months before the 1860 presidential election. Legislators, for example, started earmarking funds for military use shortly after John Brown’s infamous 16 October 1859 raid on Harper’s Ferry. They also passed a resolution mandating a state convention in the event that a Republican was elected president. Not one of these decisions was ex post facto. Each one of them was made on 24 February 1860, or almost one year before Lincoln’s election and South Carolina’s secession, which Alabama inspired, according to the *Charleston Mercury*, the *New Orleans Bee*, and several other southern newspapers. As one student of the ensuing war has noted, Alabama “practically took her stand on the side of secession” in February 1860, months before anyone knew who the nation’s next president would be.¹⁴

¹³ 13 May 1861 Brooks to Davis Letter (first quote); John Witherspoon DuBose, “Chronicles of the Canebrake,” *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 9, no. 4 (winter 1947): 585 (second quote). See, for example, A. B. Moore to Geo. N. Gilmer, Esq., 21 February 1861, in “Archives of the War,” Archives of the War: Circular, c. 1880, SPR 227, ADAH, hereinafter cited as “Archives of the War.” Cf. 1861 Secession Act; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 121, 122, 178, 183; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 22.

¹⁴ Thomas M. Owen, “Alabama’s Notable Part in the Great Civil War,” in Mrs. James A. Smith Collection, 1853-1982, A-5-5, Judson College Archives, Marion, Alabama, hereinafter cited as Smith Collection (first quote); J. H. Barker, “Early Sentiment for Secession in Alabama,” *ibid.* (second quote). See “A Bad Sign,” *New Orleans Bee*, 18 January 1860. See also “A Consistent Democracy,” *Louisville (Kentucky) Daily Courier*, 22 February 1860; “The Territorial Rights of the South ‘Barren Abstractions’—No Territory,” *Charleston Mercury*, 28 February 1860; “Important Suggestions,” *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 2 January 1861; *Montgomery Weekly Post*, 9 January 1861; Dwight Lowell Dumond, *The Secession Movement, 1860-1861* (1931; reprint, New York: Octagon Books, 1973), 32-35, 136-137; John G. Shorter

While Alabama legislators appropriated funds and made convention plans, Yancey convinced state officials to adopt an amended form of his 1848 “Alabama Platform of Principles,” which advanced the protection and expansion of race-based slavery as constitutional rights that all states enjoyed. Then, on 20 March 1860, Governor Moore announced that legislators had passed “An Act to Provide for the Efficient Military Organization of the State of Alabama.” Although the state government would not be able to purchase weapons and other necessities until the middle of June, it was hoped that no company would be forced to disband because the state government could not provide for its members.¹⁵

Appointing a commissioner to every slaveholding state in the South was one of Moore’s next important endeavors. Believing that the mounting crisis necessitated consultations and bipartisan support, the governor followed the lead of Mississippi Governor John J. Pettus and chose liberal Whigs and moderate Democrats to represent Alabama. By doing so, Moore attempted to show that prevailing sectional differences over slavery had destroyed traditional party differences, causing every white Alabamian to become a secessionist.¹⁶

to Brown, 3 January 1861, in *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies: Armies*, 4th ser., vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), 16-17. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 125; Nevins, *The Emergence of Lincoln*, 422 (footnote 24), 424. Hodding Carter takes a different approach to South Carolina’s secession history in *Their Words were Bullets*, 14, 20-21.

¹⁵ “The Governor’s Proclamation on Military Organization,” *Greensboro Beacon*, 13 April 1860, hereinafter cited as “The Governor’s Proclamation on Military Organization”; “Speech of the Hon. W. L. Yancey, of Alabama, Delivered in the National Democratic Convention at Charleston, April 27, 1860,” *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 9 May 1860. See “Reception of Wm. Yancey, and his Speech” and “Direct Trade, and How to Save the South and the Union,” *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 16 May 1860. See also “Mr. Yancey’s Slaughter Letter,” *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 23 May 1860. Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 20; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 14-15.

¹⁶ Cf. Dew, *Apostles of Disunion*, 23-24.

J. L. M. Curry, John Archer (or Archie) Elmore, Isham W. Garrott, Robert M. Patton, Edmund W. Pettus, John Gill Shorter, John A. Winston, and other commissioners' principal task was to confer with officials throughout the Lower South regarding the protection of their perceived rights, mainly slavery, and to clamor for disunion. As they prepared to carry out their mission, twenty southern congressmen assembled in the Washington, D. C., residence of Mississippi Congressman Reuben Davis to develop a compromise to end the worsening crisis. The meeting began during the late afternoon on 13 December 1860 and did not end until 11 PM that night. The following day, the group made its conclusions public via a statement of principles that became known as the "Southern Manifesto":

The argument is exhausted.... All hope of relief in the Union, through the agency of committees, Congressional legislation, or constitutional amendments is extinguished.... In our judgment the honor, safety and independence of the Southern people are to be found only in a Southern Confederacy—the inevitable result of separate State secession.¹⁷

As historian Charles B. Dew has noted, the manifesto did not explain why southern states had to withdraw immediately from what its authors called "an unnatural and hostile Union." This was left up to the commissioners, whose mission was twofold: to consult with each other and to tell white Southerners about the "dark forces" that were threatening the South, provoking southern lawmakers to seek refuge beyond the Union. Alabama and Mississippi led the effort. Speaking at South Carolina's secession convention, Alabama's commissioner to that state, J. A. Elmore, a South Carolina native and one-time law partner of Yancey, proclaimed that despite Lincoln's birthplace, his

¹⁷ Ibid., 24. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 182-183; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 22.

election was an open declaration of war on southern institutions, interests, and rights. South Carolina had to secede immediately, shouted Elmore amid a great deal of applause. That move, he insisted, would strengthen secession sentiment throughout Alabama and the rest of the South. It would also give Governor Moore, an immediate secessionist but a moderate-to-strict constructionist, enough time to let his constituents decide how soon Alabama would join South Carolina. Anticipating widespread support for immediate secession and doubting a *separation à l'agréeable*, Moore began to bolster the state's defenses.¹⁸

On 3 January 1861, or four days before the state secession convention began, Alabama's chief executive issued General Order No. 1, directing Colonel J. B. Todd of the 1st Volunteer Regiment to seize Fort Gaines on Dauphin Island, Fort Morgan at the mouth of Mobile Bay, and the federal arsenal at Mount Vernon for future Confederate use. Reportedly fearful of a federal offensive, Moore authorized Todd to use every troop under his command, if necessary, to complete the mission but cautioned the colonel that two things were "all important": the two forts and the arsenal had to be seized without bloodshed, and Mount Vernon had to be taken as secretly and as expeditiously as possible. By the time that the colonel received the command, which was sent by telegraph on the same day that it was written, slaveholders such as Alexander Caldwell Davidson of Perry County, George N. Gilmer of Tallapoosa County, and Joel E. Mathews of Dallas County had already begun to offer their slaves to help build and

¹⁸ Dew, *Apostles of Disunion*, 23-24 (first quote); Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 20 (second quote). Isham W. Garrott made similar reports from Georgia and the Carolinas during December 1860. See "Events Preceding Secession," *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 3 (fall-winter 1941): 283. See also I. W. Garrott to A. B. Moore, 7, 8, and 10 December 1860, in Milo B. Howard, Jr., ed., "A. B. Moore Correspondence Relating to Secession," *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 23 (spring-summer 1961): 13-16. "Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 179-180.

defend the forts, which Afro-Creoles from Mobile later protected on behalf of the Confederacy.¹⁹

Alexander C. Davidson represented Perry County's wealthiest citizens. He was born in North Carolina but grew up on his parents' Uniontown, Alabama, plantation.²⁰ After finishing the University of Alabama in 1840, Davidson studied law under the private tutelage of John Archibald Campbell—a prominent Mobile lawyer, southern secession opponent, and future United States Supreme Court justice—but was forced to postpone his legal studies when the family patriarch died. Thereupon, the aspiring attorney turned his attentions to overseeing his family's cotton plantation.²¹

Alexander proved to be an able administrator, tremendously expanding the size of the family estate. He also delved into industry, encouraging fellow cotton planters to assist in the construction of a railroad line that would extend from the Alabama River through the Black Belt. Davidson directed the successful venture, from which he netted a substantial financial profit. With the money, he bought additional slaves to work on the family estate.²²

¹⁹ "General Order No. 1," 3 January 1861, in A. B. Moore Correspondence, 1861, SPR 131, ADAH. See a trio of 3 January 1861 letters from A. B. Moore to Col. J. B. Todd in *ibid.* See also A. B. Moore to James Buchanan, 4 January 1861, in Auchampaugh, 168; "The Democracy of Alabama—Its Position and Duty," *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, 9 May 1860; Michael W. Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation: Popular Politics in Reconstruction Mobile, 1860-1890* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002), 1-9, 10 (footnote 3). Cf. "Archives of the War"; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 10-11; Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 6 (footnote 2); Donald et al., *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 693 (footnote 59); "The Governor's Proclamation on Military Organization"; Nevins, *The Emergence of Lincoln*, 319. One source suggests that the order to defend Forts Gaines and Morgan was delivered on 4 January 1861. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 134.

²⁰ Uniontown (or Union Town) was also called Woodville.

²¹ John A. Campbell supported a state's ostensible right to secede; he simply did not support southern secession. Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 14-15 (footnote 1).

²² DuBose, "Chronicles of the Canebrake," 585. A. C. Davidson's wealth necessitated he appeal directly to United States President Andrew Johnson for a pardon following the war. Cf. *Pardons by the President*, 9, 10.

As the Civil War neared, Davidson cast his lot with the Confederacy. He tried to join an army battalion but was turned away because of his age. At the time, he was forty-one. Subsequently, Davidson joined Gilmer, Mathews, and others in sending bondmen to Forts Gaines and Morgan. State legislators legitimized the men's actions on 31 January 1861 by passing "An Act to Accept the Service of Certain Patriotic Citizens." Via the act, slaveholders could send as many slaves as they could spare to work for the Confederacy. Governor Moore agreed to cover all travel expenses from the state treasury. As further incentive, the governor promised to provide and pay an overseer to accompany the slaves to Mobile, where they would be given proper provisions, if their owners did not wish to make the trip.²³

By the time that "An Act to Accept the Service of Certain Patriotic Citizens" was passed, several affluent white Perry Countians had already begun to form volunteer companies, practice formations, and work on various drills. During the fall of 1860, a cavalry unit was created at the Canebrake area of the county near the Demopolis and Selma Railroad. A Captain Overy was its commander. He and other volunteers practiced on the "New Hope" plantation of Ella Christians' wealthy parents, Ella and Joshua Storrs. Because Overy had attended West Point alongside fellow Perry Countian Samuel Lockett, one of the Confederacy's first commissioned officers, Overy's troops drilled well, inspiring whomever watched them.²⁴ Children were particularly impressed. Years after the war, Ella Storrs Christian reminisced about a young lad named Beverly who had

²³ Cf. "Archives of the War."

²⁴ Initially, Lieutenant of Engineers Lockett was assigned to help fortify Mobile and Pensacola. After being promoted to the rank of colonel, he became the Trans-Mississippi Department's chief engineer, supervising (with Richard Taylor and Stephen Lee) fellow Perry Countian Nicola Marschall. Lockett also toured Egypt. Following the war, he oversaw the construction of the pedestal on which the Statue of Liberty was placed. Lockett died in Bogotá, South America. See Mrs. R. L. Jackson, "City Founded in 1817 by Pioneer Seeking Home: Community is Noted as Educational Center," in Smith Collection.

watched the volunteers with much interest, imitating the men's maneuvers on a stick horse.²⁵

In the end, how well the cavalry unit drilled was of little consequence. Its members saw no action when the fighting began. This was perhaps best inasmuch as the company was made up of "old men and semi-invalids, to which the latter class" Joshua Storrs himself belonged. Other Perry County volunteers—the Marion Rifles and the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards for example—were better suited for combat.²⁶

The Marion Rifles

The Marion Rifles was the first Confederate unit mustered into service in Alabama. Midway through January 1861, Governor Moore directed the recently formed company to Fort Morgan. From there, Captain Young Lea Royston—an attorney, planter, and nephew of one-time Tennessee governor and Mexican-American War hero Sam Houston—commanded his troops to Mobile.²⁷

Captain Royston was another affluent Perry Countian. After being graduated from the state university in 1838, he studied law. In 1855, he was elected solicitor of Alabama's first judicial circuit, a position that he held for the rest of the Antebellum

²⁵ See Joel Parker, *Revolution and Reconstruction. Two Lectures delivered in the Law School of Harvard College, in January, 1865, and January, 1866* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1866). Joshua Storrs sold "Fair Oaks," the family's first Perry County plantation, before visiting the West at some point before 1860. He then decided to return to Alabama, where he purchased New Hope, onto which the family moved after Abraham Lincoln was elected president. Cf. Christian, "The Days that are No More," 223, 333.

²⁶ Cf. Christian, "The Days that are No More," 223, 333. Sometimes, the Marion Rifles were called the Marion Light Infantry.

²⁷ See "Memorial Day: Col. Lea Pays High Tribute to his Old Comrades," in Smith Collection. Royston's mother, Varilla, was the older sister of Sam Houston's wife, Margaret Lee Houston, whom Sam met in New Orleans. Immediately, Houston was smitten with Lee. As one of her male relatives would later recall, "Margaret was a bright girl and was of that peculiar type of Southern beauty as we boys designated as 'strawberries smothered in cream.'" "Early History of Perry County Vividly Portrayed by Confederate Veteran," in Smith Collection. Cf. Jones, "The Fourth Alabama Infantry: First Blood," 35.

period. With such familial, military, political, and social connections, Royston was a natural choice to lead a volunteer outfit even though he, like Davidson, was forty-one years old.

The Marion Rifles' departure from Marion caused quite a stir. According to one female observer, their exit produced a scene that was as unusual as it was exciting. Save for the "little 'brush'" with Mexico, most people in the county knew nothing about the grim visages of war. "Brought up in the arts and the employment of peace and plenty," she explained, "the bugle blast of actual war startled the public ear accustomed only to the harps and happiness of lutes and repose. The day being muster day for the Militia and two Cavalry Companies, our streets during the morning presented quite a warlike appearance."²⁸

Persons of all backgrounds lined Marion's streets to catch a glimpse of the departing soldiers. The crowd at the depot was just as thick, varied, and energized. One onlooker described:

As the time approached for the departure of the gallant corps the scene became indescribable. The tearful eye of the Mothers, wives and Sisters told more than [I] can tell, but although the heart of affection welled up, the Spartan Mothers' spirit was there to tell the Son or husband "Go, serve your state and return not except with the badge of honor."²⁹

Seven officers accepted the challenge. Under Captain Royston served First Lieutenant L. J. Lockett, Second Lieutenant Sumpter (or Sumter) Lea, and Third

²⁸ This statement is taken from an undated, handwritten letter by Mrs. James A. Smith that can be found in Smith Collection, hereinafter cited as Smith Letter. A slightly altered version of the letter is included in Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 185, and "The Departure of the Rifles," in Smith Collection. The Dragoon Rangers escorted the Marion Rifles.

²⁹ Ibid.

Lieutenant Matthew M. England. Mordecai M. Cooke, a well-known attorney and newspaper editor, was the Marion Rifle's quartermaster. J. F. Knight was its bugler, and F. G. Butler was its ensign. Under them served between sixty and seventy privates (see Appendix C).³⁰

The 1 February 1861 Uniontown *Canebrake Herald* provided a fleeting look into the activities of the Marion Rifles while they were at Fort Morgan. According to the newspaper, the soldiers led anything but an idle or wayward life. Learning to fire their new Mississippi rifles with precision was challenging, but standing guard was the most difficult thing that they had to do. Yet, no one seemed to care. As one person saw it, the Marion Rifles were willing to face dangers and privations ten times greater than the ones they were facing at Fort Morgan if the inconveniences would prevent them from having to submit to Lincoln's rule.³¹

A *Marion American* correspondent, or "special," who was headquartered near Fort Morgan provided a different account of the troops' activities. The journalist said the Marion Rifles had "spring mattresses, damask curtains, and live like epicureans. Or, in other words, straw spread out on the floor, with one blanket [to] cover with, and the wind blowing all the time." They had "to rise at daybreak, at reveille, and bring wood and water to cook with, and when the victuals are cooked they are not fit to eat. Pickled pork, crackers as hard as brickbats, coffee without sugar, onions, beef about forty years old, and such other stuff as would be thrown away by any Negro" in Perry County was what

³⁰ Cf. "The Departure of the Rifles." Some persons have referred to Sumpter Lea as Sumter Lee and Mordecai Cooke as Mortimer Cook.

³¹ Cf. 1 February 1861 *Canebrake Herald*; "Fort Morgan Correspondence," in Smith Collection.

the men ate each day. Nevertheless, the Marion Rifles, driven by an inextinguishable fire fueled by the gravity of the “holy cause,” were willing to endure the hardship.³²

The Rifles remained at Fort Morgan almost three months before returning to Marion. From there, Thomas Phelan, an attorney and third lieutenant whose father, John Dennis, was also an attorney, sent a report to Governor Moore. The younger Phelan reminded the governor that Captain Royston had not received a response to the unit’s request to be included in the 3,000-man volunteer force that the governor had requested. Consequently, no muster roll had been submitted because personnel changes would undoubtedly occur if the Rifles were not accepted for service until the 5,000-man mark had been reached. At any rate, Lieutenant Phelan and at least sixty other volunteers were ready to depart Marion on twenty-four hour’s notice.³³

The report was dated 24 April 1861. Six days later, Lieutenant Phelan sent another epistle to Moore. This time, the lieutenant communicated how the Marion Rifles were encamped near Marion and had every item that a soldier needed except for knapsacks, but the omission did not matter. He and other volunteers were ready and willing to fight whenever they received their orders.³⁴

The Marion Rifles might have been eager to enter into battle, but they would do so without one of their commanders. Under separate cover, Royston informed Moore that circumstances beyond his control were forcing him to resign from his post as

³² DuBose, “Chronicles of the Canebrake,” 585; Gildersleeve, 17. Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 31.

³³ Thomas Phelan to A. B. Moore, 24 April 1861. The letter is in the possession of W. Stuart Harris. It is unclear when Thomas Phelan joined the Marion Rifles. Inasmuch as his name does not appear on the *Canebrake Herald*’s 1 February 1861 company roll or “The Departure of the Rifles,” Phelan must have joined after the unit departed Marion the first time. But his death is certain. Phelan succumbed at Fredericksburg.

³⁴ See Thomas Phelan to A. B. Moore, 30 April 1861, *ibid.*

commander of the light-infantry unit. Royston did not divulge what the circumstances were; he wrote only that the outside pressures in Marion were too intense for him to continue to lead the company, that Lieutenant England would be a capable replacement, and that “the sugar-teet[h] boys” at Fort Morgan would continue the work that he had begun. In closing, the departing captain assured the governor that he was prepared to pick up his rifle whenever the Confederacy needed his service.³⁵

Captain Royston kept his word. With his former unit in the command of M. M. England, Royston raised another Confederate volunteer unit, the Alabama Rangers. In a letter to Governor Moore dated 3 May 1861, Captain Royston supposed Moore was swamped with letters from people asking for commissions, among other issues, and therefore hated to annoy the governor with an additional matter, but the captain had to make his present situation known. Using simple language so the governor could read the letter as quickly as possible without having to neglect other duties, Royston declared:

1st then you know the difficulties of volunteering, after the first ones start off. Well I have been raising my company, with the use of horses, if horses are not to be in the fight, if we can be called [infantry, then we will because we wish] to fight for our country. We will not stand on form or the way [we are identified.] You understand me. You see, I have raised my company lacking horses, all the time (about 40 have been given to us) and there may be some who would need a little sparing, I write this in a feverish anxiety to let no chance slip to get in, as mine is the oldest organization in the county, and intend to do the first service, with the exception of the Cane Brake Guards. I say [unqualifiedly] this is so. I do not doubt that my company would promptly respond, and go in any way, that would soon must carry them to the war. My feet burn me here, and I...wish to have a call if we should go as infantry,

³⁵ Young Lea Royston to A. B. Moore, circa 30 April 1861, *ibid.*; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 188.

that would push them nigh on there. If we are called as Cavalry, the notice is all sufficient.³⁶

Governor Moore acted quickly. Two days after the letter was sent, he wrote on the flipside of Royston's letter: "Capt. Y. L. Royston, Marion, Ala., tendering 'Ala Rangers' as an infantry Co.—put down as such May 5, 1861."³⁷

The Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards

The Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards was another Perry County volunteer unit whose members saw action during the Civil War. On 12 January 1861, the day after Alabama seceded from the Union,³⁸ Richard Henry Clarke—a Uniontown attorney, physician, and Rifle Guards commander—told Governor Moore that he had been instructed to use the "Canebrakers" as Confederate leaders saw fit. After affirming how information about the previous day's decision to join South Carolina, Mississippi, and Florida in secession had spread through Perry County like wildfire, Captain Clarke informed the governor that the decision to leave the Union had been met with the customary three cheers and that every white person in the state needed to thank him.³⁹

Most Perry County citizens were not as cheerful as Clarke maintained. In her 1916 memoir, Ella Christian told of how the Guards' order to report to their instructional

³⁶ Young Lea Royston to A. B. Moore, 3 May 1861, in DuBose, "Chronicles of the Canebrake," 585; Gildersleeve, 17; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 189.

³⁷ A. B. Moore to Young Lea Royston, 5 May 1861, in DuBose, "Chronicles of the Canebrake," 585.

³⁸ South Carolina seceded on 20 December 1860 and Mississippi on 9 January 1861. Over the next two days, Florida (10 January) and Alabama (11 January) seceded. Each of these and the next six states that left the Union—Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, and North Carolina—did so by secession convention. Tennessee, the last official Confederate state, seceded by state referendum on 8 June 1861. For a complete enumeration of the seceded states and the dates that they seceded, see James M. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982). See also J. G. Randall and David Donald, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, 1969).

³⁹ Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 189. At what point Richard Clarke took over the command of the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards is unclear. James G. Hudson contended that Clarke headed the Coosa Canebrake Rifle Guards before becoming commander of the Uniontown unit.

camp at Point Comfort interrupted the peaceful days that she and her neighbors had enjoyed following the fall of Fort Sumter. Christian was especially hurt. Many of the men who signed up for duty were close friends and valued associates. Clarke was her mother's physician. William O. Hudson was Ella's physician as well as one of her most intimate acquaintances. "I cannot tell you of the mingled feelings" of pain and exaltation that the company's departure caused, she wept.⁴⁰

According to the *Canebrake Herald*, sixty men made up the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards. Its command core included Richard Clarke, captain; T. K. Coleman, first lieutenant; Leigh (or Legh) R. Terrell, second lieutenant; E. A. W. Booker, third lieutenant; W. O. Hudson, orderly sergeant; J. W. Hudson, second sergeant; P. H. Burnett, third sergeant; C. D. Haynesworth, fourth sergeant; Bush Jones, color sergeant; James D. Bush (or Buch), first corporal; Frank M. DeLorme, second corporal; William H. Hudson, third corporal; L. A. Morgan, fourth corporal; and J. M. Langhorne, surgeon. Forty-six privates served under them (see Appendix D).⁴¹

By 20 April 1861, the Rifle Guards had elected new officers. Captain Clarke and Lieutenants Coleman and Terrell retained their positions, but David W. Pitts became the company's third lieutenant. John P. Walke (or Walker) became third sergeant, and Frank M. DeLorme was elected fourth sergeant. William H. Long replaced James D. Bush as

⁴⁰ Christian, "The Days that are No More," 336, 337.

⁴¹ In a letter to Governor A. B. Moore sent from Uniontown, Alabama, and dated 16 March 1861, Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards Quartermaster Bush Jones, who really wanted to be an officer, reported the following officers: Richard Clarke, captain; Thomas K. Coleman, 1st lieutenant; Leigh (Legh) R. Terrell, 2nd lieutenant; and David W. Pitts, 3rd lieutenant. Governor Moore ordered their commissions on 19 March 1861, and Alabama's secretary of state issued them the following day. Their 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment commissions (original/actual/expiration) were as follows: Richard Clarke (or Clark), captain, 7 May 1861/7 May 1861/22 April 1862; Thomas K. Coleman, 1st lieutenant, 7 May 1861/7 May 1861/22 April 1862; Thomas K. Coleman, captain, 7 May 1861/22 April 1862/3 October 1862; Leigh Terrell, 2nd lieutenant, 7 May 1861/7 May 1861/31 October 1862; David W. Pitts, 3rd lieutenant, 7 May 1861/7 May 1861/21 July 1862. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 182.

first corporal, W. A. Chambers took Frank M. DeLorme's vacated second-corporal position, and C. A. Terrell and J. E. Ware became third and fourth corporals, respectively. A few days later, Private James G. Hudson, a Uniontown merchant from Virginia, was made chaplain and treasurer.⁴²

The Hudson Diary

James Hudson served as the Guard's chaplain-treasurer from his 25 April 1861 enlistment in Uniontown until his October 1861 discharge in Virginia. His official duties were undoubtedly important, but one of his greatest wartime achievements was the diary that he kept while on active duty. In it, Hudson penned detailed and, at times, fanciful descriptions of the Civil War activities of the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards. His memoirs provide the most complete account of what war was and was not like for the hundreds of white Perry Countians who served in the Confederacy Army.

After answering Governor Moore's 18 April 1861 call for volunteers, Captain Clarke led the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards' eighty-four rank-and-file members to Montgomery on 26 April. The men then journeyed to Selma, where Robert Mitchell and Austin Aycocke joined them. In coming days, the Canebrake Rifles, the Governor's Guard, and the Selma-based Magnolia Cadets traveled aboard the Confederate steamer *Senator* before heading back to the capitol city.⁴³

⁴² Cf. Christian, "The Days that are No More," 336. Previously, W. H. Hudson had been 3rd corporal and L. A. Morgan 4th corporal.

⁴³ This information is taken from an Alabama Department of Archives and History finding aid for the Hudson Diary. Another source indicates Richard Clarke organized the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards at some point during March 1861. Cf. Hudson, "A Story of Company D, 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment, C.S.A.," 139-140. According to W. Stuart Harris, Captain Clarke had already been told to turn over his command to Governor Moore at some point before 12 April 1861. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 189.

The men left Selma at 9 AM and did not sail into Montgomery until 7 PM. Understandably exhausted, the volunteers' condition grew worse when no one was available to tell them where to go. Already undertaking the unofficial duty of company correspondent, Private Hudson recalled how he and his comrades stood for hours, finding little relief until they were directed to march to the Independent Rifles' armory.

The Canebrakers' new accommodations were not commodious. There was not a single bed, bench or cot in the entire armory. The only resting place was a hard floor, on which the men slept uncovered. A distressed Chaplain Hudson made sure that he noted how everything was in "perfect confusion." It was almost impossible to procure arms, blankets, or equipment. The chaplain was especially miffed about not having a blanket. He wrote about it twice.⁴⁴

Hudson was undoubtedly correct. State lawmakers encouraged persons to volunteer for service, but providing for them was difficult. With few alternatives, Governor Moore, Chairman of the Committee of Safety William M. Brooks, military officials, and other decision makers asked civilians to provide assistance through independent action or through soldiers-aid societies. Women performed a number of duties to include preparing and packaging food, sewing flannel underwear and heavy outerwear, knitting cotton and wool socks and blankets, and gathering gloves, jackets, paper, shoes, and writing utensils. In Perry County, the Soldiers Aid Society of Uniontown knitted hundreds of sweaters for the 4th Alabama. They and their female compatriots also took over farming responsibilities—a first for some of the women—and

⁴⁴ Hudson Diary. Cf. Martin, *A Rich Man's War a Poor Man's Fight*, 169. The finding aid for the Hudson diary indicates 26 April 1861 was the date the unit reported to Montgomery. Hudson, however, asserted that the company was in Montgomery on 24 April 1861. This was impossible, of course, if Hudson did not volunteer for service until 25 April.

raised money. The Young Ladies Aid Society of Marion collected \$2,000 to help the families of indigent Confederates, of which there were few in Perry County. Other women opened their homes to convalescing Confederate soldiers. A group of Uniontown ladies even turned a local house into a makeshift hospital. Like Richard Clarke and Andrew Moore, James Hudson was extremely proud of the patriotic ladies' honorable exertions.⁴⁵

On 28 April 1861, J. G. Hudson and other Rifles were ordered from Montgomery to Dalton, Georgia, to rendezvous with nine other regiments. By this time, James Curry, David Frowell (Trowell, Trowel), George Sayre, and William H. Terrell had joined the company, and all seemed well. An entry in Hudson's diary revealed how news of the men's departure from Montgomery brought out anxious, enthusiastic, and patriotic spectators who greeted the soldiers as they left the capitol city. Another entry suggested that a large assembly of men, children, and blacks also greeted them at West Point, Georgia: "Cheer after cheer went in the air, the ladies waved their handkerchiefs and showered hundreds of bouquets on the heads of the soldiers."⁴⁶

For a brief moment, the members of the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards were floating on cloud nine, envisioning how after a swift and easy victory they would return

⁴⁵ Cf. Bell, *Confederate Women*, xi-xii, 143-147; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 94, 154; Wright, "Clothes Make the Man: Especially if He's a Soldier," chap. 12 in *What They didn't Teach You about the Civil War*, 130-136. The most destitute citizens lived outside the canebrake regions of Perry County. These included Bush Creek, Five Mile, Jericho, Pinetucky, Plantersville, and parts of Marion. See "Circular: To the Soldiers' Aid Societies throughout the State," in Moore Correspondence. See also Richard Clarke to Bettie Lou Clarke, 14 August 1861, in "Clippings from Old Papers Write Chapters of Confederate History," Smith Collection, hereinafter cited as Clarke Letter; "To the Ladies of Alabama"; *Weekly Marion American*, 17 July 1861; *Selma Reporter*, 25 July 1861; "Proclamation by the Governor of Alabama," *Montgomery Post*, 6 August 1861. Cf. Donald et al., *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 261-263; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 202-213. For a different view regarding how destitute Perry Countians were during the Civil War, cf. Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 196.

⁴⁶ Hudson Diary.

to Perry County, where their wives, mistresses, and other loved ones would await them with outstretched arms. But when the unit reached Dalton, they fell abruptly to earth. The Rifles' latest home was no more befitting the brave, patriotic soldiers than their Montgomery quarters. Housed in a large, two-story, unfinished brick building that was extremely cold, the soldiers had to bed on the floor—again, without blankets. As a consequence, many of them became ill.

On 29 April, Hudson and his comrades pitched their tents and prepared for regular camp life, something with which they would become utterly familiar before Chaplain Hudson would leave the group. John Bush (or Buch), W. H. Hudson, Dr. Kitchell (or Kitchel), William Terrell, and others who had been sickened by “the exposure” wrestled with their maladies, which were usually no more than common colds, while their colleagues wrestled with boredom. The most exciting event happened quite by chance. One of Walter Hungerford's black body servants had a pistol tucked in his belt. Somehow, the pistol fell and discharged, resulting in a flesh wound to one of the black youth's arms. Other than this unfortunate incident, little happened.⁴⁷

On the first day of May 1861, the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards marched down the streets of Dalton en route to a local Methodist Church. There, the ladies of the community welcomed and entertained the soldiers in a manner that exhibited the pride, patriotism, and nerve that the troops needed to complete their mission. Evergreen arches were positioned at each corner of the church. On one arch, a banner read “Welcome Soldiers of Alabama,” on another arch “God Protect and Defend the 4th Regiment of Alabama Volunteers.” After a brief ceremony during which Dalton women asked

⁴⁷ Ibid.

questions to Bush Jones and other selected members of the Alabama regiment, the soldiers returned to their quarters.⁴⁸

The second day of May 1861, field officers were elected. After much political wrangling, influential officers from North and South Alabama struck a deal whereby Captain Egbert J. Jones, Huntsville's city attorney, was made colonel. Captain Evander McIver Law of the Tuskegee, or Alabama, Zouaves was elected lieutenant colonel, and Californian Charles Scott was elected major.

Jones, Law, and Scott's elections revealed a great deal about the politics of the period. The elections revealed even more about the social, economic, and educational conditions of the troops whom they commanded. As the February 1861 *Canebrake Herald* news report about the Marion Rifles' departure suggested, many soldiers were naïve about war, so they romanticized its nature and were eager to do battle with Union soldiers. A number of volunteers believed leading officers had to wield enough political power to ensure the regiment would see frontline duty.

Immediately, the officer corps announced that orders had come to march to Lynchburg, Virginia. This was acceptable with many members of the 4th Alabama because the only memorable event that they had witnessed was seeing a young black man shoot himself in the arm. Then again, the company had spent an enjoyable afternoon with the kind, attentive women of Dalton who had provided them clothes, food, and who

⁴⁸ Hudson did not discuss these communications in any significant detail. He simply enumerated some of the names of the soldiers who spoke and called their words appropriately patriotic.

knows what else. All Chaplain Hudson recorded was that the Dalton ladies would remain in the Guards' memories forever.⁴⁹

The sickness that began at Dalton did not let up. Solomon F. Jackson, Bush Jones, Dr. Kitchell, Thomas Ramy, and William Terrell had grown increasingly ill since they left Georgia. To make matters worse, a fierce rain commenced. The storm helped create an atmosphere that was very unpleasant, grumbled Hudson. The next day was a mixed bag. Terrell and Jackson seemed better, but Ramy remained in poor condition. Others were forced to go on the sick list. Still, the company pressed forward, taking an oath to support the Confederate Constitution and to obey Confederate officers. Yet, for some undisclosed reasons, about seven North Alabama (Hill Country, Tennessee Valley, White Belt) volunteers refused to take the oath.

One can only infer why the Hill Country soldiers did not make the pledge that their colleagues were willing to make: anti-secessionism was heavy in the Tennessee Valley. Writing to Moore on 10 June 1861, a barely literate Winston County Unionist told the governor that he was more afraid of secession than he was of any social or political change that Abraham Lincoln could propose because congressmen had to approve the change. Moreover, Lincoln had never said that he would free a single slave and had “bin beging for peas” since his 1860 election. In closing, the writer informed the governor that he would support the “Southern confedersa when ever lincoln dus eny thing Contrary to the Constitution.”⁵⁰

⁴⁹ See, for example, P. T. Vaughan, “Memories of the Civil War,” in Smith Collection. Cf. Bell, *Confederate Women*, 156, 162; Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 52-53; Wright, “Sex and the Single Soldier: Married Ones, Too,” chap. 14 in *What They didn't Teach You about the Civil War*, 145-152.

⁵⁰ Robert Bell to A. B. Moore, 10 June 1861, in Moore, Military Correspondence. See *Alabama on Reconstruction. Memorial of Loyal Citizens of Alabama, on the Subject of Reconstruction*. 39th Congress,

Anti-secessionism was similarly strong among Winston County's leadership. At the 1861 secession convention in Montgomery, Christopher Sheats (or Sheets), a twenty-one-year-old teacher and the youngest person elected to the convention, voted against severing the Union, rejected the ordinance of secession, and refused to sign the accompanying public notice. Pledging to expose the allegedly fiendish villains who supported secession to the entire world, Sheats told more than 2,500 Unionists who gathered at Looney's Tavern in his home county that the Confederacy was destined to fail. Such remarks delighted the crowd. Later, some listeners joined ultra-Unionists from North Alabama and East Tennessee in attempting to form Nickajack (or Nick-a-Jack), an independent Union state that they intended to erect along the Tennessee River. Sheats, meanwhile, joined the Confederacy.⁵¹

In a 9 July 1861 letter to Moore, a Jasper writer confirmed that there were quite a few people in Walker and Winston Counties who, unlike Sheats, refused to be called "Confederate States men." They had been born "United States men," and they had every intention of dying that way, which they would rather do than be forced to fight for the Confederate States of America. Thousands of Madison, Morgan, and Randolph County

1st sess., Misc. Doc. 42, hereinafter cited as *Alabama on Reconstruction*. See also J. E. D. Yonge, *The Conservative Party in Alabama, 1846-1860* (Montgomery, Al.: [n.p.,] 1904), 512-513. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 36-37, 50, 73-74; Bailey, "Disloyalty in Early Confederate Alabama"; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 63; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 15; Nevins, *The Emergence of Lincoln*, 422; Rogers, "Dissenting Voices," chap. 7 in *Confederate Home Front*, 104-115; Wright, *What They didn't Teach You about the Civil War*, 175.

⁵¹ Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 50 (citing Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins, "Amnesty and Pardon and Republicanism in Alabama," *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 26 [summer 1964]: 240-248, and [Thomas M.] Owen, *History of Alabama [and Dictionary of Alabama Biography]*, vol. 4 [1921; reprint, Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Company,] 1043), 73. Several persons have claimed that Native Americans named Nickajack, but the name probably came from an African American by the name of Jack Civil who was captured by renegade Cherokee and Muscogee (Muskogee, Creek) Indians, fugitive whites, and a few blacks who banded together, took the name Chickamauga, and settled at Five Lower Towns south of Chattanooga. See United States Army Corps of Engineers, "Nickajack Lock"; available via Internet @ <http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil/locks/nickajack/info.htm>; accessed 18 October 2006.

residents felt the same way. Others agreed with the working-class citizens of Perry County's Hills region who argued that southern secession and the Civil War were predicted on the preservation of slavery. As James Bell—a semiliterate Winston County Unionist whose son, Henry, was an ardent Choctaw County, Mississippi, Confederate—saw it, the Confederacy's slave-owning leaders wanted people to “git...pupt up” to go fight for the slaveholders’ “infurnal negroes and after you do there fighting you may kiss there hine parts.” This was probably the reason the Tennessee Valley Canebrakers refused to sign the oath.⁵²

The company's intrastate strife continued over the next week, but its health problems stopped. By 8 May 1861, a code of military discipline had been established, the sun shone brightly, and rumor had it that the remaining sick would be back with the company soon. The rumor proved true. By 10 May, everyone was back at camp, and the Guards were improved in health as well as in strength. But the situation changed quickly. At approximately 11 PM, “just as everything had become quiet...and still, and the soldiers...worn down with fatigue, had fallen into gentle slumber...dreaming of home, its comforts and enjoyments,” the regiment was ordered to move. The reason for the move was unknown, but soldiers figured it must have been important because they were told to prepare only two days' rations. For a moment, scribbled Hudson, “the whole encampment was in a bustle and a stir, cooking and packing up for the march, none knew whither.”⁵³

⁵² L. W. Hampton to A. B. Moore, 19 July 1861, in Moore, *Military Correspondence* (first two quotes); Henry Bell to James Bell, 21 April 1861 (third quote), in *ibid.* Bell's statement can also be found in Bailey, “Disloyalty in Early Confederate Alabama,” 525, and Donald et al., *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 263.

⁵³ Hudson Diary.

To the chagrin of many an excited soldier, the hasty move for which the unit was told to prepare did not come until 5 PM the following day. In the interim, most of the men did nothing but lounge, fuss, and exchange stories about how they were going to mix it up with Union forces just as soon as they got the chance. Their chaplain and treasurer, on the other hand, continued to complain about present arrangements and mark the pages of his beloved diary, as did Mary Chesnut two states over in South Carolina. From the “Cradle of Secession” (Charleston), she wrote: “Looking for a battle at Manassas Station [Virginia.] I am always ill. The name of my disease is a longing to get away from here and to go to Richmond.”⁵⁴

By Sunday, the men of the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards had made their way to Manassas, where they were treated to a pathetic meal comprised of hard bread and uncooked meat, grumbled Treasurer Hudson. Later, at Strasburg, the Confederate volunteers were treated to an equally pathetic meal: a “chunk of fat meat” and a slice or two of bread that the men had to eat while standing in the street. These few vittles, which a sarcastic Hudson called a hearty breakfast, were hardly ample rations for the five-mile trek that the men had to make to Winchester, but most of the soldiers did not complain. Chaplain Hudson, on the other hand, complained as brazenly as he had at each stop since leaving Selma.⁵⁵

Harper’s Ferry was the Guard’s next destination. The fort was thirty miles away from Winchester, according to Hudson’s estimate. This was the farthest distance that the unit had been ordered to travel by foot. Nevertheless, the dutiful volunteers, brimming with patriotic fervor for the Confederacy, marched on without complaint. Naturally,

⁵⁴ Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 46 (first quote); Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 64 (second quote).

⁵⁵ Hudson Diary. Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 65.

there were a few exceptions, but they were usually the North Alabama volunteers who had refused to pledge their allegiance to the new nation's constitution or its military leadership.

Eventually, the Canebrakers settled at a quiet area located near a small village called Bolivar. For Hudson, it was the most beautiful place that he had seen since leaving Alabama. The campsite was positioned on a high bluff that overlooked the Potomac River. Everyone could see the picturesque mountains surrounding Harper's Ferry, but the view did nothing to lessen the Perry County volunteers' boredom. After all, sightseeing was not the reason they had left Alabama. The Cahaba (or Cahawba) and neighboring rivers in their home state had copious picturesque scenery.⁵⁶

Orderly Sergeant W. O. Hudson offered a way to break the monotony. Two of the unit's "most intelligent" soldiers were needed for a "special purpose." Ignoring conventional wisdom regarding volunteering for special duty, Dr. William Baptist and David Frowell insisted that they were the right men for the job. To their surprise, the important assignment for which they had eagerly volunteered was no more than walking one and one-half miles to the other side of the mountain to cut and roll wood. "The boys now saw the trick," joked James Hudson, but they could do nothing about it. A later note in his diary indicated that the "poor fellows" had to cut and roll wood for the rest of the

⁵⁶ Native Americans referred to the Cahaba River as *Ika Uba* ("Waters Above") and *Chickianose* ("the Place where Buzzards Roost"). Britons dubbed it "the Acadian," others the "River that Changed History." Franklin Nichols, quoted in "The Cahaba River," *The Heritage of Perry County, Alabama*, 6. See "William Bennett to the Acting Secretary of War," in Clarence Edwin Carter, comp., *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, vol. 18: The Territory of Alabama, 1817-1819 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1952), 68, hereinafter cited as *The Territorial Papers of the United States: Alabama*.

day and that neither man “voluntarily reported himself ready for special missions” again.⁵⁷

Baptist and Frowell might not have liked what they were made to do, but they did get an opportunity to do something. The same could not be said about their compatriots. Besides waiting for the “Hessians” (German Unionists) to attack and for commanding officers to announce the next move, other members of the unit did nothing except think about their families and friends back home, complain about their inactivity and the decisions of their superiors, and hope to hear the whistle of a train chugging along somewhere in the distance, indicating a change of venue was forthcoming.⁵⁸

The Canebrake Rifle Guards’ way out of Harper’s Ferry, which Confederate Generals Joseph E. Johnston and Pierre G. T. Beauregard considered strategically unimportant, was not by train. The Canebrakers’ means of transportation were the same old, worn, smelly leather boots that had blistered their feet while they worked in Alabama’s corn and cotton fields, mills, and plants. Now, the boots were blistering their feet on the Civil War’s death fields, not one of which the Perry County volunteers had actually seen.⁵⁹

Word from Confederate Department of the Potomac Commander Johnston’s covert operators signaled a new day was dawning. Nearby, a company of Union soldiers were said to be preparing an attack. Instantly, the Canebrakers seemed to be filled with newfound courage and vitality, bounding “over the rough turnpikes as lightly and

⁵⁷ Hudson Diary.

⁵⁸ Ibid. Because the Union had far more German-born soldiers than did the Confederacy, some Confederates claimed that German Hessians dominated the Union military. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 77-78, 104; Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 178.

⁵⁹ See James Chesnut, Jr., to Mary B. M. Chesnut, 16 June 1861, in Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 65. Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 17.

cheerfully as though they were on their way to partake of a sumptuous dinner.” Although many of the soldiers were suffering from fatigue and dehydration, every one of them seemed ready and willing to undergo the adversity. Each step they took helped bring them closer to their foes.⁶⁰

Marching an estimated twenty-one miles over rough terrain in sweltering heat without much water to quench their thirsts, the men of the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards arrived at Bunker Hill. Quickly, news spread that 18,000 Union soldiers were approximately twelve miles away. Confident that they could “whip...the Yankees...without half trying,” the Guards readied themselves for battle. Weapons were drawn, and obstructions were moved. Officers galloped through the ranks, shouting orders and reminding each soldier to honor not only himself and his family but also his county, his and state, and the so-called southern way of life—even if he were not from the South.⁶¹

In the end, energies were expended for nothing. Although every “eye was strained to catch the first glimpse of the enemy, and every ear was opened to catch the first sound of the drum, or the riling of the musketry of the outposts,” the only persons whom the men of the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment saw or heard were each other. A “murmur of disappointment ran from one end of the line to the other,” Hudson chronicled, “and curse[s] innumerable were heaped upon the heads of the Yankees for

⁶⁰ Hudson Diary. See, for example, Kenneth W. Jones, “The Fourth Alabama Infantry: A Fighting Legion,” *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 38 (fall 1976): 172. Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 53 (footnote 1), 265.

⁶¹ Hudson Diary.

being kept in the positions for a considerable length of time, and no Yankee coming into sight.”⁶²

With hope of defending their sacred South and winning the hearts of beautiful southern belles temporarily dashed, many soldiers began to doubt whether General Johnston’s scouts had even seen any Union troops on the horizon. Perhaps the general was trying to trick the Guards in the same way that Baptist and Frowell had been tricked into cutting and rolling wood only days before. But what else could the men do? Loyal soldiers followed orders. The vast majority of the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment had taken an oath to do so. Sad, angry, or just bored, many of Perry County’s finest soldiers did what they would have done at home if they were tired and frustrated: they cursed. They cursed deeply and loudly, confirmed Hudson.

The Confederates’ first foul words were directed at General Johnston for getting them all worked up about engaging Union troops only to engage no one, but their deepest and loudest invectives were reserved for northern federal soldiers. Many southern Confederates cursed “all the Yankees in Christendom” because they were cowards. Others cursed them because they were, well, “Yankees.”⁶³

With unrealized dreams mounting and the possibility of returning to Alabama awash with war stories about pounding Union soldiers to oblivion lessening, the Rifle Guards marched toward Winchester. The company reporter described the division’s latest encampment as a beautiful grove with an abundance of spring water nearby. Some of the troops remained at the camp several days, sleeping beneath shade trees, drinking water, and drilling (of which they were in dire need, according to Captain William C.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

Ward, the messmate of James A. Smith, a notable Perry Countian). The troops' only other amusements were attending to their hardening calluses, chasing squirrels, and reminiscing about the lovely women whom they had met since departing Alabama's Black Belt months earlier.⁶⁴

Subsequent company moves brought additional imprecations from privates and negative criticisms from their chaplain, treasurer and chronicler. At least one officer listened. Captain Clarke recommended the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards be moved to a more pleasant location. If his words were not heeded, he threatened to move the company by himself. Fortunately, Clarke, whom the Alabama 4th Infantry Regiment would have defended at the drop of a hat, did not have to take matters into his own hands. After reviewing the situation, Clarke's fellow field officers agreed, and the entire 4th Alabama moved to a scenic area higher in the mountains that had ample drinkable water close by.

The Confederates stayed at the new campsite until 2 July 1861. It did not provide any blood-filled skirmish about which they could reminisce, but it did provide them a few amusing stories. J. G. Hudson discussed a rather comical tale in his private log. One afternoon, Privates George Markham and William ("Skinner") Ware decided to scour the area for strawberries. The two recent conquerors of the measles had not journeyed far when they stumbled across a poor, old, worn-out gray horse that was grazing near the

⁶⁴ Ibid. Captain Ward was wounded once at Gettysburg and twice at Spanish Fort. After the war, the Alabama native and licensed attorney moved to Jefferson County, where he helped build Birmingham. See W. C. Ward, "...the Greatest Battle ever Fought in America up to that Time," in Smith Collection. See also James A. Smith to R. F. Manly, 14 September 1910, in Smith Collection, hereinafter cited as Manly Letter; "Captain Ward Passes Away," in Smith Collection.

road. Believing it easier to ride than to walk, the men made a bridle from the straps of their canteens and mounted the broken-down animal.

The adventurers rode from home to home, determined to find strawberries. Eventually, they came across a stately residence adorned tastefully with beautiful flowers, fruit trees, and shrubbery. The swashbucklers figured they had happened on some sort of public garden or a market at which they could buy flowers, vegetables and, most important of all, strawberries. As they moved toward the gate of the suspected market, the soldiers announced their presence by hollering. To their surprise, an attractive, impeccably dressed young lady greeted them. Thinking the woman operated a market, Markham grinned and said, “Madam we are two poor...soldiers, nearly half starved, and we want to buy a few strawberries; can’t you sell us a tin cup full of strawberries if you please maam?”⁶⁵

Attempting to better their chances of receiving some fruit, one of the men reiterated they were starving. He also claimed that the doctors who had treated his and his partner’s measles had not given them anything to eat. “Just please maam, let us have a few strawberries, if you please,” asked one of the dotted men as the aged, gray horse looked on.⁶⁶

The young woman empathized with the Confederate soldiers, but circumstance forced her to tell them that she did not have any strawberries. If there were, then they could have as many as their empty stomachs could hold. The kind lady explained that neither she nor her family members sold strawberries. And even if they did, she would never make poor, sick soldiers pay for food. When asked to what company they

⁶⁵ Hudson Diary.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

belonged, Markham proudly stated that he and Ware belonged to Captain Clarke's company of the 4th Alabama. Smiling, the gracious Virginian remarked: "Ah indeed. I am sorry Papa is not home, he would take great pleasure in doing anything for you he could." A curious Markham asked who her father was, thinking that he might be able to tell him and his hungry associate where some strawberries were.⁶⁷

To the Confederates' surprise, the woman's father was none other than James Murray Mason, a Virginia senator. "Who?" a once curious but now traumatized Markham asked, blushing. Clarifying what had been said, the woman repeated: "My papa is Senator Mason." Instantly, Markham realized that the young lady's father was the Senator Mason who had served in the United States Congress from 1847 until 1861, who had helped draft the federal fugitive-slave law during the early 1850s, and who in 1859 had called for an official investigation into Brown's Raid. Later, Union Captain Charles Wilkes had captured and arrested the allegedly unsophisticated Mason outside Havana, Cuba, while the Confederate diplomat waited to board the British mail steamer *Trent* to sail to Europe to negotiate on behalf of the new nation. Flushed with embarrassment, Markham whispered: "Skinner, My God let us get away from here." Wheeling their "splendid steed," teased Hudson, the men said goodbye and "left as fast as that poor pack of bones would take them away, leaving the young lady standing in the door enjoying a hearty laugh at this... awful blunder."⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid. See Norman B. Ferris, *The Trent Affair: A Diplomatic Crisis* (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 1977). See also "English Public Opinion," *New York Daily Tribune*, 1 February 1862; David Donald, ed., *Why the North Won the Civil War* (1960, reprint, London: Collier Books, 1969), 63-64, 69. Cf. Bell, *Confederate Women*, 20; Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 116 (footnote 1); Donald et al., *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 267-270; Marx and Engels, 47-54, 100-105, 110-119; Thomas Ewing to Abraham Lincoln, 28 December 1861, Lincoln Papers, Series 1: General Correspondence, 1833-1916, 0507P, LOC.

After noting how Markham and Ware's strawberry hunt would be enjoyed around many a campfire, Hudson sought to refute some of the rumors about the Confederacy that were circulating around Perry County and other parts of Alabama. For starters, Confederate officers were not bumbling idiots. Captain Clarke and Lieutenant Colonel Law disproved that theory. Why Hudson did not mention any of the other officers whom he had blasted since volunteering months earlier is obvious: such criticism would have invalidated his claims about capable Confederate leadership.⁶⁹

Chaplain Hudson also rejected the rumor about how poorly Confederate soldiers were fed. How well the troops would eat in future days was unknowable, but the 4th Alabama's present chow was fine. According to Hudson, no Confederate or Union army had ever been fed as well as the division to which he belonged. Evidently, he had changed his mind about the hard bread, raw meat, and other disagreeable foodstuffs about which he continuously complained about since leaving Montgomery almost three months earlier.

On either 2 or 3 July 1861, the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment was ordered to move. This time, the regiment was told to leave everything that they had with them at the campsite and to move immediately. No private knew exactly why the move had been ordered, and Clarke, one of the most trusted field officers, was unable to provide any information because he was suffering from "the flux." Nevertheless, the volunteers were excited. The main reason for their excitement was becoming hackneyed: a soldier had told them that between 15,000 and 20,000 Union soldiers had crossed the river near

⁶⁹ Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 161; Jones, "The Fourth Alabama Infantry: A Fighting Legion," 171.

Harper's Ferry en route to their position. Another soldier heard the Unionists were only a few miles away.⁷⁰

Many 4th Alabama soldiers thought they could not have drawn a better 4th of July picture than the one that was before their eyes. In a few minutes, they would be afforded an opportunity to give Union General Robert Patterson (or Paterson) "a warm, old fashioned breakfast served up after the latest Southern stile" despite inadequate provisions. Looking back, it is a good thing that the Alabama volunteers did not waste any time scouring the woods for hogs to make bacon, chickens to procure eggs, or the strawberries that had eluded Markham and Ware. The breakfast that the volunteers anticipated serving never took place. The supposed movement of Patterson's forces was a false alarm. Rather than descending on the Alabamians, Patterson's men merely adjusted their position and enjoyed the holiday. The Unionists even had fireworks, carped Hudson. He and his compatriots did not. What a memorable 4th of July that turned out to be.⁷¹

The following Sunday, General Johnston read a proclamation that he or one of his subordinates had composed. Reportedly, Johnston had challenged Patterson's troops to a fight in the open field, but Patterson had not accepted the challenge. Johnston, a West Point graduate and respected military strategist, then decided that a direct Confederate offensive would be too risky because the Unionists greatly outnumbered his troops, who were eventually pulled back to Winchester. With this decision, any chance of a battle seemed remote. "The boys hung their heads, and as they faced about toward Winchester...heaped...many and deep...curses on the Yankees for not coming out of the

⁷⁰ Hudson Diary.

⁷¹ Ibid. Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 75, 85.

town to fight,” recalled Hudson. They also hurled a few harsh words General Johnston’s way for failing to order an offensive maneuver on the Union’s position. Why did he not? Reasons were as plentiful as worn feet and bad breath, but not one of the reasons had anything to do with a lack of confidence on the rank-and-file’s part. The young soldiers believed they could have beaten Patterson’s troops “like a sack” and then driven them back across the Potomac River. Nor was every Confederate officer afraid of the Unionists’ numbers. One Mississippi colonel said that he and his men were capable of running “every damn Yankee out of Martinburg,” Virginia.⁷²

No one will ever know whether the Mississippi colonel could have pulled off the feat about which he bragged during “battle summer” 1861. Instead of running Union troops from Martinburg, the 4th Alabama infantrymen ran back to a place they had already seen, Winchester, to do what they had already done, sleep on the ground and wait. At least, this is what they expected to do.⁷³

At Winchester, an unfortunate incident happened that shook the entire company. While examining his sidearm, Gilbert Nicolson accidentally fired his weapon. One ball struck Powhatan (Powhattan, Powahatan) Baptist, a Perry County volunteer, in the small of the back. Despite every attempt by surgeons to remove it, the ball that was lodged in the handsome youth’s spine could not be removed. When the company departed Winchester, the dying soldier stayed behind. His devoted brother, William, stayed with him.⁷⁴

⁷² Hudson Diary.

⁷³ Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 79.

⁷⁴ See, for example, Wright, “Battlefield Medicine: Malpractice Makes Imperfect,” chap. 20 in *What They didn’t Teach You about the Civil War*, 200-215. The death of Powhatan Baptist is mired in confusion. John W. DuBose suggested that Baptist was asleep in a bed when he was shot, but James G. Hudson did

Powhatan Baptists' death was a major blow to troop morale. His father, Reverend Edward Baptist—a Virginia-born itinerant minister whom John W. DuBose, a well-known Alabama journalist, lawmaker, and politician, called a “gentleman of florid complexion, deep blue and expressive eyes, medium stature, handsome, graceful, intelligent [and] a man of society”—preached at Baptist and Methodist churches throughout Alabama. An alumnus of Hampton-Sidney College and a University of Alabama trustee, Reverend Baptist was an avid student of classical literature, a devoted servant of the University, and one of the original members of the Uniontown Baptist Church, which fifteen whites and forty-nine slaves erected in 1838. Reverend Baptist's Virginia-born wife, the former Miss Eliza Judith Cary (or Carry) Eggleston, belonged to a relatively affluent family. One of her brothers, Miles, became a judge in Indiana. Another brother, Hugh B., became a judge in Louisiana, and Confederate General Joseph Eggleston Johnston's middle name came from Mrs. Baptist's father.⁷⁵

All soldiers grieved for their dying brother, Powhatan. They grieved even more for Gilbert Nicolson's father, Robert. By every account, the elder Nicolson was devastated by his son's apparent carelessness. J. G. Hudson did not mention what happened to Powhatan Baptist in his 1861 diary, but later reports confirm that Baptist

not mention a bed in his diary entry. (Nor did Hudson include any information about when the Baptist brothers joined the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards in his diary, but both men were probably members of the Marion Rifles. Powhatan definitely was a Guardsman. His name appears on a company role that the Marion Rifle's orderly sergeant prepared before the unit left Alabama.) W. Stuart Harris maintains that Powhatan Baptist died on 3 July 1861 at Bucklestown, Virginia. Another source suggests that Baptist was Alabama's first wartime casualty; but, according to historian Harris, Andrew Craig, also of Perry County, died several days before Baptist perished. Cf. “Archives of the War”; DuBose, “Chronicles of the Canebrake,” 592-594; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 213-214.

⁷⁵ DuBose, “Chronicles of the Canebrake,” 593. See “Uniontown Baptist Church,” in *The Heritage of Perry County, Alabama*, 54, hereinafter cited as “Uniontown Baptist Church.” Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, 41, 126, 162, 187; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 78, citing Martha Huckabee, *First Baptist Church, Uniontown, Alabama* (N.P.: n.p., n.d.), 1.

was taken to a graveyard on the Oakland plantation in Perry County, where his body was interred. The funeral took place just as local residents found out about the Confederates' great military and psychological 21 July 1861 victory at the First Battle of Bull Run, or Manassas. At Baptist's burial, a host of family members, friends, and sympathizers were on hand to hear Confederate legislator and Canebraker A. C. Davidson talk about Manassas and pay tribute to Alabama's second Confederate battlefield casualty.⁷⁶

In the wake of Baptist's death, the rest of the unit did little except move, curse General Johnston, think about their fallen comrade, and ignore the Sabbath. Failing to take any notice of "the positive command of the Almighty...to keep the Sabbath day holy" was wholly unacceptable to Chaplain Hudson. How, he asked, could his cohorts ignore the holiest day of the week and then ask God to protect them on the battlefield? Actually, it was easy. They were accustomed to doing it.⁷⁷

A letter from Lowndesboro, Alabama, illustrated how paradoxical certain Alabamians' religious customs and convictions were. After informing his nephew that there was no need to discuss anything about the ensuing war and nothing worth discussing about Lowndesboro, Reverend J. F. Smith revealed: "To day is our fast day. Well it was observed after a fashion. Most of the White people went to church. How many prayed I do not know.... How many fasted I cannot tell, I fear but few." Chaplain Hudson understood Smith. Despite the supposed religiosity of the average Confederate soldier, the 14 July 1861 Sabbath about which Hudson wrote passed without a single

⁷⁶ Cf. "Archives of the War"; Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 86-87, 91; DuBose, "Chronicles of the Canebrake," 594; Harris *Perry County Heritage*, 213-214; Jones, "The Fourth Alabama Infantry: First Blood," 47-49; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 92.

⁷⁷ Hudson Diary. Cf. *Lincoln's Men*, 126-129; Wright "Wait: Fun, Games, and Mail Call," chap. 4 in *What They didn't Teach You about the Civil War*, 50-54.

soldier responding to his question about keeping God's promise. The day also passed without a single Union sighting.⁷⁸

Things changed the following day. On 15 July, the men of the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment awakened to the wonderful news of a potential fight between them and Patterson's troops. For four days, the Confederate volunteers worked diligently, preparing themselves for the one battle in which they would drive the northern "vandals" out of Virginia. Then, a vile rumor began to make its way around the camp. General Johnston was not going to allow the Alabama volunteers to fight their hated enemies after all. Reportedly, Johnston had decided to evacuate Winchester and leave the city to Patterson and his men, a choice that foreshadowed later decisions by the tough but calculated Johnston, who often feuded with President Davis and other Confederate leaders about ending the war and restoring the Union.⁷⁹

Not one 4th Alabama field officer came forth to verify whether the rumor about leaving Winchester was true or false. Perhaps no field officer knew. Perhaps all field officers knew but dared not tell their restless troops what they knew. At any rate, the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment had again gotten engaged only to be left standing at the altar.

Once more, everything seemed in complete disorder. Only this time, the military was not the only group in disarray. Business came to a virtual standstill. Women ran from house to house, spreading the latest news. Black servants packed wagons while merchants and other money holders collected their gold, silver, and Confederate

⁷⁸ J. F. Smith to Thomas Whetstone, 11 December 1863, Rev. J. F. Smith Letter, 1863, SPR 61, ADAH.

⁷⁹ Hudson Diary. Cf. Bell, *Confederate Women*, 17, 20, 23-25; Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 184, 248-249, 314 (footnote 1), 343, 352, 355, 379; Winik, 318.

“shinplasters” (one of five basic types of Civil War-era currency). Everyone, it seemed, was preparing to move to a safer locale.⁸⁰

When Johnston’s army marched into Winchester, its members saw many Confederate flags flying over Main Street. Within hours, however, virtually every one of the flags had disappeared. Private Hudson, who was born in Virginia, gave considerable thought to the occurrence, but even he could not figure out why the flags had been taken down. Eventually, Hudson decided that the area’s residents feared Patterson might desecrate the flags once he took the city. If that were the case, and Hudson suspected that it was, then Winchester’s citizens were paying a mighty “high compliment (!) to Johnston and his army.” The occurrence reminded Hudson of a story about a man who had always prayed to God and the Devil because he did not know “into whose hands he might fall, and he thought it best to be on the safe side.” In his final assessment of the situation, Hudson supposed the residents of Winchester made a similar decision and took down the flags. Inasmuch as Johnston’s army was about to abandon their fair town, the plan was feasible.⁸¹

Sunday, 21 July 1861, was another memorable day. Around 7 AM, as Chaplain Hudson looked over his sermon and troops partook of the scant breakfast that the chaplain had once described as the best food that any Confederate or Union cooks had ever prepared, an order came down for the 4th Alabama volunteers to make a hasty departure from their present location to the frontlines. Within five minutes, the men were armed, equipped, and on their way to do what they had longed to do for months.

⁸⁰ Private issue, federal issue, postage stamps, and fractional notes were the other four types of Confederate currency.

⁸¹ Hudson Diary.

Stomping proudly over or through briar patches, cedar hammocks, ditches, gullies, fences, hills and valleys, pine thickets, and swamps for almost ten miles, the Perry County volunteers were determined to engage their foes.

Finally, the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards' wishes came true. The division was on the frontline of battle, standing side by side with their Confederate comrades, fighting Union forces with everything that their minds and bodies could muster. As the Confederate soldiers moved toward their foes' positions, they were suddenly told to halt their advance and lie down. The six-to-eight hundred Confederates who had begun the advance were extremely anxious because they had no natural defenses to shield them from the bullets that were whizzing past them. What is more, the men could not return fire because they were lying on the ground, as per the order.⁸²

Despite being outnumbered and outgunned, the 4th Alabama acted courageously and coolly once they resumed fighting. Older, more experienced soldiers would have been proud of their effort, wrote one observer. This was a major kudo because the regiment's colonel, lieutenant colonel, and major had been shot, and Union forces were beginning to move in on both flanks of the Confederates' position. Undaunted, the "Fighting Fourth" stood as tall as Thomas ("Stonewall") Jackson, fighting valiantly even though engaging the enemy was hardly the cakewalk that many of them had expected.⁸³

A few Perry County Confederates paid the ultimate price during the 21 July mêlée. Private Robert Mitchell, Lieutenant Pitts, J. H. Stone, and William A. Lowery

⁸² Hudson made a fleeting reference to the numerous small, guerilla-like skirmishes that had taken place previously but maintained that the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment was among the first Confederate soldiers to engage Union fighters in a conventional battle.

⁸³ "Fourth Alabama has Famous Name: 'Fighting Fourth' made a Record in Civil War that is Hard to Beat," in Smith Collection. Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 175, 269; Rogers, *Confederate Homes Front*, 153.

died on the battlefield. Others were severely wounded. Fearing complete annihilation if Union forces were able to surround the position, the acting field officer of the Confederate regiment ordered a double-quick retreat, which the men carried out under heavy fire. For Chaplain Hudson, only a protective and benevolent higher power could have engineered such a daring escape. Immediately, one of Hudson's previous statements came to mind. The soldiers had totally disregarded God's order to keep the Sabbath holy, but they were beseeching the Almighty to protect them as they fought to defend themselves. In the chaplain's opinion, the men's behavior was as sad as it was ironic. The Lord was truly forgiving, he reasoned.⁸⁴

Two days after the memorable battle, Colonel Jones, the new regimental commander, told Hudson that General Johnston praised the valiant effort of the Alabama volunteers. Supposedly, Johnston said he had never seen more bravery and poise than the 4th Alabama displayed on that Sunday afternoon and that the undaunted stand that its members made in that Virginia cornfield was instrumental to the Confederate victory at Manassas. The soldiers prevented Union soldiers from mounting an attack on the left side of Confederate lines. Such a maneuver, if successful, would have been disastrous, explained Johnston. Perhaps a later statement by William Oates, Alabama's 1894-1896

⁸⁴ J. H. Stone was a Marionite who was born in Jackson, Florida, in February 1826. William A. Lowery, a twenty-seven-year-old member of Company C in the 4th Alabama, was the son of William and Nancy Lowery and probably attended a Baptist church in Marion. Among the other casualties, William Hill, one of their Canebrake compatriots, was killed after a bomb exploded near him while he and other soldiers retreated under heavy shelling during a subsequent battle. Lieutenant James S. Evins, A. B. Moore's twenty-three-year-old nephew, died on 7 March 1862 after serving less than two weeks. Twenty-two-year-old David Y. Huntington died at the Second Battle of Bull Run. See, for example, "The 4th Alabama Regiment at the Battle of Manassas," *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 23 (1961): 208-210, citing *Daily Florence Gazette*, 5 August 1861, as printed in *Huntsville Democrat*, 31 July 1861. Cf. Gildersleeve, 99; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 182, 214-215; Hudson Diary.

governor, was correct: the 4th Alabama fought as well without officers as it did with them.

Clarke was equally proud of his unit's performance, so it was hard for him to read press accounts of how poorly his men had fought. In a 14 August 1861 letter to his daughter, Bettie Lou, famed author of "Diddie, Dumps and Tot," the captain recalled how he and A. C. Davidson had spent all day in the field, fatigued and dehydrated, commanding troops. Captain Clarke had always been proud of his men, but their bravery at Manassas was extraordinary. They were credits to their families, friends, and every patriotic Alabamian. The media simply had not given them the recognition that they deserved, but Clarke was not worried. Confederate and Union generals' official reports would reveal to the world how valiant his men had fought during the "Grand Drama of the 21st."⁸⁵

As meritorious as the regiment's work was, it was not flawless. Twice, its members were deceived by Union antics. Once, during a Confederate retreat into the wood line, Union troops masquerading as Confederates fooled the Alabamians into believing they were allies. A second time, members of the 4th Alabama spotted soldiers approaching their position but, unable to make out their flag, could not determine whether they were friends or foes. After a brief impasse, the friendly signal that Confederate field officers had decided to use during the morning hours was given and returned. Moments thereafter, an officer emerged from behind the hill where the approaching troops had stopped and waved a white flag. Believing the nearby troops were allies, the Alabamians relaxed. As they put down their arms, the officer with the

⁸⁵ Clarke Letter. Cf. Jones, "The Fourth Alabama Infantry: First Blood," 50.

white flag gave an unknown signal to his men, who came charging from behind the hill in large number, firing mercilessly on the Alabamians. “But woeful deception!” exclaimed Hudson. The unit was the victim of a ruse far more serious than the jokes that had been played on Baptist and Frowell or on the strawberry bandits, Markham and Ware.⁸⁶

The soldiers whom the 4th Alabama thought friendly turned out to be Union soldiers who had come into possession of a Confederate flag. Apparently, someone knew the friendly signal that had been decided a few hours earlier. How could this have happened? Chaplain Hudson rendered two possibilities: the Unionists won the flag in battle, or they had it tailored. After reviewing the possibilities, Hudson decided that the flag was a custom job. Confederate soldiers losing their flag during a fight was unfathomable, he concluded: “It was a shrewd trick on the part of the Yanks, and one well calculated to deceive, but, for which, they paid dearly in the end.”⁸⁷

Hudson was partly correct. During the First Battle of Manassas, Union General Irvin McDowell’s forces almost triumphed in their attempt to break through Confederate ranks, but the Confederates survived the attempt and began a counteroffensive in which panicked and disorganized Union soldiers broke their ranks and retreated. Unable to gather his troops, McDowell was forced to return to Washington in an equally chaotic manner. His men were still unnerved, and basket-carrying civilians who had decided to make the fighting a family outing dotted the nearby hillsides. Insofar as the hasty retreat caused President Lincoln to question the wisdom of his officers and damaged the spirits

⁸⁶ Hudson Letter.

⁸⁷ Ibid. Cf. Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 90. James G. Hudson’s entry is interesting. If he wrote in his diary daily, then how could he have made a statement about future events? In addition, the prose that Hudson employed seems too polished to have been written while a battle was raging—unless, of course, the chaplain was a quick-witted, brilliant writer or more a spectator than an actual participant.

of Union soldiers, the Confederates netted a huge psychological victory, but they remained as disorganized in victory as the Unionists were in defeat.⁸⁸

Regardless of how correct or incorrect Private Hudson was about the ultimate price that Union forces paid, one question remains: how did the Union forces find out about the Confederate signal? Hudson probably could have answered the question if he had more time to investigate what had happened, but he did not have such time. Just as the excitement caused by the Unionists' trickery began to die down, Bernard (or Barnard) E. Bee—a West Point graduate, Mexican War veteran, and Confederate general from South Carolina—galloped into camp on a chestnut-colored horse and asked if anyone would accompany him into battle. Instantly, every man rose to his feet and shouted: “We will follow you to the death!” Having heard what he wanted to hear, Bee rode in the direction of the place where Sherman's battery was captured.⁸⁹

Subsequent events happened quickly. John Pelham—the notoriously flirtatious Alabamian whom Colonel Henry (“Light Horse Harry”) Lee's well-respected son, Robert E., called the “gallant...boy major”—and other members of Albertu's hastily retreating battery appeared, forcing approximately twenty Canebrakers to alter their positions. Eventually, the entire 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment was separated. When Albertu's forces and train disappeared, the only persons whom Bee was able to locate were the twenty members of the Perry County unit and a few soldiers who had accompanied them

⁸⁸ See Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People*, 4th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 382. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 140.

⁸⁹ Hudson Diary. See Kenneth Davis, *Don't Know Much about the Civil War: Everything You Need to Know about America's Greatest Conflict but Never Learned* (1996; reprint, New York: Perennial, 2001), 190. See also Webb Garrison, *More Civil War Curiosities: Fascinating Tales, Infamous Characters, and Strange Coincidences* (Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press, 1995), 121; *Mobile Register*, 20 May 1894. Cf. Ward, “...the Greatest Battle ever Fought.”

when they had moved. Seemingly unworried, the general led the remaining soldiers into the heart of the conflict.⁹⁰

Soon, the Perry County volunteers found themselves directly in front of General Sherman's first rows of forces. Behind them stood about 200 additional Union troops. Before long, the Perry County volunteers were being bombarded by enemy fire. Amidst it all stood Bee, "cheering them onward to victory and inspiring them with fresh courage and heroism." Within minutes, it was the general himself who needed cheer.⁹¹

Severely wounded, Bee was taken to a shaded area by Orderly Sergeant William O. Hudson and Private J. Warren Hudson. In perhaps one of his last battlefield directives, Bee told J. Warren to attend to him as well as he could before transporting his body back to Manassas. In the meantime, William O. returned to the frontlines, where he probably confirmed what many soldiers feared: their revered leader had offered himself as "a bleeding sacrifice on the altar of his country."⁹²

After Bee's death, the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards merged with other regiments. On occasion, the Guards fought alone. Together with Orderly Sergeant W. O. Hudson, Lieutenants Coleman and Terrell took control of the company. Each man acted with exceptional bravery and self-assurance, leading their troops on to victory. The three stand-ins deserved much praise for their steadfastness during a time when cooler heads

⁹⁰ Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 5; "John Pelham," *15th Regimental Report* 10 (June 2002): 1, 3. Logue. Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 87, 94, 103, 236; Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 11.

⁹¹ Hudson Diary. Brigadier General W. H. C. Whiting replaced General Bee. A more detailed account is offered in Ward, "...the Greatest Battle ever Fought." Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 47; Jones, "The Fourth Alabama Infantry: A Fighting Legion," 171.

⁹² Clarke Letter. Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 87. James G. Hudson also listed W. O. Hudson as a 1st Sergeant. Either Thomas Hudson or Alma Pate suggested that Chaplain Hudson also helped move Bee, but the chaplain's diary entry mentioned only W. O. Hudson and J. Warren Hudson. In all likelihood, Thomas Hudson or Alma Pate thought James G. Hudson's J was an I. Later, the same J was thought to be a P. Cf. Hudson, "A Story of Company D, 4th Infantry Regiment, C.S.A.," 170.

had to prevail lest widespread Confederate death and destruction occur, averred J. G. Hudson, who also praised Captain Clarke. Though disabled and despite considerable jeopardy to his life, the captain refused to leave the battlefield. According to J. G., Clarke was determined to sacrifice his very existence rather than abandon the brave soldiers who had followed him from the Black Belt, risking both life and limb to defend their homes and civil liberties. Despite numerous injuries and continual fire, Clarke stood firm, making sure that his troops knew that he was willing to do what they themselves had pledged to do for General Johnston and for their fallen General Bee: fight to the death.⁹³

With fellow physician William E. Pegram by his side, Clarke pulled wounded soldiers out of harm's way. On more than one occasion, the two doctors had to perform amputations on the battlefield because soldiers could not be lugged elsewhere. During lulls in the fighting, Clarke and Pegram paid tribute to Lieutenant Pitts and other brave individuals whose lives the battle had taken. Pitts, one man wrote, had "died a warrior's death.... He manifested no fear on the battle field but was ever ready to face the enemy, and drive back the invading foe from the soil of his nativity...; peace to his ashes."⁹⁴

Baptist, Bee, Mitchell, Pitts, and other fallen soldiers were not the only war heroes who deserved special recognition. Of all the companies of the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment, the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards was the only unit present when Bee was wounded. A Canebraker stayed with the general until he breathed his last breath, and the Guards comprised the only Alabama company to actually see regular

⁹³ Cf. Cobb, *Away Down South*, 57, citing David A. Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 20.

⁹⁴ Hudson Diary. Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 39-40; Wright, "Battlefield Medicine." Like William H. Baptist, William E. Pegram was an assistant surgeon in the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment.

action in the last fight with Sherman's battery. With pride that seemed to jump from the pages of his diary, James G. Hudson boasted: "The 'Canebrakers' were in the charge, saw the enemy fly, gave a parting salute, and joined in the triumphant shout that rent the heavens, as the frightened and panic-stricken Yanks rushed in wild confusion over the hills and through the woods."⁹⁵

When the fighting stopped, the persons who survived the mind-altering ordeal of war faced additional heart-wrenching challenges, such as looking after their wounded comrades and identifying which persons among them had been killed in action. The lateness of the hour, the physical conditions of the soldiers, and the lack of needed resources exacerbated matters. Having fought all day, the survivors were exhausted, hungry, and thirsty. Without ambulances, many Confederates had to make the six- or seven-mile trip to Manassas on the beds of rickety carts and wagons that had no springs. Some soldiers did not make the trip at all. Instead, they had to lie on the battlefield for the entire night and much of the next day, as driving rains fell steadily. Only afterward did they manage to find their way to Manassas. "Oh! [I]t was sad, and heart-rending to walk over the battle field," recalled one remorseful soldier, describing how he and other Confederate survivors had to listen to dying soldiers groan, their excruciating pain made visible by their contorted faces.⁹⁶

Altogether, 180 members, or almost one-third, of the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment died. Scores of others were wounded, some so badly that they wished they had

⁹⁵ Ibid. Over the years, some persons have doubted whether the members of 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment actually took part in the battle during which General Bee was mortally wounded. If they did, then why did their participation go unrecorded? Three facts accounted for the omission, wrote Hudson: "Their field officers had been shot down and taken from the field. Gen. Bee, who was leading them had been separated from them by Albertu's battery, when the Battery had passed, they could find out nothing of the whereabouts of Gen. Bee, hence the regiment halted to await orders." Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

died. For these men, a February 1861 statement in the *Canebrake Herald* was unfortunately true: the pleasure, pomp, and circumstance of the glorious war were not as agreeable as many of the young fighters had imagined.⁹⁷

In the wake of the battles in which the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards had seen action, its members had more than war stories to tell; they had war memorabilia to show. Lieutenant Colonel J. L. M. Curry and other veterans could display caps, coats, and pants that had been riddled by bullets. Others could reveal clothing that had been torn to shreds by the briars, bushes, and fences that they had passed over or through. These items were more than reminders of the amazing battles in which the unit had participated; they were also reminders of the “wonderful and miraculous escape[s] from death...which they had made.” Every man might not have kept the Sabbath as properly as Chaplain Hudson had wished in 1861, but perhaps some of them had done so during previous years.⁹⁸

Returning to the unit’s battlefield experiences, Hudson discussed an episode that took place following the 21 July 1861 firefight. In its aftermath, an election was held to decide who would replace Lieutenant Pitts. Because Bush Jones was chosen via a selection process that a number of field officers and privates did not approve, Jones’ selection interrupted the peace and harmony that the regiment had enjoyed. The unit also had to elect a new regimental commander because Major Scott, the previous commander, had been wounded during the battle. Ultimately, the unit decided that Captain Clarke should be Scott’s replacement.

⁹⁷ See *Canebrake Herald*, 1 February 1861. Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 45.

⁹⁸ Hudson Diary. Near the end of the Civil War, a bullet ripped through Lieutenant Curry’s coat, perforating a folded issue of the *New York Tribune*. Cf. Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black Education*, 167.

Clarke's election restored the good feelings that Jones' election had disturbed. Knowing how carefree Clarke was, certain members of the 4th Alabama decided to have a little fun at the expense of some of their colleagues. Right away, the pranksters began to look for a victim. Private James Philips turned out to be the sacrificial lamb. He was told that Clarke's promotion to major had bumped Coleman to captain and Terrell to first lieutenant, but no one had been named second lieutenant. The jokesters assured the private that he was perfect for the job.

Full of newfound confidence, Philips hit the campaign trail, making numerous promises. Aware of the prank, most of the privates played along, pretending to listen attentively to Philips' pledges and swearing to support his candidacy. A mock election was then staged. James Cornega was Philip's fictitious opponent. Votes were cast and counted, and Philips was announced the victor. It seemed that he had beaten his rival by only six or seven votes.⁹⁹

A congratulatory reception commenced. Persons patted Phillips on the back and gave him the customary sword. Afterward, Philips was given a squad to command. One of the recently installed officer's first duties was to drill his men. According to one observer, Philips carried out this duty as well as he could. The following morning, Philips, still believing that the reigns of power were firmly within his grasp, did not respond when his name was yelled at roll call. In fact, Philips was not even in formation. He had taken his place alongside other lieutenants. Hardly amused by the volunteer's antics, the orderly sergeant commanded Philips to fall in where he belonged. To that, the duped private responded in a manner illustrative of his new, contrived status as second

⁹⁹ The surname of Philip's opponent might be misspelled. Even magnified, Hudson's writing is illegible.

lieutenant. Philips informed the orderly sergeant that he would not tolerate such disrespect from one of his subordinates. If the orderly sergeant did not change his words, Philips vowed to have him arrested.

Philips had clearly overstepped his bounds, but he did not know it. Within seconds, he did know. Unable to contain themselves any longer, the regiment's privates and Lieutenants Coleman and Terrell, who took part in the shenanigan, began to laugh uncontrollably. Philips "began to smell a 'mice,'" wrote Chaplain Hudson. Philips' suspicions were confirmed when the orderly sergeant threatened to have him arrested. Suddenly, it dawned on Philips that he had been the victim of a terrible sham and that his moment in the sun was over. He was still a private. The presumably harmless practical joke had severe consequences. A mystified James Philips became mentally and physically ill. He was so overwhelmed by the trick his brothers in arms had played on him that he applied for a medical discharge, which was granted, and he returned to his home.¹⁰⁰

On 18 September 1861, the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards tore down their camp and headed toward Dumfries (or Dumphries), an area located approximately twenty-five miles below Washington, D. C., on the Potomac River. After traveling for two days, the unit pitched its tents about one mile outside Dumfries at an elevated place they affectionately called "Camp Law" in honor of esteemed Confederate General E. M. Law. Because the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment was a support unit, the Perry County volunteers again found themselves with little to do. To pass away the time, they drilled, drank water, looked at the river, watched the explosions of distant cannons, and

¹⁰⁰ Hudson Diary.

convalesced. Over the next few weeks, the regiment found itself in better shape than it had been since the First Battle of Bull Run.¹⁰¹

The 4th Alabama remained at Camp Law until 21 October 1861, when headquarters ordered the unit to move. According to Hudson, the announcement was not received warmly. He and his comrades were satisfied with the present location, and it was unlikely that their new camp was going to be as pleasant as Camp Law. But the order had to be obeyed regardless of the inconvenience. The soldiers' frustration intensified when they reached their new camp, which turned out to be a wheat field situated on the slope of a precipitous hillside that was only twenty miles or so from Camp Law. To make matters worse, a cold, drizzling rain began to come down shortly after the volunteers pitched their tents. In a statement obviously meant for civilians, possibly his offspring, Chaplain-Treasurer Hudson declared:

Those who have never enjoyed the felicities of camp life; but have enjoyed the luxuries of warm houses; and good beds and a supply of covering, are ill...prepared to appreciate a night's rest in a tent, during a cold night, with but one blanket to cover with, and the cold, wet ground for a bed, a knapsack for a pillow and the sharp points of rocks for a mattress.

In truth, neither was he.¹⁰²

Between 10 and 11 PM, one of headquarters' commanding officers requested each company send a squad to help pave the way for Confederate artillerymen in the event that Union troops attempted to cross the Potomac River. The men who were chosen did not object to the mission because it gave them a chance to leave the muddy

¹⁰¹ Cf. Jones, "The Fourth Alabama Infantry: A Fighting Legion," 171, and "The Fourth Alabama Infantry: First Blood," 51.

¹⁰² Hudson Diary.

camp that Hudson deemed almost unbearable. Sympathetic to the concerns of the rank and file, a number of field officers set out to find a more agreeable site, which they found approximately half a mile from where the regiment was presently camped. The prospective site was wooded, but the officers believed that it would make a fine campsite if undergrowth was cut and leaves, rocks, and rubbish were cleared.

Each company gladly honored the request, but the task turned out to be a greater challenge than the officers had presumed. The woodland contained several large trees that had to be felled, large rocks that the men had to move by hand, and a cornucopia of thorny bushes that was more worrisome than harmful. Cold winds and freezing ice made matters worse for the soldiers, who ended up working for several days before completing the job. In some ways, what happened next symbolized the wartime luck of many Perry County Confederates. Just as the men began to see the fruits of their labors, another order came down from headquarters: the men of the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment were to move immediately. Instantly, their “cup of...happiness [was] dashed to the ground.”¹⁰³

After marching almost ten miles across farms and old fields, the regiment erected a camp close to some Mississippi and North Carolina Confederates who had pitched their tents about a mile outside the headquarters of Confederate General William H. C. Whiting, General Bee’s replacement. Camp Fisher was the official name of the site, but many enlisted men called it “Camp Crawfish” because of the ground’s marshy, crawfish-like texture. As had been the case several times before, the men of the 4th Alabama had just begun to settle into regular camp life when an order came for them to move back to

¹⁰³ Ibid.

Camp Law, the Dumfries site that the men had regretted having to leave in the first place.¹⁰⁴

Before leaving Camp Fisher, which the 4th was not scheduled to depart until the first day of November, the regiment had to select a new colonel. Saturday, 25 October 1861, was Election Day. Four soldiers voted for the acting colonel, whose last name was Alston. Every other person voted for Colonel Law, the widely respected officer whom James G. Hudson called “the idol of the 4th Ala.,” his nearest rival being Captain Clarke.¹⁰⁵

The Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards and other units of the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment had barely gotten to Camp Law when Mother Nature began to show how powerful she was. A terrible storm that ravaged the entire southern coastline rumbled from the sky, prompting many Perry County volunteers to wish they were back in Alabama’s Canebrake trying to recruit soldiers alongside William Robbins, a Marion soldier who had been granted a leave under the Furlough and Bounty Act. Instead, they were on the battlefield, struggling to survive inclement weather with only meager provisions. One soldier described the scene vividly: “The rain poured down in torrents, and the wind blew in fearful gales, blowing down almost everything in its course. Many of our tents were either blown over, or torn into tatters, leaving the unfortunate inmates without a shelter and entirely exposed to the...pitiless storm.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ The 4th Alabama collected \$1,000 to purchase a horse for Whiting. Cf. Jones, “The Fourth Alabama Infantry: A Fighting Legion,” 171, 172.

¹⁰⁵ Hudson Diary.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. According to Robbins, recruiting was the most difficult job that he had ever attempted. Too many potential soldiers, he said, were “compromising their patriotism” by refusing to serve the Confederacy. William Robbins, quoted in Jones, “The Fourth Alabama Infantry: First Blood,” 52. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, especially 213-221; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 47-59, 86-87; Wright, *What They*

Even then, a handful of soldiers managed to make the best out of an immensely bad situation. From time to time, someone would yell, “Tent gone,” and the soldiers whose tents were intact would laugh aloud. Down the ranks, the laughter would spread as the victim of the blizzard scoured from tent to tent, hunting refuge. Once safe from the elements, he, too, would smile and then chuckle before bursting into laughter. Such was the plight of the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards. Antietam, or Sharpsburg, Chickamauga, Cold Harbor, Knoxville, Malvern Hill, Seven Pines, Spotsylvania (or Spottsylvania), the Wilderness, and many other fights would follow before the Rifle Guards’ surrender at Appomattox, Virginia; and many comrades of theirs and compatriots from Perry County would be buried in far-off places (see Appendix E).¹⁰⁷

Additional Perry County Units

In addition to the Marion Rifles, the Alabama Rangers, and the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards, Perry County supplied the Confederate States of America with the Uniontown Independent Troop, the Marion Light Infantry, the (Henry) Talbird Company, the East Perry Rangers, and Company F, 20th Alabama Regiment Volunteers (“Curry’s Dragoons”). The Independent Troop fielded more than fifty volunteers. Captain A. H. Otey was commander. John M. Adams was first lieutenant, Joseph Selden was second lieutenant, and David Walker was third lieutenant. John L. Murphy was first sergeant, Carter Adams was second sergeant, Thomas Christian was third sergeant, and James Shearen was fourth sergeant. Under them served forty-seven soldiers, but not one

didn't Teach You about the Civil War, 69, 270-273. Davis discusses the Union’s retention issues in “The Quality of Mercy,” chap. 7 in *Lincoln’s Men*, 166-191.

¹⁰⁷ Hudson Diary.

of the men saw action as an Independent (see Appendix F). The unit was abandoned before it materialized. When it folded, Robert Christian—a successful Perry County attorney, planter, politician, history buff, and avid reader of Greek and Roman law—asked Governor Moore to permit him and other organizers to revive and place the company on an “efficient footing” if they could procure weapons.¹⁰⁸

The Marion Light Infantry had better luck (see Appendix G). Commanded originally by Captain H. M. Moseley (Mosely, Mosley), the unit departed Marion on 24 April 1861. How long Captain Moseley commanded the Marion Light Infantry or under what circumstances he vacated the post is unclear, but politics might have been involved. For soon after Moseley’s departure, Porter King—a prosperous Perry County agribusinessman, school administrator, and socialite—was identified as the division’s highest-ranking officer.¹⁰⁹

Commander King was a scion of Edwin W. King, a wealthy Baptist and antebellum planter who had migrated to Alabama from Georgia in the midst of “Alabama Fever.”¹¹⁰ Initially, the elder King ran a small, roadside tavern and was in a humble circumstance, according to a contemporary who understated King’s importance. Few early Perry County residents had enough money to own a tavern. Even fewer people had

¹⁰⁸ Robert Christian to A. B. Moore, [n.d.]. This document is in the possession of W. Stuart Harris. See Robert Christian Diary, 1854-1857, LPR 180, ADAH, hereinafter cited as Christian Diary.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Manley Letter.

¹¹⁰ During the “Era of Good Feeling(s)” (circa 1815-1825), while many United States citizens were turning their attentions away from Great Britain and developing an “American consciousness” in the face of several divisive issues, including national banks, tariffs, and race-based slavery, Caucasians moved into the Cahaba region in droves. A Carolinian described: “The Alabama Fever rages here with great violence and has carried off vast numbers of our Citizens. There is no question that the fever is contagious...for as soon as one neighbor visits another who has just returned from Alabama he immediately discovers the same symptoms.” James Graham to Thomas Ruffin, 9 November 1817, included in J. D. DeRoulhac, ed., *The Papers of Thomas Ruffin*, vol. 1 (Raleigh, N.C.: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1918), 198, as quoted in Henry DeLeon Sutherland, Jr., and Jerry Elijah Brown, *The Federal Road through Georgia, the Creek Nation and Alabama, 1806-1836* (Tuscaloosa, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 1989), 102.

enough influence among white Baptists to become a trustee of the all-male Howard English and Classical School (later Howard College) that the congregation operated or to become one of the first trustees of the Marion Female Seminary, or Institute, which Baptists and Methodists organized in 1836 to educate white girls. E. D. King, who also extended the invitation to northern educator Milo P. Jewett to locate Judson Female Seminary (Institute, College) in Marion, had such influence.¹¹¹

In addition to his business and educational pursuits, E. D. King owned a large amount of land and several homes. His first domicile was transformed into slave quarters, the second one a kitchen. The third King home would have impressed the most respected nabob, proclaimed Samuel A. Townes (or Towns), an early Alabama attorney, historian and newspaper publisher, noting how King had in a short period of time gone from a poor pioneer to Perry County's second largest slave owner. Yet, to King's credit, he was never sanctimonious. King, lauded Townes, had a "soul to dispense, with a liberal hand, the overflowing wealth with which a kind Providence has blessed him, for the promotion and the cause of learning and piety."¹¹²

Porter King's affluence was undoubtedly part of the reason he was named commander of the Marion Light Infantry. It was he who received the regimental flag that

¹¹¹ Townes, 203. Cf. Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 136. Howard (f. 1841-1842) was named in honor of John Howard, an English philanthropist. Samuel E. Sherman was its first president. Judson (f. 1838) was named in honor of Ann Hasseltine Judson, who is often recognized as the first female Baptist from the United States to perform missionary work abroad. Milo P. Jewett was its first president. See "An Act to Incorporate the 'Howard College' in Marion, Perry County," typescript, Educational Publications, LPR 139, ADAH. See also Charles A. Stakely, "The Baptists of Alabama in the State's Centennial" (address delivered at the Joint Session of the Alabama Baptist State Convention and the Woman's Missionary Union in Birmingham, Alabama, 13 November 1919). Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage; The Heritage of Perry County, Alabama*; Jackson, "City Founded in 1817 by Pioneer Seeking Home"; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 11; Townes.

¹¹² Townes, 203. Samuel Townes began to publish a Marion newspaper called the *Alabama Mercury* in 1835. See W. L. Fagin, "History of Marion, 1818-'35," *Marion Standard*, [1909], in Smith Collection, hereinafter cited as "History of Marion, 1818-'35."

female Marionites sewed for the infantrymen soon after they began to fight. In a letter to his aunt, Mrs. James H. Graham, Infantryman Porterfield Graham described the reception:

When its beautiful folds were unfurled to the breeze, we were astonished at its magnificent splendor—gazed for an instant on the beautiful device which illustrates so aptly the product of our lovely country, and then, with one accord, gave three cheers for the flag, three cheers, and three times three, to those who presented us with this inestimable token of their regard, confidence and esteem—our mothers, sisters, wives and sweethearts. Captain King then read, with great emphasis and feeling, their eloquent and patriotic letter. Captain King and his Lieut. Robbins were both called upon to reply, but their hearts were too full to give utterance to the deep emotions which burned within their souls. May we prove worthy of the high regard and confidence which is entertained for us by those at home. May the flag which has been entrusted to our keeping, wave in triumph over many a well-fought field. May its folds never be desecrated by the polluting and defiling touch of a Yankee-Abolitionist, but pure and unsullied and uncontaminated, it will and shall return to our homes in Marion.¹¹³

Porterfield Graham's private letter was made public when a partial reprint was included in the 17 July 1861 *Marion American*. Honoring the ladies who had made the blue silk flag that had been fashioned from the bridal gown of a three-month newlywed, the paper declared: "Let the fair donors be assured that while the flag waves over their brave sons and brothers it will never cover a retreating file, or trail in dishonored dust beneath the foot-tread of a foe." If only such assurances could have been kept, the newspaper would have made a magnificent prophecy.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Porterfield Graham to Mrs. James H. Graham, [n.d.], quoted in 17 July 1861 *Weekly Marion American*. Graham died outside Richmond on 30 May 1862. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 215.

¹¹⁴ 17 July 1861 *Weekly Marion American*. Cf. Jones, "The Fourth Alabama Infantry: First Blood," 35.

Howard College President Henry Talbird put away academics for a while to head a volunteer company. Over the course of the war, as many as 107 men served under Talbird, whom someone calling himself “Exodus” hailed as a “double soldier—a soldier of the cross...and a soldier of the country.” Among Talbird’s senior officers were First Lieutenant Mathew England, Second Lieutenant Walter C. Y. Parker, and Third Lieutenant James H. George. Henry Clinton Lea—a successful attorney, planter, state legislator, church and militia leader, school founder, and son of Perry County pioneers Nancy and Temple Lea—was one of Talbird’s minor officers.¹¹⁵

The 20th Alabama was organized in Perry County between 16 September and 18 November 1861. Isham W. Garrott—a wealthy antebellum legislator, church leader, Whig, law partner of William Brooks and James Phelan, Howard College trustee, and incorporator of the Marion and Alabama River Transportation Company—was its driving force. On 15 July, Garrott asked Confederate Secretary of War Leroy Pope Walker to consider him for a colonelcy. Walker informed Garrott that the position had already been filled, but if Garrott and Edmund Winston Pettus—a Mexican War veteran, circuit judge, and Confederate commissioner to Mississippi—could raise and arm ten companies of soldiers, then Walker would secure an appointment that was suitable for the enthusiasm that Garrott had displayed for the Confederate cause. Walker kept his word, and the 20th Alabama was mustered into service on 6 December the same year.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ *Marion Commonwealth*, 18 April 1862; “Letter from a Member of Capt. Ta[l]bird’s Company,” in Smith Collection. See “Roll Call of Company ‘K’ 11th Alabama Regiment which Left Marion, Ala., June 21st, 1861,” in Smith Collection. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 50-51; *The Heritage of Perry County, Alabama*, passim.

¹¹⁶ Ken Jones, 12 July 2004 communication to the author. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 200-201.

Several members of the company were former members of the Marengo Mounted Guards. Others became Dragoons at Dayton, Alabama, in October 1861. By the following April, each one of the soldiers had joined the 1st Alabama Cavalry Battalion. The combined unit was headquartered in Mobile until the spring of 1863, when its members were moved to Mississippi to bolster the forces of General Edward Dorr Tracy.¹¹⁷

On the first day of May 1863, the men of the 20th Alabama took part in the Battle of Fort Gibson. Fifteen days later, they fought in the Battle of Champions Hill, or Baker's Creek, before moving to Vicksburg. From there, Garrott drafted a letter in which he complained of inadequate provisions and called one of his superior officers, Lieutenant-General John C. Pemberton, mindless. Before closing, Garrott praised his troops' valor, but he predicted a bleak future:

Prepare yourself for bad news. One co. in the 3rd Tenn. Regt. has already stacked arms for want of food and are in jail. God forbid that any of the 20th Ala. Regt. should so disgrace themselves, but they are men—faithful true men—but still men must yield to the cravings of nature. We have bread, peas, and still some rice and molasses. It is also said that there is some bacon and pork here. But I doubt whether there are six days rations here now.... What is to become of us? I know not. I am thoroughly disgusted.¹¹⁸

Garrott was correct. On 17 June 1863, while firing a borrowed rifle, Union forces shot and killed him. Ironically, Garrott died without knowing that he had been promoted to brigadier general on 28 May. In remembrance, Confederate General Stephen Dill Lee declared: "Garrott, 20th Alabama, the pure patriot and gallant soldier...who was killed on

¹¹⁷ Ken Jones, 12 July 2004 communication to the author. The Dayton group had hitherto served under Captain William H. Horton.

¹¹⁸ Isham Garrott, quoted in Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 200-201.

June 17 while in the fearless discharge of his duties [was respected] and loved by all who knew him. [A] more attentive and vigilant officer was not in our service.”¹¹⁹

The Home Front: Economics and the Peculiar Institution

As Perry County Confederates fought and lost their lives in Vicksburg and elsewhere in the South, their relatives back in Alabama sought to protect the home front, control the slave population, and meet financial obligations. The third task was difficult for many persons, but the first two tasks were not hard to accomplish. Slavery was certainly different in 1865 than it had been in 1860, but there were no violent uprisings and only a few documented runaway attempts in Perry County during those years. In 1861, a slave catcher named W. J. Turnbow charged Hugh Davis, Sr.—a respected attorney, civil servant, fervent reader, landlord, Mason, agricultural club organizer, sportsman, Whig and Democrat, Confederate, forge operator, Cahaba and Marion Railroad stockholder, and one of the most successful agribusinessmen in Perry County—thirteen dollars to locate and capture a fugitive slave. The same year, G. W. Stewart was paid fifteen dollars to catch a runaway. Another runaway was a perpetual flier from Richmond, Virginia, whose attempted flight had nothing to do with how his owner, physician G. W. Brown, treated him.¹²⁰

Despite the fear of insurrection, the reestablishment of home guards—militias, or civilian patrols, made up of men whom one person described as “too old, too young, too

¹¹⁹ Stephen Dill, quoted in *ibid.*, citing *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 1st series, vol. 24, 350.

¹²⁰ Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 129; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*. The frequent Virginia runaway is mentioned in John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 39, citing J. J. Price to E. H. Stokes, 11 February 1860, in Charles Family Papers, Manuscript Division, LOC.

informed, too wounded, too rich, or too stupid to” be sent to the frontlines—and several epidemics, including a fall 1861 dysentery outbreak, most blacks and whites continued to work in the fields side by side, hold worship services, and rear children with little more conflict or consternation than they had before the war (although a number of exaggerative whites claimed that a handful of southwestern blacks became quite unruly in the absence of the masters). Conservative old-family mistresses continued to mask their “tacit feelings of superiority with friendly cordiality,” and young black servants and privileged white children continued to learn from each other. Ella Storrs, who frequently tutored her black peers, even claimed that the slaves celebrated Confederate successes as much as their white owners and overseers did.¹²¹

As amicable as the relations between local citizens and subjects usually were, Storrs’ contention is doubtful unless the blacks to whom she referred were children who were too young to know better or teenagers and adults who masked their tacit hopes for a Union victory. Other blacks might have been paid, given a supervisory position or responsibilities similar to Montgomery’s black firemen, told some outlandish story about Union troops being horned cannibals, or promised complete freedom in the wake of a Confederate triumph. Such emancipation proclamations had been proposed, and categorically snubbed, at the outset of the war. But by war’s end, freedom promises had

¹²¹ Clint Johnson, *Civil War Blunders* (1997; reprint, Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 2003), 306 (first quote); Glenn N. Sisk, “Social Life on the Alabama Black Belt, 1875-1917,” *Alabama Review* 13 (April 1955): 83 (second quote), 87 (footnote 12), 88 (footnote 14), citing Renwick C. Kennedy, “Black Belt Aristocrats: The Old South Lives On in Alabama’s Black Belt,” *Social Forces* 13 (October 1934): 80-85, Walter Fleming, “The Servant Problem in a Black Belt Village,” *Sewanee Review* 13 (January 1905): 1-17, and Harry F. Kroll, *Waters Over the Dam* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1944), 13 ff.; Patience Essah, communication to the author, 27 July 2006. Cf. Bond, *Black American Scholar*, passim; Christian, “The Days that are No More,” 337; Essah, *A House Divided*, 6; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 128-131, 211-213; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 54, 78, 100-101, 151-159, 160. Cf. Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 7-8, 57, 61-62, 74-75, 84, 87, 137, 152; Winik, 51, 114, 115.

become commonplace, and circumstance often necessitated a decidedly different reaction from those who had shunned the promises only a few years earlier.¹²²

In December 1861, Mary Boykin Miller Chesnut—a legendary diarist (journal keeper, note taker), childless intellectual, socialite, and eloquently discerning pundit whose father, Stephen Decatur Miller, had been a distinguished South Carolina and Mississippi planter, politician, and states-rights advocate who disliked John C. Calhoun and defended slavery as a “positive good”; whose mother was an Alabama native; and whose slave-owning and Princeton-educated husband, James Chesnut, Jr., was a South Carolina legislator, United States congressman, and advisor to Jefferson Davis—eschewed popular opinion among white Perry County Confederates and demanded that slaves be removed from supporting positions, given weapons and leftover army uniforms, and sent to the frontlines. Sensing that Union officials would use blacks as fighters, an Alabama editor endorsed Chesnut’s plan. In 1862, Warren Aiken, speaker of the Georgia House, made a similar recommendation. Alabama legislators followed suit in September 1863, but President Davis considered their advice as heretical as cursing God. The Union’s attempts to recruit and arm blacks as combatants, he said, were “the most execrable measure[s] recorded in the history of guilty man.”¹²³

¹²² Circuit-court records show that Perry County was home to less extreme master, overseer, and slave violence than other Black Belt counties. Slave uprisings were particularly few. Between 1839 and 1859, the court heard only twenty-two cases that involved slaves. Two slaves were branded and given thirty-nine lashes; four others were sentenced to death. Eight cases involved assault and battery, one with as many as ten slaves, and several acquittals and mistrials. See, for example, James B. Sellers, *Slavery in Alabama* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1950), 259, citing Perry County Records, Minutes of the Circuit Court, 1833-1859.

¹²³ Jefferson Davis, quoted in Winik, 50 (quote), 51-55; Geoffrey Ward et al., *The Civil War* (1990; reprint, New York: Vintage, 1994), 135. See C. Vann Woodward, ed., *Mary Chesnut’s Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), xvii, xxxi, xlvi. Cf. Bell, *Confederate Women*, xii, 3-38; Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, xv-xvi, xviii-xix, xxii, 15, 16 (footnote 1), 49, 50, 224. Jefferson Davis did not mind using blacks to build forts. In September, the Confederate president recommended 4,500 blacks for the job, but

By the end of the war, with the defeat of “Dixie” looming, recurrent calls for peace, if not reconciliation, and blacks joining Union ranks in astonishingly large numbers, Davis began to sing a different tune. In 1864, he attempted to flout conventional Confederate wisdom by using slaves as foot soldiers. When congressmen rejected the proposal, Davis lamented: “If the Confederacy falls, there should be written on its tombstone, ‘Died of a theory.’” Shortly thereafter, Confederate representatives convened in secret to discuss the possibility of arming slaves if hesitant whites could not be persuaded to enlist or if deserters like those from the northwestern part of Perry County, where a Union company was raised, could not be convinced or forced to return to service. Aware of the anti-Confederate sentiment in that section of the county, as well as in other parts of the Alabama, Ben Lane Posey—a one-time resident of Marion, former owner of the “miniature political thunderbolt” the *American* and co-owner (with Dr. S. K. Gennings) of a Know Nothing newspaper called the *Perry Eagle*, and future Alabama chancellor—openly discussed manumitting slaves who served the Confederacy at a 25 February 1865 meeting held in Montgomery. Still unable to convince his colleagues to enlist blacks as combatants, Davis later in the year suggested employing 40,000 additional slaves as camp followers, pioneers, and teamsters with the dubious understanding that the bondmen would become free if they served faithfully. Abraham Lincoln had made a similar offer before Davis.¹²⁴

the Confederate Congress refused the offer. Cf. Wright, *What They didn't Teach You about the Civil War*, 109.

¹²⁴ Jefferson Davis, quoted in Wright, *What They didn't Teach You about the Civil War*, 109 (first quote); “Biographical Sketches,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 1 May 1873, quoting *Montgomery Advertiser*, [n.d.] (second quote). See “The Exemption Laws,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 11 April 1872, quoting *Mobile Register*, [n.d.], hereinafter cited as “The Exemption Laws.” See also C. Eric Lincoln, “From the Civil War to the End of World War I,” in *Poverty, Education and Race Relations*, 86-88; “Republican Meeting,” *Alabama State Journal*, 26 September 1874; Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins, *The Scalawag in Alabama Politics*,

After further rumination, President Davis amazed Robert M. T. (“Run Mad Tom”) Hunter, Howell Cobb, Robert A. Toombs, and other Confederate leaders by declaring that slaves bore another relation to the Confederacy, that of people, and therefore should be used in the same manner as whites. Reaffirming the most compelling reason for secession, Attorney Hunter—one of the University of Virginia’s first graduates, a former United States senator, and president pro tem of the Confederate Senate whom Mary Chesnut considered a sane, though not very wise or tidy, man—asked, “What did we go to war for, if not to protect our property?” If slaves fought well, “our whole theory of slavery is wrong,” added Cobb, a former Georgia governor, United States congressman, and member of President Buchanan’s cabinet. “The day you make soldiers of them,” continued Cobb, “is the beginning to the end of the revolution.” Toombs, a former United States congressman and Confederate general who feuded with Davis continuously, figured Davis’ suggestion to enlist blacks as combatants was just another one of the commander-in-chief’s poor wartime decisions.¹²⁵

Cobb, Hunter, and Toombs were not alone. From start to finish, countless Confederates thought making soldiers of slaves would bode ill for the new nation. Even when the Confederacy was on the verge of collapse, there were key leaders who

1865-1881 (University, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 1977), 137. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, passim; Bell, *Confederate Women*, 141, 142, 177; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 141-143; Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 34; Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 139, 147, 394, 403; Davis, *Lincoln’s Men*, especially 89, 105-106, 156-165, 234; Donald et al., *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 453; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 251; Goodrich and Goodrich, 95 (citing Thomas Goodrich, *Black Flag: Guerilla Warfare on the Western Border, 1861-1865* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995], 55), 97, 125-129, 131; “History of Marion, 1818-’35”; Martin, *A Rich Man’s War a Poor Man’s Fight*, 48 (citing Burrell Johnson to Governor Watts, 5 September 1864, and Porter King to Gov. Watts, 3 May 1864), 238 (footnote 13); Winik, 34-35, 48, 50-52, 57, 157, 164, 270, 274-284, 320-322, 353, 375; Wright, *What They didn’t Teach You about the Civil War*, 108, 110. The *American* was also a Perry County newspaper.

¹²⁵ Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 6, 7 (footnote 1), 54 (quote), 57, 68, 103, 179-180; Robert Hunter and Howell Cobb, quoted in Winik, 55 (all subsequent quotes). Cf. Bell, *Confederate Women*, 173; Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 29. Some persons have spelled Toombs Tooms.

demanded that the armed forces contain no blacks, slave or free, but Davis believed the present situation dictated their enlistment. As author and historian Jay Winik has noted, Davis found converts among some of the most unlikely individuals. Major General Nathaniel Bedford Forrest—a forty-something commodities trader, teetotaler, and purported millionaire who, after enlisting as a private in the Confederate Army, outfitted an entire cavalry company on his way to becoming the “Wizard of the Saddle”—was one of them. Not only had the unconventional, non-conformist Forrest owned and traded slaves in the past; he had led the infamous 12 April 1864 Battle of Fort Pillow in Henning, Tennessee, during which hundreds of black and white Union soldiers were killed or injured, many of whom after laying down their weapons. Outside observers incessantly criticized Forrest, but most of his troops rallied to his defense in the wake of the controversial battle. Some of them blamed a renegade private for the offensive. Others ascribed it to the *insanitas belli*, or the “fury of battle.”¹²⁶

Several of the Unionists who survived the Battle of Fort Pillow were conscripted slaves from Alabama who belonged to the 1st Alabama Siege Artillery Regiment. They

¹²⁶ Winik, 57, 164, 274-280, 281 (quote), 282-288. What actually happened at the Battle of Fort Pillow has been heavily debated. See *Fort Pillow Massacre*, 38th Congress, 1st sess., 1964, House rept. 65, hereinafter cited as *Fort Pillow Massacre*. See also Albert Castel, “The Fort Pillow Massacre: A Fresh Examination of the Evidence,” *Civil War History* 4 (March 1958): 37-50; John Cimprich and Robert C. Mainfort, Jr., “Fort Pillow Revisited: New Evidence about an Old Controversy,” *Civil War History* 28 (winter 1982): 293-306; Dudley Taylor Cornish, *The Sable Arm: Black Troops in the Union Army* (Lawrence, Kan.: University of Kansas Press, 1987), 175; David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001), 655-657; Shelby Foote, *The Civil War, A Narrative: Red River to Appomattox* (1974; reprint, New York: Vintage, 1986), 108-110; Jack Hurst, *Nathan Bedford Forrest: A Biography* (New York: Knopf, 1993), 174; Andrew Ward, *Red River Run: The Fort Pillow Massacre in the American Civil War* (New York: Viking, 2005); Brian Steel Wills, *A Battle from the Start: The Life of Nathan Bedford Forrest* (New York: Harper-Collins, 1992), 192; John Allen Wyeth, “Storming Fort Pillow,” in *That Devil Forrest Life of General Nathan Bedford Forrest* (1959; reprint, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 304-341. Cf. Davis, *Don’t Know Much about the Civil War*, 343-348, 364; Davis, *Lincoln’s Men*, 161-162; Goodrich and Goodrich, citing *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 5 April 1866; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 402, *The Negro’s Civil War*, 220-227, 235, 335, and *Ordeal by Fire*, 380; Winik, 280, 281; Wright, *What They didn’t Teach You about the Civil War*, 223-225, citing *Richmond (Virginia) Sentinel*, 18 April 1864.

and other survivors, including several Confederates, rebutted the idea that a rogue private or the immediacy of war caused the Fort Pillow debacle. Rather, the openly racist Forrest ordered the “massacre,” they said, and the United States Congress agreed. On 4 May 1864, the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War issued a report in which its members concluded that the events of 12 April constituted a deliberate, indiscriminate, and ruthless slaughter on the part of Forrest and his men against not only Union soldiers but also innocent civilians, including women and children. Considering Forrest’s well-earned reputation for violence, coupled with the fact that he had placed a \$1,000 bounty on the head of any Union officer who commanded an African American regiment after black soldiers helped repel Forrest’s forces at Paducah, Kentucky, two weeks before the Fort Pillow incident, his support for recruiting slaves seemed unusual.¹²⁷

General Robert E. Lee also supported arming and equipping African Americans. In an 11 January 1865 letter to Virginia State Senator Andrew Hunter, the well-admired general whom Stonewall Jackson would have followed blindfolded stated that blacks should be used immediately. a respected attorney, civil servant, fervent reader, landlord, Mason, agricultural club organizer, sportsman, Whig and Democrat, Confederate, forge operator, Cahaba and Marion Railroad stockholder, and one of the most successful agribusinessmen in Perry County. Virginia Governor William Smith agreed with Lee, as did the Virginia General Assembly, whose members called for black troops on 3 March while the Confederate Congress held secret sessions to discuss the issue. Ten days later, the congressmen emerged with astonishing news: 300,000 bound and free blacks would be enlisted in the Confederate Army. This decision was surely slavery’s death knoll,

¹²⁷ Cf. *Fort Pillow Massacre*; Wright, *What They didn't Teach You about the Civil War*, 222, 248.

lamented one solemn Perry County planter. A white commoner was more theatric about the decision: “Blow, Gabriel, blow! My God! Let him blow! I am ready to die!”¹²⁸

The planter’s comment was askew, and the commoner’s reaction was overblown. Upholding the Confederate Constitution, the congressmen did not mention freeing black combat troops when they authorized recruiting and organizing them. Taking the matter into his own hands, President Davis delivered General Order No. 14. According to it, no bondman would be conscripted into service, units would be integrated—a plan that Union officials were not yet willing to implement—and every black Confederate volunteer who served well would be conferred, “as far as he may, the rights of freedman.” Yet, as generous and as enlightened as Davis’ fiat seemed, a small minority of blacks did not need or want it. Its members were faithful or institutionalized servants who actually feared freedom, conditions that were most common among a handful of house and elderly slaves.¹²⁹

Combined with the fact that Abraham Lincoln and other Union officials had made emancipation offers, orders, and acts similar to General Order No. 14 and that Union soldiers did not enter Alabama’s Black Belt until late in the war, white Perry Countians had little reason to worry about their homes being destroyed or their lives being turned completely upside down during 1865, blacks’ so-called year of jubilee. In fact, the only time that white citizens’ local government or properties were ever at risk at war’s end was when the infamous Federal Army of the West “Raiders” of Union General James Harrison Wilson—a confident, aggressive, twenty-seven-year-old West Point-trained cavalry officer and Ulysses Grant protégé whose face, hair, and military experiences

¹²⁸ Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 236; Winik, 58-60, 86, 88, 157, 192 (quote).

¹²⁹ Winik, 60. Cf. Bell, *Confederate Women*, 163; Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 93.

made him seem much older—attacked General Forrest’s forces at Ebenezer Church east of Marion en route to destroy ironworks in nearby Selma, to which a number of Perry County slaves had been dispatched in 1863 to fortify the town. Wilson’s forces, who numbered as many as 13,000 at one point, ruined a few acres of land and damaged some bridges in Perry; otherwise, the county emerged from the war largely intact. As a matter of fact, University of Alabama cadets were moved to Marion during Union General John T. Croxton’s April 1865 campaign in Tuscaloosa. The previous year, as General Sherman and other Federal troops entered Mississippi, local Confederates and Confederate sympathizers had driven thousands of pigs into Alabama to avoid confiscation. Many of the pigs ended up in Perry County.¹³⁰

As might be expected, white men slaughtered the animals to provide food for themselves and their families. Whatever was left was given to the slaves, who saved the entrails to make grease, which they mixed with lye and ate. Such victuals might not have been the leftover beef, corn, pork, and vegetables to which some blacks were accustomed, but the grease-lye concoction was sufficient in the midst of war. Elsewhere in the state and country, people were forced to eat cats, dogs, even rats. Indeed, most of Perry County’s most pressing issues developed after the war. Included were the northern

¹³⁰ Winik, 116, 214; Goodrich and Goodrich, “The Year of Jubilo,” chap. 14 in *The Day Dixie Died*, 125-136. Perry County slaves were also sent to Montgomery, and two gunboats, *O. M. Petit* and *Mercury*, sailed near Marion in 1861. See “The Battle of Selma,” in Smith Collection. See also “The Great Expedition,” *New York Herald*, 29 October 1861; “Last Battle of Civil War fought on Alabama Soil, 16 April 1865: Confederates in One Final Stand,” in *ibid.*; “Lincoln Normal School: In the Beginning”; available via Internet @ <http://www.ruthk.net/marion/lincoln/directory/In%20the%20Beginning.html>; accessed 27 May 2006; Perry County, Alabama, County Commission Minutes, 1859-1868, LG 5457, ADAH; Sarah Ellen Phillips, “Reminisces of War, and [Episode] of Wilson’s Raid near Selma, Ala., April 1865,” typescript, SPR 7, ADAH; Stephen Oates, “The Man at the Whitehouse Window,” *Civil War Times* (December 1995): 56-62. Cf. Davis, *Don’t Know Much about the Civil War*, 343-348; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 205-206, 220, citing James B. Sellers, *History of the University of Alabama*, vol. 1, 286-287; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 155-158; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 87, 140-142, 145, 148-149-152; Winik, especially 238, 274-284; Wright, *What They didn’t Teach You about the Civil War*, 274. Winik incorrectly claims that Wilson’s middle initial was W.

occupation of Breckenridge Division Hospital, a Confederate sickbay that had been established in May 1863 on Howard's campus, and the subsequent end to race-based slavery that W. M. Brooks, J. L. M. Curry, A. B. Moore, W. L. Yancey, G. Yelverton, and countless other white Southerners had predicted.¹³¹

Lieutenant Colonels Josiah F. Marsh and William Markham's 9th Minnesota Infantry Regiment was one of the northern occupiers. Marsh and Markham's troops marched into Marion on 20 May 1865 and seized arms, corn, and blight-proof cotton that belonged to the Confederate government. Together with a Michigan regiment whose members had traveled to Marion on 9 April the same year, the Minnesota company transformed Breckenridge into a Union hospital that in coming months housed northern soldiers and former slaves who, according to two female Marionites, came from miles away expecting to receive the forty acres of land and the mule that federal officials were rumored to grant them by Christmas.¹³²

At least one Perry County resident considered the Unionists' efforts the first steps toward reestablishing the United States government, but many others were less enthused about the Northerners' presence. Acting on behalf of several Marion whites, one young lady turned up her nose at the northern soldiers each time they tried to speak to her.

¹³¹ Cf. Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 157-158; Winik, 47. Contrasting views about the official end to slavery abound. See, for example, Gail Snowden Hasson, "The Medical Activities of the Freedmen's Bureau in Reconstruction Alabama, 1865-1868" (Ph.D. diss., University of Alabama, 1982), 38-39. Cf. Ayers and Mittendorf, *The Oxford Book of the American South*, 111; Goodrich and Goodrich, 147; Winik, passim.

¹³² James O. Andrew, "To the Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the South," *The Greensboro Beacon*, 23 June 1865, reprinted as "What Providence has Ordained for Us," in Malcolm C. McMillan, ed., *The Confederate Reader* (1963; reprint, Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1991), 440. See Frances Pardue, "The Confederate Hospital Marion, Alabama, May 20, 1863-May 23, 1865," in *The Heritage of Perry County, Alabama*, 6; Jackson, "City Founded in 1817 by Pioneer Seeking Home." Some sources suggest that the 9th Minnesota was the 90th Minnesota and that Union General C. C. Andrews ordered the 2nd New Jersey Cavalry Regiment to Marion in May 1865. See C. Delane Tew and Eleanor Drake, "Marion: The Heart of the Black Belt," *AHA Newsletter* 21 (fall 2006): 11. Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, 239; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 220-221; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 4.

Other white townspeople refused to walk near the occupiers and considered forming a Confederate colony in Brazil. A local Methodist minister considered his neighbors' actions and ideas unwise as well as un-Christian. It was everyone's duty, he said, to quietly accept what God had ordained. In a society in which countless religious and secular leaders had claimed that race-based slavery and Lincoln's deaths were God's will, a preacher believing that the Confederate defeat and black emancipation were also sanctioned by God is no surprise.¹³³

One cannot know how many Perry Countians agreed with the minister, but several members of the 9th Minnesota heeded his advice. Because of the commendable conduct of the soldiers, especially the officers, local opinion changed. Before the regiment left the county on 26 July 1865, several friendships had been formed. Unsurprisingly, the strongest bonds were found among the blacks who had come out in droves to greet the Unionists in May, but a number of local whites also befriended the Northerners. All the same, with the departure of the 9th Minnesota, the "War...was over for Marion," asserted a white woman by the name of Frances Pardue, and a new "new something [was] coming up." Like the earlier "new something," Lincoln's election, no

¹³³ See Mary Ellen Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900* (Charlottesville, Va.: University of Virginia Press, 2000), 34. See also Charles S. Sydnor, "The Southerner and the Laws," *Journal of Southern History* 6 (February 1940): 5-6, 12-13. Cf. Bell, *Confederate Women*, 156; Davis, *Lincoln's Men*, 21-22; Goodrich and Goodrich, 46 (citing Thomas Reed Turner, *Beware the People Weeping: Public Opinion and Assassination of Abraham Lincoln* [Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982], 95, and [Raleigh, North Carolina,] *Daily Progress*, 17 May 1865), 76, 81 (citing Joseph H. Parks, *General Edmund Kirby Smith, C.S.A.* [1954, reprint, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992], 456-457), 130, 133, 136, 148, 184-185, 196 (citing *Montgomery Daily Mail*, 28 January 1866), 220; *The Heritage of Perry County, Alabama*, 20-21; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 89, 93-94, 102-103, 140, 148; Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, 76-78; Smith Letter; Winik, 34-35, 49, 103-104, 105, 215, 247-248, 300; Wright, *What They didn't Teach You about the Civil War*, 143, 160, 179.

one really knew what the latest new something was, but many people could feel it. And for thousands of white conservatives, it, too, felt bad.¹³⁴

The Home Front: Economics and Departures

The Civil War was the one of the most devastating events that any Perry Countian could have experienced. Scores of them had heard tales about the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, and a few persons had participated in the Mexican-American War; but to see persons with whom they had come of age go off to fight in a war was heart wrenching. To see some of them return home with missing limbs or traumatized was even worse. Having to bury those who did not make it home alive was worst of all.

In addition to the wounded and the dead, Perry Countians had to deal with the wartime economy. Impressments, inflation, and taxes were central issues, especially for Perry's wealthiest citizens; some of whom had been able to apply for amnesty before and during the war because they owned at least \$20,000 worth of real and other property. With Confederate treasury notes proliferating, prices rising, and the value of Confederate currency falling, many affluent citizens found it increasingly difficult to provide for themselves and their families in the manner that they had before 1861. Taking care of Confederate soldiers and animals, which devoured local grains and trampled fields as they were driven through the county, were equally difficult tasks. What is more, citizens had to pay taxes to both Alabama and the Confederacy, whose commissary, or subsistence, departments collected augurs, axes, bacon, beef, beans, buckwheat, chains, chisels, corn, crosscut saws, flour, harnesses, hay, lumber, meal, peas, peanuts, picks,

¹³⁴ Magaul, *The Eternal Education*, 41. Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, 95, 149-154, 179, 180, 203, 213; Pardue, "The Confederate Hospital."

potatoes, rice, syrup, and virtually any other item that the Confederate government needed. As a result, the wealthy planters of Perry County and other parts of the South lost thousands of dollars in implements, produce, and supplies.¹³⁵

Planters lost other, more valuable property as well. Testifying before the members of a joint-select committee of Congress who on 20 April 1871 were charged with investigating the Ku Klux Klan in the South, William S. Mudd—an antebellum planter, circuit-court judge, normal-school commissioner in Elyton (later Birmingham) in Jefferson County, city founder, hotel owner, and one-time gubernatorial candidate—swore that numerous Alabama freepersons from the Cotton Belt southward had stayed on the estates of their former owners until Wilson’s Raid. Thereupon, they left. Mudd did not know how many black persons had actually become Union soldiers, but he was certain that a large number of them had either volunteered or been conscripted.¹³⁶

Hugh Davis, Jr., a Perry County planter who took control of the family’s Beaver Bend estate outside Marion when his father died on 6 June 1862, confirmed Mudd’s suspicions. According to the younger Davis, thousands of slaves left Beaver Bend when Wilson moved through Perry County in 1865. Other “property on two legs” fled the

¹³⁵ Naturally, ordinary and destitute whites suffered during the Civil War, but they displayed amazing endurance because they were accustomed to suffering. Cf. Bell, *Confederate Women*, xiii, 149, 162, 176; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 132-134; Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 24, 141; Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 139; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 157; Martin, *A Rich Man’s War a Poor Man’s Fight*, 173; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 47, 50-51, 71-74, 79, 80-82, 133, 134, 136-137; Wright, “A Do-It-Yourself War: Homespun, Homemade, and Make-Do,” chap. 22 in *What They didn’t Teach You about the Civil War*, 226-234.

¹³⁶ William Mudd, whose political affiliation is questionable, helped found Birmingham. See “Hon. W. S. Mudd,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 31 March 1870, hereinafter cited as “Hon. W. S. Mudd.” See also “Report,” 42nd Congress, 2d. sess., 1871, Rept. No. 6, 16, in *Index to the Reports of the Committees of the Senate of the United States, for the Second Session of the Forty-second Congress, 1871-’72. In Four Volumes* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872). Cf. Fleming, *The Ku Klux Testimony Relating to Alabama*, 3 (footnote); Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 157; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 66; Winik, 115-117.

plantation soon thereafter. Davis expressed his disgust in typical slave-less planter parlance:

Orders have been issued vouchsafing freedom to negroes and they have all become monomaniacs on the subject.... [T]housands of them flocked to Selma to be free, to embrace the *nigger lovers*—Poor deluded creatures, they thought when they had crossed the breastworks around Selma they would be baptised with freedom and have nothing to do the rest of their lives but to kick up their heels and lay in the sunshine and work or not work just as they pleased—Fond delusion!¹³⁷

A gin operator named George was the first bondman to leave Beaver Bend. Joe, a plow hand, and Wright, a house servant and expert carpenter whom the Davises had often hired out, left next. Hanover, another plow hand, marched off to Selma with the hopes of marrying the female servant of a Dallas County physician; and Henrietta, a plough hand, and Lucy, an individual who had “tar on her fingers” (meaning she was a good cotton picker or a possible thief), were expected to leave. Convinced that the remaining slaves—twenty-six of whom had, in a scheme similar to sharecropping, volunteered to remain on the plantation in exchange for one-fifth of the 1865 yield—were “all crazy to see the Elephant,” Hugh Davis, Jr., gave them passes to join their compatriots in Selma. This action might have reflected Davis’ uncertainty about the actual status of slavery, for blacks no longer needed passes to move about. At any rate, Davis made it clear that anyone who left Beaver Bend could not return. As it turned out, only two slaves,

¹³⁷ Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 199-200 (first quote); Hugh Davis, Jr., quoted in Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 160 (second quote). Cf. Fleming, *The Ku Klux Testimony Relating to Alabama*, 3 (footnote); “Hon. W. S. Mudd”; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 157; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 66; Winik, 115-117.

“regulars,” or unskilled blacks, Hester and Amelio (or Amealia), left permanently. Every other departure was temporary.¹³⁸

Census data show that Davis’ situation was typical in Perry County. In 1860, its population was made up of 9,479 white citizens, 18,236 slaves, and nine free blacks, according to one source.¹³⁹ Six years later, the county had 18,166 blacks, a difference of only seventy-nine. How many people died, were born, or moved to the county during the Civil War is unknown, but one thing is certain: for most blacks, “Nigga, back to the cotton fields” were the words that they heard as soon as the war ended.¹⁴⁰

Certain that former slaves would not be dependable laborers, Hugh Davis, Jr., had no aversion to using the lash to make freepersons work. On 30 May 1865, twenty-six days after Confederate General Richard Taylor ushered in black Alabamians’ actual emancipation by surrendering to Union Major General Edward R. S. Canby at Citronelle in Mobile County following an al-fresco luncheon that featured pâté and champagne, Davis said farewell to each slave who had willingly left his service never to return. Davis, who did not mention whether any bondman had been conscripted by Confederates

¹³⁸ Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 81, 107, 108 (first quote), 153, 160 (second quote). Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, especially 98-100, 220, 222; McMillan, *The Confederate Reader*, 421; Winik, 116. Unless otherwise indicated, the Hugh Davis referenced in the text is Hugh Davis, Sr.

¹³⁹ Willie M. Crews, telephone interview with the author, 8 June 2006. Cf. Harris, *Hugh Davis*, 22; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 133.

¹⁴⁰ “Nigga, Back to the Cotton Fields,” chap. 6 in Arthur F. Raper and Ira De A. Reid, *Sharecroppers All* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941), 77-88. By 1870, the number of whites and blacks who resided in Perry County had declined. There were 7,142 white people and 17,833 black people living there during that year, according to the flawed 1870 census. A decade later, the black population had rebounded to 23,591, but the white population remained flat at 7,150. Cf. *1866 State Census*; “Hon. W. S. Mudd”; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 22.

Perry County’s rural communities suffered the greatest population declines during and following the war. Its towns, on the other hand, grew. Marion’s population increased from 1,708 people in 1860 to 2,646 people in 1870. Uniontown had only 300 people in 1850 but 1,444 in 1870. That number fell to 810 in 1880. As W. Stuart Harris notes, a number of Perry County residents left the Black Belt for Birmingham, where there were more business, employment, and political opportunities. Others moved to places like Selma, Mobile, and Montgomery. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 245.

or Unionists, then warned: “[I]f this military order, unconstitutional as it is, does not protect them always, all who have left or leave had better look out for I have a settlement with them all my own way too.”¹⁴¹

The warning was hollow. In coming months, blacks left Beaver Bend in droves; and those who stayed were unacceptable to the young planter, who complained constantly of lazy, thieving, or arrogant blacks. Davis probably exaggerated the freepersons’ unwillingness to work, but there was enough resistance manifested among them to cause him to divorce Beaver Bend for Marion. On 3 October 1865, he grieved:

Farewell Old Farm Book! [T]o record the future work of free negroes beside your content would disgrace the past. The work and profits of the best labor system ever established have been written on these pages—the past was brilliant but the future is dismal, gloomy.¹⁴²

Conclusion

The official end of the Civil War closed one important chapter in Perry County history while opening another. Virtually everyone in the county knew that law would no

¹⁴¹ Hugh Davis, Jr., quoted in Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 160, 161. Richard Taylor was the son of United States President Zachary Taylor. See James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), passim. See also John W. Beverly, *History of Alabama for Use in Public Schools and for General Reading* (Montgomery, Al.: John W. Beverly, 1901), 202; “Call It at Once,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 June 1870, hereinafter cited as “Call It at Once”; John B. Myers, “Reaction and Readjustment: The Struggle of Alabama Freedmen in Post-bellum Alabama, 1865-1867,” *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 32 (spring and summer 1970): 5; “A Sensible Letter,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 11 April 1872. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 146; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 133; Winik, 320. The day on which nineteenth-century black Alabamians celebrated independence is also mentioned in Elizabeth Bethel, “Freedmen’s Bureau in Alabama,” *Journal of Southern History* 14 (February 1948): 49; and in Robert G. Sherer, Jr., “John William Beverly: Alabama’s First Negro Historian,” *Alabama Review* 26 (July 1973): 202 (footnote 29). Some of Canby’s endeavors are discussed in Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 26-29, and in Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 138-139. Taylor claimed that he surrendered to Canby on 8, not 4, May, even though newspapers and other contemporaneous source suggested otherwise. See, for example, “The Situation,” *New York Herald*, 12 May 1865. Cf. Wright, *What They didn’t Teach You about the Civil War*, 277-278.

¹⁴² Hugh Davis, Jr., quoted in Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 162. Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, 222; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 102.

longer permit race-based slavery, but no one knew if former slaves and slave owners would continue to live together in relative peace as legal equals. Union forces and former slaves occupied school halls and dormitories that white students had once filled, and freepersons were primed to compete for jobs that had been reserved for whites or that the vast majority of slaves had performed for free. White ministers could no longer decide when, where, and how black churchgoers could worship, and black political activism was on the rise.

Most black and several moderate-to-liberal white Perry Countians welcomed such changes, but traditionalist whites did not. For the latter group, slavery had provided a sense of stability, security, and purpose that all white persons—regardless of their class, political affiliation, or educational background—could enjoy. God, they said, had ordained the arrangement, and thousands of Confederate soldiers had been baptized in blood to preserve it. Altering the design was not only unpatriotic; it was sacrilegious.

The events that followed the Civil War confirmed white conservatives' greatest fears. Throughout Reconstruction and into the Redemption years, Perry County was a bastion of black economic, political, and religious strength. African Americans owned homes, built churches and schools, became lawmakers, and even organized a labor union. For them, the end of the Civil War did usher in something new, but it was hardly as bad as most white Alabamians claimed.

“BLACK RECONSTRUCTION” IN ALABAMA: FORMING A NEW EDUCATIONAL AND POLITICAL CULTURE, 1865-1874

“Her elation when emancipated was intense. Much to my annoyance, she insisted upon leaving, in spite of my promise to take care of her as before, and with her son Wade, a young man about twenty, she set up housekeeping for herself. Wade was not able to care for her as I would have done. But perhaps, after all, the old woman’s conduct was not strange. All she had previously lacked of being free was absolute independence.”

—Hilary Herbert, n.d.¹

“Verily, the work does not end with the abolition of slavery, it only begins.”

—Frederick Douglass, 1865²

As the Civil War came to a close, United States President Andrew Johnson began the process of reconstituting, or restoring, the eleven states that had seceded from the Union by appointing provisional governors. In Alabama, the person who held the position between 21 June and 18 December 1865 was Attorney Lewis E. Parsons, a commercially connected former Whig and secession opponent from New York who had resided in Talladega County, Alabama, since 1838.³ Parsons’ grandfather was New England’s “First Great Awakening” leader Jonathan (“the Prophet”) Edwards, but no great—or even moderate—awakening did the descendent of the Prophet lead in Alabama.

¹ Hilary A. Herbert, *Grandfather Talks about His Life under Two Flags: The Reminiscences of Hilary A. Herbert* (N.P.: n.p., n.d.), 8-9.

² Frederick Douglass, quoted in Winik, 380. A variation of Douglass’ statement ends with “but only begins” rather than “it only begins.”

³ Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 26, 161-162, 237; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 63; Wiggins, *Scalawag*, passim; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 148. At least one scholar spelled Parson’s first name Louis. Cf. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 487.

As per Johnson's proclamation, most of the laws that had existed in the state before the war could remain on the books. Likewise, the vast majority of the state's officeholders could retain their positions even though many of them had been Confederate officials. Little was done to change the social status of former slaves, who constituted almost half the state's population, and some lawmakers advocated the preservation of slavery. To the average white Alabamian, the Thirteenth Amendment merely changed black people's legal status. The *Huntsville Advocate* clarified this belief when, after encouraging its white readers to support the legal rights of blacks, it explained how legal rights and civil rights were different. Black people had been granted the former, not the latter, it contended.⁴

According to one source, white Alabamians, "unable to realize the implications of freedom and unwilling to acquiesce in anything approaching race equality," considered blacks subhuman and thus incapable of independence and uneducable. At the same time, and paradoxically, many conservative whites thought Reconstruction-era legislation benefited only blacks and white Republican turncoats, part of a national conspiracy to take from proper, patriotic, southern, white men "their" governments, thereby making

⁴ *The Huntsville Advocate*, 31 August 1865. See *The Revised Code of Alabama, Prepared by A. J. Walker* (Montgomery, Al.: Reid and Screws, 1867), 34, 72, hereinafter cited as *Revised Code of Alabama*. See also John B. Myers, "The Freedman and the Law in Postbellum Alabama, 1865-1867," *Alabama Review* 23 (January 1970): 56; William Warren Rogers et al., *Alabama: The History of a Deep South State* (Tuscaloosa, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 1994), 226, 230, 231, 233, 235, 238; Stewart E. Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung: African American Family Life on Southern Farms* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 4. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 48, 162, 164, 250-251; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 23; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 147, 149; Goordich and Goodrich, 241. Information about some of Alabama's most prominent Confederate leaders who held political and other positions in the state and elsewhere in the nation following the Civil War can be found in William B. Hesseltine and Larry Gara, "Confederate Leaders in Postwar Alabama," *Alabama Review* 4 (January 1951): 5-21. Particular attention is given to W. W. Allen, James T. Holtzclaw, David P. Lewis, Edward O'Neal, John Tyler Morgan, George Goldthwaite, J. L. M. Curry, and William Russell Smith.

“the Negro” their master. White conservatives had little reason to worry. Few African Americans wielded real political power in the state during Reconstruction.⁵

The 1865 State Constitution and Black Codes

In September 1865, delegates to the state constitutional convention adopted a body of laws whereby secession was voided, the Confederate debt was repudiated, and slavery was abolished. The delegates decided that representation to Alabama’s legislature would be based on two-year terms, but only white men would be able to become legislators. Delegates approved a census for 1866 but, against thirty Black Belt representatives’ wishes, decided that representation would be based on the calculated population of only white Alabamians. By doing so, the delegates reduced the strength of the predominantly African American counties that made up the Black Belt. Henceforth, Negroes would be allowed to serve as witnesses in open-court criminal cases that involved Caucasians, which antebellum law and Governor Parsons had prevented, but marriage between the two races would be forbidden. Because of a split between wealthy white planters, who thought that they could control black voters, and small merchants and farmers, who opposed black voting, the universal manhood suffrage for which delegates to a black (colored, freedmen’s) convention in Mobile and Nathan L. Brooks of Lowndes County had called was tabled.⁶

⁵ Joseph H. Taylor, “The Fourteenth Amendment, the Negro, and the Spirit of the Times,” *Journal of Negro History* 45 (January 1960): 24, quoting Samuel E. Morison and Henry S. Commager, *Growth of the American Republic*, vol. 2 (New York: Oxford Press, 1950), 17.

⁶ North Alabama delegates argued that counting all citizens would give their colleagues in the southern parts of the state an unfair advantage in the legislature. See Article IV, sec. 5 and sec. 8, Constitution of the State of Alabama, 1865, in *Revised Code of Alabama*, 36, hereinafter cited as 1865 Constitution. See also Lewis Parsons to Andrew Johnson, 2 October 1865, in Alabama Governor’s Administrative Files, 1865: Parsons, SG 24884, ADAH, hereinafter cited as Parsons Papers; “By Telegraph,” *Daily Selma Times*, 27

Two months after the state constitution was adopted, elections were held at the county and state levels. Robert Miller Patton—a former state legislator, public education advocate, merchant, Democrat and Whig from Lauderdale County—was elected governor. Like Parsons, Patton had opposed secession but had attempted to remain loyal to the state once it became clear that Alabama was leaving the Union. Patton had not seen combat during the war, but he had served as a Confederate commissioner and sold rebel bonds.⁷

Immediately after taking office, Governor Patton had to face some major issues. Central among them was race, a topic that he usually tried to avoid. The federal troops who had helped usher in the official end of slavery in Alabama in May 1865 had not helped usher in any significant changes in the state's cultural, economic, or political makeup. Delegates to the September 1865 constitutional convention had accepted section one of the Thirteenth Amendment, which protected a citizen from slavery or involuntarily unless he or she was tried and duly convicted of a crime, but they had rejected section two, which gave congressmen the power to enforce the amendment

September 1865; "The Freedmen's Convention," *Daily Selma Times*, 28 November 1865; *Mobile Nationalist*, 14 December 1865; *New York Daily Tribune*, 12 December 1865; *The Penal Code of Alabama; Prepared by Geo. W. Stone and J. W. Shepherd, and Adopted by the General Assembly at the Session of 1865-6, Together with the Other Criminal Laws Now in Force* (Montgomery, Al.: Reid and Screws, 1866), 31, 66-67, 69, 91, 164-165, hereinafter cited as *The Penal Code of Alabama*. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 162-163; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 151-154; Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 488-489; Myers, "The Freedman and the Law in Postbellum Alabama, 1865-1867," 58-61.

⁷ Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 233. See *Pardons by the President: Message by the President, Transmitting Final Report of the Names of Persons Engaged in Rebellion who have been Pardoned by the President*, 40th Congress, 2d. sess., 1867, House Ex. Doc. 16, 28. During the 1853-1854 legislative session, Robert M. Patton and J. L. M. Curry helped Alexander B. Meek get a bill authorizing a statewide public education system for white students signed into law. See Lee C. Cain, "Founding Public Schools in Alabama—A County Led the Way," *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 38 (winter 1976): 247. See also Peter Michael Hoar, "History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875" (master's thesis, Auburn University, 1956), 2; Albert Moore, *History of Alabama*, rev. ed. (Tuscaloosa, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 1934). Opposition to the 1854 law, especially in the Black Belt, is discussed in Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 74-75. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 74, 163; Myers, "The Freedman and the Law in Postbellum Alabama, 1865-1867," 56.

through appropriate legislation. Taking a states-rights position and arguably misapplying a state's ability to police individual, or personal, contracts under the amendment, Alabama lawmakers in December 1865 decided that only local and state officials could determine the political status of former slaves, consequently enacting black codes governing apprenticeship, gun ownership, language, vagrancy, and other matters to regulate African Americans' social, political, and occupational conduct.⁸

Alabama's black codes attracted attention from around the nation. As Maine Congressman James G. Blaine observed, the "civilized" officials of Alabama decided that stubborn, refractory, or able-bodied citizens who "loitered away their time" were vagrants. The same label was placed on drunkards, people who ran away from their employers, or individuals who habitually neglected their duties. *The Penal Code of Alabama* allowed these persons to be brought before a probate judge and fined fifty dollars, which was a large sum during the immediate postwar years. If someone defaulted, then he or she could be hired out "on three days notice by public outcry" for up to six months. In other words, the Thirteenth Amendment did not "destroy the auction

⁸ Patience Essah, communication to the author, 17 October 2006. See James G. Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress: From Lincoln to Garfield. With a Review of the Events which Led to the Political Revolution of 1860*, 2 vols. (Norwich, Conn.: Henry Bill Publishing Company, 1884-1886), 94-98. See also "Labor Contracts Laws and the Thirteenth Amendment," *Harvard Law Review* 24 (March 1911): 391-393; "The Reach of the Thirteenth Amendment," *Columbia Law Review* 47 (March 1947): 299-307; Theodore B. Wilson, *The Black Codes of the South* (Tuscaloosa, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 1965). Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 25; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 24, 63; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 152, 154; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 6-7, 33, 46, 227 (footnote 12); Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 64-65; "Reorganization Following the War," chap. 7 in McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama*, 90-109; Myers, "The Freedman and the Law In Postbellum Alabama, 1865-1867," 56-69; *The Penal Code of Alabama*; Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 233; Taylor, "The Fourteenth Amendment, the Negro, and the Spirit of the Times," 24-25.

block”; the amendment, as interpreted by Alabama lawmakers, merely sent the block inside a courtroom.⁹

Another Alabama black code relegated black law offenders, including women, to chain gangs. In theory, the code did not pardon other ethnic groups, but in practice, the chain gang was reserved almost entirely for black persons. Journalist John Trowbridge presumed white prisoners must have been too virtuous to be placed in chains and sent to the streets. The state vagrancy, or vagrant, law was applied in an equally biased manner, provoking persons throughout the nation to denounce Alabama’s black codes even though they were relatively moderate when compared to those of other states, according to some commentators. Congressman Blaine disagreed with this idea. “The Plumed Knight” (Blaine) was certain that Alabama’s vagrancy statute was designed to reduce helpless freepersons to slavery for six months, a punishment that county and state officials could extend to two years whenever they wished.¹⁰

Blaine was confident that the vagrancy law would be enforced most vigorously during the growing and harvesting seasons, when black laborers were needed to produce corn, cotton, and other staple goods. “By this detestable process,” he wrote in disgust, “the ‘master’ had the labor of the ‘servant’ for a mere pittance; and even that pittance did not go to the servant, but was paid to the treasury of the county, and thus relieved the white men from their proper share of taxation.” Blaine knew that there might have been

⁹ Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress*, 94; Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 16; John L. Love, *The Disenfranchisement of the Negro* (Washington, D.C.: The American Negro Academy, 1899); John B. Myers, “The Freedmen and the Labor Supply: The Economic Adjustments in Postbellum Alabama, 1865-1867,” *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 32 (fall and winter 1970): 160. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 154, citing *Mobile Register*, 25 October 1865; *The Penal Code of Alabama*, 10, 37.

¹⁰ See *Mobile Advertiser and Register*, 25 July 1866. See also *Mobile Nationalist*, 2 September 1866. Cf. Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress*, 94; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 6, 7; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 74-75.

“more cruel laws enacted, but the statute-books of the world might be searched in vain for one of meaner injustice.... [O]nly a community blind to public justice and to public decency,” he continued, “could enact a law that in effect declares the poverty of the laborer to be a crime.” In an equally condemning remark, one northern-born Alabama official said the state’s black codes “furnished to their advocates what was desired, and it would be difficult to tell the wickedness they have been and still are instrumental.” Blacks who were imprisoned for speaking foul words in front of white women, for throwing rocks at sheep, or for damaging plates undoubtedly agreed.¹¹

Alabama’s provisional government faced some material challenges as well as some challenges that were psychological. Key concerns included the emancipation of slaves, widespread disorganization and despair, cotton and other types of thievery, and violence—what Governor Parsons called “the invariable accompaniments of war...engendered and encouraged by a laxity of morals.” Other key concerns included numerous whites’ insistence on the preservation of legal slavery, the state’s battered lands, which heavy downpours followed by sustained droughts worsened, and President Johnson’s Reconstruction—or, as he preferred to say, Restoration—plan, which did little more than force martial law on an unreceptive white citizenry. The president’s purported

¹¹ Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress*, 96 (first quote); Wager Swayne, quoted in *Laws in Relation to Freedmen*, 39th Congress, 2d. sess., 1867, Senate Ex. Doc. 6, *loc. cit.*, 7; Wager Swayne to Lewis Parsons, 30 September 1867, Parsons Papers; Myers, “The Freedman and the Law in Postbellum Alabama, 1865-1867,” 67 (second quote). Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 6; Wilson, *The Black Codes of the South*. The original black codes that Alabama legislators advocated were extremely harsh. When Congressman Blaine and other northern policymakers and pundits reacted negatively to the codes, Governor Patton reexamined them and decided that it was unjust to force legally free black persons to live by the codes. Cf. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 488; Myers, “The Freedman and the Law In Postbellum Alabama, 1865-1867,” 67; *The Penal Code of Alabama*; Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 238.

intrusion was soon exacerbated by what many white Alabamians considered another foreign meddler, the United States Congress.¹²

The Freedmen's Bureau

The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (the Freedmen's Bureau, the Bureau) was established by an act of Congress on 3 March 1865.¹³ A component of the United States War Department, the Freedmen's Bureau in Alabama was headed by Wager Swayne, an Ohio-born attorney and decorated Union general whom national Bureau commissioner Oliver Otis Howard appointed military governor of Alabama on 20 June 1865.¹⁴ The initial concerns of Swayne (whose antislavery father, Noah, had sat on the United States Supreme Court) and other Bureau officials included the economic, educational, and medical conditions of former slaves. But once black men

¹² Lewis Parsons to Andrew Johnson, 2 October 1865. See "Alabama: Message from the President of the United States, Communicating an Application from Alabama to Resume the Direct Tax Assigned to that State," 39th Congress, 1st sess., 1866, House Ex. Doc. 79. See also Bureau of Refugees and Freedmen, *Report of the Assistant Commissioner of Alabama, 1866* (Montgomery, Al.: Barrett and Brown Printers, [1866]), 5. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 147-149; Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 40; Goodrich and Goodrich, 196, 197 (citing *Montgomery Daily Mail*, 31 May 1865), 213, 214, 217; *Laws in Relation to Freedmen*, 3.

¹³ Several works discuss the historical and legislative roots of the Freedmen's Bureau. See, for example, Ira Berlin and Leslie S. Rowland, eds., *Families and Freedom* (New York: New Press, 1997). See also Ira Berlin et al., *Free at Last: A Documentary History of Slavery, Freedom and the Civil War* (New York: Free Press, 1992); *The Destruction of Slavery* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Donald G. Nieman, ed., *The Freedmen's Bureau and Black Freedom* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1994).

¹⁴ Wager Swayne, a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor, was appointed commissioner when O. O. Howard's first choice, Colonel Thomas W. Osborn, was injured. See John B. Myers, "The Alabama Freedmen and the Economic Adjustments during Presidential Reconstruction, 1865-1867," *Alabama Review* 26 (October 1973): 253. See also Kenneth B. White, "Black Lives, Red Tape: The Alabama Freedmen's Bureau," *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 43 (winter 1981): 242. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 215; Bethel, "Freedmen's Bureau in Alabama," 49; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 149-150; Hasson, "The Medical Activities of the Freedmen's Bureau in Reconstruction Alabama, 1865-1868," 40; *Laws in Relation to Freedmen*, 3.

were slated to vote, Swayne and company placed African Americans' political condition on their agenda also.¹⁵

Article VII, sec. 1 of the 1865 state constitution spelled out who could and could not vote in Alabama. Any twenty-one-year-old, white, male United States citizen who had lived in the state one year before an election could vote as long as he had resided in the county in which he planned to cast his ballot for at least three months. Blacks, women, and foreign-born adults could not vote regardless of how long they had resided in the state or in a particular county.¹⁶

Qualified officeholders were delineated in Article I, section 144 of the 1865 state constitution. As a general rule, any white man who was at least twenty-one years of age could hold a political office in Alabama. But there was one exception: a black man, "though tainted with negro blood," could perform "valid acts" as a constable. This office was the only position that a social minority could hold under the 1865 state code.¹⁷

¹⁵ See Kenneth B. White, "The Alabama Freedmen's Bureau and Black Education: The Myth of Opportunity," *Alabama Review* 34 (April 1981): 107-124. Black education was not included in the original national program of the Freedmen's Bureau. According to some historians, Commissioner Howard and Minnesota legislator Ignatius Donnelly were responsible for adding black education to the Bureau's agenda. On Thursday, 14 December 1865, Representative Donnelly read a resolution on the House floor to allow the Joint Committee on Reconstruction to "inquire into the expediency of establishing... a national bureau of education, whose duty it shall be to enforce education, without regard to race or color, upon the population of all such States as shall fall below a standard to be established by Congress, and to inquire whether such a bureau should not be made an essential and permanent part of any system of reconstruction." The resolution failed 113 to thirty-seven with twenty-nine abstentions. *Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States: Being the First Session of the Thirty-ninth Congress; Begun and Held at the City of Washington, December 4, 1865, in the Ninetieth Year of the Independence of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1866), 69. For additional information, see Lucille Griffith, ed., *Alabama: A Documentary History to 1900* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1972), 568. See also John Cox, *General O. O. Howard and the "Misrepresented Bureau"* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1953); John and LaWanda Cox, "General O. O. Howard and the 'Misrepresented Bureau,'" *Journal of Southern History* 19 (November 1953): 427-456; Gail S. Hasson, "Health and Welfare of Freedmen in Reconstruction Alabama," *Alabama Review* 35 (April 1982): 94-110. Cf. Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 234.

¹⁶ Cf. *Revised Code of Alabama*, 43-44.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 118.

Few black Alabamians believed the Freedmen's Bureau was going to incorporate them into the body politic of the state, but thousands of them believed the Bureau was going to make them landowners. During the war, news had spread that the federal government was going to seize Confederate planters' land and redistribute it among blacks and financially poor white Unionists. Tecumseh Sherman, the famed Union general and West Point graduate who had changed his name to William following his baptism, and United States Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, a key figure in the creation of the American Freedmen's Inquiry Commission in 1863 and the Committee on Emancipation the following year, seemed to corroborate the claim when they met with twenty black leaders in Savannah, Georgia, on 13 January 1865 to discuss black persons' future.¹⁸ Three days later, Sherman issued Field Order No. 15, in which he suggested that forty acres of tillable ground in Florida, Georgia, and the South Carolina Sea Islands and "assistance" should be given to any three respectable African American men who wished to erect a peaceful agricultural community. Many people assumed assistance meant mules because the animals were common beasts of burden during the nineteenth century. Before President Johnson rescinded the measure in 1869, at least 40,000 freepersons had occupied approximately 400,000 acres of land.¹⁹

¹⁸ See Edwin D. Hoffman, "From Slavery to Self-Reliance: The Record of Achievement of the Freedmen of the Sea Island Region," *Journal of Southern History* 41 (January 1956): 8-42. See also James G. Sproat, "Blue Print for Radical Reconstruction," *Journal of Southern History* 23 (February 1957): 25-44. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 28; Goodrich and Goodrich, 239; Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction*, passim, and *Slavery and Freedom*, 79-81, 88, 110; Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung*, 9; Winik, 303-304. John W. Alvord, a Freedmen's Bureau official, might have accompanied Sherman and Stanton, from whom a group of black men from Savannah had requested education assistance in December 1864. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 11.

¹⁹ "Special Field Orders, No. 15," 16 January 1865, Headquarters Military Division of the Mississippi, Orders and Circulars, Ser. 44, Adjutant General's Office, Record Group 94, NA. See John W. Alvord, *First Semi-Annual Report on Schools and Finances of Freedmen, January 1, 1866* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1868), 15. See also Eric Foner, "Rights and the Constitution in Black Life during the Civil War and Reconstruction," *Journal of American History* 74 (December 1987): 870-871;

Although people have praised the supposedly magnanimous action of General Sherman, he actually made the suggestion out of necessity. Numerous black soldiers had accompanied him as he moved through the South, and Sherman wondered what he would do with them once the fighting stopped and the legal chains of slavery were removed. According to the general, he headed an army not a refugee camp. Radical Republican Thaddeus Stevens—a former antislavery Whig from Vermont, Pennsylvania state legislator, chairman of the United States House Ways and Means Committee, and Andrew Johnson critic whom James T. Rapier once referred to as “God’s Great Apostle,” others the “Great Commoner”—supported a similar plan, but Stevens was more concerned with black people’s postwar conditions.²⁰

The Freedmen’s Bureau Act of March 1865 also seemed to promise free land for blacks. According to its land clause, every male freedman or refugee could rent forty acres of abandoned or confiscated land for three months. Thereafter, he could purchase it. Conservative Alabama Democrats and other opponents of black upward mobility knew about these facts, but they rarely mentioned any of them. Instead, the opponents claimed that Radical Republicans had invented the forty-acres-and-a-mule story to curry favor with uninformed, gullible freepersons.²¹

Eutaw Mayor John G. Pierce described an incident in which a phony federal agent appeared at a barbecue that a group of black Alabamians were having. Immediately, the

Stephen B. Weeks, “The History of Negro Suffrage in the South,” *Political Science Quarterly* 4 (1894): 700. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 28; Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction*, 318-331, 337-339, and *Slavery and Freedom*, 110.

²⁰ James T. Rapier, quoted in “Civil Rights Bill,” *Congressional Record*, vol. 2, part 1, 43rd Congress, 1st sess., 565-567. Actually, Thaddeus Stevens was more realistic than romantic. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 25, 28, 32-33; Leavell, 152-153.

²¹ Cf. Foner, “Rights and the Constitution in Black Life during the Civil War and Reconstruction,” 870-871; Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction*, 337-339, and *Slavery and Freedom*, especially 79-82.

fake official informed the men of the good works that he had performed on their behalf. During a recent trip to the nation's capitol, the imaginary agent of goodwill had procured twenty-four red and blue pegs. According to him, they were the only items that the black men needed to mark the forty acres of land and to acquire the mule that they had been promised. Amazingly, all the man wanted in return was the money that he had spent to purchase the markers, which cost \$1 each.²²

Four pegs were required to stake out the fictitious land claims. After purchasing them, the former slaves were directed to stick the pegs down in four corners to mark their territory. Afterward, the forty acres of land was ready to accommodate them, their families and future homes, and the mules for which some ex-slaves had already received halters.

As extraordinary as Pierce's testimony might seem, a Freedmen's Bureau report confirmed that some blacks really did think the painted sticks amounted to land deeds. In a communication dated 9 January 1866, a Granby, Alabama, resident whooped: "Know all men by these present...that a naught is a naught, and a figure is a figure; all for the white man, and none for the nig. And whereas Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so also I have lifted this d—d nigger out of [d]ollars and six bits. Amen."²³

A person can only wonder whether the individuals who sold the "liberty pegs" were ever captured or prosecuted. Considering Alabama's immediate postbellum climate, it is unlikely that they were ever brought to justice. In fact, many white and a

²² See *Report of the Joint Select Committee to Inquire into the Condition of Affairs in the Late Insurrectionary States*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 238, 314, hereinafter cited as *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*. See also "Sale of Painted Sticks to Freedmen," in Walter Fleming, ed., *West Virginia University Documents Relating to Reconstruction, Nos. 6 and 7: Freedmen's Bureau Documents and The Freedmen's Bureau Bank* (Morgantown, W.V.: [West Virginia University,] 1904), 44, hereinafter cited as *Documents Relating to Reconstruction*.

²³ "Deed for Land, Given with Painted Sticks," in *Documents Relating to Reconstruction*, 45.

few black Alabamians thought the gullible blacks who bought the sticks received what they deserved. They played with Republican fire and got burnt—just as Democrats said they would.²⁴

Over time, the Freedmen's Bureau became one of Alabama's leading proponents of equal rights and privileges. The Bureau was particularly vociferous about black manhood suffrage, education, and employment. Writing to fellow agent Oliver D. Kinsman, Samuel S. Gardner declared that black Clarke and Monroe Countians were in grave need of the ballot even though allowing black men to vote seemed senseless to many of their white neighbors. According to Gardner, the whites claimed to have no political secrets that they wished to hide from blacks. The former, more experienced citizens were even willing to explain to freepersons everything that they needed to know about being free, including the suffrage that the blacks would never use, without disrupting the general fabric of the state any further than the Civil War and the subsequent federal occupation had already done. That being the case, Gardner knew that it would be difficult to get the white folk in his district to accept black manhood suffrage.²⁵

Most white Alabamians agreed with the Clarke and Monroe County skeptics, and Wager Swayne knew it. Thus, to ease white tensions regarding foreign rule and emancipation, the Yale and Cincinnati Law School graduate (Swayne) recruited white

²⁴ Alvord discusses how quickly the dream of forty acres and a mule diminished in certain parts of Alabama in *First Semi-Annual Report on Schools and Finances of Freedmen, January 1, 1866*, 15.

²⁵ Samuel S. Gardner to O. D. Kinsman, 23 July 1867, quoted in Richard L. Hume, "The Freedmen's Bureau and the Freedmen's Vote in the Reconstruction of Southern Alabama: An Account by Samuel S. Gardner," *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 37 (fall 1975): 222. This suggestion is also made in Donald G. Nieman, "Andrew Johnson, the Freedmen's Bureau, and the Problem of Equal Rights, 1865-1866," *Journal of Southern History* 44 (August 1978): 399. Cf. Hasson, "The Medical Activities of the Freedmen's Bureau in Reconstruction Alabama, 1865-1868."

Alabamians, including former Confederates, to become Bureau agents whenever he could. He also, according to some researchers, allowed officials in the westernmost parts of the Black Belt to jail suspected black criminals without trial, failed to design a policy to punish white planters who violated freemen's civil rights, ignored northern-born Bureau agents and local blacks who reported such violations, and decided against organizing Freedmen's Bureau Courts similar to those in Mississippi.²⁶ Dubious that any individual or agency was capable of altering black Alabamians' social status to a point where it was comparable to that of white persons, Swayne's early advice to African Americans was succinct: "hope for nothing, but go to work and behave yourselves."²⁷

²⁶ Many debates have been waged about how O. O. Howard, Wager Swayne, and other white Freedmen's Bureau officials approached their jobs. While some historians have considered Swayne and Howard to be earnest humanitarians who were guilelessly concerned with African Americans' welfare, other historians have called the Freedmen's Bureau a paternalistic agency whose officials often sided with planters. See George D. Humphrey, "The Failure of the Mississippi Freedmen's Bureau in Black Labor Relationships, 1865-1867," *Journal of Mississippi History* 45 (February 1983): 23. See also William S. McFreeley, *Yankee Stepfather: General O. O. Howard and the Freedmen* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); in Donald G. Nieman, *To Set the Law in Motion: The Freedmen's Bureau and the Legal Rights of Blacks, 1865-1868* (Millwood, N.Y.: KTO Press, 1979) and *The Politics of Freedom: African Americans and the Political Process during Reconstruction* (New York: Garland Press, 1994); Daniel A. Novack, *The Wheel of Servitude: Black Forced Labor after Slavery* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1978); Roger L. Ransom and Richard Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom: The Economic Consequences of Emancipation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977). Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 45; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 242-243.

Kenneth B. White and John Carpenter are among the historians who have offered a more sympathetic view of Howard, Swayne, and company. According to White, "bureaucratic mismanagement" hindered any hope of a successful mission. "The most debilitating aspect of Bureau operations," writes White, was the "incredible bureaucracy and red tape that strangled the efficiency of the organization." White, "Black Lives, Red Tape," 242. See John A. Carpenter, *Sword and Olive Branch: Oliver Howard* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964). An understanding, though not necessarily sympathetic, approach is taken by Burnett in *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 150-151, 159; by Michael Fitzgerald in "Wager Swayne, The Freedmen's Bureau, and the Politics of Reconstruction in Alabama," *Alabama Review* 48 (July 1995): 188-218; by Hasson in "The Medical Activities of the Freedmen's Bureau in Reconstruction Alabama, 1865-1869," 41-45, 48; by Leon Litwack in *Been in the Storm so Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (New York: Knopf, 1979); and by Kenneth B. White in "Wager Swayne: Racist or Realist?" *Alabama Review* 31 (April 1978): 92-109. For O. O. Howard's self-analysis, see *Autobiography of Oliver Howard, Major General United States Army*, 2 vols. (1907; reprint, Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1971). For a partial synthesis of nineteenth- and twentieth-century writers, including Swayne himself, cf. Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 51-55.

²⁷ Richard Bailey, "Black Legislators during the Reconstruction of Alabama, 1867-1868" (Ph.D. diss., Kansas State University, 1984), 4; John B. Myers, "The Alabama Freedmen and the Economic Adjustment during Presidential Reconstruction, 1865-1867," 260, citing *Jacksonville (Florida) Times Union*, 15

Thousands of black people disagreed with Swayne. For them, freedom meant doing what white people could do. And white people—white men at least—could vote. Whites could also own land and weapons, hold political meetings and socialize free from interference, keep dogs, and go to school if they chose and could afford to do so. If a black person could not do these things, then he or she was not free, observed Reverend Henry M. Turner, a notable black Georgian. “I ought to do so too, or else I am a slave,” he opined.²⁸ Most black Alabamians felt the same way. Holland Thompson, one of the Republican-leaning *Mobile Nationalist*’s black agents, was certain that black manhood suffrage, expanded educational opportunities, and land ownership would help guarantee the “‘speediest elevation’ of the race.”²⁹

Despite black contestation, Swayne’s advice was sound. By concentrating their efforts on building substantial economic bases rather than hoping to be received by their white neighbors as political or social equals, black Alabamians might have realized part of the ideals that emancipation supposedly afforded and ideals that most white

October 1865, the *Grove Hill (Clarke County, Alabama) Journal*, 14 September 1865, and George R. Bentley, *History of the Freedmen’s Bureau* (Philadelphia: [n.p.,] 1955), 111-112. See R. Blair to Superintendent of Registration, 23 June 1867, Joseph C. Bradley to Wager Swayne, 26 and 28 April 1867, F. S. Cramer et al. to Wager Swayne, 20 April 1867, and John Silsby to Wager Swayne, 1 April 1867, Wager Swayne Letter, 1902, in Wager Swayne Papers, SPR 256, ADAH. Cf. Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 237.

²⁸ Henry Turner, quoted in Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 78. Henry Turner was a multifaceted individual. In addition to being a minister, he was a blacksmith, carriage maker, educator, politician, and chaplain in the 1st Regiment of the United States Troops during the Civil War. After the war, Turner became a Freedmen’s Bureau agent, an African Methodist Episcopal Church bishop, and president of Morris Brown College in Atlanta. See Stephen Ward Angell, *Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and African-American Religion in the South* (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 1982). See also John Matthews, “Negro Republicans in the Reconstruction of Georgia,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 60 (1976): 147. Cf. 1852 *State Code*; Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 17; Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 176.

²⁹ Holland Thompson, quoted in Howard Rabinowitz, *Race Relations in the Urban South, 1865-1890* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 262. White women could not vote, of course, but Pierce Burton, a Demopolis-based Freedmen’s Bureau agent from Massachusetts, did call for white womanhood suffrage during the early postbellum years. See *Demopolis New Era*, 20 March 1867. See also Sarah W. Wiggins, “A Proposal for Women’s Suffrage in Alabama in 1867,” *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 32 (fall and winter 1970): 181-185. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawag*, 164.

Alabamians were staunchly opposed to blacks either having or displaying.³⁰ While it is true that black politicians were elected to constitutional conventions, state legislatures, and executive (constitutional, statewide, constitutional statewide) offices throughout the South during Reconstruction, it is also true that in no state except South Carolina did black representatives constitute a numerical majority. And even there, one United States senator and three out of four House members were Scalawags.³¹

In some southern states, demographics accounted for the absence of black officeholders. Ordinary white citizens and leading politicians outnumbered their black equivalents by a sizeable margin. But in Alabama, whites barely exceeded blacks during Reconstruction. Furthermore, more than 150 “pure-black” and “mulatto” politicians were appointed or elected to office between 1867 and 1874. They simply held minor positions

³⁰ See John Sibley Butler, “Why Booker T. Washington was Right: A Reconsideration of the Economics of Race,” in Thomas D. Boston, ed., *A Different Vision: African American Economic Thought*, vol. 1 (New York: Routledge, 1997), 174-193. See also Horace Mann Bond, “The Influence of Personalities on the Public Education of Negroes in Alabama,” chap. 14 in *Negro Education in Alabama*, 195-225, and “The Influence of Personalities on the Public Education of Negroes in Alabama, I,” *Journal of Negro Education* 6 (January 1937): 23, hereinafter cited as “The Influence of Personalities”; Dale A. Somers, “Black and White in New Orleans: A Study in Urban Race Relations, 1865-1900,” *Journal of Southern History* 40 (February 1974): 20. For an interesting assessment of many black persons’ attitudes regarding voting, see August Meier, *Negro Thought in America, 1880-1915: Radical Thought in the Age of Booker T. Washington* (1963, reprint, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969). *African American Life in the Post-Emancipation South, 1861-1900*, an anthological series of scholarly articles published by Garland Publishing, Incorporated, in 1994 and edited by Donald G. Nieman, explores many aspects of black life during the Civil War and Reconstruction eras. The postbellum Black Family is the focus of Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and Family from Slavery to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1985) and Herbert Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1976). Clarence Earl Walker’s *A Rock in a Weary Land* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981) is an excellent examination of the Black Church, and Robert Charles Morris, *Reading, ‘Riting, and Reconstruction: The Education of Freedmen in the South, 1861-1870* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982) is a valuable source of information about the Black School.

³¹ Sharron Herron and Christopher Pitts, telephone interviews with the author, 8 August 2006. See, for example, Edward Magdol, “Local Black Leadership: Moses as a Model,” chap. 5 in *A Right to the Land: Essays on the Freedmen’s Community* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977), 109-138. Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 75-77; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 153; Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, 102-103; Thornbrough, 2; Tunnell, “Creating ‘the Propaganda of History,’” 804. For an enumeration of the major and the minor black officeholders in Alabama during Reconstruction, cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*.

(see Appendix H).³² There were no black governors, lieutenant governors, or secretaries of state. Nor were there any black state auditors, commissioners of agriculture, commissioners of industry, superintendents of education, or treasurers. In fact, not one African American was elected to a constitutional statewide office during Alabama's "Second Civil War." However, they did hold local offices, sit in the state legislature, and attend constitutional and Republican conventions alongside whites.³³

The 1867 Republican Conventions

According to historian Loren Schweninger, the first time that black and white Alabamians gathered as "political equals" was at a 25 March 1867 meeting in Montgomery. Schweninger is only partly correct. Black and white persons did meet on that day but not as equals. Only white persons gave speeches. There was little change in this area over the next few months. When the Union Republican and the Union League conventions met together in the state capitol on 4 and 5 June 1867, the gathering was hardly an abode of party unity. Approximately 100 black and fifty white Republicans attended the meeting, at which delegates pledged support for the national party platform, including the congressional Reconstruction plan that countless white Alabamians

³² For a contrasting view, see John Hope Franklin and Alfred A. Moss, Jr., *Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans*, 7th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 218-219. Alabama law defined a mulatto as "a person of mixed blood, descended, on the part of the mother or father, from negro ancestors, to the third generation may have been a white person." Kenneth Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-bellum South* (1956, reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 195, citing Helen T. Catterall, ed., *Judicial Cases concerning American Slavery and the Negro*, vol. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institute of Washington, 1926-1937), 358-359.

³³ *Reconstruction: The Second Civil War*, prod. and dir. Elizabeth Deane and Llewellyn M. Smith, 180 min., Public Broadcasting Service, 2005, DVD. According to numerous studies about Alabama's Reconstruction-era Republican party, black participation within the party was less pressing than whether black persons were prepared to become full citizens. See, for example, Loren Schweninger, "Black Citizenship and the Republican Party in Reconstruction Alabama," *Alabama Review* 29 (April 1976): 84.

detested. This was a dangerous maneuver. By supporting Congressional Reconstruction, leading Republicans hoped to garner support from the newly enfranchised blacks, but they risked estranging some of the party's white stalwarts.³⁴

Joseph Bradley, a white Republican and former Unionist with conservative leanings, predicted conflict months before the June 1867 meeting was held. Writing to Swayne, Bradley admitted that he and other white Republicans would have to “look the Negro question directly in the face” and make concessions to their “unwelcome allies” even though allowing black men to attend the meeting would be a “bitter pill to swallow.”³⁵

“Bitter” or not, the “pill” was swallowed, and the convention was an overall success. Out of it came an official state party, whose inaugural executive committee was one of Alabama's most representative political bodies to date.³⁶ John C. Keffer, its chairman and commissioner of internal resources, was a controversial Freedmen's Bureau official from Philadelphia whom William Darah (“Pig Iron”) Kelley, a founding member of the national Republican party and one-time congressman from Philadelphia, considered a respectable politician and a true friend. John Wien Forney, another white

³⁴ Loren Schweningen, “Alabama Blacks and the Congressional Reconstruction Acts of 1867,” *Alabama Review* 31 (July 1978): 186-187. See *Montgomery Daily Mail*, 5 June 1867. See also “Correct View,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 August 1869. Cf. Saffold, *Address to Native White Republicans*, 9, 10, 11, 13. Richard Bailey disagrees with Schweningen. Bailey claims that black and white politicians did not meet as equals until the April 1867 meeting of the Alabama Union League that was held in Decatur. Bailey also claims that the April gathering was the first political meeting that black persons were allowed to attend alongside white persons. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 22, citing *Mobile Nationalist*, 28 March 1867.

³⁵ Joseph C. Bradley to Wager Swayne, 6 and 12 April 1867, Alabama Governor's Administration Files, 1867-1868: Swayne, SG6120, ADAH.

³⁶ The origin and early development of the Alabama Republican party has been debated widely. Although most persons have traced its beginnings to 1867, Horace Mann Bond suggested that the party was organized in 1866 by William R. Smith among other persons. James Alex Baggett has argued that Alabama Republicans were less prepared to form a state party because they had not participated in Wartime Reconstruction. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawag*, 159, 234-235; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 25, citing *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, 876-877.

Republican from Philadelphia, was less complimentary. He considered Keffer the Republican-led Union, or Loyal, League's "head devil."³⁷ William T. Blackford—a Republican judge, physician, and delegate to the 1867 constitutional convention politician from Greensboro, Alabama—said Keffer might have been an office seller, and a self-proclaimed Independent ridiculed Keffer for having coned an elderly landlady out of her billboard.³⁸

Keffer's real and imaginary shortcomings did not prohibit him from heading the Alabama Republican party's bi-regional, multi-ethnic executive committee. With him served fourteen white Southerners, five white Northerners, a few pure-black men, and several mulattoes. The group had sizeable obstacles to overcome. Foremost among them were divisions of race and ethnicity. Given the attitudes of many white Republicans relative to skin color, the party's black and white members were "uncomfortable political bedfellows."³⁹

³⁷ In addition to William D. Kelley's political endeavors, he was one of the northern financiers of the Oxford Works in Anniston, Alabama. Kelley also directed the Selma and Gulf Railroad. His colleague, John W. Forney, edited *The Pennsylvanian*, supported President James Buchanan during the 1840s, and clerked in the United States House of Representatives. Buchanan helped Forney tremendously before the two men parted ways. After the breakup, Forney became a Republican, resumed his clerkship, wrote for the Washington, D.C., *Daily Union*, edited the *Philadelphia Press*, and helped found and edit the Washington, D.C., *Sunday Morning Chronicle*. Following the Civil War, he supported President Andrew Johnson before he was impeached. In 1878, the opportunistic Forney completed his political journey by returning to the Democratic fold. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawag*, 165, 215; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 33, 34, 48, 49, 53, 65, 66; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 40; Foner and Walker, 29 (footnote 11), 30 (footnote 13).

³⁸ John W. Forney to Lewis E. Parsons, 8 July 1865, Parsons Papers, ADAH. See "The Convention," *Marion Commonwealth*, 17 June 1869. See also Michael Fitzgerald, *The Union League Movement in the Deep South: Politics and Agricultural Change during Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 40. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 2, 1299, 1300.

³⁹ Wiggins, *Scalawag*, 22. See *The Daily State Sentinel*, 6 June 1867. See also *Moulton Advertiser*, 15 June 1867.

Black Participation in the Republican Party

By the time that the June 1867 convention was held, key and controversial legislation, including “the negro’s charter of liberty” (the Fourteenth Amendment) and the First and Second Reconstruction Acts,⁴⁰ had given birth to numerous Republican factions at the state and national levels.⁴¹ In Alabama, one faction was headed by Republicans Lawrence S. Berry—a former slave, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church officer, Union League leader, two-time Mobile alderman, mail agent on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, and field agent of Alabama’s first (unofficial) postbellum Republican newspaper, *The Mobile Nationalist*—and E. C. Branch, a white, northern-born educator, missionary, and *Mobile Nationalist* field agent. Anticipating enfranchisement, Berry and Branch helped organize statewide colored conventions to encourage political activism.⁴²

The first colored convention was held on 20-22 November 1865. Almost sixty black men, mainly ministers from the central and southern regions of the state, attended the meeting, over which E. S. Winn, an African Methodist Episcopal Church Zion elder,

⁴⁰ Charles Wallace Collins, *The Fourteenth Amendment and the Negro Race Question* (Washington, D.C.: [n.p.], 1911), 830. The Fourteenth Amendment “was to be, *par excellence*, the negro’s charter of liberty,” asserted Collins, observing how “it is to him a perpetual guarantee of protection from discrimination. We have seen, however, that the validity of this assertion is reduced to an uncertain and undefined minimum by the facts. If it be his charter of liberty it is indeed a strange one.” *Ibid.*, 853-854.

⁴¹ “An Act to Provide for the More Efficient Government of the Rebel States” (byname First Reconstruction Act) divided the ten southern states that had not been “reconstructed”—Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Florida, Texas, and Arkansas—into five military districts subject to federal authority. “An Act Supplementary to an Act Entitled ‘An Act to Provide for the More Efficient Government of the Rebel States’” (byname Second Reconstruction Act) clarified suffrage requirements for the states that had not been reconstructed. Officials were authorized to register voters and to supervise elections to constitutional conventions.

⁴² See *Mobile Nationalist*, 25 January, 19 April, and 7 and 21 June, and 26 July 1866, and 18 April 1867. See also *Mobile Advertiser and Register*, 19 January 1869; *Selma Times and Messenger*, 14 February 1869; “Appointments of Colored Men to Office in Alabama,” *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 15 May 1869. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawag*, 164; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 47, 48, 52, 56, 79-80, 81, 82, 84, 168-169; Foner and Walker, 300-301. Although the meetings were touted as colored conventions, Branch and other white persons helped organize and attended a number of the gatherings. On more than one occasion, white persons even delivered addresses.

presided. Delegates resolved that their newly acquired freedom presented them with new educational and industrial opportunities and obligated them to be good citizens, a task that they intended to accomplish through the abilities that God had given them.

Delegates also resolved to work hard to promote peace, good will, and friendship among all persons, especially the southern whites with whom their lot was cast, but the delegates refused to relinquish any human or civil right.⁴³

Another Branch and Berry-led statewide freemen's convention was held on 4 March 1867. Mobile was again the venue, and political activism was again encouraged. Among the matters addressed by convention leaders were white domination and black voters' supposed ignorance. John Carraway—a New Bern, North Carolina, native born to a black slave and a wealthy white planter, a Civil War veteran, sociopolitical centrist, and *Mobile Nationalist* backer—declared that African Americans could be as friendly to white conservatives as they were to white moderates and liberals, but no one except African Americans themselves had a right to control their social, political, or economic future. In an extremely succinct statement, the allegedly militant Berry, who had fought the more conservative Carraway over the direction of the *Mobile Nationalist*, proclaimed

⁴³ See “The Freedmen’s Convention,” *Daily Selma Times*, 28 November 1865. Cf. 12 December 1865 *New York Daily Tribune*; Foner and Walker, 300-301; Sherer, “Let Us Make Man,” 8-11, 314. The number of attendees is still open to debate. Whereas some researchers have claimed that fifty-six black people attended the 1865 colored convention, other researchers have claimed that fifty-eight men were present. See, for example, Kelli Tipton, “Missing Pieces of a Puzzle Surfacing,” *Talladega Daily Home*, 17 November 2002. Cf. 12 December 1865 *New York Daily Tribune*; Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 216-217; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*; Foner and Walker; Kolchin, *First Freedom*. One source indicated that the first freedmen’s convention was not held until 1866. Cf. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 489; Sherer, *op. cit.*, and *Black Education in Alabama*, 2 (citing Hebert W. Gates, ed., *The Negro—A Congregational Opportunity* [New York: American Missionary Association and Congregational Church Extension Boards, {1929}], 19), 133.

that black Alabamians were smart enough to understand their newfound rights and privileges and were determined to enjoy them.⁴⁴

Local freedmen's conventions followed in Autauga, Macon, Madison, and Morgan Counties. Conventions were also held in a number of cities and towns, including Haynesville, Blufton, Marion, and Montgomery. Each meeting was characterized by inclusiveness as well as an earnest desire to develop peace and harmony, as James T. Rapier and other black men made clear at a 24 April 1867 meeting in Florence that was called to nominate the one black registrar of Lauderdale County that state law mandated. After being reminded that black Alabamians had to handle their new obligations wisely, attendees decided that Rapier's father, John H. Rapier, Sr.—a conscientious, hard-working, literate, property- and former slave-owning mulatto barber who had lived freely since 1829—was the right man for the job. The elder Rapier's appointment made him the first person of African descent in state history to hold a “major” political office.⁴⁵

The 1-4 May 1867 statewide colored convention at St. Louis Street Church of Mobile was one of the largest colored conventions to date. The meeting attracted black Republicans from at least thirteen Alabama counties. Its first morning session was

⁴⁴ See *Daily State Sentinel*, 22 November 1867. See also *Alabama State Journal*, 21 and 28 November 1868; *Mobile Daily Register*, 19 January 1869; *Mobile Nationalist*, 23 March and 31 May 1866, 25 April, 22 August, 12 and 19 September 1867, and 6 February 1868. Cf. 7 and 21 June 1866 *Mobile Nationalist*; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 35, 43-44, 84-85; Schweninger, “Alabama Blacks and the Reconstruction Acts of 1867,” 188-189; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 79, 127, 130, 153, 169; Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, 18, 41.

⁴⁵ See *Acts of the Eleventh Session of the General Assembly of the State of Alabama* (Tuscaloosa, Al.: McGuire, Henry and Wallace, 1830), 36. See also *Florence Journal*, 23 September 1869; John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, *In Search of the Promised Land: A Slave Family in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), xvi, 14, 23, 34-38, 39 (footnote 4), 47, 126-135, 163, 183, 229, 230-232, 245 (footnote 6); “Meeting of the Colored People at Florence, 24 April 1867,” in Swayne Papers. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 217; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 35; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 17, 26, 27; Schweninger, “Alabama Blacks and the Congressional Reconstruction Acts of 1867,” 183. One source suggests that John H. Rapier, Sr., who on 18 September 1869 succumbed to stomach cancer, was James T. Rapier's foster father. Cf. Bailey, *op. cit.*

characterized by the usual protocol with one exception: after registration, a brief religious service was held. When it concluded, the assembly elected officers. Alabama native Holland Thompson was chosen president, John Carraway secretary.⁴⁶

Thompson and Carraway were sociopolitical exceptions. Thompson, a leading black Baptist and *Mobile Nationalist* agent, was one of South Alabama's most powerful Union Leaguers during the immediate postbellum period. Later, he helped organize the Alabama Negro Labor Union (1871), sat in the state legislature from 1868 until 1874, and was elected to serve on the Montgomery City Council eight times.⁴⁷ Carraway had not only served in Company A of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, the famous unit that Frederick Douglass had pressured Abraham Lincoln into creating in order to facilitate black military participation during the Civil War; Carraway had joined other black combatants in fighting Lincoln over their pay, which had been \$6 dollars less than the \$13 that whites had received. In addition, Carraway had written the regimental song, "Colored Volunteers," for which he had not been given credit. Instead, the allegedly anonymously written "Give Us a Flag" and "The Regimental Song of the Massachusetts 54th (Colored) Regiment" had been used in conjunction with the all-black company whose members had participated in the famed attack on Fort Wagner in South Carolina even though "Give Us a Flag" and "Colored Volunteers" contained the same lyrics.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ John Carraway was born in 1834. After purchasing his freedom, he moved to Alabama. From there, he journeyed to New York, where he became a professional tailor.

⁴⁷ One person has suggested that the Alabama Negro Labor Union, also called the Alabama Labor Union, was organized in 1870. See "The National Labor Union," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 16 December 1870, hereinafter cited as "The National Labor Union"; *ibid.*, 6 January 1871. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 26; Feldman, "Rapier," 19; Fitzgerald, *The Union League Movement in the Deep South*, 168-169; Foner, *Forever Free*, 128, and *Freedom's Lawmakers*, *passim*.

⁴⁸ Cf. Bailey, *They Too Call Alabama Home*, 489; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 26; Davis, *Lincoln's Men*, 162-163; Winik, 47. "Give Us a Flag" was set to the tune of Billy Holmes' "Hoist Up a Flag." See *Daily State Sentinel*, 27 November 1867. See also *Mobile Nationalist*, 26 September 1867;

When the war ended, Carraway returned to Mobile, where he was named president of the Loyal Newspaper Society of Alabama. In 1867, Carraway attended Alabama's constitutional convention, served as speaker of the Alabama House from 1868 until 1870, was Mobile's 1869 registrar, and for years was considered the first black man licensed to practice law in Alabama. Although Carraway had been involved with the partisan *Mobile Nationalist* before 1867, the Second Freedmen's Convention of that year marked his and Thompson's official political debuts.⁴⁹

Convention support for the Republican party was overwhelming. On the first day of the meeting, Albert Griffin—an unofficial white delegate, skilled printer, former Free-soiler, aspiring politician, and editor of the *Mobile Nationalist*—told attendees that Alabama's destiny was in Republicans' hands and that the Republican party's destiny was in black people's hands. This idea conflicted significantly with the views of some white Alabamians, who believed that black Republicans had become so disgusted with certain white members that the blacks wanted to erect an entirely African American party, as did Henry M. Turner and a number of other black Georgians. The black-nationalist *New Orleans Tribune*, the first African American-owned daily newspaper in the United States, helped dispel the myth about black Alabama Republicans wanting to

Montgomery Advertiser, 11 and 16 November 1873; Howard Rabinowitz, ed., *Southern Black Leaders of the Reconstruction Era* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 252-253; Irwin Silber, comp. and ed., *Songs of the Civil War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 293-296; Jerry Silverman, *Ballads and Songs of the Civil War* ([N.P.]: Mel Bay Publications, 1993). Cf. Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 16-17, 81, and *The Union League Movement in the Deep South*, 31, 35, 67, 102, 124, 169, 192, 193; Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, 41; Kolchin, *First Freedom*.

⁴⁹ See *Alabama State Journal*, 15 January 1872. See also Robert L. Maull, II, "A Prelude to Reconstruction: The Colored People's Conventions of 1865 and 1867 and the Birth of Black Political Consciousness" (paper presented at the Phi Alpha Theta Graduate Colloquium, Auburn University, 4 May 2000). Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 22, 60-61 (footnote 11); Fitzgerald, *Urban Experience*, 58. Moses W. Moore, a Howard College (later University) Law School graduate, not Carraway, was the state's first licensed black attorney.

form a separate party when it revealed the main reason the freedmen's convention had been called in the first place: to secure harmonious relations with white Republicans.⁵⁰

On the second day of the meeting, each delegate was given time to talk about the most pressing concerns of his constituents. Many of the issues were familiar. For instance, black workers were not compensated fully for the work that they provided white employers, who threatened to fire any Republican or Loyal League activist, and male whites continued to prey on female blacks. But one report was distinctive. Isaac Parker, who represented Elmore County, swore that a black man had been sold in his district.⁵¹

In its overall assessment, the *New Orleans Tribune* declared that no convention ever put together was home to as much decorum and respect for proper protocol as the May 1867 colored convention in Mobile. Every session was conducted well, and none of the intra-racial resentment and infighting for which its host city's black, mulatto, and Afro-Creole residents were known was displayed. Before adjourning, the assembly had called for the formation of an integrated public school system, requested relief programs for elderly and homeless people, and praised Swayne and John Pope, a Kentuckian who commanded the Third Military District that included Alabama, Florida, and Georgia. The assembly also implored the federal government to end the abuses carried out by former slave owners and federal soldiers and penned a resolution proclaiming each delegate a member of the national Republican party and thus eligible for any dispensation that membership or federal law afforded. Specifically, the conventioners desired the

⁵⁰ See *Mobile Nationalist*, 30 May 1867. See also *New Orleans Tribune*, 7 May 1867. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 18; Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 46; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, passim; Foner, *Proceedings of the Black National and State Conventions*, 300-301; Kolchin, *First Freedom*.

⁵¹ See Walter Fleming, "The Formation of the Union League in Alabama," *Gulf States Historical Magazine* 2 (September 1903): 73-89. Cf. 7 May *New Orleans Tribune*; Foner and Walker, 304; Goodrich and Goodrich, 217-218.

same privileges, rights, and immunities that white men enjoyed—for example, holding office, being jurors, riding public conveyances, and sitting at public tables and places of amusement alongside other law-abiding citizens. In one of the strongest political pronouncements that any group of black Alabamians had ever made, the men called these inalienable rights that any respectful citizen should have been able to enjoy without having to worry about being physically or verbally assaulted (see Appendix I).⁵²

The proclamation was of little significance. When it came time to decide the party's candidates for office, not one black person was nominated. Most white Republicans were convinced that black people were inherently inferior to whites and thus unable to perform any task that required substantial perceptiveness or mental prowess, such as making important political decisions. Partial membership and voting privileges were appropriate—as long as votes were cast appropriately—because blacks were able to follow orders, but supporting black officeholders was a taboo that many white Republicans dared not break.⁵³

⁵² See *Mobile Nationalist*, 28 March and 2 and 23 May 1867. Cf. 7 May 1867 *New Orleans Tribune*; Baggett, *The Scalawag*, 207; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 22, 23, 109-110; Boothe, *Cyclopedia of Colored Baptists of Alabama*, 33-34; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 10, 64; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 156; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 1-9, 10 (footnote 3), 12-13, 49, 50, 56, 84-85, 87-133, 266-267; Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, 10; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 70, 152-153, 157-158, 163-165; Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 242; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 97, 177 (footnote 10), and "Let Us Make Man," 415; Walton, *Black Republicans*, 70-71. Moses B. Avery, a prominent black minister from Mobile, helped edit and promote the *New Orleans Tribune*, whose editor was from Santo Domingo, before moving to Mississippi. Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 46.

⁵³ See Civis, "The Public School in its Relationship to the Negro," part 1, *Southern Planter and Farmer* (December 1875): 1-7. See also William A. Dunning, "The Undoing of Reconstruction," *Atlantic Monthly* 88, 528 (October 1901): 449; Wesley Critz George, *The Biology of the Race Problem* (N.P.: [Commission of the Governors of Alabama], 1962), 75-77; Michael Lerner and Cornel West, "Cultural Identity and Whiteness," chap. 3 in *Jews and Blacks: Let the Healing Begin* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1995), 62 ff.; Straughton Lynd, ed., *Reconstruction* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 65. Cf. Thomas, *The Confederacy as a Revolutionary Experience*, 10. For an extensive list of racist literature published during the American Civil War and Reconstruction eras, cf. Wood, *Black Scare*, 193 ff.

In an extraordinarily discerning statement, the *New York Democrat* supposed that freepersons would soon learn that being able to vote or ride in cars meant little if they could not vote for themselves or ride the cars into office. The *Marion Commonwealth* reiterated this point when it asserted that Carpetbaggers had called a Montgomery “menagerie” (“monkey house,” “mongrel,” “black-and-tan,” “bones-and-banjo”) conference to decide which offices they and Scalawags would hold. Black Republicans, who constituted approximately ninety-nine percent of the party and all of its respectable members, according to the paper, would get nothing except a political “bone”—if, that is, their white “masters” felt like throwing them one.⁵⁴

Though not entirely true, such statements reflected one of the most fundamental problems that black politicians such as William J. Stevens, George Washington Cox, William H. Council, and Frank H. Threatt had with the state Republican party. Despite their numbers and omitting the party’s inaugural executive committee, black Republicans wielded little power because they were relegated to minor positions. Consequently, Stevens, who edited the *Selma Cyclone* and later represented Dallas County in the state legislature (1876-1877), formed a splinter group within the state Republican party called the Black and Tans.⁵⁵ Council and Cox—a former slave, Loyal League organizer, Tuscaloosa County registrar (1867), state representative, union leader, and emigration

⁵⁴ *Augusta (Georgia) Weekly Chronicle and Sentinel*, 27 November and 25 December 1867; Foner, *Forever Free*, 128; Foner and Walker, xi; *Marion Commonwealth*, 11 July 1872; *Montgomery Daily Mail*, 11 October, 17 November, and 3-5 December 1867. The *New York Democrat*’s statement was mentioned in “The Negro Vote—Some Common Sense,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 June 1870, hereinafter cited as “The Negro Vote—Some Common Sense.” Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 43; Tunnell, “Creating ‘the Propaganda of History,’” 794, 802.

⁵⁵ During the 1880s, William J. Stevens he supported Grover Cleveland, a Democrat, for president. The following decade, Stevens backed William C. Oates, another Democrat, for Alabama governor. Without a shadow of a doubt, Stevens’ Democratic support resulted from his opposition to the lily-white Alabama Republicans who had tried to keep black persons from occupying important positions in the state party.

advocate whom white conservatives once despised for teaching black farmers in Tuscaloosa how to receive just crop distributions and file lawsuits if they were wronged—left the Republican party altogether. Threatt—a Marengo County minister, future state legislator (1872-1874), Independent (1878), congressional candidate (1880), and great-grandfather of Oscar W. Adams, the first black Alabama Supreme Court justice—remained a Republican but had become so dissatisfied with certain white Republicans’ antics by 1874 that he swore if they were to nominate Jesus the Christ and the Democrats the Devil, he would vote for the Devil.⁵⁶

White Alabamians came up with some interesting ways to express their dissatisfaction with black persons holding key political offices. Before 1870, displeasure was often toned down in order to prevent the federal government from interfering in local matters or to woo black voters. The 1868 Democratic and Conservative party platform stated that Democrats were intent on cultivating friendly relationships with the state’s black population. Specifically, Democrats wanted to deal justly with the freedmen and help them understand their newfound privileges. Toward these ends, the Democrats denounced all attempts to create or perpetuate antagonism between the races and encouraged black voters to trust only honorable officials and office seekers.⁵⁷

When subtle pronouncements and other attempts to win over black voters failed, some white Democrats’ words became noticeably harsher. In an April 1870 letter to

⁵⁶ Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 115, 185, 213 (citing *Montgomery Daily Advertiser*, 16 October 1874), 311-321, 341, 344; Fitzgerald, *The Union League Movement in the Deep South*, 42, 129, 161, 169; Foner, *Freedom’s Lawmakers*, 52; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 161-162; Foner and Walker, 213; Wiggins, *Scalawags*, 126.

⁵⁷ Cf. Taylor, *The Issue of the Hour*, 2.

Charles Lewis Scott, John Anthony Winston—Alabama’s 1853-1857 governor and the brother-in-law of the state’s 1870-1872 governor, Robert Burns Lindsay—declared:

Local advantages might result from a mongrel ticket, but there is more strength in an open out-and-out White Man’s Ticket. We can carry some prudent and sensible negroes—but as a party we have tendered them the olive branch which they have spurned with derision. Any further effort on our part will be simply throwing pearls before swine.⁵⁸

Ryland Randolph—a prominent Tuscaloosa journalist, politician, and Ku Klux Klan leader—spoke with even more candor:

Let the negro alone! If he attends barbeques let his province be to wait on the tables and brush off flies. Let him squall aloud for [Democratic candidates] to his heart’s content, for it is like a donkey braying for his food. Hallooing for the white man’s [candidates] should be regarded as declaring in favor of white supremacy—nothing more and nothing less.

Other partisan Democrats claimed that black politicians befitted “the speaker’s stand about as well as a skunk... a sofa” and were “as fit to make laws as an elephant to teach music.”⁵⁹

In an equally derogatory remark that one modern historian considers humorous, the *Montgomery Daily Advertiser* credited William H. Blevins, a black politician from Selma, with coining the term “Niggeramus.” Blevins reportedly got tongue tied while trying to say the word ignoramus and uttered Niggeramus instead. The paper’s editor then defined a Niggeramus as “half fool—half nigger.” Many white Republicans harbored similar beliefs and endeavored to keep their black colleagues out of major positions. Black Republicans protested, but without significant assistance from leading

⁵⁸ John Anthony Winston to Charles Lewis Scott, 20 April 1870, *Mobile Register*, 6 June 1874.

⁵⁹ Ryland Randolph, quoted in *Alabama State Journal*, 1 October 1868; “Emigration of Colored Laborers,” *Greensboro Beacon*, 1 March 1873. Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 44.

white Republicans, they could do little to change their collective status within the party. Black Republicans could push for civil rights, however, and this is exactly what they did.⁶⁰

Subsequent to agitation led by Isaac Burt, Ovid (or Ovide) Gregory, James T. Rapier, William V. Turner, and other black members of the resolution-and-platform committee that David C. Humphries chaired, white Republicans agreed to support “free speech, free press, free schools, and the most liberal provisions by the state, for the purpose of educating the people thereof.” In a preliminary pledge to support the Fourteenth Amendment, Republicans swore that “henceforth there is to be no discrimination made between the inhabitants of this state in civil and political rights, on account of color or previous condition.”⁶¹

Those words came directly from the Republican party of Alabama’s first state platform. Vice-President James T. Rapier wrote them, and white Republicans vowed to adhere to them, but the agreement proved flawed and unenforceable. By pledging to support social equality, Alabama’s white Republicans aligned themselves with Republicans throughout the nation and curried favor with Alabama’s black electorate, but white Republicans never relinquished power at the state level. An important catchphrase

⁶⁰ Robert Partain, “Alabama Newspaper Humor during Reconstruction,” *Alabama Review* 17 (October 1964): 247, quoting *Montgomery Daily Advertiser*, [n.d.]. See John T. Milner, *White Men of Alabama, Stand Together, 1860 and 1890* (Birmingham, Al.: [McDavid Printing Company, 1890]), 74-75. See also Lawrence W. Powell, “The Politics of Livelihood: Carpetbaggers and the Problems of Republican Rule in the South,” in J. Morgan Kousser and James M. McPherson, eds., *Region, Race, and Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of C. Vann Woodward* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 315-349; James L. Roark, *Masters without Slaves: Southern Planters in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: Norton, 1977), 191. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 40, 43-44, 84-85; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 2, and *The Union League Movement in the Deep South*, 68, 79, 143, 165.

⁶¹ *Daily State Sentinel*, 4 June 1867. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 25, 26.

of the Reconstruction and early Redemption periods was control, a concept understood and employed by white Republicans and Democrats alike between 1865 and 1875.⁶²

Control

Throughout much of the Postbellum period, control of black persons was deemed ineffective unless it was achieved through what federal investigator Carl Schurz called “physical compulsion,” or violence.⁶³ Furious that black “anthropoids” were no longer slaves, white Alabamians carried out a “veritable reign of terror” against black people. That violence was a key controlling mechanism was irrefutable, conceded one Democrat, noting how African Americans, Carpetbaggers, Scalawags, and anyone who tried to aid them were often whipped. Schurz affirmed:

Southern white supremacists denied the freedmen’s freedom by continuing to treat them as if they were slaves. White supremacists frequently met the attempts of freed blacks to assert their constitutionally guaranteed freedom with violent repression and economic intimidation. Moreover they treated white Unionists and federal officers with disrespect, and resorted to economic intimidation and violence toward them as well.⁶⁴

⁶² See Frederick M. Wirt, “*We Ain’t What We Was*”: *Civil Rights in the New South* (Raleigh, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997), 7. Cf. Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 243; Schweninger, “James Rapier and the Negro Labor Movement, 1869-1874,” 185; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 5.

⁶³ See Carl Schurz, *Can the South Solve the Negro Problem?* (New York: [n.p.], 1903), 260, 261, African-American Pamphlets Collection, LOC. (The original document appeared in the January 1903 *McClure’s*.) As important as violence and economic intimidation were, they were never the only means used to excommunicate political undesirables. Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins explores others in “Ostracism of White Republicans in Alabama during Reconstruction,” *Alabama Review* 27 (January 1974): 52-64. For additional discourse, see Eric Foner, *Nothing but Freedom: Emancipation and Its Legacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983). Cf. Foner and Mahoney, *America’s Reconstruction*, 11; “The Negro Vote—Some Common Sense.”

⁶⁴ Schurz, *Can the South Solve the Negro Problem?* 261 (first and fourth quotes). William G. Brown, *The Lower South in American History* (New York: McMillan Company, 1902), 215 (second quote); Robert J. Kaczorowski, “To Begin the Nation Anew: Congress, Citizenship, and Civil Rights after the Civil War,” *American Historical Review* 92 (February 1987): 54 (third quote). Cf. Magaul, *The Eternal Education*, 2.

Recalling the situation in 1903, Schurz swore that white planters had used brute force to keep former slaves in check. Armed whites had patrolled major roads and byways, looking for allegedly vagrant blacks to accost. Hospital officials had reported seeing black people whose ears had been severed, whose skulls had crushed, and whose bodies had been cut. Schurz himself claimed to have seen black bodies strewn about every southern town that he had visited. In Alabama, Freedmen's Bureau officials detailed more than twenty racially motivated murders in 1866 alone. Many of them were work related. In Sumter County, Lucian Jones killed a freedman because he refused to sign a labor contract. Another freedman was murdered after he told someone that he planned to inform Bureau officials of how badly his employer was treating him. A black man named Franklin attempted to make a similar report, and no one saw or heard from him afterward.⁶⁵

Contrary to what some people have claimed, violence was not limited to any particular region of Alabama. The entire state was an abode of violence in 1866. As early as 11 January, the *Mobile Nationalist* printed information about an elderly freeman who was horsewhipped in public because he asked a white man to pay the money owed to him. In the same issue, the paper reported that a white man had threatened to shoot a black boy who refused to accept one dollar as payment for work that he had performed the previous summer in a blacksmith shop. A black girl was reportedly hanged by the thumbs for half a day because she failed to finish some type of spinning work, and a white man whipped a black woman with cowhide while two others held her. Yet another

⁶⁵ See Bureau of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Alabama, "List of Murders in the Dist. of Alabama, 1866," in Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870, Miscellaneous Papers, M809, Roll 23, Washington, D.C., hereinafter cited as NA. Cf. Schurz, *Can the South Solve the Negro Problem?* 261.

black woman was beaten in the head because she dared to say that she was free. In Demopolis, a white man hit a thirteen-year-old employee in the eye repeatedly with a bat. Also in Demopolis, a white man took a heavy club and struck the arms of a black woman who worked for him. In another instance, a black man was fatally shot as he picked fodder. Why he was shot is still unknown.⁶⁶

Near Livingston, a former Confederate soldier shot a freedman. Another freedman was killed near the Montgomery sawmill, and white persons hanged an unnamed mulatto by a grapevine near a roadside between Greensboro and Tuscaloosa. Outside Tuscaloosa, a black man was murdered for undisclosed reasons. Elsewhere in the state, a freedman named James Thompson suffered severe knife wounds. Another black man was probably killed after a group of white men abducted him for feuding with a white man. His body was never discovered. In March, a white man named Bradley took an axe to a black woman in Montgomery. The next month, three white men abducted a black woman as she rested in her home. Using nightfall as cover, the kidnappers led the woman to a nearby swamp, where they whipped her. They then cracked her skull with a pistol.⁶⁷

Nathan B. Forrest, one of the Confederacy's most colorful and admired figures, was involved in a highly publicized murder in Alabama. During the spring of 1866, he killed a black man named Thomas Edwards outside Mobile. Reports varied, but it seems that Forrest either asked or ordered Edwards and other blacks to clean their living quarters to lessen the effects of a cholera outbreak. At some point thereafter, Edwards

⁶⁶ Cf. *ibid.*; Goodrich and Goodrich, 234, citing *Mobile Nationalist*, 11 January 1866.

⁶⁷ Cf. Bureau of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Alabama, "List of Murders in the Dist. of Alabama, 1866."

began to assault his wife with a knife. One of Bedford's friends said that Forrest demanded Edwards stop abusing his spouse. When the freedman refused, Forrest hit him with a broom handle, causing Edwards to turn and cut one of Forrest's hands. Without hesitation, the 6'2" Forrest picked up a large axe and hit Edwards in the head with its handle, killing him.⁶⁸

Although some persons were certain that Forrest acted in self-defense or thought that Edwards' death was accidental, many others assumed Forrest overreacted, the latest in a series of actions that reflected the ex-Confederate's penchant for cruelty. Among other things, Forrest was a rigid adherent of the southern *code duello*, an elaborate system that combined honor and violence, prompting countless duels, feuds, score settlings, and defenses against real and imagined affronts. More damning was Forrest's brazen bigotry and involvement with the Fort Pillow Massacre. Considering these and other reports of discrimination and wartime brutality, it was easy for many postbellum Alabamians to imagine Forrest killing a black man in cold blood.⁶⁹

Violence escalated as spring gave way to summer. On 16 July 1866, a Mrs. Prus beat a black woman named Eve and her children. Henry Calloway almost killed a former slave named Nancy by hitting her repeatedly in the head with some sort of buckle. J. Howard and one of his nephews beat and then shot at a black man named Frank. Mr. Black, a white man, tried to axe Jim Sneethen to death, and Jack McLeonard gave a former slave a merciless whipping. Also on that day, Lee Davidson tied a freedwoman

⁶⁸ Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, citing *Memphis (Tennessee) Daily Avalanche*, 5 April 1866.

⁶⁹ Cf. Winik, 274-281.

by her wrists and beat her severely, Frank Pinkston cut a black man with a knife, and an unidentified white man killed the husband of a black woman named Louisa.⁷⁰

Indeed, no black person—minister, teacher, woman, or child—was immune to white terrorism following the Civil War. According to the *Mobile Nationalist*, as many as 1,000 freepersons were killed in the immediate aftermath of war. Near Bridgeport, a white man became enraged after a black man allegedly raped his daughter. Stopping the first male black he saw, the angry white father asked the freedman what his name was. When the stunned, and evidently quite bold, Negro responded by saying “[n]one of your damned business,” the irate Caucasian shot and killed him. Only later did the white man find out that he had killed an innocent person.⁷¹

Outside Greenville in Sumter County, Jason Pryor assaulted a freedman and committed some sort of outrage on a freedwoman. After torching a Greenville schoolhouse, a group of white Alabamians whom Enoch Hicks led assaulted a former Union soldier. A gang of white Clarke County ruffians ignited the home of a black family and fired gunshots at its members as they struggled to escape the blaze. Two family members were wounded, and one was killed. An equally deplorable killing occurred near Talladega. While fishing along the banks of the Coosa River, a man turned up fifteen dead blacks, one of whom a mother still clutching her child.⁷²

After burning a black church outside Tuscaloosa, a white man named Yerby threatened to kill a black man who saw him commit the act. A Reverend Alexander of

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Goodrich and Goodrich, 227, citing Jackson, Mississippi, *Daily Mississippian*, 30 July 1865.

⁷² See *Mobile Nationalist*, 18 January 1866. Cf. Berlin et al., *Free at Last*, 537; Bureau of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Alabama, “List of Murders in the Dist. of Alabama, 1866”; Goodrich and Goodrich, 235.

Auburn was beaten viciously and forced to vacate his home. The same fate awaited Eliza Adams and her sister. Armed vigilantes visited their residence one night and assured the women that they would be killed if they did not agree to leave the county. As going-away gifts, the men raped and beat the sisters horrifically.⁷³

Occasionally, local authorities, including federal soldiers, were party to violent acts. In June 1866, a white police officer burned a black woman in a Montgomery guardhouse. After a Mr. Dunn beat a freedwoman ruthlessly, Freedmen's Bureau called her trial farcical. In December, while many Alabamians awaited a visit from Saint Nick, a Judge Bragg and son beat the wife and daughter of a freedman named James. After that, the Braggs drew a pistol on James himself. Another group of white assailants went one step further. After shooting a black man in the head, they discarded him close to a nearby hospital, but caregivers could do nothing. One of assailants' bullets had penetrated the man's brain, and he died within minutes.⁷⁴

The following year brought little relief for black Alabamians. Following a 14 May 1867 debate in Montgomery between Henry Wilson—a founding member of the national Republican party, former United States senator from Massachusetts who had introduced legislation into Congress to end race-based slavery and black codes in the nation's capitol, and future vice president (1872)—and Brigadier General James H. Clanton—a former Whig, Mexican War veteran, field officer-organizer of the 1st Alabama Cavalry Regiment during the Civil War, 1866 organizer of Alabama and Conservative party's as well as the chairman of its executive committee—a drunken

⁷³ Cf. Bureau of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Alabama, "List of Murders in the Dist. of Alabama, 1866."

⁷⁴ See *New Orleans Tribune*, 14 December 1865. Cf. 11 January 1866 *Mobile Nationalist*; Bureau of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Alabama, "List of Murders in the Dist. of Alabama, 1866."

white man named David Files fired a gun into a predominantly black crowd of 4,000 or so people who had gathered to hear “Pig Iron” Kelley speak in Mobile. In Greensboro, Hale County’s black registrar was shot after an argument with a white shopkeeper.⁷⁵

One of Alabama’s most interesting reports about white violence came from Ryland Randolph, editor of the *Tuscaloosa Monitor*, a clandestine publication of the Ku Klux Klan. In 1869, an alleged Klansmen torched Bureau schools in Tuscaloosa and Greene Counties. In a post-fire statement that defied logic, Randolph, whom General Clanton had written out of the Democratic party during the summer of 1868 for his racist views, said a massive comet had caused the blaze and that the “antics of the [tale] of this wonderful comet have complete[ly] demoralized free-nigger education in these counties, for the negroes are so superstitious that they believe it to be a warning from [God] to...let their dirty-backed primers go.” This and similar statements seemed to confirm the *Alabama Weekly State Journal*’s contention that Randolph’s intellect was “certainly below mediocrity.”⁷⁶

Though mostly unrelated, the dreadful occurrences in Greene, Hale, Montgomery, Sumter, Tuscaloosa, and other counties illustrate how fragile Alabama’s economic, political, racial, and social environments were during the immediate Postbellum period.

⁷⁵ See “Citizens of Perry,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 July 1866. See also “Delegates to the Union Convention,” *ibid.*; “Convention on the 21st July,” *ibid.*; *Mobile Nationalist*, 16 May 1867; *Mobile Register*, 15-18 May 1867; *New York Times*, 15 and 17 May 1867; Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins, “The ‘Pig Iron’ Kelley Riot in Mobile, May 14, 1867,” *Alabama Review* 23 (January 1970): 45-55; Henry Wilson, *History of the Antislavery Measures of the Thirty-seventh and Thirty-eighth United-States Congresses, 1861-64* (Boston: Walker and Wise, 1864) and *History of the Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America*, vol. 2 (Boston: J. R. Osgood, 1874), 273-274. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 49; Bromberg, 9; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 157-159; Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 89 (footnote 1); Foner and Walker, 3, 23, 36 (footnotes 69 and 70); Hennessey, “Political Terrorism in the Black Belt: The Eutaw Riot,” 35; McAfee, *Religion, Race and Reconstruction*, 23, 41, 108; Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 242-243. Files was later incarcerated at Fort Morgan.

⁷⁶ “Wonderful Phenomenon and Unhappy Results” (first quote); “Ryland Randolph, the Exponent of Democracy,” *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 22 May 1869 (second quote). Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 44.

With a largely unfavorable constitutional convention among the state's white population approaching, many whites, who for the most part were neither cross-burning nor costume-clad Ku Klux Klan members, hoped that through the threat and the actual use of violence black people would conclude that the preservation of life was more important than the complete exercise of their newly legislated and forthcoming civil rights. However, the most blatant and horrific expressions of white terror did come through the actions of the Klan and similar organizations, whose presence in the state had become immensely important to the general fabric of Alabama by 1868.⁷⁷

Some persons have claimed that much of the Klan and Klan-like violence that took place in Alabama during the last third of the nineteenth century was precipitated by the adoption of the 1868 constitution. According to this hypothesis, the code gave blacks the means to turn against white people who understood them best. As a result of such defiance, white Alabamians had to handle former slaves roughly in order to remind them of their proper place in society and, moreover, to keep them in it.⁷⁸

As amazing as it might seem, thousands of white Alabamians really did think that they knew the state's black citizens better than the blacks knew themselves. Alabama Congressman J. L. Burnett even suggested that most blacks understood that whites were superior to them. In a similar statement, a female New Yorker proposed: "No truer friendship has ever been known than the attachment between the old aristocracy of the South and its colored servitors; no [more] tender consideration shown, no more confident

⁷⁷ Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 64-65; Burton, *Gracie's Alabama Volunteers*; Kaczorowski, 61; Trelease, *White Terror*, xxxv, 82.

⁷⁸ See James Leroy Taylor, "A History of the Ku Klux Klan in Alabama, 1865-1874" (master's thesis, Alabama Polytechnic Institute, 1957). Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 165; Du Bose, "The Story of the States: Alabama," 578; Tunnell, "Creating 'the Propaganda of History,'" 819.

dependence felt, than there was in the domestic relations of the old plantation régime.” John T. Milner—a leading Alabama Democrat, civil engineer, city, mine, and railroad developer who ran Newcastle, one of the state’s most infamous prison mines—was even more emphatic. The average black Alabamian, “though not a statesman, is not a fool,” proclaimed Morgan. “He realizes...that he has no fitness for legislation and law making, and instinctively admits that the whites are better suited for, and ought to rule the country.” If Carpetbaggers and Scalawags stopped stirring up black voters, Morgan was confident that the blacks would “do as elsewhere when emancipated, quietly submit to the government of whites.”⁷⁹

Such statements were untrue. In *White Terror: The Ku Klux Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction*, historian Allen W. Trelease discusses a northern-born Republican named Louis F. Post who understood that white Southerners’ purported understanding of black people’s wants, needs, and the like was largely a figment of white Southerners’ imaginations. According to Post, southern whites might have known blacks as slaves but not as humans. His words infuriated scores of white Southerners. He, after all, was a Northerner. On top of that, he was a Republican. As such, Post was guilty of treason to his race, country, God, and white womanhood.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Anne Middleton Holmes, *Southern Relief Association of New York City, 1866-1867: An Account of the Relief Furnished by Citizens of New York City to the Inhabitants of the Devastated Regions of the South Immediately after the Civil War* (New York: Mary Mildred Sullivan Chapter United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1926), 15 (first quote); John T. Milner, *White Men of Alabama, Stand Together, 1860 and 1890*, 74-75 (second quote). See J. L. Burnett, *The Immigration Bill: Speech of Hon. J. L. Burnett of Alabama, in the House of Representatives, June 25, 1906* (Washington, D.C.: [Government Printing Office], 1906), 3. See also “The Bureau in Alabama,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 July 1866; “K,” letter to editor, *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 November 1874; “Our Convicts: Horrors of Their Treatment,” *Huntsville Gazette*, 23 December 1882. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 69-70, 73, 88, 130.

⁸⁰ See Ray Marshall, *The Negro and Organized Labor* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1965), 9, citing Wilbur J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (1941; reprint, New York: Knopf Publishers, 1968), 133. Cf. Trelease, *White Terror*, xxii; Schurz, *Can the South Solve the Negro Problem?*

Repeatedly, prejudiced white Alabamians claimed that black people's character was something that white Northerners could not understand. Carl Schurz had a real problem with this belief. Although there were southern whites who understood blacks' interests, most whites did not "understand those interests at all, and whose opinions in several important historic instances have overruled the opinions of those who did." Of course, Schurz could have broadened his statement to include the group of white Southerners who did not care to understand black people. All they cared about was controlling them, and the 1868 constitution had nothing to do with that wish. Prior to its ratification, there were several white bands—the Knights of the White Camelia (or Camellia), the Night Owls, the Knights of the White Carnation,⁸¹ the Black Cavalry, the Men of Justice, the Regulators, the White League—who with the approval of conservative editors and other community leaders come together for one purpose: "to keep in check...plundering blacks and white desperadoes."⁸²

According to Trelease, the Knights of the White Camelia were responsible for more organized acts of terrorism in Alabama during 1867 and 1868 than the Ku Klux Klan. Supposedly formed in Louisiana in May 1867, the Knights were strongest there, but Alabama and other southern states were also home to much Knight, or "Ghoul,"

⁸¹ Schurz, *Can the South Solve the Negro Problem?* 268. Innumerable sources have spelled Camelia Camellia. The author employs both spellings. See Walter L. Fleming, *The Constitution and the Ritual of the Knights of the White Camelia* (Morgantown, W.V.: [West Virginia University], 1904). Cf. Trelease, *White Terror*, xxii, 81, 82.

⁸² Walter L. Fleming, *The Prescripts of the Ku Klux Klan* (Morgantown, W.V.: [West Virginia University], 1904), 2. For a similar account, cf. Myers, "Reaction and Adjustment," 16. Additional discourse is included in Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 55; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 164; John Z. Sloan, "The Ku Klux Klan and the Alabama Election of 1872," *Alabama Review* 18 (April 1965): 115. In a few counties, including Limestone, black persons are said to have organized their own Klans. Alleged names include the "Whangs," the "Black Kluxes," and the "Wide Awakes." See *Moulton Advertiser*, 31 July 1868. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 228; vol. 3, 1942; Tunnell, "Creating 'the Propaganda of History,'" especially 819-820.

activity. A Selma Democrat is believed to have organized the first group of Knights in Alabama following its Louisiana founding, which was actually before May 1867. Knights were in certain parts of Alabama's Black Belt in 1866, as evidenced by a tournament that they sponsored in Hale County on 21 June. In coming years, Knights spread throughout the region, where they operated alongside, though not necessarily in conjunction with, Klansmen and racist white Democrats.⁸³

The primary aims of the Ku Klux Klan and the Knights of the White Camellia were similar, but the two organizations differed in a number of ways. Knights tended to be less violent, wealthier, better organized, and wore fewer disguises than Klansmen; but both organizations struck fear in the hearts of countless black Alabamians, who were skeptical that law-enforcement officials would bring the lawbreakers to justice.

In December 1868, Alabama legislators passed two bills aimed at controlling the actions of the Klan and Klan-like organizations, but neither measure was ratified because lawmakers sympathized with the victims of white terrorists. The acts were enacted to keep the Klan and similar groups from becoming more powerful than the state government itself. Because numerous Klansmen were influential Alabamians, legislators had reason to worry about the organizations' actual and potential strength. Sometimes, economics caused the state's "best citizens" to join white-supremacist groups. Other times, ignorance, jealousy, prejudice, and racism supplied the impetus. These facts alone

⁸³ *Revised and Amended Prescript of the [Knights of the White Camellia]* (N.P.: n.p., [c. 1867]), SPR 372, ADAH, hereinafter cited as *1867 Knights Prescript*. See "The Greensboro Tournament," *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 July 1866, hereinafter cited as "The Greensboro Tournament." The competition is also mentioned in the 9 June 1866 *Livingston Journal* and Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 248. Cf. Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 164-165; Trelease, *White Terror*, xxii, 81, 82.

rebut the idea that the 1868 constitution was the major reason for the violence that abounded in Alabama during the late 1860s and the first half of the 1870s.⁸⁴

During an 1871 congressional investigation into Klan activities in the South, William H. Forney, a prominent Calhoun County attorney and veteran, provided an additional impetus for the rise of the Klan in Alabama, the Freedmen's Bureau. As Bureau agents made their way into the South following Lee's surrender, many one-time slaveholders found it hard to part with their chattel. Dispelling the myth about black persons' disdain for work following their legal manumission, Forney swore that blacks would work for white people, but problems arose when the workers did or said something that their employers disliked, prompting white men to punish the blacks as usual. Rather than taking the abuse or retaliating in kind, the workers would report violations to local Freedmen's Bureau officials, who would have violators arrested.

Not every black laborer would tell officials when he or she had been harmed, and General Forney did not dispute this fact. Instead, the general tried to qualify it. Only lazy or indolent blacks, he testified, reported personal and other violations. Forney believed that it was these persons whom Klansmen sought to corral. He explained: "I am inclined to think a good many persons thought they would band together and be kind

⁸⁴ Taylor, "A History of the Ku Klux Klan in Alabama, 1865-1874," ii. Cf. Jackson, "Middle-Class Democracy Victorious"; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 164-165. John A. Minnis recalled how white Alabamians such as Richard Busted denied that an organized Klan existed in Alabama during the Postbellum period. Other Alabamians disagreed. One group claimed that the Ku-Klux Committee on Outrages proved that a dangerous, powerful, secret, and vindictive Klan made up of white Democrats had existed in Alabama since 1868 at least. Its intentions were to control black laborers and to repress black voters if they, too, could not be controlled. The Klan, "or a substitute and successor to it, under a changed name and a somewhat changed wardrobe and personal manifestation" still existed in Alabama "in all its hideous and fearful proportions" as in 1874, the assembly reported. *Civil Rights in Alabama*, 4. See John A. Minnis, *Ku Klux in Alabama: Charges of Hon. Richard Busted* (Montgomery, Al.: [n.p.], 1872), 5. For additional information about Busted, see Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins, "Press Reaction in Alabama to the Attempted Assassination of Judge Richard Busted," *Alabama Review* 21 (July 1968): 211-219.

of a patrol for that class.... I think that was about the original cause of the patrol,” a statement that Forney could back with firsthand information. He had defended a group of Klansmen who on 11 July 1870 had hanged six local blacks and William McAdam Luke—a white bookkeeper, Congregationalist missionary, and schoolteacher from Canada—at Cross Plains, Patona, in Calhoun County.⁸⁵

There is an even more likely explanation for white terrorism in Alabama, including the spread of the Klan into the state after being founded by six Confederate veterans in Pulaski, Tennessee, at some point between Christmas 1865 and August 1866. The actions of the Klan and similar organizations symbolized decades of white unrest with “the Negro”—that is, the thick-lipped, clownish, “old plantation darkey,” *tertium quid* caricature—rather than an opposition to any particular legal statute or actual Negro. Put another way, the politics of 1867 and 1868 might have incensed some white Alabamians further than they had been incensed heretofore, thereby contributing to the advance of the Klan in Alabama, but the politics of those years were hardly its cause.⁸⁶

Several facts support a broader origin of the Klan in Alabama. The state’s first den was reportedly organized in Athens a few months after the Pulaski order was founded. At the time, the 1867 constitutional convention for which a reported 71,730

⁸⁵ William Forney, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1., *loc. cit.*, 477. Cf. Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 108-109, 121-122; Sherer, “Let Us Make Man,” 316, and *Black Education in Alabama*, 134-135, 187 (footnote 4), citing *American Missionary* 14 (October 1870): 285.

⁸⁶ Joseph C. Manning, *Politics of Alabama* (Birmingham, Al.: Joseph C. Manning, 1893), 20; Aldine R. Bird, “Whence Dixie? And How it became the Theme Song of the South,” in Smith Collection. See Susan L. Davis, *Authentic History Ku Klux Klan, 1865-1877* (New York: Susan Lawrence Davis, 1924). See also W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903, reprint, New York: Signet, 1969), 122; J. R. Crowe to Walter Fleming, 22 May 1905 and 15 April 1906, Walter L. Fleming Papers, 1865-1932, New York Public Library, New York, New York; Stanley F. Horn, *Invisible Empire* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1939); *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 1; Laura Rose, *The Ku Klux Klan or the Invisible Empire* (New Orleans: [n.p.], 1914), 20; C. Lester and D. L. Wilson, *Ku Klux Klan, Its Origins, Growth, and Disbandment* (Nashville: [n.p.], 1884); D. L. Wilson, “The Ku Klux Klan, Its Origins, Growth, and Disbandment,” *Century Magazine* 28 (1884): 399. Cf. Taylor, “A History of the Ku Klux Klan in Alabama,” 3; Trelease, *White Terror*, 430 (endnote 1).

blacks and 18,553 whites would later vote had not convened. Furthermore, the same racial ideology used to justify the physical, psychological, and institutional violence against African Americans during earlier eras was used to justify the victimization of blacks after the rule of the “proud, bleeding, half-starved Anglo-Saxon race” had been restored. A close look at the 1867 constitutional convention helps clarify this belief.⁸⁷

The 1867 Constitutional Convention

Alabama’s constitutional convention was historic. It was the first one held in the nation as well as the only one whose members finished their work during the same year that they began it. A reported ninety-eight district delegates—described by one historian as “extreme,” “moderate,” “men who would shift first to one side and then to the other,” and black—attended the meeting, but no more than nineteen of them were unquestionably black: eighteen actual delegates and Assistant Secretary Avery A. Moses of Montgomery (see Appendix J).⁸⁸ Because President Elisha Woolsey Peck—a

⁸⁷ “The Public Free School System,” 6; *Grandfather Talks about His Life under Two Flags*, 3; *The Voice of the Carpetbagger* (Chicago: Anti-lynching Bureau, 1901), 10; Holmes, *Southern Relief Association of New York*, 15. Only 5,583 Alabamians voted against a constitutional convention, and most, if not all, of them were white. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 64; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 160; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 491; Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 244. A Klan den was supposedly organized at Athens, Alabama, in February 1866, but this notion is debatable. More reliable is the 1871 contention of a white man from North Alabama who remembered having fellowshipped with Klansmen during the fall of 1866. Exiting the woods wearing “rather...pretty” costumes, the disguised men joined the group, danced, and talked. By the spring of 1867, Klansmen were present throughout Alabama, especially in the northernmost parts of the state—for example, Athens, Huntsville, and Tuscumbia. Trelease, *White Terror*, 10, quoting J. R. Lewis, August 1866, Tennessee Monthly Reports, Freedmen’s Bureau Records, RG 105, NA.

⁸⁸ Wiggins, *Scalawag*, 26. Some sources suggest that 100 delegates attended the meeting, but a legislative source lists only ninety-eight delegates. The president and the total number of districts in Alabama might be at the heart of the problem. In addition to presiding over the convention, Elisha W. Peck represented district twenty-nine. There was no district twenty. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 63 (footnote 63); Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 64-65; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 160; Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 490; Tunnell, “Creating ‘the Propaganda of History,’” 795, citing “Alabama,” in *The American Annual Cyclopaedia and Register of Important Events of the Year 1867...* (New York: [n.p.], 1868), 30-35, and “Radical Circus,” *Montgomery Daily Mail*, 7 December 1867.

sixty-eight-year-old Tuscaloosa attorney, former Federalist, and secession opponent from New York—made sure that the most important offices were reserved for whites, only a few blacks—principally, Mobile County’s John Carraway (mulatto) and Ovid Gregory (Afro-Creole) and Lauderdale County’s James T. Rapier (mulatto)—delivered more than one address.⁸⁹

In states where there were far more whites than blacks, eighteen or nineteen black delegates might have seemed unusually high. But in Alabama, whites barely outnumbered blacks in 1867. Furthermore, there were 90,350 black and 74,450 white registered voters in the state during that year. Considering these facts, eighteen or nineteen percent is a telling datum. *Ceteris paribus*, there should have been more black representatives at the meeting.

Attempting to retain a moderate character (as per the wishes of Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, John Pope, Wager Swayne, Henry Wilson, and other leading policymakers), convention delegates agreed that all white elected officials would be allowed to retain their positions even though a number of them had been Confederate officials. Debts were left unpaid, and land remained in the hands of its current owners. In retrospect, the only remotely “extreme” stances that the 1867 constitutional convention delegates took in drafting a new constitution were the perpetuation of a few integrated

⁸⁹ Ovid Gregory’s speech was typical. He wanted to nullify any custom, law, or ordinance that made a distinction based on someone’s color, ethnicity, or race. See *1867 Convention of the State of Alabama, Held in Montgomery, 1867* (Montgomery, AL: Barrett and Brown, 1867), 5-10, hereinafter cited as *1867 Convention*. See also *The New York Herald*, 11 and 13 November 1867; *Moulton Union*, 25 November 1867; Thomas M. Owen, *Alabama Official and Statistical Register* (Montgomery, AL: Brown Printing Company, 1903), 125-126; Monroe N. Work et al., “Some Negro Members of Reconstruction Conventions and Legislatures and of Congress,” *Journal of Negro History* 5 (January 1920): 64-68; James D. Thomas, “The Alabama Constitutional Convention of 1867” (master’s thesis, Auburn University, 1974), 46. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawag*, 16; Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 490; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 10 (footnote 3), 12-13, 109; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 517-518; Foner, *Freedom’s Lawmakers*, 91, and *Forever Free*, 135; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 171; Wiggins, *Scalawag*, 151-152.

public facilities, laws that protected the property rights of female Alabamians, the passage of a resolution that opened public galleries to black women, and the acceptance of a proposal to grant African Americans church property that they had hitherto occupied. Otherwise, the social, political, and economic conditions of social minorities were not addressed in the 1868 state code.⁹⁰

Interracial Unions, Amalgamation, and Cohabitation

White conservatives disagreed. Years after its adoption, Leroy (LeRoy, Le Roy) Pope Walker, former Confederate secretary of state and future president of the 1875 constitutional convention, called the 1868 constitution “a piece of unseemly mosaic, composed of shreds and patches gathered here and there, incongruous in design, inharmonious in action, discriminating and oppressive [and] utterly lacking in every element to inspire popular confidence and the reverence of the people.” Insofar as the constitution had been crafted by several committees rather a single body, had not met the original federal criterion for ratification (one-half of all registered voters), and had become law only because the Republican-controlled Congress had defied President Johnson and pushed through the Fourth Reconstruction Act, authorizing state officials to ratify state constitutions based on a majority of the votes actually cast, Walker’s statements regarding the “popular confidence and the reverence of the people” were sound. But his condemnation of Alabama’s 1868 constitution itself was not. In point of

⁹⁰ See Eugene Pieter R. Feldman, *Black Power in Old Alabama: The Life and Stirring Times of James Rapier Black Congressman from Alabama*, also titled *Black Power in Old Alabama: The Life and Stirring Times of James T. Rapier Afro-American Congressman from Alabama, 1839-1883* ([N.P.:] Museum of African American History, 1968). Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 218-220; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 67, 69.

fact, the document that came out of the Democratic-led 1875 constitutional convention differed only slightly from the document that had come out of the Republican-led 1867 constitutional convention, especially with regard to interracial relationships.⁹¹

Despite a long history of interracial unions, most Republican delegates to the 1867 convention vehemently opposed amalgamation and cohabitation between black and white persons of any nationality, both practices being written into statute as “offenses against public and moral decency.” If any “White person and any negro, or the descendant of any negro, to the third generation inclusive, through one ancestor of each generation, intermarry or live in adultery or fornication with other,” read the 1867 *Revised Code of Alabama*, “each of them must on conviction be imprisoned in the penitentiary, or sentenced [to] hard labor for the county not less than two nor more than seven years.”⁹²

Because many black Alabamians did not desire to live with or have sex with anyone outside their ethnic group, they probably did not mind an amalgamation or cohabitation clause. John Carraway, Ovid Gregory or James T. Rapier even proposed an amendment to allow judges to impose life sentences on any man who cohabitated with a

⁹¹ Leroy P. Walker, quoted in *Journal of the Constitutional Conventional of the State of Alabama, Assembled in the City of Montgomery, September 6th 1875* (Montgomery: W. W. Screws, 1875), 8-10, 16-17, hereinafter cited as *1875 Journal*; Ruth K. Nuernberger, *The Clays of Alabama A Planter-Lawyer-Politician Family* (1958; reprint, Tuscaloosa, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 2005). During the 1867 convention, a power struggle developed between key Republicans. North Alabamian Daniel Bingham, one of the most influential men at the meeting, wanted President Peck to appoint a single drafting committee that Bingham himself would head. In the end, John Keffer’s plan, which called for several drafting committees, won out. No more than two black persons sat on any committee, and no black person was chair.

⁹² Part fourth, chapter 5, sec. 3602 (61), *Revised Code of Alabama*, 690. Representative Jennings’ 1869 sound morals bill allowed a man and a woman to cohabit as long as they were “liberal in their conduct and...willing to occupy the relationship of man and wife. Inasmuch as it was lawful for persons of the same ethnicity to live together, the author assumes Jennings’s bill would have afforded persons of different ethnic backgrounds to cohabit. “Sound Radical Morals,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 27 January 1870, hereinafter cited as “Sound Radical Morals.” Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 15; Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung*, 191 (footnote 8).

black woman during the 1867 constitutional convention. Later, W. H. Councilll was willing to enter into a contract with white Southerners after his attempts at racial and ethnic reconciliation proved futile:

We, the Negroes, agree on our part, to hang by the neck until dead, every colored man who violates the seventh commandment with a white woman, if you, the white people, will agree to punish *according to law* every white man who violates the seventh commandment with a colored woman. So help us God.⁹³

According to Councilll, whom John Temple Graves, a prominent Birmingham publicist, considered the most eloquent and thoughtful black man of his generation, there was not a reasonable black man in the entire South who would not sign the contract.⁹⁴

Many black Alabamians agreed with Carraway and Councilll. All the same, they vilified the state's amalgamation and cohabitation laws because the measures seemed like affronts, hypocritical gestures in a southern honor system, however mythical or exaggerated, that had not only permitted illicit relations between white men and boys and black women and girls during previous eras but had actually encouraged them from time to time. To quote *The Blood Red Record*:

⁹³ William H. Councilll, *The Negro Laborer: A Word to Him* (Huntsville, Al.: R. F. Dickson, 1887), 27. See *Huntsville Times*, 27 April 1875. Cf. Morrison, *History of Alabama A&M University*. Ovid Gregory probably made the suggestion. John Carraway and James T. Rapier were known for their moderation, Gregory for being a "fiery radical." Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, 91. Cf. *1867 Convention*, 189; Feldman, *Black Power in Old Alabama*; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 112-113.

⁹⁴ Cf. Bond, "The Influences of Personalities," 24, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 203-204, citing John Temple Graves, "The Problem of the Races," in *The Possibilities of the Negro in Symposium* (Atlanta: Franklin Printing and Publishing Company, 1904), 17; *History and Hope in the Heart of Dixie*, 141-142; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 141, citing Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 203-204; William H. Councilll, *Bright Side of the Southern Question* (N.P.: n.p., [1903]), 5, quoting *Bessemer Rustler*, 27 July 1903, and G. B. Richings, *Evidence of Progress among Colored People* (Philadelphia: George S. Ferguson Company, 1896), 217.

The white man has been assimilating his blood with that of the Negro [since] 1610..., not, of course, in the orthodox manner, but in a manner which is quite discreditable to him. There was scarcely a plantation in the length and breadth of the South in the halcyon days of slavery, on which there was not a brood of *bastards*, the result of the pollution of black women by their masters and their masters' sons.

A male Alabamian was even franker. According to him, there had been "a great deal of that intercourse in times past," especially in the Black Belt.⁹⁵

Even if the incidence of illicit relationships was inflated, black Alabamians still had ample reason to detest legal enactments that separated them and white people in public and private areas, such as their homes. In every type abode imaginable, from the grandest Greek Revival mansion to the shabbiest dogtrot, black and white Alabamians had shared cherished intimacies. An individual can only imagine how many "good old uncles [and] aunts" had comforted their white masters during times of bereavement or how many white babes had "suckled at the breasts of black mammies" alongside black infants in times of yore without anyone being worried about polluting the white gene pool. Council surmised:

Ninety-five per cent...of the nurses and chamber-maids of the South are colored. These servants are thrown in hourly contact with the children of the families they serve [and] do much to shape the lives of the children they carry in their arms.... It is a fact that southern white women have been accustomed, for many generations, to surrender the care and training of their children to "black mamas," who inspired manhood and gave the first great lessons of God and truth to hundreds of the...hoary haired statemen of the

⁹⁵ *The Blood Red Record: A Review of the Horrible Lynchings and Burning of Negroes by Civilized White Men in the United States: As Taken from the Records. With Comments by John Edward Bruce* (Albany: Argus Company, Printers, 1901), 14-15 (first quote); William H. English, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3., *loc. cit.*, 1441 (second quote). Cf. Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 147; Sydnor, "The Southerner and the Laws."

Sunny South. This custom is still a delight in the South, and white mothers trust their children to the care of Negro nurses with the same implicit faith that Thetis committed her young Achilles to the charge of Phoenix and Chiron.⁹⁶

White Alabamians' positions regarding black manhood suffrage worsened matters. Whereas Carraway, Curtis, Dozier, Greene Lewis, James T. Rapier, and other leading blacks championed universal manhood suffrage, countless whites opposed it. During the 1868 legislative session, for example, Carraway introduced a bill to allow all law-abiding citizens, including ex-Confederates, to hold office and to sit on juries. Black legislators and voters supported the plan, but most white Alabamians were staunchly opposed to black men participating fully and freely in the judicial or the political process. Speaking on behalf of the white opponents of black manhood suffrage, Samuel Peugh, a leading Alabama Democrat, said that some mulattoes' European ancestry made them intelligent electors. Even so, Peugh believed that it would not be wise to allow every black man in the country to vote. White society, Peugh expressed further, "is not yet prepared to condescend to compete with the colored race for positions of either honor or profit any more than it is to admit him to social equalities."⁹⁷

Such assertions were common, but they were not the most common assertions that white Alabamians made about universal black manhood suffrage and office holding. More often, white Alabamians claimed that unsupervised black voters would place Alabama in the hands of unqualified black and avaricious white Republicans. Peugh reminded white Southerners that if black men were allowed to vote, they could be voted

⁹⁶ Peugh, 8 (first quote); *The Blood Red Record*, 21 (second quote); Council, *The Negro Laborer*, 23, 24 (third quote). See Leah Rawls Atkins, *The Romantic Ideal: Alabama's Plantation Eden* (Troy, AL: Troy University Press, 1978), 249, 250. See also "Council's Scrap Book," *Colored American*, 28 January 1899. Cf. Morrison, *History of Alabama A&M University*, 9; Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung*, 191 (footnote 8).

⁹⁷ Peugh, 2, 3. Cf. *1868 Alabama House Journal*, 26.

for. If African Americans held office on any significant scale, interposed the *Montgomery Advertiser*, one of Alabama's oldest newspapers, former slaves would control as many as ten southern states, Alabama being one of them. A "Santo Domingo" was not why white Alabamians had fought the Civil War, it declared, and conservative whites would enslave or kill every black man in the state before they would surrender their white nationality.⁹⁸

Usually, such pronouncements were mere cant. Shrewd, perceptive, or desperate white politicians pursued black voters tirelessly during the Postbellum period because white victories depended on black votes. Thus, "Othello" was courted—though never married—to ensure political success. Not even in the Loyal League, which the Freedmen's Bureau had helped northern Republicans form,⁹⁹ did an earnest concern for the universal social, political, or economic equality of black persons outweigh the personal interests of white politicians, preachers, and well-doers such as Adam Felder, the "sensible Dutchman" whom a number of black Republicans would later support during the 1874 gubernatorial race; Loyal League President Thomas O. Glasscock; and Aram S. Lakin, a circuit-riding minister from Ohio. Milton Saffold—a white judge, one-time Democrat, and Union Leaguer from the Black Belt—confirmed: "I expect to vote and act with whatever party will, for the time being, best [serve] my purpose, which I

⁹⁸ *Montgomery Advertiser*, 11 September 1867. See *Marion Commonwealth*, 10 June 1869. Cf. 31 March 1870 *Marion Commonwealth* "A Valuable Suggestion"; Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 46; "Choice Varieties"; "Jestis"; "Personal Proceedings of the Skunkery"; Peugh, 3; "The Skunkery"; Tunnell, "Creating 'the Propaganda of History,'" 795.

⁹⁹ Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 49-50; Essah, *A House Divided*, 3-4. Initially, Union Leagues were secret, patriotic, northern-established clubs organized to encourage the political activism of free black persons. In the South, Union League involvement in local, regional, and national affairs was an important reason many black persons remained devoted to the Republican party. At least one historian believes the Union League was the first important political movement among blacks. Cf. Fitzgerald, "The Union League Movement in Alabama and Mississippi" and *The Union League Movement in the Deep South*.

avow to be and ever to have been *my protection*.”¹⁰⁰ Clearly, and contrary to the claims of white Alabamians such as Leroy Walker, white politicians in Alabama were the stars of their own production, and it was understood well that black politicians and voters would be cast to fill supporting roles or would be confined to watch.

The 1868 Constitution and the Color Line

Alabama whites were united in their opposition to the code. Led by James Clanton, the *Mobile Register*'s John Forsyth, Jr., and the *Montgomery Advertiser*'s Joseph Hodgson, white voters were advised to register but not vote on the 1868 constitution. The suggestion might have been ignored if it had not come from such important men. Like Clanton, Forsyth and Hodgson were attorneys and war veterans, Forsyth having served in the Mexican-American War and Hodgson in the American Civil War. All three men were well educated and had extensive familial, political, and social ties. Forsyth, for example, was the first-born son of Clara Meigs. Her father, Josiah Meigs, was the first president of the University of Georgia's predecessor, Franklin College. Forsyth's father, John Forsyth, Sr., was a prominent Georgia and Alabama politician whose father, Robert, had for a short time served under Light Horse Harry Lee during the American Revolution. Afterward, Robert Forsyth held a number of local,

¹⁰⁰ Saffold, *Address to Native White Republicans*, 3. Strobach was given the moniker “sensible Dutchman” because in 1869 he opposed removing Democratic legislators in order to guarantee that they would not control the next legislature. See “The News in Brief,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 25 November 1869. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 74, 164-165, 216; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 156-157. For Strobach's black support, see *Selma Southern Argus*, 27 March 1875. See also *Mobile Register*, 18 July 1874.

state, and federal positions, including marshal for the District of Georgia, a post that he received at the urging of United States President George Washington.¹⁰¹

Robert Forsyth's son, John, and grandson, John, Jr., shared similar ambitions. In addition to holding various local and state offices, John the elder became a United States congressman. Representing Georgia during the "Age of Jackson," the slaveholding senator supported states' rights and spoke out eloquently against the 1828 tariff, but he adamantly opposed nullification. Only compromise, he said, could avert a civil war. Later, as secretary of state, John, Sr., took the same approach in his dealings with French officials over reparations that stemmed from the Napoleonic Wars and wine duties and with Spanish officials over Texas and the *Amistad* affair. After leading the Princeton class of 1832, John the younger was elected alderman and mayor of Mobile, became a federal official and, as envoy to Mexico, helped negotiate the peace following the Mexican-American War. John, Jr., also purchased the Columbus, Georgia, *Times* and promoted economic growth in the South, but he is best remembered for his fiery Democratic rhetoric as editor-owner of the *Mobile Register* during the "Golden Age of Partisan Newspapers," the middle-to-late nineteenth century. As a testament to the

¹⁰¹ See *New York Times*, 3 May 1877. See also *Mobile Register*, 5 May 1877; Carl R. Osthaus, *Partisans of the Southern Press: Editorial Spokesmen of the Nineteenth Century* (Lexington, Ky.: University of Kentucky Press, 1994), 1, 118-148; "Press-Register," *Wikipedia*; available via Internet @ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Press-Register>; accessed 4 August 2006; *Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor*, 16 October 1867. Cf. *1871 Hodgson Report*, 25; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 8 (citing James F. Cook, *Governors of Georgia* [Huntsville, Al.: Strode Publishing, 1979], 114), 159-160, Alvin Laroy Duckett, *John Forsyth, Political Tradition* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1962), 162, 198-202, John E. Findling, *Dictionary of American Diplomatic History* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1980), 174, John Forsyth, *Address to the People of Georgia* ([N.P.: n.p.,] 1840), 4, Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds., *Dictionary of American Biography*, vol. 3 (New York: Scribner's, 1928-1958), 534-535, and *Speech of the Hon. John Forsyth of Georgia on the Subject of the Removal of the Public Deposits...* (Washington, D.C.: F. P. Blair, 1834), 22; Logue; Tunnell, "Creating 'the Propaganda of History,'" 795-796. One person spells Hodgson Hodgeson. Cf. Burnett, *op. cit.*, 181.

younger Forsyth's partisanship, the *New York Times* once touted him as the leading Democratic editor in the South.¹⁰²

John Forsyth, Jr., might have been a biased journalist, but he was also an astute student of cultural and political behavior. During the latter part of 1867, as state constitutional conventions gathered throughout the South, he, Clanton, and Hodgson, knew that most white Alabamians preferred the status quo. The Democratic troika also knew that without 85,000 votes, or the one-half majority that existing federal mandates required for passage, no proposed state constitution could not be ratified unless congressmen changed the law. An Election Day boycott among the state's 75,000 registered white voters would thus force the federal government's hand. Clanton, Hodgson, and Forsyth hoped that Andrew Johnson, their proverbial trump card, would veto any proposed change, but they were wrong. Congress did alter the law, and to most white citizens' dismay, Alabama did get a new constitution.¹⁰³

Black Alabamians supported constitutional change. According to historian Malcolm McMillan, 62,089 black men voted to ratify the constitution, and 105 voted against its ratification. The turnout would have been higher, but conservative whites steered many potential and actual black voters away from the polls by threatening to deprive them of food. Other blacks were kept from voting by the devastating downpours that occurred in Alabama when the elections were held.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 152, 159-162. See *Mobile Register*, 3 February 1868. Cf. Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 246-247.

¹⁰⁴ See *Election in Alabama. Letter from the Secretary of War, with a Report by Major General Meade, Commanding 3d Military District, Relative to the Recent Election in Alabama, Supplemental to his Report sent to the House on the Twenty-seventh of March Last*, 40th Congress, 2d. sess., 1868, Ex. Doc. 303., *loc. cit.*, 53, hereinafter cited as *Election in Alabama: Meade*. See also *Election in Alabama. Affidavits of Discharge from Employment in Alabama for Voting*, 40th Congress, 2d. sess., 1868, House of

Although a tiny number of black persons outright opposed the 1868 code, hundreds of them were dissatisfied with parts of it. Its orientation was a common concern. Several leading African Americans considered the constitution too conservative, especially with regard to amalgamation, cohabitation, and segregation. Whereas the constitution could have established integrated schools, it did not. Legislators have been blamed for the exclusion, but they should not bear that burden alone. Members of the state board of education that Macon Countian Noah B. Cloud—an independent-minded Republican, newspaper publisher, former slaveholder, scientific agriculturist, president of the United States Agricultural Society, vice president of Bell and Everett of Montgomery, and physician from the North—headed discussed integrating the state’s public schools but decided against it in the end.¹⁰⁵

Race was one of Superintendent Cloud’s major concerns. Others included successful independent school districts such as Mobile, finances, the conduct of local school officials, public opinion, incompetent black teachers, and competent white teachers who were unwilling to teach black students. From the time that Cloud entered the office on 13 July 1868 through the 1872-1874 tenure of his successor, Joseph Speed, local officials were described as criminals, and Alabama legislators continuously refused to grant enough money to effectively operate free schools. As a result, public educators

Representatives, Misc. Doc., 111, 40-41, hereinafter cited as *Election in Alabama: Affidavits*. Food deprivation and the storm are mentioned in *Admission of Alabama*, 1-2.

¹⁰⁵ See “An Act Providing for Separate Schools for the Two Races,” Alabama Department of Education, State Board of Education Meeting Minutes, 1868-1873, 54. See also “An Act to Provide Separate Schools,” in *1868 Organization, Supervision, and Maintenance Acts*, 4; “An Act Supplementary to An Act to Provide for the Education of Teachers,” in *School Laws of the State of Alabama*, 36-37; Weymouth T. Jordan, “Noah B. Cloud and the *American Cotton Planter*,” *Agricultural History* 31 (October 1957): 44-49. Cf. *1869 Superintendent’s Report*, 4; Baggett, *The Scalawag*, 25; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 66-67, 96; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 541, 607; McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama*, 169; Paterson, *The State Normal School at Montgomery*, 2; Sherer, “Let Us Make Man,” 10-15.

were paid with virtually worthless state notes. By 1869, the situation had gotten so bad that Superintendent Cloud (whom conservatives called “Napoleon Bonaparte,” “the incapable of Ante-Bellum days,” “His Incompetency,” “scalawag charlatan,” and “old Nubius” among other things) reportedly advocated closing every public school in Alabama until policymakers were willing to support the 229,139 white and 157,918 black students who were attending the 1,355 white and 490 black facilities that the 1868 state code had authorized.¹⁰⁶

Jeremiah Haralson was on the other end of the opposition spectrum. For him, the 1868 constitution was not conservative enough. Most Alabamians were somewhere in the middle—in part, because many of them did not understand the constitutional developments in the state during 1867-1868. Their ignorance, which Cloud and other education officials sought to reduce, is another reason the 1868 state code was not the sole cause of violence during and following its adoption.

Regardless of how poorly informed white commoners were, they understood that the free public school system that the 1868 constitution created would benefit black people. For thousands of white Alabamians, the possibility that blacks might become their educational equals was an apt reason to oppose free schools. Other opponents

¹⁰⁶ “Paragraphs,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 January 1871; Weeks, *History of Public School Education in Alabama*, 88. See Monroe County Superintendent of Education Claiborne to Cloud, 25 September 1869, Alabama Department of Education, Administrative Files, 1869-1870, SG 15916, ADAH, hereinafter cited as 1869-1870 Department of Education Administrative Files. For Cloud’s Mobile issues, see “Official Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction on the Troubles in the Mobile Free Public Schools,” in *1869 Superintendent’s Report*, 35-48. See also *Report of the Superintendent of Instruction on the Troubles in the Public Schools of Mobile County; Read before the State Board of Education, at Its Late Meeting, on the 18th Day of August, 1869* (Montgomery, AL: John G. Stokes and Company, 1869), 5-6. For more general problems that Cloud faced, see the *Shelby County Guide*, 10 June 1869. See also the *Alabama State Journal*, 7 October 1870. For an additional elucidation of how the *Marion Commonwealth* felt about Cloud, see “The School Fund,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 March 1870. Cf. “Closing the Free Schools”; Fleming, *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 607, 622, 802; Sherer, “Let Us Make Man,” 2-3.

claimed that the system was fraught with waste. Officials, they said, squandered funds and kept poor records. The former contention is debatable, but the latter contention is not. Sometimes, Superintendent Cloud used a pencil to record information; other times, information was not recorded at all. With such abuse and mismanagement occurring on every level, detractors wondered why any sane person would support public education in Alabama.¹⁰⁷

Despite white contestation, 1868 was an epochal year for Alabama education. The Republican-led state government began to recognize black as well as white public and private schools.¹⁰⁸ More important, state leaders began to allocate state funds to help sustain them. Whereas supporters like State Superintendent of Instruction Cloud, J. A. McCutchen of Elmore County, and John G. Stokes, owner and editor of the *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, applauded the first real free public school system in the state's history,¹⁰⁹ opponents said the new school system was "true to its parentage" because it afforded the state's black citizens an opportunity to get a free public education.¹¹⁰ In

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 30, 69, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 59-61, 98-100; McAfee, *Race, Religion and Reconstruction*, 99; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 16.

¹⁰⁸ Walter Fleming and Edgar Knight suggested that black students were allowed to attend state-supported schools before 1868, but neither Fleming nor Knight provided any support for the claim. The enactment of an apprentice law was the only definite action that Alabama's provisional governments made on black education before that year. See Edgar Wallace Knight, *Public Education in the South* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1922), 314. See also *John F. Knight, Jr., et al., v. The State of Alabama, et al., Post Trial Proposed Findings of Facts and Conclusions of Law Jointly Submitted by the Knight and Sims Plaintiffs and Defendants the Boards of Trustees for Alabama A&M University and Alabama State University*, vol. 1, 43, Alabama State University Archives and Special Collections, Montgomery, Alabama, hereinafter cited as *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 77-78; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 607, 802; Hoar, "History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875," 62-63; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 2-6.

¹⁰⁹ J. A. McCutchen's comments can be found in "The Free School System in Elmore County," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 22 May 1869, hereinafter cited as "The Free School System in Elmore County." Stokes' support for Alabama's education system can be found in numerous *Alabama Weekly State Journal* articles, including a 19 June 1869 piece entitled "The Public School System in Alabama."

¹¹⁰ Hilary A. Herbert, *Grandfather Talks about His Life under Two Flags: The Reminiscences of Hilary A. Herbert* (N.P.: n.p., n.d.), typescript, 202, SPR 4, ADAH. Cf. "Peace and Education." In 1867, Reverend Charles W. Buckley indicated that a bill to allow every city or town's board of directors to create

doing so, lawmakers misappropriated state funds, according to Joseph Hodgson. Their actions, he argued, resulted from a deliberate plot to divert public funds from legitimate expenditures to private and semi-private educational institutions that had been established for personal financial gain or to promote self-serving social, religious, or political programs.¹¹¹

In an annual report to Superintendent Cloud, Coffee County Superintendent of Education M. Miller indicated that the white citizens in his county vehemently opposed the state's free public school system at first because it helped educate black people. Coffee's white residents did not change their minds until they began to realize that free schools might benefit them and their posterity, confirmed Miller. The situation was even worse in Sanford (later Lamar) County. There, even mentioning a free black school was risky, reported County Superintendent of Education G. C. Burns.¹¹²

Not every opponent of the state's public school system disliked it because it benefited African Americans. In his report to Cloud, Lauderdale County Superintendent of Education William Chrisholm indicated that the white people in his county opposed free schools because they distrusted the Republicans who had helped create them. Several persons spoke out against the state system because it increased their local and

segregated black and white schools was pending, but state records do not show where the bill passed. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 84 John W. Alvord, *Third Semi-Annual Report on Schools and Finances of Freedmen* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, [n.d.]), 16; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 3.

¹¹¹ See *Special Report of Joseph Hodgson, Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Alabama, to the Governor, January 1871* (Montgomery, Al.: W. W. Screws, 1871), 9, 10-11. One source referred to Joseph Hodgson as a "Conservation Democrat." Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 68 (quote), 87-110.

¹¹² See M. Miller, undated letter to N. B. Cloud, included in *1869 Superintendent's Report*, 8. See also G. C. Burns, undated letter to N. B. Cloud, included in *ibid.*, 9. Similar ideas were proposed by Dallas County Superintendent J. H. Sears, Macon County Superintendent Jason S. Caldwell, and Marengo County Superintendent George E. Pegram (or Peagram). Each one of their letters to Noah B. Cloud can be found in *ibid.*, 9-10. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 97-98.

state taxes, which were already too high, according to J. L. M. Curry and other leading white citizens. Public schools also brought additional foreign “intruders” into the state. Because competent southern teachers were sparse during the immediate postbellum years, school administrators were forced to hire northern instructors. In the opinion of many dissidents, outside instructors tried to teach inappropriate lessons to young students, especially blacks.¹¹³

Quality Education in Alabama: Obstacles and Opportunities

In his 1874 report to Governor David P. Lewis, Superintendent of Education Speed contended that the embarrassing conditions about which he, Cloud, and other education officials had written in earlier reports still existed. In some counties, the situation had worsened. Because the school-appropriation scheme that state lawmakers had authorized in April 1873 was not working in several districts, countless teachers were still not being paid promptly. Others were not being paid what they deserved. Poor counties were not generating enough revenue through local and state taxes to effectively operate their schools, and the state needed more qualified, energetic instructors. Those were not epiphanies, insisted Speed: “The teachers know it, the county superintendents are aware of it, intelligent parents feel it, and the children suffer for it.”¹¹⁴

¹¹³ See William Chrisholm, letter to Noah B. Cloud, 20 October 1869, included in *1869 Superintendent's Report*, 7, 8. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim.

¹¹⁴ Joseph Speed, quoted in *Statements Required by the House of Representatives from the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Alabama, Pursuant to a Resolution of the House Bearing the Date January 29th, 1870* (Montgomery, Al.: John G. Stokes, 1870), 5, hereinafter cited as *1870 Superintendent's Statements to the House*. Additional discourse is included in Hoar, “History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875,” 142-147.

Parental apathy and the dilapidation of public schoolhouses were two more problems that Speed addressed in his annual report. Employing religiosity to bolster his case, Speed proclaimed:

No man [who] hires a laborer on his plantation will fail to look after him. No prudent housewife neglects to oversee the work being done by those she employs. How much more important, then, that every parent should take an active interest in that most important of all delegated work, the education of the children received as a holy trust from the Almighty Father.¹¹⁵

Superintendent Speed also emphasized the need for attractive, comfortable, and conveniently located schools. In this, too, parents had an obligation. If adult Alabamians visited their offspring, siblings, friends, and associates' schools more often than they did, they would see the shabby facilities in which many public schoolteachers and pupils were forced to labor. Speed thought frequent visits might make parents and guardians more willing to pay local and state taxes to provide for the upkeep of public schools or, at a minimum, motivate them to work with local, county, and state officials to improve public education in Alabama. Interestingly, Speed supported his contention by noting the success of a black normal school at Marion in Perry County.

Conclusion

The development of the Marion institution was emblematic of African American agency. Although black Alabamians were criticized continually for being lazy, ignorant dupes whom white Republicans exploited, most African Americans were no more lethargic, uninformed, or gullible than the average white. But there was some truth in the

¹¹⁵ Joseph Speed, *1870 Superintendent's Statements to the House*, 5.

criticism. At GOP meetings, few discussions dealt with the plight of blacks. At the 1867 constitutional convention, which the GOP controlled, even fewer black men were allowed to speak. White Republicans pledged support for the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments, the Civil Rights Bill of 1866, and similar federal legislation, but few whites in the state party tried to implement them. Such apathy seemed to validate one man's claim that constitutional amendments and civil-rights bills could not secure freemen's salvation. The measures merely gave blacks themselves an opportunity to do so.¹¹⁶

Lawrence Berry, E. S. Winn, and at least fifty other innovative and industrious Alabamians accepted the challenge head on. In November 1865, while some people advertised the sell of blacks and federal lawmakers designed the congressional plan of Reconstruction, Berry and his associates met in Mobile to hold one of the first predominantly black post-Civil War statewide political conventions in the country. The conference received national attention. The vast majority of it was positive, and most of the negative criticism was politically or racially motivated. Traditionalist whites did not want to accept that fact that ex-slaves and a few empathetic whites were capable of organizing a meeting with as much decorum and respect for proper procedure as the Mobile assembly displayed. The 1867 meeting was even more successful. Not only did it help launch the political career of John Carraway, one of Alabama's most renowned black lawmakers; he and other delegates made it clear that they and most of the persons

¹¹⁶ See *A Paper Read at the Annual Meeting of the American Missionary Association, Held in Syracuse, N. Y., October 24, 1877, by Samuel Armstrong, Principal of the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute of Hampton Virginia* (Hampton, Va.: Normal School Print, 1877), 3-4, hereinafter cited as *1877 Paper Read at the Annual Meeting of the American Missionary Association*. Cf. Collins, *The Fourteenth Amendment and the Negro Race Question*, 830, 853-854.

whom they represented were as prepared to participate in the political process as was the average white Alabamian. Furthermore, Carraway and coterie were committed to racial unity.¹¹⁷

On the heels of the 1867 meeting, one quixotic observer predicted that it would be the last colored convention ever held in the state. Henceforth, skin color would be “regarded as an unnecessary prefix when bodies having political objects in view, or any other public bodies are to be designated.” The state Republican party would meet often, he said, but colored and white conventions were things of the past. As it turned out, the prediction was wrong. Black and white Republicans would continue to assemble individually, champion different programs, and disagree on how much input blacks should have in important decisions.¹¹⁸

The Republicans’ problems illustrated how important race was in Alabama. Oftentimes, white Republicans claimed that there were no qualified black office seekers, but their contention was false. The vast majority of black officials were fine lawmakers. Most white Republicans, like most white Democrats and Independents, were simply afraid of losing the economic, educational, political, religious, and social control that they had hitherto held, so they blocked blacks’ nominations or convinced black candidates that they could not be elected without white support.

The Black Belt was an exception to this general rule. There, a number of African American politicians were either appointed or elected to important political offices during and immediately following Reconstruction. Politicians of African descent were particularly successful in Perry County, where Negro rule was more than a myth.

¹¹⁷ Patience Essah, 27 July 2006 communication to the author. Cf. Foner and Walker.

¹¹⁸ 7 May 1867 *New Orleans Tribune*.

Although one would be mistaken to exaggerate the black politicians' ability to bring about change without the assistance of white moderates or the fear of retribution from white conservatives, African Americans played key roles in not only the political but also the economic, educational, and religious advancement of the county. In doing so, blacks and moderate whites made Perry County a mecca of black self-help and biracial cooperation during the Reconstruction and early Redemption periods.

**“SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES”: POLITICS AND RACE-
BASED VIOLENCE IN RECONSTRUCTION-ERA PERRY COUNTY**

“Impressed upon memory’s tablet are the bright, beautiful days of sunny April (1865)...with [their] bursting buds and blossoms. How beautiful and sweet scented were the golden glories of jasmine! The dogwoods arrayed in robes of white, seemed to proclaim that Spring had come with its wealth of bloom and fragrance to again cheer and make light the heart of man.... But how rude the shock, that called us from the boundless enjoyment of all the beauties of Spring in Alabama!”

—Sarah Ellen Phillips, 1865¹

“The Old South, having been stamped out of existence by the natural and demoniac abolitionists of the United States and christendom, a new something is coming up which shows of a worse subjugation than that of yankee bayonets. The something seems to sport the name New South.”

—Michael Magaul, 1881²

Frances Pardue pronounced the Civil War over in Marion as soon as the 9th Minnesota Infantry Regiment left the town on 26 July 1865, but her pronouncement was premature. The troops of the 9th Minnesota were not the only Union forces in Marion. The Unionist “Eagles” of the 8th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment were also stationed there. The 9th Minnesota left; the 8th Wisconsin did not—at least, not entirely. Most of them

¹ Phillips, “Reminiscences of War.”

² Magaul, *The Eternal Education*, 41.

spent the rest of the summer on the campus of Howard College alongside approximately twenty former slaves.³

The members of the 8th Wisconsin were scheduled to remain in southern and central Alabama until 5 September 1865 before traveling to Madison in the Tennessee Valley to be disbanded. Not every soldier made it. A number of Eagles decided to stay in Perry County when their tours of duty ended. Each man had his own reason, of course, but economic opportunity was a common incentive. Agreeing with “Pig Iron” Kelley’s assertion regarding Alabama having more natural wealth than all of the northern states combined,⁴ the Union soldiers who chose to remain in Perry after their brothers in arms left were determined to become as wealthy as they could from the natural, human, and institutional resources of the Black Belt despite what Conrad C. Badger (or Bagger), a foul-mouthed 34th New Jersey Volunteer Regiment private, saw as bleak postwar prospects for southern planters and northern entrepreneurs.⁵

Private Badger’s assessment was made in a 12 July 1866 letter written three months after his unit left Cowles Station in Macon County. Badger, who had become an assistant surgeon at some point during the war, once believed that 1866 was going to be a banner year for agriculturists and commercialists, especially for northern cotton investors. Instead, it was disastrous. Heavy and continuous May rains kept farmers “in the grass,” a

³ The 8th Wisconsin’s mascot was an eagle called “Old Abe.” See C. E. Dornbusch, comp., *Regimental Publications and Personal Narratives of the Civil War: A Checklist*, vol. 1: Northern States, part 6: Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin (New York: New York Public Library, 1961), 82-83.

⁴ See William D. Kelley, *The South—Its Resources and Wants* (Washington, D.C.: Union Republican Congressional Executive Committee, [n.d.]), 8. For one of many affirmations, see “Alabama and Her Natural Resources,” *Daily Selma Times*, 6 September 1865. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 33-34, 35; Smith, *The History and Debates of the Convention of the People of Alabama*, 31.

⁵ See Conrad C. Badger Letter, 1866, SPR 499, ADAH, hereinafter cited as 1866 Badger Letter. Cf. Tunnell, “Creating ‘the Propaganda of History,’” 792-793. According to one source, Badger had “just seven principles. They were five loaves and two fishes. And he clung to them until the last.” “A Monody,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 15 December 1870.

June flood destroyed a number of river plantations below Montgomery, and labor was allegedly deficient.⁶

According to Badger, who had hopes of becoming a wealthy physician before returning to New Jersey, the vast majority of planters whom he knew were forced to abandon virtually all of their cotton land because they could not find sufficient freepersons to work it. One Alabama planter whom Badger knew deserted his entire 1,200-acre plantation and discharged every one of his paid field hands. By doing so, the farmer lost all of the money that he had spent to purchase seed, sacrificed at least six months labor, and left several individuals unemployed. “All these discouragements, combined with the low price of cotton...make things gloomy enough,” wrote Badger.⁷

Not every northern soldier who remained in Alabama following the Civil War agreed with such assessments of the state’s economic conditions. In addition to the members of the 8th Wisconsin Regiment who stayed in Perry County, a Northerner named McArthur had his sights set on three Dallas County estates. Each property was doing well, recalled Badger, but the future was uncertain because the Selma plantations’ success depended on the willingness of freepersons to work the lands. Having been recently emancipated, many black people were either indolent or indifferent, argued Badger, adding: “It is almost impossible to make them understand that anyone is a loser except themselves. [If they] choose to lay up 3 days out of week,” they will. In closing, Badger communicated how optimistic he was that conditions would improve. All the same, he was confident that the era of thousand-acre plantations with hundreds of black field hands to work them was coming to an end. Small plantations with equally small

⁶ 1866 Badger Letter. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, 88.

⁷ 1866 Badger Letter.

gangs of labor supervised by “the persons directly interested in the crop will be the order of the day,” supposed Badger, concluding: “The industrious white men of the south, the men who cultivated the soil for the benefit of the proprietor & made the cotton, but who had never in their wildest dreams aspired to any thing higher than being an overseer, these are the men who in connection with the Yankees are to make the South.”⁸

“Carpetbag” Rule in the Early Postbellum Perry County

Economic gain was never the sole reason northern veterans stayed in Alabama and other parts of the South following the Civil War. Politics was an additional impetus, especially for the 8th Wisconsin volunteers who remained in Perry County. Several of them were Republicans, and Republicans held most of the county’s immediate postbellum political offices. Some constables, coroners, and justices of the peace were Democrats, but the vast majority of major officeholders between 1865 and 1874 belonged to the party of Lincoln, which the county’s black majority overwhelmingly supported. The four members of the 8th Wisconsin who held political office in Perry County during Reconstruction—Rufus J. Reid, Daniel H. Slawson, Benjamin S. Williams, and F. Daniel Wyman—were all Republicans, and their presence in the county provided nostalgic white

⁸ 1866 Badger Letter. Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, 203, 204, 211-212, 213, citing *Montgomery Daily Mail*, 10 January 1866. Some observers claimed that shiftlessness was common among white as well as black commoners. One person wrote: “All, both white and colored, grew up in a state of society that held manual labor degrading—the occupation of slaves; hence, the poor white, unable to own slaves himself, became a loafer and a hanger-on upon those who did own them; and the freedman’s first idea of liberty was chronic idleness.” Dexter Hawkins, “Education—The Need of the South,” *Barnard’s Journal of Education* (July 1881): 227.

Democrats, former Confederates, and Confederate sympathizers a convenient object against which they could mobilize anti-northern and anti-Republican sentiment.⁹

County Solicitor Reid, Circuit Clerk Slawson, Probate Judge Williams, and Senator (later Sheriff) Wyman shared a number of commonalities. All four men were northern Republicans who were either elected or appointed in 1868, faced charges of corruption, and left office under clouds of suspicion (see Appendix K). As elsewhere in the state, the Republicans were said to have sold their offices. Asked by Francis P. Blair, Jr., of the Ku-Klux Committee on Outrages if Perry County officials were known for putting their jobs on the market regularly, Robert Christian, an ex-Confederate who had served as a Freedmen's Bureau agent and a justice of the peace, swore that he did not have any personal knowledge of the reputed acts, but this was the general consensus among the informed. No one doubted whether Reid, Slawson, Williams or Wyman sold his office, and neither man ever denied the charge.¹⁰

In additional testimony, Christian swore that at least one reliable source, Major William B. Modawell—a respected attorney, war veteran, and future lieutenant-governor candidate—told him the day before his testimony that there was incontrovertible

⁹ Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, 211, 213-214; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1562; Tunnell, "Creating 'the Propaganda of History,'" 792-793. Often, Slawson was spelled Slauson. In *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy*, Sheriff Wyman is called Lyman, and investigators suggested that Benjamin S. Williams' middle initial was H. Obviously, some testifiers did not speak clearly, or recorders wrote down what the testifiers said incorrectly. As far as Reed, Slawson, Williams, and Wyman's military service is concerned, the author is certain that Williams and Wyman were members of the 8th Wisconsin. Williams was a first lieutenant in Company D when he joined the unit and a captain when he left it. Wyman remained a private in Company C throughout the conflict, but Reed and Slawson's statuses are unclear. They might have been members of another regiment and joined the 8th Wisconsin at some point during the war.

¹⁰ See, for example, Walter R. Fleming, *The Ku Klux Testimony Relating to Alabama* (N.P.: n.p.: [1903]), 2, Books Pamphlet File, MFB 299, R31-30, Samford University Special Collections, Birmingham, Alabama. At the behest of several Perry County notables, Wager Swayne authorized civil magistrates to become Bureau agents. Robert Christian qualified at the beginning of 1866 and served with the Freedmen's Bureau for at least eighteen months. See Alabama Department of Education, Administrative Files, to 1869, 1868 Returns of Votes for County Offices, SG 15915, ADAH. Cf. Christian Diary; Fleming, *The Ku Klux Testimony Relating to Alabama*; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1558.

evidence that all four men had sold or otherwise transferred their offices in exchange for property and money. In more than one instance, explained Christian, the price of the office was factored into the price of the property, which was usually inadequate in the wealthy agrarian and former slaveholder's opinion. This notion led him to believe that the transfer of property was used to disguise the transferal of office.¹¹

Reportedly, either Augustus Y. Hughes or Augustine C. Howze paid Williams \$5,000 to become probate judge. Rumor also had it that Jones J. Seawell or L. Seawell Jones purchased Slawson's position and that Democrat Charles C. Browne (or Brown) paid Reid about \$4,000 to become solicitor.¹² Amazed at the hefty sum commanded by a minor office, committee members asked whether solicitor was an important position in Perry County. Christian stated that there was not much civil business in the county, but there were numerous criminal cases for petty crimes that paid well. He then discussed the fourth member of the Republican quartet, Sheriff Wyman. Wyman sold his office to Henry H. Moseley (or Mosley)—a former Confederate and sheriff, Democrat, and local jokester—for between \$1,000 and \$1,500. Wyman, Christian testified, had to settle his accounts quickly because he had released an accused murderer from the Marion prison.

¹¹ See "Our Next Candidate," *Marion Commonwealth*, 22 January 1874, hereinafter cited as "Our Next Candidate."

¹² As amazing as it might seem, Jones J. Seawell and L. Seawell Jones apparently were different people. Seawell, a young Democrat, served in the state House from 1866 through 1867; Jones, an older Democrat, was Perry County's circuit clerk. The author has no idea from where the Hughes rumor came. Howze was probate judge after Williams. Perhaps the Ku Klux investigators misunderstood what one of the testifiers called Howze or someone misspelled his first and last names, which was common. Once, a Perry County resident spelled the probate judge's name House. Others spelled it Houze. See, for example, James Scott to Augustine House, undated letter, Perry County, Alabama, Probate Judge Deed Records, 1819-1904, LG 5486, ADAH, hereinafter cited as James Scott Letter. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1561.

If tried and found guilty, Wyman faced a fine of up to \$2,000, imprisonment in the state penitentiary, or twenty years hard labor.¹³

Republican Joseph Speed—a former Whig, Democrat, councilman, notary public, education official, county registrar, and self-professed Unionist who had been forced to serve the Confederacy—was asked similar questions about the northern-born officials. According to Speed, who had lived and taught school in North Carolina and Virginia as well as in Alabama, where he operated a boys’ school in Perry County during the war, Williams, Reid, and Slawson were good officials. Speed was particularly satisfied with Williams, whom he still deemed honorable even though Williams had sold his office. Clearly perplexed, Chairman Luke Poland—a one-time Vermont Supreme Court justice, five-term United States congressman, and chief investigator of the Crédit Mobilier scandal during Grant’s presidency—asked whether office selling was lawful in Alabama. “I am not a lawyer,” snapped Speed, pointing out that his northern colleagues’ predecessors had also acted unlawfully and that a Democratic governor had appointed their successors. In other words, unsavory politicians could be found in both major parties.¹⁴

To prove his point, Speed focused on Sheriffs Moseley and Wyman. Moseley, whom Speed considered inefficient because he was dissipated, left office illegally. Wyman, whom Speed considered a clever and able officer, did not. At some point before vacating the post, Wyman told Speed that being sheriff was not as profitable as he had

¹³ See *Marion Commonwealth*, 4 April 1867. See also “The Difference,” *ibid.*, 15 December 1870. According to one source, Moseley was known for propounding difficult conundrums that, on occasion, even he could not solve. See “Harry Moseley’s Riddle,” *ibid.*, 4 November 1869. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1558; *The Penal Code of Alabama*, 23-25, 87.

¹⁴ Joseph Speed, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, *loc. cit.*, 424. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 220; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 102, citing *Weekly Marion American*, 17 July 1861.

expected, so he sold the office. The prison scandal about which Christian testified had nothing to do with the decision, recalled Speed, who acknowledged that Wyman's act might have been unethical, but it was not illegal.¹⁵

Speed also provided testimony about Reid, Slawson, and Williams, who had also left office unethically, if not illegally, because they had sold their posts. Considering that Williams was an excellent officer and that Reid was one of the best circuit clerks Perry County had ever had, their ostensible transgressions were unfortunate, avowed Speed. This might have been true, but the Ku Klux Klan committee was more interested in what happened to Williams. Having been told that Klansmen had forced Williams from the probate judge's chair, committee member Charles W. Buckley—a Republican congressman, minister, former Freedmen's Bureau inspector and superintendent of schools from Alabama—asked whether “disguised men” (a common tag for the Klan and similar organizations) had been responsible for the prisoner's release or for Williams' removal. Christian swore that white terrorists had nothing to do with either incident. People did not know who opened the jail, he explained. The door was simply found open, and the man, whom Christian called a drunken, valueless member of the wealthy Vaughn family, was gone. This was plausible. Prison breaks were common in Perry County's seat of justice.¹⁶

According to John W. Waddell, Marion's first postbellum jailor, seven prisoners escaped between 5 and 12 February 1866. Four of them fled at one time. Two escapees,

¹⁵ Joseph Speed, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, *loc. cit.*, 424. Deputy Sheriff Edwin Burt, who was black, might have served as interim sheriff following Moseley's departure. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 346; Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, 32.

¹⁶ Robert Christian, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, *loc. cit.*, 1559. See *Records of the Superintendent of Education for the State of Alabama, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1971). Cf. Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 120; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 423; Sherer, “Let Us Make Man,” 3, 242.

R. C. Burt and someone named Fikes, were white. Their partners, Ely and Young, were black. All four men had been charged with grand larceny.¹⁷

Critics throughout the Canebrake considered Burt, Ely, Fikes, and Young's escape absurd. The men climbed through a hole in the roof. In and of itself, the means by which they got away was nothing to poke fun at. The jail had a hole in the roof that needed to be repaired. What made the 12 February 1866 breakaway so ludicrous is that E. R. Parker, a local carpenter, had been paid to mend the roof after a black inmate named John Moore had broken out of jail the previous week. It appears that Moore, who had also been found guilty of grand larceny, pulled himself up to the ceiling of his holding cell and climbed through a hole in the roof. Within twenty-four hours, Parker was summoned to the prison to make repairs. Evidently, he did not do a good job. Four days later, Burt, Ely, Fikes, and Young crawled through the same hole that Parker was supposed to have fixed. Nevertheless, Waddell asked Parker to perform the same repair that he had bungled the day after Burt, Ely, Fikes, and Young escaped.

Botched repairs and successful escapes notwithstanding, Waddell swore that the prison breaks were not his fault. Truthfully, the jailor might not have been responsible for the escapes, but he was definitely responsible for hiring an inept repairman. Deputy Sheriff Thomas A. Givhan (or Givham), an ex-Confederate and one of Waddell's successors, was not any better at decision making or at monitoring inmates. In fact,

¹⁷ See John W. Waddell, letter to the Perry County Commission, 11 June 1866, in 1866 Perry County Commission Minutes, LG 5457, ADAH, hereinafter cited as 1866 Perry County Commission Minutes.

Givhan might have been worse than Waddell at performing these jobs. By Givhan's own account, more than a dozen criminals escaped from Marion's jailhouse in a single day.¹⁸

Wyman's prisoner-release episode was as interesting as any one of his predecessor's stories. No one, for example, seemed to know how the alleged murderer was set free or why he was in Wyman's custody in the first place. Townspeople suspected the man's trial had been moved from nearby Dallas County, where the crime was committed, on account of the political power wielded by the defendant's brother, a prominent Perry County official whose name just happened to be Benjamin Williams.

Christian testified that Williams resigned—actually, sold—his position to make way for one of his northern brothers in arms, Senator Wyman, the man accused of having released William's murderous sibling from prison when he was sheriff. Looking back on the situation, Christian believed that it might have been more accurate to say Wyman, not Williams, sold the office because it was widely believed that Wyman was holding the office for Williams and that Williams was the actual recipient of the funds. In any event, they and Slawson left the county soon after the transfer of their offices, recounted Christian.¹⁹

Joe Speed offered additional information. He said Wyman departed Perry County in 1869, and Williams and Reid left the following year. As to their whereabouts, Speed believed the men were in Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin, but his recollections were hazy. As of 21 December 1870, Wyman was sheriff, and Slawson was circuit clerk. Several

¹⁸ See *Perry and Pickens Counties, Alabama 1907 Census of Confederate Soldiers* (Cullman, Al.: Gregath Publishing Company, 1983), 6, hereinafter cited as *Perry and Pickens Counties 1907 Confederate Census*.

¹⁹ See "Toadies," *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 June 1869. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1559. Wyman, whom Republican Governor William H. Smith appointed county sheriff, sat in the state senate from 1868 until 1870.

sources verify that in 1871 Williams was probate judge. The same year, Reid paid \$35 to practice law in the county. As for Wyman, he sat in the state legislature in 1870 and did not vacate the sheriff's chair until the middle of April 1871. When he resigned, smug Democrats asked how long it would take for his partner, Williams, to realize that he was not the right man to occupy the probate's office.²⁰

Some of Christian and Speed's contemporaries remembered the incidents leading up to Williams' departure differently than how Christian and Speed testified. Judge Blackford of Hale County testified that the Klan had indeed forced Williams out of the probate judge's seat. In testimony taken on 24 October 1871 in Demopolis, Alabama, Blackford recalled a Confederate general telling him that the Klan had been organized in Tennessee but had spread into every county of Alabama shortly after its inception. In addition to local dens, there was also a statewide organization whose members were especially active in counties where large numbers of African Americans lived—for example, Madison, Pickens, Tuscaloosa, and almost every one of Alabama's Black Belt counties, including Perry. What is more, the state order was amply endowed. By the judge's estimation, the Alabama Klan had as much as \$500,000 at its disposal to police black people who, among other things, endeavored to vote—the main reason why the statewide Klan was formed, asserted Blackford—and to chastise intolerable white people.²¹

²⁰ Cf. 20 April 1871 *Marion Commonwealth*; "General News..." *ibid.*, quoting *Selma Times*, [n.d.]. Based on the *Marion Commonwealth*'s rhetorical question, county commissioner records, and other documents, the author is confident that Benjamin Williams did not leave Perry County before May 1871. See *Marion Commonwealth*, 5 January 1871. See also Perry County, Alabama, County Commission Cash Receipts and Checks Received Log Book, 1870-1875, LG 4649, ADAH; Perry County, Alabama, County Commission Minutes, 1870-1877, LG 5458, ADAH, hereinafter cited as 1870-1877 Perry County Commission Minutes.

²¹ The chastise reference is taken from William H. Forney, who swore that in the counties where he practiced law (Calhoun, Cherokee, Cleburne, De Kalb, Etowah, Talladega) there "was no such

To support his accusations, Blackford revisited an incident involving the Klan and a Hale County man by the name of Peyton McDonald who was awaiting trial in a Greensboro calaboose, or jail, when Klansmen and a group of white students from Southern University came to remove him. Unfortunately for them, the mayor, a marshal, or the county sheriff ordered the mobsters to cease and desist their actions. The sheriff then contacted his father, who came to the jail accompanied by several Greensboro citizens. Together, they prevented the Klan and their young associates from seizing McDonald. Upset because white Southerners had turned them away, the disguised men eventually departed, cursing as they disappeared from sight.

Apparently, Judge Williams was another white person whom the Klan could not tolerate. Considered indifferent about the Klan's concerns, Williams was strongly encouraged to leave Perry County after Sheriff Wyman helped prevent Klansmen from capturing and slaying a black man who had been accused of killing a local white. In the wake of the foiled retaliation attempt, Klansmen sent Williams a letter in which they threatened his life. After reading it, Williams told Blackford that staying in Perry County without being harmed was impossible.²²

Eli Augustus Heidt and Mordecai M. Cooke, owners of the ultra-conservative *Marion Commonwealth* and two of the most influential editors in the Black Belt, fervently rejected Williams and Blackford's accounts. According to the journalists, every person in Perry County knew that Williams had never been threatened or injured by the

organization...of disguised persons...to resist the law." In Calhoun, Forney continued, "bands of disguised men have appeared on several occasions, in numbers ranging from five or six to probably as high as fifty, but I do not believe that they are organized for the purpose of resisting the law; it is merely to take the law in their own hands, and chastise parties." William Forney, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, *loc. cit.*, 462.

²² Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 2, 1296.

Klan despite the numerous wrongs that he had inflicted on his constituents. Had Williams been warned to leave the county, everyone from Maine to New Mexico would have known about it. In an entertainingly succinct explanation of why Blackford, Williams, and other Republicans were spreading the purportedly groundless rumor, Heidt and Cooke asserted: “Bread and butter is a powerful logician, especially when pleading before an empty belly.”²³

Blackford’s testimony confirmed that Williams had given up his probate judgeship, but it did nothing to verify that he had sold it. During the Klan proceedings, Congressman Philadelph Van Trump of Ohio asked whether Augustus Hughes had purchased the office from Williams for \$5,000, as was rumored. Blackford confirmed that Williams had purchased a large home and some land in Marion but, considering how much property cost in Perry’s county seat, believed that a house, a lot, and an office would have cost more than \$5,000. He therefore concluded that the persons spreading the rumor were mistaken.²⁴

Christian was unaware of any property that Williams had ever owned in Marion, but he believed that certain Democrats had also been censured for buying and selling offices. Although Christian was hesitant to state outright that the Democrats who had purchased offices had been criticized for their transgressions, he did say that he had heard that they had been reproached. As for Christian himself, the unhappy civil servant and staunch conservative condemned all unsavory officials for fostering miserable economic,

²³ “The Convention,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 17 June 1869. See “Benny as Martyr,” *ibid.*, 28 July 1870.

²⁴ Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 2, 1299-1300. Obviously, Van Trump meant Howze, for no Hughes was probate judge.

political, and social conditions in Perry County. Worse, he did not know when their wrongs would be righted.

In additional testimony, Blackford acknowledged being aware of other office selling, including the reputed Slawson-Seawell, or Slawson-Jones, and the Wyman-Moseley overtures. Because Blackford had spoken with Wyman only one time, he did not know if the rumor, which he had first heard in Montgomery, was true. But if it were true, Blackford believed that Wyman should have been ashamed for at least two reasons: it was wrong for anyone to make money by abusing his constituents, and the sheriff had done such an admirable job protecting a black man who had killed a white from the Klan. Blackford informed the committee that he had told Williams how he felt in an earlier conversation and, like Speed, condemned the governor for sanctioning the transaction.²⁵

Race and Violence, Perry County Style

Despite the contentions of knowledgeable Perry County citizens such as Speed and Christian, who swore under oath that the state's black and white residents had been generally harmonious during the years immediately following the Civil War, Alabama's general climate had actually been one of agrarian unrest rooted in chaotic race relations. Hundreds of sullen ex-Confederates had returned to the Black Belt, where they had tried to reestablish as many prewar mores as they could only to realize that they could do little to stop the purportedly wicked intrusions of federal occupiers, white Republicans, and other reputed conspirators. Concurrently, thousands of black persons had moved about, trying to acclimate themselves to their newfound legal rights and political privileges

²⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, vol. 1, 423-424, and vol. 3, 1561.

while remaining only cautiously optimistic that such rights and privileges would ever be fully realized or enjoyed without considerable opposition. Other people had not had the time or the inclination to give much attention to the changing social and political conditions in Perry County and elsewhere in the state. They had been too busy trying to make a living.²⁶

For a number of black people, finding work meant returning to the estates of their former owners, which hundreds of blacks had reportedly left when Wilson's Raiders made their way through Perry County. For thousands more, the process was not so dramatic because they never left the places where they had lived before the war. Expecting that local slaves would not attempt to become masters in their owners' absence, one antebellum writer predicted: "While the master is at war..., the slave will be at work.... The same lands will be cultivated, the same domestic offices performed, the same engagements executed, whatever be the external relations of the country." When the hostilities ceased, another writer reflected: "[The] malcontents of our sister counties have fussed and fought, and some of them have 'bled and died,' but, amidst all, old Perry has glided smoothly along—black and white mixing as well as oil and water." As fanciful as the last assertion is, it warrants further attention.²⁷

In testimony taken on 7 July 1871 in Washington, D. C., Joseph Speed claimed that his home county had been completely calm since the end of the War. Not even the politics of the late 1860s had caused significant disruptions, he testified, swearing that the

²⁶ See "The Senate of Alabama," *Marion Commonwealth*, 24 April 1873. See also Hillman Judith Paterson, "To Teach the Negro," *Alabama Heritage* 40 (spring 1996): 10.

²⁷ L. W. Spratt, *A Series of Articles on the Value of the Union to the South, Lately Published in The Charleston Standard* (Charleston, S.C.: James, Williams and Gitsinger, 1855), 11-12 (first quote); "The Ku Klux," *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 January 1871, hereinafter cited as "The Ku Klux" (second quote). Cf. Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung*, 8.

perfect peace of the 1860s had spilled over into the 1870s. Alexander Curtis agreed. In a 7 May 1869 communication to Clement E. Babb, editor of the Cincinnati, Ohio, *Christian Herald*, Curtis assumed there was no place in the entire South where black and white folk were more harmonious than in Marion. Persons had held heated debates during political campaigns, but no significant physical confrontations had ever taken place in Perry's county seat.²⁸

To support his and Curtis' claims, Speed revisited the November 1870 gubernatorial election that returned a Democrat to Montgomery. In Speed's opinion, the campaign was as orderly as any governor's race he had ever seen. Apparently, he suffered from temporary memory loss. The 1870 governor's race was neither orderly nor quiet. As leading Democrats W. M. Brooks, E. W. Pettus, and J. R. Powell spelled out in a 9 December 1870 public address to all Alabamians, that year's election caused a great deal of anxiety and excitement. Nevertheless, Speed asserted that the 1870 campaign had caused no more disorder or noise than there was in the room in which he was testifying and that a few of his Perry County associates would agree with him. The witness did not indicate the political affiliations of the men who would back the claim; but, considering Speed's personal, political, and social leanings, the men could have been Republicans or Democrats, white or black.²⁹

Part of James Clanton's 1871 testimony before the Congressional Committee on Ku-Klux Outrages reaffirmed some of Speed's contentions. Clanton said the vast

²⁸ See *Marion Commonwealth*, 29 July 1869, hereinafter cited as 7 May 1869 *Christian Herald* editorial. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1., *loc. cit.*, 414.

²⁹ See "To the People of Alabama," *Marion Commonwealth*, 15 December 1870. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 414. Except for three years between December 1865 and November 1870, every Alabama governor since the state's 1819 admission to the Union was a Democrat. Even Alabama's territorial governor, William Wyatt Bibb, was a Democrat.

majority of individuals who populated Alabama following the Civil War believed the status quo would be the order of the day. Clanton acknowledged many citizens being disheartened by what had transpired over the last decade, but he was confident that Alabama would rebound and that antebellum normality—save for race-based slavery and the state’s right to secede—would be restored. As for white Alabamians, they accepted the latest state of affairs in “good faith,” he said, because they were the kind of people who liked to forgive and forget. Proof positive was the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment. As far as Clanton knew, only one prominent white Alabama politician opposed that action: Alexander White, a once “bright and majestic [Democratic] angel,” war veteran, and attorney from Tennessee who had decided to dance with Republican devils when Ulysses Grant was elected president.³⁰

Reinforcing Clanton’s point, Speed told the congressional committee that the Ku Klux Klan had never been organized in Perry County, Alabama. Speed admitted having been told by one of his former slaves that scores of “disguised men—what we call ‘Ku Klux’ . . . in Perry”—had ridden through the county from time to time, but they had never been violent. His was an interesting assertion, considering that Speed had sworn that he had never seen disguised Klansman in Perry County and, by his own admission, could not confirm or refute the ex-slave’s report.³¹

³⁰ James Clanton, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, *loc. cit.*, 226 (first quote); “Address of the Democratic and Conservative State Executive Committee” ([Montgomery, Al: Democratic and Conservative State Executive Committee,] 1875), 4 (second quote). According to a number of individuals, Alexander White backed white supremacy when he was a Democrat, calling the abolition of slavery a grave error. The racial views of White, an antebellum Whig, are described in, among other works, Yonge, *The Conservative Party in Alabama, 1846-1860*, 510.

³¹ Joseph Speed, quoted *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, *loc. cit.*, 422. In Heidt and M. M. Cooke’s opinion, the congressional committee’s investigations into Ku Klux Klan activities were politically motivated. The United States Congress, they contended, was more interested in “securing Radical victims

Like Speed, Robert Christian claimed to have had no firsthand knowledge of disguised men having whipped any black Perry Countian but, unlike Speed, recounted a great deal of lawlessness in the county following the Civil War. Christian was able to discuss several general violations of the law, but he preferred to speak to specific incidents. Ignoring the request, Congressman Blair of the Klan committee asked Christian to discuss whether, in general, order had been kept since war's end. Christian reiterated there having been many violations of the law but amended his statements by explicating how most of the court cases that he had heard as justice of the peace had resulted from feuding or thieving blacks. Indeed, swore Christian, most of the lawlessness that had occurred in Perry County following the Confederacy's defeat had been confined to black people, whose tomfoolery (mainly corn, cotton, cow, horse and mule stealing) had constituted the principal business of the county's court system.³²

Christian, like Clanton, was not completely honest. Clanton overlooked the fact that Alabama lawmakers ratified only one section of the Thirteenth Amendment, and countless sheriffs' reports, circuit-court records, and newspaper articles confirmed that black and white crime rates in Perry County were similar. Furthermore, many of the crimes that white persons committed went unreported. Others, including some reported

at the polls than on promoting the interests of the whole people." "A Campaign Document," *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 February 1871, hereinafter cited as "A Campaign Document."

³² Some of the items that black thieves stole were sold at "dead falls," or crossroads shops, that one white minister defined as "depositories for plunder which the law will not and the neighborhoods cannot suppress." Edwin T. Winkler, "The Negroes in the Gulf States," *The International Review* 1, no. 5 (September 1874): 583. Cf. "Benny as a Martyr"; "The Ku Klux"; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 422, vol. 3, 1558.

crimes, were not investigated properly. Thus, many white criminals were never prosecuted or convicted.³³

Republican Thomas C. Steward—a northern-born white American Missionary Association (AMA) agent, educator-administrator, preacher, and state senator—opposed Christian, Curtis, and Speed’s utopian characterization. According to Reverend Steward, who served as the principal of a black school in Marion, the Perry County Klan threatened to kill him if he continued to educate African Americans. With the backing of Marion’s black community, Steward was spared his principalship, his senate seat and, most important of all, his life. Nevertheless, he took the necessary precautions to deal with the Klan’s midnight calls by purchasing a few of Reverend Henry Ward Beecher’s “Bibles” (rifles). Anticipating a violent confrontation, Steward told one AMA official that Klansmen were becoming very bold in the areas west of Marion and that law-abiding citizens were contemplating leaving the county. In closing, Steward declared that “bloody scenes are to be enacted before we have peace.” The “bloody scenes” about which Steward wrote, and Christian and Speed vehemently denied, would indeed come. The “peace” would not.³⁴

Christian and Speed were adept at wordsmithing that misrepresented the real conditions in Perry County. The two officials might not have seen an actual Klansman in the county or known about any whippings (the specific question to which Christian responded), but they certainly knew that the Klan or Klan-like groups were present in the

³³ See Perry County Circuit Court Bar Docket, 1834-1887, LG 4639, hereinafter cited as Perry County 1834-1887 Bar Docket. See also Perry County Circuit Court Case Files, 1860-1879, LG 5403; Perry County, Alabama, County Court Case Files, 1863-1869; Perry County, Alabama, Probate Judge Minute Book, 1859-1872, ADAH.

³⁴ T. C. Steward to E. M. Cravath, 8 February 1871, American Missionary Association Papers, 15 August 1867, Dillard University, New Orleans, Louisiana, hereinafter referred to as AMA Papers. Some persons have spelled Steward Stewart.

county. As a matter of fact, Marion was once home to a Ku Klux Klan headquarters as well as to that “institution of Chivalry, Humanity, Mercy, and Patriotism” known as the Knights of the White Camelia.³⁵

According to the *Prescripts of the Order of the Knights of the White Camelia*, the organization was established to “protect the weak, the innocent, and the defenseless, from the indignities, wrongs, and the brutal; to relieve the injured and oppressed; to succor the suffering and unfortunate, and especially the widows and orphans of Confederate soldiers.” Perry County Knights carried out some of those charges well. In June 1866, they sponsored a tournament in nearby Greensboro to raise enough money to build a fence around the makeshift Confederate cemetery behind Howard College Chapel. According to one writer, the burial ground was no more than pine grove before the Knights began to take care of it. At other times, Marion Knights and their female relations held fundraisers to benefit orphans as far away as Tuskegee in Macon County.³⁶

Not every action undertaken by Perry County Knights was noble. The group’s opposition to black political activity was particularly reprehensible. Leading Knight George P. L. Reid—a well-known Perry County official, physician, Mason, former Confederate, and supplier of liquor, red onions, quinine, and every type of English pea imaginable—said that he, Albert and Hugh Davis, Jr., and other members of the organization could assemble a thousand men in only four hours to participate in coercive

³⁵ *Revised and Amended Prescript of the Order of the [Knights of the White Camelia]* (N.P.: n.p., [c. 1868]), SPR 84 and 372, ADAH, hereinafter cited as *1868 Knights Prescript*; “The Ku Klux” (first quote). Cf. Fleming, “The Ku-Klux Testimony Relating to Alabama,” 6. Reportedly, a Yorktown, South Carolina, Klansman named Bratton fled to Uniontown and changed his name. When a detective located him, several Uniontown citizens helped Bratton escaped to Canada. Cf. *The Heritage of Perry County, Alabama*, 21, citing “Hon. Alexander Davidson Pitts,” *Selma-Times Journal*, 22 May 1921.

³⁶ *1867 Knights Prescript*. Marion’s own “Knight of the 4th Alabama,” J. P. Rogers, won the tournament. Cf. 9 June 1866 *Livingston Journal*; “The Greensboro Tournament”; *Perry County Heritage*, 248.

acts, including nonviolent terrorism against black people. According to Reid (whom the *Marion Commonwealth* considered “one of the truest and best men alive”), black persons might find scores of well-disciplined Knights positioned along the pathways leading to their homes when they left local meetings of the Loyal League and other sociopolitical gatherings.³⁷

Consider, as further proof of the existence of the Klan or Klan-like groups in Perry County, the killing of William Stillings, a Confederate veteran,³⁸ printer, and editor of an antebellum newspaper called the *True American*.³⁹ Speed and Christian acknowledged being provided information about an incident in which between fifteen and forty disguised men, presumably from Hale County or beyond,⁴⁰ traveled as many as twenty-five miles to coerce Sheriff Wyman to turn over to them the black man who had struck the “old... feeble printer” (Stillings) on the head during the winter or the spring of

³⁷ Advertisement, *Marion Commonwealth*, 9 January 1873 (first quote); “Reid,” *ibid.*, 9 January 1873 (second quote). Reid’s opinion of the Knights’ discipline, which he deemed as “perfect as human ingenuity could have made it,” is mentioned in Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 670. Cf. Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 164-165; *Perry and Pickens Counties 1907 Confederate Census*, 12. Jordan merely speculated that the Davises were Knights.

³⁸ W. Stuart Harris indicates William Stillings was a 2nd lieutenant in Company F (“Curry’s Dragoons” [formerly Murphy’s Independent Company]) of the 3rd Alabama Cavalry. Ken Jones suggests Stillings was a 3rd lieutenant; Abram Milton, William E. Wailes, and William E. Sherrell were 2nd lieutenants. The Broadfoot List also suggests that Stillings was a 3rd lieutenant in Company I. On the advice of Jones, the author checked the National Park Service’s Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System, which is available via Internet @ <http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/index.html>; accessed 18 July 2004. It lists William Stillings as a 3rd lieutenant in Company F of the 3rd Alabama Cavalry Regiment. In either event, Stillings was a 3rd lieutenant. Ken Jones, personal communications to the author, 12, 13, and 16 July 2004. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 243.

³⁹ Marion had two antebellum papers called *American*. Stillings edited the *True American*. M. M. Cooke edited Ben Lane Posey’s the *American*.

⁴⁰ Robert Christian thought the men might have come from Pickens County. However, Judge Blackford, himself a Hale County resident, said the men had assembled so early in the evening on the night that they traveled to Marion that they could not have come from as far away as Pickens. In additional testimony, Blackford recounted how Klansmen from one county sometimes went to another county to perform terrorist acts. Because Hale bordered Perry County, it would have been fairly easy for a Perry Countian to have summoned Hale Klansmen to the Marion jail. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 2, 1284.

1871.⁴¹ Insofar as this occurrence helps expose the fallibility of Speed and Christian's claims, it deserves further review.

What were the circumstances surrounding Stillings' death? Reports varied, but it seems that Stillings was either standing or walking on a narrow walkway one Friday or Saturday evening when a black couple approached him. The woman, who performed domestic duties for a living, carried a laundry basket (reportedly atop her head) and grazed Stillings' arm as she passed him.⁴² Although the worn out, unlighted pathway on which the former slaves and Stillings walked was perhaps no more than four feet wide and visibility was undoubtedly poor, the one-time 3rd lieutenant of Company F, 20th Alabama Regiment Volunteers, or Company I, 3rd Alabama Cavalry, C.S.A., believed the woman brushed against him intentionally. For Stillings, this was an outrageous offense that could have been prevented. If the black couple had paid him the respect that a white man deserved by walking on the road instead of on the sidewalk, the domestic's basket would not have touched him. This, after all, is what the former slaves would have done before "the demoniac abolitionists of the United States and Christendom...stamped out of existence...the Old South." But they did not, and Stillings was jostled violently, according to one questionable newspaper account. Consequently, he pushed the woman out of his way. He also struck her, according to Speed.⁴³

⁴¹ Robert Christian, quoted in *ibid.*, vol. 3, *loc. cit.*, 1560. Other reports differ. Heidt, Stillings' employer, said that Stillings was middle-aged. Besides the wounds that Stillings suffered during the winter or the spring of 1871, he was a healthy man, averred Heidt. The date of the Stillings altercation is also questionable. See "Trial of Rienzi Baker, Negor [sic], for the Killing of Mr. Wm. Stillings, at Marion, February 2nd, 1871," *Selma Weekly Times*, 21 May 1872, hereinafter cited as "Trial of Rienzi Baker." See also *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 May 1872. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 243; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 415 ff.

⁴² Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 243; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1562.

⁴³ Robert Christian, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, *loc. cit.*, 1562; 12 July 2004 Ken Jones communication to the author. See "A War Relic: Original Order of Gen. Johnston Dissolving

Questions from the congressional committee relative to whether Stillings hit the black washerwoman excited Christian, who doubted Speed's account. The first time that Christian attempted to answer a question regarding the incident, he was interrupted. When Congressman Buckley of the committee attempted to ask him a different question, Christian reacted brazenly. Determined to complete his sentence and irritated that a white Alabamian (Buckley) would take part in an investigation into the actions of respected white Southerners, Christian stated that he had never heard anyone say that Stillings had struck the woman.⁴⁴

Christian's statement must be viewed in context. He was a wealthy planter and a devoted Democrat. Stillings was not as wealthy as Christian was, but Stillings' boss, E. A. Heidt, was affluent. Heidt was also Christian's friend, and all three men shared party affiliation. In addition, Christian had no firsthand knowledge of the Stillings affair. All of his information came from Heidt's newspaper. More informed individuals, including two eyewitnesses, confirmed Speed's testimony.

The washerwoman's husband was one of the eyewitnesses. Subsequent reports revealed that he asked Stillings why he shoved and hit his poor wife, who already had but a "scarce ray of hope to cheer her in her toils." Though Stillings believed a southern white gentleman was not obliged to explain or justify his actions to any black person, the cantankerous Marionite told the freedman that he would never allow a black person to crowd him in any way and possibly uttered some sort of oath. Understandably disturbed,

the Tennessee Army," in Smith Collection. See also "Sidewalk Etiquette," *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 June 1869; "Our Sidewalks," *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 February 1870; "Our Streets," *Marion Commonwealth*, 11 April 1872; "Pavements," *Marion Commonwealth*, 28 November 1872; "Town and County," *Marion Commonwealth*, 28 August 1879. Cf. "The Trial of Rienzi Baker."

⁴⁴ Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1563.

the freedman snatched a paling from a nearby fence and knocked Stillings on the neck and head. After being insensible for a while, the Democratic champion of the Old South creed was picked up and taken home.⁴⁵

Speed believed the unfortunate incident involving the black couple and Stillings took place at twilight on a Friday or Saturday in late March or early April 1871. By Monday, 27 March or 3 April, Stillings had seemingly recovered and was walking around Marion. But over the course of a month, his condition worsened, and he died. It seems the cause of Stillings' death was the black man's blow approximately four weeks earlier.⁴⁶

After the initial altercation, Stillings' assailant was arrested and charged with assault with intent to murder. Considering how many affrays with weapons that Marion citizens had witnessed during the Postbellum period, town officials considered the black man's act a minor legal offense—the participants' ethnicities notwithstanding—and fined him \$100.⁴⁷ The black man paid the fine and was released, but when his victim died, he was re-imprisoned.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ "Fashionable Women," *Marion Commonwealth*, 21 July 1871 and 17 July 1873. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 415. Robert Christian cast doubt as to the marital status of the woman, referring to her only as the black man's "wife or some other Negro woman." Robert Christian, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, *loc. cit.*, 1562. See "Citizens of Perry," *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 July 1866.

⁴⁶ This estimation is based on the date that Joseph Speed suggested. It is likely that Williams Stillings had left his home before late March or early April 1871. Cf. "Trial of Rienzi Baker."

⁴⁷ At each court session, some of Marion's most recognized figures were charged with brawling in public. From the fall of 1870 to the spring of 1871 alone, Robert Christian, John B. Cocke, John T. Harris, and Jesse B. Shivers had to go before a judge after they had fought in public. See *The State v. Robert Christian et al.*, *The State v. John T. Harris and V. Williams*, *The State v. J. B. Shivers, J. B. Cocke, and Lemuel Foster*, Perry Court Circuit Court Solicitor's Docket, 1868-1872, LG 4848, ADAH, hereinafter cited as 1868-1872 Circuit Court Solicitor's Docket.

⁴⁸ Joseph Speed, Robert Christian, and William Blackford did not discuss with what the black man was charged. The *Selma Weekly Times* suggested that the charge was murder; in actuality, it was assault with intent to murder. Later, the charge was changed to murder. See *The State v. Renzi Baker*, 1868-1872 Circuit Court Solicitor's Docket. Cf. *Selma Weekly Times* "Trial of Rienzi Baker."

At some point during the second incarceration, disguised men hurried through Greensboro at about 9 PM headed toward Marion, testified James J. Garrett, a Hale County lawyer, old-line Whig, secession opponent, and Confederate veteran. Garrett was not prone to gossip, but he prided himself in keeping up with the goings-on in Hale and surrounding counties, including Perry. Garrett knew about the Stillings affair, but he was not sure if the men who traveled to the Marion jail to avenge Stillings belonged to “the Organization” (the Klan). Nor did Garrett know whether they were from Hale County, whether they were disguised, or what their purpose was. He knew only that they came from a westward direction. Apparently, the darkness of the night or the pace at which the men walked prevented Garrett’s informant from getting a good look at the “moonlight mechanics” as they journeyed to Marion.⁴⁹

Garrett’s testimony might have been earnest, but there is ample reason to believe that it was not. He was a Hale County resident, and the disguised men were said to have come from Hale. Any admission of their origin or place of residence might have cast a bad light on his home county, which was already receiving a great deal of state, regional, and national attention because of the atrocities being carried out against its black residents. This might have been the reason Garrett testified that he did not know anything about the men’s Klan affiliation, their dress, place of origin, or mission. The only thing that he could say with any degree of certainty was that the men had demanded keys from a Perry County jailer and that he had refused. The jailer and members of his

⁴⁹ W. E. Studdard to Jack D. Boozer, [n.d.,] quoted in Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 62 (first quote); “Choice Varieties,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 31 March 1870 (second quoted). Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1480. James J. Garrett was born in North Carolina but lived throughout the South. In addition to his native state and Alabama, he spent time in Georgia, Tennessee, and Virginia. During the Civil War, he was an ordinance lieutenant in the Army of Northern Virginia, C.S.A.

family had then called for some of their Marion associates, who had hurried to the jailhouse and had forced the masked men to disperse. As to the ethnicity of the vigilantes, Garrett could not say for certain that the men had been white or black. For all he knew, they could have been some of the black “Ku Kluxers” whom Reuben Chapman mentioned in his congressional testimony or the black Republicans who harassed black men like Julius Cæser (Peter) Shorter—a quiet, industrious, and sober porter-preacher from Barbour County who worked for Governor Lindsay and presided over the Liberal Conservative Club of Montgomery—for voting the Democratic ticket.⁵⁰

Blackford, Speed, and Christian’s accounts of the Stillings affair were more revealing, as well as more plausible, than Garrett’s version. Blackford confirmed that the would-be avengers did pass through Greensboro at about 9 o’clock PM, as Garrett testified, but added that it would have been impossible for anyone to have missed them or what they wore. Everyone saw the men, recalled Blackford, because there was some sort of show going on downtown. As a result, every local store was lit, and onlookers, some of whom were perched in windowsills, had clear views of the men as they made their way toward Marion.⁵¹

Taking up the story where Blackford left off, Speed maintained that Sheriff Wyman and his father-in-law were able to hold the Klansmen at bay until their Marion

⁵⁰ See “Democracy don’t want Negro Votes,” *Alabama State Journal*, 15 September 1874. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1942, 1948; vol. 1, 228. Interviewed in Livingston, Alabama, on 4 November 1871, Reuben Chapman discussed a case in which a group of black persons “Ku-Kluxed,” or violated, another black person. In all likelihood, the interviewee was referring to the act of “Ku Kluxing,” or violence, rather than to actual black Klansmen. As for Julius Caesar Shorter, who often went by his father’s name, Peter, J. C. Shorter and James H. Clanton agreed that the younger Shorter’s life had been threatened for years because he supported the state Democratic and Conservative party. Shorter’s answer to this problem was simple: he stayed away from black Alabamians. Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 36; Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 52; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 228.

⁵¹ Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 2, 1283.

neighbors came to assist them because Wyman and his father-in-law were armed with a double-barrel shotgun and a Winchester rifle. Christian did not know the exact weapons that the men possessed, but he did know that they were armed. Nor could Christian state with certainty that Wyman and his father-in-law interceded. As Christian understood it, Mrs. Wyman led the defense. Expounding, Christian stated that he and Sheriff Wyman had once belonged to the same Masonic lodge. When the vigilantes approached the sheriff, he gave them a secret Masonic sign. Recognizing the sign, they paused their advance. Shortly thereafter, Mrs. Wyman arrived at the jail, beseeching everyone to remain calm, and the men left.⁵²

Even if Christian's story were true, Sheriff Wyman and his father-in-law's weapons were probably more important impetuses for abandoning the mission than Mrs. Wyman's request or the sheriff's giving what historian W. Stuart Harris believes to have been the Masonic distress signal. Nevertheless, Christian and Harris' conclusions raise interesting questions. If Wyman gave the Masonic signal, as Harris suggests, then how did Sheriff Wyman know the men to whom it was given belonged to the order? Were they wearing Masonic regalia? Did Wyman know who the vigilantes were? If he did, then how well or in what capacity did he and possibly his wife, who supposedly encouraged the men to discontinue their mission, know them? At any rate, the prisoner was taken to Selma, where Speed believed he remained.⁵³

In additional testimony, Speed described other acts of lawlessness that he previously had dismissed. One episode involved Isaac A. N. Hall, a black Perry County winemaker and Republican who, according to Alexander Curtis, was abducted, whipped,

⁵² Ibid., vol. 3, 1562.

⁵³ Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 244.

and killed around 1 May 1871.⁵⁴ Evidently, Speed asked Curtis to look into the Hall affair and report his findings, and Curtis agreed. Speed knew that his informant was not present when the crime was committed but was confident that Curtis could find out what had transpired. As important, Speed trusted his opinion. Why would he not? asked Heidt. Like every other white Republican whom the journalist knew, Joe Speed was nothing more than a Republican “nigger” himself, asserted Heidt.⁵⁵

Pursuant to finding out why Hall had been killed, Curtis questioned several of Hall’s closest associates. Curtis, who almost certainly had dealings with the deceased, confirmed that Hall had not been a thief or a deadbeat parent and had not frequented bawdy houses—three common reasons white Alabamians terrorized black persons, according to W. H. Forney. As far as Curtis could tell, Hall had been a respectable man who was murdered for one reason: for being an active Republican.⁵⁶

Seeking more information about the black Alabamian in whose word Speed placed so much confidence, Chairman Poland of the Ku-Klux committee asked whether Curtis was a member of the state legislature. “Yes, sir,” Speed affirmed. “He is a man of unusual intelligence for a colored man; and his character for veracity and integrity is as good as that of any man I know of in the county. I think that all persons of all parties

⁵⁴ During the 1869-1870 legislative session, someone introduced a bill that would have allowed Isaac Hall to sell homemade wine without a license. *Journal of the Session of the House of Representatives of the State of Alabama, Held in the City of Montgomery, Commencing on the Third Monday in November, 1869* (Montgomery, Al.: John G. Stokes and Company, 1870), 331, hereinafter cited as *1869-1870 Alabama House Journal*. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 415.

⁵⁵ There was a black man named Joe Speed who lived in Perry County, and he probably was a Republican, but the Joe Speed whom Heidt and Cooke repeatedly referred to as a “nigger” or a “negro legislator” was white. See, for example, “Proceedings of the Skunkery,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 25 November 1869.

⁵⁶ According to W. H. Forney, politics had played a part in only one Calhoun County killing, the Cross Plains affair. Other than this incident, politics was a non-factor in local slayings, he said, because the people who carried them out were uninformed. See “Trouble at Cross Plains,” *Jacksonville Republican*, 16 July 1870. Cf. *Death at Cross Plains; Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, 462.

would give him that.” For those and for other reasons, Speed was confident that the Hall killing had taken place just as Curtis had told him. There is no question about it, declared Speed. It “is just as certain as that I sit on this chair.”⁵⁷

In addition to information about Hall, Curtis told Speed about a black man named Alfred Darling who in February 1871 had received a severe beating for no apparent reason. Speed had no firsthand knowledge of the incident, but he was sure that his informant had told him the truth for at least two reasons: Curtis was an honest man, and State Senator Burrell Johnston (or Johnson) of Hale County had corroborated Curtis’ story. According to Johnston, who saw the victim after the attack, Darling had definitely been beaten severely.⁵⁸

Speed believed that there was sufficient reason to trust Johnston, who lived just outside Perry County. In addition to being a state senator, like Curtis, Johnston was a white man. Moreover, several white Democrats had spoken to Darling’s demeanor. On their word, Speed deemed Darling a good person who had more character than most of the black people whom he knew. Darling was probably surprised to know that a well-regarded white Republican like Speed thought so highly of him. As for the white Democrats who vouched for him, Darling was probably less surprised. He was one of the few black men in Alabama who voted with the Democratic and Conservative party.⁵⁹

The next deplorable event about which Speed testified involved a female freeperson named Monie Hartley and her son, whom white terrorists wounded during the

⁵⁷ Joseph Speed, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, *loc. cit.*, 416. With such reverence for Curtis, it is interesting that Speed felt the need to mention ethnicity.

⁵⁸ Joseph Speed, quoting Burrell Johnston in *ibid.*

⁵⁹ See *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 March 1873. See also “Democratic Negroes,” *ibid.*, 12 November 1874, hereinafter cited as “Democratic Negroes.”

middle of April 1871 about fifteen miles away from Speed's home. Although the testifier was unaware of the assaulters' identities, he assumed they were the same men who had tried to remove Stillings' attacker from the Marion jailhouse because the incident took place one day after the failed removal. Like Hall and Darling, Ms. Hartley and her child were not suspected of any crime. The Hartleys were merely standing on their lawn when a group of white men, excited by the Hartleys' curiosity, approached them. Speed did not say the men were disguised, but it is likely they were. Otherwise, why would they have become excited because an African American boy and his mother were looking at them? Moreover, considering possible repercussions, why would the African Americans have been looking or, by implication, staring at the passersby in the first place unless they were outlandishly adorned or acting strangely? At any rate, the men fired shots at the Ms. Hartley and her son, wounding them.⁶⁰

Were the Hartley shootings accidental? Speed did not think they were. Rather, they were wanton acts of violence that demanded any respectable Southerner's condemnation. Lamenting, Speed testified that he was a genuine "southern man" and would never say anything bad about the South or another white Southerner unless it was absolutely necessary. Furthermore, one shooting might have been accidental, but at least two shots were fired because both Hartleys were injured.⁶¹

An additional act of racial violence caught Speed's attention. At the end of May 1871, disguised men whipped Katie Lagrone (or La Grone), a black woman employed by a white man named Blackburn. Like Hall, Darling, and the Hartleys, Lagrone committed no crime. Her only verifiable act of misconduct was leaving the service of Blackburn, to

⁶⁰ Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 416.

⁶¹ Joseph Speed, quoted in *ibid.*

whose residence she was ordered soon after the assault. Speed did not say whether Blackburn knew about or participated in the whipping, but it is not inconceivable. In any case, Lagrone went back to Blackburn's house.⁶²

Curiosities do not stop with whether Blackburn knew about or took part in the whipping. What, exactly, was the extent of Lagrone and Blackburn's relationship? On the surface, this question might seem trivial, but existing state law makes it significant. In 1871, cohabitation between a white and a black person in Alabama was unlawful.

Robert Christian heard Lagrone was living with a white man, but he did not mention the white man's name. Speed provided some clarification. Blackburn was indeed the man with whom Lagrone was living, but Speed knew nothing more about their relationship. Without additional clarification, several questions remain. Was Lagrone cohabitating with Blackburn because they were involved in an illicit relationship, or was she simply boarding at his residence because she worked for him? How many black servants did Blackburn employ? If only one Lagrone worked for him, then a person can understand why she was so important to him, especially if Blackburn were old or ill. On the other hand, if he employed other black servants, then why was Lagrone, whose age was never mentioned, so valuable to him?⁶³

Another race-related act of lawlessness about which Speed testified took place at the edge of Perry County or in nearby Bibb County. Speed was not sure of the act's exact location, but he knew the particulars. The incident involved a black Democrat named Greathouse who was visiting his brother-in-law. Once a resident of Polecat Beat

⁶² The white man might have been Sidney W. Blackburn, one of Old Town's future justices of the peace, but the author is not certain. Several Blackburns resided in Perry County.

⁶³ Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 244 (footnote 10); *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 417.

(one of Perry's political districts), Greathouse had at some point worked for a white Perry or Bibb County resident, but another white man employed him at the time of the assault. As was the case with Lagrone, disguised men approached Greathouse, demanding that he return to his previous employer. When Greathouse refused, he was promptly whipped.⁶⁴

Greathouse's current employer and landlord became upset when he found out that his employee and tenant had been assaulted. Greathouse was afforded the opportunity to return to his former boss, but he turned down the offer. Eventually, a gunfight commenced, and two of the disguised men who led the assault were severely wounded, as made clear by the large amounts of blood seen the morning after the skirmish. While they were carted away, another masked marauder, supposing the weapons of the individuals who were holed up inside the log cabin were empty, walked up to the front of the dwelling and blasted a few shots. Senator Johnston, Speed's informant, said a bullet hit one of the blacks in the thorax, killing him, but the senator did not know what happened to the other black person. Presumably, the gunmen belonged to the Klan.⁶⁵

Christian probably could have clarified who the masked men were or, at a minimum, whether they were Klansmen, but he did not. In fact, Christian was unwilling to admit that the Klan had ever existed in Perry County let alone had undertaken any significant activity. Believing that Christian was "lying like a gentleman," as Nathan B. Forrest did when he was asked about being the grand wizard of the Klan, members of the Ku-Klux Committee on Outrages pressed Christian to tell them about the thirty masked men who had ridden through Marion between 23 and 25 January 1871 amid the election

⁶⁴ Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1563. Speed was not sure whether the victim or his brother-in-law's last name was Greathouse, but other reports confirmed that Greathouse was the victim's name.

⁶⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, vol. 1, 417.

to fill the vacant senate seat of the habitual Reconstruction officeholder F. Daniel Wyman.⁶⁶

Wyman held several political offices during his relatively short stay in Perry County. Upset by the number of positions that he occupied, “An Inquiring Tax Payer” asked how many offices the 1868 state constitution would allow a politician to hold concurrently. Either the taxpayer or Editor Cooke answered: “W(h)yman! Of course he ought to have a round dozen. He will fill a dozen offices with as much ability as he fills one.” Black Perry Countians, who constituted most of Wyman’s support base, did not care that he and other Republicans were unfit for office, wrote Cooke. They were too busy spreading rumors about Klan violence.⁶⁷

Christian did not attempt to refute the notion that Wyman had held numerous positions or the possibility that disguised men had ridden through Perry County’s seat of justice at the end of January 1871. Instead, Christian endeavored to make committee members understand that he did not know anything about the Klan demonstration because he lived twenty miles outside Marion. Nor did he know about the incidents involving Darling and Hall. Perry was a very long county, and the testifier lived at the

⁶⁶ Charles E. Fager, *Selma, 1965* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1974), 75. Cf. Wright, *What They didn’t Teach You about the Civil War*, 224. The actual date of the election was 24 January 1871. See “Election Notice,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 5 January 1871. For an interesting account of the reputed Klan visit, see the 26 January 1871 *Marion Commonwealth*. It reads:

A darkey reported to us last Tuesday [24 January, 1871], that on the night before, a large band of [Ku Klux] Klan passed through Marion. He said that it took them an hour and a half to pass a given point at a quick gallop, and that they were so tall as to be compelled to dodge the telegraph wires as they passed under them. Truly they must have presented quite a formidable appearance.

Of course, individuals had to be vigilant as to the truth of the African American’s story, the paper warned, because “when a darkey *does* get scared, he is scared all over!” “Ku Klux,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 January 1871.

⁶⁷ “Information Wanted, Quick,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 21 October 1869. See “The Argus Platform,” *ibid.*, 24 March 1870.

southernmost end of it. Hence, the violence that had been reported might have occurred without his knowledge.⁶⁸

Distance might have been a legitimate reason Christian did not know about the Hall killing or the thirty Klansmen who had galloped through Marion in January 1871 to prevent black and white Republicans from making Thomas Steward Senator Wyman's successor, but distance could not explain why Christian was unaware of the Darling beating. It had taken place near Hale County, which was close to where Christian lived. "That may be very near my place of residence, or very remote," he explained, reiterating that the Hale-Perry County border was a long one. In any event, he had never heard of the Darling affair. Christian gave the same response to questions about Greathouse, the Hartleys, and Lagrone. All the testifier had any knowledge of was the one occasion on which as many as forty men descended on the Marion jail to seize the black man who had hit William Stillings in the head and neck with a fence paling.⁶⁹

Before closing, committee members Blair, Buckley, and Poland asked Christian to certify his knowledge of Marion happenings. First, they asked him how often he visited the county seat. He replied: "I attend our regular terms of our circuit court about twice a year; it sits a month, and I go thru on probate business and county business frequently, sometimes twice a month, sometimes not for three months at a time." Chairman Poland then asked, "Do you move about through the county much, or confine yourself at home?" Christian's answer, "I stay at home very closely," prompted a quick riposte: "Then it is quite possible these instances of outrage...may have occurred in

⁶⁸ Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1563.

⁶⁹ Robert Christian, quoted in *ibid.*

Perry County, and you not have heard of them?” Christian’s response—his final response—was even quicker: “It is possible, but not very probable.”⁷⁰

In some ways, Attorney Garrett’s testimony paralleled Christian’s contradictory statements. Questioned in Demopolis, Alabama, on 27 October 1871, Garrett recalled a confrontation in which a black man named “Harvey something” was slain. Suddenly remembering the man’s full name, Harvey McCann, Garrett said that McCann had been brutally murdered by as many as thirty disguised men, but the testifier could not say with certainty that the individuals who had participated in the killing were white. Reportedly, McCann had been involved in a personal feud with other black men, and Garrett believed that their argument, not racism or politics, had caused his death.⁷¹

Harvey McCann’s wife thought differently. Although Garrett claimed Mr. McCann’s last words were that the disguised killers were the black men with whom McCann had feuded, Mrs. McCann believed white Klansmen killed her husband. Consequently, she utilized the Enforcement (Force, Ku Klux Klan) Act of 1871 to file a \$5,000 lawsuit against Perry County. Evidently, the widow’s case fizzled after eyewitnesses testified to seeing the feet, hands, and other features of the murderers. According to them, Harvey McCann’s killers were black.⁷²

Apparently, no one in Perry County knew about makeup or considered that the witnesses could have lied. Harvey McCann might have fallen out with other blacks, but it is doubtful that thirty black men—more accurately, thirty disguised black men—were

⁷⁰ Robert Christian and Luke Poland, quoted in *ibid.*, 1564.

⁷¹ James Garrett, quoted in *ibid.*, 1480. Garrett was adamant about the killing having taken place at Perry County, but his testimony might have been shaped by his place of residence.

⁷² See “Ku Klux Suit,” *The Marion Commonwealth*, 31 August 1871, hereinafter cited as “Ku Klux Suit.” Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 8-9; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1488-1489.

so furious with him that they beat him to death. Furthermore, who heard McCann's last words? It is highly improbable that thirty masked blacks beat someone brutally and then took him to where someone else, presumably a white person, could find him.

Greene S. W. Lewis, one of Perry County's most prominent black Republicans, provided information about another Klan crime. In the spring of 1870, a black youth named Bettie Bradford was walking to her grandmother's house when she was kidnapped, stripped, raped, and hanged. When Bradford's naked body was recovered, persons discovered that her eyes had been removed. Lewis reported the incident to Alabama's 1870-1872 governor, William Hugh Smith, a conservative Republican and one-time district judge from North Alabama whom Democrats had nominated for provisional governor before Parsons was appointed, but no arrests were made because "unknown parties" carried out the act.⁷³

When Smith contacted local officials, they denied that the rape and hanging had ever taken place. Evidently, the governor believed them or thought that it was better to act as if he did. In a subsequent communication, Smith called Lewis' allegation a sensational creation of a delusional black man. Of course, Lewis was not delusional. Perry was simply less peaceful than some residents claimed.

In addition to the violent acts that Lewis, Blackford, Christian, Curtis, and Speed discussed, a white woman named Sarah Day murdered a freeman in 1865. The following

⁷³ Greene Lewis to William Hugh Smith, 8 April 1870, quoted in Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 187. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawag*, 161; Wiggins, *Scalawag*, passim.

year, Willis Lockett accidentally killed a freewoman whose last name was Tarrant. Why Day committed the homicide or how Lockett slew the black woman is still unknown.⁷⁴

Another atrocity was carried out on the Howard College campus. On Monday night, 18 September 1865, white men lynched a man whose surname was Williams for a crime that he probably did not commit. Bush Jones alleged that federal soldiers hanged Williams, but no eyewitness came forward to corroborate the claim. Actually, no concrete evidence about the case was ever found, but that did not seem to matter.

The incidents leading up to the Williams hanging epitomized Old South justice. During the fall of 1865, the mutilated body of a Union soldier who had been stationed in Marion was found in the vicinity of the Cahaba River. The corpse had knife wounds in at least five different places. Initially, no one had a clue as to who killed the soldier. Over time, people began to suspect that Williams, who lived outside Selma, was guilty. At some point during the investigation, law-enforcement officials found a pipe, a pocketbook, and a watch that reportedly belonged to the slain soldier. Shortly thereafter, Williams was arrested.

The suspect was taken back to Marion, where Colonel Bowyer ordered him to be placed in the county jail overnight. Perhaps afraid of vigilantes who might seek to avenge a white man's death, Williams asked to be kept in the hands of county guards. Bowyer honored the request, and the prisoner was taken to Howard College, where a Confederate hospital under the supervision of Drs. William Augustus Evans and James McCown Greene had been established shortly after Vicksburg had fallen. The move proved futile. The same night the suspect arrived at the hospital, a group of unnamed

⁷⁴ See Bush Jones, letter to the Perry County Commission, 5 June 1866, 1866 Perry County Commission Minutes. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*.

white men descended on Howard's campus, overtook one of the guards, and carted Williams away. After striking the prisoner above the left eye, they hanged him from the limb of a tree close to the Soldier's Graveyard. To this day, people still debate whether William's death was personal, political, or racial.⁷⁵

The complicated interaction of personal violence and racial violence became most obvious in the events that followed the 21 June 1866 murder of a white woman named Mary Kennington outside Marion. As reported by the *Livingston Journal*, someone entered Kennington's home and struck her with a blunt, iron instrument that shattered her skull. The attacker then turned to Kennington's eight-year-old boy and ten-year-old girl. The murderer fractured the boy's skull in two places, but he did not harm the girl.⁷⁶

An elderly woman, presumably Kennington's grandmother, and Becky Narramore, Kennington's aunt, were also in the house at the time of the brutal assaults. According to one report, the area above Narramore's eyebrows was crushed completely, but the older woman escaped. Evidently, the assailant did not know the latter individual was in the house.

The *Marion Commonwealth* provided more details about the Kennington murder. According to its account, Wiley Narramore, Kennington's brother, was summoned before Jesse B. Shivers, a respected Howard College graduate, lawyer, one-armed Confederate veteran, and Perry County's probate judge. Shivers ascertained that Narramore, a field hand who had missed dinners at his boarding house, had gotten into an argument with a freeman over a cornstalk. After the quarrel, Narramore had reportedly walked toward the

⁷⁵ See *Livingston Journal*, 23 September 1865. Cf. Pardue, "The Confederate Hospital at Marion, Alabama," 6.

⁷⁶ *Livingston Journal*, 12 July 1866.

home of W. J. Turnbow by way of Hamburg Street; but his movement was questioned because only two persons, a Mr. Railford and James Russell (or Russel), had actually seen him walking. A Dr. Heard said Narramore could not have traveled the path that people suspected because he had sat in a chair facing Hamburg Street from twilight until approximately 9 PM that night. Heard, who apparently had remained awake and attentive during the entire four-hour period, vowed that he had not seen the suspected murderer on the day in question.

Narramore did not help his situation by giving conflicting stories. Once, he said that he had walked toward Hamburg Street to visit some stores but, realizing the stores were closed, decided to go directly to the Turnbow home via a route that would not have taken him down Hamburg Street. Evidently, this was the reason Heard had not seen him. Another time, Narramore said that he had walked to Hamburg to meet with a woman named Jane who was boarding with a Mr. Spencer. When Narramore arrived at Spencer's house, Jane was not there, so he left.

No one could corroborate either story. All persons knew for sure was that Narramore had come to the crime scene on the morning after the atrocities, weeping. Within minutes, law-enforcement officials began to interrogate him. At some point during the interrogation, blood was noticed on Narramore's pants and shirtsleeves, and he was arrested. As it turned out, Narramore, whose clothes were bloody because he suffered from chronic nosebleeds, might not have committed the murder; but might have seen the murder weapon.

Before leaving the crime scene with someone named Noah Jackson, Narramore saw a bloodied, hair-covered hoe. Earlier, Kennington had borrowed the hoe from a Mr.

Eubanks to cultivate her family's plants. Jackson remembered Narramore asking what the object was or saying that it was "the tool the devilment was done with," but Jackson did not recall the suspect admitting any wrongdoing. Nevertheless, Narramore was charged with murdering Mary Kennington.⁷⁷

The court proceedings were as interesting as the events surrounding the death. One witness testified that the defendant was working in Turnbow's fields when a Mr. Lewis approached. Mistaking Lewis for Eubanks, Narramore reportedly shouted: "There's hell to pay at my house—I see Eubanks coming." Narramore denied making the statement. Because he had been away from the boarding house at which he resided every day except Sunday, he asked Eubanks to inform him of any new occurrence. While Narramore was working in the fields, he looked up and thought that he saw Eubanks. Unaware of any business that Eubanks had at the boarding house, Narramore yelled: "Something's to pay at my house—I see Eubanks coming." That he uttered "hell," "the devil," or "devilment" was pure hearsay.⁷⁸

At this point, the proceedings took an interesting turn. Investigators who had been called on to testify began to discuss other circumstantial evidence that had been found at the crime scene. On the morning following Kennington's murder, examiners discovered footprints outside her home. Officials determined that an unidentified man who in July 1865 had assaulted Kennington in front of her family left the footprints. The man had been arrested, but he had escaped from the Marion jail, as did many prisoners after him. The man was arrested a second time following Kennington's murder.

⁷⁷ "The Kennington Murder," *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 July 1866.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

Who left the footprints? Reports did not mention a name or an ethnicity, but Marion officials determined that the man was black. Instantly, a black man replaced Wiley Narramore, a white, as the prime suspect in the Kennington murder. Interestingly, the only pieces of evidence that the prosecution were able to uncover were the footprints that the investigators had seen outside Kennington's home on 22 June 1866.

The case raises many important questions. As W. Stuart Harris has asked, how did law-enforcement agents recognize the black man's footprints? More important, if the black man had raped Kennington in front of her family in 1865, then why did he not know that her grandmother lived in the house unless the elderly woman moved in following the rape? Did the hair or the blood that Narramore saw on the murder weapon match the unnamed black man's hair or blood? Maybe the black man whom Marion officials arrested did commit the gruesome 1866 murder, but it is doubtful. At any rate, the court found the prosecution's anecdotal evidence credible enough to order Narremore released from jail. Shortly thereafter, the pauper Kennington was buried at the county's expense.⁷⁹

An additional case of lawlessness involving white terrorists, a case about which even Robert Christian knew, involved a white Briton named George A. Clark. Allegedly, Clark was forced to leave Perry County in 1870 because he had tried to erect a black school. Christian said that was impossible, however, because Clark had never lived in the county. As Christian understood it, the Briton was run out of Sumter County. Besides, Perry had almost forty public, state-supported schools for blacks during the

⁷⁹ See E. Thornhill to the Perry County Commission, 25 June 1866, Perry County, Alabama, Commission Minutes, 1859-1866, LG 5457, ADAH. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 249-250.

1870-1871 school year, and white men headed many of them. Why, asked Christian, would Clark have been singled out for intimidation?

Christian undoubtedly knew the answer to his question, as did he the fate of the British native about whom he and Joseph Speed testified. Speed verified that Clark was forced to leave Sumter during the fall of 1870. According to Speed, who was Perry County's superintendent of education at the time, Clark was instructing black students when a band of white men kidnapped, whipped, shot, and hanged him. Supposing Clark had died, the vigilantes cut him down and left.⁸⁰

Clark did not die. He was insensible for a while, but he recovered, crawled away, and fled to Perry County. At some point thereafter, Clark told Superintendent Speed about the assaults, which might have occurred because Clark still claimed British citizenship as well as because he was schooling blacks, and Speed hired him for rest of the 1870-1871 school year. Unfortunately for Clark, he faced similar intimidation in his latest home.⁸¹

Conclusion

The Clark affair was only one act of violence committed by conservative Black Belt whites during Reconstruction. For them, the Civil War had done more than simply

⁸⁰ Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 417; vol. 3, 1488-1489. Joseph Speed became Perry County's superintendent of education when Charles C. Crowe resigned from the post circa 20 January 1870. State legislators had just removed Crowe and William B. Modawell's political sanctions when Crowe stepped down. A few months later, the thirty-eight-year-old Crowe died. See "Political Disabilities," *ibid.*, 23 December 1869. See also "To Trustees and Teachers of Public Schools of Perry County" and "To Teachers and Others," *Marion Commonwealth*, 20 January 1870; "Notice as to Public Schools," *Marion Commonwealth*, 27 January-3 March 1870; "Death of Col. C. C. Crowe," *Alabama State Journal*, 1 July 1870, citing *Marion Commonwealth*, [n.d.].

⁸¹ See *Annual Report of the Condition of Education in Each County Board of Education, 1871* ([N.P.: n.p.,] 1871), SG 023760, ADAH.

end an economic system that a few white planters and commercialists had relied on to maintain their material wealth. The Confederate defeat had also caused a major change in the economic, political, and social relations of the region. After hundreds of years of inequality, all black and white men possessed the same legal rights and privileges.

Had the average Canebrake white desired universal equality or believed that freepersons were ready to be citizens, everyone's post-Civil War transformation might have been smoother than it was. But most whites believed sinister northern abolitionists and officials were forcing universal equality on them. Not only did the Northerners know little, if anything, about the ways of black people, asserted white conservatives; the Northerners also encouraged black people to seek educational opportunities, political office, and just compensation for the labor that most blacks had performed for free before the Civil War's "final revolutionary conflict," Reconstruction.⁸²

For Perry County's most bigoted residents, the fact that Mrs. J. C. Tarrant (or Tarrent), Ella Storrs, and a number of other white locals had taught their slaves to read and write before the Civil War did not matter. Nor did it matter that members of the Goree, the devoutly religious and tee-totaling Lea, the Storrs, and other distinguished families had permitted hen houses and gardens near the slave quarters. These and other old families had also tried to keep slave families together, worked youngsters less than teenagers and adults, and allowed quite a few slaves to own finery, hats, jewelry, suits. Likewise, several slaves were permitted to keep a portion of the crops that they had

⁸² Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 4. Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, 215-216.

grown and some of the money that they had earned as barbers, carpenters, or other craftsmen.⁸³

The actions of one Perry County slave owner are particularly worthy of note. In 1855, 1856, and 1860, Hugh Davis, Sr., actually paid bondsmen Washington George (or simply Wash) and Solomon (whom persons called Young Sol to distinguish him from an older, more defiant cotton picker named Solomon) to manage his Beaver Bend plantation. Wash and Young Sol supervised ditchers, drivers, gin operators, fire makers, hoe and plow hands, milkers, and other regulars. Wash, a leading regular, received \$15 for monitoring the hoe hands. Young Sol—an “irregular,” or skilled black, who served as a carriage driver, currier, and orchardist—earned \$15 for keeping an eye on the plow hands and an additional \$5 for working in the blacksmith shop.⁸⁴

According to Davis, who kept excellent records, 1855 and 1856 were two of Beaver Bend’s most productive years to date, thanks in large part to the management of Wash and Young Sol. All the same, Davis hired white men to manage his plantation in coming years. Two of them were unreliable. A third overseer moved to Dallas County, and Davis quarreled with a fourth, John T. Tinsley, the last straw for both men coming in July 1858 when a fodder crop was ruined. In October of that year, Tinsley resigned. In

⁸³ Historians such as Orville Burton have noticed that elsewhere in the state and nation economics motivated slave owners to keep slave families intact. If slaves stayed together and reproduced early and often, argues Burton, the slave owner’s labor pool increased faster than it would have increased if families were separated. See Orville Burton, *In My Father’s House are Many Mansions: Family and Community in Edgefield, South Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985). See also Weymouth Jordan, ed., “‘System of Farming at River Bend,’ Alabama, 1862,” *Journal of Southern History* 7 (February 1941): 76-84; J. Hugh LeBaron, *Perry Volunteers in the Mexican War: Perry County, Alabama, First Regiment of Alabama Volunteers, 1846-1847, and the Mexican War Diary of Captain William G. Coleman* (N.P.: [Heritage Books,] n.d.), 3. Cf. Christian, “The Days that are No More,” 339; Jordan, *Hugh Davis; Sellers, Slavery in Alabama*, 163; Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung*, 7. William W. Rogers, Jr., mentions similar allowances for Montgomery blacks in *Confederate Home Front*, 9, 65.

⁸⁴ Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 107. See Henry Bullock, *A History of Negro Education in the South: From 1619 to Present* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967).

addition to Davis' penchant for acting irrationally once excited, Tinsley indicated that his services were not needed as long as competent, dependable slave managers such as George, Johnson, Lucy, Poldo, Wash, and Young Sol were alive.⁸⁵

Davis did not provide much information about Poldo or George, who followed northern soldiers to Selma during the Civil War, but Johnson was a plough-hand leader, and Lucy was one of the best cotton pickers on the plantation. Competing in one of the many contests that Davis inaugurated to boost production, she picked 2,391 bales in one week. During another contest, Lucy picked more cotton than anyone on the estate. For that, she received one of Davis' best hats, which she wore proudly.

Levi Harrison, Tinsley's November 1858 replacement, was a competent overseer. The following year, Beaver Bend produced its largest prewar cotton yield. Davis contracted Harrison through 1861, but Harrison left in February 1860. Rather than hiring another white man, Davis turned the plantation over to Wash, the principal administrator, and Young Sol and Johnson, Wash's assistants. Theirs was a remarkable arrangement when one considers that the planting season was about to begin, and the micromanaging Davis was bedridden following a paralytic stroke. Unable to move his arms and legs or do anything else that required physical exertion, Davis was completely reliant on Wash, Young Sol, and Johnson to oversee his operations. An entry in Davis' farm book indicated that the slaves exceeded expectations.

Weymouth Jordan deemed Hugh Davis, Sr., one of Perry County's most enlightened and systematic slaveholders. In 1850, Davis allowed eight slaves to share in

⁸⁵ In 1855, 391 acres, including 140 acres of cotton, were under plow at Beaver Bend. The following year, 407 acres, including 170 acres of cotton, were under plow. Before these years, total acreage had never exceeded 400. Cf. *ibid.*, 62-71, 91, 96-97, 100-101, 105-108, 132, 159, 160.

that year's cotton yield. Each man was paid two cents for every pound of cotton that was picked. Altogether, the men received \$68.08 for their efforts. Even greater dispensations came later. In 1857, Davis gave a group of slaves their own land. Because the property was communal, profits were divided according to each person's behavior, work ethic, and marital status. Davis did not allow the slaves to work their land on his time, but he did allow them a partial holiday on the days that they were exceptionally productive in his fields. One year later, Davis started sharing peanuts, peas, and cotton with his slaves; some of whom were permitted to transport the peanuts to Hamburg or Marion, where they were sold for the slaves' benefit.⁸⁶

Such antebellum privileges proved invaluable to black Perry Countians' postbellum plight. Thomas, a Lea family slave, used his carpentry earnings to become one of Perry County's most affluent blacks. One of the female Simington slaves attended Judson, sometimes setting the academic standard for her white companions at the school. Even so, white conservatives like William Jones, who whipped his slave Isabella to death, did not care about their white colleagues' generosity or the slaves' abilities. Jones and like-minded whites were sure that Thomas Lea (or Lee), Simington, and every other black in the county was naturally unfit to be educated academically, economically, or politically. God had designed the scheme millennia ago, and it was blasphemous to alter it.⁸⁷

Hugh Davis, Sr., and Reverend William H. McIntosh, pastor of Marion's historic Siloam Baptist Church, were two of several influential white Perry Countians who

⁸⁶ Ibid., 104.

⁸⁷ Cf. Bond, *Black American Scholar*, 34-42; Bullock, *A History of Negro Education in the South*, passim; Sellers, *Slavery in Alabama*, 225. Most persons have used Thomas Lee, but his surname probably came from his owner and employer, Henry C. Lea.

disagreed with their conservative neighbors. In addition to hiring black managers, providing meat and vegetables, and holding annual summer celebrations that featured barbecued lamb and gumbo and mirrored the “Ebony Festivals” enjoyed by Norfolk, Virginia’s free-black community, Davis built above-average slave quarters, furnished suitable clothing, and distributed Bibles among his slaves, who numbered seventy-eight and were valued at \$63,965, or \$820 apiece, when their master succumbed in June 1862. Before the Civil War, McIntosh had not only allowed slaves to sit in Siloam’s gallery and lower sanctuary during Sunday services; he had permitted James Childs—a crippled, literate, mulatto slave who earned enough money as a leather worker and shoemaker to purchase his freedom as well as that of wife, Martha Freeman—to hold his own services in Siloam’s basement. This was rare in antebellum Alabama. Later, McIntosh ordained Childs, who, with McIntosh’s assistance, became pastor of the First Colored, or Negro, Baptist Church of Marion. Childs’ son, Stephen, was Confederate General George D. Johnston’s body servant at the Battle of Chickamauga and became a prominent businessman, church official, politician, and school administrator following the war. Other members of the extremely light-skinned Childs family passed as whites. Two male members even married white women. Incidentally, Martha, the Childs family matriarch, was the granddaughter of the brilliant Simington slave who, as a youth, had occasionally shamed her Judson peers.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Melvin Patrick Ely, *Israel on the Appomattox: A Southern Experiment in Black Freedom from the 1790s through the Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), 462, citing Tommy Bogger, *Free Blacks in Norfolk, Virginia, 1790-1860: The Darker Side of Freedom* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1997), 153-154. See Robert Moats Miller, “Southern White Protestantism and the Negro, 1865-1965,” in Charles E. Wynes, ed., *The Negro in the South since 1865: Selected Essays in American Negro History* (1965; reprint, Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1967), 236. Cf. “Berean Baptist Church,” in *The Heritage of Perry County, Alabama*, 38; Bond, *Black American Scholar*, passim, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 19; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, passim. Historian Jordan was not certain that Davis distributed the

The Childses and Thomas Lee represented the black upward mobility and, in the case of the Childs family, the amalgamation that certain white Perry Countians were determined to prevent before, during, and especially after the Civil War. When gentle persuasion did not work, white conservatives used stronger tactics to keep blacks in check and to prevent mixed relationships, but Perry's whites were rarely as cruel as those in adjacent Black Belt counties. Elsewhere in the region, there was widespread property damage, including the burning of six churches in a single season, and continuous intimidation. Almost 400 confirmed cases of violent crime, including at least thirty murders, were carried out in one year.⁸⁹

One episode of political violence took place on 28 October 1868 in Tuscaloosa County. At least twenty vigilantes, led by Ryland Randolph, interrupted a political rally that Charles Hays and Willard Warner, two Republican congressmen from Alabama, were having for the party's presidential candidate, Ulysses Grant, and his running mate, Schuyler Colfax. The incident received a great deal of attention in the state and nation after Senator Warner mentioned it in a telegram to Horace Greeley, but it paled in comparison to later conflicts.⁹⁰

Two of the most publicized politically or racially motivated riots that occurred in Alabama's Black Belt took place in Greene County. On 31 March 1870, the Klan murdered County Solicitor Alexander Boyd—an unabashed Republican and son-in-law

Bibles among his slaves, but Jordan was certain that in 1853 Davis helped found the Perry County Club for the Cultivator. Three years later, Davis became a Democrat.

⁸⁹ Cf. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 488-489; Myers, "The Freedman and the Law in Post-Bellum Alabama, 1865-1867," 58-61; Sellers, *Slavery in Alabama*, 129, 163, 222-223, 225, 251.

⁹⁰ Cf. Trelease, *White Terror*, 120, citing a 7 November 1868 letter written by Captain G. M. Brayton, Third Military District, Letters Received, RG 9A, NA; DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*, 246. At least one source suggests that Edward Randolph was the name of the Tuscaloosa Klan leader. See Glenn M. Linden, *Voices from the Reconstruction Years, 1865-1877* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1999).

of William Miller, a former Unionist, probate judge, and one of the wealthiest Republicans in the area—because Boyd had tried to prosecute several white men who had killed two blacks. Later that year, a planned political rally and debate between prominent Republicans and local Democrats turned into a shootout in which several people were wounded.⁹¹ Also in Greene County, Klansmen fired on and then poisoned the family of a black man named Phlem Cross, Mrs. Cross dying as a consequence. In separate incidents, a black person was whipped, and two blacks were abducted by one or more unknown parties. These and similar atrocities caused one self-styled friend of Congressman Hays to assert that the Devil was loose in the Black Belt, and only God knew what was next. Believing that Hays might behave irrationally after reading his words, the writer encouraged the congressman to act coolly.⁹²

Cognizant of the Boyd murder, the infamous Eutaw Riot of 23 or 25 October 1870, the Blackford affair, the 11 July 1870 Cross Plains Massacre, and similar incidents of white violence in Alabama, Chairman Poland of the Ku-Klux Committee on Outrages posed a simple but provocative question to Hays: “[D]oes the future peace and security of the State depend upon republicans suppressing their sentiments and keeping entirely quiet?” Hays’ immediate retort, “I think that has a great deal to do with it,” was not only unsettling but also misleading. Clarifying what he meant, Hays proclaimed: “I think the patient wants rest.... I think they are all tired” of the corruption, intimidation, and

⁹¹ See *Cincinnati (Ohio) Daily Times*, 22 September and 4, 10, and 19 October 1870. Cf. Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 171, citing *Talladega Sun*, 19 April 1870 and *Mobile Daily Register*, 1 December 1870; Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 112-113. For markedly different accounts of the winter 1870 riot, cf. DuBose, *Alabama’s Tragic Decade*, 246-247, 296; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 686-687; Hennessey, “Political Terrorism in the Black Belt: The Eutaw Riot,” 35-48; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 75-77.

⁹² See “Your Friend” to Charles Hays, 8 April 1871, Alabama Governors Administrative Files, 1870-1872: Lindsay, SG 024883, Roll 2, ADAH. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy*, vol. 2, 1272-1273, 1290-1291; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 81; Trelease, *White Terror*, 259-260, 304-305.

physical violence that had taken place over the previous five or six years. “I know I am,” he then uttered, concluding: “I think if we just keep the military away...and let things alone as they are for the present, the people will probably see that it is better to have peace and order all over the country; and I think that is what they intend to do; at least I hope so.”⁹³

After a series of questions by various committee members regarding political amnesties and Hays’ wartime activities, Congressman Blair asked Hays whether removing the disabilities that had kept a relatively small number of wealthy white Alabamians from voting or holding political office would inspire them to exercise some of the influence that they could have on Alabama’s rank-and-file whites. Replicating earlier testimony, Hays swore: “I think if these men were relieved from their disabilities they would make better citizens of the Government than they are with the disabilities resting upon them, because they would then feel that they were upon a political equality with all their fellow-citizens.”⁹⁴

Wishing to clear up some of the ambiguity in the witness’ testimony, Congressman Van Trump of the committee asked whether white Alabamians were particularly riled when black politicians were appointed or elected to important local positions. In answering the question, which involved the core racial issue of virtually every important problem confronting Alabamians, Hays touched on a different and peripheral problem confronting the state and the region’s citizens: political proscriptions.

⁹³ Charles Hays and Luke Poland, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama, loc. cit.*, 20. Cf. DuBose, *Alabama’s Tragic Decade*, 246; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 74.

⁹⁴ Charles Hays, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, *loc. cit.*, 20.

In 1868 alone, congressmen pardoned 1,350 individuals, approximately 200 of whom were Alabamians.⁹⁵

Much of Hays' 1871 testimony did not apply to Perry County. Although a number of its Reconstruction officeholders were black and a few ex-Confederates had been proscribed, political and racial violence had not been as common in Perry as it had been in surrounding counties. Conservative whites in Perry had threatened several people, but only a handful of individuals had actually been hanged, maimed, shot, whipped, or killed (see Appendix L). More often, moderate whites and blacks had developed the types of relationships and institutions that were needed to help freepersons enjoy their newfound and forthcoming rights and privileges, a trend that continued throughout the nineteenth century. During the 1890s, for example, Alabama led the nation in lynching. Blacks were lynched in Bullock, Choctaw, Elmore, Macon, Marengo, and Montgomery, but not a single black lynching was recorded in Perry County.⁹⁶

Despite considerable states-rights and anti-northern sentiment, northern missionaries and federal officials helped Perry County slaves become citizens on the heels of the Civil War. Academic education was paramount. In 1867, James Childs, Alexander Curtis, Thomas Lee, and six other black Perry Countians, the American Missionary Association, and the Freedmen's Bureau built a black common school in Marion. From its inception, the facility was filled to capacity, its buildings were of sound construction, and all of its furniture and apparatuses were superb. Praising the school's success during the early months of 1874, Alabama Superintendent of Education Joseph

⁹⁵ Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 28; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, passim.

⁹⁶ See Glenn Feldman, "Lynching in Alabama, 1998-1921," *Alabama Review* 48 (April 1995): 127. Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 183-184.

Speed claimed the institution had succeeded because every administrator, faculty member, parent, and student cared about its upkeep and its instruction. Lincoln Normal School was its name, and George N. Card was its headmaster.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama* and *Black American Scholars*; Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 494; *Ku Klux Conspiracy: Alabama*; Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 243; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, passim.

**“PROSPERITY AND HAPPINESS UNDER PROVIDENCE”:
RACE,
RELIGION, AND EDUCATION IN POSTBELLUM
PERRY COUNTY**

“Only by being elevated by education...can the colored man hope for anything.”

—John Mason Martin, c. 1870¹

“Beyond a doubt the prosperity of the colored people lies in the future, and it is to be attained through the education of the youth. In bringing to a speedy experience this prosperity and happiness under providence, Lincoln School will bear a prominent part. The quickness and eagerness in learning, which the majority of the children evince, furnishes a glorious earnest of the ‘good time coming.’”

—“C,” 1869²

In his 1895 compendium *Cyclopedia of Colored Baptists of Alabama*, Charles O. Boothe—a black educator, scholar, and theologian—confirmed that Perry County had been the educational hub of his white “brethren” for decades. One resident of the county, J. L. M. Curry, had been instrumental in getting state lawmakers to sign Alexander B. Meek’s 1854 public education bill into law. Three of Curry’s associates—J. K. Armstrong, J. Erickson, and S. J. C. Sweezy—had attended the July 1856 meeting at

¹ Undated letter, Political Material, John Mason Martin, Martin Family Papers, PB, Range H, Section 7, Shelf A, ADAH, hereinafter cited as Martin Letter.

² “Letter from Alabama. The Freedmen—the Lincoln School, Etc., Etc.,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 29 July 1869, quoting the Cincinnati, Ohio, *Christian Herald*, [n.d.], hereinafter cited as “Letter from Alabama.”

which the Alabama Educational Association had been formed, and Joseph Speed had presided over the Alabama Board of Education.³

By 1858, Marion had forty-three public schools that remained open for an average of seven months per year. More than 1,100 students were registered for classes, and approximately 717 attended them daily. Ten people were enrolled in private schools, and seventy-three individuals attended the county's two white academies. Marion also boasted Howard College, one of the state's largest educational institutions, and renowned female colleges Judson Institute and Marion Female Seminary.⁴

Howard had ninety-nine students in 1858. Judson and Marion Female Seminary had even more students, but not one of them was black. In the aftermath of Nat Turner's infamous 1831 uprising in Virginia, Alabama lawmakers made it illegal to teach a black

³ Boothe, *Cyclopedia of Colored Baptists of Alabama*, 27. Boothe taught sacred literature and biblical courses at Alabama State Normal Industrial Institute for Negroes, the forerunner to Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical College for Negroes at Normal. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 6, 38; Cain, "Founding Public Schools in Alabama—A County Led the Way," 247; Hoar, "History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875," 2; Moore, *History of Alabama*; Morrison, *History of Alabama A&M University*, 50; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 227. The meeting out of which the original Alabama Education Association (AEA) grew was held on 24-25 July 1856 in Selma, Alabama. A second AEA was developed in the 1880s after the administrators and instructors of sixty black schools met on 6-7 April 1882 in Selma to form the predominately black Alabama State Teachers Association. The same month, a number of administrators and teachers of white schools met in Birmingham to form a predominately white organization, the Alabama Teachers Association (ATA). Not wanting to be confused with the members of the predominately black association whose idea they adopted, leading ATA members decided to rename their organization the Alabama Education Association. For additional information, see *Minutes of the Convention, which Formed the Alabama Educational Association, in Selma, Alabama, July 24-25, 1856* (Selma, Al.: Selma Reporter Job Printing Offices, 1857). See also Stephen B. Weeks, *History of Public School Education in Alabama* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1915), 159. Cf. Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 19, 157 (footnote 14), and "Let Us Make Man," 211, (citing Weeks, *History of Public School Education in Alabama*, and *Report of the United States Commissioner of Education, 1882-1883* [Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1884], 9), 212-226, 227.

⁴ Two hundred fifty people were enrolled in college, fifty in academies, and 709 in common schools. See Alabama Department of Education, *Report of Gabriel Duval, Superintendent of Education, of the State of Alabama. Made to the Governor, for the Year 1858* (Montgomery, Al.: Shorter and Reid, 1859), 39. See also *Alabama State Census, 1866* (Montgomery, Al.: [W. W. Bragg, 1867]), hereinafter cited as *1866 State Census*; Eugene A. Smith, "Sketch of the Mineral Resources of Alabama," included in *The Industrial Future of the South* (N.P.: n.p., n.d.), in vol. 103, book 98, J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, ADAH. Cf. Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 11; Moore, *History of Alabama*, 330-331; Hoar, "History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875," 2.

person how to read or write in every county except Mobile, where Afro-Creoles attended Catholic and other institutions that were part of the regular school system. State officials reaffirmed the ban when they created public schools for white students between 1854 and 1856, but the prohibition did not stop the Gorees, the Leas, Reverend McIntosh, and other influential white Marionites from teaching a number of blacks how to read, write, reason, and calculate during the Antebellum period.⁵

In addition to being an educational center, Marion was a hub of cultural and religious activity. According to Samuel Townes and the *Marion Commonwealth*, it was the “Athens” of Alabama. Others called it the Athens of the entire South.⁶ Like Selma and Mobile, Marion had grown continuously until the Civil War. Afterward, numerous changes were made, but few of them had anything to do with economics or town politics. Benefiting tremendously from antebellum corn, timber, and upland cotton production, a small planter élite that included the King family controlled much of Marion’s political and economic machinery. Brothers Porter and Thomas were men of inherited wealth who had delved into agriculture, railroads, real estate, and slaves before the war. Their artistic slave-owning cousin, William Rufus, had been a United States senator and later vice president.⁷

⁵ See Richard Edwin Lester, “Greensboro, Alabama, 1861-1874” (master’s thesis, Auburn University, 1956), 70. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 142; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 9, 14-16, 18, 20, 74; Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 8; Knight *Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 43; Leavell, 149; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 97, and “Let Us Make Man,” 1-2, 7-10.

⁶ Townes, 199; “Marion—‘Loveliest Village of the Plain,’” *Marion Commonwealth*, 22 July 1869; “Tailoring,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 1 April 1873; “Valedictory,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 29 May 1873. See Carla Crowder, “Lost in Poverty: Left Behind,” *Birmingham News*, 12 May 2002. Cf. “Early History of Perry County Vividly Portrayed by Confederate Veteran.”

⁷ Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 32; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 4-6, 126-127, 136. William R. King was one of the relatively few Alabama slave owners who owned 100 or more slaves during the Antebellum period. See Tax List of Thomas D. King, 1857, Slave Lists/Property List, William R. King, 1851-1860, in William Rufus King Family Papers, LPR 146, ADAH. See also Thomas Porter to Mary E. King, 25 May 1867, Accounts 1863-1873, *ibid.* W. R. King’s political positions are discussed in

Marion's religious composition was as diverse as its general population. During the Antebellum period, the thriving Black Belt town had 750 Baptists, including 375 identified "Communicants"; 213 Presbyterians; seventy-eight Methodists; fifteen "Disciples," or Campbellites; and a few members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or Mormons. Marion also had nine preachers; six medical and three botanic, or steam, doctors; fifteen lawyers; two resident surgeon dentists; a barber; two carriage makers; bond, judgment, and promissory note providers; eight dry goods stores; two groceries; two printing offices; two shoe shops; two drug stores; two confectionaries; two cabinet shops; two carriage makers; a tin manufactory; four alteration shops; an Independent Order of Odd Fellows lodge; and two taverns that one person considered unusual because they were kept well and charged reasonable prices.⁸

The most fundamental difference between antebellum and postbellum Marion was the condition of its largest ethnic group. The Union victory helped alter the legal status of thousands of black Marionites, who, together with other blacks, made up 18,166 of the 28,177 people who lived in Perry County during 1865-1866. Desirous of the same educational opportunities that birth afforded whites, the African Americans pressed county leaders to create educational facilities for them that paralleled the schools that served European Americans. Though most whites believed that formal learning would "spoil the negro for work" or that "the elevation of the blacks would be the degradation of the whites," a few white Perry County leaders supported black education. Black

many sources—among them, "William Rufus King Only Citizen of State ever Elected to Serve United States as Vice President," *Selma Times-Journal*, 2 November 1927; Walter M. Jackson, *Alabama's First United States Vice-President William Rufus King* (Decatur, Al.: Decatur Printing Company, 1952). Cf. Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 804-805; Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 71; Townes, 203; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, passim.

⁸ Cf. Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 11-12; Townes, 200, 202.

schools were fine, they agreed, as long as one criterion was met: the schools had to be headed by white people—singularly, southern white people.⁹

Black Education during the Early Postbellum Years

A handful of individuals and agencies worked hard to put a common-school system for black students in place by 1 January 1866. As mentioned in future Freedmen’s Bureau inspector of school and finances John Watson Alvord’s *First Semi-Annual Report on Schools and Finances of Freedmen*, Governor Parsons supported the idea, and a few native-born white instructors were willing to teach the “new [black] ‘wards of the nation.’”¹⁰ According to Alvord, a minister and slavery opponent who had considerable experience with black students, Alabama’s relatively well-educated urbanites were receptive to black education. But in the most rural areas, where some of the state’s most poorly educated, ultraconservative, financially poor, and racist white

⁹ Carl Schurz, *Can the South Solve the Negro Problem?* 264; Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 21. See “Sensible,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 January 1871. Cf. *1866 State Census*; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 28-29; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 22; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, passim. As late as 1913, Booker T. Washington found himself trying to demonstrate to white people that formal education had not “spoil[ed] the Negro,” as some people had predicted. Booker T. Washington, “Industrial Education and the Public Schools,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political Science* (September 1913): 227.

¹⁰ Clark, *History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1889*, 269; J. L. M. Curry, as quoted in Alexander Hogg, *Lacks and Needs of the South Educationally: The Development of her Natural Resources, the Remedy. An Address prepared for the National Education Association Meeting in Baltimore, July 10th, 11th, and 12th, Delivered also before the Centennial Bureau of Education, Philadelphia, September 1st, 1876* (N.P.: n.p., [1876]), 10. The author qualifies Clark and Curry’s statement because there were innumerable white immediate postbellum wards, and the Freedmen’s Bureau and other agencies assisted them as well as dislocated and downtrodden black people. By one account, the Bureau and missionary organizations issued twice the number of clothes and other rations to needy whites as the organizations did blacks. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 6, 15; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 25; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 147; Goodrich and Goodrich, 213.

citizens lived, a great deal of opposition existed. In those areas, the federal government might have to provide military protection for black students, wrote Alvord.¹¹

How could proponents of black education in Alabama change the minds of white detractors? Like Booker T. Washington, Tuskegee Institute's famed leader and one-time president of the Alabama State Teachers Association (ASTA); Samuel C. Armstrong, Washington's mentor and one of Hampton University's most important developers; Talladega College President Henry E. Brown; and William B. Paterson, future president of both the Alabama State Normal School and the ASTA,¹² Inspector Alvord believed that industrial, normal, and vocational training, as opposed to only "fancy education," were critical to getting rank-and-file white Alabamians to accept black education.

¹¹ Cf. Alvord, *First Semi-Annual Report on Schools and Finances of Freedmen, January 1, 1866*, 5; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 12-13; Clark, *History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1889*, 269; *Records of the Superintendent of Education for the State of Alabama, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870*, ii. Born in Connecticut in 1808, Reverend John W. Alvord had become a teacher by seventeen. Later, he worked in a Savannah, Georgia, mercantile house and undertook theological study at Lane Seminary of Ohio, where Lyman Beecher was one of his mentors. A member of Oberlin College's first graduating class, Alvord supervised six black schools in Cincinnati, accompanied William Tecumseh Sherman into Savannah during the Civil War, and became the president of the Freedman's Savings and Trust Bank. In October 1865, Alvord was appointed inspector of finances and schools and in January 1867 general superintendent of education. See Carl Osthaus, *Freedmen, Philanthropy, and Fraud: A History of the Freedmen's Saving Bank* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 12-13.

¹² See James D. Anderson, "The Hampton Model of Normal School Industrial Education, 1880-1900," in *New Perspectives in Black Educational History*, 61-96. See also Fred L. Brownlee, *New Day Ascending* (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1964), 39 (footnote 9); "The Hampton Model of Normal and Industrial Education, 1868-1915," chap. 2 in Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 33-78; "General Samuel Chapman Armstrong," chap. 3 in Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black*, 43-61; Ullin Whitney Leavell, *Philanthropy in Negro Education* (1930; reprint, Westport, Conn.: Negro University Press, 1970), 34-35; "The Rôle of Booker T. Washington," chap. 6 in Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 116-126. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 195-198, 199-200, 205-214; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 174; Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 20-21; Sherer, "The Pioneer as Well as the Apostle of Negro Education in Alabama," chap. 3 in "Let Us Make Man," passim, and *Black Education in Alabama*, 19, 118, 121, 135, 143-148, 157 (footnote 14), 169 (footnote 3).

One writer described Armstrong and Washington's relationship thusly: "With great wisdom and foresight General Armstrong saw the need of practical education for the Negro, and Hampton was born and grew. General Armstrong's sacrifice was the opportunity of others, and Hampton still lives. From Hampton came a Moses [Washington], and Tuskegee was born." Another writer referred to Washington and the Tuskegee idea (model, program) as "Armstrong and Hampton in blackface." W. H. Baldwin, Jr., "The Present Problem of Negro Education" (address delivered before the American Social Science Association in Saratoga, New York, 5 September 1899), vol. 108, book 103, J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, ADAH (first quote); Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 73 (second quote).

A vocation-based education was also practical. In a constantly industrializing age, a person with vocational training could secure work and build a solid economic foundation, one of education's principal ends and a possibility that Washington stressed continually. "One of the saddest sights I ever saw," he recalled in 1900, was a \$300 Rosewood piano that had been placed in a school located in the heart of Alabama's Canebrake. Many of the black adults who lived near the school did not own land. Others lived in cramped, rented, one-room cabins and were deeply in debt to the local merchants who supplied tools and other necessities on credit. Not one individual whom Washington met had a bank account, but nearly everyone was proud of the school's Rosewood piano and the quasi-classical education that local blacks were receiving.¹³

A purely classical education was folly during the Second Industrial Revolution, argued Washington (while sitting on the trustee boards of Fisk and Howard Universities). Industrial, normal, and vocational education was functional. As made clear by Robert Russa Moton, Washington's successor at Tuskegee, William James Edwards, a Tuskegee graduate and founder of the Colored Industrial and Literary Institute of Snow Hill in Wilcox County, and W. E. B. Du Bois, among other persons, industrial, normal, and

¹³ Bower Stewart, *The Work of the Church in the South during the Period of Reconstruction* (Milwaukee: Young Churchman Company, 1913), 47 (first quote); Booker T. Washington, *Industrial Education for the Negro by Booker T. Washington, Principal, Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama* ([Tuskegee, Al.: n.p.,] 1900), 1-2 (second quote). Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 144-146; Brownlee, *New Day Ascending*, 184; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 118, 121, 143-148, 149 (footnote 4). For Moton's beliefs, see his *Finding a Way Out: An Autobiography* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1921), 216. Paterson's views are spelled out in *The State Normal School for Colored Students at Montgomery: Its History for Thirty-seven Years and Its Needs of Today* ([N.P.]: Paragon Press, c. 1900), 7; *Some Facts Concerning the State Normal School Montgomery, Ala.* (Montgomery, Al.: [n.p.,] 1905), 1-2; and Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 159 (footnote 13). Edwards' position is put forward in *Twenty-five Years in the Black Belt* (Boston: Cornhill Company, 1918). For an additional statement regarding black Alabamians' alleged unwillingness to work during the immediate Postbellum period, see "White Labor in the South," *The Daily Selma Times*, 16 September 1865.

vocational education could strengthen the ethical and intellectual aptitudes that classical education helped develop—if, that is, freepersons were willing to work.¹⁴

Black people's supposed disdain for manual labor following the Civil War was heavily debated. Washington believed black people had learned to work as slaves, but they had not learned to respect work:

On the contrary, the Negro was constantly taught, directly and indirectly during slavery times, that labor was a curse. It was the curse of Canaan, he was told, that condemned the black man to be all the time the slave and servant of the white man.... The consequence of this teaching was that, when emancipation came, the Negro thought freedom must, in some way, mean freedom from labor.¹⁵

White people of every stripe agreed with Washington. In a 20 September 1865 speech in the state legislature, Alexander White, a prominent Alabama Democrat, suggested that freepersons would not work unless they were compelled to do so. Even Wager Swayne expressed similar views. Echoing Washington, Swayne said manual labor was such an intricate part of slavery that many blacks believed work and freedom were incompatible. Ignoring his own General Order No. 12, which prohibited anyone from entering into a contract that committed a black person to work past December, Swayne asserted that the belief that confiscated land would be redistributed during

¹⁴ See W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Talented Tenth," in *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative Negroes of To-day* (1903; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1969), 31-75. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, passim; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 27, 30-31, 36, 78-79; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, passim; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 172-173 (footnotes 31-33), and "Let Us Make Man," 481-499, 514, 516. The name of the Colored Industrial and Literary Institute of Snow Hill was later changed to the Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute.

¹⁵ Washington, "Industrial Education and the Public Schools," 226. See "The Economic Development of the Negro Race since Its Emancipation," chap. 2 in Booker T. Washington and W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, *The Negro in the South; His Economic Progress in Relation to His Moral and Religious Development; Being the William Levi Bull Lectures for the Year 1907* (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs and Company, 1907), 9-76. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 27. Robert R. Moton called Washington's plan "doing and learning." "Doing and Learning," chap. 4 in Moton, *Finding a Way Out*, 50-76.

Christmas prompted many black people to refuse to sign a contract that bound them to work during the holiday season. Nor would some blacks work steadily before that time, added Swayne. Yet, other times, Swayne said that black Alabamians did not mind working. The commissioner was particularly complimentary of their work ethic when trying to recruit northern Bureau agents.¹⁶

E. A. Heidt was certain that former slaves abhorred physical labor. According to the newsman, there was a class of postbellum blacks in Perry County who considered work disgraceful. A freedwoman reportedly proclaimed that she would rather be a slave than the wife of a poor, working-class man. This picture, painted in black and white, omits the vibrancy, however limited when compared to other states, of the immediate post-Civil War landscape of black Alabama. Undoubtedly, there were African Americans who associated certain aspects of work with slavery; but, on average, they simply did not want to work as they had worked during previous eras: for very little or, in most cases, for free, and always for someone else before themselves. Black Alabamians wanted just compensation. This, affirmed Count Agénor de Gasparin of France, was understandable. In an 1865 letter to United States President Andrew Johnson, the count told the president that one could not expect freepersons to accept what they had accepted as slaves. Furthermore, a number of black workers could not schedule work beyond Christmas because white landowners, unsure about the next year, rarely

¹⁶ Wager Swayne, quoted in *Report of the Assistant Commissioner of Alabama, 1866*, 5. See Wager Swayne to A. F. Perry, in *The Daily Selma Times*, 8 September 1865. See also “General Order, No. 12,” *Daily Selma Times*, 12 September 1865, hereinafter cited as “General Order, No. 12”; “Hon. Alexander White and his Speech,” *Daily Selma Times*, 29 September 1865; “The Negro’s Character—by Alexander White,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 August 1869; Alphonse Heninburg, “The Relation of Tuskegee Institute to Education in the Lower South,” *Journal of Educational Sociology* 7 (November 1933): 157-162. Cf. Baldwin “The Present Problem of Negro Education”; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 227 (footnote 12); Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 236-237.

drew up labor contracts that lasted past the holiday season. And even if planters and other white employers wanted to contract blacks for longer periods of time, they could not enter into such agreements lest they violate General Order No. 12. Cognizant of these facts, one white Monroe Countian admitted: “When it is said that the free nigger [will] not work, the trouble is with them that make the complaint and not the niggers.”¹⁷

Reverend Alvord expounded on this belief. Contrary to what Cooke, Heidt, Swayne, Washington, White, and others claimed about former slaves associating legal freedom with not having to perform any type of manual labor, especially for white people, Alvord believed that freepersons would work—without white encouragement, coercion, or fear of being replaced by Chinese, German, Irish, Swiss, or any other immigrant group—if they were trained properly.¹⁸ Alvord therefore suggested, albeit indirectly, that liberal-arts and normal education be a priority of the Freedmen’s Bureau because many advanced black students wanted to become teachers. The inspector was certain that hundreds of black students could obtain paying jobs as soon as they were

¹⁷ Myers, “The Alabama Freedmen and the Economic Adjustment during Presidential Reconstruction, 1865-1867,” 257, citing *New York Times*, 26 March 1866, and John Trowbridge, *The South: A Tour of Its Battlefields and Ruined Cities* (Hartford, Conn.: [n.p.], 1867), 430. See “No Disgrace to Work,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 May 1872. See also *Reconstruction! A Letter to President Johnson, by Count A. de Gasparin* (New York: Loyal Publication Society, 1865), 25. Cf. “General Order, No. 12.”

¹⁸ One paper reported: “The negroes of the South have heard that John Chinaman is coming, and appear to be more willing to work, and less desirous of becoming politicians, in consequence.” *Marion Commonwealth*, 22 July 1869, quoting *New York Paper*, [n.d.], 1865. For additional local discussions of Chinese immigration, see “The Chinese” and John B. Read, “To the Voters of the 4th Congressional District,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 29 July 1869. See also “The Anti-Coolie Law,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 5 August 1869; “The Chinese Question,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 August 1869; “The Effects of Chinese Labor,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 August 1869; “Proper Labor,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 September 1869. For an affirmation of how well Chinese immigration would serve certain Alabamians, see “Chinese Immigration,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 15 July 1869. Cf. *1869 Alabama House Journal*, 13-15.

James H. Clanton and William W. Grath, among other persons, proposed using German and Irish immigrants. See “Our Seine,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 18 November 1869. See also “Card from Gen. Clanton—The Immigrant Movement,” *ibid.*, 25 March 1869; William W. Grath to Robert M. Patton, 10 August 1866, in Hoar, “History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875,” 31-32, hereinafter cited as Grath Letter. Swiss immigrants are mentioned in “Swiss Laborers,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 25 March 1869. The overall need for immigration from a Republican point of view is discussed in “The Need of Immigration,” *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 16 January 1869.

graduated, particularly in the rural areas of the state where such “pauper schools” were desperately needed.¹⁹

In addition to industrial, normal, liberal-arts, and vocational institutions, Alvord recommended reform schools. Although he was confident that the vast majority of black pupils whom he met would become responsible, well-behaved citizens, Alvord feared a few of them would become quite disruptive if they acquired even a rudimentary education. Others needed instruction in writing and possibly drawing. To facilitate the process, proper implements (chalk, chalkboards, desks, textbooks) were needed. In Alvord’s opinion, the Freedmen’s Bureau could not go wrong by investing in such resources.²⁰

Actually, the Freedmen’s Bureau did invest in black education. By 1 January 1866, there were five black Bureau schools in Alabama. One school was located in Mobile, another in Montgomery. The other schools were located in Athens, Huntsville, and Stevenson. The facilities had large student bodies, between 813 and 817 students in all, but small faculties. Combined, the institutions had only fifteen teachers.²¹

In his January 1866 semi-annual report, Inspector Alvord indicated that the Bureau school in Mobile was a fine facility. Its teachers were thorough, and its discipline was excellent. Classes were offered in English, geography, math, and reading, and the school’s teachers published a monthly paper called the *Acorn*. The school’s 488 students received help from the North, but many of them paid a small tuition, usually anywhere

¹⁹ Weeks, *History of Public School Education in Alabama*, 58. Alvord’s views are revealed in his *Second Semi-Annual Report on Schools and Finances of Freedmen, July 1, 1866* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1868), 13.

²⁰ Alvord, *Second Semi-Annual Report on Schools and Finances of Freedmen, July 1, 1866*, 14. Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, 226.

²¹ Cf. Alvord, *First Semi-Annual Report on Schools and Finances of Freedmen, January 1, 1866*, 2-4; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 81-82.

from twenty-five cents to \$1.25 per month. Unlike other institutions, no child was refused admittance because he or she was impoverished. In total, \$1,875.18 had been received from tuition since the institution's May 1865 opening.²²

The Wager Swayne School in Montgomery had 325 pupils. Though smaller than its Mobile counterpart, the capitol city facility was still in excellent shape. Altogether, its students paid approximately \$118 per month for tuition and other costs.

By 1 July 1866, the number of black Freedmen's Bureau schools had grown to eight. The district school in Wetumpka was overseen by a black headmaster who was doing a good job treating the "leprosy of negro illiteracy." Alvord did not mention the headmaster's name, but official records confirmed that William V. Turner headed the self-supporting institution, which he had begun in 1865 under adverse conditions. Turner regretted having to give up control of the school, but he knew that he could not jeopardize his family by continuing to serve as principal. Students and supporters could bring him joy, he explained, but they could not keep him, his wife, and his children from starving.²³

²² Cf. Alvord, *First Semi-Annual Report on Schools and Finances of Freedmen, January 1, 1866*, 4; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man."

²³ James L. Pugh, *Speech of Hon. James L. Pugh, of Alabama, on Senate Bill to Aid the States in Support of Common Schools* (Washington, D.C.: Thomas McGill and Company, [n.d.]), 7, hereinafter cited as *Pugh Common-Schools Speech*. See *Mobile Nationalist*, 30 August 1866. See also *Montgomery Daily Advertiser*, 13 November 1873; *Records of the Superintendent of Education for the State of Alabama, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870, Roll 4: Special Orders Received Nov. 6, 1865-Mar. 7, 1870. Monthly School Reports of the Superintendent of Education Feb. 1866-June 1870 and Surveys of Educational Conditions in the Subdistricts Mar. 1867-Nov. 1868* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1971), hereinafter cited as *Records of the Superintendent of Education for the State of Alabama, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870, Roll 4*. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, passim; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 128, 142, 185, 344; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 80-82; Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, 217, citing William V. Turner to Holland Thompson, 15 June 1866, Unregistered Letters Received, Ser. 9, Alabama Assistant Commissioner, RG 105, National Archives (Freedmen and Southern Society Project, University of Maryland, A-1803); Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 157, 165; Miscellaneous Account Book, 1867-1868, in *Records of the Superintendent of Education for the State of Alabama, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and*

Between 3,065 and 3,338 students were enrolled in local and district Bureau schools during the late summer of 1866, but the number of teachers had shrunk to between thirty-two and thirty-eight, or approximately four to five instructors per institution. Student attendance was better. On average, 850 pupils studied the alphabet, 841 arithmetic, and 253 geography. Forty-nine students were enrolled in the grammar and higher branches, and 479 of them paid tuition. Their education was admirable, contended Alvord, who was happy to report that a number of affluent white Alabamians had begun to accept black education. A local Bureau agent, writing from Montgomery, affirmed: “Their success has proved to the mind of the white citizens...the claims of the colored people to the blessings of education. A year ago [1865], the Negro schools were a most cordially despised institution,” a number of whites showing their dissatisfaction through arson.²⁴

In *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, Walter Fleming, a noted Dunningite historian from Brundidge, Alabama, provided a reason for white detestation. North Alabama’s poorest whites, he said, competed with black people, who could afford to send their children to school more easily because African Americans had lower standards of living. In the Black Belt, argued Fleming, a Redemption year (1874) baby whose father had been an affluent planter and a Confederate soldier, the same class of white people disliked black education because they did not like seeing three or four black schools constructed per every white school. White families were so spread out that it was

Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870, 70; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 2-3, 151 (footnote 10), AND “Let Us Make Man,” 246.

²⁴ Alvord, *Second Semi-Annual Report on Schools and Finances of Freedmen, July 1, 1866*, 6. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 80-82; Hoar, “History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875,” 50; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 5, 127-129.

difficult for them to attend one school, and it was too expensive to operate multiple schools in a single county.²⁵

Fleming's conclusions are not entirely true. Thousands of white Alabamians denounced black education, but not every white Alabamian did. According to Richard Bailey, significant white opposition did not surface until the emergence of black politicians following the 1867 constitutional convention. Even then, some white Alabamians did not oppose black schools. James M. Moss, a white planter from Madison County, swore that he and his affluent Republican associates did not mind black common schools any more than they minded black manhood suffrage or white common schools. Rather, Moss and company disagreed with any ignorant individual voting, as did the proprietors of the *Birmingham Ledger*, John Knox, and other Alabama élites. As Moss explained to General Blair of the Congressional Committee on Ku-Klux Outrages, no citizen should have been allowed to vote until he was able to read and write well enough to sign his own name.²⁶

In subsequent testimony, Moss made it clear that he spoke only for himself and his acquaintances. To scores of less affluent white North Alabamians, educating and permitting black persons to vote were improper. Others did not mind a black person

²⁵ See, for example, Fletcher Green, "Walter Lynwood Fleming: Historian of Reconstruction," *Journal of Southern History* 2 (November 1936): 497-521. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 22; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 11-13; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 624; Foner and Walker, xiii-xiv, xxiv (footnote 4); Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 127, 151-152 (footnote 18).

²⁶ See Wayne Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century* (Tuscaloosa, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 8, 16. See also Henry Lee Swint, *The Northern Teacher in the South, 1862-1870* (Nashville, Tenn.: Vanderbilt University Press, 1941), 94-95. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 10, 11; Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 18; Hoar, "A History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875," 29; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 2, 925; McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama*, 293, 295 (footnote 67); Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 151-152 (footnote 18).

being educated, but they thought the North was a better place for it to occur. As Huntsville resident William W. Grath explained to Governor Patton, some Hill Country whites were willing to transport thousands of black students to Philadelphia in order for the blacks to attend school there. All Grath and his associates wanted in return was a pledge from the northern educators that the black students would stay in Philadelphia once their education was complete. Grath predicted a minimal loss in labor because 1,000 Irish and German immigrants would be willing to replace the African Americans. Thus, to prevent an exaggeration or an outright lie, Moss amended his statement to include the financially poor whites who were bent on keeping black Alabamians uneducated even though supporting black education could be used to justify creating more educational opportunities for the White Belt's poorest whites, whom Moss considered as ignorant as uneducated blacks.²⁷

To support his position, Moss recalled there being as many as 30,000 illiterate voting-age Alabamians when the 1860 state census was taken. All of them were white, and many of them were poor. Naturally, there were even more illiterate black adults. Over the years, the number grew.²⁸

²⁷ See, for example, William W. Freehling, *The South vs. The South: How Anti-Confederate Southerners Shaped the Course of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 22-23. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 11-13; Grath Letter, 31-32; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 2, 925. For one of many Black Belt affirmations, see "The Harpers," *Daily Selma Times*, 15 September 1865. For divergent views, cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 18-19; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 457 (text and footnote 4), citing *Gulf States Historical Magazine* (September 1902) and Report of General Swayne to Howard, 26 December 1865.

²⁸ State legislators and Governor William H. Smith suggested that Moss' datum was incorrect. According to them, there were actually 37,600 illiterate white adults in the state on the eve of the Civil War. In retrospect, all three sources were probably wrong. As one Peabody General Fund agent stated in 1869, it is doubtful that seventy-plus percent of Alabama's adult population in 1860 was literate. See *Journal of the House of Representatives, during the Sessions Commencing in July, September, and November, 1868, Held in the City of Montgomery* (Montgomery, Al.: John G. Stokes and Company, 1869), 17, hereinafter cited as *1868 Alabama House Journal*. See also "Address by Dr. Sears," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 6 June 1869.

The badly flawed 1870 census indicated that more than 100,000 adult Alabamians were illiterate. Two years later, the state had 383,000 adults who could neither read nor write. Remarkably, only 91,000 of them were black, according to an education analyst named Dexter Hawkins. The other 292,000 illiterates were white adults or children.²⁹

Horace Mann Bond, a renowned black twentieth-century historian, estimated Alabama's 1872 illiteracy rate to be thirty-three percent higher than did Hawkins. By 1880, the state's illiteracy rate had topped 700,000 out of a population of 1,262,505, reported United States Commissioner of Education John Eaton. While serving as Alabama's superintendent of education, Joseph Hodgson once stated that the state's illiterate citizens could have elected a governor if they had put aside their racial differences long enough to form a political party.³⁰

Edward Clement Sanders, a white carpenter and slavery proponent from Gainesville, Alabama, had a spirited discussion with federal officials about literacy and voting privileges in his home state. Asked whether he supported black suffrage, Sanders said that he did not. Intrigued, an official asked Sanders if he believed blacks understood the voting process and whether voting benefited them. Steadfast in his beliefs, Sanders stated that he was sure that African Americans were politically ignorant and thus voted

²⁹ Cf. Hawkins, "Education—The Need of the South," 236. According to Hodgson's dubious estimate, there were 17,429 white and 91,017 black adults in the state who could not read or write. Cf. *1872 Superintendent's Report*.

³⁰ Reverend Eaton, a Union chaplain during the Civil War and former superintendent of education in Toledo, Ohio, stated that in 1880 there were 433,447 people in Alabama aged ten to twenty who could not write. Of them, 111,767 were white, and 321,630 were black. In the same report, the commissioner maintained that there were 60,174 white and 206,878 black illiterates aged twenty-one and above in the state. Like all postbellum education data, Easton's information might not have been accurate, especially with regard to white Alabamians. Oftentimes, white people would not admit that they were illiterate. Other times, they simply refused to be tested. See *Illiteracy and Its Social, Political and Industrial Effects. An Address Delivered by Invitation before the Union League Club of New York City, by Hon. John Eaton, LL.D., United States Commissioner of Education. December 21, 1882* (New York: Union League Club of New York, 1882), 27. Cf. Leavell, 29; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 2, 925.

irresponsibly. Echoing the wartime sentiments of President Lincoln, who had proposed enfranchising the black intelligentsia and any black man who served in the Union Army, Sanders excluded the small minority of uncommonly smart blacks who voted responsibly because they were politically informed. However, the vast majority of black men with whom Sanders came into contact did not deserve to vote, he said.³¹

During the interview, Sanders also discussed slavery, which he considered appropriate for “cowardly” and “beastly” blacks even though he had never owned a slave. Revisiting black education, the testifier maintained that schooling black people could serve at least two purposes: a little learning could help them become better citizens if they remained free, or it could make them better free laborers if they were re-enslaved. Under no circumstance, however, should black people have been allowed to vote.³²

Like his slavery views, Sanders’ ideas regarding voting were not based entirely on skin color. To him, a number of white Alabamians were also unfit for the ballot. How, he asked, could illiterates fully understand the voting process? At the very least, one had to be able to read, write, and understand the United States Constitution before being allowed to vote. M. M. Cooke and Heidt agreed with Sanders, but they reserved their contempt entirely for black men: “What father, of common sense and feeling, would put a razor into the hands of his two year old child? The colored people, having no education

³¹ Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1801; Winik, 215, 216.

³² Edward Sanders, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, *loc. cit.*, 1801. Cf. Abercrombie, “Education in the Old South and in the New South, 8; Goodrich and Goodrich, 241.

or political experience, are children in intellect, into whose hands a Radical enemy has thrust a polished and keen razor.”³³

To perform any type of civic duty, such as voting, a person should have had some sort of education. As one person theorized, a free government and an ignorant electorate could not endure for long. Not even Cooke, Heidt, or Sanders questioned the validity of this idea. But which type of education the state’s white and black masses needed was heavily debated. “It being yet wholly uncertain how the rights of freedom would be vindicated by the nation,” wrote Major General Swayne, the first charge of the Freedmen’s Bureau and similar agencies was to establish amicable relations between employers and laborers. Swayne was particularly concerned with planters’ desire to control black workers without any sort of oversight.³⁴

Samuel Armstrong, William Paterson, and John Ryan, another postbellum state superintendent of instruction, were among the thousands of individuals who agreed with Swayne. Armstrong was fond of saying that black Americans needed the education of the hand, head, and heart that manual instruction, trade schools, and stern, Christian-based discipline would provide. Washington and Moton were two of the hundreds of late nineteenth-century Hampton graduates who promoted the academic, industrial, and

³³ “One Word,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 January 1871. See Wade Hampton and John T. Morgan, “Shall the Negro Majorities Rule,” in “The Race Problem in the South,” *Forum Extra* 1 (March 1890): 23. Cf. Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 79.

³⁴ Wager Swayne, quoted in Bureau of Refugees and Freedmen, *Report of the Assistant Commissioner of Alabama, 1866*, 5; *Laws in Relation to Freedmen*, 4, 7; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 52. See “Address of the Republican Committee to the Voters of the Third Congressional District,” *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 17 July 1869. See also Joseph H. Speed to Wager Swayne, 1 September 1867, in *Records of the Superintendent of Education for the State of Alabama, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870, Roll 4*. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 9; Hawkins, “Education—The Need of the South,” 230. Swayne, who lost his right leg as a result of a shell wound that he suffered while fighting at Rivers Bend, South Carolina, on 2 February 1865, was promoted from brigadier to major general in 1866. This and other aspects of his military career are reviewed in Johnson and Malone, *Dictionary of American Biography*, vol. 18, 240-241. Cf. Bethel, “The Freedmen’s Bureau in Alabama,” 49 (footnote 1).

vocational aspects of their mentor's idea, or model. Paterson, on the other hand, thought that black education was synonymous with black training. Both undertakings could prepare former slaves to be wage laborers. As for Ryan, he believed that Alabama's mineral and industrial resources had to be developed for the state to prosper, and that work required educated minds as well as hardy muscles. Alvord was in partial concurrence. Whether stated or simply understood, their plans would prepare black students to become qualified industrial laborers in coming years. Other Alabamians, including a handful of Perry County's most prominent white citizens, supported Bower Stewart's plan: "elementary training in Church schools."³⁵

Such a proposal, if enacted, would have made clergymen instrumental in educating Alabama's black population. In Perry County, the plan was carried out. As early as winter 1865-1866, white ministers met in Harmony, Marion or Uniontown Presbyterian Church to decide how they could help elevate the county's purportedly piteous "negroes, with their inherited tendencies of superstition, and their long, dreary history of ignorance, thriftlessness, and slavery." Unfortunately, the poor cotton harvests and even poorer relations between local blacks and whites that followed the meeting

³⁵ Stewart, *The Work of the Church in the South during the Period of Reconstruction*, 46. See, for example, *Circulars of Information of the Bureau of Education. No. 3-1879. The Value of Common School Education to Common Labor, by Dr. Edward Jarvis, of Dorchester, Mass.; Together with Illustrations of the Same Schools as Shown by the Answers to Inquiries Addressed to Employers, Workmen, and Observers* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1879). See also Atticus G. Haywood, "Hand as Well as Head and Heart Training" (address delivered at the dedication of the Elizabeth L. Nest Industrial Home in Holy Springs, Mississippi, 10 March 1885), vol. 54, book 59, J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, ADAH; Robin D. G. Kelley, introduction to Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black Education*, xi-xii; "The Public Free School System," 3-4, in vol. 49, book 4, J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, ADAH; Robert G. Sherer, "William Burns Paterson, the Pioneer as Well as Prophet of Negro Education in Alabama," *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 26 (summer 1974): 135; Donald Spivey, *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978), 3. Cf. 1866 Report of John Ryan, 16; Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, passim; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 78-81, 144-146; Brownlee, *New Day Ascending*, 98; Paterson, *The State Normal School at Montgomery*, 7; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 6, 159 (footnote 10), and "Let Us Make Man," 510.

hindered the entire process.³⁶ Unmoved, the ministers held several additional meetings at which they and a few of the county's most prominent white businessmen, churchgoers, and politicians discussed how they could help black students acquire a more extensive formal, religion-based education than the South's numerous Sabbath schools provided.³⁷

The second meeting was held on 15 May 1866 in Marion. Its size is unknown, but W. H. Raymond, a Presbyterian minister, and W. H. McIntosh, a Baptist minister, were definitely in attendance. Joining them were a few African Americans and J. L. M. Curry, a leading white advocate for supervised black education and future agent-trustee of the George Peabody and John F. Slater Education Funds. At Curry's behest, a mass meeting was held in the town on 17 May. There, Curry, McIntosh, Raymond, and some of Perry County's most respected freedmen discussed the educational future of local blacks. Afterward, Curry drafted a resolution in which he called on local whites to undertake the task of schooling the county's black masses. As two of Curry's biographers would later write, calling the town meetings and drafting the resolution were wise and prescient actions. At the time, the former slave-owning Curry faced federal

³⁶ J. L. M. Curry, "An Appeal to Southern Representatives in Congress and to the Friends of Free Common Schools in the South," in vol. 76, book 71; and "Justice to the Coloured Race," vol. 78, book 73, J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, ADAH. See Edwin A. Alderman and Armistead C. Gordon, *J. L. M. Curry: A Biography* (New York: McMillan, 1911), 201. See also Joseph Daniel Caver, "Marion to Montgomery: A Twenty Year History of Alabama State University, 1867-1887" (master's thesis, Alabama State University, 1982); James William Marshall, *The Presbyterian Church in Alabama* (Chattahoochee, FL: [n.p.,] 1938), typescript, Alabama Church Records, Coley 7N, ADAH. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, passim, and *They Too Call Alabama Home*, passim; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 79, 80; Curtis, 7 May 1869 *Christian Herald* editorial. For this occurrence throughout the state, see Walter L. Fleming, "The Churches of Alabama during the Civil War and Reconstruction," *Gulf States Historical Magazine* 1 (September 1902): 121-127.

³⁷ See *Livingston Journal*, 26 May 1866. According to one nineteenth-century writer, the formal education of black clerics inaugurated a large-scale missionary movement. In May 1870, the American Baptist Home Mission Society resolved to try to found first-rate training schools for black ministers and good-willed instructors. The Society also resolved to raise \$500,000 to help build schoolhouses, maintain grounds, and endow the institutions. Program coordinators said the work was necessary to "save the African race." Edwin T. Winkler, "An Eloquent Passage," quoted in James B. Simmons and William A. Gellatly, *Schools for Colored Preachers* (New York: Lange, Little and Hillman, [c. 1871]), i.

charges for his Confederate involvement during the Civil War. Promoting Reconstruction and racial harmony by aiding black education would surely help his cause, he reasoned.³⁸

As the last action illustrates, J. L. M. Curry was a shrewd individual. He was also one of the South's most notable nineteenth-century figures. Born on 5 June 1825 in Lincoln County, Georgia, Curry moved to Salt Creek in Talladega County, Alabama, when he was twelve. An industrious student, he finished Franklin College of Georgia and Harvard University's Dane Law School by age twenty. Though he agreed with Horace Mann's insistence on universal education, Curry was a staunch Democrat who aligned himself with the "Calhoun Group" of the party, championing states' rights and the expansion of race-based slavery.³⁹

By 1857, Curry owned at least twenty-five slaves. Some of them had been inherited from his father, William, a prominent stockholder in the Alabama and

³⁸ Alderman and Gordon, *J. L. M. Curry*, 201. Cf. 26 May 1866 *Livingston Journal*; Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 17, 133, 149, "The Influence of Personalities," 21 (footnote 40), and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 111, 143, 198-203, 210, 214-217, 262-264; Caver, *passim*; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 457, 626; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 244; Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black Education*; "Lincoln Normal School: In the Beginning." For a different view of Curry's regard for black education, cf. Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 2, citing Jessie Pearl Rice, *J. L. M. Curry: Southerner, Statesman and Educator* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1949).

George Peabody—a white war veteran, investment banker, philanthropist, and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient—established the Peabody Fund on 6 February 1867 "to encourage the intellectual, moral, and industrial education of the destitute children of the Southern States." The Slater Educational Fund, established in 1882 by white industrialist John Slater, served the same purpose: "to provide for the uplifting of the colored people [of the United States] and the welfare of the nation." Elizabeth Schaaf, "George Peabody"; available via Internet @ <http://www.peabodyhistorical.org/gpeabody.htm>; accessed 23 August 2003 (first quote); "John Slater Education Fund," *American Missionary* 37 (June 1883): 164 (second quote). Cf. Leavell, 58-66, 83-98, 155-158.

³⁹ Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 120; Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black Education*, 162; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 36-37. For additional information regarding Curry's loyalty and antebellum pursuits, see his *Autobiography* (N.P.: n.p., n.d.), typescript, Curry Family Papers, 1816-1907, LPR 48, ADAH. See also C. M. Stanley, "Why Alabama Honors Dr. J. L. M. Curry," *Montgomery Advertiser*, 26 October 1952. Cf. Hawkins, "J. L. M. Curry," chap. 3 in *The White Architects of Black Education*, 161-178. Horace Mann Bond suggested that Talladega was Curry's birthplace in *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 132.

Tennessee River Railroad, before William died. Over the next eight years, the younger Curry's chattel increased to between forty and forty-nine. Together with 550 acres of land, household furnishings valued at \$300, and \$325 worth of farm equipment, J. L. M. Curry's slaveholdings made him a member of the top twelve percent of slave owners in the United States.⁴⁰

Like many attorneys, J. L. M. Curry used his legal background to launch a political career. In 1847, he was elected to the Alabama House. After a short leave of absence from the law and politics, Curry was reelected to the state legislature in 1853. Four years later, he was elected to the lower house of the United States Congress. Curry was reelected two years later but resigned the post when the Confederate States of America was created. The fervid states-rights Democrat—immediate secession was the only way to handle the South's "impending crisis," he argued—was then selected to the Confederate Provisional Congress. Curry also served on a number of Confederate committees, was a member of the Confederacy's first regular Congress, and continuously advised Jefferson Davis, whom Curry encouraged to be a genuine battlefield commander.⁴¹

In the latter part of 1865, the Alabama State Baptist Convention leaders appointed Curry president of Howard College. Henry Talbird was still the most popular choice to head the institution, which was suffering tremendously when Curry's tenure began on 5

⁴⁰ See Kenneth Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Antebellum South* (1956, reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 30. Cf. Alderman and Gordon, *J. L. M. Curry*, 105; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 38; Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black Education*, 162.

⁴¹ J. L. M. Curry, *Perils and Duty of the South. Substance of a Speech Delivered by Jabez L. M. Curry, in Talladega, Alabama, November 26, 1860* (N.P.: n.p., n.d.), in vol. 33, book 30, J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, ADAH. In addition to his educational pursuits, Curry (whom the 9 February 1861 *Harper's Weekly*, historian Wayne Flynt, and author B. F. Riley identify as James or Jabez Lafayette Monroe Curry) authored several works, including *The South in the Olden Time* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Harrisburg Publishing Company, 1901).

December, but Talbird's physical condition prevented his return. Despite the opposition, Curry worked hard to restore the college's prewar luster. He and his three-man faculty, comprised of father-son team A. B. and D. P. Goodhue (who had headed Howard during the war) and E. Q. Thornton (or Thorton), faced major challenges. Central among them was money. By the late 1850s, Howard had amassed a \$200,000 endowment and owned property valued at \$264,499.88. By the summer of 1865, the school had no endowment, its buildings were ragged, and there were virtually no students. This was a dreadful state of affairs for a college run by the state's wealthiest and most influential religious denomination. In time, Howard's financial situation grew so bad that Curry was not paid his salary.⁴²

Combined with an uncanny ability to adapt quickly to even the worst situations, including his wife's April 1865 death, Curry's heightened sense of spirituality following the Civil War lessened the pain caused by his and Howard's immediate postwar problems. After being arrested on 30 May for his Confederate activities, Curry entered the ministry. Though unfalteringly conservative (although historian Bond called him moderate), Curry realized sooner than many former Confederate decision makers that

⁴² Howard College's immediate prewar status is questionable. Howard officers W. P. Chilton, Samuel Henderson, and Albert Williams said the school had fallen on hard times by 1857. That year, they contended, Howard had an endowment of less than \$100,000, relatively few and poorly paid professors, unfinished buildings, an unenclosed campus, a limited library, and a small student body. Administrators did not report the college's financial status to Alabama Superintendent of Education Ryan during 1865-1866, but Ryan understood that Howard and Judson were "in operation... with promise of extensive usefulness." Alabama Department of Education, *Report of John Ryan, Superintendent of Education, of the State of Alabama, Made to the Governor, April 1st, 1866* (Montgomery, Al.: Reid and Screws, 1866), 7, hereinafter cited as *1866 Report of John Ryan*. See *Circular to the Baptists of Alabama, on the Subject of Endowment, of Howard College, by a Committee Appointed at a Meeting in Behalf of Howard College, Held in Marion, July 1, 1857* (Marion, Al.: Dennis Dykous, 1857), 7. See also Noah K. Davis, *The Progress and Prospect of Alabama. An Address Delivered at the Commencement of Howard College, June, 29th, 1854* (Marion, Al.: Dennis Dykous, 1854), 15. Cf. 24 March 1870 *Marion Commonwealth* "Interior Correspondence"; Alderman and Gordon, *J. L. M. Curry*, xiii; Clark, *History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1889*, 174.

theirs was indeed a lost cause. Instead of wallowing in self-pity, promoting regional hate, or over romanticizing the Old South, Curry buried much of his Confederate past and worked hard to resurrect Howard—once, that is, he had appealed to President Johnson, paid a \$250 fine, and been pardoned.⁴³

Curry worked equally hard to create black common schools in Perry County. Because “a little army of Yankee school ma’ams” had begun to march into the southern states to educate black students, Curry decided that white Southerners should assume the responsibility first. This was one way to guarantee that black students received a “proper” southern education rather than the reprehensible teachings of “quarrelsome Northern chaps.” When objectors, including a minuet number of former slaves, claimed that blacks would forget their place or that the economic, political, and social positions of the races would be reversed if blacks were schooled, Curry snapped: “I have never heard of a graduate of the University of Tuscaloosa going between the plow handles.”⁴⁴

Though most white conservatives and conservative newspapers found little solace in Curry’s words, a few of them supported Curry’s plan as long as the instructors who were chosen to educate the freepersons were more committed to the white South than

⁴³ Cf. Alderman and Gordon, *J. L. M. Curry*, 200; Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 17; Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black Education*, especially “J. L. M. Curry.”

⁴⁴ Washington, “Industrial Education and the Public Schools,” 220 (first quote); “Evangelizing the Pickaninies,” *Montgomery Weekly Mail*, 4 October 1866 (second quote); J. L. M. Curry, quoted in Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 143, citing *Montgomery Advertiser*, 2 February 1889 (third quote). See *Montgomery Advertiser*, 24 July 1867. See also Will W. Alexander, foreword to Arthur F. Raper, *Preface to Peasantry: A Tale of Two Black Belt Counties* (1936; reprint, Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), xliv-xlv. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 72, 84; Bond, “The Influence of Personalities on the Public Education of Negroes in Alabama, I,” *Journal of Negro Education* 6 (January 1937): 23, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 112, 143, 195-225; Goodrich and Goodrich, 213; Hawkins, “J. L. M. Curry”; Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, passim; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 417, and vol. 3, 1488-1489; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 2, 4, 5, and “Let Us Make Man,” 54. One black man warned: “Niggers has got to l’arn that they ain’t like white folks, and never will be, and no amount of eddycation can make’em be. [W]hen they gits outen their place they is gonna be trouble.” Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung*, 42.

postbellum officials seemed to be. Native Kentuckian Robert McKee's *Selma Southern Argus* (Alabama's "mouth-piece of law, order, and old time Democracy") insisted that state lawmakers chose textbooks that were not worthy of being read by white Southerners: "In one of the series Sheridan's infamous spoliation and destruction of the valley of Virginia is commemorated and lauded in a batch of doggerel entitled 'Sheridan's ride.' In others, selections equally obnoxious to Southern men, and sentences pregnant with insult to the glorious past." Another Democratic newspaper assumed the goal of the people who selected the textbooks was to teach southern youths, blacks included, to dislike Confederates like Jackson, Johnson, and Lee and to revere Unionists like Butler, McNeil, and Sheridan.⁴⁵

The *Marion Commonwealth* insisted the greatest need of southern schools was "truthful" (meaning white, southern-leaning) school histories. In its opinion, southern parents did not want northern stories about southern contumacy and treason or southern slaveholders' rebellions told to children as if the stories were factual. Grown ups knew the truth, it continued, but young students were more apt to believe what they were taught in school than what their parents or guardians, pastors, and other respected figures tried to teach them. Appealing to Confederate veterans and sympathizers, the paper concluded:

Here in Marion... let some gentleman who has a son buried in Virginia or at Shiloh or Chickamauga, apply to his own case the result of teaching his younger children that that dead son was a traitor who deserved to die; a rebel, who should have suffered, a miscreant who only escaped the halter by meeting the bullet, and think what his feelings

⁴⁵ "Law Abiding Democrats to the Front," [n.d.], Reconstruction Era Political Records, 1868-1878, LPR 101, ADAH (first quote); "Beware," *The Marion Commonwealth*, 30 September 1869, quoting *Selma Southern Argus*, [n.d.] (second quote). One source suggested that Robert McKee edited the *Selma Times* during the immediate Postbellum period. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 79, 144-146, 320 (footnote 40).

would be were those younger children to join together
some fine winter evening in his presence and the presence
of his dead boy's mother, to ridicule and revile the "rebel,"
the "traitor," the "miscreant."⁴⁶

Initially, most white persons were as unreceptive to black education as some
persons were to independent black churches.⁴⁷ Historian Fleming even argued that, for
the average white, educating former slaves was comparable to invading the South with
armed troops.⁴⁸ This was especially true during the immediate postbellum months,
proposed Fleming. Even Curry, a man of mixed ancestry who had several black friends
as a child, reportedly opposed black education immediately following the war.⁴⁹ Hence,
teaching Canebrake blacks became the responsibility of northern missionary and

⁴⁶ "Southern School History," *Marion Commonwealth*, 11 November 1869. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 63; Goodrich and Goodrich, 205, 206, citing *Montgomery Daily Mail*, 18 January 1866.

⁴⁷ See "Reconstruction in the Churches," chap. 10 in Fleming, *Documentary History of Reconstruction*, 215 ff. See also Harriet E. Amos, "Religious Reconstruction in Microcosm at Faunsdale Plantation," *Alabama Review* 42 (October 1989): 243-269; Sylvia Krebs, "Funeral Meats and Second Marriages: Alabama Churches in the Presidential Reconstruction Period," *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 37 (fall 1975): 206-216; *Report of the Committee of the Alabama Association, upon the Relation of the Colored Members to the Churches, with the Speech of I. T. Tichenor, D. D., Pastor of First Baptist Church, Montgomery, Upon the Adoption of the Report* (Montgomery, Al.: Barrett and Brown, 1865). Cf. Du Bois, "Reconstruction and Its Benefits"; Stakely, "The Baptists of Alabama in the State's Centennial," 6.

Whereas Du Bois and other scholars believed emancipation caused great fissures among white and black churchgoers, Krebs suggests that white parishioners were not only receptive to black worshipers during the Postbellum period; whites, in fact, saw no need to change the ethnic or racial makeup of the congregations. During 1866 and 1867, writes Krebs, many separations took place, but only a handful of the breakups were bitter. Usually, pious, sincere white church officials and members helped blacks build their own churches. Cf. Krebs, "Funeral Meats and Second Marriages," 212, 213.

⁴⁸ Cf. Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 456. For one of many confirmations, see "Teachers for Colored School," *The Montgomery Advertiser*, 27 January 1869. See also "M," letter to the editor, *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 6 February 1869.

⁴⁹ Cf. Flynt, *Alabama Baptists*, 152, quoting Walter Bell White, "J. L. M. Curry: Alabamian" (master's thesis, Samford University, 1971), 362, and *Christian Index and South-Western Baptist*, 6 June 1867. Curry once said, "I can hardly call myself an Anglo-Saxon as in my veins flow English blood, Scotch, Welsh, and French." Another time, Curry told Booker T. Washington that he was a vehement opponent of black education when the Civil War ended. According to Washington, Curry did not change his mind about black education until he had actually visited some black schools. Charles Mitchell, untitled and undated typescript in Curry Family Papers, ADAH. Cf. Bond, "The Influence of Personalities," 21, especially footnote 40; Hawkins, "J. L. M. Curry"; Washington, *My Larger Education*, 58; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 2. Curry's childhood associations are discussed in Alderman Gordon, *J. L. M. Curry*, 3.

philanthropic organizations, federal agencies, and the blacks themselves.⁵⁰ Their combined efforts were remarkable. Employing a simple but effective fundraising scheme, a group of black Perry Countians raised \$335 in one day (14 July 1866) to help pay for a school which they and their progeny could attend. How did the blacks achieve this marvelous feat? They held a dinner.⁵¹

The Freedmen's Bureau pitched in. By the summer of 1866, the Bureau operated primary and normal schools in Hamburg, Marion, New Hope, and Uniontown. Marion's black school had 132 pupils whom northern educator Silas H. Prater taught geography, mathematics, reading, and writing.⁵² This was no easy task. In addition to inherent problems associated with trying to educate a number of former slaves, scores of white persons were utterly opposed to seeing African Americans receive a formal education because it was a stimulus for success. Rather than having to deal with a learned black property owner, opponents of black education preferred dealing with the docile and lazy, well-mannered and happy "Sambo" character that innumerable white Southerners had created to strengthen their self-worth and to justify controlling black people.⁵³

⁵⁰ For a few contrasting views about how intolerant white Marionites were, cf. Alexander H. Curtis' 7 May 1869 *Christian Herald* editorial; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 457 (including footnote 4); "Letter from Alabama." For similar occurrences elsewhere in the state, see "The Educational Capacity of the Negro," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 6 February 1869. Cf. *1869 Superintendent's Report*, 7-10.

⁵¹ *Livingston Journal*, 7 July 1866. Cf. Brownlee, *New Day Ascending*, 109; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 244.

⁵² Remarkably, only one-third of Prater's students did not pay fees. Everyone else paid tuition.

⁵³ "Sambo" was a common moniker for ignorant blacks during the last half of the nineteenth century. Stanley Elkins revived the stereotype in his controversial study *Slavery: A Problem in Institutional and Intellectual Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959). Elkins' detractors are numerous. See, for example, Ann Jane Lane, ed., *The Debate over Slavery: Stanley Elkins and His Critics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971). For one of several general discussions of the Sambo character following the publication of the first edition of Elkins' *Slavery*, see John W. Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South*, rev. and enlarged ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977). Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, 254; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, xix; Wright, "Sambo and Cuffee: That 'Peculiar Institution,'" chap. 2 in *What They didn't Teach You about the Civil War*, 17-37. For an

The fact that “yankey” teachers and federal employees who had never dealt with slaves in their entire lives dared to educate “their niggers” did not help some of Perry’s white citizens deal with the county’s black schools.⁵⁴ Oftentimes, persons who had never owned a slave were more outraged by former slaves being formally educated than former slave owners were. Knowing this, the *Marion Commonwealth* advised: “We venture to give the Freedmen this warning: If a Yankee school master has anything whatsoever to do with [an] aid society stay out or get out, and the sooner the better.” The men then warned instructors and supporters about the supposed evil effects of dealing with northern educators, whose work would “morally damn any respectable freedmen. Remember our warning.” Incredibly, their admonitions were placed in the paper’s “Local Intelligence” section.⁵⁵

In an effort to prevent black people from attending Bureau schools, as well as to retain some degree of control over their former servants, a few white Perry County planters created catechism schools on their estates. The *Alabama Weekly State Journal* reported how a Mr. Saunders (or Sanders) hired a white man to head a black school on his plantation. Retrospectively, his and other private schools served at least two purposes: they prevented Northerners and other non-Alabamians from planting purportedly seditious ideas like freedom meant not having to work or formal learning was

interesting caricature of “Sambo” being courted by Lincoln, cf. Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, 102.

⁵⁴ See “The Bureau in Alabama,” *The Marion Commonwealth*, 12 July 1866. “Yankey,” as opposed to Yankee, is taken from a number of sources, including James G. Hudson’s 1861 diary and a 7 December 1864 letter from H. W. Fontain to his wife, Gatsey. H. W. Fontain Letter, RG 697, Auburn University Special Collections and Archives, Auburn, Alabama. Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, 215.

⁵⁵ “Freedmen,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 July 1866. For one of many similar contentions, see *Tuscaloosa Observer*, 21 July 1866. Some of Heidt’s religious views were equally biased. According to him and M. M. Cooke, Brigham Young had eighty actual and 120 spiritual wives. See “Brigham Young,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 29 July 1869.

better than manual labor in the heads of young blacks; and planters benefited from the labor that some of the students provided in lieu of paying tuition. Saunders, for example, took care of all necessary expenses, including boarding and paying the school's teacher, but still expected to benefit from the arrangement by having capable, dependable workers who were satisfied with their situation. Similar agreements were made throughout the Black Belt.⁵⁶

Perry County's black residents were not duped. They knew that Saunders and like-minded individuals were trying to make sure they had ample low-wage—in some cases, no-wage—workers to grow their crops, thereby perpetuating as much of the prewar socioeconomic hierarchy as they could. Because the economic leaders of the Cotton Belt were usually its political leaders, economic stagnation meant political stagnation, a trend that certain forward-looking black citizens were determined to counteract.⁵⁷

Skeptical of the promises of influential white Perry Countians such as J. L. M. Curry, A. B. Moore, Porter King, and Joseph Speed, black education advocates and aspiring students usually cast their lot with northern educational, philanthropic, and religious organizations and the federal government. Two groups, the Congregationalist-led American Missionary Association and the Freedmen's Bureau, proved as critical as ministers to educating black Perry Countians, who though only recently emancipated had

⁵⁶ See Charles W. Buckley to Wager Swayne, 15 March 1867, in *Records of the Superintendent of Education for the State of Alabama, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870, Roll 4*. See also Francis Greenwood Peabody, *Education for Life: The Story of Hampton Institute* (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1918), 291; "Progress of the Freedmen," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 1 May 1869, hereinafter cited as "Progress of the Freedmen." Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, passim; Bethel, "The Freedmen's Bureau in Alabama," 70; Brownlee, *New Day Ascending*, 109; Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 33-34, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 114, 115; Bullock, *A History of Negro Education in the South*, passim; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, xiii; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, passim, and "Let Us Make Man," 245-246, 511-512.

⁵⁷ Cf. Hoar, "History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875," 25.

a higher concentration of quasi- and completely literate individuals than other predominately black counties in Alabama. Perry's status as a key center for religious, educational, and economic activity during the Antebellum period had necessitated a larger class of semi-educated domestic, or house, servants and ministers than other cotton-growing areas. As such, many postbellum blacks were able to take advantage of Reverend Thomas Steward's 1867 attempts to form another local academy for black students.⁵⁸

Lincoln School of Marion

Reverend Steward was a native of Constantia, New York.⁵⁹ Charged with erecting a black common school in Alabama's Black Belt, a process that Congregationalists and the Cleveland, Ohio, Freedmen's Aid Commission had already

⁵⁸ See Andrew Billingsley, *Black Families in White America* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1978), 117-119. See also Minnie Rhodes Darden, "History of Marion, Alabama, 1817-1890" (master's thesis, Auburn University, 1941); Joe M. Richardson, *Christian Reconstruction: The American Missionary Association and Southern Blacks, 1861-1890* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1969), 229; Loren Schweningen, "The American Missionary Association and Northern Philanthropy in Reconstruction Alabama," *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 33 (fall and winter 1970): 145, citing *American Missionary* 14 (October 1875): 200; James M. McPherson, "White Liberals and Black Power in Negro Education," *American Historical Review* 75 (June 1970): 1357-1386. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 239-243; Bond, *Black American Scholars, The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, and *Negro Education in Alabama*; Boothe, *Cyclopedia of Colored Baptists of Alabama*, 26-27; Essah, *A House Divided*, 131-133; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 124-125; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 79; Leavell, 31-39; McAfee, *Religion, Race, and Reconstruction*, 12-14; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama* and "Let Us Make Man." At least one source suggests that Lincoln School of Marion was not founded until 1869. Cf. Leavell, 38.

⁵⁹ Circa 1905, M. L. Phillips, one of Lincoln Normal School's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century principals, indicated that Steward was from Ohio. Later, Idella J. Childs made the same suggestion. Steward was a native of New York commissioned to serve the American Missionary Association in Ohio, where he probably met his wife, a native Ohioan. See "The Teachers of the American Missionary Association in Alabama," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 29 May 1869. See also M. L. Phillips, *Lincoln Normal School, Marion, Ala.* (New York: Congregational Rooms, c. 1905), 1; Idella J. Childs, "The Lincoln School," in The Book Committee and Friends of the Perry County Historical and Preservation Society, "Memories of Perry County," sec. 2 of Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 29. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 350.

begun at places like Talladega in central Alabama,⁶⁰ Steward journeyed to the Black Belt in January 1867 after a disabled Civil War veteran contacted the AMA.⁶¹ The veteran's story is remarkable. After losing one of his legs during the war, the possible Wilson's Raider or 9th Minnesota infantryman was either left near Marion when his unit departed the town or remained there for personal reasons. In a foreign land and unable to work because of his injury, the soldier built a small shack, somewhat less than a cabin, and lived a hermitic life on the outskirts of town.⁶²

Occasionally, a curious child or two would visit the fascinating man from the North who had one leg and who knew how to read and write. As word of the recuperating soldier's literacy spread, more children scurried to his small abode to listen to him read stories. Eventually, the soldier began to teach them the alphabet and "other little things," according to Bobbie Kerr Beans, a Marion educator and Lincoln High School graduate. Interested in what their children were learning, parents supported the effort only to find out that the soldier was leaving Marion. But before he left, he contacted the AMA, whose officials had hopes of creating biracial educational schools

⁶⁰ See, for example, E. C. Silsby, "Congregationalism in Alabama" (address delivered at the Twenty-fifth Annual Meeting of the Congregational Association of Alabama, held at Florence, Alabama, on 3 April 1900), Pamphlets and Brochures Vertical Files, Subjects, LPR 117, ADAH. Cf. Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, passim; Leavell, 37; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 118, 133, 134-148, and "Let Us Make Man," 267.

⁶¹ For different information, see "Alabama State University 100th Year Celebration Day," Alabama State University State Publications, SG 011965, ADAH. See also J. Mills Thornton, III, and Joseph Caver, *Touched by History: A Self Guided Tour to Civil Rights Sites in Central Alabama—Special Montgomery Edition with an Alabama State University Supplement* (Montgomery, AL.: New South Books, 2005), 53.

⁶² See "Lincoln Normal School"; available via Internet @ <http://www.ruthk.net/marion/lincoln/directory/Chronology%20Page.html>; accessed 27 May 2006. See also National Lincolnite Alumni Association, *Sixteenth (16th) Biennial Lincolnite Reunion* ([Marion, AL.: National Lincolnite Alumni Association, 2006), 1. Cf. "Lincoln Normal School: In the Beginning."

throughout Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Steward was sent to Alabama's Black Belt.⁶³

Once Steward arrived in Perry County, he canvassed the area in search of potential students and supporters. Knowing that the county's freepersons had a considerable thirst for knowledge and that education was essential to preparing them for their newly legislated rights and responsibilities, Swayne and other Freedmen's Bureau officials helped.⁶⁴ By the spring of 1867, a catechism school had been created at the partly constructed Old Methodist Church. The Bureau donated needed supplies, the AMA two or three additional instructors, including May Sanderling (or Senderling) and Ms. H. F. Treadwell, and the Canebrake hundreds of energetic students. Despite their efforts, keeping the school open was difficult from the spring through the summer of 1867, but Sanderling, Steward, and Treadwell persisted. Their students and supporters were undoubtedly glad that they did.⁶⁵

With additional blacks inquiring about the newly created school, Steward realized that his "huge barn" (Old Methodist Church) was too small to accommodate everyone who sought his, Sanderling, and Treadwell's assistance. The project was also costly. After expending his entire salary and contracting a \$150 debt, Steward was forced to

⁶³ Bobbie Beans, personal interview with the author, 23 March 2006. Cf. Brownlee, *New Day Ascending*, 109. The soldier's story is also referenced in Malinda White, "Lincoln Remembered," a pamphlet produced by the Lincolnite Association, a club that was formed in 1970 to preserve one of Lincoln School's last buildings. Mrs. Beans provided a copy of the pamphlet to the author.

⁶⁴ Cf. Alvord, *First Semi-Annual Report on Schools and Finances of Freedmen, January 1, 1866*, 1; Hoar, "A History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875," 24, citing *Appleton's Annual Cyclopaedia and Register of Important Events* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1872), vol. 5: 1865, *loc. cit.*, 337.

⁶⁵ Steward taught the first 150 students without any assistance. H. F. Treadwell and May Sanderling came to Marion during the spring of 1867, but Sanderling did not stay. Because the Freedmen's Bureau would pay for the travel of only one teacher or for some other reason, she returned to the North in August 1867. See AMA Papers, 15 August 1867. Cf. AMA Papers; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 83, citing *American Missionary*, April 1867, 75; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 248; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 56, 57.

make a formal appeal to Wager Swayne for additional assistance.⁶⁶ Although Swayne was more concerned with the economic conditions of black people, including some freepersons' penchant to be paid in foodstuffs rather than in currency and planters' desire to control every aspect of labor, Swayne agreed to give \$2,000 to the project as long as two criteria were met: Perry County's black population had to pledge \$500 toward the construction of a new building and secure the land on which the building would be placed.⁶⁷

Alexander Curtis and the Princesses

Alexander Curtis was one of the most significant men to rise to the challenge. Born a slave in North Carolina on either 19 or 29 December 1829, Curtis accompanied the family of E. Haywood to Alabama when he was ten. In 1848, after working several years in a store called Stockton (or Stocking) and Hunt, the illiterate mulatto relocated to Marion. There, he was a two-year body servant of E. W. King's son-in-law, John R. Goree, a successful and well-liked planter-merchant from Dallas County who allowed Curtis to operate a barbershop whose profits were split between the slave and the spinster, Goree. Curtis also farmed, perhaps undertook clandestine study, and in 1851 married Princess Webb Freeman, a fourth-generation descendent of a legendary Malagasy princess who in the late 1740s had been kidnapped by a North American

⁶⁶ See "Hard to Beat," *Marion Commonwealth*, 15 December 1870. Cf. "Letter from Alabama."

⁶⁷ See "The Alabama Bureau," *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 July 1866. See also *Florida Times*, 10 December 1865. Cf. Wiggins, *Scalawag*, 142; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 52 (footnote 30); Wilson, *The Black Codes of the South*, 58. The main reason some black people preferred to be paid with crops was simple: food was tangible; money was more of an enigma. Put another way, ignorant blacks were less likely to be cheated if they were compensated in foodstuffs. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 120; Brownlee, *New Day Ascending*, 116; Goodrich and Goodrich, 128; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 37, 39.

privateer while she and her brother were traveling to France to receive a convent education. Before dying circa 1800, the princess had begun one of modern-day America's most remarkable, albeit little-known, black academic and professional dynasties.⁶⁸

The female African youth's story is as fascinating as it is germane. After being taken to Philadelphia and sold into slavery, she was transported to Norfolk, Virginia, where she became a revered slave of Frances Freeman and Captain John McKerrell (or McKerel). As a testament to her value and out of respect for her pedigree, the princess-turned-slave never called Freeman mistress or McKerrell master, according to William Montgomery Jackson, an American Episcopal Church priest and the great-great grandson of the African princess.⁶⁹

Information regarding the McKerrells' next moves is sketchy. Frances definitely married Captain Francis Childs, and Mary definitely married Thomas Burke, an Irish attorney-physician, member of the Continental Congress, Revolutionary War veteran, and North Carolina's first Independence-era governor, but other occurrences are less certain.

⁶⁸ Information about Curtis' early years is scarce. Although persons now accept that Curtis was born in 1829, at least one source suggests that he was born in 1826, another source 1827. Nor has his birthplace gone without question. Most persons agree that he was born in Wake County, North Carolina, but some people have claimed that he was born in Orange County. Curtis' actual status, or condition, when he came to Alabama is also dubious. Curtis was definitely a servant and probably a slave, but neither condition is certain. One of the best sources available to modern scholars, Boothe's *Cyclopedia of the Colored Baptists of Alabama*, states only that Curtis was "the property (?) of E. Haywood." Some persons have claimed that Curtis was the body servant of R. T. Goree, others J. Goree. Boothe, *op. cit.*, 132. See Idella J. Childs, "Black Elected and Appointed Officials during the Reconstruction Period," in "Perry County Personalities," *Perry County Heritage*, vol. 2, 4. Cf. Bailey, *They Too Call Alabama Home*, 97-99; Bond, *Black American Scholars*, 34-35, 38, 170-175; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 136-141.

⁶⁹ The princess was also called Maria. See W. M. Jackson, "The Great-Great-Grandson of a Madagascar King becomes a Priest of the American Episcopal Church," *Spirit of Missions* 71 (1906): 946. Cf. Bond, *Black American Scholar*, 34-39, 170-171.

It seems the Burkes and the Childses eventually moved to Orange County, North Carolina, and took “Princess” with them; but this, too, is open to debate.⁷⁰

In time, Princess gave birth to a child, Maria, whose life and times are also vague. Both individuals were mentioned in the will of Governor Burke, who passed in 1783 (the same year, incidentally, that European nations began to recognize the American independence for which Burke had fought). Princess and Maria were mentioned a second time in the will of Captain Childs, who succumbed nine years after Burke, but other aspects of the Africans’ existence remain a mystery. Who, for example, was Maria’s father? William Jackson recorded only that Princess died a slave in December 1859 and, because of her large frame, was buried in a coffin originally built for John Brown. Jackson did not state who fathered Maria or whether she was ever manumitted.⁷¹

The ultimate condition of Maria’s child, Patsey (or Patsy), a third-generation descendent of the Malagasy princess, is known. The forty-five-year-old Patsey was listed among the free blacks who lived in Orange County in 1850, having been freed by her female offspring. William Freeman, Patsey’s sixty-five-year-old husband, was also a free black who lived in the county.⁷²

Like Alexander Curtis’ childhood and Maria’s entire life, little is known about Patsey and William Freeman’s relationship other than they had between eight and ten children. According to oral tradition and a diary that was kept by Patsy Childs, Patsey Freeman’s granddaughter and an alumna of Lincoln School and Talladega College, several of the female Freeman children were excellent seamstresses and sewed uniforms

⁷⁰ Cf. Bond, *Black American Scholar*, 34-39, 170-171.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

for Bingham Military Academy, an all-boys school in Hillsboro, North Carolina. Their profession earned them enough money to purchase the freedom of their mother and younger sister, Nancy (or Nancey). Later, Patsey and Nancy moved to Oberlin, where Nancy received a Puritan education and married Andrew Jackson, a well-off black carpenter and carriage maker.⁷³

Nancy and Andrew Jackson's union produced a number of college professors, ministers, and other professionals. Daughter Mattie Rebecca became a schoolteacher in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where she taught for a half century. Her brothers, Andrew, Jr., and Robert also became schoolteachers. John Charles studied construction, eventually building, contracting, and teaching in Oberlin; and George and Flossie became pharmacists in Memphis, Tennessee. Legend has it that William Christopher Handy—a Florence, Alabama, native, one-time Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical College music professor, and self-proclaimed “Father of the Blues”—penned his famous “St. Louis Blues” (1912) while sitting at a table in George Jackson's Memphis drugstore.⁷⁴

Other descendants of the enslaved Madagascar princess had a more difficult time. In 1834 or 1835, while Patsey and Nancy Freeman lived as freepersons in Oberlin, the daughters of Patsey who had purchased her and Nancy's freedom through regular and overtime work as garment makers were taken to Marion, Alabama. There, they became members of the more privileged class of slaves that included black overseers such as

⁷³ Ibid.; Jackson, “The Great-Great-Grandson of a Madagascar King becomes a Priest of the American Episcopal Church,” 947. Bond called Patsy Childs Patty Childs in *Black American Scholars*, 170.

⁷⁴ Bond, *Black American Scholar*, 172. Cf. Sherer, “Let Us Make Man,” 152. George Jackson was graduated from Oberlin College and the University of Michigan. Flossie attended Fisk, Oberlin, and Meharry.

George Washington Davis; house servant; and irregulars (craftsmen, skilled servants) such as Alexander Curtis, Thomas Lea, and Young Sol Davis.⁷⁵

It was at Perry's county seat that Alexander Curtis became enthralled with Princess Webb Freeman, but their first encounter might have occurred earlier. Curtis was born in Wake County, North Carolina, but he might have spent time in Orange County, Princess' birthplace, before being moved to Alabama. In any event, Alexander Curtis was baptized in 1852. Later, he operated some sort of small business (possibly a clothes shop), barbered, farmed, and fathered two sons, Alexander, Jr., and Webb. "Succeeding by industry and economy," observed Charles O. Boothe, Alexander H. Curtis, Sr., paid Mrs. E. Haywood \$2,000 in 1859 to secure his and his wife's manumission. Thereupon, the elder Alexander Curtis traveled to New York, where it was easier to execute freedom papers, and lived as a legal citizen. Princess stayed in Marion with the children and other family members, friends, and associates.⁷⁶

The status of the Curtis children when their father traveled to New York is uncertain. Alexander, Sr., might have made the journey northward to get the freedom papers of every family member or to get the existing papers certified. If this were the case, then Curtis was evidently unaware that Alabama lawmakers probably would not have recognized freedom papers that had been executed outside the state. If the children were still slaves when Curtis left Marion, he might have gone to New York to seek help from abolitionists or to make more money than he had made in Alabama in order to

⁷⁵ Bond, *Black American Scholar*, 34-39, 170-175; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, passim.

⁷⁶ Boothe, *Cyclopedia of the Colored Baptists of Alabama*, 132; Charles A. Brown, "A. H. Curtis: Alabama Legislator," *Negro History Bulletin* 26 (February 1962): 100; Childs, "Black Elected and Appointed Officials during the Reconstruction Period," 3. Cf. Bond, *Black American Scholars*, 170-175. Unless otherwise noted, the Alexander H. Curtis to whom the author refers in the text is Alexander Curtis, Sr.

purchase his children's freedom. Then again, Curtis might have envisioned moving his wife and two sons to New York. Possible motives are endless. It is certain, nonetheless, that Curtis returned to Marion in 1861. The following year, Thomas Austin, the third of four boys born to Princess and Alexander Curtis, arrived. Their fourth son, William Parrish, was born in 1865.⁷⁷

Following the Civil War, Alexander Curtis resumed his barbering and mercantile practices, operating a small store with Pat Billingslea (or Billingsley) that offered tobacco and other goods underneath the King House, Marion's first hotel. Curtis also farmed, became a building contractor, delved into education, and entered politics. Cast in this manner, he, like John Carraway, was a typical black Carpetbagger. Having left the South before the Civil War, Curtis came back to the region during the war and held political office following its official end.⁷⁸

Curtis' political career began as county registrar. When state law mandated that every county have at least one black registrar per every two white registrars, Albert J. Webb, Curtis' in-law, was appointed registrar in 1867. The following year, Curtis himself was appointed to the office. In 1870, Curtis was elected to the lower house of the state legislature. By this time, he had become the trustee of a public school for white

⁷⁷ See, for example, Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 129. Cf. Bond, *Black American Scholars*, 38, 172.

⁷⁸ Black Carpetbagger is taken from Willie Lee Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, 104. Neither she nor the author uses it pejoratively. See "Frohlickstein," *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 February 1870. See also Clement Clay Eiland, "Early History of Perry County Vividly Portrayed by Confederate Veteran," in Smith Collection; Perry County, Alabama, County Court Commission Minutes, 1870-1877, Business Licenses, 1870, LG 5458, hereinafter cited as 1870-1877 Perry County Business Licenses; and Perry County, Alabama, County Commission Cash Receipts and Checks Received Log Book, 1870-1875, LG 4649, ADAH, hereinafter cited as 1870-1875 Perry County Cash and Checks Log Book. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbagger nor Scalawag and They Too Call Alabama Home*; Bond, *Black American Scholar*, 38-39, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 109; Boothe, *Cyclopedia of the Colored Baptists of Alabama*, 132; Brown, "A. H. Curtis"; Caver; "Early History of Perry County Vividly Portrayed by Confederate Veteran"; Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 107, citing 17 July 1861 *Weekly Marion American*.

students and had helped develop Alabama State University's earliest predecessors, Lincoln School and Lincoln Normal School of Marion.⁷⁹

Between 1870 and 1872, Curtis' political career flourished. Locally, he was elected to the Perry County Commission. Regionally, he became a district four alternate to the 1872 National Republican Conference that was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.⁸⁰ The same year, he campaigned to become a state senator from Alabama's twenty-second senatorial district. When the smoke from the battle had cleared, election officials discovered that Curtis had polled more than two and one-half times the number of votes received by his Democratic opponent, a white Perry County attorney named John H. Chapman.⁸¹

Curtis remained in the state legislature until 1876. As was the case with John Dozier, another devout black Baptist and state legislator from Perry County, black and white politicians truly admired Curtis. His colleagues frequently called him one of the most competent, caring, and energetic Republicans in the state legislature. Like Dozier, Curtis moved through the political ranks with a sterling reputation.⁸²

⁷⁹ Lincoln School was also called Abraham Lincoln School and the Lincoln Academy for Freedmen. See "Appointment of Registers," Montgomery, Alabama, *Daily State Sentinel*, 23 May 1867. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 62 (footnote 50); Schweninger, "The American Missionary Association and Northern Philanthropy in Reconstruction Alabama," 145; 1870 Teachers' Monthly Reports.

⁸⁰ Curtis' fellow Marionite Joseph Speed and George M. Duskin of Greensboro were also alternates. They were joined by another Marionite, Peter G. Clarke (or Clark), W. G. M. Gholson of Prattville, and Walter B. Jones of Demopolis. See *National Republican Executive Committee, Roll of Delegates and Alternates Elected to the National Union Republican Convention to Assemble at Philadelphia, June 5, 1872, with the Post Office Address of Each*, corrected ed. ([N.P.]: Gibson Brothers Printers, 1872), 2.

⁸¹ Curtis received 3,753 votes, Chapman 1,376. See Perry County Probate Judge Records of Election Results, 1823-1930, 1 November 1872, LG 5489, ADAH.

⁸² Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, passim; Bond, *Black American Scholars and Negro Education in Alabama*; Boothe, *Cyclopedia of the Colored Baptists of Alabama*, 132; Brown, "A. H. Curtis," 100, and "John Dozier," 113; Caver.

As meritorious as Curtis' political activities were, some of his most memorable endeavors remain in education. After working for years to ensure that Alabama's black youth in general and those of Perry County in particular would be afforded the same higher education opportunities that birth afforded white persons, Curtis, Greene Lewis, and other delegates to the 1875 constitutional convention reaffirmed that right by creating a normal school for black teachers in Huntsville and by continuing to support the university for black teachers and students in Marion.⁸³

The "Marion Nine"

Margaret Mead, an American anthropologist, believed "a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world."⁸⁴ Alongside some American Missionary Association agents and Freedmen's Bureau officials, a few thoughtful and extremely committed black Marionites helped change the world of innumerable African Americans in Alabama. Known affectionately as the "Marion Nine," James Childs, Alexander Curtis, carpenter Nicholas (or Nikolas) Dale, John Freeman, merchant David Harris, Thomas Lee, Nathan Levert (or Lavert), Joey Pinch, and Thomas Speed answered Wager Swayne's 1867 call to raise \$500 and to locate land on which a larger black common school than Thomas Steward's Old Methodist facility could be built. Unbeknownst to them, they were laying the foundations for the first state-sponsored

⁸³ In 1873, Alabama state legislators authorized the establishing of a white normal school in Florence. Its placement resulted largely from compromise after community leaders tried unsuccessfully to get the land grant college that was ultimately erected in Auburn, Alabama, constructed in Florence.

⁸⁴ Mead's words can be found in innumerable sources. See, for example, City of Wichita, "Building Bridges: A Community Process to Heal Racism"; available via Internet @ <http://www.wichitagov.org/Government/BuildingBridges/>; accessed 13 December 2004.

liberal-arts institution for the higher education of African Americans in the United States.⁸⁵

Among the Marion Nine, Curtis was perhaps the most significant advocate of black academic and theological education. A case could be made for Lee, but he died before significant strides were taken. By July 1867, Curtis had helped raise \$400, or eighty percent, of the money for which Swayne had called. Not only did Curtis' fundraising efforts epitomize the self-help and cooperationist doctrines that Booker T. Washington would later champion in Alabama; they also demonstrated Curtis' social standing in Perry County and elsewhere in the state. Curtis, whose ability to purchase his freedom attested to his financial position, apparently donated a portion of the money from his own savings. Additional funds came from Perry County's black community and a few whites. Like Gabriel Prosser before him and the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., after him, Curtis was a man whom many people instinctively followed.⁸⁶

Pursuant to seeing their dreams realized, the Marion Nine asked Black Belt blacks to make as many financial contributions as their pockets could stand, and they did—"cheerfully." Private contributors put in a few bucks here and there, and local churches made good use of their benevolent offerings. But the vast majority of the funds that were

⁸⁵ For a somewhat different view on the Bureau and education, cf. Hasson, "The Medical Activities of the Freedmen's Bureau in Reconstruction Alabama, 1865-1868," 52.

⁸⁶ Charles Brown suggested that Curtis was a member of the Second Baptist Church of Marion, but, according to the *Marion Commonwealth* and other sources, Second Baptist was not built until 1873. Curtis was probably a member of the Negro Church of Marion, one of Second Baptist's predecessors. See "The 2d Baptist Church," *Marion Commonwealth*, 10 April 1873, hereinafter cited as "The 2d Baptist Church." See also "Second Baptist Church," *ibid.*, 20 March 1873. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, passim; Brown, "A. H. Curtis," 101; Curtis, 7 May 1869 *Christian Herald* editorial; "Letter from Alabama"; Paterson, *Some Facts Concerning the State Normal School Montgomery Ala.*, 1.

raised came from two black ladies' fairs and from a small group of churchgoing white folk.⁸⁷

The fact that certain white Perry Countians supported Lincoln's fundraising drive should not be surprising. White Baptist and Presbyterian clergymen were among the first non-blacks to consider the postwar education of the county's sizeable African American population. The ministers' female relations undoubtedly stood behind their efforts. Although some of them might have had less-than-honorable reasons for supporting black education—"If you do not lift them up, they will drag you down to industrial bankruptcy, social degradation and political corruption," posited J. L. M. Curry—or acted because of a perceived religious obligation, their ulterior motives did not stop Curtis from recalling with unbridled fondness how white ladies had contributed cakes, creams, jellies, and other pastries during the summer 1867 fundraiser.⁸⁸

Many, if not all, of the women to whom Curtis referred were the wives, sisters, or daughters of the white clerics who pondered ways to create a school for Perry County's black residents during 1865 and 1866. Looking back, it seems feasible that most of the women provided the tasty treats because it was their Judeo-Christian duty to help individuals who were less fortunate than they were. As was the case with the clergymen's motives, the ladies' noblesse oblige did not matter. Together, black suppers

⁸⁷ Cf. Curtis, 7 May 1869 *Christian Herald* editorial. Similar activities are mentioned in Brownlee, *New Day Ascending*, 116.

⁸⁸ J. L. M. Curry, quoted in *Montgomery Advertiser*, 2 February 1889; in Bond, "The Influence of Personalities," 21; and in Hoar, "History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875," 26. In 1900, Curry went even further, saying that uneducated blacks would "drag [whites] down to hell." J. L. M. Curry, quoted in Bond, "The Influence of Personalities," 23. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 5-6, 239-243; Curtis, 7 May 1869 *Christian Herald* editorial; Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black Education*, especially 161-178, 181; Leavell, 47. For a different view, cf. Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 2.

and white donations produced \$225; fifty of which came from a single contributor: the former Ms. Callendar McGregor Lumpkin's immensely wealthy husband, Porter King.⁸⁹

In reality, the Alabama and Chattanooga (A&C) Railroad executive's fifty-dollar "contribution" was not a *contribution* at all. King owned the property that the money had been raised to purchase. The quintessential businessman and gubernatorial candidate who needed black support merely subtracted \$50 from the purchase price of the land, which he had been holding for another party.⁹⁰ That, too, was insignificant at the time. Steward's Puritan-style school for blacks had a new home. Land was cleared, and construction was begun. Shortly thereafter, James Childs, Alexander Curtis, Nicholas Dale, John Freeman, Thomas Lee, new trustee Ivey Parish (or Parrish), and Thomas Speed filed papers in Probate Judge Williams' office, and Lincoln School of Marion was incorporated:

The true intent and meaning of this declaration being, that although we, for purposes of convenience, associate ourselves into a corporation...every colored man and child in Marion is equally interested in the objects of our [corporation, and] we expect to obtain the property which we shall acquire from them principally, and for their benefit.⁹¹

Several questions remain regarding the founding of Lincoln School. It is unclear, for example, whether all members of the Marion Nine were present at the probate judge's

⁸⁹ Leavell, 47. Callendar McGregor Lumpkin wed Porter King on 19 February 1852 in Athens, Georgia.

⁹⁰ Support for Porter King among whites was widespread. Two of his Perry County backers explained why: "We are tired [of] vacillation in high office—We want a man...with the firmness and independence of Andrew Jackson, and Judge King is that very man." "The Governorship," *Marion Commonwealth*, 21 February 1867.

⁹¹ Idella J. Childs, "Lincoln Normal School, 1867-1970"; available via Internet @ <http://www.marionalabama.org/lincoln/lincolnnormalschool.html>; accessed 09 July 2003; Clifton H. Johnson, "Powerful Little School," *Crisis* 79 (May 1972): 156. Cf. Bond, *Black American Scholars*, 39-41-42, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 57. Ivey Parish replaced Joey Pinch.

office on 18 July 1867. The petition itself bore the names of only six—Curtis, Childs, Dale, Freeman, Lee, and Speed—and Parish. Three signers used crosses, but there might be a simple explanation for latter occurrence: not every member to the Marion Nine was literate. Questions also remain regarding the year the school was created. According to William B. Paterson, founder of the Tullibody Academy for Negroes in Hale County and one of Alabama State Lincoln Normal School’s most revered presidents, the Marion Nine created Abraham Lincoln School in 1866. Shortly thereafter, they asked the American Missionary Association to provide teachers. Historians Horace Mann Bond, Joseph Caver, and J. Mills Thornton, III, have also suggested that Lincoln began in 1866, but the evidence does not support their claims. The Freedmen’s Bureau oversaw four schools in Perry County during 1866, and the Marion Nine might have helped sustain one of them through a corporation that they and other influential blacks created that year to make sure their children received formal educations, but no AMA school was located in Marion before 1867. At least one source has nevertheless claimed that Thomas Steward was teaching at a school created by J. L. M. Curry and others on 1 September 1866.⁹² This is impossible. Curry and his associates discussed creating a black common school during the winter of 1865 and again during the spring and fall-winter months of 1866, but they did not erect it. Furthermore, Steward did not arrive in the Black Belt until January 1867. And in all likelihood, he actually founded Lincoln. The Marion Nine incorporated

⁹² “Monthly Report of C. W. Buckley, Superintendent of Education, Bureau of Ref. Freedmen of Al. Lands, of the Number of Colored Children Taught during the Month Ending on the Thirty First Day of July 1866,” in *Records of the Superintendent of Education for the State of Alabama, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870, Roll 4*. Cf. “Alabama State University 100th Year Celebration Day”; Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 15; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags and They Too Call Alabama Home*; Bond, *Black American Scholars*, 38, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; Caver, passim; Paterson, “To Teach the Negro,” 12; Thornton and Caver, *Touched by History*, 53; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 150 (footnote 6).

Lincoln, helped build its first schoolhouse, and served as the institution's first trustees, but they probably did not create it.⁹³

Located in the westernmost sector of Marion, Perry County's only school owned solely by black people had a rough start. When monies provided by the AMA and northern agencies proved inadequate, the school's trustees were forced to beseech the black community for help. Unfortunately for them, the money that the charitable blacks were able to provide was also insufficient. The will of Lincoln's students was not. When classes began on 13 November 1867, between 113 and 132 black youths paraded into the unfinished building as if it contained the keys to their very existence. In some ways, it did.⁹⁴

Without any support from Perry County's school board, which received \$6,479.35 from the state government to help cover the costs of educating the county's 9,000-plus students, Lincoln's survival depended largely on the area's black citizens, the non-sectarian American Missionary Association, and the Freedmen's Bureau. The Association located teachers, and the Bureau paid most of their travel expenses, but neither one of the organizations gave any money directly to the school. Nevertheless,

⁹³ Joseph Caver, telephone interview with the author, 10 December 2005. See Dwayne Ashley and Juan Williams, *I'll Find a Way or Make One: A Tribute to Historically Black Colleges and Universities* (New York: Amistad, 2004), 312. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, especially 82-83; "Lincoln Normal School: In the Beginning"; Schweninger, "The American Association and Northern Philanthropy in Reconstruction Alabama," 139. At least two sources have identified John Silsby as the founder of Lincoln. Cf. Brownlee, *New Day Ascending*, 124; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 160 (footnote 19), and "Let Us Make Man," 50.

⁹⁴ See, for example, Anna M. Holmes, *New York Ladies Southern Relief Association, 1866-1867* (New York: [n.p.,] 1926), 46. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, passim; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 57; *Records of the Superintendent of Education for the State of Alabama, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870, Roll 4*; Schweninger, "The American Missionary Association and Northern Philanthropy in Reconstruction Alabama," 140. For a different view of Lincoln's initial problems, cf. Paterson, *The State Normal School for Colored Students at Montgomery*, 6-7.

Principal Steward, who also taught intermediary courses, and Ms. Treadwell, the primary course instructor, educated their 100-plus students as well as they could.⁹⁵

Steward left teaching for a while in 1868. That year, Perry County's majority black electorate helped send him to the Alabama House. Greene Lewis and Thomas Lee went with him, but Lee died before he could take his seat.

Considering Steward's northern birth, his self-proclaimed disdain for politics, and his social and educational affiliations, for which whites continuously denounced him, Steward was an extremely active legislator. He sat on the education, the ways-and-means, and a railroad committee. He also chaired the elections-and-privileges committee and was an outspoken supporter of a bill that called for the complete payment of all teachers, including missionaries, who had taught in any one of Alabama's free public schools during 1866, 1867, or 1869.⁹⁶ And believing that tax collectors could perform the jobs of county treasurers, Steward backed a bill to eliminate the treasurer's position.⁹⁷

Perry County's most conservative citizens criticized a number of Representative Steward's actions. More important than his county-treasurer scheme or his teacher-pay

⁹⁵ Cf. Leavell, 33; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 255-256. These data are compiled from information found in *1869 Superintendent's Report*, 32, and *Special Report of Joseph Hodgson, Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Alabama, to the Governor January, 1871* (Montgomery, AL: W. W. Screws, 1871), 15. Alabama was apparently the only state that received this gift from the Freedmen's Bureau. Because the AMA did not send enough teachers to the state, the Bureau stepped in. During 1866 and 1867, the Bureau paid \$33,762.25 for teachers' salaries. Because the endeavor was so costly, the organization stopped the practice in 1867. Cf. Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 3.

⁹⁶ Alabama lawmakers had passed a similar bill on 11 October 1869. It provided for the payment of every person who had taught in one of the state's public schools since 1 July of that year. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 95-96; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 7.

⁹⁷ Reportedly, Steward was targeted so often that he contacted the *Marion Commonwealth* in an attempt to refute the claims that had been hurled at him. Believing Steward's "statement was marked by great courtesy and apparent candor," E. A. Heidt and M. M. Cooke printed Steward's testimonial. In it, Steward maintained that he had never given poor advice to an Alabama freeperson or voluntarily meddled in politics. Moreover, the people who confronted him at his home were not black, and the accusation that he was overly intimate with blacks was baseless. "*Fiat Justitia*," *Marion Commonwealth*, 27 February 1868. Cf. *1869-1870 Alabama House Journal*, 84, 348, 433, 454.

advocacy was his support for the 1868 state code, an action which prompted M. M. Cooke to label Steward a “negro equality carpetbag Radical of the very worst type.” Steward also voted to issue Daniel Stanton, a Boston-based Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad executive, straight bonds. In return, Stanton gave the “soap-eyed” New Yorker (Steward) two sawmills, alleged Cooke.⁹⁸

Treadwell was Lincoln’s principal while Steward was in Montgomery. Already burdened with the difficult tasks of finding and paying qualified teachers, Treadwell also faced having to supervise the school’s intermediary and primary departments by herself. Anticipating Steward’s March-June 1868 absence, she, Steward, and the board of trustees combined the two divisions. Consolidation was a wise decision, but it did nothing to secure enough money to keep the school open. With few alternatives and Steward in absentia, the beloved Principal Treadwell—whose long, committed service to her students has not received the full attention that it rightfully deserves—was forced to ask the American Missionary Association for help. Utilizing the 11 August 1868 “Act to Secure Co-operation with the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, and the Several Aid Societies,” Treadwell, Steward, and the remaining members of the Marion Nine entered into an agreement with the AMA on 10 September 1868 that obliged the organization to use Lincoln’s schoolhouse and to occupy its grounds for ten years.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 245, 246, citing the Birmingham, Alabama, *Weekly Independent*, 17 November 1877; *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 May 1870. By the time that Cooke’s statement appeared in the *Weekly Independent*, Steward had joined other Perry County émigrés in Birmingham, where he became a city councilman. According to W. Stuart Harris, Perry County residents “shouted with joy at such a loss.” In truth, the situation was not that clear-cut. Quite a few individuals, including some of Steward’s former pupils, were saddened when he relocated to Birmingham. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 245.

⁹⁹ The act read: “*Be it enacted by the board of education of the State Board of Education...*, That the various associations and aid societies shall continue to select and send to the State competent teachers, and

The September 1868 negotiations have also been debated. One source suggests that the American Missionary Association actually owned the building, but the Association merely occupied it. Another source suggests that Steward initiated and oversaw the lease agreement, but this notion is moot. He knew about the lease and participated in the negotiations, but Treadwell probably made the initial appeal. It is certain, however, that Curtis was Parish and Freeman's agent and that the AMA agreed to hold classes a minimum of seven months per year unless a justifiable reason arose to discontinue them. The AMA also agreed to appropriate some of the money that Marion received via the state's public-school fund to Lincoln, to expand and make all needed repairs to the facility free of charge to the school's trustees, and to locate and pay the salaries of competent teachers. For those reasons alone, any early history of Lincoln School of Marion is utterly incomplete unless it pays homage to the hard-working schoolmarm from Mansfield, Massachusetts.¹⁰⁰

Prudently, Lincoln's black trustees did not relinquish their right to function as an advisory board or local blacks' property rights. In addition, the trustees specified that Lincoln would always be run in a manner that afforded as many students an opportunity to achieve an academic education as possible. Other parts of the agreement permitted the

pay for their portion to and from their respective fields of labor [and that] the state shall pay for the teachers thus furnished from the educational fund." In a specific reference to the Freedmen's Bureau, the act stated that "whenever schools are maintained under the auspices of the bureau, or the bureau in conjunction with the missionary associations and aid societies, the superintendent of education for the bureau in the State of Alabama shall continue to have the same supervision over the said school which he had heretofore exercised." "An Act to Secure Co-operation with the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, and the Several Aid Societies," in Alabama Department of Education, *Acts Providing for the Organization, Supervision, and Maintenance of the Free Public Schools of the State of Alabama, Passed at the Session Commencing July 23d, 1868* (Montgomery, Al.: John G. Stokes, 1868), 3, hereinafter cited as *1868 Organization, Supervision, and Maintenance Acts*. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 95-96; "Letter from Alabama"; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 7, 249.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Caver, 37-38; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 58; "Letter from Alabama"; *Records of the Superintendent of Education for the State of Alabama, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870*. Local blacks were asked to assist with the repairs.

trustee board to hold elections every two years, as provided by the original incorporation agreement that American Missionary Association Secretary Erastus Milo Cravath had signed, and gave preference to prospective teachers.¹⁰¹

The first incorporation scheme reflected the Marion Nine's desire to make sure the property on which Lincoln sat remained in the hands of the benefactors of the school, Perry County's black citizens, until they decided otherwise. Only they could elect a new trustee, but sitting trustees were authorized to select a new board member if someone moved, resigned, or died. Trustees were also authorized to improve the condition of the campus, including its building; limit board members to renewable, two-year appointments; and hire or fire instructors, a policy that eventually proved disastrous.

The American Missionary Association acted promptly. Under the direction of Thomas Steward, who had resumed the principalship, the Association purchased an old plantation house and with assistance from Perry County's black community built "Forest Home," a dormitory for Lincoln's faculty. By all accounts, the people who stayed in the dorm adored it, but their love for the building paled in comparison to the county's black residents. At one point, Forest Home had been a Ku Klux Klan headquarters.

From Lincoln School to Lincoln Normal School

During the early months of 1869, the Freedmen's Bureau presented Lincoln School's organizers approximately \$2,800 to help realize Lincoln's new home.

Additional money came from local blacks and from the AMA. In all, \$4,200 was raised,

¹⁰¹ Childs, "Lincoln Normal School." Cf. Caver, 37-38; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 57; *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative Negroes of To-day*, 46; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 115, 182 (footnote 4), and "Let Us Make Man," 256-257. Because Thomas Lee died during the spring of 1868, only eight trustees signed the charter.

and a new schoolhouse was built. Principal Steward, who also served as the project's architect, oversaw all construction. Because the facility took longer to complete than expected, classes did not begin until 8 March 1869. The AMA and northern charitable organizations provided most of the institution's educators, the Black Belt most of its students.¹⁰²

The new building was dedicated on Lincoln Corporation's property on Sunday, 11 April 1869. The structure was an impressive two-story, fifty-square-foot frame dwelling that featured a recitation area for the normal class and four sizeable rooms for other classes. After viewing the building, an awestruck visitor from the North commented: "When we first beheld it standing out in white relief from the background of dark evergreen, we conjectured that it must be some State school building, so imposing it seemed that the freemen never once entered our mind."¹⁰³

At the dedication ceremony, over which Reverend Steward and other AMA officials presided, a large assemblage of black and a few white supporters sang songs led by children and listened to talks by Reverends James E. Cowan (or Cowen), Steward, John Silsby, and Cravath, the keynote speaker. Perhaps more than anything else, onlookers and participants examined the facility, fellowshiped, and praised God.¹⁰⁴

Cowan, a Crawfordsville, Indiana, native who had relocated to central Alabama to work under Talladega College President Henry E. Brown, gave the opening prayer.

¹⁰² Lincoln did not hold school during the fall of 1868.

¹⁰³ "Letter from Alabama." Some writers have called the building small, but for a Black Belt school for freepersons that received no official county or state support, the building was quite impressive. See "Lincoln Normal School: Politics, Passions, and Partisanship"; available via Internet @ <http://www.ruthk.net/marion/lincoln/directory/Politics.html>; accessed 27 May 2006. Cf. Paterson, "To Teach the Negro."

¹⁰⁴ See "The Marion School," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 24 April 1869, hereinafter cited as "The Marion School." The gathering would have been larger, but the telegram announcing Cravath's appearance did not arrive in Marion until the Friday before the engagement.

Steward then discussed the origins and organization of Perry County schools. Afterward, Silsby—a tee-totaling white Republican and AMA agent from Dallas County (by way of Massachusetts or Iowa) who had served as the *Mobile Nationalist*'s first editor, had helped found the Burrell School in Selma during 1866-1867, and had sat on both the education-and-school-fund committee of the 1867 constitutional convention and the 1868 state Republican executive committee—reminded the youth of the wonderful opportunities that Lincoln School would afford them. According to the *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, Silsby, an eager supporter of black education whom historians Fred L. Brownlee and Robert G. Sherer, Jr., have credited with founding Lincoln, told everyone in attendance that education “lights up and beautifies the countenance.” By thinking positive thoughts and cultivating “truth and its teachings,” education would beautify students and teachers so fully that people would see “continued improvement both in looks and deportment ‘Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.’” Before closing, Silsby explained how responsibility accompanied the newly granted blessing:

You desired freedom... you longed for it..., and when it came, you thanked God for it; but you expected it would be all sunshine, and were unprepared for the cares and trials you meet; but these strengthen the soul, and fit you for better things, and no one can expect to be fitted for higher duties, that has not met with trials.... This freedom which you now enjoy, calls to higher duties, and if you are to be educated it is that the world may be better for it.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. Oberlin, Ohioan Jabez Burrell gave the final \$10,000 that was needed to complete the school that bore his name. See *Mobile Nationalist*, 2 July 1868. See also Jennifer Kaye Spiers, “Educating Blacks in Reconstruction Alabama: John Silsby, the American Missionary Association, and the Freedmen’s Bureau” (Ph.D. diss. Auburn University, 1991). Cf. Bond, *Black American Scholar*, 38, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 87, 118; Brownlee, *New Day Ascending*, 124; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 56-58, 62-64, 77, 81; Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 49; *Journal of the 1867 Convention*; Leavell, 37; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 124-126, 135, 160 (footnote 19), 186 (footnote 48), and “Let Us Make Man,” 50, 282-283, 296 (footnote 61); Wiggins, *Scalawag*, 143, 152.

The keynote address was delivered next. Cravath—a Homer, New York, native and Oberlin College graduate who in December 1865 had helped fellow ministers John Ogden and Edward Smith establish Fisk University of Nashville’s forerunner, Fisk Free Colored School—spent much of his time clarifying Lincoln’s religious mission.¹⁰⁶ Reminiscent of persons such as Samuel C. Armstrong and J. L. M. Curry, who promoted black education in general and industrial education in particular but opposed universal equality,¹⁰⁷ Cravath declared that the goal of the thousands of people who supported and worked in the South’s black schools was not simply to give black students educational advantages.¹⁰⁸ Equally important goals stressed by the former Union chaplain and future president of Fisk University (Cravath) were thrift and instructing black youth “in the true princip[les] of Christian religion and to bring pupils to a personal knowledge of Christ,” a quasi-evangelical message that white missionaries and educators had stressed since the end of the Civil War.¹⁰⁹ “The motives which actuated those interested in this work, are not new or fanatical,” Cravath continued, “but such as underlie, and are acknowledged to

¹⁰⁶ See “Personal Sketches: Rev. Erastus Milo Cravath, D.D.,” *American Missionary* 48 (February 1894): 76. Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 359, 362, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 196; Leavell, 35-36.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Sherer, “Let Us Make Man,” 516. For Armstrong and Curry’s beliefs relative to the importance of religious education and black students, cf. Peabody, *Education for Life*, 38, 53. Curry’s ideas about social equality are spelled out in a number of works, including *Speech of J. L. M. Curry, of Alabama, on the Election of Speaker, and the Progress of Anti-Slaveryism. Delivered in the House of Representatives, December 10, 1859* (Washington, D.C.: Lemuel Towers, 1859), hereinafter cited as *10 December 1859 Speech of J. L. M. Curry*; J. L. M. Curry to John Haralson, 21 November 1860; Hawkins, “General Samuel Chapman Armstrong” and “J. L. M. Curry”; and “Letter from Hon. J. L. M. Curry,” *Greensboro Beacon*, 21 December 1860. Sherer provides an alternative view in *Black Education in Alabama*, 2. James Anderson, among other authors, describes Armstrong’s overall views in *The Education of Blacks in the South*.

¹⁰⁸ “The Marion School.” E. M. Cravath was made an American Missionary Association district secretary at Cincinnati, Ohio, in September 1866. By 1870, he was field secretary of the Association’s New York office. From 1875 until 1900, Cravath served as president of Fisk University. When he died, he was buried in the Nashville National Cemetery (Davidson County, Tennessee).

¹⁰⁹ “The Marion School.”

be the guiding principles of all who believe that all mankind are entitled to the full development of the powers that God has given them.”¹¹⁰ After hearing these words, children and adults alike sang: “Oh we are volunteers in the army of he Lord.”¹¹¹

Before spectators departed, David Harris encouraged everyone present to remain mindful of what Cravath, Silsby, and other speakers had said. By employing their credos daily, the notion that a “black man’s consciousness is only to be reached through his hide” or that a “nigger is only fit for...de [plough,] de shovel and de hoe” could be refuted once and for all. Thereupon, Cravath led a dedicatory prayer, the doxology (“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”) was sung, and Silsby gave the benediction. Everyone then departed, knowing that the occasion would always be remembered fondly by those who were present.¹¹²

After two trying years, Lincoln School’s administrators, faculty, students, and supporters were confident that they would reap in joy what they had sown in tears. At the time, their educational and religious center employed four teachers; all of whom shared at least three commonalities: they were northern, they were white, and they were committed to providing their black students a complete social, moral, and academic education comparable to any school in the North. James Cowan, one of the dedication ceremony’s featured speakers, was in charge of forty primary students. Thomas Steward’s Windham, Ohio-born wife taught fifty-eight intermediate students. Steward

¹¹⁰ Ibid. The evangelical mission of earlier northern educators and administrators is mentioned in “Evangelizing the Pickaninies” and, among other sources, Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*.

¹¹¹ “The Marion School.”

¹¹² *1877 Paper Read at the Annual Meeting of the American Missionary Association*, 7 (first quote); “The Marion School” and “Wonderful Phenomenon and Unhappy Results,” *The Tuscaloosa Monitor*, 21 September 1869 (second quote). The *Alabama Weekly State Journal* identified the man who made the closing remarks as Deacon Harris, but Lincoln trustee David Harris, who might have been a church deacon, was the actual speaker. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 33-78; Caver, 40; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 58.

himself and Treadwell, two of Lincoln's three original instructors, rounded out the faculty. Steward taught forty-two advanced students, Treadwell fifty-two primary students.¹¹³

Altogether, 192 individuals were enrolled in Lincoln School during the fall of 1869. Forty-two of them, Steward's group, were on the teacher track. Because developing "moral earnestness," or character, among former slaves was an important part of the AMA's *mission civilizatrice*, tardiness was not tolerated, and church attendance was mandatory. Each Sunday morning, students and teachers filed into First Congregational (1869) to hear Reverend Steward's message and Vespers in the afternoon. Religious meetings were held on Thursdays, and choir practice was conducted on Fridays. Each day, parents and guardians were asked to pray with their children before they left for school; once there, the students prayed before classes began. Throughout the day, teachers and Principal Steward encouraged the students to pray before meals and at bedtime. Unlike other black Southerners, who rejected the strictness and the purportedly unrealistic expectations of the northern missionaries, most of Lincoln's students and supporters embraced the Northerners' teachings.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 30; Bond, *Black American Scholars*, 37, 40-41; Brownlee, *New Day Ascending*. According to the American Missionary Association's mission, normal schools served a dual purpose: to educate black youth and to turn out qualified black teachers who wished to teach other black people. As one source notes, Association leaders decided that black teachers were best fit to teach black students. That way, black people themselves would remain firmly in control of their own futures. J. L. M. Curry concurred. According to him, black people needed "to be qualified for their exalted responsibilities. Especially do they need trained and educated teachers of their own race." Consistent with some of the most common prejudices of the time, Curry argued: "[I]f practicable, a degraded race should be elevated and delivered by their own class, as the patronage of the superior has a tendency to degrade character." J. L. M. Curry, quoted in Hogg, *Lacks and Needs of the South*, 10. See "The American Missionary Association"; available via Internet @ <http://northbysouth.kenyon.edu/1998/charleston/ama.htm>; accessed 19 August 2004.

¹¹⁴ Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 58 (quote), 240-241. Cf. Bond, *Black American Scholars*, 40-41, and *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 127-128; McAfee,

In addition to religion, every pupil was schooled in arithmetic, geography, music, reading, and writing. Because northern textbooks such as abolitionist Lydia Marie Child's *Freedmen's Book* were used, students were introduced to significant antislavers such as John Brown, Frederick Douglass, and William Lloyd Garrison. Students also learned "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," "Marching through Georgia," "We'll Rally 'Round the Flag, Boys," and other Union songs and read poems by people such as Douglass and John Greenleaf Whittier, another well-known abolitionist. Significant instruction in the arts and sciences, as well as "the various accomplishments of mind and body," came later. For the moment, Lincoln's administrators, including newly appointed commissioners J. J. Barclay, J. H. Preston, and Confederate war hero Richard H. Clarke, were content seeing their students tackle the rudiments of formal learning and watching the facility grow.¹¹⁵

With growth came a greater need for funds. Perry County's school board did not provide any money, and the recently developed Alabama Education Board that Noah Cloud chaired only considered giving Lincoln financial assistance. Black Marionites continued to do what they could, and their white neighbors had apparently done all that they were willing to do. The AMA faced substantial debts, an economic shortfall, and changing leadership, and federal legislators denied the Freedmen's Bureau adequate appropriations. As a consequence, Bureau aid to Lincoln had dwindled to \$329 by the

Religion, Race, and Reconstruction, 4-5, 13-14; McPherson, "White Liberals and Black Power in Negro Education."

¹¹⁵ A. H. Mitchell, "Denomination Education: A Sermon Preached before the Alabama Conference, at Its Session in Talladega, December 14th, 1854," in *Minutes of the Alabama Conference of the M. E. Church, South, Held in Talladega, Alabama, December 13th, 1854, Together with the Annual Sermon, Preached before the Conference by A. H. Mitchell, D. D.* (Montgomery, Al.: Advertiser and Gazette Job Office, 1855), 31. Cf. 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, SG 23724, 138; Bond, *Black American Scholar*, 41, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 115-117; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 29-30; McAfee, *Race, Religion and Reconstruction*, 39.

end of 1869, and most of that money had been used to rent buildings (at a cost of \$15 per unit) before the new schoolhouse was completed. Among many northern corporate-industrial philanthropists and other private contributors, the tendency had shifted to letting Southerners handle their own affairs.¹¹⁶

Realizing that Lincoln School would cease to exist without adequate funding, Representative Steward introduced an act into the Alabama legislature that called for a 1½ percent tax on the assessed value of all personal and real property in Marion. That amounted to about \$500,000 in 1870.¹¹⁷ Levied by the town's corporate officials, the measure was designed to generate enough money to educate all, as opposed to some, Marion youth. After a while, Steward's work paid off. State lawmakers approved the bill on either 14 or 16 February 1870.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ During 1865-1866, the Freedmen's Bureau spent \$6,633.62 on Alabama education. During the following school year, described by one historian as the "golden age" of Bureau schools in the state, this amount increased substantially to \$45,237.55. By February 1870, after spending \$156,941 since October 1865 to rent, repair, or build schoolhouses (\$116,297.62), to transport (\$1,307.48) and pay teachers (\$34,846.56), superintendents (\$4,411.26), and textbooks (\$78.18), Oliver O. Howard ordered the Freedmen's Bureau to end its educational pursuits in the state by 15 July 1870. That year, the AMA operated 157 common schools throughout the nation. By 1874, the number of AMA common schools had fallen to thirteen, but its high schools and colleges had risen from five in 1867 to twenty-nine in 1872. Bethel, "The Freedmen's Bureau in Alabama," 70; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 248 (quote), 249-251, 259, 261, 264. Cf. *Alabama on Reconstruction*; "Alabama State University 100th Year Celebration Day"; Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 239-241; Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 128; Leavell, 33; "Peace and Education"; *Records of the Superintendent of Education for the State of Alabama, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870*; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 4. For the self-professed sociopolitical leanings of Cloud, who had come to Alabama in January 1857 and established the *American Cotton Planter*, see *Affairs in Alabama*, 43rd Congress, 2d sess., 1874, House Rept. 262, 288-289. See also "Old Union Men," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 31 July 1869.

¹¹⁷ This approximation is based on 1869 figures provided in Joseph Hodgson, *The Alabama Manual and Statistical Register for 1869* (Montgomery, AL: Mail Building, 1869). According to Hodgson, Perry County had 405,993½ acres of land valued at \$1,553,000. Town property, assessed in lots, equaled 332 and was worth \$506,485. *Ibid.*, xxxi.

¹¹⁸ See "An Act," *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 March 1870. See also *Acts of the General Assembly of Alabama, 1869-1870* (Montgomery, AL: W. W. Screws, 1870), 120-121, hereinafter cited as *1869-1870 General Assembly Acts*; *Elias Dunkin v. Mayor, Council Town of Marion, James H. Graham, and George M. Brown*, Perry County Circuit Court Case Files, 1860-1879, LG 5403, ADAH, hereinafter cited as 1860-1879 Circuit Court Case Files.

Approximately two weeks before Steward's school-tax bill was passed, the House approved a new charter for Marion. Steward's tax measure was included in it. Needless to say, most white Marionites were far more excited about the overall charter than they were about the additional tax contained therein.¹¹⁹ To Heidt and M. M. Cooke, the tax was one of the most intolerable features of the new charter. The disgruntled journalists predicted the duty would lead to the creation of a few worthless public schools to which white youths would be sent to waste time under the tutelages of incompetent, untrustworthy educators. Objecting further, Heidt and Cooke claimed that Steward's new tax would demoralize Perry County's labor system by encouraging able-bodied, adult, black field hands to live in communities where they could survive by stealing while their children were at school. In the newspapermen's opinion, the only part of the new charter that was worse than the school-tax feature was its provision for universal manhood suffrage.¹²⁰

In one of the *Marion Commonwealth's* most venomous criticisms of the tax, its owners called the measure an open attempt by Steward to rob Perry County's white

¹¹⁹ Certain Perry County citizens complained continually about how high their taxes were during the early Postbellum period. Oftentimes, they said that tax assessors miscounted the number of individuals whom they employed. One person alleged that the county and state governments had taxed him for employing several individuals when he had employed only one person, his son. This and other reports can be found in Perry County, Alabama, County Commission Minutes, 1859-1868, LG 5457, ADAH. The *Marion Commonwealth* is also a good source to find Perry citizens' opposition to purportedly high taxes. J. L. M. Curry's dissension and 3 February 1868 appearance before Perry County Probate Judge Bush Jones are discussed in a document that can be found in (of all places) Perry County Judge Recommendations, Etc., for Licenses to Retail Liquor, 1838-1935, LG 5576, ADAH, hereinafter cited as 1838-1935 Perry County Judge Liquor License Recommendations.

¹²⁰ See "For the Marion Commonwealth," *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 September 1869. See also "The Charter," *ibid.*, 3 March 1870. Cf. 1869-1870 *Alabama House Journal*, 348; Brownlee, *New Day Ascending*, 124. Additional measures that would have affected Perry County included incorporating Uniontown and forming a new Black Belt county, Chillatchie, out of Dallas, Marengo, Perry, and Wilcox Counties on 22 January 1870. Representative Steward moved to make its consideration the special order of Monday, 24 January, at noon. The measure lost. Later, on 12 February 1870, Steward was granted an indefinite leave of absence from the Alabama House. Cf. 1869-1870 *Alabama House Journal*, 283, 391.

population to benefit him and his students. As such, it should have been condemned by every white man in the county.¹²¹ Some of Perry's most influential white men agreed. Together with Ludy A. Wyatt, Elias Dunkin—a Democratic horse raiser, liquor retailer, lumberjack, court frequenter, and future Marion councilman—filed an injunction on behalf of more than thirty white men in the Office of the Registrar in Chancery for Perry County in order to keep town and county officials from collecting the tax. Named in the grievance were Perry County's tax collector, James H. Graham, and its superintendent of education, Joseph H. Speed (with whom Dunkin had sued Charles H. Seawell during the spring of 1870). Also named in the injunction were Marion's mayor, George W. Brown, and three of its commissioners: white Democrat Charles W. Lovelace and black Republicans Nicholas Dale and David Harris, two Lincoln trustees.¹²²

Elias Dunkin v. Mayor, Council Town of Marion, James H. Graham, and George W. Brown was filed on either 20 or 28 May 1871.¹²³ Its signatories were a virtual who's who of Perry County's white business, educational, religious, and social leaders (see Appendix M). The men claimed they were being taxed for educational purposes twice: once by the state government and another time by local officials. Furthermore, the new

¹²¹ See "An Injunction Granted," *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 May 1870, hereinafter cited as "An Injunction Granted." For even clearer indications of how M. M. Cooke felt about Steward, see the 26 May 1870 and the 5 January, the 19 January, the 24 January, the 26 January, and the 18 May 1871 issues of the *Marion Commonwealth*.

¹²² See Perry County Circuit Court Appearance Docket, 1866-1879, LG 4611, ADAH. The suit was also referred to as *Elias Dunkin v. Mayor, Council Town of Marion, James H. Graham, and George M. Brown*. Its plaintiff, Dunkin, was a court regular. From May through September 1870 alone, he was named in cases involving accounting errors, bills of exchange, breach of agreement, breach of contract, damages, and money fraud. Cf. Perry County 1834-1887 Bar Docket.

¹²³ Both 20 and 28 May 1871 were given in official records, one of which indicated that Brown's middle initial was M. See *Elias Dunkin v. Mayor, Council Town of Marion, James H. Graham, and George W. Brown*, Perry County Chancery Court Trial Docket, 1869-1872, LG 4652, ADAH, hereinafter cited as 1869-1872 Chancery Court Trial Docket. Cf. *Elias Dunkin v. Mayor, Council Town of Marion, James H. Graham, and George M. Brown*, 1860-1879 Circuit Court Case Files.

school tax was illegal. It allocated funds to municipal, not state, institutions and thus violated Section II, article 4 of the 1868 constitution.¹²⁴

The angry taxpayers were mistaken. Section II of Alabama's 1868 code did not have four articles. Attorneys Brooks, Haralson, and Roy's clients undoubtedly meant Article V, section 2 of the 1854 public-school law, which spelled out how school funds were to be used. But that was a minor oversight. More important was Dunkin, Wyatt, and company's unfamiliarity with or deliberate omission of Article VI, section 3 of the 1854 law:

Each and every county in this State is hereby authorized to raise annually, by special tax...in the same manner as other county taxes shall be levied...upon real and personal property within the county, an amount of money not exceeding ten cents on each hundred dollars of valuation, for the support of the common schools therein, and for providing suitable houses and purchasing libraries and apparatus for such schools.¹²⁵

Ultimately, First Judicial Circuit Court Justice Milton J. Saffold granted the questionable injunction, but few persons outside the thirty-plus people who had signed it were willing to pay the \$2,000 bond that was needed to secure it. Meanwhile, Superintendent of Instruction Cloud, citing existing state law, ordered Steward to collect the tax.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ See Perry County Chancery Court Case Files, 1842-1905, American-Dunkin, LG 5343, ADAH, hereinafter cited as 1842-1905 Chancery Court Case Files. On 19 August 1869, Perry County Commissioners Benjamin S. Williams, James (or Jason) H. Houston, Green B. Sanders, and F. Daniel Wyman authorized the tax collector to appropriate ten cents per centum of the state tax for building and repairing Perry County's free public schools. Commissioners Benjamin F. Bolling, Moses H. Daniel, M. A. Eiland, and David Gentry reaffirmed the scheme on 23 August 1870.

¹²⁵ *The Free School Law of the State of Alabama; also a Circular of the Superintendent* (Montgomery, Al.: Advertiser and Gazette Job Office, 1854), 11-13.

¹²⁶ Milton J. Saffold was appointed to the circuit court in August 1869 after Judge Benjamin L. Whelon died. For details, see the 26 August 1869 *Marion Commonwealth*. For Cloud's action, see Noah B. Cloud

Heidt and Cooke were livid when they learned of Cloud and Steward's actions. The newspaper publishers were even more upset with Perry County's white population. In a matter like this, they wrote, "it was hoped that the white people at least would present an unbroken front, because the object of the law was at once so criminal and so transparent that there was neither palliation nor concealment for it." To their chagrin, Steward's allegedly illegal, oppressive, unequal, and unjust bill passed only to be repealed one year after becoming law.¹²⁷

The words and actions of the *Marion Commonwealth*, Dunkin, Wyatt, and other objectors reflect at least two related hatreds. Despite what Benjamin F. Butler and others said about state governments being obligated to educate the masses, many white Alabamians believed it was unjust to tax one person to educate the offspring of other, especially "Africanised rabble."¹²⁸ Other white Alabamians disliked Northerners, purportedly disreputable white Southerners, or black people dictating how their hard-earned money was going to be spent. Which idea was more important depended on the person who was asked, of course, but to Klansmen, neither one of the ideas was acceptable, a verity that they made clear to Steward by visiting his home repeatedly

to Colonel Joseph H. Speed, 16 June 1870, Alabama Department of Education Administrative Files, 1870, SG 15918, ADAH.

¹²⁷ "An Injunction Granted." Cf. *Elias Dunkin et al. v. Mayor and Council of the Town of Marion, James H. Graham, George W. Brown*, 1869-1872 Chancery Court Trial Docket. In the end, a Selma chancellor ruled on the case. For his April 1871 opinion and decree, cf. 1842-1905 Chancery Court Case Files. For Saffold's beliefs, cf. *Address to the Native White Republicans*, 3.

¹²⁸ "Hon. Jos. W. Taylor in Reply to Alex. White," *Marion Commonwealth*, 9 September 1869, quoting *Eutaw Whig*, 26 August 1869. See J. W. Perry, *Circular to the Trustees of the Public Schools* (Montgomery, Al.: [n.p.,] 1855), 6. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 292. Benjamin F. Butler asserted: "It is the State's duty, because Alabama [was] not only far behind her sister States in the promotion of education among her children" but also because Alabama's educational efforts resembled supposedly "uncivilized and base" third-world countries. Elsewhere, opposition came from less affluent people, including one group of churchgoers who believed it was unfair to make them pay to educate the offspring of rich people. *Argument of Benjamin F. Butler*, 9. See *Proceedings of the Western Baptist Educational Convention Held in the First Baptist Church, Chicago, May 24 and 25, 1871* (Chicago: Lakeside Publishing and Printing Company, 1871), 55-56.

during 1868 and 1869 to remind him and his family that operating an African American school could be hazardous to their health.¹²⁹

Despite continuous threats, several reorganizations, a temporary closing, and a few bouts with Mother Nature, Lincoln School continued to operate. By September 1870, AMA officials were confident that the institution, out of which First Congregational had grown, surpassed any comparable facility in the North. In relation to Lincoln's appearance and its finances, Association leaders were largely correct. The large, square building could seat between 250 and 500 people and had ample light and ventilation. Blinds covered each window, and almost every one of its five rooms was festooned with Sherwood seat-and-desk combinations. What is more, Lincoln's only significant debt was the \$500 that administrators owed to the school's black builders. But in relation to governance and to attendance, Association leaders were mistaken.¹³⁰

Ironically, the school's major trouble came from one of its most influential incorporators, Alexander Curtis. According to his detractors, Curtis was trying to impede the school's progress by demanding that persons recognize the importance of every individual responsible for Lincoln's existence rather than concentrating almost solely on

¹²⁹ See, for example, *Montgomery Weekly Mail* 27 January 1869, 24 November 1869, and 9 February 1870. For this phenomenon throughout the South, see T. M. Logan, "The Opposition in the South to the Free School System" (paper presented before the American Social Science Association in Saratoga, New York, 6 September 1877), 1, 2, 4, in vol. 15, book 45, J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, ADAH. Cf. "*Fiat Justitia.*"

¹³⁰ Cf. "Letter from Alabama." The original Congregational Church of Marion was erected in 1869. At first, the church was housed in Lincoln School itself. A separate building for the church was built on the first Sunday in January 1870. Thomas Steward was the architect as well as the contractor. See John Silsby, "Congregationalism in Alabama" (address delivered at the twenty-fifth annual meeting of the Congregationalist Association of Alabama in Florence, Alabama, 3 April 1900), Pamphlets and Brochures Vertical Files, Subjects, LPR 117, ADAH. See also "Marion, Ala.," *American Missionary* 46 (June 1892): 182.

Steward's efforts. Specifically, Curtis wished to see greater attention paid to the Marion Nine and other black Perry Countians.

In one of his most direct pronouncements, Curtis questioned Steward's claims about being harassed by the Klan. In a letter to Editor Babb that Amzi Godden—a Newark, New Jersey-born merchant-physician and moderate Democrat who had relocated to Marion—might have written, Curtis stated that he had never heard of the supposed Klan visits until he read about them in the northern newspaper. Curtis remembered an occasion on which Steward had been visited by some local drunks, whose behavior was categorically condemned, but Curtis had never heard of an actual Klan disturbance. Other Perry Countians agreed. One group mockingly called Steward a somber, orderly man who was willing to be kidnapped, hanged, or robbed by “red-handed rebels” (Klansmen) just to keep Republicans in power and to educate blacks.¹³¹

Though Curtis feuded with Steward on occasion, the trustee was not in complete agreement with group's vituperation of the principal. At times, Curtis praised Steward for what he had done to help black persons obtain academic educations, but Curtis was disturbed by a northern writer who exaggerated Steward's role. According to Curtis, the writer insinuated that Perry County blacks had been eager to be educated following the war, but they had not done anything to secure a formal education. The northern commentator, Curtis continued, portrayed Steward as a self-sacrificing hero who had

¹³¹ “Ku-Kluxers,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 May 1870. See “Dr. Godden,” in Smith Collection. Cf. Curtis, 7 May 1869 *Christian Herald* editorial; McPherson, “White Liberals and Black Power in Negro Education,” 1360.

provided all of the money that was needed to erect and sustain Lincoln, built its schoolhouses, and confronted the violently racist whites who had threatened his life.¹³²

Curtis spelled out his concerns in the letter to Babb, but the editor did not print it. Criticizing the decision, the Cambridge City, Indiana, *Democratic Times* charged the *Christian Herald* with publishing one-sided statements and with refusing to carry the comments of a southern black who had questioned the story of a northern white. “Would not the Herald of hate be a better name for the paper than the one which it has stolen from Christianity?” the *Times* asked, urging Babb to print both letters. This way, an individual could make up his or her own mind as to the letters’ validity.¹³³

Curtis’ agitation did not stop with Steward. Curtis told Stephen Childs—a highly successful baker, confectioner, general store operator, cotton futures trader with a Wall Street firm, Lincoln graduate, and one-time trustee of both Lincoln Normal School and the First Congregationalist Church—that his and his wife’s children could attend another black school if he did not like the way that Lincoln was being run. In addition, Curtis said the county’s youngest blacks could be home schooled and insisted on the AMA paying the expenses of any teacher brought from the North.¹³⁴

Why Curtis (whom some Marionites labeled a “scoundrel,” others “the Great,” according to Steward and the *Marion Commonwealth*) made such statements is debatable. He might have wanted the AMA to pay for transporting teachers because its leaders did

¹³² Cf. Curtis, 7 May 1869 *Christian Herald* editorial.

¹³³ “One-Sided Statements,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 29 July 1869, quoting the Cambridge City, Indiana, *Democratic Times*, [n.d.].

¹³⁴ Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags and They Too Call Alabama Home*; Bond, *Black American Scholar*; Caver; Sherer, “Let Us Make Man,” 67. The primary department (division, school) in which young children were taught was housed in a one-room building next to the Congregational Church. When the state government took control of Lincoln School in 1874, the primary school remained under the control of Lincoln School administrators.

not pay any money to lease Lincoln's building or grounds. Curtis might have believed that decreasing Lincoln's student enrollment would lower its operating costs. Perhaps his reasons were rooted in the actions of the Freedmen's Bureau, whose officials had previously taken care of the travel expenses of at least one northern teacher per year even though the state government was supposed to have paid for finding and relocating teachers from the state's education fund. Maybe Curtis' impetus was the belief that Marion's black population did not have enough money to take care of northern educators' travel expenses or the fact that Cravath had obligated the AMA to locate and pay for competent teachers when he signed Lincoln's second charter. Then again, Curtis might have had a problem with the route that Lincoln had taken since its founding or, almost certainly, the undivided attention that Steward seemed to have received for helping create and sustain the institution.¹³⁵

As important as anything else, Curtis wanted Lincoln to be an independent entity. By this, the dedicated black Baptist meant only that Lincoln's day-to-day operations would not be micromanaged by its founding body, the Congregationalist-led American Missionary Association, or the state government in the form of the Alabama Education Board. Unfortunately for him, most of Lincoln's trustees and several black community leaders disagreed, opting to stay with the AMA rather than hand over the school's operations to the Colored Baptist State Convention of which Curtis was an important

¹³⁵ Curtis, 7 May 1896 *Christian Herald* editorial; T. C. Steward to E. M. Cravath, 1872, AMA Papers. See "The Legislature," *Marion Commonwealth*, 30 November 1871. Cf. "An Act to Secure Co-operation with the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, and the Several Aid Societies," in *1868 Organization, Supervision, and Maintenance Acts*, 3; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 2, 3, and "Let Us Make Man," 249.

member. Backed by at least one Lincoln trustee, a Mr. Hall or David Harris, Curtis threatened to discharge any board member associated with the AMA.¹³⁶

In a letter to Reverend Cravath, Helen M. Leonard, a Congregationalist Lincoln schoolteacher, expressed her apparent bewilderment with the Curtis-AMA controversy. After telling Cravath that she abhorred the thought of having to place Lincoln in the hands of the Black Baptist State Convention and move to the “cradle of the Confederacy” (Montgomery), the teacher questioned Curtis’ assertion regarding home schooling Perry County’s youngest blacks. Leonard believed the neediest black children should have been given an opportunity to attend Lincoln School before Curtis and other trustees’ more privileged children were. Some of her colleagues felt the same way, but they were afraid to voice their opinions lest they be accused of devising a Congregationalist plan aimed at completely controlling the school.¹³⁷

In all likelihood, Curtis’ comments were rooted in pecuniary concerns, a personal rivalry with Steward, who had become a school commissioner on 1 December 1869, and religion. Richard Bailey is confident that the Curtis-AMA conflict arose from Curtis’ “Baptistic opinions,” but sectarianism was only partly responsible for the conflict. Three

¹³⁶ The first name of the trustee went unrecorded. The author suspects the trustee who sided with Curtis was David Harris rather than someone whose last name was Hall but does not have enough proof to support the claim. If, however, the trustee’s last name was Hall, then it might have been Isaac A. N. Hall, the black Perry County winemaker whom disguised men killed circa 1 May 1871. For a brief reference to the ill treatment that Curtis received after he was elected “one of de *secatutes*,” see *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 August 1869

¹³⁷ Paterson, *Some Facts Concerning the State Normal School Montgomery Ala.*, 4; Joseph Hodgson, *The Cradle of the Confederacy: Or, the Times of Troup, Quitman and Yancey. A Sketch of Southern Political History from the Formation of the Federal Government to A. D. 1861* (Mobile, AL: The Register Publishing Office, 1876); Du Bose, “The Story of the States,” 574; Edgar Daniel Nixon to Martin Luther King, Jr., 6 October 1965, quoted in “Montgomery Celebrates 50 Years of the Montgomery Bus Boycott,” *Montgomery-Tuskegee Times*, 1-7 December 2005; “Organization and First Days of the Alabama Division, U.D.C.,” in Smith Collection (first quote); Helen Leonard to E. M. Cravath, 14 September and 11 November 1872, AMA Papers (second quote). Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, and *They Too Call Alabama Home*; Bond, *Black American Scholar*; Caver.

Ps—personality, power, and praise—and one M—money—were also important factors.¹³⁸

Curtis' financial trepidations were understandable. Lincoln had not enjoyed complete economic stability since its 1867 founding even though Alabama law required the state government to provide financial assistance to all public and private schools under the auspices of Alabama Education Board. Lincoln met both of these requirements in 1870. Initially, it was a private missionary school, but its status changed on 11 August 1868. That day, Alabama's board of education took the first practical steps in creating state-sponsored normal schools by authorizing the formation of ten independent normal schools and one dependent normal school in Athens, Eufaula, Evergreen, Huntsville, Marion, Mobile, Montgomery, Portersville, Selma, Talladega, and Tuscumbia. Subsequent legislation halted the process that year, but on 16 February 1869, state legislators established four normal schools—three for black students and one for white students—in Huntsville, Marion, Mobile, and Talladega. Lincoln was one of them. It simply did not receive any state funds. Soon, that changed.¹³⁹

By 21 January 1870, Senate Secretary M. P. Blue and other state officials were calling Lincoln School of Marion a state normal school. It seems that Blue's statement

¹³⁸ Boothe, *Cyclopedia of Colored Baptists*, 25. Richard Bailey, personal communication to the author, circa February 2004. The Alabama Board of Education also appointed B. S. Wallis to the commission, or board. Much of the power that the surviving members of the Marion Nine had held was stripped. Governance became the responsibility of state lawmakers and Lincoln's two white commissioners.

¹³⁹ Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 105; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*; Caver; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 29-32, 161, and *Black Education in Alabama*, 6, citing Weeks, *History of Public School Education in Alabama*, 155. Lincoln School of Huntsville, which William H. Council headed, had not fared any better. Cf. Morrison, *History of Alabama A&M University*. For the state government's public and private school duties, see "An Act to Regulate and Govern the Free Public Schools in the State" and "An Act to Supplement the Free Public School Fund, and Provide for the Free Public Schools," in Alabama Department of Education, *Acts of the Board of Education Presented to the Legislature, 1870-1874* (byname *Board of Education Captions of Laws Fall Session 1873*) (Montgomery, Al.: Arthur Bingham, 1874), SG 23722, ADAH, hereinafter cited as *1873 Board of Education Caption of Laws*. Both acts were signed into law on 19 December 1870.

was based on two 1870 occurrences. Early in the year, Lincoln began to benefit from Alabama's common-school fund. Later, state legislators started providing buildings for Lincoln students, faculty, and administrators. Considering these facts, AMA officials might have been just in calling Lincoln Normal School of Marion better off than any one of its northern counterparts.¹⁴⁰

Representative Steward was largely responsible for convincing Alabama legislators to sponsor buildings for the school that he headed. Steward made the request on 17 January 1870. Four days later, Secretary Blue confirmed that state senators had agreed to the plan. On 9 February, House Secretary D. L. Dalton announced that Governor Smith had approved the bill, thereby guaranteeing the assistance for which Steward had called. With the governor's approval, Lincoln Normal School of Marion became a legitimate (meaning funded) state-sponsored institution.¹⁴¹

Steward's work has been ignored in recent years, as has the work of Ms. Treadwell. Also neglected have been Porter King, John Moore, and Joseph Speed, three of Lincoln Normal School's white commissioners. At their behest, state legislators apportioned \$486 for Lincoln during 1870-1871.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ *1869-1870 Alabama House Journal*, 230. In *History of Alabama A&M University*, Richard Morrison maintains that state money was not used in 1870 to construct school buildings for black students, but Lincoln School of Marion received money for buildings. Another writer maintains that Marion's Lincoln became a normal school in 1871, but its classification changed one year earlier. Cf. Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 51.

¹⁴¹ Cf. *1869-1870 Alabama House Journal*, 322.

¹⁴² Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 105; Caver. Steward and Treadwell were not always ignored. One observer praised Steward for working "six weeks at his expense without any wages, occupying the intermissions between the sessions of the Legislature in the same manner. We have given a not undue prominence to his agency in the inception, conduct, and completion of his work." The observer then declared: "Few would have made such sacrifices or performed the labor this courageous missionary has done, and too much praise cannot be written or spoken of him." "Letter from Alabama."

Although Lincoln had succeeded in graduating six teachers whom Perry County Superintendent of Education James Houston commended for doing exceptional work, race and politics played huge roles in both allocations. On 12 December 1870, the state's Democratic-controlled House coerced the Alabama Education Board to pass an act that suspended all state-sponsored normal classes. Before policymakers approved the 1871 funds, Commissioners King, Moore, and Speed recommended that Lincoln be kept open and asked the members of the state education board to approve a measure obligating the state government to help pay the school's expenses. Consequently, board members selected two whites, W. H. Clayton and Joseph Speed, and one black, Peyton Finley, to serve on a colored-school committee to look into the recommendation.¹⁴³

Peyton Finley

In 1871, Peyton Finley became the first black man to sit on the Alabama Board of Education. By then, he was well known in social and political circles in and around Montgomery. Having served as a doorkeeper in the Alabama House of Representatives before the Civil War, Finley emerged from the war as one of the capitol city's leading black spokespersons. In addition to becoming a prominent Loyal Leaguer and the commissioner of a black normal school, Finley worked in the local land office (the agency that administered the Southern Homestead Act) and in 1867 was appointed registrar. The same year, he was elected to the Second Freedmen's Convention and

¹⁴³ See "An Act to Suspend the Normal Schools and Classes Now in Existence in this State," in 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, SG 23724, 170, 171, 223, hereinafter cited as "An Act to Suspend the Normal Schools." Cf. *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 56. For background information, cf. "An Act to Suspend the Normal Schools," 204. Houston's praise is noteworthy because one of the biggest problems that black schools faced was finding and keeping competent teachers. Cf. *1871 Hodgson Report*, 73.

served on the education-and-funds committee of the state constitutional convention. Considering his educational and political background and his community ties, Finley was well-suited for the committee on colored schools.¹⁴⁴

Clayton, Finley, and Speed were extremely active. Because of their lobbying efforts, board members agreed to keep Lincoln Normal School of Marion operational. In truth, board members had few alternatives. Along with other influential Alabamians, Finley had pressured state lawmakers to either create a bona fide black college or university or to integrate the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa, which was suffering from low enrollment.¹⁴⁵

Led by Ryland Randolph, a group of racist whites intimidated any student who tried to attend the University during the fall of 1870. University officials, they alleged, intended to admit black students. The allegation was not true, but it served its purpose. When the 1870-1871 school term commenced, no more than twelve students were enrolled at the state's only white university. In an attempt to rekindle alumni support, recruitment, and retention, school leaders accepted a deal that Finley offered amid a spring 1871 meeting between University alumni and the Alabama Education Board.

¹⁴⁴ After drawing a two-year lot, Peyton Finley served on the Alabama Board of Education from 1871 until 1873, although one source suggests that he was a board member from 1870 through 1872. Because the Board was disbanded in 1875 and was not reorganized until 1919, Finley was the Board's only black nineteenth-century member. See Michael L. Lanza, *Agrarianism and Reconstruction Politics: The Southern Homestead Act* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1990), 37. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 62, 142, 341; Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 70, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 87, 102; Fitzgerald, *The Union League Movement in the South*, 14 (footnote 6); Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, 75; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 49; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 33.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags* and *They Too Call Alabama Home*; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*; Caver; Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*.

Because of the compromise, the doors of Lincoln Normal School of Marion were kept open.

The Board announced the decision on the first day of June 1871. Nineteen days later, Finley presented the following preamble and resolution:

Whereas, the present financial condition of the State University is such as to prevent much aid to [the] university for colored people for some time to come, and
Whereas, the Colored race have no desire or intention nor would they under any circumstances attempt to interfere with the actions of the State University by any claim or pretext of rights thereto, be it therefore
Resolved, that the Superintendent of Public Instruction be and is hereby authorized to make application at Washington and to urge upon the Congress of the United States at its next session in behalf of the Board and the people of Alabama for a grant of public lands in aid of such university and an additional grant in aid of the public schools of this State.¹⁴⁶

The preamble and resolution were approved, but sizeable opposition remained. Hence, Finley introduced another bill on 23 November. Although the measure was entitled “An Act for the Establishment of Normal Schools,” it called for creating a genuine university, as opposed to mere normal schools, for black Alabamians. Like countless other African Americans, Finley viewed the establishment of a black college or university as essential to truly liberating the state’s black citizens. His proposal was read twice before being referred to the Board’s committee on normal schools, whose members held intense debates about the bill. After five days of constant bickering, the act was turned over to the Board’s committee on revisions.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, SG 23724, 53.

¹⁴⁷ “An Act for the Establishment of Normal Schools,” in Alabama Department of Education, *Journal of the Board of Education and the Board of Regents for the State of Alabama, 1871* (Montgomery, Al.: W. W. Screws, 1871), 39, hereinafter cited as *1871 Education and Regents Board Journal*; 1869-1871 Board

By the time Finley's proposal reached the revision committee, the state's existing normal schools were in flux. In 1869, Alabama lawmakers had authorized the creation of normal schools in Elyton, Evergreen, Mountain Home, and Prattville. Schools had already existed in Huntsville, Marion, Mobile, and Talladega. In a special report to Governor Lindsay, State Superintendent of Education Hodgson recounted how the state education board had abolished the existing nine normal schools but had also written a bill creating thirteen additional ones. Seven schools were reserved for white students, six for black students. Hodgson supported normal schools, but he did not think the state needed thirteen of them, or, as he liked to say, three times the number of normal schools as New York lawmakers had operated over the past twenty-five years. In Hodgson's opinion, two white and two black normal schools in Alabama were sufficient. Finley evidently disagreed. On the eve of the 1871 decision that guaranteed Lincoln Normal School of Marion would receive additional financial assistance from the state government, he introduced two measures that, if enacted, would have established eight additional normal schools—four for white students, four for black students—in Huntsville, Marion, Montgomery, and Sparta. The white schools would receive a total of \$4,500 per year, and each black school would receive between \$1,000 and \$1,500.¹⁴⁸

Whether Finley truly believed that Alabama needed eight more normal schools or was just politicking is debatable. At any rate, some lawmakers decided that it was more fiscally and politically responsible to increase the appropriation of one normal school

of Education Minutes, SG 23724, 240. See *Acts of the Session of the General Assembly of Alabama and of the Board of Education, 1872* (Montgomery, Al.: Arthur Bingham, 1872), 14-15. Cf. 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, SG 23724, 249; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Fact*, 53.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 105-108; Clark, *History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1889*, 254-255; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 6, 7, 152 (footnotes 25 and 26), 153 (footnotes 28-32); Weeks, *History of Public School Education in Alabama*, 155. Finley probably wanted integrated facilities but figured that any attempt at integration would have failed.

than to try to fund seven or eight additional ones. Other lawmakers had trepidations about creating a genuine university for black students, an action that had been debated for at least two years.

On 6 December 1869, the Alabama Board of Education adopted a resolution requesting the state legislature to find a suitable building for a black university. Two days later, the Board named members Brooks, Miller, and Putnam to an ad hoc committee charged with locating a good site for the institution. Additionally, the Board decided that the university's black pupils should receive the same schooling that the white students who attended the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa received and that the black university should have the same facilities as the state's white university. As of November 1871, neither one of the Board's wishes had come true.¹⁴⁹

John Sears, one of Finley's colleagues, believed that having several productive black normal schools would give Alabama's most conservative policymakers another reason to prolong the creation of a genuine, state-sponsored college or university for black students. Therefore, on 5 December, Sears offered a resolution in which he asked the members of the Alabama Board of Education Committee on Normal Schools to design a bill authorizing one black normal school and to close all others. In the end, Lincoln Normal School of Marion benefited from the decision.¹⁵⁰

Lincoln's blessing was not one of chance. Joseph Speed sat on the normal-school committee. On the first day of December, he had reported on "An Act to Establish Normal Schools." Three days later, he reported on a bill to provide for the educating of

¹⁴⁹ Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; Paterson, *The State Normal School at Montgomery*, 2; 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, SG 23724, 3.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, SG 23724, ADAH, 323; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*.

teachers in black schools. After debating the proposals, he and other board members decided to make the latter act the special order of 5 December, but when it came time to discuss the matter, fellow Perry Countian Jesse H. Booth requested that it be taken up at 11 AM on the following morning. Booth's reasons are unclear, but his colleagues agreed, and on 6 December, the Alabama Board of Education agreed to establish and provide for the black college or university that board members had approved two years earlier.¹⁵¹

In coming days, several measures were offered to the Board that aided Lincoln Normal School of Marion. Two of them were brought before board members on 11 December. One proposal obligated its members to create and sustain a "University for the education of students of the colored race."¹⁵² The other proposal, which Sears introduced, made effective the bill to sustain the university. Next, W. H. Clayton of the committee on colored schools offered a resolution authorizing one person to travel to Washington, D. C., "at his convenience" to lobby congressmen to provide a land grant to help create a black university in Alabama. At some point thereafter, Sears made a motion to table the resolution. Board members Clayton, Comegys, and Speed voted nay. Ard, Cook, Finley, Harrison, Henderson, Miller, Payton, and Sears voted yea. Eventually, the bill passed but not without significant opposition.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ Cf. 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, SG 23724, ADAH, 254, 261, 263-267; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*.

¹⁵² According to some sources, Peyton Finley had on 28 November 1871 introduced a measure entitled "An Act to Establish a University for the Education of Colored Students in the State of Alabama." Because three Republicans joined three Democrats in voting against it, Joseph Hodgson, the Alabama Education Board's newly elected president and a prominent Democrat, had to break the deadlock. Unsurprisingly, the bill was defeated. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 107; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 61.

¹⁵³ 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, SG 23724, 282-283. Peyton Finley's yea vote was a clever parliamentary tactic that allowed him to reintroduce the resolution if it failed. Booth's vote was not

For the rest of 11 December, board members debated whether Alabama would have a state-supported black college or university. In the meantime, Finley made last-minute changes to a resolution that he was prepared to read if necessary. As it turned out, it was necessary. Just before the Monday afternoon meeting adjourned, he announced: “*Resolved by the Board of Education of the State of Alabama, That Joseph H. Speed, John H. Sears, and O. D. Smith be appointed to a committee to prepare a memorial to the Congress of the United States for a donation of public land [via the Morrill Act of 1862] to aid in establishing a University for the colored race.*” The resolution was adopted.¹⁵⁴

On 13 December, Peyton Finley offered another resolution. In the event that congressmen did not agree to provide public land or funds to help erect a university for black Alabamians, a portion of the funds that had been earmarked for the establishment of the state’s white agricultural and mechanical college could be used to help create a black college. After Booth called for a special committee to discuss the proposal, it was adopted.¹⁵⁵

In the end, the Alabama Education Board passed “An Act to Provide for the Education of Teachers of Colored Schools.” The measure mandated at least twenty-five students be enrolled in Lincoln Normal School of Marion before classes could begin. That was no problem. Lincoln’s enrollment had never been lower than thirty since its 1867 founding. The act also allowed students to attend the school free of charge so long

recorded in the minutes. See, for example, Jessica Holzer, “Is Estate Tax Reform Dead?” *Forbes*; available via Internet @ http://www.forbes.com/2006/08/04/estate-tax-reform-senate-ex_jh_0804estatetax.html?partner=daily_newsletter; accessed 8 August 2007. Historian Bond offers a different description in *Negro Education in Alabama*, 108.

¹⁵⁴ 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, 284. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 108-109; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 63, 65-68.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, SG 23724, 291, 292; *1871 Education and Regents Board Journal*, 72.

as they agreed to teach in one of Alabama's free public schools for black students a minimum of two years after graduation. Another provision increased Lincoln's appropriation from \$486 to \$1,250. Yet, as generous as the allocation was, it was still less than the Montgomery normal school's \$1,500 allotment. Their counterparts in Huntsville and Sparta got \$1,000 each.¹⁵⁶

Around the same time that the Alabama Education Board agreed to establish a black university and allocated money to other black institutions, Speed offered a resolution that compelled the state government to provide additional assistance to the black normal school in Marion. Lawmakers consented, and on 16 December 1871, the Board ratified "An Act for the Relief of Lincoln School in the Town of Marion, Alabama." The act gave Lincoln's trustees \$168 of the unexpended funds that Perry County had raised under section 992 of the 1868 state code to help cover fuel and rental costs for the 1869-1870 school year. The allocation helped, but Lincoln was helped even more when the Curtis-AMA conflict began to die out.¹⁵⁷

N. E. Willis, an AMA agent and Lincoln instructor, wrote a letter to E. M. Cravath in which he presented a picture of Curtis that was considerably different from the one that Helen Leonard painted. Willis recalled speaking with Curtis at a Sunday school convention in Montgomery. According to Willis, Curtis seemed amenable to working with the Association. Reverend George Whitfield Andrews—a graduate of Oberlin

¹⁵⁶ See "An Act to Provide Support for the Colored Normal Schools," in *Alabama Department of Education, Acts Passed by the Board of Education of the State of Alabama, at the Session of 1872, and Approved by the Governor* (Montgomery, Al.: Arthur Bingham, 1873), 14. The act was repealed on 9 December 1873. See "An Act to Repeal An Act to Provide for the Education of Teachers of Colored Schools Approved Dec. 20, 1871," in *1873 Board of Education Caption of Laws*. Cf. *1871 Education and Regents Board Journal*, 117.

¹⁵⁷ "An Act for the Relief of Lincoln School in the Town of Marion, Alabama," in *1871 Education and Regents Board Journal*, 103. For information about Speed's actions, cf. 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, SG 23724, 278; *1871 Education and Board Journal*, 70; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 249.

College and Andover Theological Seminary in Massachusetts, northern principal, early pastor of the First Congregational Church of Marion, and future dean of theology and president of Talladega College—believed Cravath helped Lincoln’s situation by making a good impression on Curtis, who was still friendly with Joseph Speed. Together, they helped ensure the survival of one of most important overlooked black educational institutions in United States history, Lincoln Normal School of Marion.¹⁵⁸

George N. Card

The early 1870s was a period of mixed blessings for Lincoln. Although Governor Lindsay issued a pocket veto that blocked the payment of teachers’ salaries, lawmakers continued to talk about making Lincoln a state-sponsored university for persons of African descent. It was likely that Curtis would be receptive to the idea because state sponsorship would likely end AMA control over the institution that he and other black persons had been so instrumental in developing. Equally important, Curtis would probably be appointed one of the university’s three commissioners.¹⁵⁹

Ultimately, Alabama’s education board conceded. On Friday, 5 December 1873, O. D. Smith, an Auburn professor and member of the state education board, called up

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 137-138, and “Let Us Make Man,” 52, 268, 279 (footnote 35), 324-329. Alexander Curtis and Joseph Speed were two of the state’s most prominent Republicans. Before 1873, Curtis and Speed seemed to have a real fondness for each other. Not only did Curtis support Speed’s political bids; Curtis was one of Speed’s main sources of information during the 1871 Ku Klux Klan hearings. At least two things separated the men. Together with Greene S. W. Lewis, Speed and other white Republicans blocked Curtis’ 1872 congressional bid, and Speed seemed indifferent about the Civil Rights Bill of 1873 unless politics necessitated otherwise.

¹⁵⁹ See the 19 December 1870 “Act to Repeal An Act to Provide for the Payment of Teachers, and other School Expenses,” in *1870-1874 Board of Education Acts*. For a different view, see William B. Paterson, *The State Normal School at Montgomery: A Plain Statement of Its Principals* (Montgomery, AL: State Normal School Press, [c. 1887]), 2. Paterson contended that state policymakers stopped discussing making Lincoln a state-supported college or university after the 1870 gubernatorial election. According to Paterson, the creation of the agricultural and mechanical college at Auburn during 1872-1873 caused state legislators to revisit the idea of a state-sponsored black university.

“The Act to Establish a State Normal School to Provide for the Location of a Colored University.” Although state records did not indicate what was decided, they did show that Smith later presented “An Act to Establish a State Normal School and University for the Education of Colored Teachers and Students,” which passed. On Saturday, 6 December 1873, Republican Governor David P. Lewis signed the act into law. With his endorsement, the black university that state lawmakers had debated for at least four years was authorized.¹⁶⁰

The completion of the school—which from the outset was expected to become “more than...and different from a normal [school; it] was intended to become a university or college of which the normal school should be a department,” averred O. D. Smith—depended on Lincoln’s administrators. Key figures included Principal George N. Card and the school’s advisory board, which now included Democrat Porter King and Republicans John Dozier, John Foster, John T. Harris, and John Sears.¹⁶¹

Amcram Village, New York, native George Card became Lincoln’s principal in a dubious manner. When the state education board appointed Lincoln Normal School’s first two commissioners, they chose only white men. Every black trustee was dismissed. Strangely enough, the dismissals were carried out with the concurrence of the black

¹⁶⁰ See Alabama Board of Education Meeting Minutes, 89-90, 120, SG 23752, ADAH. Cf. *1870-1874 Board of Education Acts*. On 14 December the previous year, 1872, the Alabama Board of Education had passed “An Act to Provide for the Support of Colored Normal Schools.” Cf. 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, SG 23724, 360; *1870-1874 Board of Education Acts*; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbagger nor Scalawag and They Too Call Alabama Home*; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 108-109; Caver; Sherer, “Let Us Make Man,” 32. On 15 December 1874, state lawmakers approved “An Act to Amend Sections One and Two of An Act to Establish a State Normal School and University for the Education of Colored Teachers and Students Approved Dec. 6th, 1873.” Cf. *1873 Board of Education Acts*; Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 237.

¹⁶¹ O. D. Smith, letter to W. B. Paterson, [n.d.], quoted in Paterson, *The State Normal School at Montgomery*, 3. Some persons have spelled Card’s last name Cord and have suggested that his middle initial was S or W rather than N. See, for example, “Geo. S. Card,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 January 1871, hereinafter cited as “Geo. S. Card.” Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 106, 110; Sherer, “Let Us Make Man,” 53.

trustees, whose reasons are open to debate. They might have figured that without considerable assistance from northern philanthropists and organizations like the Bureau and the AMA, which was waning, it would be extremely difficult to operate the school unless the state government helped. Some board members might have been tired of Curtis and Steward's bickering and grandstanding. Others might have believed the growing divide between black Baptists and white Congregationalists would destroy the institution. Maybe the trustees had other obligations and interests that prohibited them from devoting as much time to Lincoln as they wanted or simply felt that it was time for someone else to take up and carry forward the torch that they had helped light almost a decade earlier. Whatever their reasons, Lincoln's black trustees paid a hefty price. After they were relieved of their official duties, the men's two white replacements utilized a part of the incorporation agreement that allowed board members to hire or fire any faculty member whom they wished and in October 1872 dismissed Principal Steward and each one of his faculty members. Card, Marion's former director of public schools, was Steward's replacement.¹⁶²

Card's appointment sent tremors through the spines of black Marionites, who appreciated what Steward had done to help educate black youth. Unbeknownst to some of them, Lincoln's second full-time principal had considerable experience with black education. Not only had Card studied alongside black students at New York State Normal School; he had done a meritorious job educating blacks in Alabama's Cotton Belt. Before being brought to Lincoln, Card had operated a fifty-six-student freedmen's institution in Uniontown that received support from the county's school board—largely

¹⁶² See Helen Leonard to E. M. Cravath, 7 October 1872, AMA Papers.

because Card was a member of the Perry County Board of Examinations—and some of Uniontown’s black residents. One of them, a man named Benjamin Jeffries, collected \$10 per month in rent for his efforts.¹⁶³

The summer of 1871 was particularly eventful for Card. That season, he was married. The ceremony took place in New York, where the jubilant groom delivered a speech in which he downplayed the racial and other prejudices that he had either witnessed or heard about while in the South. The *Marion Commonwealth* discussed the talk: “Mr. C. testifies to the peaceable and law-abiding disposition of our people, and give[s] the lie to the reports of Houston, Steward, Speed and others of that ilk, who are anxious to have Senator Scott declare martial law” in Perry County. Quoting a letter from one of Card’s northern neighbors, the paper asserted:

[Card] speaks in high terms of the Southern people; that he has been used with uniform respect and kindness; he says that the Southern people will gladly welcome any Northern man who comes for the good of the country; and not for office. He also says that it is really gratifying to see how much the people of the South are doing for the education of all classes. Mr. Card being no politician, relates these facts, not for any political effect, but in justice to the South.¹⁶⁴

Considering the increase in Klan and other lawless activity during Card’s initial southern stay, his flattering testimonial was undoubtedly skewed, but it was effective. Politically and socially conservative white Alabamians sided with Card because they figured his words would positively impact the way that Northerners in general and northern businesspersons in particular viewed the South. In that way, Card’s 1871

¹⁶³ Cf. *ibid.* Some persons suggest that Card’s school was located in Marion. Cf. *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 59.

¹⁶⁴ “Geo. S. Card” (first quote); “Geo. N. Card,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 21 September 1871, hereinafter cited as “Geo. N. Card” (all subsequent quotes).

address was a predecessor to the “New South” speech that *Atlanta Constitution* editor and southern booster Henry Grady delivered to the New England Society of New York approximately fifteen years later. Equally important, Card knew how to politic, but he was not a politician per se. The *Marion Commonwealth* confirmed: “Mr. Card is a teacher by profession as well as by practice. He is no politician, and we have gladly learned from various sources, takes neither interest, *part nor lot in political contests or controversies*, further than to vote as he thinks proper.”¹⁶⁵

State Normal School and University

Heidt and the Cookes could not make the same statement about Alexander Curtis or Thomas Steward, men who had been everything but disinterested in political controversies and contests.¹⁶⁶ Respected by numerous African Americans because of his religious zeal, educational and entrepreneurial activities, and labor advocacy, and clever enough to align himself with some of the region’s most powerful white citizens, including Porter King and Joseph Speed, Curtis was easily one of the most influential black politicians in Alabama during the Reconstruction and early Redemption eras. If a buggy fall outside Marion had not claimed his life on 20 July 1878, the power and prestige of the forty-nine-year-old African American would have increased. No doubt, had Curtis lived longer, he would have proven an able political ally or a worthy foe of the

¹⁶⁵ “Geo. S. Card.” Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 49; “Geo. N. Card.”

¹⁶⁶ See “Labor Union of Perry County,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 13 July 1871, hereinafter cited as “Labor Union of Perry County.” See also “The Colored Labor Union in Perry,” *Greensboro Beacon*, 22 July 1871, hereinafter cited as “The Colored Labor Union in Perry.” The organization is also mentioned in William Warren Rogers, *The One-Gallused Rebellion; Agrarianism in Alabama, 1865-1896* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970), 12. Cf. Schwening, “The American Missionary Association and Northern Philanthropy in Reconstruction Alabama,” 149-150, citing Albert A. Saffold to Erastus Cravath, 4 May 1871, and Thomas C. Steward to Erastus Cravath, 5 April 1871, AMA Papers; Wiggins, *Scalawag*, 142.

state's most influential late nineteenth-century black educational, political, and social leader, Booker T. Washington.¹⁶⁷

While in the Alabama legislature, Curtis used his economic, political, religious, and social ties to become the first black person named to Lincoln Normal School's board of commissioners. Curtis might have secured the position via an agreement with Finley, Speed, and Porter King, who was also named to Lincoln's board. Lincoln's third commissioner was John T. Harris, Perry County's unpopular tax collector and future sheriff and state legislator.¹⁶⁸

The Lincoln Normal School Board of Commissioners might have been more representative of Alabama's economic, ethnic, and political makeup than any other executive committee in the state. The two white commissioners, King and Harris, represented the political right and center-right, respectively. King was a moderate Democrat, and Harris was a conservative Republican who opposed the Fifteenth Amendment. Curtis, a former slave of "mixed blood" and self-styled conservative, moved well in and out of any political circle. He was equally nimble among churchgoers, common laborers, and businesspersons. But neither Curtis' broad appeal

¹⁶⁷ See Alabama Department of Education, *Report of LeRoy F. Box, Superintendent of Education for the State of Alabama, For the Scholastic Year Ending 30th September, 1878, with Tabular Statistics of 1876-7. Containing also the laws Relating to the Public School System of the State, with an Appendix of Forms* (Montgomery, AL: Barrett and Brown, 1879), xxiv. John Moore, president of Lincoln's board of directors, indicated the influential black Baptist minister William H. McAlpine replaced Curtis. See Clement Richardson, ed., *The National Cyclopedia of the Colored Race*, vol. 1 (Montgomery, AL: National Publishing Company, 1919), 82. Cf. Boothe, *Cyclopedia of the Colored Baptists of Alabama*, 39, 40.

¹⁶⁸ At least one source lists Tax Collector Harris, who was elected sheriff of Perry County in 1871 and represented Perry County in the state House from 1874 until 1876, as T. J. Harris. Another source suggested that Harris and Porter King were black. In any event, Harris' detestation did not arise solely from his association with Lincoln Normal School. Perry County citizens disliked him because he was an allegedly corrupt tax collector who used southern money to buy northern land. Harris justified his actions by claiming "NEGROES AND NEGRO LABOR WERE NOT RELIABLE!" "Where did He get It?" *Marion Commonwealth*, 28 July 1870. See "Look Out Democrats," *ibid.*, 26 May 1870. See also "The Report of the Grand Jury," *ibid.*, 28 July 1871. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 106, 109; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 246.

nor his influential associates were powerful enough to shield Lincoln Normal School from the turbulence brought on by the financial panic of 1873 or by the decisions of the state board of education.¹⁶⁹

Only fifty-five students were able to attend Lincoln Normal School in 1873. As pitiful as this might seem, there were fifty-four more students than there were teachers. Three years earlier, Lincoln's total enrollment had been eighty-six, and four new instructors had been added to the faculty. G. W. Andrews had taught Thomas Steward's advanced classes while he was in Montgomery. Reverend Andrews had also headed First Congregational Church in Steward's stead. Fearing that bigoted whites would disrupt his services, Andrews had kept a loaded revolver by his Bible or a rifle in the pulpit. The animated pastor's wife, Hattie, had instructed the intermediate students, and Anna B. Ackley and Lizzie F. Dunbar had shared the responsibilities of managing Lincoln's primary department. Not one of these individuals was on staff at Lincoln during 1873-1874 however. The school's two white commissioners dismissed them when they fired Principal Steward.¹⁷⁰

Despite sizeable obstacles, including the student-teacher ratio and a scarcity of funds, Lincoln Normal School of Marion continued to operate. In some respects, it grew. The curriculum was expanded to include algebra, chemistry, composition, classical philosophy, physiology, composition, geometry, grammar, higher arithmetic, history,

¹⁶⁹ See "Spring Fights," *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 May 1870. See also "J. H. Graham," *ibid.*, 15 December 1870, hereinafter cited as "J. H. Graham"; Michael Perman, *The Road to Redemption: Southern Politics, 1869-1879* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 35-36, 55-56. Cf. Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 3; McAfee, *Race, Religion and Reconstruction*, 121-124; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 52, 258-259, 263.

¹⁷⁰ *Report of Lincoln School at Marion, Alabama, 30 November 1870* ([Marion, Al.: n.p.,] 1870), AMA Papers. Cf. Brownlee, *New Day Ascending*, 124 (citing *American Missionary Association Annual Report, 1871*, 32), 195. Reverend Andrews relocated to Talladega, where he taught at that city's black college.

natural philosophy, physiology, practical grammar, reading, spelling, teaching methods, writing, and written arithmetic—all taught by George Card. Lincoln students could not study Greek, as could University of Alabama and other students, but they could study Latin. Lincoln's curriculum is noteworthy because Lincoln was the first state-sponsored college or university in the United States to offer not only vocational and industrial training but also significant liberal-arts instruction to black students. The school's administrators probably followed the leads of other black institutions, including Fisk and Talladega, but they were not state-sponsored institutions.¹⁷¹

Together with the number of qualified graduates who had already completed Lincoln's program, the enhanced curriculum strengthened the arguments of people such as Peyton Finley and John Sears, who for years had campaigned for a state-sponsored university for African Americans. The curriculum and graduation rate also bolstered the contentions of Commissioners Curtis, Harris, and King, who encouraged state lawmakers to provide Card additional teachers, equipment (chemical kits, globes, maps, philosophical apparatus, physiological charts), and funds.¹⁷² The commissioners were grateful that state officials had already allocated almost \$500 for Lincoln and that Card had raised an additional \$200, but they knew that \$700 was not enough money to cover

¹⁷¹ See *Acts of the Session...of the General Assembly of Alabama and of the Board of Education, November 1873* (Montgomery, Al.: Arthur Bingham, 1873), 74-75, hereinafter cited as *November 1873 General Assembly and Board of Education Acts*. Cf. Alabama Board of Education Minutes, 127-129; Clark, *History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1889*, 274; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 99; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 118, 133, 134-148, 152 (footnote 24), 160 (footnote 19), 182-183 (footnote 15). Lincoln was not the only Perry County institution to suffer. The once well-off Howard College was also hurt. In November 1873, its president, Colonel James Thomas Murfee, had to secure a \$3,000 loan from the Alabama Baptist State Convention in order to keep the school open.

¹⁷² One official report lists A. Harris, Porter King, and A. H. Curtis as the commissioners who made the request, but this is obviously a mistake. John T. Harris was Lincoln's commissioner.

every one of Lincoln's operating costs. Because there was three times more work than there was when the school was founded, there were more expenditures, they explained:

We have been obliged to introduce [collegiate] studies to satisfy the advancing condition of the colored race...in view of the fact that they have no State University. The fact can no longer be evaded nor ignored that if the colored people of the State have their just educational rights, they must have a University for higher instruction.¹⁷³

Using Lincoln's track record to strengthen their case, Curtis, Harris, and King reminded lawmakers that twenty Lincoln students had taught in the public and private schools of the state with much success. The commissioners wanted Lincoln to be the best black school in Alabama, and they were confident that it would if state lawmakers provided the proper support.

Before state legislators would allocate money "for the liberal education of the colored race in the same manner as is already provided for the education of the white race in [Alabama's] universities and colleges," Card and coterie had to place Lincoln Normal School at the state's disposal. They did so with the reluctant concurrence of Marion's black citizens, who were skeptical of the conservative Democrats who were preparing to take control of the state. Nevertheless, in coming months, as many Alabamians celebrated the restoration of ultra-conservative white rule, Card and his associates worked diligently to guarantee that Lincoln Normal School would be reorganized as the State Normal School and University of Alabama.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ Alabama Board of Education Meeting Minutes, 127-128. The commissioners' statements also appear, though slightly altered, in the *November 1873 General Assembly and Board of Education Acts*, 74-75.

¹⁷⁴ *Knight v. Alabama*, United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, 14 F.3d 1534; 1994 U.S. App. LEXIS 3410; 7 Fla. Law W. Fed. C 1249 (1994). See *Acts of the General Assembly of Alabama and the Board of Education, 1874* (Montgomery, Al.: [Arthur Bingham,] 1874), 176-179.

Some AMA officials disagreed with the move. Like many blacks, the officials worried that state sponsorship would eventually place Lincoln in the hands of the Democratic and Conservative party, whose platform was growing increasingly racist. Association leaders speculated that if the smallest problem arose or if faculty members disagreed with the way that state officials wanted to run the school, Redeemers would resolve such issues by closing Lincoln's doors. Considering how hard the school's founders, students, and supporters had worked to guarantee its existence, that would have been a travesty.

The AMA officials' advice was noted. In an 1887 letter to the *Marion Standard*, Stephen Childs recalled how after "weeks of anxious deliberation, and trusting the assurances of friendship pledged by some of the best white citizens of Marion, consent was given, and the Lincoln Normal University was established." The university's first board of directors contained such familiar names as Alexander Curtis, John C. Dozier, John Foster, John T. Harris, Porter King, John Sears, and Joseph Speed. Their primary charge was to make sure that Lincoln's normal and university departments provided black pupils the same sort of liberal-arts study that white pupils were provided at the state's white university. John Martin McKleroy, a Howard College alumnus and state education superintendent from 1874-1876, explained: "The Normal School at Marion is designed to become a university for the colored race of the State...and it is not doubted that its facilities for furnishing the higher education to the race will be amplified as the demand therefore becomes apparent."¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁵ Stephen Childs, letter to editor, *Marion Standard*, 12 January 1887, quoted in Caver, 51 (first quote); John McKleroy, quoted in Alabama Department of Education, *Report of John M. McKleroy, Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Alabama, For the Scholastic Year Ending September*

Alabama legislators allotted \$2,000 for the State Normal School and University for the Education of Colored Teachers and Students—also called Alabama State Lincoln Normal School, Lincoln Normal University, Lincoln and State Normal University, Alabama Lincoln Normal School, Marion Normal School, Alabama State Lincoln Normal School, State Normal School and University, State Normal School and Colored University at Marion, Colored People’s University of Alabama, University for Colored Students, or simply “the U.” Although the appropriation was \$825 more than the \$1,125 for which Finley had originally called, it was still less than one-tenth of the \$24,000 that the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa received in 1874. In fact, the average University of Alabama professor’s salary was more than Lincoln’s entire appropriation. Nevertheless, Lincoln’s sole instructor and principal (Card) went to work, teaching, supervising, and counseling between thirty and forty eager students.¹⁷⁶

Alabama State Lincoln Normal School’s establishing act allowed individuals to come from any part of the state to matriculate so long as they were at least fourteen years of age and passed an entrance-examination. The act also allowed trustees to develop a normal department within the university, but the main purpose of the institution was to provide blacks educational opportunities similar to those that were provided in the state’s

30th, 1875 (Montgomery, Al.: W. W. Screws, 1875), 32, hereinafter cited as *1875 Report of John McKleroy*, Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 110, and Paterson, *The State Normal School at Montgomery*, 8 (second quote). Cf. Sherer, “Let Us Make Man,” 52. Like other persons, Paterson misspelled McKleroy McElroy, and some persons suggested that McKleroy’s middle name began with a T. At least one source suggested that Foster was black. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 109.

¹⁷⁶ See “An Act to Establish a State Normal School and University for the Education of Colored Teachers and Students,” in *Acts of the Board of Education of the State of Alabama. Session Commencing November 17, 1873* (Montgomery, Al.: Arthur Bingham, 1874), 16-19. See also Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, vol. 2 (1921; reprint, Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Company, 1978), 1269. Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 70, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 110; Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts, 78, 80; Rogers and Ward, “Radical Reconstruction,” chap. 15 in Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 257; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 156 (footnote 68).

white colleges and university. Through a plan similar to a scheme that the *Marion Commonwealth* and a few state officials had offered in 1871, students paid no fees if they agreed to teach in Alabama's public school system for at least two years after graduation. If someone did not agree to the condition, the school's board of directors could charge tuition. Along with the principal, board members were also responsible for recommending candidates for graduation. Students reached this level only after they had completed their courses of study and had passed a teacher-certification examination. To Lincoln's credit, many of them did pass the exam.¹⁷⁷

A Genuine University or an Elementary School with Industrial Features?

To date, Alabama State Lincoln Normal School's preeminence has been one of African American history's greatest little-known facts. A number of sources have suggested that National Religious Training School and Chautauqua (later North Carolina College for Negroes and North Carolina Central University) is the nation's oldest state-sponsored liberal-arts college or university for black students, but their contention is false. Founded at Durham in 1910 by James E. Sheppard, the North Carolina school followed its Alabama counterpart by almost fifty years. Lincoln University of Missouri (1866) and Alcorn College (1871) were also state-sponsored institutions, but they were

¹⁷⁷ See Sec. 7, "An Act to Establish a State Normal School and University for the Education of Colored Teachers and Students." The *Marion Commonwealth* proposed: "We need trained teachers for our Public Schools, more now because of the peculiar circumstances of the past ten years, than perhaps hereafter. How shall we get them?" The paper then asked: "Can we afford to erect Normal Colleges in various portions of the State, with expensive furniture and laboratories, to serve the pressing needs of the hour, or should we *charter* (to speak) the Alabama college?" "Our Normal Schools," *Marion Commonwealth*, 8 June 1871, quoting *Alabama Journal of Education* (N.P.: n.p., n.d.).

land grants.¹⁷⁸ Likewise, several persons have questioned whether Alabama State Lincoln Normal School was a legitimate institution of higher learning. Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century lawmakers called it a university, but a number of individuals have rejected the idea. When William Paterson became Lincoln's president in 1878, the once prejudiced educator said the institution was no more than an elementary school with industrial features. But in 1901, Paterson confirmed that Alabama State Lincoln Normal School had been established for the higher education of blacks.¹⁷⁹

A comparison of the classes offered in 1874 by Alabama State Lincoln Normal School with Howard, Judson, and the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa helps to rebut Paterson's original claim. The black university offered courses in algebra, chemistry, classical philosophy, composition, geometry, grammar, higher arithmetic, history, Latin, natural philosophy, physiology, practical grammar, reading, spelling, teaching methods, writing, and written arithmetic. Howard, Judson, and the University of Alabama had more academic offerings, but curricula were similar.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Chautauqua has also been spelled Chautau. See Frank Bowles and Frank DeCosta, *Between Two Worlds: a Profile of Negro Higher Education* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), 292. See also *Encyclopedia of Black America* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981), 95, 651; Jessie Carney Smith et al., eds., *Black Firsts: 2,000 Years of Extraordinary Achievement* (Detroit: Visible Ink, 1994), 100, 101. Cf. Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 52.

¹⁷⁹ See the advertisement section in Beverly, *History of Alabama*. See also William B. Paterson, *Facts Relating to the State Normal School at Montgomery* (N.P.: n.p., n.d.), Alabama State University State Publications, Various, SG 011965, ADAH; M. E. Wilcox, "Anniversary Exercises: Lincoln Normal Institute, Marion, Ala.," *American Missionary* 48 (September 1894): 318-319. Cf. Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 118, 131-132, 142-146, 153 (footnote 40), 159 (footnotes 5 [citing W. B. Paterson to John Paterson, William Burns Paterson Papers] and 10), 182-183 (footnote 15), 169 (footnote 1), and "John William Beverly," 196 (footnote 8), and "Let Us Make Man," 53.

¹⁸⁰ See *Catalogue of the Marion Female Seminary. Marion, Alabama. Thirty-ninth Annual Session. 1874-1875* (Selma, Al.: James P. Armstrong and Company, [1874]), 11, hereinafter cited as *1874-1875 Marion Female Seminary Catalogue*. See also *Catalogue of Howard College, Marion, Ala. For the Year Ending June 1872* (Selma, Al.: Jason P. Armstrong, 1872), hereinafter cited as *1872 Howard College Catalogue*; "An Act to Establish Grades in the Free Public Schools of Alabama," in Alabama Department of Education, *School Laws of the State of Alabama, with Blank Forms and Instructions, as Prepared by the Board of Education* (Montgomery, Al: John G. Stokes and Company, 1870), 21, hereinafter cited as

Omitting the ethnic composition of their student bodies, the major difference between Alabama's white and black colleges and universities was the black university's normal department, which the white colleges and university did not have. Worth noting, however, is the fact that Speed and other members of the Alabama Education Board had recommended normal classes at East Alabama College as early as 12 December 1870. Two days later, the Board decided to offer black and white normal classes in Abbeville, Courtland, Huntsville, Marion, Montgomery, Prattville, Scottsboro, Selma, Sparta Talladega, Tuskegee, and Tuscumbia. In June 1871, the Alabama Board of Regents, which had become the Board of Education on 28 November 1870, recommended a normal department on the Tuscaloosa campus. Later, the Board actually passed a bill establishing a central normal school there.¹⁸¹

Superintendent McKleroy advocated creating multiple normal departments at the University of Alabama. His suggestion was almost certainly prompted by the need for competent teachers, which normal departments helped develop, but it was also prompted by the success of Alabama State Lincoln Normal School, whose skilled instructors were doing everything within their power to make sure their students received a solid collegiate education. The University of Alabama had skilled instructors and was aptly endowed by the state government, but it did not offer programs specifically designed to

School Laws of the State of Alabama. Cf. 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, 28, 45, 205, 213, 276; Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 243-244.

¹⁸¹ Cf. 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes; *1874-1875 Marion Female Seminary Catalogue*, 11; *1872 Howard College Catalogue*; *School Laws of the State of Alabama*.

offer pedagogical training to prospective public schoolteachers. Alabama State Lincoln Normal School did offer such programs.¹⁸²

Maybe Paterson, who had begun his teaching career in Alabama on a Hale County plantation school similar to the one that Saunders operated in Perry County and whom many people have incorrectly credited with founding Lincoln School of Marion, meant the institution was an elementary school with industrial features before 1874, the year that Card and Lincoln's trustees gave the state government complete control of the school. If Paterson did, then he forgot one important fact: no one claimed that Lincoln was anything more than a level two, or intermediate, institution before that year. Rather, people projected that it would be a genuine college or university in coming years, and this evolution, as historian James Anderson has shown, was consistent with similar institutions throughout the nation. Moreover, by the standards of nineteenth-century Alabama, Alabama State Lincoln Normal School was a genuine university, which T. Cotesworth Pinckney included in his *U. S. School and College Dictionary*.¹⁸³

¹⁸² See *Alabama Department of Education, Report of John M. McKleroy, Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Alabama, For the Scholastic Year Ending 30th September, 1876* (Montgomery, AL: W. W. Screws, 1876), 14, hereinafter cited as *1876 Superintendent of Public Education Report*. For an excellent elucidation of the charges of normal department and schools, as well as the principal difference between them and model and private schools, see John Hart, "Schools for Professional Education of Teachers," *Barnard's American Journal of Education* (January 1868): 401, 405. See also W. H. Ruffner, "What are Normal School in Fact?" in vol. 68, book 63, J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, ADAH.

¹⁸³ See Pinckney letter to John M. McKleroy, 7 December 1877, Education Correspondence, 1875-1878, SG 16977, ADAH. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 242-245; Sherer, "John William Beverly: Alabama's First Negro Historian," 196 (footnote 8), *Black Education in Alabama*, 23-31, and "Let Us Make Man," 53, 60, 245; Williams and Ashley, *I'll Find a Way or Make One*, 312-313. The McFaddens operated the Hale County plantation school. Like Saunders, they wanted to keep as many former slaves on their plantation as they could. In 1870, the McFaddens hired Paterson, whose experiences with black pupils resulted in a change of attitude about African Americans.

Primary and Secondary Education in Perry County, 1866-1875

The condition of Perry County's Reconstruction-era primary and secondary schools is more difficult to determine. Some years, L. W. Temple and other officials did not make reports. Other years, the reports that they made conflicted with the data that state officials compiled. Hence, anything disseminated about the county's public schools should be considered speculative at best.¹⁸⁴

Information about the 1866 and the 1867 academic years is particularly suspect. Some local, county, and state records indicated that Perry County did not have any money apportioned from the state government for education in 1866. Other records showed that the state did provide county officials money but that they did not draw any of it or did not report what was apportioned and drawn. The same records suggested that the state government provided \$6,479.35 for the 1867 school year, but Colonel Charles Crowe (or Crow), Perry County's Republican superintendent of education and future governor of New Mexico, did not use the money. However, at least one other official source indicated that Crowe drew but did not report on \$6,479.35 in 1866 and that no report was made for 1867. In any event, Crowe made sure that he took advantage of the state appropriation in 1868. That year, he withdrew \$12,471.98 of the \$13,046.13 that was made available to Perry County via the state's public-school fund. This amount was more than any other county in Alabama except Dallas (\$16,125.98), Madison (\$14,680), and Montgomery (\$17,888.39).¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ See *Annual Report on the Condition of Education in Each County Board of Education* (N.P.: n.p., [1869]), SG 23759, ADAH. Cf. Hoar, "History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875," 97-100.

¹⁸⁵ See Alabama Department of Education, Minutes of the State Board of Education, 1869-1871, SG 23763, ADAH, hereinafter cited as 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes. See also Alabama Department of Education, *Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Alabama, to the Governor, For*

How many free public schools, students, and teachers were in Perry County in 1868 and part of 1869 remains unclear. According to one report, there were sixty-two public schools and sixty-two teachers during the 1868-1869 school year. Another report indicated that seventy-two white and thirty-four black schools were in operation from 1 October 1868 until 31 September 1869, but it did not state whether that number included private schools. County officials were apportioned \$1,153.75 from the state's public-school fund to help cover the costs associated with educating the county's 9,230 students. Crowe (a man who represented everything "honest, fearless, manly and virtuous [in] the South," according to the Republican-leaning *Alabama Weekly State Journal*) drew the money on 16 June 1870, but he never accounted for it.¹⁸⁶

In addition to state funds, a number of local schools received assistance from George Peabody and other northern philanthropists. Reverend Barnas Sears—former president of Newton Theological Seminary and Brown University, secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and agent of the Peabody Educational Fund General—reported that Uniontown's white residents welcomed free schools and raised \$1,500 in 1868 and the first half of 1869 for that purpose. The Peabody Fund provided

the Fiscal Year Ending 30th September, 1869 (Montgomery, Al.: John G. Stokes, 1870), 32, hereinafter cited as *1869 Superintendent's Report*; Alabama Department of Education, *Report of Joseph Hodgson, Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Alabama, for the Scholastic Year, January 1st, 1871, to September 30th 1871* (Montgomery, Al.: W. W. Screws, 1871), Appendix, xi, hereinafter cited as *1871 Hodgson Report*. For some reason, Superintendent Crowe was paid only \$1,125. Eight county superintendents were paid more than he was. Cf. *1870 Superintendent's Statements to the House*, 5-8. Crowe's New Mexico appointment is mentioned in "Names of Alabamians Who have Received Appointments" and "Col. Charles C. Crowe," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 10 April 1869; "Governor of New Mexico," *ibid.*, 17 April 1869; "Col. C. C. Crowe," *ibid.*, 24 April 1869, quoting *Talladega Sun*, [n.d.]; *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 8 May 1869.

¹⁸⁶ "Col. C. C. Crowe," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 24 April 1869. Cf. *1869 Superintendent's Report*, 29; *1871 Hodgson's Report*, xi; *Special Report of Joseph Hodgson*, 15; *Special Report of Joseph Hodgson*, 28.

an additional \$1,000. Marion's white population was just as receptive to free schools, affirmed Sears, who made a similar offer to them.¹⁸⁷

Reverend Sears' report did not mention whether he approached Uniontown or Marion blacks during the 1868-1869 visit, but he did not. Many people were not surprised. During the same years that Sears visited Perry County, the strict segregationist proposed to limit the financial assistance that black schools received from the Peabody Fund to three-fourths the amount that white schools in Greensboro, Huntsville, Marion, Mobile, Montgomery, Selma, Talladega, Tuscaloosa, and Uniontown received. By 1871, the Fund's trustees had adopted Sears' proposal.¹⁸⁸

If much information about Perry County's 1869-1870 school year was ever reported, then someone or some agency lost it. Fortunately, information about the next academic year was preserved. In his 1871 report to the Alabama Board of Education, County Superintendent Houston indicated that Perry had eighty-two operative public schools during the 1870-1871 academic year. Looking back, the report might not have been correct. In the same report, Houston indicated that the county had forty-two white and thirty-nine black public schools, or eighty-one public schools altogether.¹⁸⁹ Houston also reported that the county had seventy-eight teachers. Sixty-seven were white, and

¹⁸⁷ *Reports of the General Agent of the Peabody Educational Fund, From January 21, 1868, to July 1, 1869, with some Accounts of the Proceedings of the Trustees Relating to the Subject of his Agency* ([N.P.]: Straunton Spectator Job Office, 1869), 25. See, for example, Lewis W. Jones, "The Agent as a Factor in the Education of the Negroes in the South," *Journal of Negro Education* 19 (spring 1950): 31-32. Cf. Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black Education*, 173; McAfee, *Religion, Race and Reconstruction*, 16, 106.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 53-55, 130-132; *Negro Education in Alabama*, 262-263; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 83; McAfee, *Race, Religion and Reconstruction*, 128-129; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 154 (footnote 44).

¹⁸⁹ Hodgson's 1871 report to the governor showed that Perry County's superintendent of education drew \$13,044.48, but the superintendent only vouched for \$6,516.38. Additional records probably exist, but the author has not been able to turn up much information about the 1869-1870 school year other than these transactions. Cf. *1871 Hodgson Report*, xi, xxiv-xxv.

eleven were black. Forty-three were men, and thirty-five were women. Three teachers taught at multiple institutions. In total, the county's educators were paid \$12,179.59, but only \$4,488.18 came from the state treasury. The remaining \$9,195.18 was desperately needed, wrote Houston, because the teachers needed their pay.¹⁹⁰

In his 1871 report to the governor, State Superintendent of Education Hodgson gave different data for the 1870-1871 school year. According to Hodgson, Perry County had seventy-seven free public schools and eighty teachers. Forty-eight were men, and thirty-two were women (see Appendix N). Hodgson did not mention the educators' ethnicities or whether anyone taught at more than one school, as Houston indicated, but pay records confirm that Houston was correct.¹⁹¹

Superintendent Hodgson might have been wrong about other matters as well. His report showed that Perry County did not have any grammar (class-three) or high (class-four) schools and that no one taught history. In actuality, there were fifty-nine grammar schools in the county. Twenty-nine were white, and thirty-two were black. There were also eighteen intermediate schools. Fifteen were white, and three were black. Each one of them offered class-one and class-two (or basic) public-school courses, including arithmetic, geography, grammar, orthography, reading, and writing. A few of them offered composition, history, natural science, and physiology if not elementary bookkeeping and the United States Constitution, two classes that were required for class-three or class-four status.¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ Cf. *1871 Hodgson Report*, 72. For additional discourse, see *Montgomery Daily Advertiser*, 22 March 1870. See also *Montgomery Weekly Mail*, 28 July 1869, 23 February 1870, and 6 April 1870.

¹⁹¹ *1871 Hodgson Report*, iii, v.

¹⁹² *Ibid.* Alabama's prewar public-school curriculum included astronomy, bookkeeping, English composition, geography, history of the United States and "outlines of universal history," hygiene, mental

The Alabama Department of Education's administrative files painted a different picture. According to these records, Perry County had several grammar schools, high schools, and history offerings. In January and February of 1870, J. Thomas taught history to five white Uniontown students at a school that had James H. Houston as a trustee. In Perryville, Parridese M. Green's sole female pupil received courses in history during January and April 1870. In February of the same year, Miss Sallie Hutchinson taught six white Uniontown students history, and Mrs. E. V. Givhan (or Givham) offered history classes to three white students at a Marion school that had a black trustee, Alexander H. Curtis.

In May 1870, W. L. Fagan taught history to thirteen white students. The same month, Selina A. Robards reported teaching history to four white Marion youths, or three more than she had taught the previous month. In Uniontown, Miss M. H. Smith offered history courses to black pupils months before Fagan or Robards. Her neighbor, George Card, also taught black students history in January 1871.¹⁹³

It seems that Hodgson's data regarding Perry County's grammar- and high-school deficiencies were also wrong. More than twenty teachers instructed grammar- or high-school students in 1870 and 1871. Even a cursory look at some of the county's teachers

and written arithmetic, orthography, penmanship, physiology, reading, and a course in the United States Constitution. Those branches, explained Superintendent of Education W. F. Perry, were selected because they were essential to a solid common-school education. W. F. Perry, prep., *Forms for the Officers of Free Public Schools, and an Abstract of the Laws Relating to the Sale of the School Lands of the State of Alabama* (Montgomery, Al.: Advertiser and Gazette Steam Power Press Book Office, 1854), 14, hereinafter cited as *1854 Forms for the Officers of Free Public Schools*. Branch designations are found in Article V, sec. 2 of the 1854 school law.

¹⁹³ See Alabama Department of Education, Administrative Files, 1869-1870, 1870 Teacher's Monthly Reports, SG 15916, and Teacher's Reports, SG 15918, ADAH, hereinafter cited as 1870 Teachers' Monthly Reports.

and the grades that they taught from January through April 1870 helps expose the inaccuracy of Hodgson's claims (see Appendix O).

Out of all of Perry County's black students, John C. Dozier's ten pupils were truly privileged. Their sober, trustworthy, and extremely capable instructor knew not only English but also Greek and Latin, which he used to read and interpret biblical scriptures.¹⁹⁴ The seventy-year-old physician, politician, property owner, and second pastor of the First Colored Missionary Baptist Church of Uniontown (which his grandson, Edward S. Dozier, later pastored) learned the languages from one of his former masters, the president of a Virginia college.¹⁹⁵ Although John C. Dozier did not offer his students formal instruction in Greek or Latin, as did white Bush Creek, Marion, and Uniontown educators W. A. Montgomery, W. L. Fagan, and Maurice Bondurant (or Bundurant), Dozier probably uttered a few Greek or Latin phrases in front of his pupils from time to time as he stressed the importance of classical study, hard work, sobriety, and thrift.¹⁹⁶

J. C. Dozier was without question Perry County's most erudite 1870-1871 grammar schoolteacher of black students, but he was not the only one. Fellow Uniontown educators B. R. Thomas and M. H. Smith taught forty-eight and five black

¹⁹⁴ See Alton Fitts, III, "The Rest of the Story," introduction to Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, xii. See also Charles Brown, "John Dozier: A Member of the General Assembly of Alabama, 1872-1873 and 1873-1874," *Negro History Bulletin* 26 (November 1962): 113. Cf. Boothe, *Cyclopedia of Colored Baptists of Alabama*, 138-139. Cf. Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 166.

¹⁹⁵ See, for example, "First Colored Missionary Baptist Church," in *The Heritage of Perry County, Alabama*, 41. The author is not certain of John C. Dozier's age. Charles Brown interviewed some of Dozier's family members, and they believed that Dozier was born in 1800, but Brown was not certain. Some sources have suggested that Reverend Dozier was the first, not the second, pastor of First Colored Missionary Baptist Church, which has also been called First Colored Baptist Church and the First Baptist Church. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 269; Brown, "John Dozier."

¹⁹⁶ Cf. Brown, "John Dozier," 113; Boothe, *Cyclopedia of Colored Baptists of Alabama*, 138-139. It seems that W. L. Fagan was paid more money than any other Perry County public schoolteacher who submitted a report between January and May 1870. He or she made \$70 per month. Other teachers usually made between \$40 and \$60 per month. Cf. 1870 Teachers' Monthly Reports.

grammar-school students, respectively. Card taught more than fifty others. How Superintendent of Education Hodgson could have been unaware of this information is uncertain. His department compiled it.

Overall, Perry County's white and black student-age citizens went to school at about the same rate, eighty percent, during Reconstruction. Male white students tended to attend classes about four percent more than their black counterparts, whose school year was twenty-one days longer than that of white students, but female attendance was virtually even. Turnout tended to drop during the growing and harvesting seasons, but other than those months, students' attendance was strong. Their high and steady enrollment helps prove how important academic education was in Perry County following the Civil War.

For some reason, the pay rate of teachers who taught black students was \$1 more than that of white teachers during 1870 and 1871. The difference might have resulted from the difficulties that black students' teachers faced in trying to school individuals who had never been afforded anything except "an old field school education," but black Perry Countians were remarkably literate by Alabama standards during the Postbellum period, and black literacy increased in coming years. White opposition to black schools could have caused the \$1 difference, but several sources indicated that many white school officials had begun to embrace black education by 1870.¹⁹⁷

Perry County's 1870-1871 school-fund apportionment for black schools was \$9,242.02, or \$4,564.07 more than the money that the county's white free public schools received. Because the state government allocated funds according to how many pupils

¹⁹⁷ *Marion Commonwealth* "Biographical Sketches," quoting *Montgomery Advance*, [n.d.].

were in regular attendance, the disbursement was understandable. Although Alabama did not have free public schools during much of the Antebellum period, and those that were established were created to educate the offspring of the wealthy Democrats, the state's ordinary white school-age children, teenagers, and young adults were still afforded more legal opportunities to obtain a formal education than the state's black population. That is not to say that adequate resources, including learned and patient educators, were not needed in the state's white postbellum schools because they were. But adequate resources were needed even more in the black schools.¹⁹⁸

During the 1870-1871 academic year, Perry County was issued \$4,181.68 in certificates to cover school expenses. Officers received an additional \$266.60, bringing the county's total disbursement to \$4,448.28. The following year, the county apportionment increased to \$4,511.33. No data seem to exist for the amount of money that officers received, but contemporaneous reports showed that no warrant went unpaid in 1870 or 1871 and that no 1866-1870 superintendents held warrants. Superintendents Speed and Houston were paid \$1,500 and \$795.99, respectively. Together with the county's directors and trustees, Houston amassed \$255.29 in expenses, but information pertaining to the previous years' expenditures is unknown. Evidently, Speed did not submit a report, or state officials misplaced it.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁸ See "The Free School System," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 16 January 1869. Cf. "Peace and Education"; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 43. The state government could have allocated public-school funds based on the actual populations of school districts. Even then, Perry County's black schools would have received more money than its white schools. According the 1870 state census, Perry had 6,545 black and 3,473 white children. The county's white and black teenage and young adult populations were similarly disproportionate. Cf. *1871 Hodgson Report*, ix.

¹⁹⁹ Lincoln Normal School incurred \$252.36 in expenses during the 1870-1871 school year. Cf. *1871 Hodgson Report*, xii, xiv, xx, xxvii. In 1871, directors were paid \$72.

Certificates totaling \$12,071.66 were issued and returned for the 1870-1871 academic year. The state government allocated \$13,046.13. Almost half (\$6,150.65) of the allocation came from sixteenth-section interest. The rest of it came from “other” funds. Although most of the money was used to pay teachers’ salaries, and public schools benefited Perry County’s masses, several of the county’s wealthiest citizens objected to the local and state taxes that were used to keep them operational. They also disliked the way that state lawmakers used money that should have been earmarked for educational purposes to fund non-educational projects and the prorating of poll tax income. Likewise, detractors complained that tax money was shifted from one state department to another before it was finally transferred to county officials for local use.²⁰⁰

Superintendent Hodgson’s response to criticism was dichotomous. On the one hand, the self-styled “ministerial officer” encouraged lawmakers to sell state bonds to meet the costs of maintaining Alabama’s public school system if licenses and taxes did not generate enough revenue to cover outlays. Confident that good public schools were better security mechanisms than handcuffs or policemen, Hodgson encouraged decision makers to support public education. When they refused to listen, he reminded them that jails were filled with illiterate men and women: “Knowledge is power—knowledge is

²⁰⁰ See Alabama Department of Education, Payroll Ledger for County Superintendents, 1870-1871, SG 23725, ADAH. See also Incomes by State Fund for Free Public Schools, SG 23763, ADAH; “Peace and Education: The Free Public School System of Alabama,” *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 7 October 1870, hereinafter cited as “Peace and Education.” Cf. *1871 Hodgson Report*, xi; Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 59. Using sixteenth-section funds for public educational purposes is also taken up in *Argument of Benjamin F. Porter, in Support of a Bill Introduced by Him into the House of Representatives, “For the Preservation of the Sixteenth Section Grants, and to Establish, Permanently, in the State of Alabama, a Common School Fund, so as Fully to Secure the Intellectual Improvement and Moral Welfare of the Youth of the State”* (N.P.: n.p., n.d.), in vol. 5, book 3, J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, LPR 100, ADAH, hereinafter cited as *Argument of Benjamin F. Porter*; “An Act to Provide for the Extension of the Debts due Sixteenth Sections,” in *1854 Forms for the Officers of Free Public Schools*, 25-28. Cf. Hoar, “History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875,” 137.

wealth. It is poverty that urges crime.” On the other hand, Hodgson suggested that the state government could cut costs by limiting the number of normal and private schools that it supported by encouraging the children of wealthy Alabamians to attend public schools and by appealing to the federal government to provide the land and requisite funds needed to sufficiently educate the state’s black population.²⁰¹

During 1871-1872, Perry County had 10,054 public schoolchildren and a state apportionment of \$14,046.04. Of that amount, \$10,032.60 went to black students; the remaining \$4,046.04 went to white students. County Superintendent Houston reported a state allocation of \$10,825.99 for expenses. Only \$4,747.33 came from the 1872 public-school fund; the remaining \$6,078.66 came from other sources.²⁰²

As in previous years, Perry County officials did not submit a report showing the amount of money in certificates that Houston was issued from the state government’s 1872 unexpended funds, or state officials lost it. The same is true for Houston’s report on white schools. But in 1873, he reported that \$3,434.57 had been issued in certificates to pay twenty-six people who taught in Perry’s black and white schools (see Appendix P). Almost one-third, or \$1,322.95, of the money went to persons who taught white students; the remaining \$2,111.62 went to persons who taught black students.²⁰³

Perry County had 10,054 school-age children in 1873. Of that number, 7,060 were black, and 2,994 were white. Altogether, the county received \$12,195.87 from the

²⁰¹ “Col. Hodgson’s Address to the Board of Education,” *The Shelby County Guide*, 6 December 1870 (first quote); Joseph Hodgson, quoted in Alabama Department of Education, *Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, for the State of Alabama, For the Scholastic Year Ending on the 30th of September, 1872, to the Governor* (Montgomery, Al.: W. W. Screws, 1872), 10, hereinafter cited as *1872 Superintendent’s Report* (second quote). For Hodgson’s bond scheme, cf. *ibid.*, 6; *1871 Hodgson Report*, 4, 9, 10-11, 13. For the financial difficulties that Hodgson and other education administrators faced during 1870 and 1871, cf. Hoar, “History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875,” 132, 134-135.

²⁰² Cf. *1872 Superintendent’s Report*, 16-23, 27.

²⁰³ Cf. *ibid.*, 78.

state treasury for education. A reported \$8,730.07 of the money was allocated for black students; the remaining \$3,465.80 was earmarked for white students. At the end of the school term, \$8,661.30 remained. Why the money was not used is unknown. Elsewhere in the state, many public schools were closed, as per a 14 December 1872 act by State Superintendent Speed, but the public schools in Perry County remained open. To no informed person's surprise, opposing Democrats claimed that Speed used his office to keep the schools in his home county open.²⁰⁴

In all, Perry County had 10,177 school-age children during the 1873-1874 academic year. A reported 7,656 children were black, and 2,521 were white. Excluding local and poll taxes, administrators had \$10,083.23 at their disposal to educate the county's school-age population. Of that money, \$6,211.68 came from interest derived from the sixteenth-section fund. The state government provided the remaining \$3,871.55.²⁰⁵

During 1874-1875, Perry County had 7,656 black and 2,521 school-age citizens. Of those, 1,523 black and 487 white persons were actually enrolled in a public school, and approximately eighty percent of them attended school daily. Perry's thirty-seven white public schools received \$3,223.41 from the state's public school fund, the county's forty black public schools \$10,486.57. A reported \$6,211.68 came from sixteenth-section interest, and \$1,059 came from poll taxes.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 140, 157; Hoar, "History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875," 142-147. For Perry County's "undrawn balance" at the end of 1872-1873 school year, see *Report of Joseph Speed, Superintendent of Public Instruction, of the State of Alabama, For the Scholastic Year Ending October 1st, 1874* (Montgomery, Al.: W. W. Screws, 1874), 5, hereinafter cited as *1874 Speed Report*.

²⁰⁵ *1874 Speed Report*, 17.

²⁰⁶ In his annual report to the governor, Superintendent Speed indicated that there were 1,218 black and 388 white persons attending school each day in Perry County, which had twenty-four public schools for its male

Like his predecessor, Hodgson, State Superintendent Speed's information regarding the number of grammar and high schools in Perry County during the first months of the 1874-1875 was probably incorrect. According to Speed's data, there were five white and fourteen black primary schools in the county. In addition to these institutions, there were thirteen white and eighteen black intermediate and ten white and five black grammar schools. Teachers in the county's white schools received \$2,941.22, teachers in the black schools \$9,560.70. Average pay was \$43.06 for white schools' teachers and \$31.08 for black schools' teachers even though the people who taught in the black schools worked an average twenty-eight days longer than those in the white schools. Likewise, people teaching in the black schools usually taught at least twenty-five more students than those in the white schools.²⁰⁷

A comparison of Perry County's public schoolteachers' 1870-1871 and 1874-1875 pay presents an interesting scenario. During 1870-1871, persons who taught black students earned one dollar more than persons who taught white students. During 1874-1875, however, the former were paid more than \$10 less than the latter. One could easily infer that the pay differences resulted from the reemergence of the Democratic and Conservative party, which regained almost complete control of the state government in November 1874, but the situation was not that simple. Because Alabama faced a substantial debt, lawmakers required almost every public schoolteacher, and quite a few administrators, to accept pay cuts when Democratic, or "home," rule was restored. In Perry, the county superintendent of education was paid only \$625.10 plus a \$100 per

and thirteen public schools for its female white youths and young adults. The county's black male and female students had thirty and eight public schools, respectively. Cf. *ibid.*, 55.

²⁰⁷ Cf. *1874 Speed Report*, 55, 57; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 6.

diem for visiting schools. Five years earlier, Charles Crowe had earned \$1,125, and he had barely been among the ten highest paid county superintendents in the state.²⁰⁸

Black Church Building in Perry County

By 1874-1875, black Perry Countians had gained educational and financial resources that had confused traditional caste and class arrangements. With the help of the American Missionary Association, several of them had acquired one- or multiple-acre homesteads on which they had built comfortable homes. Black people had improved their conditions even further via religious and secular education. Remarkably, in a state where illiteracy was widespread, few black Perry Countians under the age of thirty were unable to read and write by 1874-1875, according to Heidt. And he would have known. His newspaper had a substantial black readership.²⁰⁹

The fact that many Perry County blacks were regular subscribers to the *Marion Commonwealth*, the *Alabama State Journal*, the *Montgomery Daily Advertiser and Mail*, the *Selma Weekly Times*, and other Black Belt newspapers illustrates how informed, forward thinking, and financially secure they were. Out of 175,000 Alabama voters in 1874, only 40,000 of them subscribed to papers, according to Edward King, a northern pundit who was investigating the South's natural resources and sociopolitical conditions to communicate to northern readers. Through an unexplained (and possibly flawed)

²⁰⁸ Cf. *1870 Superintendent's Statements to the House*, 7-8.

²⁰⁹ See "Communicated," *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 June 1873. Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 55, 185; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 37, 39; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 160 (footnote 16), citing *Lincoln Normal School, Marion, Alabama* (New York: American Missionary Association, 1905), 1, and Brownlee, *New Day Ascending*, 124, and "Let Us Make Man," 51; Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung*, 12-13.

methodology, King determined that most newspaper subscribers in Alabama were white. The state's black population did not seem to care for newspapers at all, he concluded.²¹⁰

King's hypothesis did not apply to Perry County. There, numerous blacks had enough foresight and financial stability to stay abreast of local, state, and national news. A few of them even kept up with international affairs. Likewise, many freepersons had enough money and fortitude to make sure their children received academic educations even though tuition and other school fees could be quite expensive. During the 1874-1875 school year, for instance, white students paid an average of \$2.02 per month to attend school in Perry County. That year, only Limestone County pupils paid more. Reports differed, but educational costs were undoubtedly higher for Perry County's black students.²¹¹

Black Perry Countians' educational and financial accumulation, prudence, and willingness to sacrifice were astounding. One observant visitor was amazed at how well the county's black private schools were attended during the summer of 1873. Such a high enrollment meant that Perry County had fewer black workers during the planting and harvesting seasons. To compensate for the shortfall, black parents had to work additional hours, or their children had to work mornings, evenings, and weekends.

²¹⁰ See Edward King, *The Southern States of North America: A record of Journeys in Louisiana, Texas, the Indian Territory, Missouri, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland* (London: Blackie and Son, 1875) and *The Great South; a Record of Journeys in Louisiana, Texas, the Indian Territory, Missouri, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland* (Hartford, Conn.: American Publishing Company, 1875). Cf. Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction*, 378.

²¹¹ Cf. *1875 Report of John McKleroy*, 62-63.

Despite the demanding schedule, the visitor was confident the county's black public schools would be filled to capacity as soon as the fall semester began.²¹²

In addition to being academically grounded, hard working, relatively secure financially, and politically aware, many blacks in Perry County were extremely religious. Before 1865, a number of them had been able to attend church, camp meetings, and revivals with their white masters, overseers, or neighbors. Others had worshipped together in private, as was the case in 1844 when two white evangelicals preached to a group of Perry County slaves in a grove outside Hebron Baptist Church. Inside, white members of the Baptist Bethel Association discussed foot washing, priestly duties, Sunday schools, and temperance. A similar incident took place in 1847. As members of the Cahawba (or Cahaba) Baptist Association met in the Hopewell Baptist Church of Marion, Reverend B. H. Matthews ministered to slaves in a grove outside.²¹³

Black church attendance was common in Perry County before and during the Civil War, but it should not be exaggerated. On occasion, black people were unable to attend church because they had to work when services were held, Sundays included. Once, Hugh Davis, Sr., sent his slaves to the fields on Sunday without their usual Sabbath pay because he was behind schedule, and the cotton that they had picked during the week contained too much grass. Reverend J. F. Smith described another instance of Sunday work in an 11 December 1863 letter to his nephew, Thomas Whetstone: "While the

²¹² Cf. 19 June 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Communicated"; Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung*, 11, 42.

²¹³ William A. Stickney, founder of St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church of Marion, also ministered to slaves who lived in rural areas. See Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South*, updated ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 132-133, 136, 148, 199-200. See also Booker T. Washington, *Negro Education not a Failure* (Tuskegee, Al.: Tuskegee Institute, 1904), 8. Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 185; Flynt, *Alabama Baptist*, 62, 67, 99-107; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 70-71, 72.

white folks were at church professing to be fasting and praying, the negroes are in the fields hard at work. What a shame! No wonder our prayers are not heard.”²¹⁴

One can only imagine for what Reverend Smith prayed in the midst of war, but most blacks prayed for academic education, personal property, religious autonomy, respect—in a word, freedom. Outside Selma, Alexander Goldsby, a blacksmith and Baptist deacon in a predominately white church whose father was born on a slave ship, assembled a group of blacks each Friday night to pray for the emancipation that Abraham Lincoln’s 1862-1863 proclamations did not bring. In Marion, blacks held formal prayer meetings each Sunday afternoon and night as well as one night during the weekdays. Bishop Cobbs, an elderly black Baptist whom the Storrs family knew, led many of the services. On occasion, a white person would attend, encouraging the slaves to sing European-style hymns, but they preferred to sing traditional African songs that had been passed down orally or hymns that they themselves had composed. Jubilee, or slave, songs, they said, “had more religion than those in a book.”²¹⁵

As John W. Blassingame, John Hope Franklin, Alfred A. Moss, Jr., Albert J. Raboteau, Thomas Wentworth Higgins, and other authors and historians have amply pointed out, religion was one of the strongest forces that slaves had at their disposal to combat the barbarity of slavery. It was also a way to perpetuate African customs, as reflected in the abovementioned thwarting of European hymns. As important was slaves’ insistence on singing “Hail Mary,” “Roll, Jordan, Roll,” “Steal Away to Jesus,” and

²¹⁴ 11 December 1863 J. T. Smith letter to Thomas Whetstone. Cf. Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 103; Sellers, *Slavery in Alabama*, 299.

²¹⁵ Christian, “The Days that are No More,” 339. Cf. Blassingame, *The Slave Community*, 138; Boothe, *Cyclopedia of the Colored Baptists of Alabama*, 107, 146-147; Foner, *Freedom’s Lawmakers*, 88; Sellers, *Slavery in Alabama*, 300; Winik, 53.

innumerable other spirituals in the manner to which they were accustomed. Slaves on the Storrs estate were fond of “My Jesus Acomin”:

My Jesus acomin!
 He’s acoming inde mawning,
My Jesus acomin!
 He’s coming in his charot,
My Jesus acoming!
 Crac you whip Liga,
My Jesus acomin!
 Open de gate Marthy,
My Jesus acomin!
 Run to meet ‘im Mary,
My Jesus acomin!
 His eyes like fire,
My Jesus a comin!
 His legs lik a pilgrems,
My Jesus acomin!²¹⁶

According to Ella Storrs, the slaves could sing this song indefinitely, improvising as they went along. The chorus never changed, but each participant would insert a verse indicating what he or she thought was going to happen when Jesus finally came. From time to time, someone would “get happy” (a common sign of a pious realization, or epiphany), and the worshippers would clasp hands, form a circle, and jump up and down in time with the music. As the singing grew louder and the words blurred, someone would scream, throw up his or her hands as if cataleptic, fall down, and have to be carried away.²¹⁷

Storrs might not have known it, but what she was witnessing was a variation of the African American ring shout (ringshout, shout), a scheme that slaves developed to

²¹⁶ “My Jesus Acomin,” as quoted in Christian, “The Days that are No More,” 340. See John Hope Franklin and Alfred A. Moss, Jr., *Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans*, 8th ed. (New York: Knopf, 2000). See also T. W. Higginson, “Negro Spirituals,” *Atlantic Monthly* 19 (June 1867): 685-694. Cf. Blassingame, *The Slave Community*, especially 134-138; Raboteau, *Slave Religion*.

²¹⁷ Christian, “The Days that are No More,” 340; Raboteau, *Slave Religion*. Cf. Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction*, 91-94.

perpetuate traditional African forms of worship that incorporated perpetual movement, vibrant polyrhythmic beats, and constant singing when white masters and overseers' religious conventions, fear of rebellion, or ignorance forbade the slaves from enjoying such customs. Over time, the ringshout became known as the Charleston, an immensely popular dance that blacks and whites performed throughout the early twentieth century. At the time, relatively few people knew that the "invisible institution," or slave religion, produced it.²¹⁸

The vast majority of Perry County slaves were not manumitted until the Thirteenth Amendment was ratified, but thousands of them did get an opportunity to "taste freedom" through private worship services. Others fellowshiped alongside, as opposed to behind or near, their white brothers and sisters in Christ. At the historic Siloam Baptist Church, for example, black and white parishioners began to be baptized, pray, and tithe together shortly after its 7 June 1822 or 1823 founding. Early leaders were perhaps surprised to find out that blacks were as receptive to biblical study as whites. In some cases, blacks were more receptive.²¹⁹

At the time that Siloam was established, Marion was supposedly notorious for the iniquity that occasionally marked the early history of a newly settled town or village. According to one nineteenth-century report, slaveholding minister Charles Crow (or Crowe), Siloam's first pastor and future president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, held services only one time per month because Marion's early settlers were

²¹⁸ Raboteau, *Slave Religion*.

²¹⁹ See, for example, *Baptists in Alabama, 1808-1958* (Birmingham, AL: Alabama Baptist State Convention, 1958). Cf. Blassingame, *The Slave Community*; Flynt, *Alabama Baptists*; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 128; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 3, citing *Marion Standard*, 2 April 1909; Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*. Reverend Crow might have been the father or grandfather of postbellum Perry County Superintendent of Education Charles Campbell Crowe.

more interested in the devilment that the town offered than in attending church. William Calloway, Crow's successor and fellow slaveholder, encountered similar apathy. Only one person was baptized during Calloway's 1830-1833 pastorate, and the church had only thirty-five members when he left.²²⁰

James Veasy, Siloam's next pastor, was more successful than either one of his predecessors. "The secret of the success of his preaching lay in his dwelling much upon the passion and love of the Redeemer," recalled one individual. "These themes animated his soul, and their power was acknowledged by his congregation." When Veasy stepped down in December 1834, Siloam's bi-ethnic membership had risen to 103, and fifty-one members had been baptized.²²¹

Siloam grew over the next twenty years. Under Peter Crawford, Veasy's replacement and one of Judson's founders, an elegant \$7,000 parsonage was raised before Crawford left Marion in 1837 to teach at the Central Female College in Mississippi. During the tenure of his successor, James H. DeVotie (or Devotie), who served until 1855 or 1856, a lot was purchased at the corner of Washington and Early Street, and some of the black members built Marion's first brick church. By the time that Reverend William H. McIntosh replaced DeVotie, Siloam had more than 650 members, and the majority of them were slaves.²²²

²²⁰ See "Historic Sketches of the Siloam Baptist Church, Marion, Ala.," typescript, 1849, Alabama Church Records, Coley 7N, ADAH. The Alabama Baptist State Convention was organized on 28 October 1823 at Salem Baptist Church outside Greensboro in Hale County. Cf. "Ocmulgee Baptist Church Slave and Free Members." One twentieth-century writer had a distinctly different view of Marion during the 1820s, calling it a dilapidated, sleepy town that had dirty houses and an unhealthy climate. Cf. Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 3, 4, quoting *Marion Standard*, 26 March 1909, and citing Thomas Perkins Abernathy, *The Formative Period in Alabama, 1815-1828* (Montgomery, AL: Brown Printing Company, 1922), 57-58.

²²¹ Cf. "Historic Sketches of the Siloam Baptist Church, Marion, Ala."

²²² Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 70-75.

Ocmulgee (Okmulgee, Oakmulgee) Baptist Church, out of which Siloam grew, also welcomed black people. One of Alabama's oldest Baptist churches, Ocmulgee had twelve members when Calloway, Crow, William Harrod, Isaac Suttle (or Sattle), and John Tubb founded it on 10 June 1820. Crow was named pastor, and Reddick Sims was named clerk. The same year, citizens S. Norris and Thomas Lowe became deacons, and slaves Bob and Dafney were received by letter, but neither bondman was a member for long. Bob died on 25 August 1821, and Dafney was dismissed from the church on 22 September. Church records did not indicate why he was excused, but they did indicate that he or another man named Dafney was a member on 22 March 1828.²²³

In April 1823, Elder Crow resigned. His successor, a slave-owning minister by the name of Noah Haggard, stayed at Ocmulgee until March 1831. The church prospered under Haggard and his aides. One of them, Matthew Dennis, held a deaconship for almost thirty years. Dennis' twin brother, John, was ordained in 1826 and preached to white and black congregations throughout Perry County. By the time that Reverend Dennis became an elder in April 1829, several persons had been baptized, and Ocmulgee was flourishing.²²⁴

Thanks to competent leaders and a growing membership that included more than 100 slaves, the church continued to flourish without any significant interruption or change for the rest of the Antebellum period. During the Postbellum period, however, it and other predominately white churches faced substantial change, especially with regard

²²³ See "Ocmulgee Church," typescript, 19 April 1860, Alabama Church Records, Coley 7N, ADAH. See also "Baptist Churches by Name," *ibid.* Suttle might have been an Arminian, and Crow pastored several churches. In addition to the churches mentioned in the text, Crow headed Concord, Hopewell, and Shiloh. Cf. Flynt, *Alabama Baptists*, 28, 62; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 70, 71-72; "Ocmulgee Baptist Church and Free Members."

²²⁴ Cf. "Ocmulgee Baptist Church Slave and Free Members."

to their black members. Although white religious groups like the Alabama Baptist State Convention did not think former slaves' altered political and legal statuses necessitated a change in their social or religious status, a number of black church leaders thought differently.²²⁵

Following the Civil War, one way that Perry County's black citizens expressed their new station in life and their understanding of liberation theology was by "hunting for Jesus" in their own houses of worship.²²⁶ The process actually began during the war. Once James Childs, Wilson Freeman, George Huckabee, Henry King, Orum Parish (or Parrish), Isaac Smith, and other black Baptists heard about Abraham Lincoln's technically weak but psychologically strong 1862-1863 emancipation proclamations,²²⁷ which would have manumitted slaves in Confederate-held territories and the District of Columbia and then compensated former slave owners for their losses,²²⁸ the blacks began

²²⁵ See *Minutes of the Forty-third Annual Session of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, 1865* (Atlanta: Franklin Steam Printing House, 1866), 10. See also George H. and Mildred B. Watson, *History of the Christian Churches in the Alabama Area* (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1965), 52-53. Cf. Essah, *A House Divided*, 146-147.

²²⁶ J. Wayne Flynt and Johnny R. Green, communication to the author, 17 October 2006, hereinafter cited as Flynt and Green Communication; Stewart, *The Work of the Church in the South during the Period of Reconstruction*, 39 (quote). Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 41; *History and Hope in the Heart of Dixie*, 108-109. One historian argues that Reconstruction did not pivot on religion until 1870. Cf. McAfee, *Religion, Race and Reconstruction*, 25, 162.

²²⁷ How far-reaching, revolutionary, or stunning Lincoln's 1862-1863 proclamations remains a topic of widespread debate. Among the works already cited by the author, Blassingame, *The Slave Community*; Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*; Davis, *Lincoln's Men*; Dunning, *Essays on the Civil War and Reconstruction*; Essah, *A House Divided*; Foner, *Forever Free*; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*; Lincoln, "From the Civil War to the End of World War I"; McAfee, *Race, Religion and Reconstruction*; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom, The Negro's Civil War, and Ordeal by Fire*; Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction and Slavery and Freedom*; Stamp; Ward et al., *The Civil War*; Winik; and Wright, *What They didn't Teach You about the Civil War* summarize the virtues and shortcomings of Lincoln's emancipation proclamations. For reasons mentioned in the text, Bruce Catton, one of the United States' most influential twentieth-century Civil War historians, deemed Lincoln's proclamations "almost absurd." *The American Heritage New History of the Civil War*, James M. McPherson, ed. (New York: Barnes and Nobles, 2005), 248.

²²⁸ The years 1862 and 1863 were not the first times that Lincoln had contemplated de jure slavery in the District of Columbia. As a second-term congressman in January 1849, Lincoln drafted "A Bill to Abolish Slavery in the District of Columbia," but he never introduced the measure into Congress. See *Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 1848-1849*, Saturday, 13 January 1849, 242. See also

to make plans to erect a church that they themselves controlled. Childs and his associates knew that building the praise house would not be a problem because they had made the brick, mixed the mortar, and helped construct Siloam, but they worried about raising enough money to either rent or purchase a building to house the church. Finding a white person who was willing to part with land during the war was equally vexing.²²⁹

Exactly how, when, and from whom the men acquired the resources they needed to build the Negro Church of Marion is questionable, but the church's wartime existence is certain. Following the war, its members volunteered their services to help build First Colored Presbyterian. In 1871, they paid John B. Cocke, a leading Perry County Democrat and future doorkeeper of the Alabama House, \$480 for a small plot of land at the corner of Washington and DeKalb Streets about two squares below Siloam for the sole use of Negro Baptist. In 1873, while W. T. Coleman was pastor, Negro Baptist was renamed the Second Colored Baptist Church of Marion. Later, it became Berean. Among the church's earliest members were the well-to-do Billingslea (or Billingsley), Curtis, Freeman, Foster, Jones, Parish (or Parrish), Speed, Tarrant, Thomas, Tutt, and Webb families.²³⁰

"A Bill to Abolish Slavery in the District of Columbia," transcript, and Abraham Lincoln to Congress, 16 April 1862, Lincoln Papers, Series I: General Correspondence, 1833-1916, LOC. Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 199; Lincoln Winik, 236.

²²⁹ The Cahaba Association of the Alabama Baptist State Convention might have given \$1,000 to Siloam, whose officers donated the money to First Colored Baptist, but the author is not sure whether the funds were exchanged in 1871 or in 1873. Cf. "Berean Baptist Church," *The Heritage of Perry County, Alabama*, 38.

²³⁰ Naturally, not all black persons in Perry County left predominately white churches after 1865. For instance, the Perryville Circuit of the Southern Methodist Episcopal Church maintained a sizeable black membership. See Perryville Circuit, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Quarterly Conference Record, 1853-1869, Alabama Church Records, Coley 7N, ADAH. Cocke was named temporary doorkeeper of the Alabama House on Monday, 16 November 1874.

Black Uniontown congregants were as independent-minded as their Marion counterparts. In late July or early August 1866, William Boyd, John C. Dozier, Solomon Groom, Jerry and Randolph Nicholson, and Spencer Weaver petitioned former Uniontown Canebrake Guard James G. Hudson, Lilburn L. Fox, and other white leaders of the predominantly black Uniontown Baptist Church to form a separate place of worship:

[W]e, the [400-plus] Colored members of the Uniontown Baptist Church, do hereby petition our White Brothers of the said church, to grant letters of dismissal to such of us as have no charge of disorderly conduct against us and to aid us in forming ourselves into [an] independent church to be known as the Uniontown African Baptist Church.

The white officials accepted the petition, and the First Colored Missionary Baptist Church was begun. John C. Dozier was one of the six original deacons.²³¹

Elsewhere in the state and nation, freepersons did not have enough money and other resources to build their own churches, so whites donated vacant buildings. This was rarely the case in Perry County, whose black residents' somewhat privileged prewar circumstance allowed them to be real postwar agents of self-help, self-sufficiency, and thoroughness whom former slaves in adjacent counties sought to emulate. It also allowed black Perry Countians to give generously to religious institutions and activities and to manage their own spiritual affairs (although white assistance was appreciated).

Retrospectively, the efforts of Perry County's Caucasian and Negro churchgoers seem to

²³¹ John Green, Dan and William Langhorne, Moses Nickerson, and Jetty Washington joined Dozier on the deacon board. For reasons that remain unclear, Fox stayed on as pastor. Oftentimes, the white congregants of bi-ethnic churches who helped black people create separate places of worship during the Postbellum period merely perpetuated previous Jim Crow policies. That is to say, black and white churchgoers would gather in separate buildings, but the blacks would worship in the same way that had worshipped in the basements and galleries of the antebellum churches. Cf. "First Colored Missionary Baptist Church," *The Heritage of Perry County, Alabama*, 41, 54; Essah, *A House Divided*, 147; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 79, citing Beth Drake, "Uniontown," 8.

suggest that the racial divides for which the Black Belt was known during the Antebellum, Civil War, and Reconstruction periods did exist in Perry County, but they were not as rigid in Perry as they were in neighboring counties such as Choctaw, Dallas, Greene, Hale, and Marengo.²³²

White church leaders' pre-Civil War courting of black members lends support to this contention. The competition among white Baptists and Methodists such as Hugh Davis, Sr., was particularly intense. Legend has it that Methodist elders passed an ordinance mandating the expulsion of any black member who was found guilty of immorality, intemperance, being unclean, lying, stealing, or attending a Baptist church. As long as black Methodists did not commit one of these prohibited acts, they could continue to sit beside, commune with, and drink from the same cup as white Methodists.²³³

An early postbellum religious conversion also supports the contention that Perry County churchgoers were not as racially divided as other Black Belt congregants. At a December 1866-January 1867 revival preached by J. L. M. Curry (Perry County's "blazing meteor in the dark theological sky of Reconstruction"), the son of a wealthy antebellum planter was converted. As soon as the young man was baptized, two elderly men who had belonged to the convert's father walked past other congregants and

²³² Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 55; McPherson, "White Liberals and Black Power in Negro Education," 138; Winkler, "The Negroes in the Gulf States," 585. First Colored Missionary Baptist Church did fit the common mold. For a few postwar years, its members met in the white church out of which it grew. Because most black members left the original church, it suffered, having to serve as a school and a courtroom. Unable to pay a full-time minister, Howard students often gave sermons. Cf. "The 2d Baptist Church"; Essah, *A House Divided*, 146-147; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 59; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 79; Raboteau, *Slave Religion*, 178; "Uniontown Baptist Church"; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, passim, and "Let Us Make Man," 403.

²³³ Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 70, 80-84; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*; Sellers, *Slavery in Alabama*, 294-331.

extended “the right hand of fellowship,” according to the Atlanta, Georgia, *Christian Index and South-western Baptist*. Afterward, the pious blacks thanked God in plain but touching words for making the white youth a Christian.²³⁴

The year 1873 was a banner one for black church building in Perry County. Several edifices were constructed during the first half of the year, additional buildings were scheduled to be completed before year’s end, and demand for theological study increased. In each endeavor, white Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and other denominationalists helped. Additional assistance was provided by the biracial Young Men’s Christian Association and the Perry County Bible Society over which Edwin Theodore Winkler—a Brown and Furman alumnus, Newton Theological Institute graduate, editor, future owner (with Reverend John L. West) of the *Alabama Baptist*, and one of Alabama’s most renowned white Baptist ministers—presided.²³⁵ Their cooperation strengthens the argument that many black and white Perry Countians were able to overcome the misunderstandings, stereotypes, and ungodly secular and religious divisions that the Civil War and Reconstruction produced. Rather than accepting complete racial segregation as a *fait accompli* during the postwar years, several of the county’s churchgoing citizens met “in common purpose and mutual affection.”²³⁶

²³⁴ Wayne Flynt, *Alabama Baptists: Southern Baptists in the Heart of Dixie* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1998), 141, 152, quoting Walter Bell White, “J. L. M. Curry: Alabamian” (master’s thesis, Samford University, 1971), 362, and *Christian Index and South-western Baptist*, 6 June 1867 (first quote). “Alabama Revival and Schools,” *Christian Index and South-western Baptist*, 17 January 1867 (second quote).

²³⁵ See “The Bible Society,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 22 May 1873. Cf. “The 2d Baptist Church”; Flynt, *Alabama Baptists*, 133-142; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 75-76; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 112, 117.

²³⁶ Flynt, *Alabama Baptists*, 141. See Cal M. Logue, “Racist Reporting during Reconstruction,” *Journal of Black Studies* 9 (March 1979): 335-336. See also David M. Reimers, *White Protestantism and the Negro*

Perhaps Marion's role as the Baptist capitol of Alabama or the high concentration of Baptist institutions located there affected this biracialism. In addition to Judson and Howard Colleges, the town hosted the state denominational newspaper, the *Alabama Baptist*, whose original owner was William W. Wilkerson, a local physician. Marion also served as home to the denomination's domestic mission board.²³⁷

Creating black Sunday schools, emphasizing the importance of temperance, and developing a theological school to educate black youths were central aims of Perry County church builders. On Sunday, 15 June 1873, members of the Sunday School Union assembled in the Congregational Church of Marion to hold the group's first conference. Approximately 400 people attended the meeting, at which some of the Black Belt's most influential black and white citizens delivered addresses. Featured speakers included George Card, N. E. Willis, and Alexander Curtis, president of the Union.

In the wake of the June 1873 conference, several persons claimed that Perry County was leading the Sunday school movement in Alabama. African Americans played key roles. In addition to Curtis, Reverends Boothe, Dozier, and McAlpine were energetic members of the movement. Boothe, pastor of the St. Phillip Street Church of Selma, preached and taught theology in the White and Black Belt regions of the state. Reverend McAlpine, a key Selma University developer, was later elected the first president of the separatist Foreign Mission Baptist Convention (FMBC) of the U.S.A., an organization formed at Montgomery in 1880 by the leaders of several southern black

(New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 25. Cf. Watson and Watson, *History of the Christian Churches in the Alabama Area*, 52-53.

²³⁷ Cf. "Perry County Personalities," in *Perry County Heritage*, vol. 2, 46. W. Stuart Harris suggests that Howard College's Edwin King and Milo P. Jewett were the first owners of *The Alabama Baptist*. According to Harris, King and Jewett purchased a religious-oriented Wetumpka newspaper called the *Family Visitor* in 1840 and renamed it the *Alabama Baptist*. Jewett was the original editor, but Howard College President Samuel Sherman soon replaced him. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 76-77.

Baptist churches and other associations. Nine years later, the FMBC, the American National Baptist Convention, and the Baptist National Educational Convention merged to form the National Baptist Convention (NBC) at a meeting in Montgomery. Although Boothe, Dozier, and McAlpine played strategic roles in the new NBC, they had supported biracial initiatives and organizations and had given cheerfully to black and white religious groups, especially Baptists.²³⁸

An examination of the proceedings of the sixteenth annual session of the Colored Baptist State Convention illustrated how prosperous and giving Boothe, Dozier, and company were. At the 1883 meeting, Perry County was represented by Boothe; G. J. Brooks of the Hopewell Baptist Church of Marion; N. H. Bouey; Jane, John C., J. W., and Leonard Dozier, R. Grant, and S. Johnson of the First Baptist Church of Uniontown; D. O. Gulley of the Union Baptist Church; W. H. McAlpine, chairman of the program committee and a member of the Convention's mission board; W. D. Myree (or Miree) and John W. Harris of the Perryville Baptist Church; N. R. Nickerson; J. W. White; W. Wyatt of the Friendship Baptist Church; and a host of other individuals. It is likely that Alexander Curtis would have attended the 1883 meeting, but he had died five years earlier. In his stead, Thomas A. Curtis, Alexander's son and a future dentist, represented the family.²³⁹

²³⁸ Flynt and Green Communication. See William L. Banks, *The Black Church in the US: Its Origin, Growth, Contribution and Outlook* (Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 1972), 36. See also Jacqueline Trussell, "The Convention Movement of the Black Baptist Church"; available via Internet @ <http://www.blackandchristian.com/articles/academy/trussell1.shtml>; accessed 17 October 2002. Cf. Boothe, *Cyclopedia of Colored Baptists of Alabama*, passim; Flynt, *Alabama Baptists*, 181; 19 June 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Communicated"; McPherson, "White Liberals and Black Power in Negro Education, 1865-1915"; Richardson, *The National Cyclopedia of the Colored Race*, 82; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, passim, and "Let Us Make Man," 417-420, 422-423.

²³⁹ One source lists Thomas A. Curtis as A. T. rather than T. A. See *Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Session of the Colored Baptist State Convention, Held with St. Phillips Street Baptist Church, Selma, Ala.*,

Thomas Curtis and other attendees' financial contributions attested to their commitment to religious service and generosity. Among the Uniontown delegates, Admore Hendinson gave \$10; Leonard Dozier and Andrew Goldin \$8; Miss E. Terrell \$6.30; Ephraim Freeman, Anderson Pitts, and S. Johnson \$5 apiece; Lucinda Gilbert \$2; and Jane Dozier \$1. Marion delegates gave as bountifully as their Uniontown counterparts. Curtis donated \$3, W. W. Freeman \$2.75, Mrs. H. M. Hightower and William F. Davis \$2 each, and M. L. Folwkes (or Fowlkes) fifty cents.

Additional assistance was provided through stock purchases, perhaps in a lumber company owned by black Republicans Williams Stevens and Charles Hendley, Jr., an entrepreneur, education advocate, one-time Rust Institute student, Mason, editor of the *Huntsville Gazette*, principal of the Lakeside United Methodist Church (in which Huntsville's first city-sponsored black school was located), and vocal convict-lease opponent. The Uniontown Association paid \$150 for stocks. John C. and J. W. Dozier paid \$25 and \$5, respectively. Members of the Hopewell Baptist Church purchased \$15 worth of stock, and John Moore and Presbyterian William Burns Paterson bought stock totaling \$10. Before the session ended, Uniontown delegates gave another \$23.80 to the Black Baptist State Convention, but the largest single contribution (excluding stock purchases) came from the Second Baptist Church of Marion. Its delegates gave \$51.10.²⁴⁰

November 14th, 15th and 16th, 1883 (Selma, Al.: Baptist Print, 1884), hereinafter cited as *1883 Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Session of the Colored Baptist State Convention*.

²⁴⁰ Richard Bailey, communication to the author, 28 July 2006. See Norwood Kerr, "Highway Markers in Alabama," *Alabama Review* 52 (January 1999): 51-86. See also *Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Session of the Colored Baptist State Convention, Held with St. Phillips Street Baptist Church, Selma, Ala., November 14th, 15th and 16th, 1883* (Selma, Al.: Baptist Print, 1884); Beth Taylor Muskat, "Mobile's Black Militia: Major R. R. Mims and Gilmer's Rifles," *Alabama Review* 57 (July 2004): 188 (footnote 20). Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 71, 233 (footnote 43, [citing Leliafred Ballard, "The

As noteworthy as Boothe, the Curtises, the Doziers, and other black Perry Countians' educational, political, and religious efforts were, they received little attention from the *Marion Commonwealth*. Instead of publicizing the black men's good works, its proprietors usually criticized the blacks for being diehard Republicans. The journalists were critical throughout Reconstruction, but their negative comments, innuendos, and outright libel reached new heights in 1874-1875.

Conclusion

For thousands of Alabamians, the creation of Alabama State Normal School and University, not Redemption, was the most glorious news of the early 1870s. In many respects, the university's formation illustrated how productive white and black persons could be when they put aside such petty differences as class, skin color, political affiliation, and denominationalism and worked together. In doing so, black and white commoners, northern- and southern-born educators, wealthy planters and small merchants, influential politicians and religious leaders fulfilled the prophecy of a nameless northern visitor to Alabama's Canebrake who, as fate would have it, toured Perry County amid one of Lincoln's most trying years, 1869: "Beyond a doubt the prosperity of the colored people lies in the future, and it is to be attained through the education of the youth," he proclaimed, adding: "In bringing to a speedy experience this prosperity and happiness under providence, Lincoln School will bear a prominent part.

American Negro as Portrayed in the Huntsville Gazette, {master's thesis, Howard University, 1952}, 21-22]; *1883 Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Session of the Colored Baptist State Convention*, 2-5, 6, 22-23, 25; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 80-81, 173 (footnote 7), and "Let Us Make Man," 232, 359. Rust Institute was also called Rust Normal Institute (1872), Rust Normal Institute (1873-1876), and Rust Biblical and Normal Institute. Circa 1888, the name was changed to the Central Alabama Academy.

The quickness and eagerness in learning, which the majority of the children evince, furnishes a glorious earnest of the ‘good time coming.’” The prophetic Northerner had no idea how correct he was.²⁴¹

²⁴¹ “Letter from Alabama.” In addition to the black university, the fact that more black politicians were elected to office in 1874 than any other year in the state’s history delighted many informed blacks. Cf. McAfee, *Race, Religion and Reconstruction*, 152.

“REMEMBER OLD PERRY, BOYS!”: WHITE NOSTALGIA, BIRACIAL INITIATIVES, AND KLAN VIOLENCE IN PERRY COUNTY, 1869-1870

“Oh when will the workers for Jesus be free from the reign of these Ku Klux. Pray that the Lord will show us where we can do the most for Jesus.”

—May Jewell, 1870¹

“I die tonight. It has been so determined by those who think I deserve it. God only knows I myself feel entirely innocent of the charge. I have only sought to educate the negro.... But God’s will be done.”

—William Luke, 1870²

The northern visitor to Marion who toured Lincoln School in 1869 was not the only prophesier in Perry County that year. E. A. Heidt and M. M. Cooke predicted the return of the Democratic party and a productive year for the county’s numerous public schools and Marion’s three white colleges. Only part of their predictions was correct. According to one commentator, the Reconstruction years were worse on Howard College than the Civil War was on the entire South.³

After criticizing Montgomery’s foolish white citizens for being apathetic toward registration, Perry County Democrats encouraged traditionalist white voters to be politically active during the upcoming gubernatorial election. By doing so, wrote

¹ May Jewell to E. M. Cravath, 20 September 1870, AMA Papers; Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 40.

² William Luke to Fanny Luke, 11 July 1870, as quoted in Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 91.

³ See “A Prediction Verified,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 January 1871. See also “Terrible Thunder Storms,” *ibid.*, 2 September 1869; “The Schools,” *ibid.*, 14 October 1869; Charles C. Crowe, *Annual Report to the Superintendent of Perry County, for the Scholastic Year Ending September 30th, 1869* (N.P.: n.p., 1869); Report on Conditions of Schools and Annual Financial Reports, 1866-1878, SG 015933, ADAH. Cf. Stakely, “The Baptists of Alabama in the State’s Centennial,” 6.

“Jonathan Oldstyle,” they could help rescue the government from Carpetbaggers and Scalawags, nine-tenths of whom were in the Republican party “simply and solely because their mouths and chops water to the taste of loaves and fishes.”⁴

The 1870 Election Cycle

The last statement constituted the first plank of Oldstyle’s 1870 Democratic platform. Planks two through four included low taxes, strict economy, honest appropriations, and opposition to any political ring that had been formed for personal or collective gain. This included the Knights of the White Camelia, whose revised and amended prescript required all prospective members to swear that they had never been a member of the Republican party or the Loyal League. Applicants also had to state whether they had been loyal to the Union during the Civil War, supported universal equality, or favored white rule. Although Oldstyle agreed with the Knights’ prescript, he and other Democrats asked all predominantly Democratic organizations to comply with the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments; otherwise, the federal government would return to Alabama, impose martial law, and hamper the Democratic renaissance.⁵

In order for restoration to be achieved, local pundits knew that white Perry County Democrats had to do more than their Montgomery colleagues were doing to harness their collective clout. According to two observers, at least three hundreds white voters had not gone to the polls since the end of the Civil War. This could not happen in

⁴ “Platform of for the Democratic and Conservative Party of Alabama,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 May 1870. See “Our Seine,” *ibid.*, 18 November 1869.

⁵ See Article VII, *1868 Knights Prescript*, 19.

the upcoming gubernatorial election, which a number of individuals considered to be as pivotal to the existence of white Alabama as the 1860 presidential election. Hence, any man of European descent who did not try as hard as he could to place a Democrat in the state capital was nothing more than an ethnic turncoat, alleged one partisan voter, arguing that when someone “itches to publicly proclaim himself a *dishonest Judas*,” he should be treated like Judas Iscariot.⁶

Drawing on the same biblical theme, Thomas H. Herndon, an influential Alabama Democrat, called the Republican “Judases” who had helped crucify the South some of the most deplorable human beings alive. Herndon spoke similarly about the white Democrats who had courted blacks. For a white man to align himself with black men politically meant acquiescing in the Fifteenth Amendment, professed Herndon. It also meant allowing black men to become official members of the Democratic and Conservative party, thereby entitling them to a voice in the party’s councils, seats at its conventions, and places on party tickets. Worse, it meant acknowledging that black people were equal to whites. This, he said, was bad policy.⁷

What were the bases for such assertions? In addition to what Herndon considered dreadful sociopolitical and economic conditions in the state following the official end of “the ‘lost,’ but still glorious ‘cause,’” a group of Perry County Democrats pointed to the county’s fall 1869 circuit-court session, which began on the first day of November. Eighteen persons comprised the grand jury. Ten of them were white. John Dozier,

⁶ “Call It at Once.” For Walker’s contentions, see *Able Campaign Documents, Speech of Hon. R. W. Walker, at Huntsville, October 1st, 1870* (N.P.: n.p., [1870]), in vol. 41, book 36, J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, ADAH.

⁷ See “Bad Policy,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 14 July 1870. Cf. Herndon, “A White Man’s Sentiment.”

Wilson Freeman, Emmanuel Jackson, George Huckabee, Greene Lewis, Gustus McCoy, Jonathan Nall, and William Wilson were black.⁸

The grand jury's ethnic makeup truly infuriated the Democrats, who assumed that only Dozier, Lewis, and Nall were literate freeholders and thus qualified to be jurists. If any other black juror could read or write, he had not yet made it known. That being the case, the Democrats called the grand jury a Republican sham. Journalists Heidt and M. M. Cooke, who claimed to have no affiliation with the Democratic party despite their constant shows of supports, seethed: "Act with such a party! Great God! Where is the intelligent Southern man low or vile enough to do so, for other than pecuniary or other sordid consideration?"⁹

Alabama Democratic and Conservative Party Executive Committee Chairman James H. Clanton agreed. Writing from Montgomery on 31 August 1869, Clanton claimed that white apathy had allowed Republican victories in at least four political districts during the previous postbellum elections. The predominantly black fourth congressional district, which included Perry County, was one of them. Speaking directly to the state's white electorate, Clanton inquired:

Are we to understand, that the yoke of your oppressor has grown *easy* and their burden *light*? Are you, then, satisfied with your unscrupulous and cruel taskmasters? Have you fallen in love with a jury system whereby your lives, liberty, and prosperity...are determined by ignorant negroes? This cannot be! This will never be, so long as the blood of your noble ancestry courses through your veins. Then, by your noble dead, your wives and your children are to live after you, let me beseech you to awake from your slumbers, gird on your armor, and be ready for the

⁸ "Col. Y. L. Royston," *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 September 1872. Cf. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 404.

⁹ "Circuit Court," *Marion Commonwealth*, 4 November 1869.

conflict.... Let us marshal our battalions for the great and *decisive* State contest of 1870. Let us be first in the field; and when the signal is given, let us move forward as one man, remembering...victory is LIFE and LIBERTY. Defeat [means] *Slavery* and *Death*...to us and our posterity.¹⁰

The bugle had sounded, so the *Montgomery Advertiser* (or, as Horace Greeley liked to call the paper, “the leading rebel organ in Alabama”) was clear to give the order: Alabama had to be redeemed. The state’s leaders had to be honest white men who truly represented the public will. Change had to be immediate, or the state’s reformation would occur too late. Thus, lingering discord had to be put aside and new relations cultivated. The paper’s publishers knew that old prejudices were hard to unloose, but they encouraged all Democrats to let bygones be bygones and make a concerted effort to reconcile all differences that they had with their antebellum rivals, including one-time Whigs such as Clanton. For their part, former Whigs had to realize that the economic and political principles that had divided them from Democrats in the past were unimportant in the current race. As one voter saw it, the former foes could work together to defeat Republicans today and “fight...like blazes tomorrow on matters of inferior weight—just as two game hawks may unite to repel a hawk.”¹¹

Because the *Marion Commonwealth* believed “the Skunk” was a fitting name for the Republican party, it felt that the noble citizens of Alabama versus “the Skunkery” was a proper epithet for the 1870 elections. Robert McKee’s *Selma Southern Argus* preferred “The People of Alabama vs. The Fools and Thieves in Power.” Whatever the elections

¹⁰ “Address from General James H. Clanton,” *ibid.*, 9 September 1869.

¹¹ Horace Greeley, quoted in Tunnell, “Creating ‘the Propaganda of History,’” 796, citing “A Virulent Rebel Sheet,” *Montgomery Daily Mail*, 4 August 1867, quoting *New York Tribune*, [n.d.] (first quote); “A Word to Old Whigs,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 21 July 1870 (second quote). See “Alabama must be Redeemed,” *ibid.*

were called, the state's most conservative voters agreed that the Democratic and Conservative party had to triumph over the Republicans who had supposedly wreaked havoc on the state over the past few years and did not mind doing whatever was needed, including being dishonest and violent, to ensure this end. Knowing that they controlled one of the period's most important means of communication and guided by sectionalism, fear, hate, political conviction, honor, or a perverse sense of enjoyment, alacritous Democratic newspapermen encouraged misdeeds through slanted articles and one-sided opinion pieces about the aims of GOP officials.¹²

Republican strategists devised a plan to prevent political fraud and terrorism, two favorite tools of many conservatives. Federal agents would be brought into Alabama to make sure that there would be no Election Day irregularities. Powerful white Republicans like Colonel George Eliphaz Spencer, former commander of the Unionist First Alabama Cavalry, lobbied other influential Republicans to support the program, but they were largely unsuccessful. Actually, Spencer was part of the problem. Many of his white colleagues believed that he was more interested in increasing his political clout than he was in ensuring a fair vote. Others thought Spencer had a two-year plan to end the political careers of Governor Smith and Senator Warner, who had questioned black manhood suffrage, supported a lenient pardons policy for ex-Confederates, favored high taxes, and faced dwindling support in some parts of the state. Black Republicans criticized Spencer for having too few black associates.¹³

¹² "The Fools and Thieves in Power," *ibid.*, 28 July 1870 (first quote); "A Flagrant Outrage," *ibid.*, 26 May 1870 (second quote). Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, *passim*; Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 3, 9-10, 35-37, 43, 45; Tunnell, "Creating 'the Propaganda of History,'" 796.

¹³ See Loren Schweninger, *James T. Rapier and Reconstruction* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1978), 96. See also Elbert L. Watson, "Willard Warner," in *Alabama United States Senators* (Huntsville, Al.:

According to historians William W. Rogers, Sr., and Robert D. Ward, Senator Spencer wished to control all federal patronage in Alabama. Spencer's superciliousness put him in direct competition with Smith and Warner. Enduring sectionalism and differing sociopolitical outlooks worsened their problems. The conservative Smith was an Alabama native. Spencer, a moderate with liberal tendencies, was born in New York and had lived in Iowa. Warner, who had served two year's in the Ohio State Senate following the Civil War, was as chameleonic as any politician in the state. He was conservative, but politically he favored whatever the situation required. As a Treasury Department collector in Mobile, he fired white Democrats and hired a number of affluent blacks to occupy minor-to-mid-level federal posts. Warner also recommended Philip (or Phillip) Joseph, an Afro-Creole whom Warner considered unusually intelligent, for a clerkship in the auditor's office. At the time, the position paid \$1,500 per year.¹⁴

Ultimately, the inaction of Governor Smith vis-à-vis the Ku Klux Klan and similar organizations, whose members became increasingly violent as the 1870 elections drew near, drove an irremovable wedge between the governor and Spencer. Usually, Klansmen whipped their victims, but in the run up to the elections, the Klan began to kill people. Northern-born white and black Republicans wanted Smith to employ federal

Strode Publishers, 1982), 77-79. Cf. "Address of the Democratic and Conservative State Executive Committee," 1; Baggett, *The Scalawag*, 161, 221; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 203-204; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 67, citing *Official Journal of the Constitutional Convention the State of Alabama, Held in Montgomery, Alabama* (Montgomery, Al.: Barrett and Brown 1868), 61; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 176-197; Rogers and Ward, "Radical Reconstruction," 250.

¹⁴ Willard Warner to G. P. Boutwell, 4 August 1871, Records of the Division of Appointments, Records Relating to Customs Service Appointments, Applications for Appointments as Customs Service Officers, 1833-1910, Box 1, Entry 247, RG 56, NA; *Report and Testimony of the Select Committee of the United States Senate to Investigate the Causes of the Removal of Negroes from the Southern States to the Northern States*, 46th Congress, 2d sess., no. 693, 1880, *loc. cit.*, 417, hereinafter cited as *1880 Senate Investigation of Negro Removal*; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 181. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 74; Rogers et al., *Alabama*; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 2; Wiggins, *Scalawag*. On occasion, the first and last names of Attorney Joseph have been confused. References have included Joseph Philip, Joseph Phillip, and Joseph Phillips. Cf. Fitzgerald, *op. cit.*, 10 (footnote 3), 11-12, 93, 124, 172, 177, 180-185, 190-195.

troops to curb Klan violence, but the governor refused. That action provided Spencer and his followers a justification for supporting Robert Lindsay, the Democratic candidate for governor.¹⁵

As Republicans feuded and the Klan expanded its bases of operation, Smith garnered enough support to ensure his nomination. Concurrently, James Thomas Rapier—a black man—was nominated for secretary of state. Matches were thus lit for what was sure to become a real sociopolitical barnburner. In the end, Lindsay defeated Smith by a mere 1,409 votes (76,977 to 75, 568), but Perry County had little to do with the victory. Only 1,356 of its citizens voted for Lindsay. Despite Smith’s opposition to federal intervention and the criticism of him by Greene Lewis and other black people who made the governor aware of white terrorism in the Black Belt, Smith polled 3,903 votes in the county.¹⁶

First Restoration

Perry County’s most conservative citizens did not care how few votes the governor-elect received from local voters. A conservative wish had come true: Alabamians had emerged from their darkest sociopolitical cloud to date, Reconstruction. Voters, they said, had vindicated the state so resoundingly that it seemed as if a heavenly voice had guided their steps. Through their valiant efforts, the most dangerous

¹⁵ See *Rome (Georgia) Daily*, 12 July 1870. See also *Alabama State Journal*, 16 and 21 July 1870; *Talladega Watchtower*, 20 July 1870; *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 22 July 1870; *Selma Press*, 23 July 1870; *Selma Southern Argus*, 24 July 1870; *Jacksonville Republican*, 14 July-6 August 1870; *Huntsville Advocate*, 14 September and 28 October 1870; *Montgomery Weekly Mail*, 19 October 1870; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 63, 446, 467, 471-472. Cf. Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 134-135.

¹⁶ See “The Vote for Governor,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 15 December 1870. Cf. 8 April 1870 Lewis Letter to Smith, as quoted in Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 187; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 168.

socioeconomic and political problem in United States history had been solved, and the “glorious land of Dixie” was again in the hands of its rightful owners.¹⁷

Considering the animosity that was brewing between black Republicans, moderate-to-extreme white Republicans and the out-going governor, William H. Smith’s Perry County majority is remarkable. But it should not be misunderstood. In general, the county’s black voters were more loyal to the party on whose ticket Smith ran than to Smith himself. Indeed, one can only wonder how many black Republicans watched with indifference or outright contempt as Smith protested the unquestionably stolen November election. Perhaps karma was at work. All leading Democrats knew was that at 11 AM on Tuesday, 3 December 1870, the Honorable James Q. Smith arrested Smith for refusing to relinquish state property, the capital, and for trying keep his office despite the will of the people.¹⁸

For the rest of the week, Alabama had two governments whose leaders commanded the attention of state, regional, and national media. Immediately following the stolen election, Smith obtained a writ that prevented Alabama lawmakers from counting the returns. Because state senators had not been elected, United States congressmen appointed an Ohioan by the name of R. N. Barr to preside over the Alabama Senate. After Barr counted all of the returns except for governor and treasurer, he took them to the secretary of state, but the newly elected Democrats who controlled Alabama’s legislature did nothing because they viewed Governor Smith’s conduct as a bold

¹⁷ “Letter from East Perry,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 13 August 1874. See “The Election,” *ibid.*, 26 August 1869. See also Joseph W. Taylor, *The Issue of the Hour, Speech of Hon. Joseph W. Taylor, of Alabama, Delivered before the Conservative State Convention, in Montgomery, on the 5th of Sept. 1867, Together with the Platform of the Conservative Party of Alabama* (Montgomery, Al.: Montgomery Daily Mail, [1867]), 10. For an extraordinary statement about the 1870 election, cf. Paterson, *The State Normal School at Montgomery*, 2.

¹⁸ See “William H. Smith Under Arrest,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 5 December 1870.

usurpation attempt, wrote Willis Brewer, a Democratic journalist, Confederate sympathizer, and lawyer.¹⁹

The federal State Department ordered Alabama's new lieutenant governor, Edward Moren, a physician and former Confederate from Bibb and Perry Counties, to tally the election returns. Moren proclaimed Lindsay (whom Brewer called "a gentleman of unsullied character and scholarly attainments") governor, and Grant, one of Lindsay's running mates, was named treasurer. Lindsay was inaugurated, but Smith refused to leave the capital. Instead, Smith called up a platoon of soldiers from a nearby federal garrison and locked himself in the statehouse. After six days of stalled negotiations, Smith ("the would-be-Governor-of-Alabama-any-how," mocked Brewer) relented, and on Monday, 9 December 1870, Lindsay, Moren, Grant, and other newly elected officials entered their new offices. Because Democrats controlled most state posts, the *Marion Commonwealth* predicted that law, order, and honest government would be achieved.²⁰

The paper's gleeful owners dared not say the same thing about local offices. Republicans scored overwhelming victories in Perry County in 1870. Thomas Steward, one of Heidt and Cooke's favorite targets, returned to the state senate. Curtis and Dozier, men who claimed to be conservative but who had reportedly backed proscription and Governor Smith, were elected to the Alabama House. By several voters' estimation, James H. Graham, the county's former tax collector and future enrolling clerk in the state

¹⁹ Willis Brewer, *Alabama: Her History, War Record and Public Men. From 1540 to 1872*, vol. 1 (1872; reprint, Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Company, 1975), 73. See Robert S. Henry, *The Story of Reconstruction* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1938), 417-418. Cf. Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 123; Owen, *History of Alabama*, vol. 1, iii, 213.

²⁰ "William H. Smith Under Arrest." Cf. Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*.

senate, was the only honest politician whom Perry County Republicans elected to the state legislature.²¹

Of all the Republicans who held office during the winter of 1870-1871, Steward received the most ridicule. Already incensed because Probate Judge Williams had given the printing contract to the *Demopolis Republican*, Cooke and Heidt were particularly harsh. Alleging that Steward and company had emulated the Democrats' "Negro program" by courting black voters through the use of egalitarian rhetoric, the journalists maintained that every time Democrats consented to political equality, white Republicans immediately consented to universal equality. As J. L. M. Curry and other prominent Democrats stated repeatedly, complete social equality was not a concession that the white man's party was willing to grant the state's 475,510 black citizens.²²

By electing Steward to the senate, Republicans acknowledged the equality of the races, blasted Perry County Democrats. To make matters worse, the United States Congress was contemplating declaring martial law in the South by enacting the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871. According to H. Clay Cooke, Heidt's new business partner and the cousin of his old one, Perry County did not need any legal diktat to control its residents, but certain Republicans desired one. H. Clay argued that state legislators proved how unnecessary the measure was in November 1871 when they rejected a bill that would have punished any member of a secret political society, such as the Klan or the Knights

²¹ Cf. "J. H. Graham"; Perry County Circuit Court Appearance Docket, 1866-1879, LG 4611, ADAH. Graham became enrolling clerk in 1872.

²² "A Prediction Verified." See *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 1 May 1869, quoting *Marion Commonwealth*, [n.d.]. See also "The Difference," *Marion Commonwealth*, 15 December 1870; U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States, 1920-1932* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1935), 9-10. Cf. Curry, *10 December 1859 Speech of J. L. M. Curry; Perils and Duty of the South*.

of the White Camelia. For the time being, however, Perry Countians had to contend with Joseph Speed and other Republicans' supposed lies about Ku-Klux outrages.²³

Ku-Klux Testimonies

As soon as Perry County Democrats found out that Speed, Chancellor Clarke of Eutaw, and Governor Lindsay had been summoned to appear before the Committee on Ku-Klux Outrages, they began to denounce their summonses with unabashed alacrity. A few men said the governor's duties required him to be in Alabama. Others said Lindsay's being forced to go to Washington on such a ridiculous mission or to go escorted by only federal soldiers, as opposed to a state militia whose members he could select, was an outrage. Let the "timid fools" of the North come to the South and find the Klan, objectors cried. "Perhaps they might.... We cannot."²⁴

Of all the people from Perry County and surrounding areas who went before the congressional committee, Joe Speed caused the greatest commotion in his home county. When word of his testimony reached Marion, Heidt and H. C. Cooke lit into Speed for recanting a previous statement that he had reportedly made to them in Selma. One week before traveling to the nation's capitol, Speed supposedly admitted that he had never seen a Klansman in his entire life. But once he arrived in Washington, he changed his tune, or so the newspapermen thought. The word on the street was that Speed had sworn that Klansmen had kept black people from voting as they pleased. This was wholly untrue, vituperated Heidt and Cooke. Perry was one of the strongest black-northern white

²³ See *Marion Commonwealth*, 20 April 1871. See also "Pleading Guilty," *ibid.*, 8 June 1871; "The Radicals," *ibid.*, 30 November 1871; "Legislative Proceedings," *ibid.*, 14 December 1871.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 15 June 1871

Republican counties in Alabama, so if the Klan was needed anywhere in Alabama, it was Perry County, they averred.²⁵

Marion's most powerful media figures believed the Klan had no presence in their hometown for a variety of reasons. Foremost were its citizens. Despite the provocations of the Civil War and Reconstruction, the county's residents were some of the most orderly individuals in the state. Republican rabble rousers had given incendiary speeches and sponsored "midnight [political] orgies" from time to time, recalled Cooke and Heidt, but there had been only one serious violation of the law. Hence, the journalists supposed Speed had committed perjury when he swore under oath that Perry County had been an abode of lawlessness since 1865.²⁶

Heidt and Cooke made assumptions that were incorrect. They assumed that Speed had called Perry County a carnival of crime, terror, and disorder following the Civil War. In reality, he had not. Yet, those facts did nothing to stop the newspaper publishers from asking how Speed could have testified that black Perry Countians had been afraid to vote or from challenging Speed to find a single black person to substantiate the allegation. Speed's real motivation had nothing to do with terrorism, they charged. Rather, the spoils of office were his impetuses. Without federal intervention, his days in office were numbered.²⁷

Bettie Bradford, Alexander Curtis, Alfred Darling, Isaac Hall, J. T. Harris, the Hartleys, Katie Lagrone, Greene Lewis, Harvey McCann, George Reid, Thomas Steward, Benjamin Williams, and other Perry County citizens undoubtedly disagreed with the

²⁵ Ibid., 13 July 1871.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Other times, Curtis agreed that Perry County had been one of the state's most peaceful postwar counties. Cf. Curtis' 7 May 1869 *Marion Commonwealth* editorial.

Marion Commonwealth's publishers. When Harris was tax collector, he vowed that Klansmen in the northern or northwestern region of the county met regularly and whipped black men who voted for Republicans. Marveling at the fact that such an allegation would come from one of the most detested figures in the county, one Democrat thought it was strange that the Klan would whip law-abiding blacks but not touch a lying, detestable, law-breaking white official such as Harris and Harris.²⁸

Speed reacted promptly to the journalists' claims about his Ku-Klux statements. On 20 July 1871, or merely four days after the news about his Washington testimony surfaced, Speed wrote a letter from Marion in which he charged Heidt and Cooke with wronging him. Though perturbed, Speed was willing to concede that their actions were not completely malicious. Insofar as the Associated Press was partly responsible for the miscommunication, Speed was not bitter. He simply wanted the mistake rectified. The journalists agreed, promising to vindicate Speed if the facts proved that they had erred.²⁹

The facts had a hard time finding Marion. After almost three weeks of uncertainty, Heidt and Cooke had written nothing further about their 13 July claims. Instead, they had redirected their criticisms to Perry County Superintendent of Education James Houston, who had reportedly written a letter to the Ku Klux Klan committee in which he claimed that Republicans' lives and property were utterly insecure in Perry County. If Houston did write the letter, then he was even more disgusting than Thomas

²⁸ Cf. *ibid.*; 9 June 1866 *Livingston Journal*; Curtis, 7 May 1869 *Marion Commonwealth* editorial; "Letter from Alabama";

²⁹ See Joseph Speed, letter to the editor, *Marion Commonwealth*, 20 July 1871.

Steward, roared Democrats. Steward, after all, was a Northerner. Houston was a Southerner who at one point associated with Democratic gentlemen on equal terms.³⁰

This was not the first 1871 attack against Superintendent Houston. During the spring of that year, he was accused of selling his office because he could not carry out his official duties and teach physics at the same time. After ridiculing him, Democrats encouraged Houston to vacate the position if he could not handle the superintendent's job. Supposing George Card had carried out most of Houston's work, critics asked whether Houston should have been allowed to relegate his duties to someone else. Earlier, in 1869, a group of Black Belt Democrats had removed Houston's name from the roll of the Canebrake Lyceum because he was running for office as a Republican and supported a new state constitution. According to Lyceum Secretary B. Harwood, Houston's bid to become a public official as anything other than a Democrat was an overt declaration of hostility toward his ethnic group and an insult to any self-respecting white Alabamian's sense of patriotism.³¹

Most whites listened. A reported 3,693 of 4,200 registered Perry Countians went to the polls in 1869, but only twenty-four of them were white. Every other registered white voter took part in Clanton, Forsyth, and Hodgson's "active non-participation" scheme. But to Perry Countians' credit, no one attempted to obstruct a fair vote. A few planters threatened to fire any black man who voted Republican; otherwise, the elections went off without a hitch.³²

³⁰ See "J. H. Houston," *ibid.*, 3 August 1871.

³¹ See "The Superintendent of Education," *ibid.*, 18 May 1871. See also B. Harwood to J. Houston, 10 February 1868, in *Election in Alabama: Affidavits*, 40-41. Cf. *Election in Alabama: Meade*.

³² Linden, *Voices from the Reconstruction Years, 1865-1877*, 182.

While Democrats attacked Houston, the *Marion Commonwealth* renewed its attacks on Steward. After calling him an incompetent educator-politician who was disgracing Perry County in the state senate, the paper discussed the poor opinion that he ostensibly had of his southern neighbors. Steward, it asserted, had recently bought some valuable property in the Marion suburbs and was contemplating committing another outrage on Perry County by making the county seat his permanent residence. Referring to a previous letter to the editor, Heidt and Cooke mused: “He [Steward] finds teaching ‘at his own expense without any wages’ so profitable that he has concluded to continue to make these noble sacrifices for the good of his ‘Madagascars’ or ‘bleached out friends,’ as he once termed his mulatto dupes.”³³

The editorial to which Cooke and Heidt referred was written during the spring of 1869. Steward was its supposed author even though it did not bear his name. The letter was signed only “C.” Steward might have written it, but he was not the only candidate. Others included Erastus M. Cravath and George N. Card. Reverend Cravath was utterly familiar with Lincoln’s early development and, as an AMA official, had communicated repeatedly with Steward during the first part of 1869. Those two facts alone made him an excellent candidate. Card had not been in Perry County long when the letter was sent to the *Christian Herald*, and its author, who always used the third person, indicated that his few weeks in the Deep South had given him several new ideas about how to best educate the region’s black population. Reverend Steward had been in the South since January

³³ “Soap Eyed Stewart’s Opinion of his Neighbors,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 18 May 1871, hereinafter cited as “Soap Eyed Stewart’s Opinion of his Neighbors.”

1867. Why, then, would he have made this statement? Steward might have known about the correspondence, but either Card or Cravath probably wrote it.³⁴

Either unconvinced or unaware that someone besides Steward could have penned the dispatch, Heidt and Cooke were delighted to reproduce its sentiments in their paper. Seemingly, the only reason they printed the excerpt was to show their black and white readers what Steward thought of his Marion neighbors. He supposedly called the pure-blacks and the freckle-faced, fine-haired, blue-eyed, straight-nosed mulattoes who lived in the county extremely imitative, especially with regard to politics. White Marionites were Celt-like drunks who littered Marion's roads with empty wine bottles and other unsightly debris. This might not have been an accurate description, but Marion and surrounding towns definitely had enough suppliers of booze to provide excellent opportunities for such behavior. Of the hundreds of business licenses that county officials granted business owners and home merchants during 1870 and 1871, many of them were for liquor distribution (see Appendix Q).³⁵

Reportedly, Steward considered white Marionites' morals so low that no one cared if a church deacon owned a bar. Playing the devil's advocate, Cooke and Heidt asked their white readers how they liked Steward's characterization of them. The journalists did not ask black Marionites what they thought because Steward was a local hero. After calling Steward no better than the Klansmen whom he often criticized, the journalists concluded: "We do not mean to censure anyone for selling him property, but

³⁴ Cf. "Letter from Alabama."

³⁵ Cf. "Soap Eyed Stewart's Opinion of his Neighbors."

we do say that we would not degrade a sheep-killing dog by selling it to such a libel upon the human family; nor would we desecrate *a penitentiary by sending him into it.*"³⁶

Cooke and Heidt were relentless slanderers of Steward, but they praised George Card. After revealing how much they regretted not being able to attend the various barbecues to which they were invited in May 1871, the Marion journalists commended a cookout given by the black students who attended Card's Uniontown school. Based on what they had heard, it was well conducted. The words of Porter King and other speakers fit the occasion, and the coronation ceremonies were a credit to Card and his pupils.³⁷

As long as Card stuck to academics, he was acceptable to white conservatives. But if he ever strayed too far from the classroom, he became as vulnerable to their attacks as Steward and "soft-shell" (moderate, conciliatory) Democrats, as in one 8 June 1871 editorial:

Every southern community is cursed with a few of these timid conservatives... those political seers, Wiseacres in their own estimation, but Bob Acres in the estimation of all true men, who shake and tremble before the terror of Ku Klux bills and Presidential proclamations, who take you off to one side and *whisper*, "don't be too rabid. My feelings was worn-wood and gall I admit, but I think it *prudent* to use *policy* and not *say* much." For all such concerns we have but one feeling...pity and contempt. They are a curse to any community and a bane to any curse.³⁸

On the same day that the conservative penman criticized his dovish Democratic colleagues, the local grapevine carried the name of the first man to publicly announce his intent to become Perry County's treasurer. His name was John H. Allen, and he opposed the Klan and other so-called political organizations. S. Ford was his opponent. George

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ See "Arrival," *Marion Commonwealth*, 20 July 1871. See also "Pic-Nic," *ibid.*, 18 May 1871.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 13 February 1873 (first quote); "Wiseacres and Bob Acres," *ibid.*, 8 June 1871 (second quote).

W. Brown, Henry H. Moseley, and John C. Moore planned to vie for the sheriff's office. William Smith and James W. Hornbuckle wished to become tax assessor, and Thomas G. Clancy (or Clancey), F. J. LeVert (or Le Vert), William Walton, and George P. White were gearing up to run for tax collector.

The following week, the *Marion Commonwealth* discussed the platform of J. or I. R. Shortfellow, an alleged Republican candidate for treasurer. The paper described him as a man who favored free blacks, free liquor, free love, free lunch, and the complete equality of every stump-tail dog, flea, and duck-legged radical. In addition, Shortfellow supported the Union and its pro-black Constitution, loved any law that oppressed white people, and was unwaveringly devoted to the Union League because its members hindered, restrained, and intimidated respectable black men who voted the Democratic ticket, but he was obstinately opposed to the Klan because its members wore white rather than black. With a platform like this, how could the fictional Republican candidate lose?³⁹

“New-Departure” Democrats, “Non-Departure” Democrats, and “Radical” Republicans

In addition to phony Republicans, conservative Democrats condemned “new departures,” or “birds”—that is, Democrats and Democratic media who had gravitated toward republicanism or independency during or immediately after 1867. Included in this group were several of the state's most prominent white Republicans—Alexander McKinstry, Lewis Parsons, Charles Pelham, Benjamin and Milton Saffold, Joseph Speed, Samuel Rice, Alexander White—and newspapers, including the *Greensboro Beacon*, the

³⁹ See “To the People of Perry County,” *ibid.*, 15 June 1871.

Henry County *Register*, the *Huntsville Independent*, the *Limestone News*, the *Montgomery Advertiser*, and the Wilcox County *Vindicator*. Strict, or “non-departure,” Democratic newspapers included the *Eufaula News*, the *Eutaw Whig and Observer*, the *Haynesville Examiner*, the *Huntsville Democrat*, the *Jacksonville Republican*, the *Montgomery Advance*, the *Mobile Register*, the *Mobile Tribune*, the *Selma Southern Argus*, the *Shelby Guide*, the *Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor*, the *West Alabamian*, the *Wilcox County News and Pacificator*, and, of course, the *Marion Commonwealth*.⁴⁰

White Democrats’ self-expressed reasons for becoming Republicans varied. McKinstry, Parsons, Rice, and White stated publicly that Alabama would fare better by adhering to the Republican Reconstruction plan. Joshua Morse did so privately. Others, such as Milton Saffold, became Republicans to ensure political success, but he, like Parsons and most other white converts, remained politically and socially conservative.⁴¹

Speaking before a congressional committee in the nation’s capitol, Parsons reaffirmed his allegiance to the Democratic and Conservative party before 1868. Thereafter, he decided that it would be better to gain Republicans’ confidence by working with them. As long as he and other conservatives fought the controlling party and its Reconstruction agenda, which Parsons had opposed, the perpetuation of the Union was at risk. Rice left the Democratic fold because it had grown too radical by 1868. Although

⁴⁰ “General News Items,” *ibid.*, 22 June 1871. See “The New Departure,” *ibid.*, 28 July 1871. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 64 (citing Joshua Morse to Wager Swayne, 17 August 1867, Swayne Papers, ADAH), 250-251; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 251; Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 12; McAfee, *Religion, Race and Reconstruction*, 23, 24.

⁴¹ Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 136, 218; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, *passim*; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 95.

he did not admit it, being a member of the controlling political party was an equally important impetus for his and other one-time Democrats' party realignments.⁴²

Benjamin Williams and F. D. Wyman were also easy targets for white Perry County conservatives. On top of being a northern-born Unionist and an allegedly corrupt official, Williams might have told one of his northwestern colleagues that Alabama was not a good place for non-Alabamians to live. In Marion, racist Democrats renounced Williams' possible contention because not every Northerner was unwelcome. Fair, honest, gentlemanly Northerners who shunned politics had no problem in the South, they said. Alabama was simply no place for office-robbing criminals to relocate.⁴³

Conservative Marionites also rejected Williams' claim about the Klan forcing him out of Alabama. Rather, \$5,000 was Williams' impetus for leaving Alabama. After convincing blacks to vote for him, he misused his office and moved back to Oshkosh, Wisconsin. As for Wyman, the *Marion Commonwealth* prodded the Northwesterner to ask Williams what prompted Wyman to leave Perry, implying that creditors drove him away. The paper then urged Williams and Wyman's northern and northwestern associates to ask Wyman, a reputed drunkard, if he had squandered away the \$1,000 that he had received for releasing Williams' brother from the Marion jail.⁴⁴

The Railroad Situation

When local conservatives tired of insulting northern Republicans, they turned to northern businessmen. One of the conservatives' chief victims was Daniel Stanton, chief

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ "'Shoog' Up Nairth," *Marion Commonwealth*, 27 July 1871.

⁴⁴ See "Oshkosh Again," *ibid.*, 24 August 1871, hereinafter cited as "Oshkosh Again." Cf. 24 April 1873 *Marion Commonwealth*.

executive of the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad, whom local Republicans also disliked. Such bipartisan consensus was rare.

During the last week of January 1870, Perry County Republicans met at the county courthouse to discuss the railroad situation. At the evening meeting, attendees passed resolutions denouncing the A&C Railroad bill. They also advised legislators Matthew Avery, Greene Lewis, and Thomas Steward to denounce it. Democrats thought Reverend Avery—a former slave, editor, and mulatto farmer from North Carolina—and Lewis might oppose the measure, but the Democrats were certain that Steward (whose brother was involved in some sort of railroad business in Knoxville, Tennessee) would ignore his party's advice because he was a Stanton crony.⁴⁵

Unlike the Stantons' operation, the Selma, Marion and Memphis (SM&M) Railroad was fine to local Democrats. Perhaps their approval had something to do with the railroad's superintendent, General R. L. Walker. In May 1870, Walker gave Heidt and M. M. Cooke passes that allowed them to travel free of charge on his railroad until January 1871. Equally important, the directors of the SM&M Railroad included prominent Marionites John Howze, Porter King, and William Modawell. Of the three, only King had official ties to the Alabama and Chattanooga, and he was too powerful a figure to openly criticize.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ See "Indignation Meeting," *ibid.*, 3 February 1870. See also *Alabama State Journal*, 3 March 1871; *Mobile Daily Register*, 16 April 1871; *Marion Commonwealth*, 7 September 1871; "Soap-eyed Stewart's Bud," *Marion Commonwealth*, 30 November 1871. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 340; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 36-37, 50-59; Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, 16. The *Marion Commonwealth* was incensed that John T. Morgan, an influential Democrat, also supported the \$2,000,000 Stanton bill. See "The Stanton Bill," *Marion Commonwealth*, *ibid.*, 18 August 1870, quoting *Selma Argus*, [n.d.].

⁴⁶ See "Thanks," *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 May 1870. Cf. 26 July 1870 *Marion Commonwealth*.

For the rest of 1870 and well into 1871, Heidt and M. M. Cooke continuously scrutinized the A&C Railroad. Cooke left the paper during late March or early April 1871, but his replacement, H. Clay, was no more supportive of the A&C than the former editor was. Both Cookes were conservative lawyer-journalists who detested the Republicans and the moderate Democrats who had supposedly turned their beloved state into an afflicted land through the A&C and similar mishandlings.⁴⁷

On 15 June 1871, H. Clay made an important announcement: the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad had filed for bankruptcy. Overjoyed, he chastised Daniel Stanton for not using the \$6 million that Alabama taxpayers had given him to pay the railroad's debts. If Stanton had done this rather than buying miles of track and building splendid hotels in other states, his company's financial affairs would be in order, its trains would be running, and the state's credit would not be at risk, asserted Cooke. If it were left up to him, Stanton would have been sent to the penitentiary hand in hand with the "fine delegation" of black Republicans who had been incarcerated during the spring of 1870.⁴⁸

In one of the most serious attacks against Stanton, Perry County Democrats claimed that the northern businessman had tried to bribe Lindsay by offering the governor \$50,000 worth of A&C mortgage bonds, \$20,000 worth of negotiable notes, and another \$5,000 in cash. Stanton's sibling, John, said the bribery charge was egregious.

⁴⁷ See Eliza J. McBride, or McBryde, to an unnamed sister, 4 September 1868, McBryde Family Papers, 1838-1990s, LPR 149, ADAH. According to one researcher, E. C. Cooke became *The Marion Commonwealth's* editor in 1872. In actuality, Cooke's first name began with an H, and he was the newspaper's editor by the first week of April 1871. By this time, M. M. Cooke had moved to Montgomery, where he had begun to co-edit the *Montgomery Daily Mail*, which merged with the *Montgomery Daily Advertiser* circa 13 April 1871. See Rhoda Coleman Ellison, *History and Bibliography of Alabama Newspapers in the Nineteenth Century* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1954), 102. Cf. "Biographical Sketches."

⁴⁸ "Ho! For the Penitentiary," *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 May 1870, hereinafter cited as "Ho! For the Penitentiary." See *Marion Commonwealth*, 15 June 1871. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 50-59.

At first, John merely rebuked anyone who said his brother tried to buy off Lindsay; but when rumors and harangues did not cease, John filed a lawsuit against the *Montgomery Advertiser*, one of the South's leading Democratic newspapers, for libeling his brother, Daniel.⁴⁹

Initially, several Democratic newsmen were prepared to assist Lindsay. An unusually temperate *Mobile Register* contended that the exact condition of the Alabama and Chattanooga legal case was not clear. This was not true. Lindsay bought the A&C at a sale ordered by a bankruptcy court for \$312,000 despite the state government's mounting liabilities. A befuddled editorialist wrote of the purchase: "We have the elephant, but what shall we do with it?"⁵⁰

Lindsay's decision to take over the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad following a missed interest payment on a loan shortly after he entered office was particularly bothersome to economic conservatives. While the governor and the purportedly dim-witted Republican and Democratic state legislators responsible for the pitiful conditions of the state's finances were buying failed businesses and offering loans to other large-scale operations, several Perry Countians suspected the local government was on the verge of bankruptcy. County Treasurer Hodgson confirmed their suspicions on 31 August 1871 by announcing that the once wealthy Perry was almost penniless. Conservative Democrats blamed their moderate colleagues for the county's downfall but

⁴⁹ See "Libel Suit by Stanton against the Montgomery Advertiser," *Marion Commonwealth*, 28 March 1872, hereinafter cited as "Libel Suit by Stanton against the Montgomery Advertiser." Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 50-51; Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 46. Evidently, a general by the name of Roddy passed the rumor along to General Clanton, who believed Lindsay needed to be made aware of the allegation at once. See "Astounding Disclosures," *Marion Commonwealth*, 10 August 1871.

⁵⁰ *Marion Commonwealth*, 9 May 1872. See "The Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad Muddle," *ibid.*, 4 April 1872, citing *Mobile Register*, [n.d.].

reserved most of their criticism for the usual suspects: avaricious Carpetbaggers, vile Scalawags, and ignorant blacks.⁵¹

Old Perry

In one of the most blatantly racist statements to ever appear in the pages of the postbellum *Marion Commonwealth*, its proprietors proclaimed that before the War, Perry County was represented in the state legislature by honorable, intelligent white men. Now, the county was being represented by dishonorable, ignorant, thick-lipped blacks. The pronouncement was erroneous. Curtis and Dozier were the only two African American legislators from Perry County. The paper dubbed Dozier a “pelican-lipped...nigger,” but Curtis was a thin-lipped mulatto. Graham and Steward, the county’s other state legislators, were white.⁵²

For many persons, these were insignificant facts. The once-great Perry County had suffered tremendously during Reconstruction. The county treasury was almost bankrupt, the agricultural situation was uncertain, and businesses and homes had burned routinely because the county did not have a fire department until 1 May 1872. Even then, it was difficult for William Modawell and other volunteers to perform their jobs because

⁵¹ See *Marion Commonwealth*, 7 March 1872. See also “The Commonwealth,” *ibid.*, 11 June 1872; “The Treasury Empty,” *ibid.*, 31 August 1871. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 50-59; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 63-64, 231 (footnote 6 [citing Mark Summers, *Railroads, Reconstruction, and the Gospel of Prosperity: Aid Under the Radical Republicans, 1865-1877* {Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984,} 213-236]).

⁵² See “The Policy for Perry,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 9 May 1872. The pelican-lip reference is taken from “An Act,” *ibid.*, 26 December 1872. The *Marion Commonwealth* frequently called Curtis, Dozier, and other black politicians niggers.

they did not have a fire engine, and the small buckets of water that Modawell's group were forced to use were of little use during raging infernos.⁵³

Reminiscing further, Cooke and Heidt recalled the prewar days when conservative Perry Countians had virtually controlled Alabama politics. Back then, William Brooks, Andrew Moore, Isham Garrott, and other local stars had shown brightly in the state's fabulous political galaxy. Now, all Perry County could point to were its white and black Republican legislators and its new fire department—with no engine. Exasperated, Cooke and Heidt sighed: "Remember Old Perry, Boys."⁵⁴

Conclusion

For most Perry County Democrats, Reconstruction had been every bit as demoralizing as the journalists' statements reflected. Not only had they lived in one of the state's wealthiest and most influential counties before the Civil War, hundreds of them had become Confederates to preserve the status quo. Once the Confederacy was no more, a handful of conservative Democrats and former Confederates tried to build amicable relationship with their former military and political rivals and with freepersons; all the same, it was hard for most Democrats to watch native and foreign-born white Republicans control much of Perry County's political machinery. Watching former slaves register to vote, elect officials, and hold office was almost unbearable. Federal

⁵³ See *ibid.*, 2 May 1872. See also "The Fire Company," *ibid.*, 9 May 1872; "Fire Extinguisher," *ibid.*, 16 January 1873.

⁵⁴ "Remember Old Perry, Boys," *ibid.*, 23 May 1872, hereinafter cited as "Remember Old Perry Boys"; "An Act," *ibid.*, 16 December 1872.

lawmakers added to the conservatives' frustrations by passing legislation that aided blacks while disenfranchising certain whites.⁵⁵

Honest Perry County Democrats knew that members of their party had been partly responsible for their plight. On the eve of the Civil War, uncompromising southern Democrats had helped sever the nation. In the years that followed, Democrats had committed most of the unlawful acts that necessitated civil-rights, enforcement, and other protective acts. Democrats had also taken part in the railroad decisions that other members of the party had been quick to criticize and had caused once prominent Democrats to change parties. Further, Democrats had provoked the federal government to remain in the state by terrorizing Negroes, Republicans, and other racial or political opponents.

Despite what some Democratic politicians and pundits claimed in 1870, no black Perry Countian had injured or killed anyone for political reasons since 1865. Destitute or delinquent blacks had stolen corn, cotton, cows, horses, and mules, and one black man had beaten a white man for dishonoring his wife; but no black Perry Countian had wronged one of his white neighbors because of politics. In fact, most blacks had attempted to work with their white counterparts. As Thomas Lee declared during the 1867 constitutional convention, "I have no desire to take away any rights of the white man; all I want is equal rights in the courthouse and equal rights when I go to vote." In

⁵⁵ For a decidedly different view from a modern writer, see John Remington Graham, *A Constitutional History of Secession* (Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing Company, 2005).

conclusion, Lee said the time had come for cooperation and self-control to characterize the actions of all policymakers, black as well as white.⁵⁶

Lee spoke for most of his black associates. Nevertheless, leading white conservatives viewed blacks' sociopolitical ascendance as an attack on whiteness, especially during the 1870 campaign. Whites' antipathy during that year's cycle revealed at least one important fact about Reconstruction-era Perry County: although racial strife was noticeably slighter in Perry than in other Black Belt counties, Perry County was not utopian. Freepersons and white moderates worked hard to develop the type relationships that Lee called for, but white conservatives worked even harder to disrupt their efforts and to unify the county's numerical minority through white supremacy and, if necessary, through violence. In doing so, black and white Perry Countians created the backdrop for the racial cooperation and conflict that would characterize the county for the rest of the Reconstruction and early Redemption years.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Thomas Lee, quoted in Childs, "Black Elected and Appointed Officials during the Reconstruction Period," 2.

⁵⁷ For a general concurrence, cf. Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 4.

VIOLENCE, RECONCILIATION, RESTORATION, AND REVOLUTION: PERRY COUNTY AND ALABAMA'S FIRST REDEMPTION

“Old prejudices are stubborn things to deal with, and the Democrat who should approach an old Whig on the subject of surrendering these prejudices, would be apt to leave him no nearer conviction than he found him. But our Whig friends must bear in mind that in this contest there are no old principles at issue, and they may co-operate with the Democratic party today without sacrificing the first principles of, or the least vestige of their fealty to, the old party they so much revere. Nay more. They may make common cause with the Democrats against the common enemy to day, and fight them like blazes tomorrow on matters of inferior weight—just as two game hawks may unite to repel a hawk.”

—The Marion Commonwealth, 1870¹

During a May 1871 visit to Marion, Virginian W. M. Davis said Judson President Archibald John Battle should be recognized throughout Alabama as one of the state's most accomplished Christians. Davis had similar praise for Howard President Samuel R. Freeman, who was destined to make the college succeed. Amid pressing financial and social problems, Howard still had 120 moral, highly motivated cadets on its roll, alleged Davis. Every building and apparatus was sound, the library was worth \$50,000, and white Alabama Baptists were beginning to support their educational institutions the way that they and their ancestors had done before the Civil War. That could mean only one thing, asserted Davis: Howard would continue to be successful.²

¹ “A Word to Old Whigs,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 21 July 1870.

² See “Interior Correspondence,” *ibid.*, 24 March 1870. See also “Marion Female Seminary,” *ibid.*, 15 December 1870; “Marion, Ala.,” *ibid.*, 4 May 1871.

Davis could not make the same assertion about Marion agriculturists, the financial condition of the beautiful inland town's public schools, or the *Marion Commonwealth*. By virtually all accounts, 1871 was difficult for Perry County farmers. The county's free public schools lacked money, and its only newspaper lacked readers. As a result, the paper had to reduce its subscription price or accept foodstuffs, farm equipment, and other items as payment.³

Judson and Howard: Arrivals and Departures, Successes and Failures

In truth, W. M. Davis' comments were filled with hyperbole. Judson and Howard, two of Perry County's most important institutions, had troubles as well. The same year the visitor praised President Battle for his professional accomplishments, Battle was asked to become president of Mercer, the Baptist college that his father and Confederate veteran, Cullen, had helped found. Many Marionites believed President Battle would take the position, but Heidt and H. C. Cooke predicted that he would remain at Judson. The journalists had not seen or spoken with the younger Battle, but they were confident that he would refuse the offer. Looking back, they should have consulted him. A. J. Battle accepted the Mercer presidency. His replacement, Tuskegee transplant Raymond H. Rawlings (or Rawlins), stayed in Marion only three years.⁴

As for Howard, its first postwar president, J. L. M. Curry, had hoped that the college would have "a fair hope of success," but the gloomy spirit that had encircled the

³ See "Marion and Its Surroundings," *ibid.*, 9 January 1873.

⁴ See *ibid.*, 19 October 1871. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 135. Georgia-born A. J. Battle was not new to Alabama education when he became president of Judson. The 1846 alumnus of the University of Alabama, as well as the cofounder and president of Alabama Central Female College of Tuscaloosa, had taught a class in ancient languages at his alma mater (the University of Alabama) from 1847 through 1852 and similar courses at East Alabama Female College until 1855. Afterward, Reverend Battle became the pastor of a Tuscaloosa Baptist church.

institution when he took office was overwhelming. The situation worsened over the next three years. Howard's trustees were thus faced with three possibilities: close the school immediately, let it die gradually or try to save it.⁵

Many prominent Perry Countians thought Howard was too important to the community to be closed immediately, but without adequate resources, they did not know how to save it. As it turned out, what seemed impossible was semi manageable. Only fifty cadets were enrolled at Howard during 1868-1869, but its enrollment rebounded to either 184 or 185 during the following school year.⁶

President Freeman was largely responsible for the partial recovery. An effective fundraiser and one of Alabama's ablest nineteenth-century preachers, Freeman traveled all over the state in an effort to find the funds needed to help his beloved alma mater, Howard. Unfortunately, the minister-administrator, who also finished Mercer, fell short of his goal. Costs, meanwhile, continued to mount before help came in 1870. At Freeman's behest, delegates to the Alabama State Baptist Convention agreed to provide Howard a \$100,000 endowment.⁷

As noble as the gesture was, it turned out to be a stopgap that did not take care of Howard's expenditures. By 1871, the school's expenses exceeded its income by \$2,000. In order to save the college from a complete demise, the Convention sold the Baptist Church of Greensboro, but an even greater problem soon arose. When leading white Baptists met in Opelika on 12 July, President Freeman resigned to become a theological

⁵ Paul M. Gaston, *A Utopian Heritage: The Fairhope Single Tax Colony* (N.P.: n.p., n.d.), 3. Cf. Alderman and Gordon, *J. L. M. Curry*, xiii; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 250.

⁶ More students must have enrolled after 3 February 1870. Local reporters maintained that there were only 173 students at Howard on that day. See "The Howard," *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 February 1870.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 15 December 1870. See *ibid.*, 28 July 1871. Cf. Clark, *History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1889*, 174, 176.

instructor and pastor of a Baptist Church in his hometown, Jefferson, Texas. His faculty, staff, and students respected the decision, but they were saddened by the loss. Freeman, who in coming years would return to Marion to preach and visit friends, had done such an admirable job leading Howard through a difficult time that its faculty members resolved: “Dr. Samuel R. Freeman will ever be intimately associated with the history of Howard College.”⁸

Freeman’s replacement, James Thomas Murfee (Murfree, Murphree) of Southampton, Virginia, was one of the most notable, and controversial, figures of postwar Howard College. After finishing Howard and the Virginia Military Institute, Murfee moved to Tuscaloosa, where he taught mathematics from 1860 until 1862. He also commanded University of Alabama cadets during the Civil War and helped rebuild the University on the heels of the war.

According to Willis G. Clark, a Mobile educator-administrator and author of *History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1889*, Murfee was “in the full vigor of manhood” when he accepted the Howard presidency. A steely disciplinarian and a skilled organizer, Murfee revamped the school’s curriculum by placing more emphasis on industry, promptness, and punctuality through rigorous, military-style training. His aim was to develop skills that could not be taught in an ordinary classroom. Howard cadets did obtain book knowledge, but the value of following orders, being persistent, and taking pride in whatever they did was also stressed. Without these qualities, which all

⁸ “Resolution,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 8 February 1872. Cf. Clark, *History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1889*, 176.

professions required, many gifted scholars were unsuccessful educators and mentors in the colonel's opinion.⁹

Howard began the 1871 school year with its largest postbellum enrollment. Murfee wasted no time before he began to whip the college's ninety-five cadets and its campus into shape. Among other things, he planted approximately 100 trees, painted or repaired broken fences, and ordered uniforms for his plebes. White Marionites valued the renovations, but they were ecstatic about the new dress code. When Howard students gathered on the streets of Marion on Saturday, 23 March 1872, a handful of ex-Confederates said the cadets gave the town a decidedly martial appearance that resembled the spring of 1861 "when the notes and bustle of preparation for the coming conflict rang through the land and fired the young and chivalrous spirits of the South."¹⁰

Howard's uniforms attracted much attention. Some of Perry County's most ardent Old South advocates believed their black-trimmed buttons had a "most beautiful and suitable device—a cross and crown radiating a hale of light and glory, with 'Howard College' in prominent letters." The design, they contended, was appropriate "in view of the sad recollections and hallowed associations that cluster around the 'boys in gray.'"¹¹

Under Murfee, Howard's enrollment grew, but its endowment did not. When the Alabama State Baptist Convention convened in November 1873, it was obvious that Howard was not financially sound. In fact, the college seemed to have as many debts as

⁹ Clark, *History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1889*, 174 (footnote) (quote one); "President's Report," *The Howard Collegian* 1 (June 1873): 3, hereinafter cited as 1873 Howard College President's Report (quote two). See B. F. Riley, *Makers and Romance of Alabama History* ([N.P.: n.p.,] 1915), 317. See also "Examination and Commencement Exercises at Howard College," *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 June 1873. Cf. Clark, *History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1889*, 175; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 251. Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 3-4, 9-11.

¹⁰ "The Howard," *Marion Commonwealth*, 28 March 1872. See "Howard College," *ibid.*, 26 October 1871. See also "The Howard," *ibid.*, 21 March 1871.

¹¹ 28 March 1872 *Marion Commonwealth* "The Howard."

it had students and few means to pay them. Despite sizeable arrears, Murfee decided to expand and improve Howard's appearance, but he did so without telling the leaders of the Convention; many of whom were shocked to find out that Murfee had authorized the building of a new Howard cafeteria, approved new dormitory furniture, and remodeled the library.¹²

Somehow, the dedicated, enlightened, and forward-looking president was able to get the delegates to approve his latest renovations. Persons still debate how he was able to do it. It appears that Murfee convinced leading white Baptists that enhancing the campus' looks and improving its facilities would attract new students, whose tuition and other fees would offset the costs of the improvements that he had ordered. All that is known for sure is that the Convention authorized a \$3,000 loan to Howard, and its doors remained open.¹³

In his fall 1873 presidential address to the Convention, Murfee discussed Howard's cosmetic improvements. The commodious cafeteria featured silver-plated dishware, and each dormitory had been provided new bedsteads, blankets, chairs, comforters, mirrors, pillowcases, sheets, spreads, tables, and wash stands. Murfee assured the Convention's leadership that the changes had been made at no cost to Howard's students and at little cost to the Convention because materials had been purchased wholesale. Several Democratic supporters did not care how the materials had

¹² See *The Marion Institute* 8 (October 1912): 10. See also "Town and Country," *Marion Commonwealth*, 6 February 1878.

¹³ Cf. Clark, *History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1889*, 174 (footnote).

been acquired or how much they had cost the Convention. Their only concern was Howard's continued success, which God had ordained.¹⁴

By the beginning of 1874, Murfee had begun to restore Howard's prewar power and prestige. Reverend McIntosh, one of the president's most loyal supporters, had forecast a renaissance before Murfee was even hired. Reminiscing about previous board decisions and presidents, one male Democrat chided Howard's trustees for having made many unwise decisions, but he applauded them for appointing Murfee president.¹⁵

Continued Republican Rule in Perry County

Perry County's early 1870s political representatives were not so impressive to Howard's Democratic backers. The Democrats reveled because several Carpetbaggers had left, but numerous Scalawags and blacks, though destined for extinction, remained. Together, they were running the county and the state into the ground, argued leading Democrats. Worse, not one Republican seemed to care. This, the Democrats professed, was to be expected of opportunistic Carpetbaggers and inexperienced blacks, but the actions of the "SCAL-A-WAG" were inexcusable. He "fiddles and jokes while Rome is burning," the *Marion Commonwealth* jeered.¹⁶

Try as they might, Black Belt Republicans could not escape the watchful and sometimes extremely critical eye of the paper's proprietors. Reportedly, when John T. Harris was elected sheriff, he could not afford to pay his bond despite all of the money

¹⁴ See "Address to the Baptists of Alabama," *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 October 1873. For information about the improvements that Murfee ordered, cf. 1873 Howard College President's Report.

¹⁵ See "Howard College," *Marion Commonwealth*, 17 August 1871. Cf. 28 December 1871 *Marion Commonwealth*; 21 March 1872 *Marion Commonwealth* "The Howard."

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 14 September 1871 (first quote); "Scalawag," *ibid.*, 17 February 1868 (second and third quotes). See "The Cahaba Bridge," *ibid.*, 8 June 1871. Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, 133.

that he had supposedly taken from local residents when he was tax collector. Political associates John H. Allen, Joseph Speed, and Reuben (or Rubin) Tubb, a Marion grocer and livery stable keeper, aided the candidate. In all, the Republican trio provided Harris \$20,000, according to the 12 October 1871 *Marion Commonwealth*. Its publishers did not broadcast this fact, which they acquired from a spring 1871 grand jury-report, because of any sentiment tainted as malice, they said. Rather, the information was given so the people of Perry County could know to whom they were indebted for further Republican rule.¹⁷

One week after publicizing the grand-jury's report concerning Harris' bond, Cooke and Heidt revisited the aid package of Allen, Speed, and Tubb. According to the journalists, Allen and Tubb swore that they had not intended to endorse Harris. In all likelihood, the white Republicans lied. Because the matter attracted so much attention, they removed their names from Harris' bond. Speed, in contrast, did not budge. Not only did he continue to support Harris; he and Elias Dunkin—the Marion bar owner, horseman, Democratic politician, and ruffian who had filed an injunction to halt Thomas Stewart's 1870 school-tax measure—signed the bond of William H. Smith, Republican candidate for assessor.¹⁸

Meanwhile, black Republicans gathered at the Perry County courthouse on Saturday, 14 October 1871, to discuss which candidates they were going to back. At the meeting, delegates nominated J. T. Harris for sheriff, William E. Rickard for tax collector, Henry W. Perry for treasurer, and Joe Speed, Peter T. Hurt, Richard Terrell (or

¹⁷ See "J. T. Harris," *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 October 1871.

¹⁸ See "Harris Driven to Desperation," *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 October 1871. See also "The Business of Marion," *ibid.*, 22 August 1872; "Our County Offices," *ibid.*, 30 November 1871. Cf. 1870-1877 Perry County Business Licenses; 1870-1875 Perry County Cash and Checks Log Book.

Terrel), and Alexander Curtis for the county commission. With typical derision, local Democrats labeled each one of the candidates. Harris was a “Skunk Extraordinaire.” Rickard was a “so-called” white man and “fervid orator of the Irish type.” Perry was another “so-called” white man; Speed “the Speedy Kuklux witness”; Hurt “a No. 1 stanch Democrat...and every whit a gentleman”; Terrell a “nigger...of Uniontown”; and Curtis a leading “‘Madagascar’...of Marion.”¹⁹

In a statement obviously directed at Harris, whose 1871 nomination was reportedly opposed by black Republicans, Democrats recalled how humiliating it was when Democratic voters snubbed a white politician. But when purportedly ignorant black and debased white Republicans did so, it was mortifying. Considering the possible backlash against Harris from the county’s white community, leading Democrats wondered why he was willing to endure such misery for an insignificant political office.²⁰

To several persons, the fact that Harris even tried to develop a relationship with black Perry Countians was abysmal. As tax collector, Harris had reportedly made a fortune by charging black people an additional fifty-seven cents when they had been unable to pay their taxes on time. As two Democrats saw it, the purported companion of Union General Wilson (Harris) hungered for money, not justice, and he did not mind taking the last pieces of bread from hungry, weeping black babies if he could make one penny from it. Nevertheless, most partisan whites were sure that black men would vote

¹⁹ “De Convenshun,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 October 1871; letter to the editor, *ibid.*, 20 August 1874. The journalists intentionally misspelled staunch “stanch” and white “whit.”

²⁰ See “Snubbed by Niggers,” *ibid.*, 26 October 1871.

for Harris because he was a Republican. As such, African American voters deserved to be robbed or otherwise wronged.²¹

Despite the colorable Democrats' rhetoric, not every black man in Perry County voted Republican. One *Marion Commonwealth* article congratulated the 700 or so black voters who, according to the paper, asserted their legal freedom and manhood by supporting Democrats rather than the Republicans whom John T. Harris, Joseph Speed, Thomas Steward, and other leading Republicans had told them to support. Hitherto, the paper had contended that almost every black voter in the county belonged to Harris, Speed, and Steward (whom Democrats dubbed "the immortal trio, Satan, Sin and Death") as much as they belonged to black Republicans such as Curtis, J. C. Dozier, Greene Lewis, and Terrell.²²

While exonerating the independent-minded blacks who backed Democrats, Perry County conservatives denounced white Republicans. One group of Democrats pledged to characterize any white man who voted for even a single Republican candidate as a radical. Other Democrats vowed to treat all whites who voted Republican or who became bondsmen for Republican officeholders as public enemies. In a pronouncement illustrative of their support for violence as a means to ensure political and other victories, Cooke and Heidt proclaimed:

This is the last *peaceful* method left our tax-burdened people of protecting and ridding themselves of the infamous plunderers who would eat up their substance, beggar their little ones, and humiliate and degrade them

²¹ See "J. T. Harris," *ibid.*, 2 November 1871. See also "Un Unfortunate Rad," *ibid.*, 26 May 1870. Cf. "Ho! For the Penitentiary." Harris adamantly objected, calling General Wilson a "woman insulter and house burner." "Goodness Gracious! A Much Slandered Cuss," *Marion Commonwealth*, 16 November 1871.

²² "To our Colored Friends," *Marion Commonwealth*, 16 November 1871.

forever.... The time has come when our people must place under the ban of social outlawry every one who in the *least* degree countenances or aids with these blood suckers.²³

Responding to a 23 October 1871 question posed by affluent Democrats, Henry W. Perry, a candidate for county treasurer, clarified his association with local Republicans. In doing so, he stood up to the influential conservatives. Perry said that he had announced his candidacy weeks before the Republicans held their countywide convention, which he did not attend, and that the delegates had nominated him for one reason: he was fit to hold the office. Regardless of Perry's politics, the future Sloss Iron and Steel Company manager was obliged to place his name on the Republican ticket because its members had nominated him. Perry was not a Republican however. Nor did he seek the office because he was a partisan; he sought it because he needed it and, if elected, planned to carry out his duties faithfully and without bias.²⁴

The entire "Republican" ticket, as decided at the 2 November 1871 countywide convention, appeared in the 9 November *Marion Commonwealth*.²⁵ As expected, J. T. Harris was the party's choice for sheriff. Rickard was nominated for tax collector, Joseph W. Morton and W. H. Smith tax assessors, H. W. Perry treasurer, and Curtis, Terrell, and Speed county commissioners. Sensing defeat, Cooke and Heidt, who claimed to have no political preference, encouraged every one of their Democratic patrons to save the 9

²³ "A Fair Warning," *ibid.*, 26 May 1870. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 37.

²⁴ See "Correspondence," *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 May 1870. See also "Mr. H. W. Perry," *ibid.*, 2 November 1871. Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 152-154.

²⁵ See "The Radical Ticket," *Marion Commonwealth*, 9 November 1871. See also "J. W. Morton—He Stooped, but didn't Conquer," *ibid.*, 23 November 1871, hereinafter cited as "J. W. Morton—He Stooped, but didn't Conquer." The author emphasizes Republican because a number of the individuals whom the paper enumerated, including Morton, Perry, and Rickard, were not Republicans.

November issue of the paper so that future generations would not forget who had made them political paupers in the event of a Republican landslide.²⁶

According to a number of voters, the 1871 elections were carried out as quietly and as orderly, but hardly as lawfully, as previous elections. At a number of polling places, there was a great deal of irregularity, if not outright fraud, according to one observer. In Uniontown, several officials and a few bystanders were said to have tampered with ballot boxes. Writing privately to Attorney Modawell, Democrats Robert Christian, S. D. Hale, and Robert S. Nicolson contended that Republican James Houston kept a ballot box in his possession after the polls closed. Interestingly, Houston was not even a duly sworn official. Christian was.²⁷

In other alleged cases of misconduct, Greene Lewis, who was an acting clerk as well as a candidate for the Alabama House, allowed people to loiter at polling places, and managers were frequently absent. At Scott Station, J. T. Harris and one of his associates had full access to the ballot box, poll lists, and other official materials because they were permitted to stay in the room with the managers. Similar irregularities were reported in Hamburg. Because of these and similar acts, Democrat Henry Moseley was bent on contesting the election results before any one knew the outcome of a single race.

Maybe Moseley was psychic. Many Perry County residents and at least one northern visitor were. As Moseley predicted, the November 1871 elections were not good to Democrats. J. T. Harris defeated Moseley 2,737 to 1,515. H. W. Perry, whom

²⁶ Heidt and M. M. Cooke declared that they were not Democrats when a writer calling himself or herself "Vox Populi" accused them of belonging to the Democratic party. The men denied the claim, but they made it clear that as "long as that party represents honest and correct principles we shall proudly co-operate with it on the ground that no one but a moral coward will desert a just cause because it is unpopular." "Vox Populi," *Marion Commonwealth*, 14 October 1869.

²⁷ "The Election," *ibid.* See *ibid.*, 7 December 1871.

the *Marion Commonwealth* referred to as a Democrat and a Republican, beat Lorenzo Love, a Marion grocer and a registered Democrat, 2,821 to 1,439. William Smith, Republican candidate for tax assessor, crushed Democrats James Hornbuckle and Joseph Morton by more than 1,900 votes each.²⁸

The contest was not a complete rout. Alfred Wooley became the constable of Marion beat, and William Sherrard was declared the winner of the coroner's race even though a report issued by the Alabama Secretary of State's office indicated that Samuel Chambers received more votes than Sherrard. Rickard, whose party affiliation was also questionable, was elected tax collector, but he could not keep the post because he was unable to pay his bond. When he resigned, Governor Lindsay appointed H. H. Moseley to the post. The "jolly good" Perry County Democrat did not have to contest the election results after all.²⁹

All three Republican candidates for the county commission—Curtis, Speed, and Terrell—were voted into office. Joining them was Democrat Peter T. Hurt, whom the *Marion Commonwealth* called a Republican. Terrell was also elected constable of Uniontown, and a number of Republicans and Democrats became justices of the peace (see Appendix R).³⁰

In the wake of the elections, another misidentified Republican spoke out. The 9 November 1871 *Marion Commonwealth* listed J. W. Morton among the Republicans who sought political office in Perry County, but Morton was adamantly opposed to being

²⁸ Smith polled 2,698 votes, Hornbuckle 852, Morton 777.

²⁹ "Our County Officers." Cf. Perry County Probate Judge Records of Election Results, 1823-1930, 18 November 1871.

³⁰ Cf. Perry County Probate Judge Records of Election Results, 1823-1930, 18 November 1872. The Executive Department of the Office Secretary of State might have misspelled Hurt's last name, employing Hush instead of Hurt. Other sources used Husk and Hunt. As far as the author can tell, Hurt is correct.

called a Republican. Not once in his forty years had a private or public offense such as being associated with the Republican party been leveled against him, he fulminated, calling the claim not only untrue but also unkind.³¹

People were eager to know how Morton's name ended up on the Republican ticket. Morton had a simple explanation: some of his black associates asked him to run for assessor. Convinced that it was the duty of all responsible citizens to answer any reasonable call to public service, Morton accepted the nomination, but he never abandoned the Democratic and Conservative party. He merely secured Democratic and Republican ballots and circulated them among Perry County's entire electorate.³²

Heidt and Cooke printed Morton's statement, but they added a disclaimer: the unsuccessful candidate's name appearing on the Republican ticket was not their fault. The men merely disseminated the information that they had been provided. The journalists then reminded readers that they had not assigned Morton to any particular party when they announced the results of the county elections because his conduct during the race had been inexplicable. "If Mr. Morton has ordinary intelligence, and we presume he has, and is capable of understanding plain English," exploded Heidt and Cooke, "he must see from our Article of the 9th we 'asserted or intimated' *nothing* concerning his politics. We merely stated the *fact* that his name was on the Radical ticket. [As to] *how* it came there was not our province to inquire."³³

The discussion could have ended there, but it did not. In a subsequent statement, the staunchly conservative newspapermen chastised Morton for not running for office

³¹ See "Lay on Macduff," *Marion Commonwealth*, 13 February 1873. Cf. "J. W. Morton—He Stooped, but didn't Conquer."

³² Cf. "Darkey Repeaters"; "J. W. Morton—He Stooped, but didn't Conquer."

³³ "J. W. Morton—He Stooped but didn't Conquer."

when the white Democrats of eastern Perry County asked him. Why, they asked, did the self-proclaimed Democrat not announce his candidacy before he had spoken with Curtis or Speed? If Morton ever responded, then his response was never printed; but a person can infer with a great deal of confidence nonetheless why Morton courted black voters as hard, if not harder, than whites. African Americans constituted the numerical majority in Perry County, and they had gone to the polls in previous elections. Many whites had not.

White voter apathy was one of the main reasons Democrats lost numerous elections between 1868 and 1871. Employing the oft-cited adage “in union, there is strength,” party leaders denounced the white people who either forgot or did not care about the truism. In the previous three elections, Republicans had been victorious because Democrats had been disunited, one conservative winced. Oftentimes, several candidates competed for the same office, thus splitting the Democratic vote. In a few cases, as many as five Democrats had run against each other. Others had tried to win over Republicans. Such greed and treachery had bred nothing but division, disgust, and torpor, asserted one group of conservative Democrats.³⁴

Having vented their frustrations, the Democrats returned to one of their favorite pastimes, ridiculing the Republican party. Closet Democrats E. A. Heidt and H. C. Cooke did not think that Republicans were the only persons deserving of their scorn. Heidt and Cooke were equally dissatisfied with local cotton makers, whom the journalists deemed unworthy to be called businessmen, cotton growers, or farmers because they were producing fewer bales of cotton than they had produced in previous years. Nor

³⁴ See “Party Organization,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 7 December 1871.

were they taking advantage of the marvelous business opportunities currently available to them (see Appendix S).³⁵

What were the bases for Cooke and Heidt's assertion? Up to the Civil War, Perry County had been one of the nation's most productive cotton-growing counties. In 1860, one-fifth of the 4,500,000 bales of cotton produced in the United States had been grown in Alabama's Black Belt. Altogether, 997,978 bales had been produced in the state, and almost 45,000 of them had come from Perry County. By 1870, the county produced less than 14,000 bales, or approximately two-thirds less than it had a decade earlier.

Inasmuch as the Black Belt's rich soil was considered inexhaustible, an optimistic writer from the area was confident that Perry and surrounding counties could grow cotton for as long as the residents of Egypt, India, or any European country if farmers took care of the land and the persons who worked it. The penman was also confident that a hefty profit could be made in the process, especially in Marion.³⁶

The writer had a valid point. Although Alabama's Black Belt produced less than 400,000 bales of cotton in 1870, Marion was as good a place to sell the product as the town had been to sell slaves during the 1840s. Indeed, in 1870, cotton fetched a hefty price, 18.5 cents, in Perry's seat of justice. Elsewhere in the state, cotton prices were lower. According to one analyst, Marion needed only more enterprising agribusinessmen to compete with neighboring cotton markets, such as Mobile and Selma. Although

³⁵ See "To All Whom It May Concern," *ibid.*, 7 December 1871. Cf. Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 804-805.

³⁶ See "Alabama," *Marion Commonwealth*, 10 September 1874. See also Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1974), 44, 198-199.

Marion's cotton growers and merchants were "shaking off their Rip Van Winkle nap," the analyst continued, they had a long way to go before being fully awake.³⁷

Just as race was at the root of Perry County's political woes, it also accounted for the county's agricultural problems. Regularly, white agriculturists bailed incarcerated blacks out of jail when their labor was needed. As a few white conservatives saw it, this practice had to be stopped because it invited the black rogue who was neither afraid nor embarrassed to go to jail to commit crime. Rather than being renounced, the convict would be applauded by his or her family, friends, and associates. Therefore, the conservatives encouraged anyone who enjoyed peace and quiet, respected the law, or liked to see all criminals punished rather than rewarded to discourage the pernicious policy.³⁸

Releasing black prisoners so that they could work was not the only program that a number of conservatives wanted scrapped. After almost two years under Robert Lindsay, many Alabamians had grown tired of Democratic governance. Some people disliked the governor because he condoned the selling of offices and endorsed bogus bonds. Others disliked him for being too moderate and for purchasing the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad. For the last reason alone, a number of Perry County residents could not support the incumbent governor.³⁹

³⁷ "A Bad Custom," *Marion Commonwealth*, 14 December 1871, hereinafter cited as "A Bad Custom." Cf. 30 November 1871 *Marion Commonwealth* "The Legislature"; Sellers, *Slavery in Alabama*, 178, citing Col. A. J. Pickett to Hon. P. W. Kittrell, 15 November 1845.

³⁸ Cf. "A Bad Custom."

³⁹ "Those 'Bogus Bonds,'" *Marion Commonwealth*, 23 January 1873. See *ibid.*, 9 May 1872. See also Don H. Doyle, *New Men, New Cities, New South: Atlanta, Nashville, Charleston, Mobile* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 70, 78. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*. Additional attention is given to Lindsay's opinions regarding the bond issue in "Governor Lindsay and the Payment," *Marion Commonwealth*, 20 April 1871. For information regarding office selling, cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1561, and vol. 2, 423-424.

Despite disillusionment with the Democratic standard-bearer and constant denial of any political affiliation, the *Marion Commonwealth* continued to define its identity in partisan political terms. When W. L. Pitts, a well-known Uniontown citizen, wrote that he was tired of getting news about Perry County from the Selma media and enquired about a subscription to the *Marion Commonwealth*, the paper's owners welcomed the show of support: "We have endeavored and shall endeavor to exclude from our columns everything savoring of independency or immorality and we shall keep the *Commonwealth* only on that political highway which Southerners may tread without shame or dishonor." Of course, the immorality and independency about which the reporters wrote were synonymous with the Republican party. Southerners, as defined by them, were conservative white Southerners, and the Democratic party built the highway on which the journalists intended to stay (their continual denials notwithstanding). White Democratic solidarity remained essential because the possibility of politico-racial violence and turmoil had been a constant factor since 1865. The early 1871 sidewalk killing of William Stillings, which continued to unfold in the trail of Rienzi (or Renzi) Baker the following year, illustrated this fact.⁴⁰

The Trial of Rienzi Baker

The Perry County Circuit Court indicted Baker during its spring 1871 session. Shortly thereafter, defense attorneys requested the proceedings be moved to Dallas County. The reason for the change of venue was not hard to determine. After disguised men came to the Marion jailhouse to abduct Baker, Perry County officials transported

⁴⁰ "A Sensible Letter."

him to Selma, where he stayed for approximately one year before his case was brought before Dallas County Criminal Court Judge Craig and, ultimately, First Circuit Court Judge Milton Saffold.⁴¹

As to what type person Baker was before the altercation with Stillings, Seaborn Saffold—Judge Saffold’s 300-plus-pound relative, Virginia Military Institute graduate, ex-Confederate, white vigilante-committee proponent, owner and editor of *The Selma Weekly Times*, and future president of the Alabama Press Association—could not say. Seaborn knew only that Baker was no more than twenty-three years of age and did not seem to have the countenance of a cruel man. What Seaborn did not know was that Baker had been arrested and charged with grand larceny after trying to rob the safe and storehouse of Marion grocer-educator A. B. Goodhue during the spring of 1870.⁴²

Baker’s case was heard on 14 May 1872. According to Seaborn Saffold, the surprisingly calm and remarkably well-dressed defendant walked into the Selma courtroom at 11 AM accompanied by his young wife. The defendant’s casual manner reflected his confidence in his innocence or an indifference to his fate. After prosecutors and defense attorneys challenged possible jurors, twelve individuals were selected. Unlike other cases involving black persons, Baker really was judged by a jury of his peers. In the jury box sat five whites and seven blacks.⁴³

The state’s witness list read like a who’s who of Perry County notables.

Prosecutors called E. A. Heidt, Perry Fowlkes, Lorenzo Love, E. B. Thompson, W. C.

⁴¹ See “Renzi Baker,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 May 1870. See also *The State v. Rienzi Baker*, 1868-1872 Circuit Court Solicitor’s Docket; 28 May 1874 *Marion Commonwealth*. Cf. *Selma Times Weekly* “Trial of Rienzi Baker.”

⁴² See Henry S. Marks, comp., *Who was Who in Alabama* (Huntsville, Al: Strode Publishers, 1972), 155. Cf. *Selma Times Weekly* “Trial of Rienzi Baker.”

⁴³ “Commencement Day,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 14 July 1870, hereinafter cited as “Commencement Day.” Cf. *Selma Times Weekly* “Trial of Rienzi Baker.”

Wyatt, and William W. Wilkerson. Each one of these men was white. Also testifying for the prosecution were African Americans Washington Lowry and Henry Richardson. The defense called only one European American, James H. Graham, and three blacks: adults Tom Hubbard and Tom Lattimore and a young man named Dena Wyatt.

After Baker pleaded guilty to murder, Lowry took the stand. The witness testified that on the day of the altercation, he and another black man were leaving Marion when they saw Baker and his young wife. Mrs. Baker carried a large basket on her right hip, recollected Lowry, who also remembered the Bakers walking on the innermost part of the raggedy pathway. Shortly after Lowry and his associate passed the Bakers, the men saw the defendant strike Stillings in the head with what seemed to be a fence paling.

Apparently, Baker had removed it from the sidewalk on which he, his wife, and Stillings were walking. After the assault, the ex-Confederate's body lay limp on the pavement.

Lowry remembered Baker walking over to where Stillings was lying, uttering a few words, and rushing hurriedly toward him and his accomplice. By the time that Baker reached them, he had discarded the fence paling. Like Lowry, W. C. Wyatt did not know what Baker had said to Stillings while he stood over him, but the latter witness did know what Mrs. Baker had pled: "For God's sake don't hit him...any more." Believing that Stillings was dead, Rienzi Baker had cried out for help. Mrs. Baker had wept because the man whose assistance her husband sought was not home.⁴⁴

When W. C. Wyatt arrived at the crime scene, Stillings was lying to the side of the pavement. His body was numb, and blood was running from his mouth and nose. The witness recalled seeing some sort of injury at the back of Stillings' head and

⁴⁴ *Selma Times Weekly* "Trial of Rienzi Baker."

rightfully suspected that it had been caused by one of Baker's blows. As Baker's terrified wife looked on, W. C. gathered Stillings in his arms, placed him in a buggy, and wheeled him home. Around 8 PM that night, Wilkerson visited Stillings at his residence. The wounded printer was still insensible, testified Wilkerson, who noticed another lesion on Stillings' body. Apparently, the second laceration was not life threatening, but the gash on the veteran's head, being so close to his brain, could have proven fatal.

Dr. Wilkerson cared for Stillings for six weeks. Though able to walk around town, Stillings was wounded severely. His brain had swelled, and a postmortem examination showed a large blood clot had formed beneath his scalp. Wilkerson, whose brother was also a physician, concluded that one of Baker's blows must have caused Stillings' death because he had seen no other life-threatening injuries on the veteran's body the entire six weeks that he had treated him.

Early in Stillings' recovery, W. W. Wilkerson advised him to stay in bed, but the patient, believing his injuries were not serious or perhaps swallowed up by pride or embarrassment, ignored the physician's counsel. Shortly after the assault, Stillings returned to work, performing printing tasks for Heidt, who disputed the testimony of others who described the victim as elderly and feeble. According to Heidt, Stillings was about forty-five years old, of ordinary height and weight, and possessed average physical abilities and strength.⁴⁵

James H. Graham was the defense's first witness. Baker's lawyers intended to show through Graham's testimony that Mrs. Baker was of sound moral character. The defense also wished to show that Perry Countians were usually courteous when they

⁴⁵ Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1560.

passed each other on public thoroughfares. The prosecution believed such details were superfluous, and Judge Saffold agreed. Consequently, the judge ordered jurors to disregard Graham's statement.⁴⁶

Dena Wyatt, the defense's second witness, reenacted the winter or spring 1871 *mêlée*. Dena recalled the Bakers walking together on the inside of the walkway but said Mrs. Baker was carrying a basket in her left arm rather than her right arm, as Lowry had said, or atop her head, as Robert Christian and other persons had suggested. More important, Dena swore that Stillings was the cause of the evening ruckus. As the couple approached him, Stillings extended his arm in a deliberate attempt to strike Mrs. Baker. The young witness did not see what happened immediately after the malicious act, but he did see the deceased walk to the edge of the sidewalk, as if he were looking for something. Dena then heard the defendant ask Stillings if he had struck his wife. Within moments, the witness saw Rienzi Baker whack Stillings on his head, presumably a second or a third time.⁴⁷

Tom Lattimore confirmed that there was more than one blow. He was not in a position to actually see the blows, but he heard them. Sprinting to the crime scene, Lattimore found a broken brick lying on the pavement. Fellow witness Tom Hubbard testified that he was close to where the altercation took place, but he did not see the parties' positions or hear anything that they might have said to each other. Hubbard did, however, hear a loud thump and someone ask, "Did you hit my wife?" or, "What did you

⁴⁶ Cf. *Selma Times Weekly* "Trial of Rienzi Baker."

⁴⁷ Ibid. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1562.

hit my wife for?’ then a woman’s voice crying, ‘Don’t Mr. Baker.’” Unlike Lattimore, Hubbard never moved from where he was standing.⁴⁸

After the defense rested, W. C. Wyatt was placed back on the witness stand to rebut Lattimore’s testimony. It seems that W. C. went back to the area at which the skirmish had taken place on the night of the altercation, but he did not see any broken bricks on or near the sidewalk, as Lattimore had testified. The only item that W. C. saw the paling that Baker had removed from the fence to strike Stillings.⁴⁹

Dallas County Solicitor S. W. John spoke next, followed quickly by defense counsels Knox Lee, Esquire, and Colonel John C. Reid (or Reed). Perry County Solicitor Charles G. Browne spoke last. In a statement torn right from the pages of a book on southern manhood, the defense contended that Baker, as the sole protector of his wife’s life and honor, acted in self-defense. Rather than being premeditated, Baker’s action was actually a reaction, argued Lee and Reid. Their client had done what any respectable husband would have done to someone trying to insult or injure his wife. Not having been committed maliciously or in a zealous rage, the killing should not have been considered murder.

After listening to the defense’s argument, the prosecution strove to prove that any provocation by Stillings could not have been so serious as to warrant killing him. Solicitor Browne, who had managed to stay in office despite numerous charges of office buying, was confident that Baker could not have acted in self-defense, as the defense alleged, because he had not been attacked. Nor had anyone proven that Stillings had provoked Baker by hitting his spouse. The only evidence that the defense had cited were

⁴⁸ *Selma Weekly Times* “Trial of Rienzi Baker.”

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

the testimonies of a black youth who claimed to have seen Stillings fling his arm in Mrs. Baker's direction and that of the defendant, recounted Browne, who quickly reminded the court that the young man did not say that he had actually seen Stillings hit the woman and that the defendant would say anything to be acquitted.

With all arguments completed, Judge Saffold turned the case over to the twelve jurors, to whom Saffold gave very specific instructions. It did not take long for them to wrap up their deliberations, returning a decision within hours after the closing arguments. At about 8 o'clock PM on 14 May 1872, Rienzi Baker was pronounced guilty of first-degree manslaughter and sentenced to a year of hard labor in the state penitentiary. The defense moved to commute the sentence to one year's hard labor in Perry County, where the crime had been committed, but Judge Saffold refused the request. Why Baker's lawyers did not ask Saffold to consider the year that Baker had already spent in the Selma jail time served is debatable.

According to *The Selma Weekly Times*, the Baker case caused a great deal of excitement in the Black Belt. Considering the testimony by Christian, Speed, and other important officials during the 1871 Ku Klux Klan hearings, the Selma newspaper was undoubtedly correct. Oddly enough, the case did not receive much coverage in the Marion press. Townspeople had to have known what had taken place; otherwise, Curtis would not have been able to provide Speed details about the incident. But extant issues of the *Marion Commonwealth*, whose owner was a witness in the 1872 proceedings, hardly mentioned it.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ *Marion Commonwealth* might have discussed the Baker case between 3 February and 19 April, 21 April and 17 May, or 19 May and 21 August 1871. The author has not been able to locate issues of the newspaper for those dates.

The Selma Weekly Times did publicize much information about the trial, particularly the relatively light sentence. Seaborn Saffold and staff did not wish to question the jury or Judge Saffold's decisions, but the journalists were confident that the trial's outcome would not satisfy most of the white people who knew about it. Seaborn believed the lenient rulings in a series of similar cases recently settled might have affected the judge's decision to hand down a one-year sentence. Most blacks and liberal whites figured Judge Saffold's ruling was caused by Baker's ostensible innocence. White conservatives, on the other hand, wanted Baker burnt "without the benefit of clergy," a fate that M. M. Cooke had proposed for a group of blacks who had raped two of "Dixie's beauties" near Eufaula in November 1869. According to Attorney Cooke, this was the only proven way to end the blacks' real and imaginary violent practices.⁵¹

Comparing a case of unpremeditated manslaughter to an alleged gang rape reflects the racial tensions rising from Reconstruction politics in Perry County during 1871-1872. Rienzi Baker was thus fortunate that his trial was moved to Selma, where northern Republicans had supposedly tricked a few freedmen into pressuring lawmakers to establish a criminal court. Having a court anywhere in Dallas County was the last thing that a black Selman should have wanted anywhere near him, reasoned several Perry County Democrats. They might have been correct, but at least one black Marionite was probably glad that his Selma contemporaries had been "tricked". Because of their

⁵¹ "A Valuable Suggestion" (first quote); "The Judson," *Marion Commonwealth*, 30 May 1872 (second quote).

supposed naïveté, Rienzi Baker was able to avoid one of Marion's undertakers-cabinetmakers. James Holt Clanton, a leading Alabama Democrat and Civil War veteran, was not so fortunate.⁵²

The Death of James H. Clanton

On Wednesday, 27 September 1871, General Clanton was slain in Knoxville, Tennessee, as the consequence of a drunken argument that centered on the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad. Announcing his passing before the facts of his death became known in the Black Belt, one melancholy but proud Marion editorialist proclaimed that Alabamians were in tears because of the death of their "fallen chief!" Clanton died as he had lived, the penman continued, "in the service of his people. No nobler spirit ever lived. He was the soul of honor, the exponent of Southern chivalry. [The] brave, generous and noble Clanton...never wronged a human being, and fell at last a victim to his own magnanimity."⁵³

The memorial was moving but a bit premature. Clanton had frequently wronged black Alabamians for political reasons because his most loyal friends and associates had been white conservatives. Clanton had not been as prejudiced as many of his cohorts, but he had spoken derogatory words about black persons in public. Privately, he had spoken even more passionately about African Americans and had even supported black education. These and related actions prompted Julius Shorter, a prominent black

⁵² "Duped Again," *Marion Commonwealth*, 27 January 1870. Cf. "The Business of Marion."

⁵³ "General James H. Clanton," *ibid.*, 5 October 1871. See *Huntsville Advocate*, 8 August 1866. Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 34, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 51; Going, *Bourbon Democracy in Alabama*, 2; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 234-236; McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama*, 152.

Democrat, to consider Clanton a true friend to the state's black population. Following Clanton's death, Shorter grieved: "[E]very time I pass his office, my heart feels like a lost a father."⁵⁴

Shorter's words were heartfelt. Like other politicians, Clanton had tailored his words and actions to fit the occasion. Consider black manhood suffrage. During the late 1860s, he, John Forsyth, Jr., and Joseph Hodgson had led the attempt to recruit black men to the Democratic and Conservative party. When their attempts failed, Clanton and crew insulted black Republicans, calling them inferior to white people and unprepared for suffrage. This was a tactic used throughout the South, especially by prominent editors such as Forsyth and Hodgson, to discount the value of politically active blacks.

However, in Clanton's last public address, which he made before the Alabama Association of Teachers that Hodgson had organized in July 1870, Clanton reemphasized the need for white Southerners to support black education. As Hodgson had stressed earlier, formal learning would decrease black thievery, produce better-informed black electors, and provide needy whites employment as faculty and staff.⁵⁵

What about the Marionite's claims about Clanton falling victim to his own high-mindedness? In truth, Clanton fell victim to the anger of Colonel David M. Nelson, son of Tennessee Judge A. R. Nelson, after Clanton and the younger Nelson quarreled. Apparently, Colonel Nelson, who was employed by the Stantons and other A&C Railroad interests, and Clanton had been drinking when the colonel questioned the general's courage. Clanton, whom Alabama lawmakers had retained to investigate and possibly

⁵⁴ Julius Shorter, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 2, *loc. cit.*, 1076. Cf. *ibid.*, 234; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 80.

⁵⁵ Cf. *1871 Hodgson Report*, 25; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 113, 114; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 160-165, 176-179; Logue.

file suit against the A&C Railroad, replied: "Name your time and place and try me." Fearing the worse, one of Nelson's friends tried to intercede, telling the drunken colonel that was he wrong, but Nelson continued his tirade: "Now will do as well as any other time," motioning for Clanton to walk into the street.⁵⁶

What followed was emblematic of the ill effects of the southern *code duelo*. As Clanton made his way to the road, Nelson dashed into a nearby store, grabbed a double-barrel shotgun, and kneeled beneath an awning out of sight from Clanton. As onlookers scattered, Nelson placed his gun against a doorframe and pulled the trigger. The first shot missed Clanton, who, unable to see Nelson, began to fire at random. Buckshot from Nelson's second round entered Clanton's arm and passed through his chest, killing him.

In the wake of Clanton's death, the *Marion Commonwealth* extolled him as one of the kindest, most chivalric and generous men to ever live in Alabama. This view was common among the Black Belt's white élites. Led by Edmund W. Pettus of Selma and William B. Modawell of Marion, affluent whites raised money to help Clanton's survivors. Pettus informed Modawell of his intentions in a 2 October 1871 letter from Selma. In it, the "grand old Roman" (Pettus) stated that he had been asked by some of Montgomery's most influential white citizens to seek contributions from as many respectable Alabamians as he could to pass on to the widow and children of the deceased. Because Modawell was a charitable man who had known Clanton well, he was happy to assist. Together with Mayor Shivers, Modawell canvassed Perry County, seeking

⁵⁶ "Death of Gen. Jas. H. Clanton," *Montgomery Advertiser*, 5 October 1871.

donations. Elsewhere in the state, black Democrats Julius C. Shorter and George W. Cox solicited funds, but few African Americans responded.⁵⁷

State lawmakers also tried to help the Clanton family. Amid debate over a bill that, if enacted, would have allowed Mrs. Clanton to be paid for the services that her husband had provided during the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad litigation, legislators decided to give General Clanton's widow, as trustee of his estate, \$10,000 to use as she pleased. Attempting to prevent a precedent, lawmakers amended the bill to prevent any other lawyer who had taken part in the A&C proceedings from filing a claim against the state. Sixty-five legislators backed the amended act, and seven opposed it. All dissenters were African Americans, and of them was Alexander Curtis.⁵⁸

Purported Republican Perfidy and Political Violence

Around the same time as Clanton's death, white Perry County conservatives Joseph and Thomas Gay, F. Hopkins, Bee Miller, William Muse, and Albert Ware whipped a man of purported low character named Larkin Bagwell. As the victim testified before Dallas County's grand jury, his assaulters turned themselves over to the local sheriff. At some point thereafter, the federal government intervened, and the defendants were taken into custody by a United States marshal. Allegedly, each man was a member of the Perry County Klan.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ *Canebrake Herald*, 11 August 1887. See *Marion Commonwealth*, 5 October 1871. See also "The Clanton Fund," *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 October 1871; "A Colored Man's Reason for Acting with the Democracy," *Marion Commonwealth*, 14 December 1872. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 185, 341.

⁵⁸ Cf. 14 December 1871 *Marion Commonwealth* "Legislative Proceedings"; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 50-51.

⁵⁹ See *Montgomery Advance*, 6 April 1872. See also "Perry Ku Klux," *Marion Commonwealth*, 11 April 1872, hereinafter cited as "Perry Ku Klux."

Attorney Reid, co-counsel in the Baker case, asked if the bonds of the accused violators could be reduced. According to the *Montgomery Advance*, Reid made the request at the behest of some of Perry County's best citizens (an expression often used during the postbellum years to denote the Klan). In their opinion, the accused men were of sound moral character, high social status, and unquestionably innocent. All the same, Richard Busteed, a Republican district-court judge, refused to lower the bonds.⁶⁰

Editors Cooke and Heidt knew Bagwell as well as Hopkins and Muse, who had belonged to Company K of the 11th Alabama Volunteer Regiment. The journalists called Muse and Hopkins calm, orderly Democrats who had made excellent soldiers, but they referred to Bagwell as a characterless, idiotic Republican who had been court-martialed in 1864 for cowardice. Reportedly, the only reason Bagwell had not been convicted of a war crime was because military officials had deemed him an imbecile. The newsmen were not certain, but they thought the three veterans had been messmates during the war. Knowing how insignificant, trifling, and wretched Bagwell was, Cooke and Heidt doubted that Hopkins or Muse would have harmed him. The entire ordeal was probably fictional, they wrote: "Larkin and Larkin! These, oh, Radicalism, are thy jewels!"⁶¹

It was within this context of violence and partisan insult that Perry County Republicans met at various places during the early summer of 1872 to decide who would attend the upcoming statewide convention and run for the state legislature. Although turnout was lower than usual, most of the meetings went well. Frontrunners included House candidates John Dozier and Greene Lewis. Peter Clark, a white Republican from

⁶⁰ Cf. "Perry Ku Klux"; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 62.

⁶¹ "Perry Ku Klux." William Muse might have been a sergeant, and the F. Hopkins to whom Heidt and Cooke referred might have gone by J. Hopkins. Ken Jones, personal communication to the author, 19 September 2004.

California, was also in a good position to become a representative. This infuriated most Democrats. For them, reducing the power of Joseph Speed was the only commendable thing that the Westerner had done since moving to Perry County.⁶²

The Democrats were wrong. Even as they made the statement, Speed was preparing to vie for Joseph Hodgson's position as state superintendent of education. Speed's colleague, Alexander Curtis, was expected to be nominated for the state senate, but Curtis really wanted to become a congressman. That aspiration put him in direct competition with Greene Lewis, who also had congressional aspirations. Regardless of who was nominated, blacks had reason to rejoice. If either man was elected to the 43rd Congress, he would become the second African American in Alabama history to represent the state on Capitol Hill.

Curtis' chances seemed good during the early summer months. Even Heidt and H. C. Cooke backed him. But their support did not last long. Soon, they were blasting Curtis much the same way that they had blasted J. T. Harris, Speed, and Thomas Steward. For the time being, however, the partisan pundits spent much of their time discussing the weather, censuring unlawful blacks, cursing pesky varmints, and awaiting the second coming of the Alabama Democratic and Conservative party.

Actual Democratic Perfidy and Political "Fusion"

"Dog days" came early in Perry County in 1872. Rather than August, the rainy season began in June. Rain continued to pour throughout July, prompting the cotton farmers who had not moved to Selma or elsewhere in the state to work tirelessly to

⁶² See *Marion Commonwealth*, 11 July 1872. See also "Pow-Wow," *ibid.*, 8 August 1872, hereinafter cited as "Pow-Wow"; "Dr. J. C. Dozier," *ibid.*, 23 July 1874.

recover from the June-July rains. Accompanying the precipitation was an equally menacing foe, insects. By one person's estimation, worms ruined much of the cotton that survived the previous drought and subsequent flooding.⁶³

Rain and worms were not the county's only woes. The fall of 1872 saw a rise in diphtheria, which caused several illnesses and a few August-September deaths. By the time the sick had recovered, there was little agricultural work to perform. Inclement weather and insects had given birth to a short season, so most of the cotton had been picked by 10 October 1872. That day, a cynical Democrat predicted that black laborers would have a great time doing nothing until December. By Christmas, he mused, every black man in the county would be a politician.⁶⁴

The writer's racism was indicative of the attitudes of countless white Alabamians during the Postbellum period. Why so many white Alabamians disliked, feared, or mistrusted blacks defies easy answer, but some clues appear in the *Marion Commonwealth*. In one article, its owners maintained that they were not in the habit of deprecating African Americans even though they had often engaged in blatant and demeaning racism, as in April 1872:

A female Negro woman, black as the King of Hades' boots was in town last week with a young child as irregular in appearance as to excite the curiosity and wonder at the strange ways of nature. The child's face was part white and part black, there being one large white spot on his forehead and another on his chin. Its arms were white, and the whole front of his body was spotted white and black, while [its] back was black as ebony.

⁶³ See "From Marion to Selma," *ibid.*, 12 September 1872. See also "Cotton," *ibid.*, 29 August 1872. Cf. "Weather Report."

⁶⁴ *Marion Commonwealth*, 10 October 1872. See "Diphtheria," *ibid.* Cf. 12 September 1872 *Marion Commonwealth*; "The Outlook for 1872."

In the newsmen's judgment, the youth was a "rare phenomenon, though not much of an improvement, on the nigger." Supposedly, a Marion clerk who saw the reputed oddity suspected that it was a radical Republican, but local physicians could not confirm his suspicion. "What is it?" asked Cooke and Heidt.⁶⁵

The answer to the inventive journalists' question is obvious. "It," or the "rare phenomenon," was not a genetic aberration but a figment of their imagination, an anthropomorphism invented to accentuate the bi-ethnic nature of the county Republican party, whose members were criticized continuously. The average black in the party was still unprepared for citizenship, and his white colleague was a traitor who continued to lie about white vigilantism in Perry County. This they said despite the fact that several black politicians from the county had shared bipartisan support and that in January 1871 Ryland Randolph had deemed Hale, Marengo, and Perry perfect for Klan resurgence. It should be noted that in 1870 these three counties had accounted for more than ten percent of the state's major black officeholders and twenty-two of the Black Belt's twenty-five wealthiest white planters (see Appendices G and S). It should also be noted that the *Marion Commonwealth* rarely printed anything positive about black officeholders, but it frequently featured articles or editorials depicting African Americans as having slave-like mentalities, as being lazy, thieving, or incomparably stupid.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ "A Strange Freak of Nature," *Marion Commonwealth*, 11 April 1872. See "To the Negroes," *ibid.*, 1 August 1872.

⁶⁶ See "Smash Up," *ibid.*, 11 May 1869. See also "White vs. Negro," *ibid.*, 17 June 1869, quoting *Newberry (Massachusetts) Herald*, [n.d.]; *Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor*, 31 January 1871. Cf. 1 August 1872 *Marion Commonwealth* "To the Negroes"; 1870-1877 Perry County Business Licenses; 1870-1875 Perry County Cash and Checks Log Book; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 311-321, and *They Too Call Alabama Home*, 496-499; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, passim; Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, passim; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 247; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 12 (Table 2). For additional information about Randolph's Klan revitalization plan, cf. Trelease, *White Terrorism*, 246; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 62.

Beyond the issue of racial inferiority and stereotypes lay the more important terrain of political hegemony. Who would rule the Black Belt? Among conservative white citizens, the consensus was that whites would forever control blacks. Hence, voting for an honest white Democrat was as sensible as voting for a dishonest white Republican. Several Democrats tried to use this sales pitch to attract black voters, but few African Americans were interested in what the Democrats were selling.

In addition to urging black voters to rethink their general allegiance to the Republican party, Perry County Democrats disseminated ways that their party could ensure success in political races without black support. Reform and retrenchment were of utmost importance to the plan. According to one male editorialist, these were the watchwords that had stirred the emotions of white conservatives in 1870 and had driven the Republicans out of office. Democrats had made great strides during that year's campaign, but their work was not done. In a stealthy remark undoubtedly directed at Governor Lindsay and other Democrats who had collaborated with the Republicans for what their detractors saw as purely selfish reasons, the editorialist declared that unadulterated Democrats would surely "clean the Augean stable" in the next election.⁶⁷

Rigid economy and political expediency were the orders of the day. Democratic leaders had to pursue a different policy than the one that the editorialist preferred. Rather than totally opposing their Republican foes, Democrats had to work with them in some instances. Toward that end, leading members of the Marion beat of the Perry County Democratic and Conservative party resolved to cooperate with anyone who wanted to relieve United States citizens from the biased, corrupt, and dangerous policies and

⁶⁷ *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 May 1872. Cf. 11 July 1872 *Marion Commonwealth*; "To the Negroes Once More."

practices of the Republican-headed central government. Attendees also deemed it inexpedient and unwise for delegates to the National Democratic Convention to nominate a president or vice president, preferring fusion with the National Liberal party.⁶⁸

When the county Democratic and Conservative party convention was held, delegates reaffirmed these goals. They also backed the timely payment of any just debt that the state government owed, opposed the payment of all unjust debts, including bonds and interests, and demanded that every one of the public servants or officers whom they backed be an advocate of rigid economy and a scrupulous adherent to the strict construction of the law. Conferees rejoiced because full amnesty had been granted to thousands of white Southerners, reiterated the need to keep local and state governments in the hands of conservative whites, and entreated all good citizens to ignore all animosities, personal preferences, or prejudices and to unite in “this last and crowning effort to complete the work of political redemption and of reform in our State so auspiciously begun in 1870.”⁶⁹

Heidt and Cooke monitored the activities of the Democratic and Conservative party closely, but the two refused to admit that they were Democrats. Instead, they lauded its members for opposing the Force Act of 1871 and for planning an all-white county militia that Henry H. Moseley would command. If organized, the Old South types who made up the militia would have carte blanche to check local Republicans’ progress.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ See “Marion Beat,” *ibid.*, 23 May 1872.

⁶⁹ 30 May 1872 *Marion Commonwealth* “Proceedings of the County Convention.”

⁷⁰ See *ibid.*, 23 May 1872. See also “Military Company,” *ibid.*, 30 May 1872.

When Colonel A. R. Kelly (or Kelley) called the Perry County Democratic Convention to order on 27 July 1872, he did not know if a countywide militia would be formed, but he did know that his party had to do something to combat the strength of the county's Republican factions. Around the state and nation, thousands of Democrats had chosen to unite, or "fuse," with white Republicans and National Liberals such as Samuel F. Rice and W. F. Hatchett; but Kelly's group was as unsure of that plan as they were about courting black voters. Lingering racial and sectional issues were partly responsible for the hesitance. A number of orthodox Democrats disliked the National Liberals' candidate for president, Horace Greeley, a former slavery opponent from New York, but other nominees were acceptable.⁷¹

In Perry County, orthodox Democrats were particularly fond of the National Liberal party's vice-presidential and gubernatorial candidates, N. Gratz Brown of Missouri and Thomas H. Herndon of Hale and Mobile Counties, respectively. Josiah Alexander, John Chapman, and David Scott, the party's choices for the Alabama Legislature, were also acceptable to the orthodox Democrats; most of whom had previously supported A. or H. C. Davidson and W. H. Pitts (South Perry), Captain Jones J. Seawell or John H. Chapman (Marion), David B. Scott or Captain W. H. Johnson (West Perry), Robert Sturdivant or Josiah Alexander (East Perry), and Joseph Walton (North Perry) for the state legislature.⁷²

⁷¹ Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 168-173, 185; McAfee, *Race, Religion and Reconstruction*, 152. Greeley received the most votes from the Alabama delegation. Rice and Hatchett served on the platform and rules committees, and Thomas Lamert, another Alabamian, was on the party's first vice-presidential list. See *Proceedings of the Liberal Republican Convention, in Cincinnati, May 1st, 2^d, and 3^d, 1872* (New York: Baker and Godwin, 1872), 13, 19-26, hereinafter cited as *1872 Proceedings of the Liberal Republican Convention*. For a more complete listing of National Liberal party nominees, see *Marion Commonwealth*, 1 and 22 August 1872.

⁷² "Candidates for the Legislature," *Marion Commonwealth*, 18 July 1872.

What caused the sudden change of heart? Political desperation influenced the decision. Without a fusion strategy to enlarge the Democratic base, Republicans would certainly prevail. The presence of Perry County politicians was an additional impetus. In nominating Alexander, Chapman, Pitts, and Scott for prominent positions and Bush Jones, Jr., for a minor post, some of the prominence that the county had once enjoyed seemed to return. The mere possibility of a conservative resurrection led by “genuine” public servants rather than professional politicians prompted *The Selma Southern Argus* to applaud Perry County Democrats for setting an excellent example for other Black Belt members of the party.⁷³

Nominating capable, respectable men was a good start to restoring Perry’s former luster, but it was not enough to completely rejuvenate Old Perry. As was the case with the county’s agricultural factions, local Democrats and their newfound friends, the National Liberals, had to organize. Because dyed-in-the-wool Republicans were busy forming political clubs and addressing potential black voters, Democrats needed to follow suit. Considering that only one Democratic-Liberal party had been organized in Perry County, there was much work to be done before the upcoming election. Hundreds of potential voters had to be registered, immigrants had to be naturalized, campaign documents had to be distributed, phony registrations had to be invalidated, and Greeley’s opponents in the county had to be persuaded to bury their prejudices and march hand-in-hand with other honorable citizens against their common enemy, Republican rule. No longer denying their political loyalties, Heidt and H. C. Cooke, secretary of the county

⁷³ See *ibid.*, 8 August 1872, citing *Selma Southern Argus*, [n.d.]. John Chapman was elected chairman of the Democratic party’s fourth district. Bush Jones, Jr., was named elector. They were chosen to their respective positions at a 7 August 1872 meeting that was held in Tuscaloosa. Cf. 19 October 1871 *Marion Commonwealth*.

Democratic convention, commanded all concerned Democrats and National Liberals to form societies in every political beat in the county. After scolding local Democrats for being slow in preparing for the upcoming elections, the journalists reviewed Perry County's rich political history. Why be lethargic now, they asked, demanding: "[White] Men of Perry[,] Awake! Arouse, and Organize!!"⁷⁴

Democratic Success in Marion

Marion's municipal government was an excellent example of what good organization could accomplish. Mayor Shivers, Town Clerk Thomas Givhan, Superintendent Thomas Clancy, and Marshal Joseph Thompson were all Democrats. Councilmen Francis Bates, David Howze, Peter Hurt, John Poole, and James Moore were also devoted Democrats.⁷⁵

Achieving the type success that Marion Democrats accomplished throughout the county, state, and nation was a sizeable task, and leading Democrats knew it. In Perry County alone, Republicans were holding rallies and mass meetings to encourage black people to maintain their political activism. The advantages of staying with the party of Lincoln were spelled out most clearly at a gathering that John Reynolds, a former auditor, held on the courthouse lawn. Though there were not as many black listeners as there usually were on such occasions, enough persons were present at the meeting to muster up three cheers for Reynolds, the next man to Ulysses Grant, joked one Democrat. The

⁷⁴ *Marion Commonwealth*, 15 August 1872; "Men of Perry Awake! Arouse, and Organize," *ibid.*, 26 September 1872, hereinafter cited as "Men of Perry Awake! Arouse, and Organize." See "Farmers Must Organize," *Marion Commonwealth*, 9 November 1871.

⁷⁵ See "Our Town Government," *ibid.*, 22 August 1872. Thomas Clancy was county clerk, but he lived in Marion.

audience's response was weak, but any response was enough to cause concern when white Republicans such as Paul Strobach were telling black voters to "put their heels on the heads of the white men and grind them in the dust."⁷⁶

According to many white conservatives, civil political debate between parties was out of the question. Like influential Democrat James L. Pugh, who was certain that every northern-born white Republican was a greedy politician who did not care about African Americans or the South, numerous Perry County Democrats claimed that the state's most influential white Republicans were not gentlemen and that black Republicans did not reason. Therefore, any discussion held someplace where large numbers of black people lived would accomplish little. One conservative was sure that black voters were more inclined to believe a northern Republican who told a group of Scott's Beat blacks about six white Alabamians who had been placed in northern prisons for committing atrocities against black voters than to accept the word of a reasonable Democrat who desired reconciliation.⁷⁷

As pesky as northern-born Republicans were, Perry County Democrats' chief menace was a native-born Southerner, Joseph Speed. Because of his wealth and social status, he was more dangerous than any other Republican office seeker in the county. According to one anti-Speed faction, no respectable white person would stoop low enough to support a conniving, thieving, and racially absconding traitor's bid to become the state superintendent of education. If Speed were elected, wrote another opponent, the

⁷⁶ "The Radical Watchwords," *ibid.*, 29 August 1872, quoting *Montgomery Advertiser*, [n.d.]. Cf. 12 September 1872 *Marion Commonwealth*.

⁷⁷ See *Marion Commonwealth*, 17 October 1872. Cf. "Cui Bono," *ibid.*, 12 September 1872; 26 September 1872 *Marion Commonwealth*; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 409.

state university would have fewer students and less money than it did when Noah Cloud held the position.⁷⁸

Keeping Speed's 1871 congressional testimony about Klan violence in Alabama on the minds of white voters seemed the best way to ensure that Joseph Hodgson remained the state's top education official. Evoking memories of the testimony, for which Speed was never vindicated after the *Marion Commonwealth* twisted his words, its owners proclaimed that Speed had told interviewers that his white neighbors had engaged in widespread lawlessness since 1865. As a result, the federal government had been forced to impose martial law in Perry County. In truth, Speed had told investigators that the county had been largely crime-free since 1865. Other witnesses, including Robert Christian, one of the most respected Democrats in the area, had testified that Perry County had been plagued by violence.

Continuing to besmirch Speed, H. Clay Cooke and Heidt claimed that the Republican testifier had accused white Marionites of excessive drunkenness and other rakishness while ignoring a gruesome attack by a black man on a white woman. Nor had Speed mentioned how Willis M. Pleasant's horses, stable, and other property had been destroyed after Pleasant quarreled with a Republican official. Speed had also overlooked the destruction of I. C. Tutt's crib because Tutt's son had overheard freedmen talk about torching a Baptist church in Marion and had failed to mention the planned burning of Republican William R. Brown's home, which local Democrats believed had been orchestrated by Brown himself. Because Speed had not discussed any one of these allegations during his 1871 Klan testimony, he had essentially lied, according to Cooke

⁷⁸ Cf. 17 October 1872 *Marion Commonwealth*.

and Heidt. But what else, they asked, could be expected of a once majestic bird that would leave the Democratic nest of righteousness to take up with filthy Republican vultures?⁷⁹

Accustomed to reading such insults and doubting that the publishers would print a rebuttal, Speed and other Perry County Republicans concerned themselves with the upcoming elections. On Saturday, 3 August 1872, they met at the Marion courthouse to elect delegates to the statewide party convention and to nominate people for statewide office. As expected, the local paper attacked the candidates' character. In its 29 August issue, the *Marion Commonwealth* reported that David P. Lewis, the Republican nominee for governor, was infamous for persecuting poor men in Judge Busted's district court. Further, a key part of Lewis' campaign was keeping former secessionists from regaining control of the state. Because Lewis had signed Alabama's ordinance of secession, his was an odd position to take. Then again, the wealthy politician and gifted coalition-builder had refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Confederacy, resigned from the Provisional Confederate Congress after only three months, and pretended to be a destitute miller to keep from being conscripted, alleged Cooke. Actually, Lewis had avoided the draft by accepting a circuit-judge appointment by Governor John Gill Shorter, but Cooke was right about one thing: when the fighting began, Lewis had left North Alabama for Union-held Nashville.⁸⁰

In a palpable appeal to black voters, Cooke reminded his readers that Lewis E. Parsons, another member of the "cage of unclean birds," or former Democrats, that Speed

⁷⁹ See "J. H. Speed," *ibid.*, 3 October 1872.

⁸⁰ See "The Radical Candidates for Our State Offices and their Platforms," *Marion Commonwealth*, 29 August 1872, hereinafter cited as "The Radical Candidates for Our State Offices and their Platforms." Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 50, 237, 250; "David P. Lewis."

and others had elected or nominated, had hated black people so much during the 1868 presidential election that he had refused to speak to them. Likewise, Alexander White had been so suspect of blacks that he had not wanted to recognize their legal freedom after the sword had liberated them. The 29 August 1872 *Marion Commonwealth* mentioned little about Joseph Speed (whom its owners called a “goose”), but he was not forgotten. Heidt and H. C. Cooke simply felt that Speed did not need a eulogy at the moment because they planned to pluck and cook him thoroughly before the November elections.⁸¹

They did not lie about that. In coming months, derogatory epithets, jokes, and slurs about Speed filled the pages of the Perry County weekly. Most of the 17 October 1872 issue was devoted to Speed, who, it contended, was asking black men to vote for him even though he would not vote for them. Making sure that every potential elector understood the pronouncement, the paper’s publishers reiterated that Speed had pledged to oppose Curtis, Green, or any other black person who ran for Congress in at least four separate articles. In one of them, the writers insisted that Speed had held no fewer than three political offices at the same time since becoming a Republican. Black voters had elected him to every one of the positions, but on the eve of the Republican convention in Uniontown, Speed had reportedly told a distinguished white Selman that supporting a black man’s congressional bid was more than he could stomach.⁸²

⁸¹ “The Radical Candidates for Our State Offices and their Platforms.” See *Marion Commonwealth*, 29 August 1872. Perry County voted Republican during the presidential election of 1868. According to one source, 5,362 of its citizens were registered voters. This number was down only eleven from a year earlier. Grant received 3,733 votes, Seymour 1,336. Most of the victor’s support came from 3,822 black voters. Cf. Hodgson, *The Alabama Manual and Statistical Register for 1869*, xxxii-xxxiii.

⁸² See “Courts as Political Machines,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 18 July 1872, hereinafter cited as “Courts as Political Machines.” See also *ibid.*, 17 October 1872.

Robert McKee might have been the gentleman to whom Cooke and Heidt referred, but they never mentioned who first broke the story. They did, however, reveal some of the men who had worked with Speed to prevent Curtis or Green from receiving the nomination: white Republicans Peter Clarke, Charles Hays, James Houston, and George Spencer. Because Hays wanted to keep his congressional seat and because Speed could not tolerate another black congressman, the cabal of white Republicans sabotaged Curtis and Green's chances of being nominated.⁸³

Greene Lewis also took part in the scheme. After running an unsuccessful campaign against Hays in 1870, Lewis wanted the nomination for himself. Then again, Lewis might have been bribed, or he could have had some sort of personal vendetta against Green and Curtis, with whom he would later quarrel when James T. Rapier and Jeremiah Haralson ran for Congress. Surely, Lewis did not think that a black man was incapable of winning enough support in the fourth district to become a congressman. The black vote alone could have secured the election for Curtis or Green. Green's black-nationalist attitude might have hurt his chances, but Curtis would have been a fine candidate. Many prominent white Alabamians admired him for being a self-styled conservative, the type Republican whom historians Michael Fitzgerald and Michael Perman have extolled for being able to sustain a heterogeneous alliance between the white and black members of the party.⁸⁴

Discussing the Republican conspirators' perfidy further, Cooke and Heidt asked why Curtis had been bumped when he had not done anything to jeopardize Speed and

⁸³ Cf. 17 October 1872 *Marion Commonwealth*; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*; Powell, "The Politics of Livelihood," 315-349. Peter Clarke, George Spencer, and James Houston's motivations are debatable.

⁸⁴ Cf. Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, passim; Powell, "The Politics of Livelihood," 315-349; "State Normal School, Normal, Ala.," in Richardson, *The National Cyclopaedia of the Colored Race*, 460.

coterie's power, especially since Curtis was more honorable than any one of the persons conspiring against him and Green. The journalists therefore wondered why Curtis or Green continued to support Hays and Speed after such treachery. The reason, of course, was simple: Hays and Speed were powerful Republicans who, despite their personal beliefs, could help Negroes fulfill their economic, educational, and political dreams. That being the case, the *Marion Commonwealth* continued to run false, misleading, or true but racially divisive statements about Speed. Hays, meanwhile, prepared to do battle with his latest challenger, Russell Smith, a former Whig, Know Nothing, secession opponent, University of Alabama graduate, and author who had lived in Greensboro, Huntsville, and Tuscaloosa.

Smith was an able opponent. After being admitted to the state bar in 1835, he spent the following year fighting Creek Indians, editing a literary journal in Mobile, and writing a tragedy (later play) entitled *Aaron Burr*. Smith then returned to Tuscaloosa and edited the *Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor*, authored a manual for magistrates entitled *Alabama Justice*, and practiced law before being elected to the state legislature. Later, Smith moved to Fayette, where he became a circuit-court judge, was elected to the United States Congress, and was named president of the University of Alabama.⁸⁵

By 1872, Smith was a seasoned politician and a well-known public figure. In addition to his years of Capitol Hill, he had helped organize the 26th Alabama Regiment, C.S.A., attended the Confederates' constitutional convention, whose debates he later published, and served two terms in the Confederate Congress. Following the war, he had run for governor. Smith's credentials were solid, but he lacked one key component of

⁸⁵ Initially, Russell Smith studied law under George W. Crabb, a Tuscaloosa barrister who had befriended young Russell following his mother's death in 1823.

victory in Alabama's fourth congressional district: black support. Because Hays was running as a Republican, he could count on substantial backing from the district's majority black voters despite his personal views, slave-owning and Confederate pasts, and commitment to conservative principles.

Although Republicans outnumbered Democrats by approximately 4,000 votes in the fourth district, at least one Perry County editorialist was still confident that Smith could be triumphant if his party raised 143 votes in each of the fourteen counties that made up the district. By the writer's estimation, an additional 2,002 votes would offset the Republican majority that had sealed Hays' previous victories.⁸⁶

Republicanism Victorious

The editorialist was quixotic. Hays defeated Smith 20,171 to 15,817. The victor's strongest county was Perry, where he received 4,139 votes to Smith's 1,399. Republicans fared just as well there and throughout the state in the contest for governor. With federal troops present to make sure that there were no Election Day irregularities, David Lewis defeated Thomas Herndon 89,020 to 78,524. In Perry County, Lewis outperformed Herndon 4,141 to 1,400. Republican Alexander McKinstry beat Democrat Edward Moren by the same margin in the lieutenant governor's race, and Republicans Alexander White and Christopher Sheats—a northern Alabama attorney and Confederate who had been accused of treason, delegate to the 1865 state constitutional convention, and federal consul—received more votes than Alpheus Baker and John Jolly to become

⁸⁶ Cf. Brewer, *Alabama*, 561; "The Fourth District"; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 91, 92.

representatives in Congress for the state at large. The Republican victories increased the party's majority in Alabama by 10,000 votes.⁸⁷

Despite the *Marion Commonwealth's* tirades, Joseph Speed was also victorious, receiving 3,825 votes to Hodgson's 1,336. Statewide, Speed's victory was by almost 15,000. Heidt and Cooke tried to spin the results, commenting that in Perry County, the superintendent-elect ran behind other Republicans because many local Republicans could not tolerate him. But the Democratic newspapermen could take little further comfort in election returns that gave Speed's party a gain of 200 local votes over previous elections. "POOR PERRY," they grimaced.⁸⁸

While Heidt and Cooke sulked, Republicans and Republican supporters, including a few card-carrying Democrats, reveled in the fact that the vast majority of their candidates were voted into office. Curtis beat out John Chapman by 2,377 votes in Perry County to become a state senator from the twenty-second district. In the House races, Clarke, Dozier, and Greene Lewis outpolled their nearest competitors by 2,730 votes. Charles G. Browne beat S. D. Hale 3,876 to 1,570 to retain his position as county solicitor, John Foster clobbered his opponent, W. or M. C. Burke, 4,131 to 1,397 to take a seat on the state education board, and Thomas Lambert defeated Edward Comegys 4,140 to 1,398 to become commissioner of industrial resources.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ See *Marion Commonwealth*, 17 November 1872. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 50, 73; Brewer, *Alabama*, 368; DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*, 353; "Official Vote of Perry County"; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 57. Sheats claimed 4,141 votes, White 4,138, Alpheus Baker 1,398, and John J. Jolly 1,391.

⁸⁸ "Poor Perry," *Marion Commonwealth*, 7 November 1872. See *Alabama State Journal*, 22 November 1872. See also *Marion Commonwealth*, 14 November 1872. Cf. 20 July 1871 *Marion Commonwealth* letter to the editor; Perry County Probate Judge Records of Election Results, 1823-1930. After his 1872 loss, Joseph Hodgson became editor of the *Montgomery Daily Advertiser and Mail*. Circa February 1873, he purchased the *Montgomery Advance*.

⁸⁹ John Dozier and Greene Lewis polled 4,139 votes, Peter G. Clarke 4,122. Josiah Alexander received 1,392 votes, David B. Scott netted 1,369, and David A. Boyd pulled in 1,329. See "Official Vote of Perry

In other statewide contests, Pat Ragland defeated Jabez Parker 4,141 to 1,399 in the race for state auditor. Robert D. Smith beat Thomas J. Burnett in the state auditor's race 4,141 to 1,397. Arthur Bingham, the Republican candidate for state treasurer, won 4,141 Perry County votes to James F. Grant's 1,399; and Benjamin Gardner beat John W. A. Sanford in the attorney general's race 4,141 to 1,398. These and other county totals represented nearly solid straight-ticket voting. Nine Democrats received a total vote of 1,397 to 1,400, a difference of only three votes. Their nine Republican opponents' vote spread was slightly higher at 4,131 to 4,141; but the margin of victory was just as revealing. On the whole, Perry County was a bastion of Republican support that caused Democrats to wail:

Oh! [There must be] some hidden curse,
Some secret thunder in the stores of heaven,
Red with uncommon wrath, to blast the wretches
Who owe their greatness to their country's ruin.⁹⁰

Perry County was not cursed—at least, not politically. Still high from their 1870 gubernatorial victory and often unwilling to reach out to African American voters, overly confident, negligent, skeptical, or occasionally fearful Democrats failed to organize or recruit blacks on any significant scale in 1872. Nor did many Democrats change their position on the railroad situation; instead, they continued to blame Republicans when Democrats had played major roles in important railroad decisions. Additionally, Democrats failed to win over many of the conservative white Republicans in the Tennessee Valley, made too little of the infighting and ethnic divisions within the Republican ranks, and did not fully explore the scandals, failed policies, and other

County," *Marion Commonwealth*, 5 December 1872. Cf. Perry County Probate Judge Records of Election Results, 1823-1930, 1 November 1872.

⁹⁰ "Our Humiliation," *Marion Commonwealth*, 14 November 1872, hereinafter cited as "Our Humiliation."

problems that had beset Ulysses Grant presidency. As a result, the Republican party was triumphant despite its internal fissures and national image.⁹¹

A Tainted Victory?

How the GOP candidates defeated their Democratic rivals in November 1872 and the consequences of these victories on their black constituents constitute a little-known episode in Alabama history. The various civil-rights bills that state and national policymakers had begun to propose are central to the story because they, as much as anything else, symbolized what economic, political, and social equality meant for blacks and whites alike. Although aspirations for equality constitute the major theme of these events, struggles over justice occurred within the context of the daily lives of Perry County and other Black Belt citizens during the “Democratic interlude” of 1872-1874. Planters and merchants continued to quarrel, and Black Belt politicians continued to guarantee their parties’ success by using or controlling—often dishonestly—black voters.⁹²

Using information provided by the Columbus, Georgia, *Enquirer*, a group of Perry County Democrats attempted to show how Alabama Republicans had tried to get several non-Alabamians to vote during the November 1872 elections. Supposedly, Isaac Heyman, J. L. Pennington, and D. B. and J. O. D. Smith had chartered a train to transport

⁹¹ See William Gillette, *Retreat from Reconstruction, 1869-1879* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 56-57. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 68; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 168-169; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, passim; Going, *Bourbon Democracy*, passim.

⁹² Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 67; Melinda Meek Hennessey, “Reconstruction Politics and the Military: The Eufaula Riot of 1874,” *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 38 (summer 1976): 112. See “How the Radicals Carried the State,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 14 November 1872. See also “The Causes of our Defeat,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 21 November 1872; “Governor Lindsay’s Message,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 28 November 1872.

a group of black men from Columbus to Opelika, Alabama, to cast illegal votes for Republican candidates. Whether this actually took place is unknown, but it would have been no worse or no more surprising than the non-Alabamians and dead persons who had voted for Democratic candidates in previous contests. However, it would have been surprising if the black men were allowed to ride in the first-class compartment of the train.

As early November reports of Republican wrongdoings made their way around the state, many citizens turned their attentions to Thanksgiving. The outgoing governor prepared for the celebration by proclaiming Thursday, 28 November, a day for giving thanks and prayer. Disgusted Democrats mocked: “Like George the Third, Lindsay wishes to thank God it’s no *worse*, when God knows it can’t be any worse.” Actually, it could have been worse, and it was. When the Alabama House of Representatives met on Monday, 18 November, John P. Hubbard found that only forty-five legislators responded to roll call, and each one of them was a Democrat. Because there was no quorum, the House had to adjourn. A similar occurrence took place in the state senate, but the seventeen duly elected senators who showed up met. Little happened, so Lieutenant-Governor Moren adjourned the meeting the following day. Meanwhile, Republicans assembled in the United States District Court Room and formed a separate legislature. It seemed that the events of 1870 were being repeated.⁹³

In addition to the House and senate debacles, federal officials apprehended Democrats F. H. Kimbro, F. A. McNeil, and R. A. Morgan for violating the Ku Klux

⁹³ “Revolution Inaugurated at Montgomery,” *The Marion Commonwealth*, 21 November 1872, hereinafter cited as “Revolution Inaugurated at Montgomery.” See *ibid.*, 21 November 1872. Cf. DuBose, *Alabama’s Tragic Decade*, 364.

Klan Act. One conservative Democrat was confident that the proceedings in Montgomery were meant to remove enough Democrats from the state legislature to ensure the reelection of Senator Spencer. Unable to control his despair at the outcome of the elections, the conservative exclaimed: “There is no longer any doubt that Alabama has elected the Radical, Arnold ticket, with Lewis at its head.... Again we are to be robbed and plundered by the Clouds and Bingham who well nigh bankrupted and beggared us in the two years they had control of the State under Smith!” The Democrat did not care about what the victors might “steal—for we have little to be stolen—but the disgrace, the dishonor, the humiliation, is overwhelming. Poor Alabama,” he sobbed.⁹⁴

Conclusion

For most white Perry Countians, Lewis’ gubernatorial victory was definitely humiliating, but it was not unforeseen. After successfully restoring home rule in 1870, Governor Lindsay had turned out to be as unwise and as unwanted as the Republican lawmakers whom his Perry County constituents had routinely criticized. Under Lindsay, local farmers had struggled, Howard and Judson had faced uncertain futures, and black Republicans had continued to flex their political muscle. The recent Republican victory just sealed the Democrats’ fate.⁹⁵

Without black support, any chance of Democratic success outside Marion was remote. Most Perry County communities were Republican citadels whose political soldiers fought hard to get their candidates elected to local, state, and national office

⁹⁴ “Revolution Inaugurated at Montgomery” (first quote); “Our Humiliation” (all subsequent quotes). The arrests are also discussed in “Radical Revolutionary Proceedings at Montgomery,” *The Marion Commonwealth*, 21 November 1872.

⁹⁵ “Our Humiliation.”

despite the fact that Charles Hays, Joseph Speed, and other white Republicans were indifferent or outright opposed to legislation that benefited African Americans. Most black Perry County Republicans were not dupes, as was rumored; they simply believed black Alabamians stood a better chance of effecting change by staying in the Republican party than by joining the thousands of openly racist Democrats in the state. Furthermore, several local black politicians were quite active in local, state, and regional affairs, so white Republicans consented to some of their personal and political wishes. Hays and Speed understood this idea as well as any one of their white colleagues and therefore spoke, wrote, and occasionally acted as if they were truly devoted to universal equality. By supporting Lincoln Normal School, for example, Speed had bettered his chances of becoming Alabama's superintendent of education. By asking the federal government to punish white terrorists, Hays had made sure that he would continue to represent the state's predominately black fourth district in Congress. And by speaking in favor of civil-rights legislation, Hays and Speed helped guarantee that Perry would remain one of Alabama's strongest Republican counties throughout the first half of the 1870s.

**“WAITING FOR SOMETHING TO TURN UP”: PERRY COUNTY
DURING THE “DEMOCRATIC INTERLUDE,” 1872-1874, PART I**

“Our people are becoming fully aroused from their apathy and listlessness, and are tired of Micawber’s philosophy of ‘waiting for something to turn up.’ Get up and go at it, is now the rallying cry, to which all are heroically responding.”

—Derflo, 1873¹

“With a blush of shame, we are forced to say that a Democratic State Senate passed the first Civil Rights Bill in Alabama, and we are willing to add that if the Democratic party does not repudiate this act and the men who are guilty of encouraging the [infringement] of the blacks upon the whites, then we will repudiate the Democratic and Executive party of the State.”

—The Marion Commonwealth, 1873²

The fourth was Alabama’s largest postbellum congressional district. To the *Marion Commonwealth*, it was “the true battleground,” the key to political success in the state. Heidt and H. C. Cooke were thus outraged when only Republicans seemed interested in campaigning or organizing in the district during 1872. Democrats, in contrast, seemed unconcerned about the “benighted...but reclaimable section” and thereby left the district open for the Machiavellian Republican Charles W. Hays’ taking.³

¹ Derflo, “Grange Meeting at Newbern,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 9 October 1873, hereinafter cited as “Grange Meeting at Newbern.”

² “The Senate of Alabama,” *ibid.*, 24 April 1873.

³ “The Fourth District,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 October 1872, hereinafter cited as “The Fourth District.” For a similar assertion, see “How Hays Beat Harris in 1870,” *ibid.*, 10 October 1872. Autauga, Baker, Bibb, Choctaw, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Marengo, Perry, Pickens, Sanford, Shelby, Sumter, and Tuscaloosa made up the fourth congressional district.

Charles Hays: The Antebellum Years

Charles Hays was a four-time United States congressman from Alabama's fourth district. Born about one mile outside of Boligee (later Haysville) in Greene County on 2 February 1834, Hays was initially educated privately by devout Methodists A. A. and B. A. Archibald. As a teenager, Hays attended the acclaimed Greene Springs School that Henry Tutwiler ran outside Havana in Greene. From there, Hays went on to Franklin College and the University of Virginia, but he did not graduate from either institution. When problems arose over his father's estate, Hays returned to Alabama, where he and his family became embroiled in a long and sometimes acerbic legal case with William Proctor Gould. At issue was Gould's management of the Hays estate and his compensation.⁴

After the Alabama Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Hays family, Charles was able to collect the money and other resources that his father, George, had willed to him before dying on 30 July 1838. Instantly, the twenty-one year old was a wealthy man. With his inheritance, Hays built a modest house that he called "Sebastopol" (from the Crimean outpost of the same name) and became a successful farmer—a planter, as he was fond of saying to everyone except the members of the Ku Klux Committee on Outrages and President Johnson, who blamed planters and their "slaveocracy" for southern secession. Cognizant of this fact, Hays denied that he was a planter when he,

⁴ Cf. Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 6, citing "Gould v. Hays et al.," *Alabama Reports* (1851) (Montgomery, Al.: J. H. and T. F. Martin, 1852), 438-463; Mary Morgan Glass, ed., *A Goody Heritage: Memoirs of Greene County* (Eutaw, Al.: Greene County Historical Society, 1977), 88; William Proctor Gould, *Diary of William Proctor Gould of Boligee, Greene County, Alabama*, vol. 4, 45; and "Gould v. Hays et al.," *Alabama Reports* 25 (1854) (Montgomery, Al.: Cowan and Martin, 1855), 426-33.

Governor Parsons, Colonel D. C. Thomas, William P. Webb, and John A. Winston asked the president to pardon Hays for his Confederate involvement.⁵

Like others of his ilk, growing and selling cotton had been Hays' primary pursuits before the Civil War, but he had also bought and sold land. Within a short period of time, the agribusinessman had amassed real-estate holdings valued at almost \$113,000. By 1860, the Hays estate was worth an estimated \$211,000. Combined with other assets, including more than 100 slaves, Hays' property made him one of Alabama's richest citizens on the eve of the war. This was a remarkable feat for the descendant of middling Scotch-Irish immigrants who had not yet celebrated his thirtieth birthday. Hays' upward trajectory would have been even more remarkable if his father had not left his son, "Charley," and two daughters, Mary and George Anne, so well off before his 1838 death.⁶

Charles Hays: The Wartime Years

When the South seceded, Charles Hays reluctantly sided with the Confederacy. Once fighting began, he selected two of his most valued slaves, secured a favored position as inspector general or aide-de-camp in the Army of the Tennessee under his brother-in-law, Lieutenant Colonel (later Brigadier General) Marcus Joseph Wright, and marched off to war. Although some persons have claimed that Hays was conscripted and that he "never heard a bullet whistle" during the war, he actually volunteered and saw

⁵ Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 147; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 16. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 218; Goodrich and Goodrich, 7, 28, 32, 36; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 24; *Pardons by the President*, 17.

⁶ See "Charles Hays, of Greene," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 19 June 1869. Cf. Brewer, *Alabama*, 150; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 27-28, 37; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 4, 5, 10; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 12. Although Hays' property value had decreased to \$50,000 by 1870, he was still one of Alabama's wealthiest citizens.

action at the November 1861 Battle of Belmont in Missouri, the April 1862 battle at Shiloh in Mississippi, and the September 1862 Battle of Chickamauga in Tennessee. After Chickamauga, he was made an army major.⁷

Hays did witness the gore of war, but his early wartime service should not be over glorified. He was allowed more furloughs than other soldiers of his rank, and the 1863 death of his stepfather allowed him and his body servants to return to Sebastopol before his tour ended. Once there, the relieved popular-sovereignty Democrat resumed his agricultural and political pursuits and married Margaret Cornelia Minerva (“Queen”) Ormond, daughter of Alabama Supreme Court Justice John J. Ormond. As Hays biographer William Warren Rogers, Jr., has noted, their union brought together two of western Alabama’s most distinguished families.⁸

Mrs. Hays was not able to enjoy her husband for long. In 1864, he returned to service. This time, only one of Hays’ slaves, Willis, went with him. By winter of that year, both men had grown tired of war. Writing to his wife during the first week of November, Hays admitted that he no longer desired the “miserable demoralizing command” that he had been given. Instead, he wanted peace and quiet. Most of all, Hays longed to see his beloved Queen, who was almost nine months pregnant with their first child. According to the major, his only other source of joy was reliving his Franklin

⁷ Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 11, 20-23. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 218; DuBose, *Alabama’s Tragic Decade*, 246.

⁸ See, for example, Terry Seip, *The South Returns to Congress: Men, Economic Measures, and Intersectional Relationships, 1868-1879* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), 31. Cf. Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 10, 11.

College days with former classmates. Willis tried desperately to remain cheerful, but he, too, was ready to return home.⁹

Their wish came true on 9 April 1865 when Robert E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant at the Appomattox courthouse. Thereupon, Hays and Willis returned to Greene County, where they were met by a host of family, friends, and associates. Included were Hays' wife and newborn daughter, Mary Hairston, several of Hays' Democratic colleagues, and thousands of soon-to-be freepersons; at least 175 of whom belonged to the Hayses.

The initial master-slave reunion constituted a watershed in southern race relations. Having "endorsed the antebellum polemicist's view of the slaveholder as benevolent paternalist, the Biblical patriarch at the center of a stable and orderly agrarian world," one might have wondered how easy, or how hard, it would have been for Hays and other slave owners to relinquish their stewardship. Added to this was the widespread criticism of planters and other slaveholding citizens throughout the world, the possibility of land confiscation, and an even more pressing concern, the mindsets of slaves. "Whether the lost stewardship had been conscientiously administered or cruelly betrayed," explains historian Willie Lee Rose, "nothing guaranteed that the slave of yesterday would remember his owner as benevolent paternalist, or picture him in the mind's eye of a Christmas morning, at the door of the Big House, dispensing gifts and favors. Who could say," for instance, that Hays' slaves would remember the times when he or one of his agents had treated them humanely any stronger or more often than they would when Hays or some other authoritative figure had mistreated or severely punished them for cursing,

⁹ Charles Hays to Margaret Cornelia Hays, 2 November 1864, as quoted in Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 13.

quarreling, or committing adultery; sleeping on the job; feigning illness, injury, or pregnancy; stealing cotton, corn, chickens, flour, meal, pigs, or sheep; breaking tools; having an unauthorized garden or selling food without permission; wandering away to “get a little taste of freedom”; being late for work; staying up past bedtime; or any one of a thousand other defiant acts? The blacks who had remained on the Hays plantation during the war might not have held a grand celebration, run away, or fomented a rebellion following Lincoln’s emancipation proclamations, as many abolitionists, Radical Republicans, and militant blacks had hoped; but the slaves had certainly relished in the idea that Hays and every other slaveholder in the country would soon be “masters without slaves.”¹⁰

Charles Hays: The Postbellum Years

Hays’ political affiliation also changed following the Civil War. For reasons that continue to be debated, he became a Republican during the summer of 1867. Later that year, after mobilizing black Republicans in Greene and other Black Belt counties, he was chosen to attend Alabama’s constitutional convention. Although his presence was not felt to any significant degree, the fact that he was there as a Republican was a cause of concern for many of his former associates. Those who had actually befriended him were infuriated. Among the latter was a Tuscaloosa editorialist who in November 1867 charged Hays’ political conversion to his “low Celtic origin.” Before the war, the writer

¹⁰ Roark, *Masters without Slaves*; Rose, “Masters without Slaves,” chap. 5 in *Slavery and Freedom*, 73-88, 76, 78 (first and third quotes), Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 29-30, 47-73, 90-91, 99 (second quote), 100-102; Patience Essah, 27 July 2006 communication to the author. Cf. Bell, *Confederate Women*, 164; Blassingame, *The Slave Community*; Essah, *A House Divided*, 56; Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*; Hoffman; Jordan, “System of Farming at Beaver Bend,” 78; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 65-66; Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction*, 185, 186, 199; Sproat; Stamp, *The Peculiar Institution*, 185.

continued, Hays had inherited land and slaves, whom he had subsequently abused, and had taken advantage of a relative's military position to land a cushy position tantamount to a camp follower during the war. Now, the editorialist concluded, Hays' need for black workers, political aspirations, and inflated ego were causing him to abandon everything that was proper and pure and join the ranks of black and white Republicans.¹¹

For the next two years, Hays was constantly criticized for deserting the Democratic party and for innumerable other reasons. Sometimes, his critics were correct, as was the case with much of the Tuscaloosa writer's statement. Hays had belonged to one of the 3,000 families in the United States who had owned more than 100 slaves before the Civil War. Likewise, Hays had used his relationship with his half sister's husband to secure a relatively undemanding assignment during the first two years of the war. Furthermore, Hays' father had left his sole male heir a sizeable inheritance when he succumbed. But it was Charles Hays himself who had built it up. This was undoubtedly one of the main reasons he rarely issued a public defense against his critics' invectives.¹²

An exception to Hays' general rule of silence came on 12 September 1868. That day, he and William Jones—a distinguished Greene and Marengo County Democrat, former slaveholder, and John Bell supporter who had sided with Hays a number of times in the state senate—faced off in a debate. The men shared similar backgrounds. Like

¹¹ "I Know Em," letter to the editor, *Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor*, 27 November 1867, hereinafter cited as "I Know Em." One source suggests that Hays became a Republican in August 1866. Cf. Linden, *Voices from the Reconstruction Years, 1865-1877*, 181, 184.

¹² Cf. Stamp, *The Peculiar Institution*, 30-31.

Hays, Jones had deserted the Democratic party following the Civil War. But, unlike Hays, Jones had returned to the Democratic fold during the summer of 1868.¹³

Harassment, public opinion, violence, and a concern for his family's welfare were what caused Jones to leave the Republican party. According to him, only a fool would have continued to support the GOP in the face of the intense pressure from Black Belt conservatives. In an August 1868 letter to Governor Smith, Jones explained: "When a gentleman's social relations are assailed, when his family [is] compelled to ask enjoyments only at home, it is no more right that something should be done to remedy such unfortunate evils." Jones' remedy was to rejoin the Democrats and harangue Republicans, starting with Charles Hays.¹⁴

Hays and Jones' fall 1868 debate at Forkland, a small town located about halfway between Demopolis and Boligee, attracted a large crowd. Hays opened by acknowledging how happy he was to be given a chance to vindicate himself. He then divulged why he had become a Republican in the first place. Defying popular opinion, Hays swore that he was not an enemy to his race but an upholder of the United States Constitution. Most of the Democrats whom he knew had shown no inclination to do the

¹³ John Bell of Tennessee was a presidential candidate in 1860. At that year's Democratic National Convention in Baltimore, Maryland, differences over slavery divided the party. One group backed Stephen ("the Little Giant") Douglas, an Illinois senator and presidential aspirant who advocated "popular sovereignty" as a means to resolve issues regarding the perpetuation of race-based slavery. Led by William Lowndes Yancey, the "Fire Eaters," or "Yanceyites," called for the complete recognition of slavery everywhere in the country and supported Kentuckian John C. Breckenridge, who took forty-two counties in Alabama. The third faction, the Constitutional Unionists, backed Bell. Combined, Bell and Douglas claimed 41,484 votes to Breckenridge's 49,019. Years later, while speaking to those emotionally and politically charged days of 1860, Hays recalled how confident he had been that Democratic infighting and would destroy the Union. See Charles Hays to Andrew Johnson, 1 August 1865, United States Adjunct General Records, Record Group 94, NA. See also Durwood Long, "Economics and Politics in the 1860 Presidential Election in Alabama," *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 27 (spring-summer 1965): 43.

¹⁴ William Jones, quoted in Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 35-36, citing William Jones to William H. Smith, 17 August, William H. Smith Papers, ADAH; *Mobile Daily Register*, 12-13 August 1868; and *Montgomery Daily Mail*, 28 July 1868.

same. Nor had they shown any respect for local or state law. Quite the opposite, Hays' Democratic associates, many of whose views regarding economics and ethnicity he continued to share, seemed determined to take the law into their own hands or to stand by while white vigilantes imposed their own types of justice.¹⁵

Jones was eager to respond to Hays' claims, but Hays left before his challenger was given an opportunity to speak. Claiming that he had to visit one of his Marengo acquaintances and was already late, Hays boarded his carriage and rode away. In his absence, Jones recounted how his opponent had planned to return to the Democratic party, but cash and political opportunity had persuaded him to remain a Republican. Speaking directly to the blacks in the audience, Jones called Hays the worst enemy that they could possibly have because he had come to them under the veil of friendship when he was really their foe. Although some of what Jones said was conceivable, his speech did little to change the blacks' position. Those who had come out to support Hays left supporting him and vice versa.

In coming months, Hays' notoriety and political aspirations grew. Some persons even speculated that he would make a run for Congress. Hays confirmed the idea when Republican Charles W. Pierce—a Union veteran, Freedmen's Bureau official, New York native, and the sitting congressman from Alabama's fourth district—became the first district's assessor of internal revenue during the latter part of 1868. Immediately, lawmakers made plans to fill the vacancy. When a special election was set for 3 August 1869, Hays was a logical choice to replace Pierce.¹⁶

¹⁵ Cf. Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 36.

¹⁶ Cf. Linden, *Voices from the Reconstruction Years, 1865-1877*, 181.

Although Hays had solid support throughout the fourth district, especially among the politicians whose bonds he had endorsed in previous years, he immediately began to round up additional backers. Writing on 2 January 1869 to Charles W. Dustan, an influential Black Belt Republican and one-time Union general from New York, Hays proclaimed: “I envy your being in New York but know that you will make a good thing of it and occasionally drink a good bottle of wine and eat a good dinner in remembrance of your poor persecuted scalawag and carpetbag friends.” Because the Republican nominating convention was only five months away, Hays concluded his remarks by asking Dustan to do his part to help secure the nomination of a “needy friend.”¹⁷

Hays’ letter was probably more of an announcement of his intentions than a request for assistance. Few Republicans believed that he would have any trouble getting the requisite votes needed to become the party nominee. As a matter of fact, some people wondered who would be daring or foolish enough to run against him. In time, it became clear that Hays would face at least one formidable opponent when delegates met in Marion on 16 June 1869 to decide the likely representative of the fourth congressional district: Charles W. Dustan.

In the end, Hays held off Dustan and Judge W. G. M. Golson to become the Republican party’s candidate for Congress. Accepting the nomination, Hays told the Marion delegation that he would continue to support equal rights, black manhood suffrage, and every other principle for which the Republican party stood. In addition, he would try to restore positive relations between Republicans and Democrats by extending the proverbial olive branch of peace. This was not surprising, considering that leading

¹⁷ Charles Hays to Charles Dustan, 2 January 1869, Charles W. Dustan Papers, ADAH.

Alabama Republicans had already registered official support for the national platform, including the Fifteenth Amendment, and for President Grant. Moreover, the district that Hays desired to represent was predominantly black.¹⁸

Meanwhile, Democrats vacillated. So uncertain were they that some people began to wonder whether Hays would run unopposed. In a move that surprised a number of individuals, M. M. Cooke advised Democrats to nominate a black man if they could not find a suitable white man to challenge Hays. By doing so, they could “out-Herod Herod,” reasoned the allegedly confused Cooke.¹⁹

Democrats met in Marion on 23 June 1869, but they did not select a candidate. When Dustan found out what had transpired, he publicly announced his intention to run for Congress as an Independent Republican. Because Dustan was a conservative Republican, the decision was logical. Once, he had considered running for Congress as a Democrat but had been persuaded by several people, including M. M. Cooke, to vie for the office as an Independent. By doing so, Dustan stood a chance of obtaining support from Republicans who disliked Hays as well as hundreds of Democrats.

By Editor Cooke’s estimation, three-fourths of the conservatives who lived in Perry County would support Dustan as an Independent. In Marengo, Francis Strother Lyon, a former United States and Confederate States of America senator, confirmed Cooke’s beliefs when he and fifteen of his neighbors issued a manifesto in which they pledged support for Dustan while blasting Hays. Attempting to secure “place and

¹⁸ Cf. Rogers, *Black-Belt Scalawag*, 49, 50, quoting *Demopolis Southern Republican*, 23 June 1869, and Rogers’ own “‘Politics is Mighty Uncertain’: Charles Hays Goes to Congress,” *Alabama Review* 30 (July 1977): 169-172.

¹⁹ DuBose, *Alabama’s Tragic Decade*, 277. See *Marion Commonwealth*, 10 June 1869. See also *Montgomery Daily Mail*, 5 May 1869.

power,” Hays had violated the southern white code of honor, backed proscription, and wanted to increase taxes to pay for public education and internal improvements. Dustan, on the other hand, had supported President Johnson’s lenient amnesty plan and favored low taxes. In view of those “facts,” wrote Lyon and company, an “open enemy in war” was better than a traitorous “renegade.”²⁰

As Dustan and Hays drummed up support, Democrat John B. Read, a Huntsville graduate of the University of Alabama and the University of Louisiana at New Orleans Medical School who had lived in Tuscaloosa since 1842, joined the race. Backed by Ryland Randolph, editor of the often imprecise, semi-journalistic *Tuscaloosa Monitor*, Read announced his plans during the middle of July 1869. At Randolph’s behest, Read based his campaign on white supremacy, using orthodox Eurocentric histories of Africa, Asia, and Western nations to justify his racist platform.²¹

On 22 July, Read debated Hays in Centreville, Bibb County’s seat of justice. During the contest, Read asked Hays how he could claim to be a friend of black people when he had owned and purportedly abused hundreds of them before the Civil War. Later, Read chided Hays for supporting the property tax that Alabama lawmakers had recently approved. In response, Hays told the audience that he had shelled out more money for taxes than any other person in Greene County, had supported black emancipation, and had been a member of the local Union League.

²⁰ Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 52, citing “To the Voters of Marengo County,” in Charles W. Dustan Papers, ADAH; Owen, *History of Alabama*, vol. 4, 1079-1080. See J. A. Moore to Charles Dustan, 28 June 1869, Dustan Papers. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 37.

²¹ Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 44; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 55, citing *Marion Commonwealth*, 29 July 1869, *Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor*, 24 June 1869, Owen, *History of Alabama*, vol. 4, 1419, and Harwell H. Jones, “The History of Bibb County during Reconstruction” (master’s thesis, University of Alabama, 1932), 9-11.

For the next two weeks, Dustan, Hays, and Read campaigned. Dustan and Hays moved throughout the fourth district, delivering carefully worded speeches designed to generate interest among black and white voters. Read's campaign was confined to the predominantly white counties of Baker, Bibb, Fayette, Sanford, Shelby, and Tuscaloosa. On the third day of August, voters went to the polls. As expected, Hays swept his opponents, polling 17,343 votes altogether. His nearest competitor, latecomer John Read, received 4,883, Dustan 2,011. In all, Hays took ten of the fourteen counties that made up the fourth district. When asked about the election, Hays said that his wartime service and the fourth district's ethno-political makeup were as critical to his victory as any other factor. As virtually everyone who kept up with politics in the "Gibraltar of Republicanism" knew, Read had virtually no chance of success.²²

The time that Read entered the race compounded his problems. He had not announced his candidacy until one month before the election. After the race, some would-be supporters claimed that they did not even know that Read had been a candidate. Others had known, but still upset about recent state and national events, including the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment, guaranteeing citizenship to blacks and abolishing the state and nation's black codes, a number of potential Read backers had not gone to the polls. Therefore, Hays, the "Gilded Age politician with the accent and manners of the South," went to Washington. Through some occasional finagling, he remained on Capitol Hill until 3 March 1877, serving as the 43rd Congress' chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture.²³

²² Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 47, quoting William Jones to William E. Chandler, 9 July 1871, William Chandler Papers, Manuscripts Division, LOC; *Alabama State Weekly Journal*, 21 October 1870.

²³ Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 59. Hays also sat on the naval affairs committee.

Hays was a quintessential politician whom historians William Warren Rogers, Sr., and Roberts David Ward correctly call redoubtable. Combined with Hays' wealth, substantial social connections and ethnicity, his political savvy enabled him to remain in Washington longer than any other Reconstruction-era congressman from Alabama despite the fact that Hays was disliked by many of the people whom he represented. Some of his Perry County constituents reviled him so much that they criticized his mental aptitude as well as his politics. While discussing an allegedly iniquitous speech that the congressman made in the nation's capitol, two people challenged the authorship of the allegedly senseless and libelous tirade because the Charles Hays whom they knew did not have "brains enough to grease a knitting needle." The duo claimed to know personally that when Hays was "at school in his boyhood, he was compelled to labor assiduously for several sessions before he finally mastered his alphabet and reached 'B-a-k-e-r.' Now, however, he is a 'light' in the darkness of radicalism."²⁴

Mayor Pierce spoke similarly about Hays. In congressional testimony taken on 21 June 1871 in Washington, D. C., Pierce revisited a day when the congressman had been kept from speaking. Preventing people from making public addresses for just causes was common in Eutaw, but Hays' talk had been disallowed for a rather unusual reason. Hays, Pierce testified, was quite obnoxious to his neighbors. A number of drunken white men had gathered to hear and possibly disrupt the speech, so for the sake of harmony, peace, and quiet, Pierce thought it best to keep Hays silent. When asked by

²⁴ Rogers and Ward, "The Bourbon Oligarchy," chap. 16 in Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 263 (first quote); "Hays' Speech," *Marion Commonwealth*, 23 May 1872 (all subsequent quotes). Joseph Taylor, a Tuscaloosa Democrat, also questioned the authorship of the speech. According to Taylor, Hays was "mentally incapable of writing." *Tuscaloosa Times*, 25 September 1872. Cf. Linden, *Voices of the Reconstruction Years, 1865-1877*, 180-187, 320.

Congressman Philadelph Van Trump of the Ku Klux Klan Committee on Outrages whether Hays' association with the GOP was the reason he was obnoxious, Pierce replied by asking if he needed to trace Hays' history, which would have revealed why the congressman was obnoxious. Before Van Trump could respond, Pierce uttered: "I prefer not to do it."²⁵

Other persons did not hesitate to comment on Hays' history. James Clanton called Hays one of the harshest slave owners he had ever known. Other detractors labeled Hays a "vile, dirty wretch," a despicable individual who "floated to the surface by the mere force of circumstances," and a racist demagogue whose discriminatory views drove black Republicans such as William H. Councill and George W. Cox to the Democratic and Conservative party.²⁶

Even routine matters such as changing leadership at Judson College became enmeshed in political partisanship. Richard H. Rawlings, whom one distinguished Virginian considered among the South's most accomplished academicians, became president in July 1872. Renovating the school was one of Rawlings' first priorities. By the winter of that year, the project was almost complete. New, elegant furniture and lush carpets were placed in most buildings. Bureaus, stands, tables, and wardrobes provided additional comfort. Such amenities surrounded the ladies of Judson with the coziness of home, boasted one trustee.²⁷

²⁵ Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 303 (quote), 304.

²⁶ *Marion Commonwealth*, 23 May 1872 (first quote); John Jolly, quoted in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, *loc. cit.*, 265, 291, 295 (second quote). Cf. Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, passim; Powell, "The Politics of Livelihood," 315-349; "State Normal School, Normal, Ala.," in Richardson, *The National Cyclopedic of the Colored Race*, 460.

²⁷ See "The Judson," *Marion Commonwealth*, 11 July 1872.

In addition to Judson's cosmetic overhaul, Rawlings improved its already accomplished faculty. Added were Professor Dickinson, formerly of East Alabama Female College; a Professor Allen, who had returned to Judson after teaching at another college; a Miss Spear in the art department; and Miss Zitella Cocke, a gifted author and musician who belonged to one of Perry County's leading families. Over time, Cocke became Alabama's poet laureate, and the *Boston Transcript* named her one of the nation's top 125 authors.²⁸

Judson supporters agreed that President Rawlings not only needed but also deserved the heartfelt appreciation and cooperation of Perry County's white community. Rawlings had not come to the county as a Carpetbagger or an "Ishmaelite," they recalled, but as a true citizen desirous of becoming fully associated with conservatism in feeling, interest, and sentiment. "Like the hero of the *Æneid*," Rawlings had moved to the Canebrake to live among some of the South's most cultured and noble citizens and had brought "with him his household Gods, his Penates and Lares. Let warm hearts and hospitable homes welcome him...in carrying forward the Judson," supporters urged. Simultaneously evoking biblical scripture and the existing sociopolitical conditions in Perry County, one proud donor claimed that Judson "already sits like 'a city upon a hill,' high above the gloom and wreck that war has spread about us, and the rays of moral and intellectual light that breaks from its portals...brighten the dark outlines of the future and gild the shadowy summits that bound our political horizon."²⁹

²⁸ Ibid.; "Judson Female Institute," *ibid.*, 18 September 1873. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, vol. 2, 50. Judson's preparatory department featured Miss Joe Tutt and a Mrs. Burnett. Mrs. Margaret Harrell was retained as matron and Mrs. Woodruff as governess.

²⁹ 11 July 1872 *Marion Commonwealth* "The Judson"; 18 September 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Judson Female Institute."

The backers' rodomontade and other positive news were soon forgotten in a frenzy of political acrimony. John T. Harris had not broken the neck of the "California convict," Peter G. Clarke, as the *Marion Commonwealth* had predicted during the early months of 1872. Nor had Joseph Speed become the United States Ambassador to the Argentine Republic, a position for which he had campaigned during the summer of 1872. For once, wrote Heidt and Cooke, Speed's aspirations had been in accord with the vast majority of his white neighbors, who had been anxious to get rid of him as soon as they could and under any circumstance. Instead, he, Clarke, Curtis, and other Republicans were traveling around the county and state, causing mayhem, alleged Cooke.³⁰

The *Marion Commonwealth* carried a story that seemed to illustrate the Republicans' purported proclivity for disorder. The paper reported that Speed had called a special session of the Perry County Commission at which he had persuaded its members to adopt a resolution demanding that Selma, Marion and Memphis Railroad executive General Rucker return to Perry County some of the black convicts who were under the general's control. Rumor had it that the workers were treated inhumanely. The rumor might have been false, but it would not have been surprising if it were true. Such cruelties had been frequent in Alabama since 1866. That year, Smith and McMillan, a group of industrialists, secured a \$15,000 loan from Alabama legislators to construct a railroad that would run through the Mineral Belt (District, Region), which comprised almost one-third of the state and included Jefferson and twenty-five other counties. As

³⁰ "Pow Wow," *ibid.*, 8 August 1872, hereinafter cited as "Pow Wow." See *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 May 1872. See also "Courts as Political Machines," *ibid.*, 18 July 1872; "Our Convict Representative," *ibid.*, 23 January 1873; *ibid.*, 6 March 1873. Two Democrats conjectured: "If any white man voted for Alex. Curtis, in the recent election, he must be puzzled as to which side to sympathize with in the present Legislative embroglio." *Marion Commonwealth*, 5 December 1872.

part of the agreement, Governor Patton leased in excess of 200 prisoners to the industrialists, who began subletting convicts, sometimes illegally. The plan proved disastrous for the state. Smith and McMillan never repaid the loan and shelled out only \$5 for the prisoners, who usually worked on the South and North or the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad.³¹

Smith and McMillan's monopoly on convict labor ended in June 1872. That month, state lawmakers chose Colonel Larkin G. Willis over the more conservative M. G. Moore to become the state warden. But rather than solving existing problems, Willis added to them. In coming years, the state's convict-lease system became so bad that members of an ad hoc investigating committee stamped it a "relic of barbarism, a species of human slavery, a crime against humanity." W. E. Locker, a Baptist minister of uncertain ethnicity, compared the convicts' plight to that of the Israelites whom Egyptians supposedly enslaved.³²

Perry County Probate Judge Augustine Howze ordered General Rucker to return the black prisoners to the county. Rucker complied with the order even though several conservative Democrats swore that the allegations against him were false. According to them, some of the convicts had admitted that they had been fed well and that the only

³¹ See Saffold Berney, *Handbook of Alabama: A Complete Index to the State, with Map*, 2d. and rev. ed. (1892; reprint, Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Company, 1975), 257; "The Mineral Region of Alabama," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 1 May 1869, hereinafter cited as "The Mineral Region of Alabama." Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 31; Beverly, *History of Alabama*, 160; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 1-4, 7, 123, 231; DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade* (back-end paper); Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 7, 63-64, citing Matthew J. Mancini, *One Dies, Get Another: Convict Leasing in the American South, 1868-1928* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1996), 100-101, Robert Cvornyk, "Convict Labor in the Alabama Coal Mines" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1993), 21-22, and Governor Cobb, "History of the Penitentiary," in *Biennial Report of the Inspectors of Convicts, 1884-1886*, 348-366.

³² Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 47 (quote), 48, citing Elizabeth Bower Clark, "The Abolition of the Convict Lease System in Alabama, 1913-1928" (master's thesis, University of Alabama, 1949), 54-57, 94-96. Cf. Berney, *Handbook of Alabama*, 257; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World*, 9, 63-64, 85, 87; Going, *Bourbon Democracy*, 170-171, 180.

persons who had been punished were individuals who had refused to work. The Democrats thought the Perry County Commission's action was just another attempt by Joe Speed to help some of his black associates. In any event, the plan worked. As a consequence, the somewhat fortunate convicts were returned to Perry, where prisoners were treated well, according to several grand-jury reports. Elsewhere in the state, convicts were handled so roughly in coming months that Warden Willis brought them in from the field and placed them in a gender-mixed Wetumpka prison called the Walls. Several sources confirmed that the warden was afraid the prisoners would die on his watch if they were not treated better.³³

Attempting to save Alabama from further embarrassment, many officials called the cruelty exaggerated, but death rates suggested otherwise. In 1869, ninety-two, or forty-one percent, of the convicts who were leased in the state died. Data for earlier years were either lost or intentionally destroyed. Later reports suggested that convicts were treated well, but the reports were fabricated. Convicts continued to die at rates ranging from fourteen to forty percent each year. Equally embarrassing, Willis spent upwards of \$30,000 in a failing venture to reform the convict-lease system, served under a dubious contract, and was believed to have embezzled funds before dying in office.³⁴

Dying convicts and thieving officials were not Alabama Democrats' only worries during the winter of 1872. In fact, their troubles were widespread. A central concern was David Lewis' gubernatorial victory. On Monday, 25 November, Alabama's new

³³ See, for example, M. H. Daniel, letter to the Perry County Commission, 8 November 1866, 1866 Perry County Commission Minutes. Cf. 11 July 1872 *Marion Commonwealth*; Berney, *Handbook of Alabama*, 258. For the Democratic allegations, cf. 5 December 1872 *Marion Commonwealth*; "Col. Hodgson"; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World*, 64, 122-124, 148-149.

³⁴ Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World*.

chief took the oath of office, which Charles Pelham—a former Confederate soldier and Democrat-turned-Republican judge whose younger brother, John, was a Confederate war hero and whose immediate family members were all die-hard Democrats—administered during a closed ceremony in the executive chamber of the state capital. Clearly riled by the procedure, one Black Belt journalist lashed out:

And this is the way our traitor Governor enters upon the solemn duties of his office...in a corner? Some men love darkness rather than light, and their reasons...explain why Lewis did not take the oath of office in the broad light of day and in the presence of the two Houses of the Legislature of Alabama.³⁵

The newsman's dark reference can be interpreted in several ways. Oftentimes, darkness was associated with death and destruction. Other times, it was used to describe Alabama's existing economic, political, and social conditions. Governor Lewis was a Republican, and numerous Democrats called his party as Black, or Dark, because of its numerical majority of black persons, who were instrumental in electing Lewis.

As Lewis' opponents criticized the way that he received the oath of office, one of Perry County Democrats' most abhorrent "angels of darkness," State Superintendent of Education Joseph Speed, tried to lessen the hatred that the county's most conservative citizens held for him. During Speed's first official message to the state education board, which he delivered on 23 November 1872, the new superintendent recommended enacting another law that would allow state officials to replace any county superintendent of education who was found guilty of unethical behavior, such as drunkenness, or who did not carry out his official duties. Speed also recommended revising the section of the state's public-school law that dealt with the employment of teachers. Specifically, Speed

³⁵ 5 December 1872 *Marion Commonwealth*. Cf. Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 11.

proposed a plan that, if accepted, would prohibit the state government from hiring any teacher until it had the funds to pay his or her salary.³⁶

Speed was an advocate for Alabama's public schoolteachers. Like other analysts, he believed the state's educators were considerably underpaid, especially when their salaries were compared to those of teachers in other parts of the country.³⁷ By his estimate, as many as ninety percent of Alabama's public schoolteachers were completely dependent on their monthly pay to care for themselves and their families. This was impossible, of course, if they were not paid adequately or on time. Without prompt and proper pay, Alabama's public school system might lose the dutiful, hard-working teachers who were needed to help rectify the wanton ignorance in the state.³⁸

In addition to calling for teacher-hiring and pay reform during his inaugural address, Speed spoke to the condition of the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa and the residency requirements of county superintendents. Speed told board members that the state university needed to reduce its yearly expenditures, which were exceeding its yearly income. Speed also recommended abolishing two professorships in moral and mental philosophy, which he had tried to combine with the president's office in 1871, and

³⁶ *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 December 1872; *Alabama State Journal*, 26 November 1872. See J. H. Speed to David P. Lewis, 2 April 1873, Education Correspondence, 1867-1907, SG 15978, ADAH. Cf. 22 November 1870 "An Act to Provide for the Appointment and Removal or Suspension of County Superintendents of Education"; 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, 157. For Speed's actual statements, see "Mr. Speed's Address," *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 December 1872, hereinafter cited as "Mr. Speed's Address."

³⁷ Actually, Joseph Speed was an advocate for several groups. As Perry County's registrar, he had petitioned the county commission to construct a building to house paupers. Commissioners agreed, and the Perry County Poor House was built. N. B. Ashworth, its superintendent, was allowed to allocate up to \$4 per acre and \$1 per rail toward the completion of the project.

³⁸ Cf. "Mr. Speed's Address." Among voting-age Alabamians, 91,000 black and 17,000 white persons could not read or write in July 1873, according to Speed. Of the more than 1 million individuals who populated the state, 383,000 were wholly illiterate, he said. If Speed's data are correct, then the vast majority of Alabama youth were either undereducated or uneducated altogether. See "Discouraging to Teachers," *Marion Commonwealth*, 24 July 1873.

striking the professorship in natural history. The superintendent wanted a number of university chairs (mineralogy, geology and chemistry, Greek and Latin, pure and mixed mathematics) consolidated, backed a reduction in professors' salaries and room-and-board fees, and advocated reinstating tuition, which state lawmakers had ended on 16 December 1871. Furthermore, Speed wanted to hire numerous tutors, urged university officials to complete all unfinished buildings, wished to see the campus library enlarged, and repeated a call for a law school on the Tuscaloosa campus.³⁹

As far as county superintendents of education were concerned, Speed believed all of them needed to reside in the county seats of the districts that they supervised. If this were not possible, Speed thought county superintendents should at least hold regular office hours in the county seats. Commentators throughout the state agreed that these were reasonable requests. Even Cooke and Heidt, who despised Speed's overall politics, backed them. For once, they said, the reforms of "Joseph...the changeful [were] wise and wholesome."⁴⁰

Actually, the proprietors of the *Marion Commonwealth* backed several of Speed's recommendations. That county superintendents should be moral, sober individuals was obvious to all. They also approved of teachers being hired or rehired only when the state government had enough money on hand to pay them. Combining the University of Alabama's geology and mineralogy chairs with its chemistry chair was a good idea, and placing a law school on its campus was worth considering if the attorneys whom the

³⁹ Joseph Speed believed that geology could be combined with chemistry and that one person could teach Greek and Latin. Speed also believed that professors' salaries needed to be reduced from \$2,500 to \$2,000 per year. For Speed's first attempts at consolidation, cf. 1869-1871 Board of Education Minutes, 47, 283. Cf. *Education and Regents Board Journal*, 8.

⁴⁰ "Mr. Speed's Address."

school produced were going to be better than the innumerable attorneys already licensed to practice law in the state. Speed's desire to reduce the University's room-and-board fees and tuition as well as his plan to allocate some of the funds that the University had saved to enlarge college buildings and improve certain apparatuses were also praiseworthy if the proposals were sincere, but combining the Greek and Latin chairs was not feasible because no one could teach those two languages properly without assistance.

In addition to opposing the proposed Greek and Latin combination, Cooke and Heidt objected vehemently to reducing professors' salaries, joining the mixed and pure mathematics chairs, and employing tutors. In their opinion, the tutors' salaries would obstruct the savings that Superintendent Speed mentioned in his opening address. More problematic, tutors would become tools of political patronage. In the end, wrote Cooke and Heidt, his "highness" (Speed) and the royal education court of Alabama would only worsen the condition of the state's leading educational facility by hiring tutors.⁴¹

As the forgoing opining makes clear, Speed could not escape the disparagement of Perry County's most conservative journalists, who were certain that anyone who knew Speed also knew that his first official address to the Alabama Education Board was insincere. The men nevertheless acknowledged Speed's modesty and applauded his attempt to get board members to put aside any political partisanship in order to carry out their responsibilities as good Christians.⁴²

In its coverage of Speed's speech, the *Marion Commonwealth* implied that his conduct was new, but it was not. Previously, he and other members of the University of

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² See "Col. Hodgson's Address to the Board of Education," *Shelby Guide*, 6 December 1870, hereinafter cited as "Col. Hodgson's Address to the Board of Education." Cf. *1871 Education and Regents Board Journal*, 27; "Mr. Speed's Address."

Alabama's board of regents had agreed to set aside politics after Superintendent Hodgson told them that their duties were of utmost importance and should not be approached with "the heart of a partisan or with the brain of a bigot." Board members also agreed to never let envy, hate, love, prejudice, or any other emotion dictate their decisions. All the same, Cooke and Heidt were sure that Speed's requests were disingenuous.⁴³

The journalists felt the same way about Speed's pledge to curtail spending and his statement regarding being elected superintendent of education in a bipartisan manner. When Speed mentioned economy, reform, and retrenchment, it reminded them of the Devil citing biblical scripture. The only reason Speed included strict economy in his November 1872 address was because he feared a public backlash if he did not, they reasoned. Strict economy had been a key principle of Alabama politicians since the Civil War.⁴⁴

Alabama's most powerful education official kept his campaign promises regarding textbooks, teacher pay, and firing county superintendents for insobriety, extremely unethical behavior, and other just reasons. Added to these was a measure that required every county superintendent to have an office in the county seat of the district that he supervised. Hitherto, all county superintendents had to do to meet their obligations was to visit the schools in their districts at least one time per school year.

⁴³ "Col. Hodgson's Address to the Board of Education." For earlier statements, see "The University of Alabama," *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 17 July 1869.

⁴⁴ See "A New Commissioner," *Marion Commonwealth*, 17 April 1873. Cf. "Mr. Speed's Address."

Speed also requested additional support for the state's black normal schools, including the one in Marion.⁴⁵

The Alabama Education Board granted each one of Speed's requests. On Saturday, 14 December 1872, board members approved an act requiring all county superintendents to have offices in the county seats of their respective districts. In addition, county superintendents had to keep office hours on each Saturday to transact business, such as meeting with public schoolteachers and other officials. Later, the Board approved "An Act to Prevent the Employment of Teachers unless They can be Promptly Paid." Governor Lewis signed each one of the acts into law shortly after it was passed.⁴⁶

Labor and Black Unionism

While Joseph Speed and his merry band of reformers reworked Alabama's education system, their allies in Perry County tried to bring some sort of normalcy and justice to the labor system. According to a number of the county's wealthiest and most prejudiced residents, the labor contracts that its citizens wrote and signed were no better than previous agreements. For several whites, the latest contracts were actually worse because some of the county's most informed, organized, and vocal black men had helped decide their terms and conditions. This was utterly absurd to one conservative businessman because no laborer, especially a former slave, should have been allowed tell

⁴⁵ See "An Act to Define More Fully the Duties of County Superintendents," in *School Laws of the State of Alabama*, 17. For additional information about Joseph Speed's platform, see "Caption of Acts Passed by the Board of Education," *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 December 1872.

⁴⁶ See Alabama Department of Education, *Acts Passed by the Board of Education of the State of Alabama at the Session of 1872, and Approved by the Governor* (Montgomery, Al.: Arthur Bingham, 1873), 9-10, 18. "An Act to Prevent the Employment of Teachers unless They can be Promptly Paid" was replaced on 6 December 1873. See Department of Education, *Acts of the Board of Education Presented to the Legislature, 1878-1879* ([Montgomery, Al.: n.p.], 1879), SG 23721, ADAH.

his or her employer how much he or she would be paid. Furthermore, employers already paid their workers too much money in the businessman's opinion. Agreeing with him, another white man advised every planter or merchant who employed black workers to tell them that they had only two options: they could work or starve.⁴⁷

Cooke and Heidt had more advice for Perry County employers. No farmer, they said, had a right to demoralize the laboring classes of his or her locality by offering them more money than he, she, or others could afford. This, they conjectured, jeopardized potential profits. To support their hypothesis, the pundits recalled how the excessively high wages that some farmers had paid their field hands since 1865 had forced commission merchants such as A. M. Fowlkes and Company, J. B. Fiquet and Sons, and Lee Myatt and Son to give larger advances than they would have given if wages had been kept low. By doing so, Fowlkes, the Fiquets, the Myatts, and other commission merchants had been able to keep profits that otherwise would have gone to employers or laborers. For that reason, keeping wages low was better for white planters and for black workers, surmised Cooke and Heidt.⁴⁸

Several scholars have emphasized planters' scorn for merchants and farmers who ostensibly paid black and other laborers too much money during the Postbellum period. In *Social Origins of the New South*, Weiner looks at five Black Belt counties, including Perry. He argues that the merchants' power increased tremendously during and immediately following the Civil War, the "decade of opportunity" in his words, while the

⁴⁷ See George S. Houston to Mrs. Houston, 22 February 1866, George S. Houston Papers, 1831-1899, Duke University Special Collections Library. See also *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 December 1872; "Farmers of Perry, Read This," *Marion Commonwealth*, 21 November 1872, hereinafter cited as "Farmers of Perry, Read This"; "State Directory," *Alabama State Journal*, 5 September 1874-October 1874. Cf. Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 38-39.

⁴⁸ Cf. 1870-1877 Perry County Business Licenses; 1870-1875 Perry County Cash and Checks Log Book; "Farmers of Perry, Read This."

strength of planters decreased. In the process, a power struggle developed that threatened the status quo. As Weiner sees it, this struggle did not cease until “the decade of restrictions, 1870-1880,” when state lawmakers began to pass legislation that slowed the upward mobility of the largely foreign-born merchants of the Black Belt and other parts of Alabama.⁴⁹

Weiner does not devote much attention to Perry County—and with good reason. It did not fit the Black Belt model that he has created. For one, the vast majority of the county’s merchants were not immigrants; they were native-born American Southerners. Many of them had called Alabama home for decades, others their entire lives. What is more, a number of planters continued to grow cotton and corn, produce flour and meal, raise horses and mules, and cut and sell timber just as they had before the Civil War. Similarly, the average working-class African American was not like the stereotypical black laborer in the Black Belt. Most Perry County freepersons were not submissive or tepid, nor were they unorganized.⁵⁰

In 1866, the National Labor Convention became the first nationwide labor union in the United States. According to historians like John Bracey, August Meier, Philip

⁴⁹ “The Merchant Challenge,” part two in Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 4-5, 10, 16, 19-21, 77-133, *loc. cit.*, 117.

⁵⁰ Federal censuses and the postbellum business licenses that were granted to Perry County citizens help bear out the contentions of the author. See U.S. Bureau of the Census, *A Compendium of the Ninth Census (June 1, 1870.) Compiled Pursuant to a Concurrent Resolution of Congress, and Under the Direction of the Secretary of the Interior, by Francis A Walker, Superintendent of Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 2, hereinafter cited as *Ninth Census: Compendium*. See also U.S. Bureau of the Census, *The Statistics of the Population of the United States, Embracing the Tables of Race, Nationality, Sex, Selected Ages, and Occupations....* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 345, hereinafter cited as *Ninth Census*, vol. 1: Population; *The Statistics of the Wealth and Industry of the United States, Embracing the Tables of Wealth, Taxation, and Public Indebtedness; of Agriculture; Manufactures; Mining; and the Fisheries....* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 15, 94-97, 345, hereinafter cited as *Ninth Census*, vol. 3: Wealth and Industry. Cf. 1870-1877 Perry County Business Licenses; 1870-1875 Perry County Cash and Checks Log Book; *Eighth Census*, vol. 2: Agriculture, 2-5, 193; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 126-128; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, especially 13 (footnote 12).

Foner, Elliott Rudwick, and Loren Schweninger, the organizers of the Convention desired an interracial federation of labor, but their egalitarianism was shunned by local leaders, who demanded an all-white assembly. Thus, in December 1869, 214 black workers from all parts of the country met in Washington, D. C., to form a counterpart to the white union. The men named their club the Colored National Labor Convention and elected Isaac Myers, a former slave and ship caulker from Baltimore who had attended some of the early meetings of the National Labor Union, president. In coming months, he and his associates asked congressmen to help black workers in the South by providing them low-interest loans. Myers' group also asked the federal government to divide the South's public lands into forty-acre plots on which black persons could build homesteads, as per the wishes of certain white Republicans and tens of thousands of blacks.⁵¹

James T. Rapier was the only Alabamian who attended the Colored National Labor Convention's inaugural meeting. When the self-appointed delegate returned to Alabama, he traversed the state, encouraging black unionism. By the end of 1870, the seeds that he had been planting over the past twelve months began to bear fruit. On 16 December, the *Alabama Weekly State Journal* broadcast a statewide labor convention for African Americans to be held in Montgomery on 2-5 January 1871. Immediately, black

⁵¹ See "The Late Isaac Myers, of Baltimore, Md.," *African Methodist Episcopal Church Review* 7, no. 4 (April 1891): 351-356. *Black Workers and Organized Labor*, John H. Bracey, Jr., et al., eds. (Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1971). See also See Philip S. Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974); Loren Schweninger, "James Rapier and the Negro Labor Movement, 1869-1874," *Alabama Review* 28 (July 1975): 185. For a different take on the National Labor Union's race policies, cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 158; Eric Foner, "Rights and the Constitution in Black Life during the Civil War and Reconstruction," 870-871; Marshall, *The Negro and Organized Labor*, 11.

men from across the state began to hold local meetings to elect delegates to the first convention of the Alabama Negro Labor Union.⁵²

The three-day conference attracted ninety-eight black workers from numerous trades and from forty-two counties. Reflecting the importance of the Republican party on labor relations, many of the conferees had been Union Leaguers. After naming Rapier chairman, leading delegates such as Jeremiah Haralson, a future president of the organization, and William V. Turner, a state agent, decided who would attend a meeting of the National Labor Convention of Colored Men that was scheduled to be held in Washington, D. C., on either 9 or 10 January 1871. J. T. Rapier was an obvious choice. Not only had he spearheaded the black union movement in Alabama that had led to the creation of the Alabama Negro Labor Union, which under President Haralson, State Agent Turner, and other officials would become one of the strongest black federations of labor in the South; Rapier was the Colored National Labor Convention's self-appointed vice president, serving under Frederick Douglass.⁵³

Following James Rapier's lead, Alexander Curtis, Thomas Dale, James Green, Greene Lewis, and other influential Black Belt freedmen assembled at the Marion courthouse on 1 July 1871 to form the Perry County Labor Union, or Convention. Lewis was elected president, Curtis was elected vice president, and William R. Pettiford—an

⁵² Cf. 6 January 1871 *Alabama Weekly State Journal*; Feldman, "Rapier," 19; Fitzgerald, *The Union League Movement in the Deep South*, 168-169; Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, passim; "The National Labor Union."

⁵³ See John Hope Franklin and Loren Schwening, *In Search of the Promised Land: A Slave Family in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 232. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 158-159; Feldman, "Rapier," 18; Fitzgerald, *The Union League Movement in the Deep South*, 168; Eric Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, 94; Philip Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker*, 43-44, including footnotes; Eric Foner and Walker, passim; "The Late Isaac Myers, of Baltimore, Md.," 354; Schwening, "Rapier and the Negro Labor Movement, 1869-1874," 88. Some persons have suggested that the Alabama Labor Union was founded specifically for agriculturists. Cf. Foner, *Forever Free*, 128; Fitzgerald, *The Union League Movement in the Deep South*, 168.

educator, minister, and the principal founder and president of the Alabama Penny Savings Bank—was elected secretary.⁵⁴

After accepting the presidency, Lewis made a short speech in which he urged everyone present to meet each obligation that he had made to his employer, an occurrence about which Freedmen's Bureau officials worried constantly. Lewis then read a resolution in which he and several other members of the Convention made it clear that, despite substantial familial and religious ties in the county, they were prepared to emigrate to Kansas or someplace else in the nation if the pay and working conditions of all common laborers, whites included, did not improve by 1 January 1873. Afterward, Jake Barker offered an amendment to the resolution requiring members of a standing committee to meet with the large property holders in the county, whose numbers had shrunk since 1860, to achieve the goal. The modified resolution passed.⁵⁵

Jim Green was almost certainly behind the emigration scheme. In 1868, John H. Parrish, a Hale County plantation manager, had broadcast Green's 1867 attempts to convince a group of blacks in that county to move to the "land of freedom," Liberia (as had members of the Alabama Colonization Society almost forty years earlier). Future happenings seemed to corroborate Parrish's claim. At the January 1871 meeting of the Alabama Negro Labor Union, for instance, Green recommended sending a small number

⁵⁴ When the Alabama Penny Savings Bank was founded between 1888 and 1890, Reverend Pettiford was the pastor of 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. See Alabama Department of Education, *Annual Report of the Condition in Each County Board of Education* ([Montgomery, AL: n.p.,] 1871), SG 32760, ADAH, hereinafter cited as *1871 Board of Education County Report*. Cf. Beverly, *History of Alabama*, 208; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 167.

⁵⁵ Cf. "The Colored Labor Union in Perry"; Essah, *A House Divided*, 130-131; "Labor Union of Perry County"; Rogers, *The One-Gallused Rebellion*, 12.

of blacks to Kansas to seek opportunities there similar to those that the residents of the legendary Nicodemus community would later enjoy.⁵⁶

Thomas Dale, a Lincoln School of Marion incorporator, offered the Perry County Labor Convention's second resolution. In it, he confirmed each member's willingness to meet the conditions of any labor contract that had already been finalized. In addition, Dale warned all workers, white as well as black, to thoroughly review and understand the terms of every contract that they signed, especially with regard to pay. The resolution reflected the Convention's sincerity about equal wages. It also dispelled a common myth among numerous whites regarding black people's willingness to accept wages that were considerably lower than those of white workers and disproved Joseph Hodgson's theory about Alabamians' shunning unions. Evidently, Dale and other members of the Convention had compared what the average Perry County worker made with what persons made elsewhere in the state and nation and, armed with this information, promised—or threatened, depending on one's view—to leave the county if comparable wages and equitable labor contracts were not provided. After the resolution was read and adopted, the conventioners adjourned, having taken one of the strongest Black Belt stances against the horrors of economic neo-slavery to date.⁵⁷

When local Democrats found out what the Perry County Labor Convention had proposed, they wanted to offer the Convention some sound advice, but they were confident that its members would not heed it. For that reason, the Democrats decided to

⁵⁶ Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, 20. Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 193; "The Colored Labor Union in Perry"; "Labor Union of Perry County"; Rogers, *The One-Gallused Rebellion*, 12; Sellers, *Slavery in Alabama*, 237-238.

⁵⁷ Cf. "Labor Union of Perry County"; "The Colored Labor Union in Perry"; Rogers, *The One-Gallused Rebellion*, 12.

counsel the people who paid them. If employers were wise, they would hold a convention of their own, proposed two partisans. At the all-white convention, planters and merchants could make a collective decision about how much black and white, but especially black, laborers were worth. According to several analysts, only a concerted action could control such matters. If white employers did not act in concert, “dull plodders,” or ordinary black laborers, would control their white employers.⁵⁸

The commentators’ seriousness shows how extraordinary the Perry County Labor Union was. The product of men who had already helped create an academic institution for blacks in Marion that they actually ran, the union showed that black Perry Countians constituted more than a Reconstruction issue; they were active participants in the process. Rather than relying on their former owners, the Republican party, or the federal government to determine how much they would be paid, local blacks took matters into their own hands. Even more important to the continuing religious and social reconstruction of the county was the fact that the union was envisioned as a bridge that would connect all common laborers irrespective of their skin color and previous conditions of servitude or their social, religious, or political affiliations. The Grange, the Alliance, the Knights of Labor, and similar organizations failed to span these differences, (although leading national Grangers and Knights made some efforts to do so). Contemporaneous records did not indicate whether the Perry County Labor Union ever had any non-black members, but the fact that its organizers extended a genuine invitation

⁵⁸ Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*. Cf. “Labor Union of Perry County.”

to other ethnic groups is noteworthy. If the unionists had recruited women, their organization would have been more remarkable.⁵⁹

As Curtis, Greene Lewis, Dale, and other blacks worked to enlarge their convention, Henry H. Moseley, Perry County's Democratic tax collector, urged people to pay all outstanding taxes. Interestingly, the local newspaper had continually criticized former tax collector Harris for pressuring people to settle their debts, but it printed nothing negative about Moseley's words and actions even though they exceeded those of his Republican predecessor.⁶⁰

Throughout the winter of 1873, Moseley threatened people who had not met their obligations. Meanwhile, the owners of the *Marion Commonwealth* broadcast the expected loss of A. B. Goodhue to Oxford, Alabama. His relocation would be a terrible blow to the county because Goodhue was a talented instructor and a considerate

⁵⁹ Larry Gerber, 27 July 2006 communication to the author. See W. S. Carter to Samuel Gompers, 19 February 1896, Philip Taft Research Notes on Alabama Labor History, Birmingham Public Library Archives, Birmingham, Alabama. See also William Gesner, *Coal and Iron Resources in Alabama* (N.P.: n.p., n.d), J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, ADAH; Thomas C. Johnson, *Cotton Lands: The Best Permanent Investment for Capital, and Alabama One of the Best, if not the Very Best, Cotton States to Invest Money in and to Live In* (Montgomery, Al.: "Daily Ledger" Book and Job Office, 1865), 8-11. Cf. "The Colored Labor Union in Perry"; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 73, 97-112; Feldman, "Labour Repressions in the American South," 345; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, passim; Griffith, 496; "Labor Union of Perry County"; Rogers, *The One-Gallused Rebellion*, 12.

Every now and then, black and white working-class Alabamians were able to find common ground. The mining industry is a good example. Although Daniel Letwin and other historians have exaggerated the unity that miners displayed, Appalachian coalminers were able to coexist better than other laborers. Perhaps the squalor and danger in which the miners worked brought them together. Maybe the demands of the job, similar educational and economic backgrounds, or the absence of white women at the workplace were unifying factors. Whatever the reason, black and white coalminers labored together, albeit at a distance, inside mines to provide for themselves and their loved ones and outside mines to combat avaricious employers. See Daniel Letwin, "Interracial Unionism, Gender, and 'Social Equality' in the Alabama Coalfields, 1878-1908," *Journal of Southern History* 61 (August 1995): 519-554, and *The Challenge of Interracial Unionism: Alabama Coal Miners, 1878-1921* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998). See also Paul D. Marengo, *Black Americans and Organized Labor: A New History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2006); Robert H. Woodrum, "The Rebirth of the UMWA and Racial Anxiety in Alabama, 1933-1942," *Alabama Review* 58 (October 2005): 247. Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 1-3, 73-76, 134-137, 202-207; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 122, 127-128, 205, 206; Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, 91.

⁶⁰ See "Delinquent Taxpayers," *Marion Commonwealth*, 16 January 1873.

merchant. Perry County had already lost Archibald J. Battle, one of Judson's former presidents, and had barely avoided losing its current president, Raymond H. Rawlings, who had been invited to pastor South Franklin Street Church of Mobile during the winter of 1872. On a brighter note, Howard President Murfee was governing his "absolute monarchy" well.⁶¹

Howard's success did nothing to lessen partisan criticism. One Democrat claimed that Republican rule in the state had already begun to redden the cheeks of thousands of white people and was "rallying the masses that they may call forth, with their life-giving tones to a Lazarus-like resurrection.... Heaven grant that when it comes, it may prove to be the sum of a Conservative Austerlitz and of a Radical Waterloo" that would silence any talk about universal equality once and for all.⁶²

Equal Rights

Many, if not all, of Alabama's black legislators supported the early 1870s human- and civil-rights measures that their conservative white colleagues detested. Together with some of their white allies, black legislators formed the Equal Rights Association (ERA). Among other activities, the ERA sought to guarantee that a comprehensive civil-rights bill would be passed in Alabama and that equality would be given to all of its citizens regardless of their color, gender, or previous condition of servitude.⁶³

⁶¹ "Col. J. T. Murfee," *ibid.*, 11 April 1872, hereinafter cited as "Col. J. T. Murfee"; "Marion and Its Surroundings," *ibid.*, 9 January 1873. See "The Judson," *ibid.*, 30 May 1872. See also "Prof. A. B. Goodhue," *ibid.*, 12 December 1872. Cf. 14 November 1872 *Marion Commonwealth*; Riley, *Makers and Romance of Alabama History*, 317.

⁶² Taylor, *The Issue of the Hour*.

⁶³ "Social Equality Next—Negroes in the Alabama Legislature Demanding It," *Marion Commonwealth*, 6 January 1873.

Leaders of the Equal Rights Association included a number of the state's most influential pure-black and mixed-race politicians. James Rapier served as president, James Green was vice president, Philip Joseph was second vice president, and Alexander Curtis was treasurer. Among these men, only Green was known for his forthright activism. Black Mobilians had even accused the opportunistic Joseph of avoiding darker-skinned blacks, opting to associate with other Afro-Creoles or prominent whites such as Willard Warner and Frederick Bromberg, a successful attorney, Harvard tutor, and one-time congressman.⁶⁴

Regardless of Joseph and other officers' past moderation or their present motives, the existence of the Equal Rights Association exposes the inaccuracy of some of the claims made by historians such as Richard Bailey, Loren Schweninger, and Allen Trelease. According to them, black Alabamians did not conduct a sustained campaign for integrated public schools. At one ERA meeting, John William Jones—a former slave from North Carolina whose original name might have been John Coleman, Lowndes County, Alabama, plantation, general store and racetrack owner, state senator (1872-1876), future United States deputy revenue collector, substantial property owner, Mason, and member of the Knights of Pythias—did say that there were at least 4,000 black voters in his county who were opposed to forced integration. Like members Curtis and Dozier, Jones worried that conservative white Republicans would desert the party if blacks' civil-rights agitation continued. As important, Jones did not think that a civil-rights bill had

⁶⁴ Philip Joseph did represent the affluent Afro-Creole class of Mobilians, but he did not entirely eschew segregation and other civil-rights issues. Joseph simply became more vocal about such issues once he joined the Equal Rights Association and began to edit the *Mobile Watchman*. See *Mobile Daily Register*, 26 and 27 May, 21 July, 2, 5, and 16 August, and 6 October 1874. See also *The Mobile Watchman*, 30 August 1873, 26 April 1874. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 75, 252; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, passim.

any chance of being ratified. However, Jones—who later in life built a gigantic dwelling in Montgomery that he called “Centennial Hall,” others “Centennial Hill”—did not speak for every person in the Equal Rights Association. Members Green and Lewis were especially vocal about integration. Although Green had championed emigration in the past, he was certain that the day when black and white children would eat and play together, attend the same schools, and help each other with their studies was just around the corner.⁶⁵

Integration opponents could not sit by idly or keep quiet while the ERA wrangled on about educational, political, and social equality. A group of Black Belt segregationists thought it was ridiculous for men who had been enslaved less than ten years earlier to even talk about equality. Worse, there were white men, including some Democrats, who were willing to entertain the thought of integration if it would help them obtain political office. The segregationists were particularly incensed at state lawmakers who opposed their views. Locally, Senator Curtis received the most criticism because he had not been a radical type. Now, with his apparent change of heart, Perry County’s most conservative white citizens changed their minds:

Many of our best citizens...all agree now that he [Curtis] had deceived them, and that the evil communications of his later life have corrupted whatever of good there may have been in him previously. The colored voters of Perry should begin to look around for another leader in the place of

⁶⁵ See *Montgomery Daily Advertiser and Mail*, 27 June 1874. See also “Insulting North Alabama,” *ibid.*, 12 August 1874, hereinafter cited as “Insulting North Alabama”; John Parrish to Henry Watson, Jr., 30 September 1867, Henry Watson, Jr., Papers, 1765-1938, Collection No. 5593, William R. Perkins Library, Manuscripts Department, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina. Cf. Allen, *White Terror*, xxxi; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 103, 214, 315-316, and *They Too Call Alabama Home*, *passim*; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 70; Brown, “Reconstruction Legislators in Alabama,” 198; Foner, *Freedom’s Lawmakers*, 122; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 144-145; Schweningen, *James T. Rapier*, 134; “Social Equality Next—Negroes in the Alabama Legislature Demanding It.” On the idealism of black leaders throughout the South during Reconstruction, cf. Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, 108-109.

Alex. They have done enough for him and there are others among them [who are quite] as intelligent and deserving [as] Alex. Let him stand aside, now, and give them a chance.⁶⁶

Pat Billingsley (or Billingslea) and Riley Sullivan were two of the black men who were capable of replacing Curtis. During early January 1873, the *Marion Commonwealth* announced that Billingsley, a barber and small merchant who ran a shop with Curtis, and Sullivan, a shoemaker, had been chosen to serve as jurors in the United States district court that Judge Busted was presiding over in Montgomery. People throughout the county backed the decision. By almost all accounts, Billingsley and Sullivan were intelligent men who, if confirmed, would carry out their duties exceptionally well.⁶⁷

One month after declaring that Billingsley and Sullivan would make excellent jurists, the *Marion Commonwealth* broadcast additional news about Billingsley. Only this time, its words were not so complimentary. Rumor had it that he was in line to become Marion's next postmaster. The paper's proprietors wondered what kind of man would want to be one of Billingsley's bondmen. Though unstated, the newspaper publishers obviously meant "authentic," "patriotic" white men, for it is doubtful that Cooke or Heidt would have been surprised if a black man such as Alexander Curtis or Greene Lewis would have sponsored Billingsley. Nor would the journalists have been surprised if "unauthentic," "unpatriotic" white men like Joseph Speed or Peter Clarke would have sponsored Billingsley. Whites A. C. Davidson and T. C. Hill might have put

⁶⁶ *Marion Commonwealth*, 30 January 1873.

⁶⁷ See, for example, "Huge," *ibid.*, 9 January 1873. For Billingsley and Sullivan's occupations, cf. 1870-1877 Perry County Business Licenses; 1870-1875 Perry County Cash and Checks Log Book

up the \$10,000 that Billingsley needed to become Marion's postmaster, but they had already agreed to pay the bond of Richard Terrell, Uniontown's black postmaster.⁶⁸

The answer to Heidt and Cooke's question about Billingsley's bondsmen was not made public until the spring of 1874. By that time, Cooke was no longer associated with the *Marion Commonwealth*, and his replacement had not been named. Thus, Heidt had the pleasure of announcing the names of the men who had paid the \$10,000 bond of Pat Billingsley by himself. Former tax collector John T. Harris was one of them, and future tax collector Martin T. Hendrix was the other one. Both men were white Republicans whom Heidt and the Cooke enjoyed criticizing.⁶⁹

Not everything that the *Marion Commonwealth* printed about Republican lawmakers was slanted during the winter and spring of 1873. Heidt and Cooke wrote objectively about a bill that Curtis introduced into the state senate on 24 February to prohibit tax collectors from obtaining state-sanctioned warrants for taxes. On the same day, Alexander White, the Republican chairman of the judiciary committee, responded negatively to a measure that would have protected and provided a means for the vindication of any Alabamian who was mired in litigation. Later, Chairman White offered a measure entitled "A Bill to Secure Equal Rights and Accommodations on

⁶⁸ See "Marion P. O.," *Marion Commonwealth*, 20 February 1873. Cf. 30 November 1871 *Marion Commonwealth* "The Legislature"; 26 December 1872 "An Act"; *ibid.*; 22 January 1873; "Alabama Legislature," *ibid.*, 20 February 1873; *ibid.*, 30 January 1873; *ibid.*, 13 March 1873; 29 May 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Valedictory"; "Pow Wow." In June 1873, Peter G. Clarke was appointed special agent of the Alabama and Mississippi Post Office Department. Clarke, who replaced Dr. W. F. Blackford, took up the post on 1 July 1873. See "News Items," *ibid.*, 12 June 1873. Cf. 1870-1877 Perry County Business Licenses; 1870-1875 Perry County Cash and Checks Log Book.

⁶⁹ *Marion Commonwealth*, 21 May 1874. See "Alabama Legislature" and "Attention—Democrats," *ibid.*, 13 February 1873. See also "Alabama Legislature," *ibid.*, 6 March 1873; "Already," letter to the editor, *ibid.*, 24 September 1874. Cf. 22 January 1873 *Marion Commonwealth*. Martin Hendrix was elected tax collector during the November 1874 statewide elections. See "Martin T. Hendrix," *ibid.*, 22 October 1874.

Railroads and Steamboats to All Persons without Distinction on Account of Race or Color.” The paper carried impartial reports about each one of these items.⁷⁰

White’s bill required all railroad companies in Alabama to have at least three cars (compartments, sections) per passenger train. Two of them would be reserved for the first-class passengers, as indicated by a clearly marked and visible label. Black persons would be allowed to travel aboard one of the first-class cars, white persons aboard another car. In no instance, however, would black and white passengers be allowed to ride in the same first-class compartment of a three-car train. But, in keeping with the equality posture of the GOP, the plan required both sections to be equal in comfort, finish, and style.

According to White’s bill, any ethnic group would be allowed to sit in second-class cars, which carriers could designate smoking cars if they wished. In the event that a railroad company could afford only one compartment, its executives had to use a wooden or some other solid partition to divide the car into two segregated sections. Evidently, any white person could travel in the white section of a one-car train because the bill did not include any information about the status of the ticket holders, but only persons who had purchased first-class tickets would be able to ride in the black section of a one-car train. The bill did not mention where black people who held second-class tickets would be assigned.

White’s proposal infuriated black legislators such as James Green and Greene Lewis. They and other members of the Equal Rights Association vowed to protest it and any other scheme that denied black people the privilege of eating, sleeping, or sitting with

⁷⁰ 6 March 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* “State Legislature.”

other ethnic groups. Whatever the outcome of Green and company's protests, it was extremely unlikely that the ERA members would have to worry about eating, sleeping, or sitting with anyone aboard a state-owned Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad car after the spring of 1873. In February of that year, Governor Lewis sent a message to the Alabama House of Representatives in which he forewarned of its sale.⁷¹

As legislators mulled over the fate of the A&C Railroad, black Selman Jeremiah Haralson introduced a bill into the state senate to enlarge Perry County's equalization board that was referred to committee. Concurrently, Greene Lewis, who sat on the House Ways and Means Committee, introduced a bill to clarify Alabama's existing exemption laws. It, too, was referred to committee.⁷²

Republican Ben Lane Posey believed Lewis' bill needed to become law. Circa April 1872, Posey sent an epistle to the staunchly Democratic *Mobile Register* in which he declared that no other state statute was of more concern to Alabamians than the exemption laws, yet they were almost universally misunderstood. Posey proceeded to educate ignorant citizens about the state's pre-June 1868 allowances. Via the state code, any head of household was applicable for a tax exemption. (A household was defined as a husband, wife, and at least one minor child who lived at home or an older child who was totally dependent on his or her parents for support.) Up to \$1,200 in property, such as real estate, could be exempted. Other exemptions included a personal estate of no

⁷¹ 13 February 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Alabama Legislature." See, for example, "Sale of A. & C. Railroad," *ibid.*, 4 June 1874. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, *passim*.

⁷² 13 February 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Alabama Legislature."

more than \$1,000 and some specific tax exemptions that were too trivial to list, explained Posey.⁷³

The state code allowed for several post-June 1868 tax exemptions. Included were homesteads whose value did not exceed \$2,000 and personal property (jewels, merchandise, money, movables) worth no more than \$1,000. Such exemptions were applicable to any citizen, whether head of household or not, man or woman, single or married; but the 1868 code did not excuse land unless it was the debtor's homestead, meaning the debtor's actual residence. Via the homestead provision, a debtor who lived in a rural area could exempt eighty acres of land. Any excess acreage was valued at one dollar per acre and was liable for debts. As such, any land exceeding the eighty-acre allowance was of little value, argued Posey. By contrast, the homestead of a debtor who lived in an urban area, such as an incorporated city or town, was allowed a \$2,000 exemption if the homestead was the individual's actual place of residence. Vacant lots were not exempted.

According to Posey, Alabama's exemption laws were conditional measures that had to be overturned. When they were, the liens that creditors attached could be enforced. For that reason, it was very important for persons who were owed money to keep an accurate record of all debts that they could not collect under the existing system. In most instances, it was only a matter of time, Posey declared: "The money will come sooner or later. Knowing this I pile up the judgment and 'bide my time.'"⁷⁴

⁷³ Cf. 1 May 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Biographical Sketches"; 26 September 1874 *Alabama State Journal* "Republican Meeting"; "The Exemption Laws"; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 251; "History of Marion, 1818-'35"; Wiggins, *Scalawag*, 137.

⁷⁴ "The Exemption Laws."

Posey, whose explanations probably did little to assist common citizens understand Alabama's existing exemption laws, was certain that the inability or the unwillingness of state legislators to create easily understood exemption laws had provoked persons to commit fraud since 1868. A number of leading Perry County conservatives, property owners, and analysts did not know whether Alabama's existing exemption laws had given birth to widespread corruption; but they did know that sleazy dealings had been common over the past four or five years and, unsurprisingly, attributed most of the shady deals to allegedly misled blacks and deviant whites within the Republican party. Two Republicans, Alexander Curtis and Peter Clarke, were in the state legislature, ruining Perry's once sterling reputation. At least, this is what some of Curtis and Clarke's critics wanted people to believe.

On Wednesday, 5 February 1873, Senator Curtis introduced a bill requiring Perry County's treasurer to report the financial status of the county twice per year. His plan might have arisen from Perry's recurrent postbellum bankruptcies. Around the same time, Representative Clarke read a resolution requiring the speaker of the House to appoint a committee of three individuals whose duties would include clarifying when state legislators were entitled to pay. After little discussion, the resolution was adopted, and Clarke made a motion to suspend all regular business so that the tabled civil-rights bill could be taken up and referred to the judiciary committee. The motion carried.⁷⁵

On 10 February 1873, members of the State Senate Committee on Education reported favorably on a measure to give every county in Alabama a proportionate share of the sixteenth-section and other school funds that the state government collected. Such

⁷⁵ Cf. 13 February 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Alabama Legislature." Representative Clarke sat on the counties and county boundaries, education, and internal improvements committees.

a measure, if enacted, would be a tremendous benefit to Perry County. In recent years, the county had generated some of the highest sixteenth-section revenue in the state. In 1871, for example, county officials reported a collection of \$76,883.30. That year, only Dallas (\$110,973.19), Madison (\$114,580.77), Montgomery (\$79,381.29), and Sumter (\$110,575.09) Counties reported higher sixteenth-section revenue.⁷⁶

The only real concerns that existed in Perry County about the education committee's plan were how, where, and if the re-apportioned money would be spent. In the same 1871 document in which county officials reported almost \$77,000 in such revenue, they also reported an "undrawn" balance, or credit, of \$4,706.31. The amount of money that officials did not draw fell to \$133.33 in 1872, but it rose to an amazing \$8,761.30 the following year.⁷⁷

On the same 10 February 1873 that the school fund measure was discussed, Representative Clarke and other members of the House Committee on Counties and County Boundaries authorized enlarging Perry County's equalization board, as Haralson had proposed. Shortly thereafter, state senators ratified Curtis' bill requiring the county tax collector to make semi-annual financial reports. Senators also agreed to relieve Mrs. F. E. Husk of Marion, as per Curtis' request. Unfortunately for Perry County's leading

⁷⁶ See *Laws Relating to the Public Schools of Alabama, with Remarks and Forms, 1871* (Montgomery, Al.: W. W. Screws, 1871), 51-77. The sixteenth-section fund was rooted in two ordinances that the Articles of Confederation developed. In 1785, its leaders agreed on a land ordinance that set aside section, or lot, sixteen of every thirty-six section township for a school. The plan was confirmed via the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.

⁷⁷ Cf. *1875 Report of John McKleroy*, 67. In 1874, Perry County Superintendent of Education J. W. Morton reported a cash balance of \$56.27. See *Supplemental Report of the Superintendent of Education, to the Governor* (Montgomery, Al.: Barrett and Brown, 1877), 9.

black politician, the legislators' approval did nothing to alter the growing disdain for him and other black Republicans, Carpetbaggers, and Scalawags.⁷⁸

On 18 February 1873, "A Voter" sent a letter to the editor of the *Marion Commonwealth*. In it, the writer asked whether John T. Harris and a few black men had held a recent political meeting in the Marion bar of George W. Brown to discuss their choices for mayor and town council. After beseeching Cooke to reveal the nominees' names, the anonymous writer asked whether Democrats intended to allow one white and a few black Republicans who had convened in a saloon to determine who would govern Perry County.⁷⁹

Editor Cooke responded quickly. The rumor was true. Harris and several black Marionites had convened in Brown's tavern on 15 February to discuss municipal matters and to prepare for the upcoming elections for which the town's incumbent mayor, J. B. Shivers, and W. T. Hendon's law partner, A. R. Kelly, were also preparing. Cooke assumed all had gone well at the Republican meeting because whiskey and Harris had presided. No official candidate had been chosen, but the people who attended the meeting had discussed a bi-ethnic ticket, confirmed Cooke. The partisan journalist, educator, high-ranking YMCA official, and member of the Perry County Democratic party's executive committee knew the names of the individuals who had been discussed, but he did not think that it was proper to print them because they did not know anything

⁷⁸ Alexander Curtis had also introduced a bill into the state senate to provide relief for Henry H. Moseley, one of the *Marion Commonwealth's* favorite officials who, together with E. H. Bernhard, purchased J. H. Rutledge's grocery store in June 1874. Cf. 22 January 1873 *Marion Commonwealth*; *ibid.*, 13 February and 6 March 1873 "Alabama Legislature."

⁷⁹ See "A Voter," letter to the editor, *Marion Commonwealth*, 20 February 1873. Cf. 1870-1877 Perry County Business Licenses; 1870-1875 Perry County Cash and Checks Log Book.

about the meeting. Why, asked Cooke, should they have to suffer the embarrassment of being associated with such a motley group?⁸⁰

As important as these local matters were during the early months of 1873, they paled in comparison to statewide and national issues. Foremost among them were the conditions of freepersons. On 2 February 1873, Latty J. Williams, a black legislator from Barbour or Montgomery County, introduced a civil-rights bill into the House that sought to discourage race-based discrimination in hotels and schools, on common carriers, and in theaters and other places of amusement. After several legislators pressured Alexander White to issue what might have been a premature statement, his judiciary committee reported favorably on the bill. Heated debates followed, but the measure died in the House on 10 March 1873.⁸¹

While Williams' proposal was being debated, Senator Haralson drafted a similar civil-rights bill and brought it before his colleagues on 19 February 1873. After a few alterations, White's judiciary committee presented the bill for approval. Senator Curtis was among its reluctant supporters. In his opinion, the proposal left much to be desired, but it was the best measure that he, Haralson, and others could get approved.

Why Curtis was hesitant to support Haralson's amended bill is open to debate. Reportedly, Curtis was opposed to complete social equality and, therefore, believed that the social feature of the bill went too far. One person even said Curtis had told one of his acquaintances that social issues would resolve themselves over time, and until they did,

⁸⁰ Cf. "Spiritualism in Marion." Kelly announced his candidacy on 9 January 1873. Shivers, whom Cooke and Heidt supported, announced his candidacy later the same month. See "Mayor," *Marion Commonwealth*, 23 January 1873. Cooke's teaching duties are mentioned in "A Change of Teachers," *ibid.*, 21 August 1873.

⁸¹ Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 211; Wiggins, *Scalawag*, 86-87.

Curtis was determined not to force himself on anyone who did not want or appreciate his presence.⁸²

Richard Bailey is of a different opinion. He argues that Curtis did not press the civil-rights issue because he did not envision Black Belt residents having significant racial clashes. As a slave, Curtis had been given access to the best hotel accommodations and conveyances that any black or poor-to-middling white person could have expected. Why, Curtis is said to have wondered, would such allowances have been kept from him and other black persons simply because they were legally free?⁸³

Bailey's contentions are interesting. Curtis knew about several race-based skirmishes that had taken place in Marion and other Black Belt towns following the Civil War. In fact, it was he who had provided Joseph Speed with much of the information that Speed had presented during his highly publicized 1871 Ku Klux Klan testimony. Curtis might have earnestly thought that time would solve the nation's race problems, as did other persons, but he certainly envisioned significant racial conflicts between blacks and whites.⁸⁴

Whatever the case may be, Curtis and other black legislators began to place more emphasis on the civil rights of African Americans as February 1873 came to a close. In the reputedly farcical, do-nothing state senate whose members were not expected to leave the state capitol before March, civil-rights bills monopolized discussion on 25 February. When Samuel W. Cockrell, a white Republican representing Greene County, discussed

⁸² Cf. Bailey, *Neither Scalawags nor Carpetbaggers*, 211, citing *Montgomery Daily Advertiser and Mail*, 6 March 1873; *Greenville Advocate*, 20 March 1872; Wiggins, *Scalawag*, 87. Cf. 23 and 25 August 1874 *Alabama State Journal* "To the People of Alabama."

⁸³ Cf. Curtis, 7 May 1869 *Christian Herald* editorial; Hampton and Morgan, "Shall the Negro Majorities Rule," 23.

⁸⁴ Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 20, 415-416; Pugh, *Speech of Hon. James L. Pugh*, 7.

his support for integration, another representative asked him whether David P. Lewis had refused to accept the GOP nomination for governor if either a northern-born Republican or a black man's name appeared on the ticket. Cockrell, one of several white members of the party whom federal investigators had summoned to Mobile to give testimony about the infamous 1870 Eutaw Riot, did not remember. Several of his white associates seemed to experience similar amnesia when it came time to discuss pending civil-rights legislation.⁸⁵

The various civil-rights bills that were proposed during the 1870s had as hard a time as many Alabamians did during the financial depression of that decade. Whereas the measures received almost universal support from black politicians and voters, most whites rejected the idea of public race mixing. For the latter group, the color line was a permanent divide that could not be erased. Because several of the state's most influential white Republican lawmakers also supported segregation, one white Alabamian could justly argue that the civil-rights bills that were introduced in Alabama in 1873 were killed not only by conservative Democrats but also by "white Radicals. Let the Negro remember this."⁸⁶

Representative Lewis did remember who opposed civil-rights legislation. When Haralson and Williams' 1873 civil-rights bills failed in the state senate, Lewis reminded his white counterparts that during the Civil War, white Unionists from North Alabama had come down to the Black Belt supplicating for corn and other perishable goods. Clearly riled at the former Unionists postwar behavior, Lewis exclaimed: "I have known

⁸⁵ Cockrell was beaten after testifying. Cf. 6 March 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Alabama Legislature"; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 12 ff.

⁸⁶ *Marion Commonwealth*, 6 March 1873. See "What Causes Hard Times," *ibid.*, 12 June 1873. Cf. *Pugh Common-Schools Speech*.

colored people to steal corn from their own masters to keep your women and children from starving; and yet you vote against the bill!” Lewis, whose claims about “corn men” and “corn women” were true, described a paradox of Alabama politics. Oftentimes, white Republicans cared a great deal about black votes but very little about black voters. As Atticus Greene Haywood—a Methodist minister, former Confederate chaplain, future agent-trustee of the Peabody and Slater Education Funds, and president of Emory College—recounted in an 1881 tome entitled *Our Brother in Black*:

No political party, as such, has dealt fairly with this question of the negro’s citizenship. They have considered him almost exclusively as a voter, one party seeking to control his vote, the other seeking to avoid being controlled by it. Neither party has considered him in the fullness of his citizenship [but has] been... anxious to count his vote.... The negro’s ballot is, indeed, important in every view of the case, but in our dealings with him his importance as a voter has been greatly exaggerated by both parties, and much to his damage as a man and a citizen in the broader sense.⁸⁷

Haywood, whom W. E. B. Du Bois considered one of the most egalitarian white men in the South, spoke the truth. For many white Republicans, equality meant providing black people similar, as opposed to the same, institutions and opportunities. If, for example, a community had one public school for white students, then the community should have one public school for black students. This, they said, was equal. That the black school had fewer resources with which to operate than the white school seemed

⁸⁷ Greene Lewis, quoted in Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 213, citing Henry E. Cobb, “Negroes in Alabama during Reconstruction” (Ed.D. diss., Temple University, 1952), 269 (first quote); *The Heritage of Perry County*, 20 (second quote); Atticus G. Haywood, *Our Brother in Black: His Freedom and His Future* (New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1881), 117 (third quote). Cf. Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black Education*, 176. For similar political statements, cf. “Insulting North Alabama.” For Haygood’s wartime, educational, and civic appointments, cf. Jones, “The Agent as a Factor in the Education of the Negroes in the South,” *Journal of Negro Education* 19 (spring 1950): 33. Some corn women were the wives of Confederate deserters, others the wives of men who never fought. Cf. Martin, *A Rich Man’s War a Poor Man’s Fight*, 171-172.

insignificant. Numerous black people, naturally, disagreed. For them, equal public institutions and accommodations could not be determined mathematically. Furthermore, integrated facilities were more than places where people with different skin color came together. Mixed schools were symbolic. After hundreds of years of surreptitious recognition, white people were openly acknowledging the humanity of blacks.⁸⁸

Resistance abounded. One white man maintained that separate schools were best for everyone in the South: *“However it may be in other sections or countries, it is not best to mix the races in Southern school-rooms. Right or wrong, wise or foolish, this is a fact. All but lunatics and visionaries recognize facts.”* In the event that someone did not know what such *“facts”* were, one segregationist clarified what he meant. In general, a southern white child would not sit at a desk with a black child. A southern black child, in contrast, might sit beside a white child, but he or she would rather sit next to someone who was unquestionably black. *“And this,”* the segregationist surmised, *“gives trouble to no soul of man, except to a small class of fanatics, who feel that all things human must yield to their fancies.”*⁸⁹

In March 1873, the *Marion Commonwealth* printed a story about Jean Louis Rodolphe Agassiz—a Swiss-born American paleontologist, systemist, polygenic theorist, and Darwin critic—that certain whites used to bolster their segregationist stands. Drawing from the thoughts of Étienne-Rénaud-Augustin, a French anatomist who contended that “the Negro is no more a white man than a donkey is a horse or a zebra,”

⁸⁸ Cf. *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative Negroes of To-day*, 67.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 144, 145, 149-150. Unlike some Alabamians, the man did not have any problem with white instructors teaching black students. In “all truth and common sense,” he said, “there is no reason for discounting, in any respect, a white man or woman simply for teaching negroes. It is utterly absurd. May it not, also, be sinful?” *Ibid.*, 150.

Agassiz argued that the “negro is no more the white man’s brother than the owl is the sister of the eagle, or the ass the brother of the horse.” For the newspaper’s proprietors, asses and Negroes were more alike than Negroes and Caucasians, a notion supported, they said, by some of the actions of the pro-equality “jackasses” in the state legislature.⁹⁰

On 26 February 1873, Alabama House members discussed the pending civil-rights bill. Black and white Republicans such as Greene Lewis and W. T. Hunter made it clear that they backed the original bill that Haralson had proposed in the state senate. House Democrats objected continually, so the day passed without any significant action being taken. On the following day, the social-equality bill again consumed much of the representatives’ time before being replaced by a substitute measure in the state senate on 28 February.⁹¹

In coming weeks, Black Belt Democrats’ attacks became personal. On 6 March 1873, Representative Lewis rose in the House to rebut two allegations that had been made against him in the *Selma Weekly Times*. It seems that the paper had labeled Lewis a bigamist and dealer in counterfeit money. In response, Lewis called the allegation libelous and unworthy of being printed in any respectable newspaper. Seaborn Saffold and staff then dared Lewis to deny the charges. Not only did Lewis deny them; he demanded that the journalists prove them.

Lewis was no stranger to fights, so the battle with the *Selma Weekly Times* did not bother him. He was more concerned about the pending civil-rights legislation that some

⁹⁰ R. R. Johnson, untitled essay; available via Internet @ <http://www.cartage.org.lb/en/themes/Sciences/LifeScience/HumanRaces/RacesMan/RacesMan.htm>; accessed 20 November 2004 (first quote); “Professor Agassiz on the Negro,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 8 May 1873 (second quote). See Arnold Guizot, *Memoir of Louis Agassiz, 1807-1873* (Princeton, N.J.: C. S. Robinson and Company, 1883). Cf. Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black Education*, 30-32.

⁹¹ 13 March 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* “Alabama Legislature.”

of his legislative colleagues had made the special order of 12 March 1873. On that day, the measure was taken up, as planned, and was soundly defeated. In a similar show of power and disregard for federal law, Democratic lawmakers, clinging to a states-rights position, declared the Enforcement Act of 1871 null and void. The illegal act provoked much jubilation among Perry County conservatives, but they were less enthused about another legislative matter. W. G. Little, Jr., a wealthy planter and Sumter County's newest state legislator, had begun his tenure by pledging support for the Civil Rights Bill of 1873. Numerous conservatives wondered how that could have happened. Little, they thought, was a sociopolitical conservative. Had it not been for him and three other Democratic senators, the civil-rights debate might have stopped forever, complained one dismayed Democrat. Instead, the purported farce was continued.⁹²

The civil-rights bill was taken up again on 13 March 1873. Still disgusted, opponents recalled how one state senator had made a motion to dismiss the entire matter, but a number of Democrats had balked when it came time to vote. Had every Democratic senator voted against the measure, as his supporters expected, the prospect of universal equality would have been no more because the Alabama House had already killed the civil-rights bill, argued Cooke and Heidt.⁹³

Again, the journalists were wrong. Representatives had not killed the Civil Rights Bill of 1873. As a matter of fact, Representative Hunter introduced a resolution on 14 March that required the judiciary committee to give the status of the bill on 25 March. Ultimately, legislators decided that from 1 o'clock forward each day thereafter, the

⁹² See "The Election," *ibid.*, 6 March 1873. Cf. "Alabama Legislature," *ibid.*; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 94. Greene Lewis apparently got into a fistfight in late August 1873 and had to pay \$5 in fines and other costs. See "Dan," letter to the editor, *Marion Commonwealth*, 4 September 1873.

⁹³ Cf. 20 March 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Alabama Legislature."

measure would be the special order of the day until the matter was decided. Several black representatives championed a more immediate course of action. One of them introduced legislation to allow the House to decide the fate of the civil-rights bill immediately, but his white colleagues tabled it.⁹⁴

The proprietors of the *Livingston Journal* favored renouncing all Democratic legislators who did not publicly oppose the Civil Rights Bill of 1873. While they presented their cases for renunciation, other Democrats and Democratic media concentrated on any economic, educational, political, religious, or social group whose members did not oppose not only universal equality but also supposedly avaricious northern businesspersons and every Democrat who had not voted for reliable politicians in past elections.⁹⁵

On 12 April 1873, another civil-rights bill was introduced into the state legislature. This time, the motion to table it failed. Perry County Democrats were confident that the failed motion was a sure sign that the measure was going to be signed into law. The “Apostate Senate,” exploded one member of the party, was doing more to help enable ex-slaves’ allegedly presumptuous demands than the Republicans in the state legislature. For that reason, any man who had voted for Democratic senators should have cried as loudly as he could: “Tyrant, I well deserve the galling chains.”⁹⁶

For the upset conservative and like-minded individuals, April Fool’s Day 1873 turned into April Fool’s Month. For demagogical effects, wrote Cooke and Heidt, senate

⁹⁴ See “Alabama Legislature,” *ibid.*, 27 March 1873.

⁹⁵ See *ibid.*, 23 January 1873. See also *ibid.*, 6 March 1873; “Let the Press Utter Its Protest,” *ibid.*, 8 May 1873.

⁹⁶ “An Apostate Senate,” *ibid.*, 1 May 1873 (first quote); 6 March 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* (second quote). Cf. 10 and 17 *Marion Commonwealth* “Alabama Legislature.”

Democrats had resurrected the civil-rights bill that House Republicans had killed. As such, the mistaken journalists believed the senators deserved the condemnation of every right-minded white voter in the state. For the journalists, it was almost unfathomable that Democratic senators had passed Alabama's first civil-rights bill. If the Democratic party's executive committee did not repudiate the senators' actions, the newspapermen vowed to renounce the Democratic party.⁹⁷

Heidt and Cooke's position was nonnegotiable, absolute, final. Unbeknownst to the former individual, it was one of the last positions that his business partner would make as co-owner of the *Marion Commonwealth*. Cooke was not repudiating the newspaper, but he was leaving it. For him, something had indeed turned up during the first half of the Democratic interlude of 1872-1874. It just happened to have turned up somewhere other than in Perry County.⁹⁸

Cooke's Departure

H. C. Cooke left the *Marion Commonwealth* on 29 May 1873, but he did not explain why. In his valedictory, the departing editor informed his readers that he had sold his half of the paper and was appearing before "the public merely to make my bow and retire." In truth, Cooke did much more. Among other things, he explained what he had tried to do after accepting the editorial position. His first priority had been to guard

⁹⁷ Cf. "The Senate of Alabama."

⁹⁸ Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 67; Hennessey, "Reconstruction Politics and the Military in Alabama," 112.

and promote the economic, political, and social interests of his patrons, especially those of Perry County.⁹⁹

Cooke did not mention anyone by name or ethnicity, but the persons whose interests he had tried to protect and advance were usually white Democrats despite the fact that many of his most faithful subscribers, particularly at the local level, were black Republicans. Cooke acknowledged that he had made some mistakes as editor, but he swore that no error had been made intentionally:

In the field of journalism, as on the field of battle, I have had the honor to oppose the plunderers of my people and the despoilers of my country. If I have appeared at times too bitter, it is attributable to the heat and excitement of constant conflict, and is a fault, if fault at all, that “leans to virtue’s side,” and one which all true Southern gentlemen will more readily pardon than censure. The soldier whose breast is ever bared to the shafts of the enemy becomes more interested in the contest and more embittered in his feelings than the camp-follower who lurks in the rear and reaps the rewards of the fight.... Conscious that in the control of the columns of this paper, I have never *intentionally* wounded a good and true man, or endangered a single *genuine* patriot, I can and do scorn to regard the opinions and sentiments of all others, as I loathe their listlessness and treachery.

At this point, the retiring editor’s memory became even more selective. He claimed to have attempted to “steer with perfect impartiality amid the various interests, prejudices and preferences, secular and sectarian, that divide our people here” in Perry County, but the contention was misleading. All the same, Mordecai M. Cooke would have been proud of his kinsman, for he was as hidebound as H. Clay and had no problem

⁹⁹ 29 May 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* “Valedictory.” Months later, a local weekly announced that Cooke moved to Texas, but it did not state why he left Alabama or what he was doing in the “Lone Star State.”

with insulting religious “deviants,” such as Mormons, or “the diabolic trinity” constituted by Scalawags, Carpetbaggers, and black Republicans.¹⁰⁰

Before closing, H. C. Cooke expressed how confident he was that Heidt would continue to promote conservatism in his absence. In fact, Cooke was confident that his successor, Major Frank W. Hawks, would be a better defender of conservative ideals than he had been. Still, Cooke regretted leaving Perry County because its beloved residents had patronized and encouraged him in the various wars that had been waged against southern conservatives for more than a decade. Although he was moving away from the county, Cooke swore that the memory of its valiant soldiers and citizens would remain close to his heart as he entered into his new, unmentioned duties.¹⁰¹

The 1873 Municipal Elections

As H. C. Cooke prepared to leave Alabama, Marion politicians and voters prepared for the February 1873 municipal elections. Because mayoral candidates Shivers and Kelly were two respected Democrats, there was little campaigning done in Perry’s county seat, particularly among white voters. Instead, most electioneering was aimed at getting the town’s black electors to cast ballots for their favorite candidates, only one of whom was black. Replicating earlier assertions, local Democrats called the 1873 contest one of the most orderly races in the town’s history.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. (first quote); Trelease, *White Terror*, xxv (second and third quotes); 29 May 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* “Valedictory” (fourth quotes). At the time that H. C. Cooke left *The Marion Commonwealth*, Mordecai M. Cooke was the junior editor of the *Montgomery Advertiser and Mail*.

¹⁰¹ Cf. 29 May 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* “Valedictory. For Hawks’ appointment, see “To the Public,” *ibid.*

¹⁰² See “The Election Last Tuesday,” *ibid.*, 6 March 1873.

This was one way to look at the election, but it was hardly the only way to look at it. Many persons did not take part in the local race because Marion was a Democratic citadel in 1873, meaning the outcomes of the local elections of that year were largely predetermined. Unless fraud occurred, white voters forgot the date of the elections, or God and the federal government intervened, a white Democrat was likely to be elected to every major political office in the town. Thus, fewer than 500 people voted.

The outcomes were not surprising. Shivers defeated Kelly by sixty-one votes. Councilmen Elias Dunkin, J. G. L. Huey, Peter T. Hurt, Leopold Loeb, Lorenzo Love, and John G. Poole were Democrats. Republicans William Smith and Thomas Speed, the town's only black office seeker in 1873, received fewer votes than any other candidate, including Heidt's "clever Israelitish friend," Leopold Loeb (see Appendix U).¹⁰³

Marion's municipal elections proved at least one thing: regardless of how many Perry County towns and rural communities voted Republican, its quaint county seat was Democratic country when it came to local elections. But this fact did not stop white Republicans such as Joseph Speed from making repeated efforts to rouse support or encourage black men to vote. Before the election, Speed had supposedly hurried from Montgomery "like Saul of Tarsus, 'breathing out threatenings and slaughter,'" only to discover that he no longer carried the black vote in his back pocket. Instead of following Speed's orders, black voters acted independently, casting ballots for people whom they chose rather than for people who had been chosen for them. According to one delighted

¹⁰³ "Returned," *Marion Commonwealth*, 20 August 1874. Apparently, Dunkin was a "late departure," or recently converted Democrat, because he had been a Republican. For a brief discussion of the councilmen's installation, see "The Convention," *ibid.*, 6 March 1873.

male Marionite, the black voters' actions proved that they were beginning to realize that Republicans were treating them like slaves rather than freemen.¹⁰⁴

It should be remembered that no more than 500 people decided the outcomes of Marion's 1873 municipal races. In all likelihood, less than 160 of them were black. But to Democrats and other conservatives, the number and ethnicity of the persons who went to the polls did not matter. Low voter turnout might not have been beautiful, but victory was "just as s-w-e-e-t." Now, if Democrats could only convince a few thousand white moderates, liberals, and additional blacks to back their platforms, they could help do something about the purportedly sour apples, jackasses, and skunks that were in the state legislature.¹⁰⁵

The Death of A. B. Moore and Biracial Initiatives

The spring 1873 death of A. B. Moore, one of Alabama's most revered citizens and the only governor that Perry County had ever produced, interrupted the Democrats' pontificating. For a brief moment, they and Republicans put their animosities aside to recognize Moore's memory. Legislators Curtis and Terrell led the way. Curtis offered a resolution authorizing the state senate to adjourn at 10:25 AM on 11 April 1873 in honor of the deceased. Terrell amended the resolution to provide a three-man committee enough time to draft a proper proclamation honoring Moore, a one-time secessionist and lifelong Presbyterian who had supported black education following the Civil War. After considerable discussion by Senators Cooper and Hamilton, who praised Moore for his

¹⁰⁴ "The Election Last Tuesday."

¹⁰⁵ "Something Handsome and Sweet," *Marion Commonwealth*, 6 March 1873.

unyielding service to the state, Curtis, Hamilton, and Terrell were appointed to the ad hoc committee.¹⁰⁶

As Moore's resolution committee met, House members passed a bill repealing Superintendent Speed's bill that forbade the state government from employing public schoolteachers until they could be paid properly. Amidst a financial depression, the state government did not have the money to pay new hires, and legislators did not want to anger their constituents by raising taxes. Back in Perry County, black Baptists continued their self-help drive, provoking a group of moderate whites to congratulate them for being committed to black educational, political, religious, and social uplift. The ex-slaves' effort, the whites said, was "a thing very commendable and praiseworthy in...these *chosen men of God, carved in ebony*."¹⁰⁷

A number of white parishioners had less praise for Thomas Steward, one of the Black Belt's most ardent white supporters of universal equality. Martin T. Sumner—a Howard College alumnus, Democrat, and county surveyor—said that Steward sold at least eight acres of land in Marion's southernmost sector that did not belong to him. Supposedly, the eight acres at question belonged to James Francis Bailey—a Marion lawyer, Mexican War veteran, former state legislator, delegate to the secession convention, member of the Confederate Committee on Military Affairs, and Perry County probate judge—or one of his relatives. As it turned out, the land was less than four acres, and it was leased, not sold, to local freedmen for \$60 per acre. Sumner

¹⁰⁶ "Honors to Ex-Gov. A. B. Moore," *ibid.* See, for example, "Ex-Governor A. B. Moore," *ibid.* Cf. Brewer, *Alabama*, 491; DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*, 191.

¹⁰⁷ E. C. Morris, "Negro Baptists—Retrospective and Prospective," in *Sermons, Addresses and Reminiscences and Important Correspondence, With a Picture Gallery of Eminent Ministers and Scholars* (Nashville: National Baptist Publishing Board, 1901), 69. See "Alabama Legislature," *Marion Commonwealth*, 17 April 1873. Cf. 20 March 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Second Baptist Church"; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 37; "The 2d Baptist Church."

probably knew this, but he continued to criticize Steward because, worse than anything else, Steward had co-founded a black school in Marion that white taxpayers were forced to support and backed Charles Sumner's civil-rights bill.¹⁰⁸

Conclusion

For the thousands of people who had lived in Perry County during the early 1870s, the period had brought about sweeping changes. The federal government had passed two Force Acts that Alabama lawmakers had later unconstitutionally repealed, and former governor Moore had died. In the commercial sector, forty-plus businesses had waned and rebounded, and planters and laborers alike had braved several droughts and floods, a debilitating financial depression, and other natural and man-made disasters. A predominately black labor union had been founded in Marion, and local educators had continued to train and graduate exceptional students despite sizeable obstacles.¹⁰⁹

As important as these occurrences were, the most significant challenges that Perry Countians had faced during the early 1870s had been political and racial. In 1872, Alexander Curtis had come close to being nominated for Congress, but several influential Republicans had sabotaged his campaign. Consequently, Charles Hays had returned to Capitol Hill. In spite of persistent racial strife, Republicans had also been successful in local and statewide races. Numerous Perry County Republicans had been elected to local office in November 1872 and February 1873. At the state level, David Lewis had been elected governor, and Joseph Speed had been elected superintendent of education.

¹⁰⁸ See "A County Surveyor," *Marion Commonwealth*, 22 August 1872. See also "Poor Mister Sthoward," *ibid.*, 24 April 1873. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, especially 136-138, 182.

¹⁰⁹ Another potential mishap was mentioned in "An Accident," *ibid.*, 30 May 1872.

As 1874 approached, Perry County conservatives became worried about the fourth congressional district. Congressman Hays had managed to remain in Congress since 1869, and it did not seem as if any Democrat could garner enough support to unseat him. Without removing Hays and other Republicans from Congress, local Democrats knew that it was virtually impossible to make any headway in curtailing the various social-equality initiatives that were being developed at the national level. For that reason alone, it was extremely important for all Black Belt Democrats to end their lethargy, wrote one Perry County partisan. In his opinion, the state could not afford to adhere to “Micawber’s philosophy of ‘waiting for something to turn up.’ Get up and go at it” had to be the rallying cry to which true white patriots responded. Only time, of course, could tell whether they would answer the call.¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ “Grange Meeting at Newbern.”

**“CONFLICT AND CONQUEST”: PERRY COUNTY DURING THE
“DEMOCRATIC INTERLUDE,” 1872-1874, PART II**

“The pending election is pregnant with the most important consequences to the weal or woe of Alabama. It is a time for men to reflect and to think, rather than to give way to the impulsion of blind passions.... The direct effort of the policy now pursued by the Bourbon Democracy is to plunge the people of Alabama into a war of races.... The Republican party comes before you upon a sound platform, made entirely of heart timber.”

—“A Union Man,” 1874¹

“There are but two parties in the field, the Negro party and the white man’s party. There is no middle ground between the two—to one or the other, every man must belong. He who isn’t for us is against us.... Nigger or no nigger is the question.”

—The *Florence Times Journal*²

H. C. Cooke left Alabama on the eve of one of the most important elections in the state’s history. Before departing the *Marion Commonwealth*, he discussed the central issues in the 1874 campaign: race and class. Racial polarization continued, defining much of Perry County’s political culture. But growing agricultural problems, falling cotton prices, rising tenancy rates, and deepening economic divisions between black and white voters afforded new possibilities for a biracial political process based on class rather than race. Unfortunately, white racism swept in with agrarian reform, stifling the possibility of a new kind of class-based politics.

¹ “To the White Men of Alabama,” *Alabama State Journal*, 6 and 29 September 1874, hereinafter cited as “To the White Men of Alabama.”

² *Florence Times*, 30 September 1874.

Continuing Racial Divisions

The Civil War and Reconstruction were two of the main reasons biracial cooperation turned into partisan racism. No major battles had taken place in Perry County during the war, but many of its most prominent white citizens had served the defeated Confederacy. By 1874, most of them had come to realize that complete prewar normalcy was unattainable, but that did not stop them from attempting to create economic, political, and social orders that mirrored those of the Antebellum period. As one male conservative saw it, the Civil War and Reconstruction had given birth to a mandatory conquest, and the reinvigorated Democratic and Conservative party was the only body that could lead it:

The Democrats of the South are abused, vilified, derided, and despised for not changing the course and endeavoring to make terms of peace and reconciliation with Gen. Grant and the powers that be.... The Southern States were paralyzed by the war, yet with their recuperative energy and the application of their intelligence they might have set themselves up again, if left unobstructed and free to manage their own affairs.³

This is not what had happened after 1865. Instead of letting Southerners be, purportedly intrusive outsiders had descended on the region and disrupted the natural order of things by placing the bottom rail on top, according to numerous Democrats and, rather curiously, Charles Hays, the white Republican congressman from Alabama's majority black fourth congressional district. Worse, so-called political agitators had accomplished this task through deception, equivocation, exaggeration, or just plain,

³ "The South's Strange Situation," *Marion Commonwealth*, 14 August 1873; "Republicanism North and Radicalism South," *ibid.*, 31 July 1873, hereinafter cited as "Republicanism North and Radicalism South." Cf. Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, 56, 110; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 24-25.

old-fashioned lying; of which there was far too much for the owners of the Democratic-leaning *Exchange*'s liking.⁴

According to the *Exchange* and other conservative newspapers, white radicals had repeatedly told black Alabamians that white people desired to re-enslave them when any right-minded individual knew the state's white population had not supported any form of neo-slavery. To support the contention, W. Roberts reminded his *Shelby County Guide* readers that white Alabamians had not murmured a single word when black people were emancipated. White contestation, wrote Roberts, did not begin until blacks became lawmakers.⁵

Statements about Negro rule filled the pages of local newspapers and were shouted from the steps of local courthouses. Leading politicians included them in Saturday evening campaign speeches, and leading preachers made them the topics of Sunday morning sermons. Congressman Hays even made the largely mythical idea of Negro rule a focus of his 1871 congressional testimony before the Committee on Ku-Klux Outrages.⁶

In Perry County, few persons communicated how wrong it was for black persons to hold prominent political offices or other important positions with greater ferocity or regularity than the publishers of the *Marion Commonwealth*. After their brief flirtation with biracially reforming Alabama agriculture, Heidt and Hawks returned to more familiar partisan ground, claiming that white Southerners could resolve any economic,

⁴ Litwack, *Been in the Storm so Long*, 102. See "The Curse of the Hour," *Marion Commonwealth*, 10 July 1873, quoting *Exchange*, [n.d.]. Cf. Hays' 2 June 1871 testimony to the Committee on Ku-Klux Outrages in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 15, 23.

⁵ See "Resolution of the State Convention," *Shelby County Guide*, 28 August 1868. Cf. Goodrich and Goodrich, 241; "Republicanism North and Radicalism South."

⁶ Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 23.

political, racial, or social issue that arose if they were left alone. Because white Southerners understood African Americans' aptitudes and temperaments better than any other persons, including African Americans themselves, Heidt and Hawks believed southern whites could devise a scheme that would protect the interests of everyone living in the South without violating anyone's human rights or legal privileges. Instead, troublesome foreigners intervened. In doing so, they contributed significantly to the general ruin of the region. The following editorial was typical:

If the majority of the [lawmakers] of these United States were negroes..., how long would the people of the United States stand such a mockery of a government? Not a day. But the mockery is forced upon a portion of the people of the South, and we are called disloyal and traitorous and unpatriotic because we don't love the flag that sanctions...this monstrous travesty and because we don't shout hallelujahs in its praise as the best government the world ever saw.⁷

Racial Politics, 1873-1874

The last statement appeared in an August 1873 *Marion Commonwealth*. During the same month, its owner and editor printed an article entitled "Parties Based on Race" in which they showed how hypocritical, paradoxical, or shrewd they could be. According to the two Democrats, it was unfortunate that some people had allowed race to become such a major sociopolitical and economic wedge issue in Alabama. After making it clear that they did not wish to discuss the possible motives of people who favored an all-white Democratic party or censure them for feeling that way, Heidt and Hawks discussed what they considered the most pressing issue facing Alabamians: "political tranquility," or "an

⁷ "The South's Strange Situation." Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 29; "Republicanism North and Radicalism South."

avoidance of irritating measures productive of Race antagonism.” Reinforcing some of the ideas that Heidt and M. M. Cooke had made years earlier, Hawks predicted that Democratic victories during the November 1874 elections would restore much-needed peace.⁸

Congressman Hays did not agree with the men’s hypothesis about Democratic victories, but he did think that race-based disturbances would cease in Alabama if the federal government would let existing laws and history’s greatest healer, time, take their course. James Lawrence Pugh—an antebellum congressman, ex-Confederate, United States congressman, and Democrat from Barbour County—went one step further. The “Great Bronze Battering Ram” (Pugh) was convinced that it was useless to even discuss racial problems. Only time, he said, could solve them—if, that is, they could be solved. Such contentions provoked one northern observer to ask Hays whether members of every political party and organization, including white Republicans and black Loyal Leaguers, could speak freely in Alabama without having to worry about being interrupted or assaulted. In a terse statement, Hays swore that no Republican, especially a white one, could make a speech in the state without causing a riot.⁹

Hays believed proscription had been largely responsible for the political disorganization and violence that had taken place in Alabama following America’s Armageddon. A large number of pertinacious ex-Confederates and other potential officials had refused to accept the conditions for holding office that the federal government had established during and in the wake of the Civil War. In doing so, they

⁸ “Parties Based on Race,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 21 August 1873, hereinafter cited as “Parties based on Race.” See “Correct View,” *ibid.*, 19 August 1869.

⁹ Brewer, *Alabama*, 129. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 20; Pugh, *Speech of Hon. James L. Pugh*, 7; Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 266-267.

provided the black and the relatively few northern white politicians who had remained in Alabama after 1865 a perfect opportunity to hold such positions. Now, Hays noted, former Confederates and others ousted from office were upset because they could not occupy them and therefore authorized, participated in, or did nothing to stop the violent acts that were being carried out against the people who could hold important political positions.¹⁰

Heidt was in partial concurrence with the congressman, whose views he typically opposed. Excoriating the *Montgomery Daily Advertiser and Mail* (“the voice of Alabama’s plantation elite since the Civil War”), Heidt said the capitol-city newspaper liked to emphasize how black men dominated Louisiana and South Carolina politics during Reconstruction. Evidently, the papers’ proprietors and staff, including former *Marion Commonwealth* editor M. M. Cooke, forgot that Negro domination in those two states had been caused by racial antagonism, recounted Heidt.¹¹

Hawks also thought that it was better to unify Alabamians rather than to use race to divide them. The journalist was sure that downplaying skin color, improved organization, and eliminating party conventions would help solve the Democrats’ internal problems. Like many voters, he felt that conventions produced candidates who did not reflect the will of most voters; rather, nominees were chosen to convey and carry out the

¹⁰ See, for example, “Democracy to Emigrants,” *Alabama State Journal*, 20 October 1874. Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 35; DuBose, *Alabama’s Tragic Decade*, 249; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*; Goodrich and Goodrich, “Swallowing the Dog,” chap. 15 in *The Day Dixie Died*, 137-146; Wiggins, *Scalawag*, especially 128-153.

¹¹ Samuel Webb, “Hugo Black, Bibb Graves, and the Ku Klux Klan: A Revisionist View of the 1926 Alabama Democratic Primary,” *Alabama Review* 57 (October 2004): 244. See “White Man’s Party,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 21 August 1873. Cf. “Parties Based on Race.” Historians have recently noted that the myths about blacks and white planters dominating Reconstruction lasted well into the twentieth century. Cf. Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 11; Webb, *op. cit.*; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, 39.

desires of the coffee- and tea-drinking professional politicians who selected them. As a result, the wrong candidates were routinely foisted on the rest of the party. Without popular support, they were defeated. During the 1872 campaign, for example, the state Democratic convention had chosen candidates who rendered “Alabama Financially Bankrupt by Black Rule!”¹²

The Plight of Agriculture

Hawks and Heidt did find some hopeful signs. Central among them was the rekindled spirit of local farmers. Like most agrarians, Perry County agriculturists were proud of their livelihoods and romanticized their virtues. Unlike other professions, farming’s intrinsic dignity could be passed on from one generation to another; furthermore, there was an inherent manliness and a noble independence in farm boys that was rarely found in their urban contemporaries. The city boy might have been “quicker with his mother tongue, but sound him and you will find that he has not the depth of mind or the manliness of character that are generally possessed by the hardy country boy,” avowed one agrarian. Still, one fact remained: neither the robust farm boy nor his dignified father had made much headway in organizing local agrarians.¹³

Statewide organizations such as the Alabama Mechanical and Agricultural Society encouraged cooperation between certain laboring classes. In January 1871, the Society publicized a planters’ conference that was scheduled to be held in the state

¹² “Financially Bankrupt by Black Rule,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 7 August 1873. See “The Reform Party,” *ibid.*, 17 July 1873, hereinafter cited as “The Reform Party.” See also “Party Conventions,” *ibid.*, 4 September 1873. Cf. Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 33, 34.

¹³ “Farmers’ Boys,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 15 August 1872. Hugh Davis had a decidedly different opinion of farming. According to him, the occupation was “a fine business for a man [who could not] do anything else.” Hugh Davis, quoted in Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 16.

capitol on 8 February. Organizers hoped the state's most successful white planters would attend. If they could not make it, then important community leaders were expected to come to the meeting. Colonel Samuel G. Reid—the Society's president, one-time owner of the *Marion Commonwealth*, and relative of Perry County's own George ("the Medical Purveyor of Alabama") Reid—issued the notice, but few local planters or influential men responded to it.¹⁴

Looking back, it seems ironic that President Reid had significant ties to Perry County, but its agriculturists were slow to respond to his request. How that could have happened was one of the greatest questions of the day, according to some residents. An even greater question was what the county's farmers, merchants, and other concerned parties were willing to do to conquer the economic conflict that had plagued the county since 1865 and recover the lost fortunes that had made Old Perry great.¹⁵

Several persons were confident that this question could be answered in one word, "*agriculture*. We do not mean agriculture as now understood and followed," they explained, "but a *wiser, more intelligent*, more practical system of tilling the soil. It is true this is not the South's only resource, but the great Creator has unmistakably stamped this region of ours as peculiarly an agricultural Eden." In addition to the South's land and water resources, people knew that its human resources were critical to the region's on-going financial reconstruction. Because money was scarce and making a good living

¹⁴ "Teeth," *Marion Commonwealth*, 24 July 1873. See *Montgomery Advertiser*, 20 September 1874. See also *Alabama State Journal*, 22 September 1874. Before and during the Civil War, Samuel Reid had been associated with the *Montgomery Advertiser*. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 135-136; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 16.

¹⁵ See "The South's Financial Reconstruction," *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 June 1873, hereinafter cited as "The South's Financial Reconstruction." See also "Conflict and Conquest," *ibid.*, 10 July 1873, hereinafter cited as "Conflict and Conquest." Cf. "The Ku Klux"; "Remember Old Perry, Boys"; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 118.

honestly was trying almost everyone's souls in 1873, commentators throughout Perry County praised common laborers for working as hard as they could to help restore the prosperity for which the county, state, and region had once been known. Still, more could be done. For starters, work could be conducted in a more orderly and efficient fashion, proposed a handful of business-minded farmers.¹⁶

A number of local agrarians were confident that the Patrons of Husbandry, or the Grange, could help. But until a countywide Grange could be established, some of the county's most prominent farmers thought it was a good idea to applaud the diligent blacks who had shunned unionism and to create the local societies for which some people had called since 1869. Uniontown farmers spearheaded the latter process, followed by those at Perryville in eastern Perry County. There, on 9 August 1873, organizers finalized some of the plans that had been made at an informal meeting held on 26 July.¹⁷

Reflecting the dominance of the old plantation élite on 1870s Alabama agrarianism, members of the new organization named Colonel Josiah Alexander acting chairman and Dr. James F. Walker acting secretary. When formal elections were held later, Robert D. Sturdivant—a former slave owner, state representative, and Perry County probate judge—was elected president. Colonel Alexander was named first vice president, and future Perry County superintendent of education Joseph Morton became second vice president.¹⁸

¹⁶ "The South's Financial Reconstruction." See, for example, "Perry County and her People," *Marion Commonwealth*, 31 July 1873.

¹⁷ See "The Power of the South," *Marion Commonwealth*, 29 May 1873. See also "Agricultural Societies," *ibid.*, 27 March 1870.

¹⁸ See J. Hugh Le Baron, "Ocmulgee Baptist Church, Slave and Black Freedmen Members, Perry County, Alabama," private record sent to the author via electronic mail, 6 July 2004, hereinafter cited as "Ocmulgee Baptist Church Slave and Free Members." Sturdivant was in the Alabama House from 1865 until 1866. Cf. Brewer, *Alabama*, 499; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 246.

The East Perry Agricultural Club's preamble spelled out how important it was for farmers to embrace scientific management, or efficiency, and crop diversification. They hoped that diversifying crops, rotating soils, applying fertilizers, and the like would help restore the prominence that Alabama's Black Belt had once enjoyed. Promoting agricultural interests through the collection and dissemination of pertinent information, courting northern capitalists and foreign laborers (boosterism), and supporting any other program that might aid the area's agrarian classes were three additional objectives. Members agreed that these and other reforms were definitely needed.¹⁹

The eastern Perry County farmers' club was formed just in time for the upcoming harvest. The busiest part of the season had begun, and cotton was being taken to local markets every other day, according to a Uniontown editorialist named "Dan." Unfortunately, buyers were unable to be as competitive as they had been in previous years because financial hardships were too severe. Local merchants still expected a profitable quarter, but their expectations were unrealistic. Most of the town's farmers were more practical. Barely able to grow half a cotton crop and facing a shortfall in corn, the vast majority of agriculturists anticipated more difficult days, especially for displaced freepersons.²⁰

According to one source, the streets of Perry County were filled with idle or thieving blacks during the winter of 1873. Because the growing season had been less productive than usual, they could not find employment. As a result, several black families were evicted from their homes. A writer from Uniontown swore that the

¹⁹ See "East Perry Agricultural Club," *Marion Commonwealth*, 11 September 1873. Cf. Jordan, "Plantation Management: Scientific Farming," chap. 2 in *Hugh Davis*, 25-46; Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung*, 25.

²⁰ "Dan," letter to the editor, *Marion Commonwealth*, 18 September 1873.

county's wealthiest white citizens wanted to help, but the current financial crisis prevented them from taking action. How, then, could the problem be solved? One white man proposed emigration. Black layabouts could simply leave the county. Another white man encouraged Alabama legislators to enact stricter vagrancy laws to control the local "tramp menace." Into this agricultural crisis, with consequent displacement of many black farm laborers, came E. M. Law, a national Grange deputy and Confederate veteran who traveled to Perry County in September 1873 to organize a countywide order.²¹

A local Grange could be formed with as few as nine charter members. Thirty was the maximum number. In the former case, each person had to be male and at least eighteen years of age. If a chapter were chartered with thirty members, then at least ten of them had to be female. Men paid \$3 for dues and \$4 to be initiated whereas women paid fifty cents and \$2, respectively. Approximately \$15 of that money was used to pay for the paperwork that Grange officials distributed from the organization's national headquarters in Washington, D. C., and for the travel expenses of deputies such as Cushing, Law, and George D. Johnston, a Perry County attorney and war hero.

In a rather contentious appointment, Johnston was named associate deputy of the western region of the Alabama State Grange's precursor, the Masters of Subordinate Granges. A number of individuals thought Johnston's jurisdiction included Baker, Bibb, Greene, Hale, Perry, Shelby, and Tuscaloosa Counties, but Greene, Hale, and Tuscaloosa

²¹ Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 218. See "General Law's Appointments," *Marion Commonwealth*, 25 September 1873. See also "Attention, Grangers," *Marion Commonwealth*, 9 October 1873; Derflo, "Grange Meeting in Newbern," *Marion Commonwealth*, 9 October 1873, hereinafter cited as "Grange Meeting in Newbern"; "What is Best for Them," "More Burglary and Stealing," and "Stealing! Stealing," *Marion Commonwealth*, 16 October 1873; "A Vagrant Law," *Marion Commonwealth*, 6 November 1873. Cf. 6 February 1873 *Marion Commonwealth*; Jackson, "City Founded in 1817 by Pioneer Seeking Home"; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 129-130.

were actually within the territory of another deputy. Thus, to prevent a full-blown controversy, the unnamed official conceded the three counties at question to Johnston, who was promulgating the value of countywide Granges at the time of the concession. Johnston's actions were partly self-serving. Deputies were given an additional five dollars plus living expenses for organizing local and countywide orders.²²

At least one Grange enquirer seemed up to the challenge of forming a Perry County Grange, but he needed a few questions answered before coming aboard. Employing broken English reflective of the inadequate education that he had received in the Black Belt or attempting to deceive whomever read his letter, the farmer sounded off:

They say we must, and I say so too. Well, where's the organ and who is to grind it and where's the tune to grind on it. Them's the question—to which Mr. Editor, if I get across this grease spot on the paper, I'll give you my views. I like them speeches I heard.... Them Grangers of the Patrons of Husbandry, and wifery too, I suppose are the very thing. I like the name—it reminds me of an extinct species of animal.

Continuing to use colloquialisms to discuss the “gospel of efficiency,” the editorialist proclaimed: “It'll do 'em more good than to hear of all the niggers I once owned.... The Freedmen is a failure as a labor-saving machine. A buggy plow costs less and don't eat nor have a dozen little ones to eat with it.” In an interesting postscript, the former slave-owning agrarian asked the editor to correct his grammatical and spelling errors because his daughter usually proofed his papers, but she was attending the Marion Female Seminary.²³

²² See “Geo. D. Johnston” and “Gen'l George D. Johnston's Appointment,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 October 1873, hereinafter cited as “Geo. D. Johnston” and “Gen'l George D. Johnston's Appointment.” Cf. “Attention, Grangers.”

²³ “A Granger,” letter to the editor, *Marion Commonwealth*, 25 September 1873.

That local opinion, which might have come from someone mocking the Grange rather than a potential member, did not conform to the conclusions about black labor held by many southern Grange leaders. Colonel David Wyatt Aiken, a South Carolina member of the national Grange's executive committee, was convinced that no day laborer could compete with an ex-slave, especially with regard to cultivating southern crops. One Alabamian affirmed: "You can make anything of the black people, if they are properly used. They make the best servants, the best carpenters, and blacksmiths. [Blacks] can do anything." White workers, on the other hand, had many wants, and some of them could not be supplied in the South, added Aiken.²⁴

Aiken would have enjoyed other parts of the Perry County penman's editorial as well. The operational efficiency to which the Uniontown writer alluded and the countywide Grange that R. H. Lee and others had discussed creating during the late summer and early fall of 1873 are fitting examples. With the help of Thomas Lowry, a storeowner and bandleader, and W. C. Zimmerman, a well-known Mason, war veteran, and editor, Lee assembled a large group of Black Belt farmers to promote the advantages of having an official Perry County Grange.²⁵

The first official meeting was held on Saturday, 13 September 1873, at the Marion courthouse. Lee was elected acting chairman, Lowry acting secretary. Afterward, Captain Zimmerman gave a spirited speech relative to the necessity and benefits of having a countywide Grange. Because Zimmerman belonged to a similar

²⁴ Albert Patton, quoted in Philip Taft Research Notes on Alabama Labor History, Birmingham, Alabama, Public Library Archives, hereinafter cited as Taft Notes. See D. Wyatt Aiken, "Immigration and Labor," *Marion Commonwealth*, 17 July 1873. See also Claudius H. Pritchard, Jr., *Colonel D. Wyatt Aiken, 1828-1887: South Carolina's Militant Agrarian* (Hampden-Sydney, Va.: C. H. Pritchard, 1970).

²⁵ Together with Jesse B. Shivers and J. W. Taylor, Zimmerman edited the *Howard College Magazine* during 1858-1859. Zimmerman's Masonic participation is mentioned in "Masonic," *Marion Commonwealth*, 16 October 1873.

society that he and other white agrarians had formed in western Perry County (possibly the Uniontown Farmers' Club), the captain believed he was a logical choice to contact General Law about obtaining the materials that were needed to charter an official countywide Grange.²⁶

As delegates discussed Zimmerman's proposal, W. B. Modawell encouraged every man in the audience to scrap the "suicidal plan" of planting only cotton and diversify his or her crops. Though hardly epochal, Modawell's words struck a cord among many of his listeners. One person reminded everyone present that at least twenty percent of the money and other resources that were invested in agriculture—principally, cotton—was ultimately wasted. Another person acknowledged that cotton was still considered king in the Black Belt, but corn was the autocrat.²⁷

After Modawell's speech, B. A. Rush asked each prospective member to come forth and place his or her name on a roster. Shortly thereafter, someone made a motion for the new organization to cooperate with the western Perry County association to which W. C. Zimmerman belonged. (The motion passed, incidentally, without anyone mentioning the East Perry Agricultural Club.) Consequently, Captain Zimmerman was named the joint delegate of the western society to which he belonged and the forthcoming countywide Grange as well as liaison to Deputy Law, as the captain had wished. After attendees agreed to come together a second time on 20 September 1873, the meeting adjourned.

²⁶ See "Grange Meeting," *Marion Commonwealth*, 18 September 1873.

²⁷ William Modawell, quoted in *ibid.* See "Why the South Remains Poor," *ibid.*, 9 October 1873. Cf. 9 October 1873 *Marion Commonwealth*. The wastefulness of southern agriculture is discussed in "Wastefulness of Farmers," *ibid.*, 15 January 1874, hereinafter cited as "Wastefulness of Farmers." Obviously, some statements were not made at the September 1873 meeting, but they are applicable.

Word of the 13 September gathering spread like wildfire. The general reaction to the planned Grange was mixed, but a few Perry County residents were ecstatic. Agreeing with a “Reconstructed Farmer” from Montgomery, one person said the vast majority of local farmers had grown tired of waiting for northern businessmen and the federal government to help them. Others wished to tell politicians that the national farmers’ movement to which the Grange belonged was spreading quicker than a western prairie fire, but several residents were less enthused however. Among the latter group were E. A. Heidt and F. W. Hawks.²⁸

Perhaps it is more accurate to suggest that Marion’s top reporters were more concerned that the Grange was not a panacea for the many problems that farmers faced than outright opponents of the organization. In addition to its banking and cash-credit proposals, the Grangers’ cooperative, or co-op, scheme particularly troubled the conservative newsmen. Whereas some persons considered the co-op plan smart because it would allow farmers to purchase machinery and other necessities from wholesalers, thereby eliminating merchants and other middlemen, the journalists were not sure the strategy would work.²⁹

Hawks and Heidt used an article from the Aberdeen, Mississippi, *Examiner* to spell out their concerns. In the piece, a Grange opponent claimed that anyone who was familiar with the Patrons of Husbandry knew that it was an experiment. And for an experiment to be successful, it had to have a solid foundation, which the cooperative plan

²⁸ See “The Farmers’ Movement—How It is Progressing,” *ibid.*, 16 October 1873. See also *New York Herald*, 7 October 1873; “Agricultural Reconstruction,” *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 6 November 1870. Cf. “Grange Meeting in Newbern.”

²⁹ See “The Farmers and the Grange,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 18 September 1873, hereinafter cited as “The Farmers and the Grange.” See also “Objects of Grangers,” *ibid.*, 20 November 1873. Cf. “Grange Meeting at Newbern.”

would not provide. Setting farmers against merchants would only divide the two classes, who depended on each other for economic survival. Worse, the co-op plan would divide white people at the very moment that they should have been cooperating to prevent black dominance.³⁰

In an attempt to sway large property owners, business people, and Old South champions who disliked outsiders interfering in what they considered local affairs, the Grange critic declared: “God knows we have enough outside pressure against our interests, without seeking to weaken ourselves any further by what we might term internecine strife among property holders.”³¹ After calling to memory certain sociopolitical and military events of the previous decade, the Aberdeen resident argued that creating friction between agrarians and the merchants on whom they depended was a risky undertaking, especially for an organization as young as the Grange. Continuing to summarize the origins of the national order, the Mississippi critic recalled how Oliver H. Kelley and other founders had wanted the organization to be an agent for improved agriculture, but they had not meant for it to hinder the progress of any business class, merchants included. According to the writer, who might have been one of the southern commercialists who would have been hurt by the Grange’s co-op plan, its current members were acting irrationally.³²

In at least one way, the concerned writer and several Grange leaders thought alike. Both parties, for example, called for efficiency. They also supported crop diversification and recognized that farmers were partly responsible for their present

³⁰ Cf. “The Farmers and the Grange.”

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

condition. The anti-Granger simply believed that if an agricultural war had to be waged, then it should have been waged against people who deserved enmity, such as farmers themselves, rather than merchants, middlemen, or other commercialists who had done nothing wrong. Farmers, he said, needed to decrease their cotton production or, at a minimum, improve the soil on which they depended by applying appropriate fertilizers. Farmers also needed to plant clovers, corn, and small grains. Raising their own mules, instead of buying them from commercial stable keepers, was also wise. Continuing to tap into southern white antipathy toward outsiders, the writer professed no ill will toward local agricultural clubs because they could be excellent sources of information, but he doubted the utility of a national organization with a central headquarters as far away as Washington, D. C.³³

The commentator's appropriation of concepts like home rule, localism, and states' rights perfectly complied with the ideologies of certain Old South advocates. Unfortunately for him, not every individual who was interested in the Patrons of Husbandry was opposed to federal assistance or believed capitalists had ordinary farmers' best interest at heart. One Perry County Granger made this clear when he declared that the annals of history were full of evidence that the world's greatest reforms were initially attacked:

Even in this enlightened age, the [moneyed] aristocracy and political demagogues look with jealous eyes upon the grand movement that is now agitating our land.... We are not surprised to hear objections from some and see cold cynical smiles in others, but as the waves of the ocean are not retarded by the rock-bound islet, so will this Farmers' Reform spread all over the United States. [W]e firmly

³³ Ibid.

believe that in the...Granges will [be] chiefly instrumental [in] Alabama's prosperity.³⁴

About the same time that the prophecy was made, Grange convert Frank Hawks announced his temporary departure from the *Marion Commonwealth*. Editor Hawks, future lecturer of the Hale County Grange, did not know how long he would be away from the newspaper, but he did not worry about its survival or its commitment to conservative principles because E. A. Heidt would do an admirable job editing the paper in his stead.³⁵

One of the first letters sent to Editor Heidt during Hawk's absence came from Tiger Fork, Alabama. It was written on 25 October 1873 and addressed labor and the plight of white farmers. After mentioning the purportedly pitiful state of affairs that existed in the Black Belt, the "Southern Patriot" who penned the editorial discussed what to him were the principal reasons local white agrarians were suffering. Contrary to what some people believed, a dearth of labor was not the problem. White planters simply did not have the right kind of labor. Instead of depending almost solely on black field hands, more white workers should have been used.³⁶

Joseph Hodgson agreed with the Perry County writer. In 1869, Hodgson argued that there was no reason white field hands could not grow cotton, but as long as the economy was relatively sound and black labor was cheap, there seemed to be no pressing need among the state's white planters to diversify the workforce. Employing too many black field hands was a disastrous policy, according to Hodgson. As long as white farmers entrusted their fate to black workers, Alabama's Black Belt and the rest of the

³⁴ "A Word to Grangers," *Marion Commonwealth*, 18 September 1873.

³⁵ See "Temporary Respite," *ibid.*, 6 November 1873.

³⁶ "Southern Patriot," letter to the editor, *ibid.*, 6 November 1873, hereinafter cited as "Southern Patriot."

South would continue to decline. Once one of the most celebrated regions in the world, the South had become little more than a wasteland by the winter of 1873, and Southern Patriot knew why: white agriculturists had allowed “the great king Cotton [and] coloreds [to supplant] the Almighty.”³⁷

Southern Patriot asked anyone who did not believe him to ride through the Black Belt. Once there, one would see wealthy planters gathered at local crossroads stores. Some of them would be playing marbles, others telling jokes and chortling loudly. Meanwhile, many black and a few whites would be riding about on underfed horses, shouting hoorays for leading Republicans such as Grant. All the while, weeds would be growing wildly, choking crops. Black vagrants would be wandering about aimlessly or committing crimes. Bridges such as the ones at Pine Creek and Waxahachie (or Waxahatchie) would be in dire need of repair, and a handful of idiots would be calling on Grangers to violate their organization’s constitution by entering politics.³⁸

A number of male Canebrake whites believed any member of their ethnic group who would permit one of those things to happen was not a true friend of the South. Fields needed to be looked after, freepersons needed to be controlled, and the Grange needed to stay out of politics. In Perry County, at least one of the white men’s wishes was fulfilled. During the fall of 1873, forty-eight prisoners were in the county jail. Forty-two of them were black men, five were black women, and one was a white man. A grand-jury report indicated that most of the prisoners had been convicted of

³⁷ “Southern Patriot.” Cf. Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*; Hodgson, *Alabama Manual and Statistical Register*, 28; Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung*, 25.

³⁸ See *Marion Commonwealth*, 16 October 1873, quoting *Rural Carolinian*, [n.d.]. See also “Report of the Grand Jury,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 6 November 1873, hereinafter cited as November 1873 Grand-jury Report; “More Incendiarism,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 8 October 1873, hereinafter cited as “More Incendiarism.” Cf. “More Burglary and Stealing”; “Southern Patriot”; “Stealing! Stealing!”; “A Vagrant Law”; and “What is Best for Them.”

misdemeanors. No doubt, had agricultural and economic circumstances been different, many of the detainees would have been released, but the poor growing season of that year reduced the need for their labor.³⁹

The grand-jury report did not provide the names of the men and women who were incarcerated, but one of them might have been a black man by the name of Lloyd (or Loyd) Fuller. During the first week of October, a white farmer named Isaiah Lowry got into an argument with Fuller, who burned Lowry's barn and destroyed all of his corn and hay. Contemporaneous sources did not reveal the exact reason for the dispute, but it might have resulted from Fuller performing some service for which he was not paid properly. Considering the financial crisis that plagued the nation in 1873, a conflict that might have been resolved easily if the economy were better probably turned vicious within a matter of hours.⁴⁰

Some Perry County citizens were sickened by the racial tensions that the sustained financial depression of the early 1870s seemed to bring on or exacerbate. They were sickened even more by repeated talk about the depression. "Hard times! Hard times—don't talk so much about hard times," advised one white citizen. That, he said, should have been left to the city-dwelling bankers, doctors, lawyers, and life insurance agents who were "afraid of the sunshine." In truth, there was not much sunshine in Perry County during the fall-winter months of 1873, and much of the sun that did shine seemed to be partial to the county's black population. Meanwhile, most whites were experiencing a "remarkably dull time. There is no business of any character to cheer the

³⁹ Cf. November 1873 Grand-jury Report.

⁴⁰ Cf. "More Incendiarism."

mind—no amusement to beguile the lazy hours,” wrote one Uniontown editorialist. “Our little town, once the whirl of business... is now as lifeless as the Dead Sea.”⁴¹

The last statement was made in November 1873 by “K,” a Judson supporter whose statements appeared regularly in the *Marion Commonwealth* even though they were sometimes incorrect. The last comment was representative. While it is true that thousands of Perry Countians were suffering tremendous hardships when the statement was made, it is also true that they, like countless other Alabamians, had always suffered tremendously. The state’s black, female, and financially poor white populations are excellent cases in point. Black people had faced prejudices too numerous to list, and the prevailing cult of domesticity, evangelical mores, and ignorance had significantly restricted what women could and could not do, such as vote. As for financially poor white Alabamians—or, as they were commonly called, “po’ white trash” or “po’ buckra”—pride, a memorable past wherein their skin color had guaranteed them a more prominent place in society than blacks, and the hope that white conservatives would soon retake control of all southern institutions were among the few things that sustained thousands of destitute whites during the depression-ridden 1870s. Their outlooks and optimism were understandable, to some persons commendable; but as one Marion writer was quick to point out, what they and other plain folk really needed was beef, bread, chicken, coffee, ducks, fish, flower, lard, pork, mutton, and lots of money.⁴²

⁴¹ “The Dark Splitting Grange,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 27 November 1873, hereinafter cited as “The Dark Splitting Grange” (first two quotes); “K,” letter to the editor, *ibid.*, 20 November 1873 (last two quotes). A handful of Black Belt writers disagreed. According to one of the state’s Republican weeklies, statistics showed that “times [were] not so dull as many white people...supposed.” “The Times not so Bad,” *Alabama State Journal*, 6 September 1874.

⁴² Pessen, 1123. See Eugene Genovese, “‘Rather be a Nigger than a Poor White Man’: Slave Perceptions of Southern Yeomen and Poor Whites,” in Hans L. Trefousse, ed., *Toward a New View of America: Essays in Honor of Arthur C. Cole* (New York: B. Franklin, 1977), 79-99. See also *I’ll Take my Stand*

The Grange sought to remedy some of the perceived and actual problems that Alabama's white agrarians faced. As one Perry County Granger noted, the organization was designed to elevate, enlighten, and qualify its members for what he saw as their God-given profession, farming. In reality, the Grange did much more.⁴³

The Grange entered Alabama during the early 1870s, but the exact date is a matter of conjecture. Citing the *Journal of Proceedings of the Third Annual Session of the Alabama State Grange*, William Warren Rogers, Sr., maintains that Oliver Kelley received the first inquiry about a statewide Grange from J. H. Barger of Eutaw in 1871. The organization's official debut then came when, later the same year, a Grange deputy from Mississippi helped found eight locals in Pickens and Sanford Counties. The *Wilcox County News and Pacificator* also suggested that the Grange made its way into Alabama circa 187, but historian John B. Clark contended that Alabama's first Grange was not erected until 15 July 1872 in Yorkville. Regardless of which source is correct, it is certain that a statewide Grange was formed on 27 November 1873.⁴⁴

A more formative organization than the agricultural clubs that Alabamians had previously created, the Grange is said to have boasted a state membership of more than

(1930; reprint, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977); Robert R. Moton, *What the Negro Thinks* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran, and Company, 1929); I. A. Newby, "Plain Folk, 'Poor Whites,' and 'White Trash,'" introduction to *Plain Folk in the New South: Social Change and Cultural Persistence, 1880-1915* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 1-19; "Wanted," *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 April 1874; "Democratic Disenfranchisement of Whites and Blacks," *Alabama State Journal*, 20 September 1874; "Democracy Disenfranchising the Poor Whites and Blacks," *Alabama State Journal*, 29 September 1874. Cf. Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, 191; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 11-13; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 186; *History and Hope in the Heart of Dixie*, 179, 211; Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South*; Thornton, *The Southern Nation*.

⁴³ See "What is a Grange?" *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 April 1874, hereinafter cited as "What is a Grange?" See also William Warren Rogers, "Agrarianism in Alabama, 1865-1896" (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina, 1958); "The Alabama State Grange," 104-118. "The Alabama State Grange" can also be found in Wiggins, *From Civil War to Civil Rights in Alabama*, 133-144. Cf. Nordin; Rogers, *The One-Gallused Rebellion*.

⁴⁴ See "News Items," *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 June 1873. See also John B. Clark, *Populism in Alabama* (Auburn, Al.: Auburn Printing Company, 1927). Cf. Rogers, "The Alabama State Grange," 105.

14,000 by the late 1870s. E. M. Law and William H. Chambers, a conservative intellectual from Russell County who had led his graduating class at Emory University, were its most notable statewide leaders. Together, they broadened the Grange's scope to include academics as well as agriculture.⁴⁵

Getting ordinary Alabamians to understand the importance of an academic education was a huge task. Many of them were contemptuous of formal education, preferring more practical schooling, usually in the form of agricultural or vocational training. At times, media made matters worse by downplaying the benefits of classical learning while playing up its alleged corruptive abilities and potential costs. Quoting a Maryland newspaper called the *Comet*, Arthur Bingham's *Alabama State Journal* recounted how many people believed that trying to provide an academic education to every citizen in the state was a foolish endeavor. Recognizing that the vast majority of Alabamians were common laborers and anticipating a similar future for their offspring, several wealthy conservatives asked, "Who desires to have a classical farm hand? Who wants a mechanic versed in the natural sciences?" Other individuals argued that formal schooling was simply a means for Northerners to impose their ways of life on the South and further disrupt the general fabric of the region. As J. L. M. Curry saw it, nothing would satisfy a Northerner more than controlling a white Southerner.⁴⁶

Making ordinary citizens pay taxes to educate Alabama's entire citizenry, especially black persons, was even more nonsensical to a number of prominent

⁴⁵ Cf. Rogers, "The Alabama State Grange," 105, 107. For additional information, see Leroy S. Hodges, "Organizations among the Farmers of Alabama" (master's thesis, University of Alabama, 1922). Cf. Rogers, "Early Agricultural Societies and the Grange Interlude," chap. 3 in *The One Gallused Rebellion*, 56-79.

⁴⁶ "Education for the Masses," *Alabama State Journal*, 1 October 1868. See Jabez Curry Civil War Letter to his Son, SPR 457, ADAH. Cf. Franklin, *Reconstruction*, 107-113; *History of Hope in the Heart of Dixie*, 212-213; McAfee, *Religion, Race, and Reconstruction*, 12.

newspaper owners and editors. Others disagreed. The proprietors of the *Birmingham Independent*, for instance, believed any state tax that would help public education was a sound measure and criticized the state's highest socioeconomic echelons for opposing using taxpayers' money to fund public education. According to the Jefferson County newspapermen, Alabama's wealthiest citizens were indifferent or outright opposed to free schools because they could afford to send their offspring to one of the state's private schools or have them educated elsewhere in the country.⁴⁷

Initially, Grangers recognized the contempt that many Alabamians held for public education and championed privatization. Two independent, industrial, self-sustaining Grange schools were founded in Calhoun and Morgan Counties. Additional institutions were created at De Armanville, Mt. Willing, and Pleasant Valley Church. But when public opinion regarding free schools began to change, Grange leaders began to shift their allegiances and started championing free public schools.⁴⁸

Sometimes, supporting education reform in Alabama meant speaking or writing favorably about a document that thousands of Alabama Democrats abhorred: the 1868 state constitution. Walter Lawrence Bragg and other members of the state Democratic party's executive committee blasted the 1868 code, calling it designed by corrupt officials to "enable 'rich men,' railroad monopolists, and speculators in bonds to plunder all the people of Alabama, poor and rich!" In an equally critical assessment, D. C. and Jourd White, owners of the Democratic-leaning *Moulton Advertiser*, called the 1868 state constitution "the patch work of a pie-bald assembly" of Carpetbaggers, Scalawags, and blacks, but the publishers praised the public school system that was made possible by the

⁴⁷ Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 4-5; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 37, 292.

⁴⁸ See "Grange Schools," *Marion Commonwealth*, 5 February 1874.

code. Anything that could withstand as much criticism as Alabama's public school system had withstood since its 1868 formation must have been perfect, they argued.⁴⁹

The opinions of newspaper editors and owners were extremely important in nineteenth-century Alabama. Realizing this, Grangers used papers as their primary means of expression. Leaders cautioned ordinary members to avoid becoming overly dependent on credit and strongly encouraged nonmembers to join a local or the state order. Some spokespersons ventured so far as to tell prospective members that they had an urgent duty to become involved with the Grange.⁵⁰

The drive was successful, especially in the Black Belt. In Perry County, once staunchly independent farmers began to work in concert with other agrarians and flocked to the organization in droves. Sons came with fathers, mothers with daughters, and husbands with wives. For some persons, the Grange was like a second family, and William H. Chambers, the state's first worthy master, or president, was its patriarch.

During Chambers' tenure, Grangers placed more emphasis on crop diversification and scientific management. At state fairs and other forums at which persons could be educated as well as entertained, paid lecturers told farmers how to make their crop yields more productive by utilizing land and other resources better than they had in previous years. The lecturers also addressed the crop-lien system, sharecropping, and other forms of farm tenancy. Nathaniel Davis, heir to the Beaver Bend estate, and other white Perry Countians regarded tenancy as inferior to wage labor, but wage labor was often infeasible

⁴⁹ 17 July 1875 "Address of the Democratic and Conservative State Executive Committee" (first quote); *Moulton Advertiser*, 11 June 1875 (second quote). For at least one Democrat's activities, read the private communications of Charles Bartlett in the Charles C. Bartlett Papers, 1855-1894, ADAH.

⁵⁰ See "Waning, Weakening, Wanishing," *Marion Commonwealth*, 10 July 1873. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*; Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*; Rogers, "The Alabama State Grange," 106.

during the 1870s because employers did not have enough money to pay workers on a regular basis. With few alternatives, the average agrarian grew increasingly dependent on credit to survive.⁵¹

To keep persons mindful of their ability to break the chains of credit and one of its hardest sidekicks, cotton, national Grange leaders developed an apt slogan: “Corn and Hogs or no Credit.” The pronouncement was needed, but many Alabama farmers proved resistant to change. Thousands of them remained loyal to the Cotton-Credit regime, routinely blaming Jewish middlemen, northern commercialists, or the federal government for their predicament. Seeking a solution, Grangers attempted to form the cooperatives that Hawks and Heidt criticized.⁵²

Despite continuous assaults on the co-op program, numerous Alabama Grangers supported it until the early 1890s, when they concluded that policymakers would not affect any significant change. Then they became Populists—or, more times than not, disgruntled Democrats and Republicans parading as Populists. If Grangers did not “sow [and] nurture the seeds of reform,” wrote A. W. Dillard to Robert McKee, politicians were not going to “push reform beyond a substitution of one party for another.”⁵³

The Grange pushed for reform. This is unarguable. In an era during which separate gender spheres prevailed, Grangers admitted female members—if only because Oliver Kelley’s daughter demanded that women be admitted. Yet, remarkably,

⁵¹ Cf. Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, especially 166-168. Chambers was named worthy master of the Alabama State Grange in late March or early April 1874. See “State Grange Officers,” *ibid.*, 2 April 1874. Cf. Lincoln, “From the Civil War to the End of World War I,” 91. On southern industrialization and crop diversification, see Robert Porter, *Southern Industrial Progress* (Washington, D.C.: Judd and Detweiler, 1891).

⁵² See, for example, *Jacksonville Republican*, 26 October 1873; and Daniel De Leon, “Equality before the Law,” *Daily People*, 28 April 1895.

⁵³ A. W. Dillard to Robert McKee, 1 May 1874, McKee Papers, ADAH.

Alabama's female Grangers were not mere appendages of men. Women were active participants in Grange events, held office, and though kept out of decision-making processes were at least kept in mind when decisions were made. But there was one important catch: each one of the women who participated in Grange activities, who were elected to office, and whose views were taken into consideration when decisions were made was white. Black women, like black men, were largely prohibited from participating in the Alabama State Grange.

As per the policies of the national Grange, no person could be refused membership on account of skin color. But aware of how many white Americans felt about black people and most foreigners, especially in the South, the Grange's national officers agreed to a plan that gave local and state leaders the power to accept or reject all applicants to their respective orders. Although the measure was touted as a way to afford local leaders more control over their organizations and to lessen bureaucracy, the policy was actually little more than a façade that provided narrow-minded whites such as Ryland Randolph, a Tuscaloosa Grange lecturer, the means to decline the applications of black persons and other social minorities without national leaders having to respond to allegations about the Patrons of Husbandry barring people on account of their race or ethnicity.⁵⁴

In lieu of membership, white Grangers often encouraged black persons to join a virtually unknown order called the Council of Laborers. According to a student of the Louisiana Grange, Council leaders tried to extend "the colored race the benefits of trade cooperation and [thus] enable them to improve their moral and intellectual condition."

⁵⁴ See, for example, Sidney H. Kessler, "The Organization of Negroes in the Knights of Labor," in *Black Workers and Organized Labor*, 6-25.

Concurrently, white Grangers could boast that they were doing no less for black people than they were doing for themselves.⁵⁵

Boast is about all that many white Grangers could do. Members of a seemingly integrated organization did not have to worry about being attacked by human and civil-rights activists or by the federal government. In other words, a biracial organization had a better chance of succeeding nationally than an organization whose members seemed to exclude persons because of their skin color. Knowing this, leading white Grangers made it seem as if they were champions of universal equality when, in truth, they were either indifferent or outright opposed to it. Of course, there were some egalitarian members; but, more times than not, prominent white Grangers believed that self-preservation was more important than attempting to settle what they did not consider a national problem, especially given white Southerners' obsession with skin color.

Considering the economic, political, and social climates of postbellum Alabama, it should be of little surprise that the participation of black persons was minimal. Even in the Black Belt, where blacks outnumbered whites as much as nine to one, African American Grangers were few. Grange sources, such as T. J. Cox's *Alabama Grange*, contained few references to specific issues confronting African Americans and even fewer references to African Americans themselves. During club meetings, white Grangers rarely mentioned black people unless there was a labor concern, and white Lowndes County Grangers were known to take corn and cotton from black men as they traveled home or to markets. In nearby Wilcox County, members pledged to never bail a thieving black out of jail, others to never hire a black Republican or allow a black

⁵⁵ Curley Daniel Willis, "The Grange Movement in Louisiana" (master's thesis, Louisiana State University, 1935), 16.

Republican to occupy a home. Nevertheless, supporters praised the social and semi-professional organization for uniting “those of the same calling into one great brotherhood for the protection of all” and for healing “the wounds of the unfortunate.”⁵⁶

Canebrake blacks had innumerable wounds that needed to be healed, but the Grange did little to help them. A number of white people, on the other hand, benefited tremendously. An examination of Perry County’s Granges substantiates this claim.⁵⁷

One of Perry’s first official locals, or dens, was established in the western part of the county. At some point between 20 September and 9 October 1873, W. C. Zimmerman oversaw a meeting in the schoolhouse at which the West Perry Grange was formed. The gathering was a real family affair. Several of its fourteen male and four female charter members were related (see Appendix Va). In coming days, Zimmerman helped establish Granges throughout Perry County. On 11 October 1873, the Hamburg Grange was formed. Like its western Perry County counterpart, the Hamburg order had both male and female officers, and many of them were related (see Appendix Vb).⁵⁸

Zimmerman was not the only active organizer in Perry County during the latter months of 1873. By 20 November 1873, General George Johnston had organized in excess of twenty local Granges. Marion Grange No. 1 was one of the first. On Saturday, 15 November 1873, its members met with some of the county’s most prominent residents at Grange Hall to confer degrees; but as well known and experienced as Curtis, Dozier,

⁵⁶ “What is a Grange?” See “The Grangers and the Excitement in Lowndes,” *Alabama State Journal*, 24 September 1874. See also “The War of the Races...—A Grange Dinner and Forty of the White Leaguers,” *Alabama State Journal*, 22 September 1874. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 288, 318 (footnote 70); Edwards, *Twenty-five Years in the Black Belt*, 111.

⁵⁷ Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 130.

⁵⁸ “West Perry Grange,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 9 October 1873. See “A New Farmers’ Grange,” *ibid.*, 23 October 1873. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 182.

Greene Lewis, and other black organizers were, not one of them was invited to the meeting.⁵⁹

Because of the exclusiveness of the Grange and similar organizations, existing prejudices, and Alabama's financial situation, many black Perry Countians considered leaving the state for Florida via the Montgomery and Eufaula or the Mobile and Girard Railroad. Others contemplated moving to Georgia, Mississippi, or somewhere in the West. A number of white residents harbored similar thoughts. When realized, their departure hurt not only the county's economic and educational institutions but its religious institutions as well.⁶⁰

According to a local minister, the emigration of white Perry Countians depleted the memberships of several Baptist churches outside Marion. At least six churches reportedly lost their pastors. A similar state of affairs existed elsewhere in the county. Wanting to improve their conditions, many Uniontown whites wanted to relocate. K confirmed: "Westward the course of empire takes its way."⁶¹

After a brief discussion of the outward flight of Uniontown residents, the editorialist discussed the town's recently developed Grange. According to him, people expected the organization to do exceptional work because some of the area's most influential white citizens were affiliated with it. The group's president, Robert Christian,

⁵⁹ Additional local Granges were created in the following Perry County towns: Craig's, Dublin, Jericho, Oak Grove, Pinetucky, Pinhook, Radfordsville, and Zion Church. See "Gen. Geo. D. Johnston," *Marion Commonwealth*, 22 January-12 February 1874.

⁶⁰ "Mississippi mania" is discussed in a 1 January 1874 letter to the editor of the *Marion Commonwealth* as well in a 15 January 1874 article entitled "And Still They Go." Florida is mentioned in the 5 February 1874 *Marion Commonwealth*. See "Go West through St. Louis," *Alabama State Journal*, 5 September 1874. See also Vernon L. Wharton, *The Negro in Mississippi, 1865-1890* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947), 107. Cf. Flynt, *Alabama Baptists*, 143; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 21, 28-29 (footnote 63).

⁶¹ "K," 20 November 1873 letter to the editor of the *Marion Commonwealth*.

and other leaders beseeched their white neighbors: “The time has come, Thy chances of escape Grow narrow, and thou cannot make [but] one resolve, Take oath with us and live.”⁶²

As Christian and company courted potential Grangers, a number of townsmen criticized the organization for admitting women. Objectors said a proper lady had no business meddling in non-domestic affairs. *Southern Patriot* countered the claim by reminding detractors that women had ruled over some of the most powerful nations in the world; furthermore, love and harmony could not exist without them. Sadly, *Southern Patriot* had no use for African Americans, male or female.⁶³

Traditionalist white Grangers’ opposition to black membership reflected a broader trend in the South and other parts of the nation. Allowing black people to become official Grangers was tantamount to acknowledging that they were equal to whites and thus worthy of the same voting privileges as white men, equal pay and membership in political parties, land ownership, or any other civil and human right or civil liberty that white people enjoyed. According to Thomas Herndon, a former gubernatorial candidate and “unreconstructed disunionist,” these were ideas that only the “dark, funeral, ghostly and ghastly” phenomenon known as Reconstruction could have conceived. Perry Countians debated such ideas repeatedly during the winter months of 1873, but they did not monopolize public or private discussion. Of equal importance to many residents were

⁶² “K,” letter to the editor, *ibid.*, 11 December 1873.

⁶³ See “*Southern Patriot*,” letter to the editor, *ibid.*, 25 December 1873. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 130.

the management of land and other natural resources, immigration as a labor source, and industrial development.⁶⁴

Industry

According to historian W. David Lewis, many Alabamians pursued their “own indigenous approach to industrial growth” during the Postbellum period, implementing strategies that had been developed before the Civil War. Using the territory that would become Birmingham as a test case, Lewis has shown that one-time slave-holding planters and other white agribusinessmen supported internal improvements, manufacturing, and urban planning throughout the Antebellum and immediate Postbellum periods. Letwin, Weiner, and William Warren Rogers, Jr., have disagreed. According to Letwin, Alabama industrialization was only partly successful because it was too reliant on black convicts and unskilled, poorly paid white wage workers. Weiner believes planters were opposed to industrialization and successfully blocked legislation that would have helped the state industrialize. And in a study on the state capitol, Rogers contends that Montgomerians were generally indifferent toward manufacturing because they were obsessed with cotton.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Sutton S. Scott, *Personal Recollections of Thomas Hord Herndon, with Remarks upon his Life and Character* (Montgomery, Al.: Alabama Historical Society, 1905), 272. See “Democracy Exposed,” *Alabama State Journal*, 26 September 1874. Of the total acreage occupied by farms in Alabama between 1850 and 1880, approximately sixty percent was unimproved, according to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Compendium of the Tenth Census, 1880, Part 1, Population and Agriculture* (Washington: United States Census Office, 1880), 657, hereinafter cited as *The Tenth Census*. For a partial account of industry in Alabama before 1900, see Peter A. Brannon, “Romance of Beginnings of Some Alabama Industries” (address delivered before the American Branch of the Newcomen Society of New England in Mobile, Alabama, 21 March 1939), Pamphlets and Brochures Vertical Files, Subjects, ADAH. See also Alabama Labor Council, *A Short History of Alabama Labor* (Birmingham, Al.: Alabama Labor Council, [n.d.]), 1-2.

⁶⁵ W. David Lewis, *Sloss Furnaces: An Industrial Epic* (Tuscaloosa, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 1994), iv. Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 79-80; Fitzgerald, *Urban*

Historian J. Wayne Flynt concurs with Lewis. To Flynt, southern industrial growth throughout the Antebellum and immediate Postbellum periods was quite impressive, particularly with regard to railroads and textiles, occupations in which black labor was used copiously. Between 1848 and 1860 alone, Alabama chartered twelve cotton mills, fourteen mining companies, thirty-five plank roads, and fifty-nine railroads. Corporations providing banking, insurance, telephone, and other services that were essential to a modern economy also emerged during this period. During the 1850s, for instance, Alabama's railroad mileage quintupled, and its cotton output tripled.⁶⁶

Despite black attempts to leave the cotton fields that they had been forced to work as slaves, white cries to diversify, unpredictable markets, and foreign competition, cotton continued to be Alabama's major crop following the Civil War. One cotton grower had predicted such loyalty as early as 1831:

We say to those who urge [crop diversification,] who made you rulers and judges over us in this matter? We believe ourselves to be the best judges of our own concerns. We have a right to cultivate cotton..., so long as we choose to do so, and we utterly deny the right of manufacturers, with Congress at their backs, to drive us from the pursuits of our choice.⁶⁷

Joseph Hodgson took up where the 1831 commentator left off. By Hodgson's estimations, Alabama cotton growers made more money during 1868-1869 than any year

Emancipation, 10; Letwin, *The Challenge of Interracial Unionism*, 17; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 5-6; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*, passim; Winik, 329.

⁶⁶ W. David Lewis, "The Emergence of Birmingham," citing Robert J. Norrell, "Distant Prosperity: Modernization of Nineteenth-century Alabama" (unpublished paper 1991). See Horace Mann Bond, "Cotton and Steel: Economic Changes in Alabama, 1865-1900," chap. 9 in *Negro Education in Alabama*, 120-134. Cf. Flynt, *Poor but Proud*, 15.

⁶⁷ "A New South and New Industries. Speech of Hon. Charles W. Buckley of Alabama, in the House of Representatives, March 28, 1870, On the Substitution of Yarn for Raw Cotton as an Article of National Export," 8, Alabama Pamphlets Collection, LPR 131, ADAH (first quote); *Hayne's Fourth of July Oration, at Charleston, South Carolina* (Charleston, S.C.: A. E. Miller, 1831), 14 (second quote).

before the war. To support his contention, the analyst showed how Alabama cotton had carried a value of \$24,570,972 during 1846-1847. The next year, its value dropped to \$17,321,317, but it rebounded slightly to \$17,956,200 during 1848-1849. By 1868-1869, the state's cotton crop was worth approximately \$50,000,000, according to Hodgson, who claimed that cotton provided agriculturists excellent incentives.⁶⁸

Hodgson did not consider inflation. Nor did he consider previous market ebbs and flows, which would have provided more accurate data than he offered. Instead, he chose to use a single year, 1868-1869. Likewise, foreign competition affected projections, but Hodgson did not write a single word about that. He concluded, nonetheless, that cotton's positive valuation was a predictable indicator of the state's future prosperity.⁶⁹

Hodgson was only partly correct. Demand for cotton remained strong throughout the nineteenth century, but foreign competitors tended to sell their products cheaper than American Southerners, causing supply to exceed demand and returns to diminish. Attempting to restore the reign of King Cotton, many Alabama agrarians became intimately acquainted with "Prince Credit," tenancy, poverty, and a myriad of other issues.

The state's civic and commercial leaders, large property owners, newspaper publishers, wealthy farmers, and other boosters were also responsible for postwar issues. In historian Glenn Feldman's opinion, they prostituted Alabama in order to develop industry. In Perry County, J. C. Welch, owner of the *Canebrake Herald*, went to great lengths to publicize how much Uniontown and other local communities offered in the

⁶⁸ Cf. Hodgson, *The Alabama Manual and Statistical Register for 1869*, 28.

⁶⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, 6-7.

way of commerce and culture. Located in the center of the Black Belt, Perry County was home to some of the finest agricultural land in the South. The county's educational and religious centers were well attended, and its citizens were known throughout the South for their hospitality and refinement. Also, the climate was excellent. Perry, explained Welch, was not as prone to sudden, unexpected changes in temperature as were places farther north. Even on the hottest summer day, a Uniontown night was remarkably cool.⁷⁰

United States Senator John Tyler Morgan was another Alabama booster. In an 1878 address delivered on Capitol Hill, he revisited several failed attempts to convince white people from the North and the Northwest to move to Alabama's Black Belt. According to Morgan, the people with whom he spoke were enticed by the region's cheap land, but they were afraid of the black people who lived there. Morgan, a reputed Klansman and colonization proponent, believed northern and northwestern whites would not even look at African Americans much less live and vote with them. That being the case, forced immigration or integration would have exacerbated existing economic, political, and social problems in the Black Belt.⁷¹

Hodgson was among a group of Alabamians who disagreed with Senator Morgan. In 1869, Hodgson claimed that there had been no major civil disorders in the state since 1865. He also said that the land was in good condition and that the "wheels of State

⁷⁰ Glenn Feldman, telephone interview with the author, 1 August 2006. See *Canebrake Herald*, 11 August 1887. Cf. 19 June 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Communicated"; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, especially 62; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 25, 115, 125, 138; Washington, *Negro Education not a Failure*.

⁷¹ See *Exercise of Elective Franchise. Speech of Hon. John T. Morgan, of Alabama, in the Senate of the United States, December 17, 1878* (Washington, D.C.: [n.p.,] 1878), 10-11. See also Joseph O. Baylen, "Senator John Tyler Morgan, E. D. Morel, and the Congo Reform Association," *Alabama Review* 15 (April 1962): 129. Cf. Brewer, *Alabama*, 225-226; DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*, 14-15, 161, 258, 292, 337.

government have never ceased to run smoothly.” Such claims, which several Perry Countians also made, were erroneous. Civil disorder had been a common feature of Alabama Reconstruction, and the state government’s wheels, made wobbly by the rough roads on which they rolled, had been patched and plugged several times by 1869. Ignoring these realities, Hodgson invited everyone, especially immigrants and northern businesspersons, to join in Alabama’s destiny by developing the state’s natural resources. These included more than 100 natural resources—excluding cotton—that could be used to make any commercial or industrial enterprise a success. When combined with cotton, however, Alabama’s mineral wealth, its plentiful rivers and streams that could be used to power for factories, pleasant climate for constant and cheap labor, splendid fruit, rich soil, diversified agricultural products, and numerous vineyards made the state one of the most attractive places to live or do business in the nation. As further incentive, Hodgson dubiously swore that Alabamians eschewed unions, were willing to accept low wages, and were working hard to correct the racial and educational issues that the *Canebrake Herald* and Senator Morgan mentioned.⁷²

Hodgson provided excellent inducements to settle in the Black Belt, but relatively few non-Alabamians moved or brought businesses there during the last third of the nineteenth century. Blossoming industrial towns such as Elyton in Jefferson County were more attractive to foreigners and to foreign businesses. Within a short period of

⁷² Cf. Hodgson, *The Alabama Manual and Statistical Register for 1869*, 7, 147. For information about industrialism and at least one of its connections to education, see Kenneth R. Johnson, “Urban Boosterism and Higher Education in the New South: A Case Study,” *Alabama Historical Review* 42 (spring and summer 1980): 40-58. Agrarian-industrialist dissension is explored in James C. Cobb, “Beyond Planters and Industrialists: A New Perspective on the New South,” *Journal of Southern History* 55 (February 1988): 45-68. Cf. Gesner, *Coal and Iron Resources in Alabama*; Johnson, *Cotton Lands*, 8-11; Griffith, 496; McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama*, 168; Feldman, “Labour Repressions in the American South,” 344-345; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 140.

time, it, Anniston, Gadsden, Tuscaloosa, and other parts of the upper Piedmont-Mountain region of the state had helped solidify Alabama's position as one of the most important centers for the production of coal and iron in the nation. Textiles came later.⁷³

Several Perry County citizens applauded the emergence of Elyton and surrounding areas. At the same time, they advised people to remain mindful that exploiting or ignoring one region in order to build up another one was harmful to both areas. To support the contention, a group of Uniontown writers summarized the rise and fall of the Black Belt: "When every town in the mineral belt was booming, much capital was diverted for foreign investment. This money will never return to this section and the farms must be managed so as to recuperate by their own energies."⁷⁴

Black Tenancy and Contract Labor

Oftentimes, farmers' devotion to a single crop made the recuperation difficult. According to Williams Chambers, William Kelley, and William Modawell, nineteenth-century Alabamians' dependence on cotton was a grave error.⁷⁵ Credit and farm tenancy were equally problematic. Advocated initially because thousands of impoverished southern farmers did not have enough money to buy supplies or to pay cash wages, each

⁷³ See, for example, Delos D. Hughes, "A Kentucky Builder in the New South: The M. T. Lewman and Falls City Construction Companies in Alabama, 1897-1915," *Alabama Review* 59 (April 2006): 107-110. Cf. Berney, *Handbook of Alabama*, 1; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 35, 39; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 69; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 8, 78, 109, 122-124, 129, 131, 145, 146, 157, 179; Smith, *The History and Debates of the Convention of the People of Alabama*, 31.

⁷⁴ *The Canebrake Herald*, 11 August 1887. Although the writers mentioned the mountainous Mineral Belt, they undoubtedly meant the Black Belt. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 31; Beverly, *History of Alabama*, 160; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 1-4; DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade* (back-end paper); "The Mineral Region of Alabama."

⁷⁵ Kelley touched on Alabama's numerous, diversified natural resources but concentrated on coal, limestone, and iron. Cf. Kelley, *The South—Its Resources and Wants*, 8. For Modawell's position, cf. 18 September 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Grange Meeting." For an alternate view, cf. Hodgson, *The Alabama Manual and Statistical Register for 1869*, 6-7, 28.

one of these systems would ultimately play a significant role in making the average agrarian dependent on someone else for survival.⁷⁶

Historian John B. Myers does not think that Alabama's black farmers expected sharecropping to re-enslave them. Initially, black "croppers" welcomed tenancy, he says, because it provided them clothing, food, and shelter. Fellow historians Patience Essah, Peter Kolchin, and Gavin Wright think sharecropping also provided blacks a quasi sense of ownership that, on occasion, counterbalanced the previous experience of being owned. Because some black croppers were given up to one-fourth of the crop and did not have to work in gangs or under an overseer, they had a real incentive to work as well as some control of their lives. And for humans who were viewed as mere chattel less than a decade earlier, this "precious margin of freedom signified a tangible improvement over their former status," avers Essah.⁷⁷

Such propositions have been debated for decades. Many historians have contended that the black farmers who embraced sharecropping did so because it seemed to eliminate problems caused by labor contracts, including having to depend on

⁷⁶ See "The New System of Slavery in the South," especially 31-37, in vol. 102, book 97, J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, ADAH. See also Booker T. Washington, *The Negro and his Relations to the Economic Progress of the South. An Address by Booker T. Washington before the Southern Industrial Convention, Huntsville, Alabama, Oct. 12, 1899* (Tuskegee, Al.: Tuskegee Institute Steam Print, 1900); George Washington Cable, "The Southern Struggle for Pure Government," in Arlin Turner, ed., *The Negro Question: A Selection of Writings on Civil Rights in the South* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1968), 212, 230; Louis Harlan, ed., *The Booker T. Washington Papers*, vol. 3 (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1974), 5, 7-9. Cf. Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 35-36, 41; Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, 102.

⁷⁷ Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 50, and Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung* (first quote), 10; Essah, *A House Divided*, 142 (second quote). See Gavin S. Wright, "The Economics and Politics of Slavery and Freedom in the U.S. South," 96-99, and *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy since the Civil War* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), 85-86, 91, 101. Black willingness to take part in the various forms of tenancy is also taken up in Ralph Shlomowitz, "'Bound' or 'Free'? Black Labor in Cotton and Sugarcane Farming, 1865-1880," *Journal of Southern History* 50 (November 1954): 569-596. A summary of Wright and other historians' views can be found in Jay R. Mandle, "Black Economic Entrapment after Emancipation in the United States," in McGlynn and Drescher, *The Meaning of Freedom*, 71-75. Cf. Fitzgerald, *The Union League Movement in the Deep South*, 5 (footnote 7); Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, passim; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 34-36, 38-39, 41-42, 46-47; Myers, "The Freedmen and the Labor Supply," passim.

Freedmen's Bureau and other federal officials to negotiate them. Despite black contestation, government assistance was needed because many black laborers did not have enough financial savvy to negotiate just contracts. Even in Perry, where black literacy was relatively high by comparison to other Alabama counties, there were black persons who were taken advantage of during and immediately following the Civil War.⁷⁸

In 1864, Catherine M. Goldsby and H. P. Hughes were among a group of whites who \$50 per year, or less than \$4 per month, to employ a black man from Marion whose surname was Anderson. Three years earlier, A. P. Johnson had hired out a black boy named Richard for approximately \$6 per month. Anderson's employers were required to provide him a blanket, a hat, two pairs of shoes, two summer suits, and some winter clothes. They were also required to take care of Anderson's medical bills and pay several unexplained taxes before returning him to Marion on the first day of January 1865. In 1866, Rebecca Smith paid \$120 for two "Negro men of first class," two suits, and an acre of cotton. In return, the men agreed to pay Smith fifty cents for any time lost as well as their own medical bills, which Hugh Davis and other local employers had usually paid when a black or white supervisor could not treat a servant's illness.⁷⁹

Smith's first-class blacks included Joe, Mac, and Wash. They and Joe's wife were paid \$60 apiece. Francis, Mason, and Leathy received \$30 each. Smith shelled out another \$30 for Henry's clothes, medical bills, and food as well as \$84 for a servant named Isom and two of his family members, Jane and Fe Lee. Jim, a black man who

⁷⁸ Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 47-49; Fitzgerald, *The Union League Movement in the Deep South*, 104-105; Goodrich and Goodrich, 218.

⁷⁹ Rebecca Smith Agreement, 1866, SPR 73, ADAH. See Perry County, Alabama, Probate Judge Records, Mixed Series, ADAH. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 125; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, 58, 62-63, 78-80, 86-89.

belonged to Michael and Nathan Horn, fared better. In 1864, Jim received two summer suits, a pair of shoes, a blanket, and headgear when he was hired out to John and M. Christopher for twelve months. Another term of the contract obliged the Christophers to pay Jim's medical bills.⁸⁰

In 1869, Franklin Perkins, a black sharecropper, agreed to work the Ramer, Montgomery, lands of a white man named Albert Naftel. For his work, Perkins received an undisclosed amount of money as well as half of the cotton and one-fourth of the corn that he grew. The agreement required Naftel to pay wages only after he had subtracted the Perkins' clothing, medical, and supply costs. The contract did not indicate to what the provisions amounted, but they were probably less than what Naftel charged Perkins.⁸¹

Margaritte Gilmore's 1865 and H. L. Whipple's 1868 labor contracts reflected neo-slavery arrangements more than either one of the forgoing arrangements. On the first day of July 1865, Ms. Gilmore entered into an agreement with Armistead, a Wetumpka black, who solemnly swore to serve his employer faithfully for the rest of his life provided that she pay all expenses associated with having one of his legs amputated and give him the same attention that he had received while enslaved. As for Whipple, he required each one of his sixteen black employees to cheerfully obey all white orders regardless of the status of the individuals who made them. A disobedient worker could be fined. Under a condition that replicated the state's 1852 legal code and Hugh Davis' comprehensive 1862 "System of Farming at Beaver Bend," which required each slave to work continuously until 9 PM each night and to adhere to a strict code of conduct,

⁸⁰ Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 125-126. Leathy might or might not have been one of the servant's names. The writing in the contract is illegible.

⁸¹ A. S. Naftel Freedman's Labor Contract, SPR 476, ADAH.

Gilmore's black workers had to be polite and respectful to white people at all times. They likewise had to be ready to work at sunrise each morning, including Sundays, and render good, faithful service until midday or so. At that time, they were given approximately ninety minutes to feed and water Whipple's livestock. Another term of the contracts stipulated that wages would be reduced for any tool that was damaged or destroyed. There was a related stipulation for lost time. R. M. Robertson, a white doctor from Louisiana or Mississippi who apparently owned property in Marengo County, made a similar agreement with ninety-four illiterate Uniontown blacks; only they received a half-pound of pork per day, a morsel of meal per week, and access to a vegetable garden. Robertson also allowed his workers to have flour, tobacco, and whiskey—but only when necessary.⁸²

The regulations that Commissioner Swayne and other officials issued following the Civil War required employers to pay male fieldworkers between ten and twelve dollars and female fieldworkers between six and ten dollars per month, but several of Whipple's black employees were paid as little as two dollars for the work that they performed. Why the blacks agreed to such conditions is unknown, but at least four of them were probably accustomed to them. Before the war, they had been Whipple's slaves. Others might not have understood the contracts to which they affixed their signatures or were forced to sign them. Such occurrences were common in many parts of Alabama during the Postbellum period. Blacks who lived in the most remote areas of the

⁸² See Margaritte Gilmore, *Contract with Freeman*, SPR 503, ADAH. See also H. L. Whipple, *Freedman's Labor Contract*, 1868, SPR 473, ADAH. Cf. *1852 State Code*; Goodrich and Goodrich, 218, citing Nathaniel Cameron Papers, ADAH; Jordan, *Hugh Davis*, especially 47-58, 95, 97, and "System of Farming at Beaver Bend," 78; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 28-29 (footnote 63); Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 8, citing John W. A. Sanford, *The Code of the City of Montgomery* (Montgomery, Al.: Gaines and Smith, 1861) and Montgomery City Council Minutes (September 1860-December 1866), 4-5; Sellers, *Slavery in Alabama*, 76; Stamp, *The Peculiar Institution*, 192.

state, where formal education was limited, were particularly hard pressed to get a just contract. In these places, black sharecroppers, who constituted the bottom rung of tenant farmers, were constantly open to the dirty dealings of “marauding ruffians,” reported Swayne.⁸³

It did not take black people long to figure out that sharecropping, the crop-lien system of farming, and similar schemes made them little more than what Kolchin calls “free plantation labor.” Nonetheless, countless blacks were forced to endure these conditions because they had few alternatives. Public land was reasonably priced following the Civil War, but it was scarce. Some private land was available, but relatively few white landholders were willing to part with it if prospective buyers were black. National Freedmen’s Bureau Commissioner O. O. Howard intended to rent abandoned or confiscated land to black people, but he was forced to abandon the plan after President Johnson intervened.⁸⁴

The Southern Homestead Act of 1866 was also of little use to black Alabamians, especially in the Black Belt. Via the act, public land in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi was made available to families regardless of their race or previous condition of servitude. Each family was given eighty acres, but Alabamians

⁸³ *Bureau of Refugees and Freedmen, Report of the Assistant Commissioner of Alabama, 1866*, 6. See “Memorandum of a Contract,” 1 January 1867, in *Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Alabama, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870, Roll 13: Letters Received, 1867, S-Z* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1969). Cf. Alvord, *First Semi-Annual Report on Schools and Finances of Freedmen, January 1, 1866*, 15; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 117; Lincoln, “From the Civil War to the End of World War I,” 91; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 40; Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung*. A few men earned as much as \$15 per month.

⁸⁴ Kolchin, “Free Plantation Labor,” chap. 2 in *First Freedom*, 30-55. See Martin Abbott, “Free Land, Free Labor, and the Freedman’s Bureau,” *Agricultural History* 30 (1956): 150-156. See also La Wanda Cox, “The Promise of Land for the Freedmen,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 45 (1958): 413-440. Cf. Bond, “Forty Acres and a Mule”; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 50-51, 55; Foner, *Reconstruction*, 409; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 13, 113, 116-117, 190; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 132, 134-135; Myers, “The Freedmen and the Labor Supply,” 101; Wright, “The Economics and Politics of Slavery and Freedom in the U.S. South,” 94.

received little of it because their state had little public land to give. Relatively few acres were abandoned, and most of them were not fit for farming. In all, 16,284 Alabamians applied for homestead grants, but only 6,293 titles were granted. As a result, the vast majority of land in the state remained in the hands of its former owners. Indeed, and contrary to what the Republican *Daily State Sentinel* contended, most of Alabama's postbellum black citizens were landless, semi-nomadic tenant farmers trapped in a peonage-like system of servitude that kept them tied to land they would never own, indebted, and utterly frustrated. But, when juxtaposed to their situation, the average white farmer did not fare much better.⁸⁵

Circumstance provoked agriculturists to turn to local professional, political, and social organizations for help. When they proved ineffectual, farmers appealed to the state government. When those attempts failed, Alabama's independent, prideful, sometimes stubborn agrarians were forced to accept assistance from once unsolicited and unappreciated sources: foreign groups dedicated to social and economic reform, such as the Grange and later the Agricultural Wheel. Unfortunately, skin color kept most blacks from participating in these and similar organizations, so African Americans formed their own local, state, regional, and national organizations. The Colored National Labor Union and the Southern States Convention of Colored Men were two of them. The Perry County Labor Union was another one.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Cf. Alexander, foreword to *Preface to Peasantry*, xlv-xlv; Bond, "Cotton and Steel"; *History of Hope in the Heart of Dixie*, 14; Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung*, 25. A few black Alabamians were able to use the Southern Homestead Act to build schoolhouses. See *Daily State Sentinel*, 12 March 1868. Cf. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 137-140; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 2.

⁸⁶ The economics-oriented Colored National Labor Union and the Southern States Convention of Colored Men, whose leaders stressed civil rights and encouraged political activism, seem to have merged on 18 October 1871 at a meeting held in Columbia, South Carolina. The politically neutral bylaws of the former organization were adopted, but leaders of the combined organization soon found themselves delving into

Social and Racial Divisions and the 1874 Elections

The formation of the Perry County Labor Union symbolized how difficult it was for local whites and blacks to completely erase the color line. An equally symbolic incident took place on Sunday, 11 January 1874. That day, while a Howard College cadet walked home from a Marion church, he and a black boy of the same denomination began to jostle for space on the walkway. A scuffle commenced, and the Howard student put the “small frying size negro...in a condition to use about 25 cents worth of sticking plaster on his head,” according to one report. Evidently, the golden rule had not been the focus of that evening’s church service.⁸⁷

The following morning, the young Baptists appeared before Justice-Mayor Shivers to explain what had happened. The cadet told Shivers that the fight began when the black boy tried to shove him off the sidewalk. Contemporaneous reports did not indicate how the black youth responded to the claim, but it is unlikely that he admitted any wrongdoing. As William Blackford, Joseph Gill, Charles Hays, Carl Schurz, and innumerable other sources noted, insolence—a crime with which only black people could be charged—was rare.⁸⁸

politics. No political test was required to become a member of the union, but leading members felt as if they had a moral obligation to support the Republican party. See William Warren Rogers, “Agrarianism in Alabama, 1865-1896” and “The Alabama State Grange.” (“The Alabama State Grange” can also be found in Wiggins, *From Civil War to Civil Rights in Alabama*, 133-144.) See also Paul Horton, “Testing the Limits of Class Politics in Postbellum Alabama: Agrarian Radicalism in Lawrence County,” *Journal of Southern History* 57 (February 1991): 63-84. Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 73; Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker*, 43; Nordin; Rogers, *The One-Gallused Rebellion*.

⁸⁷ “Lively,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 15 January 1874.

⁸⁸ See “Report on the Condition of the South,” *Senate Executive Documents*, 39th Congress, 1st sess., No. 2, 1865, 28-31. Cf. Foner, *Reconstruction*, 149; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 38, 45; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 2, 856, 1318, and vol. 3, 1836; Trelease, *White Terror*, xviii. For a different view and one notable exception, cf. Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, especially 153-155; Goodrich and

After reviewing the testimony of each witness, Shivers decided that the black boy had indeed caused the fracas and fined him \$10. Many white people were delighted. A black person, they said, had no right to violate a white person in any way. That both boys were Baptists did not matter. As it turned out, the whites' joy was short lived.

One month after the Howard student beat the African American youth, a local newspaper carried a story that made the blood of white conservatives throughout Perry County boil. George W. Brown, a white Democrat and five-year mail agent of the Alabama Central or the Selma and Meridian Railroad, had been fired. His removal was bad enough to the conservatives, but his replacement, Greene Lewis, made the situation even worse. A black man was replacing a white, and Congressman Hays probably engineered the deal.⁸⁹

Such incidents primed the pumps of violence enveloping a county whose residents had already seen, heard about, participated in, or threatened several violent acts. In January 1871, for example, Willis T. Myree (or Miree), an agent of the influential King and Richardson families, promised to contact law-enforcement officials if anyone trespassed on his or his clients' properties. Apparently, some individuals ignored the warning, for at the end of February 1874, Myree shot a black man who was trying to steal corn. One group of Democrats had only one complaint: Myree did not kill the would-be thief.

Goodrich, 126; Howard, "Violence Erupts in Cross Plains," chap. 8 in *Death at Cross Plains*, 61-74; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 85.

⁸⁹ See "An Outrage," *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 February 1874. See also George W. Brown to General Pope, 18 November 1867, Education Correspondence, 1867-1907, SG 15978, ADAH; "The Temper of the South," *Hartford Daily Courant*, 15 September 1874, hereinafter cited as "The Temper of the South."

The Democrats' position further illustrated how hypocritical many of them could be. Before the shooting, several members of the party had made repeated statements about seeing more amicable economic, political, and social relationships developed in the county. Wanting a white man to kill a black man, even a potential thief, was inconsistent with those wishes. The same is true of Democrats' March 1874 remarks regarding the ethnic makeup of the Perry County Grand Jury, on which only two black men sat.⁹⁰

In counties where white people constituted a numerical majority, the absence of black jurors would not have been surprising, but black Perry Countians outnumbered their white neighbors by a sizeable margin. Thus, Alexander Curtis and other influential blacks were wroth with Sheriff Harris because he had not placed more African Americans on the jury, reported Heidt, who was less interested in ethnic or racial harmony than he was in the rogue who had stolen the hallway lamp of the Young Men's Christian Association building, the Alabama Baptist State Convention's decision to publish the re-established *Alabama Baptist* from its original home, Marion, the central council of the Perry County Grange that had been formed on 13 February 1874, and the Marion cotton and wool factory for which one reader had recently called. Even more significant, Democrats had been elected or reelected to important offices in the county's two largest municipalities.⁹¹

In Marion, Democrats had pooled their strength and reelected Mayor Shivers. Democrats Peter T. Hurt, T. D. Jones, Lorenzo Love, O. Schevenell, W. W. Wilkerson,

⁹⁰ See "Negro Shot," *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 February 1874.

⁹¹ See "Place and Plan" and "Resolutions of the Board of Directors of the Alabama Baptist Convention," *ibid.*, 25 December 1873. See also "Too Mean," *ibid.*, 15 January 1874; "Attention! Grangers," *ibid.*, 12 February 1874; "Po Patria," "Cotton and Wool Factory at Marion," *ibid.*, 26 February 1874; *ibid.*, 5 March 1874. Cf. Seip, *The South Returns to Congress*, 201.

and L. A. Wyatt had been elected to the town council. Neither Wilkerson nor Schevenell remained on the council long. Wilkerson resigned in March 1874 and was replaced by J. A. Moore. A few months later, Schevenell moved to Texas.⁹²

Uniontown Democrats had not done as well as their Marion counterparts, but the formers' efforts were still worth mentioning. Mayor J. Harwood was reelected, and Democrats E. F. Gouldman and Richard Hudson joined Republican Richard Terrell on the town council. Overall, the slate of municipal officers was satisfactory to Uniontown Democrats, but it was hoped that their party would do even better in November.

Attempting to guarantee that voters understood the importance of the forthcoming statewide elections, some of the county's leading Democrats took to the campaign trail. To bridge sectional gaps, many members supported George S. Houston of Limestone County for governor and William B. Modawell of Perry County for lieutenant governor.⁹³

Houston was born in Williamson County, Tennessee, on 17 January 1811. His parents, South Carolina natives Hannah Pugh Reagan and David Houston, moved to Alabama circa 1821. Young George was schooled at Lauderdale County Academy. He later studied law under the tutelage of a Florence judge and at a Harrodsburg, Kentucky, law school before being admitted to the Alabama Bar in 1831. The following year, Houston was elected to the state legislature, representing Lauderdale.

In 1834, Alabama Governor John Gayle appointed Houston district solicitor. Three years hence, Houston was elected to the position, which he retained until he was elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1841. Reelected to Congress

⁹² See "Municipal Election" and "Uniontown Municipal Election," *Marion Commonwealth*, 5 March 1874. See also "The Nominations," *ibid.*, 13 August 1874. See "J. A. Moore," *ibid.*, 26 March 1874. See also "Off for Texas," *ibid.*, 17 December 1874.

⁹³ Cf. 13 August 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* "The Nominations"

eight times, Houston stayed on Capitol Hill for most of the Antebellum period. After a temporary retirement from politics in 1849, he affiliated himself with the pro-Union Committee of Thirty-three and supported Stephen Douglas' popular-sovereignty plan. But when Alabama seceded, Houston presented the state's formal withdrawal notice to the speaker of the House, returned to Alabama, and supported the Confederacy by, among other things, serving as Governor Moore's liaison to the Tennessee Valley.⁹⁴

Following the war, Houston returned to Washington, where he was a senator-elect when President Johnson submitted his Restoration plan. Denied a seat, Houston returned to Alabama, practiced law, and developed business relationships with James W. Sloss, a former storekeeper and one of North Alabama's wealthiest industrialization proponents, among other influential Alabamians. Within a short time, Houston earned a reputation for being intelligent, moderate, and modest. Together with his strong Union leanings and powerful business allies, who helped him raise more money than any other gubernatorial candidate in the state's history, Houston's integrity and temperament made him an ideal candidate for the Democratic party.⁹⁵

Reportedly, Houston was acceptable to every Democratic newspaper in the state except Robert McKee's *Selma Southern Argus*, which backed no one. To the owners of the *Marion Commonwealth*, their Dallas County business partner's position did not matter. Months before the 1874 election, they had predicted that Houston would be elected governor by a minimum of 15,000 votes. Even if Houston had not adopted white supremacy and home rule as parts of his campaign platform, the journalists were sure that

⁹⁴ Cf. Bailey, "Disloyalty in Early Confederate Alabama," 523. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 41, 53; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 792.

⁹⁵ See Jimmie F. Gross, "Alabama Politics and the Negro, 1874-1901" (Ph.D. diss., University of Georgia, 1969), 101. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 40, 41, 130; Brewer, *Alabama*, 324-325, 498.

business-minded and ordinary white North Alabamians' support for Houston and Modawell, who had also lived in the Tennessee Valley, would give Democrats enough political leverage to guarantee a victory. Mobilizing Democrats in the central regions of the state southward through double-dealing, humbuggery, and trickery merely strengthened the candidates' chances.⁹⁶

Taxes, actual and potential debts were key issues during the early campaign season. Local Democrats wanted the state government to pay its bills, but they opposed increasing taxes to accomplish the laudable goal. One agrarian Democrat who lived in eastern Perry County believed creditors should have allowed individuals to make payments in installments. That way, no one's property would have to be sold in order to meet tax obligations. In the farmer's opinion, no sane white Alabamian would support the Republican party because its leaders tried to increase taxes every chance that they got (just as northern Republicans had allegedly done before the Civil War).⁹⁷

In truth, certain Republicans' support for integration, universal manhood suffrage, and human rights was more important to the white agrarian than Republicans' alleged penchant for increasing local and state taxes. The number of black Republicans who had become Perry County officeholders during Reconstruction was another problem. Since 1867, several former domestics and field hands had been appointed or elected to represent the county. One Democrat was confident that purportedly iniquitous and evil

⁹⁶ Cf. "Take Your County Paper."

⁹⁷ See "East Perry," *Marion Commonwealth*, 9 April 1874. Cf. Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, especially 94-95; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 37, 53, 55, 71; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 31, 34.

Reconstruction laws could have been overridden if blacks, Carpetbaggers, and Scalawags had not risen to office.⁹⁸

Despite what some Democrats alleged, Curtis, Dozier, and other black Perry County officeholders were no less qualified, intelligent, or honest than their white counterparts. Retrospectively, Reverend Dozier (who, unlike other black minister-politicians, was never harmed while in office) and other Baptist ministers from Perry County were exceptions to Kolchin and other scholars' contention that black preachers had little political influence at the state or regional level. After suggesting that their continued success would impede the "progress of liberty and civilization," one Democrat asked white electors if they were going to let Thomas Lee, Curtis, Green Lewis, and Peter Clarke remain in power.⁹⁹

The Democrat's argument was as factually incorrect as it was racially flawed. Lee was dead, Clarke was white, and Perry County's black voters usually did not vote for a black candidate simply because he was black. They voted for him because he was willing to articulate their concerns. Similarly, black voters did not vote against a white candidate. They voted for people whom they knew and respected or people who seemed to advance their causes, as in the case of Charles Hays. By contrast, most of Perry County's white politicians desired an all-white government, especially in 1874.

Every politically astute individual in Alabama knew the importance of the 1874 elections. As one former Unionist acknowledged, the pending races were "pregnant with

⁹⁸ "Correct View," *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 August 1869. See "Will It be so Again," *Marion Commonwealth*, 14 May 1874, hereinafter cited as "Will It be so Again." Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 70; DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*, 117; Seip, *The South Returns to Congress*, 201.

⁹⁹ "Will It be so Again." Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Era*, 119; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, 117, 120, 166; Foner, *Reconstruction*, 112; Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, 104-105.

the most important consequences to the state of Alabama. It is a time for men to reflect and to think, rather than to give way to the impulsion of blind passions.” Even so, most voters believed the state’s destiny depended on which party and party ideology, not necessarily which individuals, were victorious in November. Democrats claimed that an additional two years of Republican rule would reduce the state to the degradation and poverty of Louisiana and South Carolina, where African Americans had been elected to executive offices. For that reason alone, leading Alabama Democrats said they had no time to waste. Leisurely activities and petty bickering had to be put aside if Alabamians were going to be rescued from the “accursed crew” who had controlled the “ship of State” since November 1872.¹⁰⁰

Heidt could have used such advice, especially with regard to bickering. As May 1874 came to a close, he and the owners of the *Montgomery Ledger* got into an argument about who had first nominated Houston for governor. The Montgomerians claimed that they had; but John Black, owner of the *Eufaula Weekly News*, countered by suggesting that he, H. C. Cooke, and Heidt had put Houston’s name forward weeks before the *Montgomery Ledger*.

In an era where newspaper endorsements played huge roles in getting office seekers elected, reelected, or defeated, which paper was first to nominate a successful candidate was important. Being first to put forward the name of a victorious candidate could also bolster a paper’s prestige, so Heidt wasted no time reminding people that his newspaper had nominated Houston for governor and Modawell for lieutenant governor in

¹⁰⁰ “To the White Men of Alabama” (first and second quotes); *Marion Commonwealth*, 28 May 1874 (all subsequent quotes). See “Hard Castle,” letter to the editor, *Marion Commonwealth*, 28 May 1874.

a 22 January 1874 article entitled “Our Next Candidate.” At the time, the *Montgomery Ledger* did not exist, and Black did not endorse Houston and Modawell until March.¹⁰¹

After correcting his Democratic associates, the Marion publisher advised them not to quarrel about who had been first to nominate Houston. For Heidt, the party ticket was the only important issue that they faced. In a halfhearted concession, Heidt said that if the owners of the *Eufaula Weekly News* and the *Montgomery Ledger* would do their best to make sure that Houston and Modawell were elected, he would bestow upon them the honor of having nominated the two candidates before he did.¹⁰²

Houston and Modawell had a great deal of support in Perry County. The Uniontown correspondent who called himself Canebrake considered Houston one of the ablest financial minds in Alabama. Not only had Houston amassed a personal fortune, he had chaired the Ways and Means Committee of the United States Congress for twelve consecutive years. The *Clarke County Democrat* had equally positive words about Modawell, whose knowledge of political philosophy certified him to be a useful public servant in any capacity. If Houston had to resign, or if he died, the executive office would still have an able leader in Modawell.¹⁰³

As local Democrats stumped for Houston and Modawell, a group of Perry County Republicans circulated a petition calling for the removal of Marion’s Republican postmaster, Peter G. Clarke. Instead of Clarke, they wanted Alexander H. Curtis. The United States Senate had confirmed Sir J. Patirico De Billingsley for the post in late

¹⁰¹ Cf. “Our Next Candidate.” Heidt referred to the piece as “Our Next Candidates.” He perhaps confused it with an article that appeared in the 26 March 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* entitled “Our Candidates.”

¹⁰² See “Hon. George S. Houston,” *ibid.*, 28 May 1874.

¹⁰³ See “Canebrake,” letter to the editor, and “Hon. W. B. Modawell,” *ibid.*, 28 May 1874. Cf. Brewer, *Alabama*, 325. Houston also chaired the judiciary committee while he was in Congress.

March 1874, but he had not paid the \$1,000 bond that was required to keep the office. Concurrently, Reverend Winkler and other religious leaders tried to stem the tide of ethnic identification and meanness that the postmaster controversy signified. In a sermon given to the Young Men's Christian Association, Winkler emphasized how "good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."¹⁰⁴

It was gratifying to see Reverend Winkler try to close some of the racial divides that had plagued the Black Belt and other parts of Alabama before and during Reconstruction. Joining Winkler were YMCA officials Charles G. Browne, A. W. Fowlkes (temporary secretary), Perry Fowlkes, D. P. Goodhue, George A. Hall, Pickney B. Lawson, Charles W. Lovelace (chairman), W. H. Raymond, James Sherrard, and N. E. Willis. Later, John C. Dozier was elected second vice president.

Despite the YMCA officials' admirable attempts at racial unity, they could not successfully compete for attention in such a tense political climate. Writing to Governor Lewis in July 1874, Joseph Speed alleged that "white-line," or supremacist, Democrats were planning to form a local militia. Alexander Curtis, Speed's one-time friend and political colleague, endorsed the claim. For humanity's sake, they beseeched Lewis to intervene.¹⁰⁵ The same summer, a group of Republican held a political meeting at the Marion courthouse. All speakers were white, but most of their listeners were black.

¹⁰⁴ "Order of the Organization of the Young Men's Christian Association Convention, in the Baptist Church, Marion, Ala.," *Marion Commonwealth*, 21 May 1874, hereinafter cited as "Order of the Organization of the Young Men's Christian Association Convention, in the Baptist Church, Marion, Ala." Cf. 25 December 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Resolutions of Board of Directors of the Alabama Baptist Convention"; Flynt, *Alabama Baptists*, 148. For information regarding the petition, see *Montgomery Republican*, 23 March 1874. J. Patirico De Billingsley was discussed in the 2 April 1874 *Marion Commonwealth*.

¹⁰⁵ Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 211. See Joseph Speed to D. P. Lewis, 25 July 1874, Alabama Governors Administrative Files, 1872-1874: Lewis, SG 024885, ADAH. For one of many similar contentions, cf. Manning, *Politics in Alabama*, 31.

Considering the ethnic makeup of the audience, it should be of little surprise that Speed and other office seekers spoke to issues that were important to black voters. Foremost was the civil-rights bill that was before Congress. Speed was opposed to the measure, but he knew that most black Republicans supported it and kept his personal beliefs to himself when he addressed the predominantly black crowd.¹⁰⁶

Speed's Democratic foes did not have to suppress their feelings about the Civil Rights Bill of 1873. With their usual banality, Perry County conservatives said that Benjamin Butler's proposal would ruin the South's public schools if it were passed. The University of Alabama would surely fold, they said, because no white father would send his offspring to a school that admitted black students. In their opinion, the "odious" bill's only purpose was to arouse the passions and prejudices of black people to a point where they would turn against honorable whites.¹⁰⁷

Citing the Republican Buffalo, New York, *Commercial Advertiser*, one individual claimed that countless northern Republicans opposed the Civil Rights Bill of 1873 because its passage would aggravate existing racial problems. Ironically, the Northerners did not discuss their regional associates who were largely responsible for introducing the measure into Congress when they criticized its supporters. Rather, southern Republicans such as Southern District Attorney George M. Duskin and Joe Speed were condemned. Reportedly, many of the Alabamians' northern colleagues considered them perpetual public plunderers who did not deserve to be treated respectfully. Duskin was especially disliked. One northern Republican called the Hale County lawyer, state senator, and

¹⁰⁶ See "Duskin—Speed," *Marion Commonwealth*, 4 June 1874, hereinafter cited as "Duskin—Speed." For a markedly different view of Speed's commitment to universal equality, cf. Fitzgerald, *The Union League Movement in the Deep South*, 104-105.

¹⁰⁷ Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 100.

former House member the most despicable person on Earth. In the Northerner's opinion, Duskin and all other white Republicans who supported the federal civil-rights bills should stand on one side of the political, racial, and social line and every other white member of party on the other side.¹⁰⁸

If the Northerners did make the forgoing statements, then they were wrong about Speed's unadulterated support for the bill but correct about his and other white Republicans' prejudice. Thousands of them did not wish to unite with black people socially or politically if the union meant that black men would hold prominent positions within the party. White Republican opposition to James T. Rapier becoming secretary of state in 1870 was irrefutable proof of this fact. Speed and other white Republican opposition to Curtis and Jim Green's 1872 and 1874 congressional bids was further proof.

In a few instances, black Republicans' numbers and political activism provided them a degree of leverage against white Republicans' exclusionary strategies. Perry County afforded one of the best postbellum Alabama examples. Not only was it home to some of the state's most intelligent, refined, and spiritual black people; the county's black electorate was critical to the success of Black Belt Republicans such as Charles Hays.¹⁰⁹

In 1872, Hays had polled more votes in Perry County than he had in any other place in the fourth congressional district. Mindful of that fact, he had to make sizeable

¹⁰⁸ See "Duskin," *Marion Commonwealth*, 18 June 1874. Cf. Wiggins, *Scalawag*, 140, 148, 149, citing *Register of Officers and Agents, Civil, Military, and Naval in the Service of the United States on the Thirtieth of September, 1873* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1873) and *Journal of the Senate of 1872-73 of the State of Alabama, held in the City of Montgomery, Commencing on the 18th of November, 1872* (Montgomery, Al.: [n.p.], 1873), 4; *1870-1871 Alabama House Journal*, 683-685; "Duskin—Speed."

¹⁰⁹ Cf. 19 June 1873 *Marion Commonwealth* "Communicated"; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; Boothe, *Cyclopedia of Colored Baptists of Alabama*, 26-2.

concessions to the county's black politicians. If a few of them were not allowed on local and state tickets or given political privileges and jobs, the thousands of black voters who resided in Perry County might not have been as active as they had been in previous years. Then again, the blacks might have continued to campaign and vote in large numbers, but they might have done so for Democrats and Independents as well as for Republicans. With few alternatives, some of the Republican party's leading white opportunists occasionally spoke as if they truly supported universal equality.¹¹⁰

In a 21 January 1874 letter to Hays, Speed advised the congressman to support the Civil Rights Bill of 1873 because countless black and a few white voters supported it. Because Speed was not a radical Republican, he opposed the type of equality that the civil-rights bill represented. All the same, Speed knew that a public endorsement would help the Republican party, especially at the local level, so he asked Hays to back the measure in its original form. If that did not work, Speed advised Hays to push for the best modifications that he could get. Like Speed, Hays was a self-professed "southern man," but he heeded the advice because, among other things, he was up for reelection.¹¹¹

The January 1874 letter to Hays was not the only time that Speed discussed the Civil Rights Bill of 1873. On another occasion, he delivered a speech in Washington in which he apparently pledged support for the bill without reservation. According to one

¹¹⁰ Charles Hays, quoted in DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*, 246. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim.

¹¹¹ Charles Hays, quoted in F. and J. Rivers and George A. Bailey, *The Congressional Globe; Containing the Debates and Proceedings of the Second Session of Forty-second Congress; an Appendix, Embracing the Laws Passed at that Session* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Congressional Globe, 1872), 3077, hereinafter cited as *The Congressional Globe*, 42nd Congress; *Congressional Record: Containing the Proceedings and Debates of Forty-third Congress, First Session. In Six Parts, with an Index*, vol. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1874), 1096, hereinafter cited as *Congressional Record*, 43rd Congress; "The Temper of the South." See "Speed and Social Equality," *Marion Commonwealth*, 10 September 1874. See also "Speed's Social Security Letter," *Marion Commonwealth*, 15 October 1874. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 416.

report, Speed swore that he would give his life for its passage. In Alabama, his words changed. When some of Perry County's most influential white citizens began to harangue Speed about the speech, he denied making it.

When news of the denial reached Heidt, the ill newspaper publisher mustered enough strength to ask Speed what he intended to accomplish by declaring that he would give his life to secure human and civil rights for black people. Surely, Speed did not mean the rights and liberties that the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments already protected, presumed Heidt, who believed the pending civil-rights bill was nothing more than a northern attempt to persuade white Southerners to view black people and the Republican party's dishonorable white leaders as equals. That, he said, would never happen.¹¹²

Several Perry County delegates to the annual convention of the Alabama Teachers' Association concurred. In a letter to Judson President Rawlings, who was a presiding officer, future Perry County superintendent of education Powhatan Lockett and other members of the Association's committee on reception and arrangements accused Superintendent Speed of publicly advocating the passage of the civil-rights bill that lawmakers were debating. Believing its enactment would critically damage Alabama's public schools by making inherently dissimilar students commingle against their will, Lockett and crew asked to be relieved of all duties associated with the convention if Speed did not change his position. Eventually, they became so upset about the Civil

¹¹² See "Excuse," *Marion Commonwealth*, 18 June 1874. See also "Social Equality" and "Speed," *ibid.*

Rights Bill of 1873 that they asked the convention's organizers to cancel the entire meeting if congressmen ratified the measure.¹¹³

As strange as it might seem, even the name of the civil-rights bill offended some Perry Countians. Supposedly, its title did not reflect its actual content or purpose. In order to properly convey the proposal's truest intent, several Democratic opponents believed it should have been called "a bill to regulate and compel the social equality of the races in the Southern States, or to precipitate a conflict of the races." In the event of a race war, Speed would surely die among Negroes, the Democrats surmised. Similar statements were made about Speed's purportedly radical partner, Charles Hays. Their appropriateness is debatable. According to William Rogers, Jr., the congressman's public support for the Fourteenth Amendment, black manhood suffrage, and Union League involvement prove how egalitarian he was. Hays also supported Benjamin Butler's force bill that would have penalized individuals or corporations for denying people access to public accommodations because of their skin color. For Rogers, the latter act is further proof of Hays' devotion to universal equality.¹¹⁴

That Hays spoke and wrote like a real humanitarian, especially on the House floor, cannot be denied. Once, Hays dared any one of his congressional colleagues who opposed integration to show him a single place in the South where de facto integration

¹¹³ See *Livingston Journal*, 7 August 1874. See also "Grand Unification Meeting, *Marion Commonwealth*, 20 August 1874. Cf. 18 June 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* "Speed." The meeting was scheduled for 14 July 1874. Rawlings revealed J. G. L. Huey, H. C. Cooke, James H. Lee, Lockett, E. L. Stickney, and others' disgust in a 25 June letter written to their friend, M. M. Cooke, associate editor of the *Montgomery Advertiser and Daily Mail*. According to Rawlings, the men considered Speed's reputed support for the Civil Rights Bill of 1873 "hostile to their peace and happiness." Raymond Rawlings, quoted in *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 July 1874. For H. Clay's teaching endeavors, see "A Change of Teachers," *Marion Commonwealth*, 21 August 1873.

¹¹⁴ Cf. 18 June 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* "Speed"; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 21, 100.

was not already practiced. Board a railroad car and travel southward, prodded Hays. Even if one traveled in the finest palace car in the region, he would see white women sitting alongside their black nurses, maids, and nannies. Because unofficial integration was already customary, the civil-rights bill would not have harmed or forced anything on white Southerners, argued Hays. Besides, white lawmakers had a moral obligation to enact such measures because black laborers had built the antebellum South. When white men went off to war and their female relations were left at home, every able-bodied black person in the region could have revolted, but most of them did not. Instead, they continued to work as orderly and as productively as they had before the war. If it were not for their efforts, white women and children would have starved, posited Hays. When hostilities ceased and former slaves could have carried out wanton acts of thievery, pillage, rape, or murder, they did not. Rather, the vast majority of freemen whom he knew acted admirably despite widespread provocations for unlawful behavior.¹¹⁵

The congressman spoke from firsthand experience. Before the Civil War, his 12,000-acre estate had included at least 175 slaves. Two or three of them had accompanied him into battle, and one of them had been at his side when he returned home. (Their apparent closeness compels one to question Clanton, DuBose, Fleming, Heidt, John Read, and other persons' contentions regarding how cruel Hays was to his slaves.) More recently, black men had helped Hays return to Capitol Hill. Although the congressman claimed that his conscience, God, and reason were the reasons he supported

¹¹⁵ Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 78; *Congressional Record*, 43rd Congress, vol. 2, 1097; Goodrich and Goodrich, 125-129. Mobile Creole T. U. Bernard, among other black men, agreed wholeheartedly with Hays. See *Mobile Advertiser and Register*, 20 April 1867. Cf. Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, 147, 149; *Congressional Record*, 43rd Congress, vol. 2, 1096; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 100.

total integration and the “sacred and inalienable rights of liberty and freedom,” his largest body of supporters was undoubtedly a major reason for his advocacy.¹¹⁶

Perry County constitutes an excellent case in point. There, black registered voters outnumbered white registered voters more than two to one between 1867 and 1874. The margin was even larger among the county’s actual voters, some of whom were important and fairly well-off politicians. John C. Dozier, for example, was one of only twenty black Reconstruction officials in Alabama whose land holdings were worth at least \$1,000 in the early 1870s (see Appendix W).¹¹⁷

Because Dozier was one of many black Alabamians who were critical to Hays’ political success, the congressman spoke as if he were a genuine supporter of universal equality. Hays was most vociferous about black people’s rights and privileges when he was in relatively safe environments, such as the halls of Congress or during congressional

¹¹⁶ Charles Hays, quoted in *Congressional Record*, 43rd Congress, vol. 2, *loc. cit.*, 1096, and Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 122. See Hugh C. Davis, “John W. Du Bose [sic]: The Disillusioned Aristocrat,” *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, nos. 3 and 4 (fall and winter 1965): 167-190. See also “The Fourth Congres[s]ional District,” *Montgomery Daily Advertiser and Mail*, 12 August 1874. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; *Congressional Record*, 43rd Congress, vol. 2, 1096; DuBose, *Alabama’s Tragic Decade*, 246 (footnote 20); Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 787; “I Know Em”; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 101; Trelease, *White Terror*, xxxvi.

¹¹⁷ One historian has claimed that John Dozier was the only free-born mulatto or pure-black politician during Reconstruction to qualify as a property owner. Forty-one black officials had no property, three had property worth up to \$500, five between \$500 and \$1000, and twenty-seven in excess of \$1,000. Free-born black Mobilians Jacob Anderson and Constantine Perez owned \$1,500 and \$6,000 in real estate, respectively. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 98, 116, 341, 345; Boothe, *The Cyclopedia of Colored Baptists of Alabama*, passim; Brown, “John Dozier,” 113, 128; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 182; Foner, *Freedom’s Lawmakers*, xxii (Table 13), 7, 65, 169.

Voting data are derived from *A Compendium of the Ninth Census (June 1, 1870.) Compiled Pursuant to a Concurrent Resolution of Congress, and Under the Direction of the Secretary of the Interior, by Francis A Walker, Superintendent of Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 24-25, 116, hereinafter cited as *Ninth Census of the United States*, vol. 4: Compendium. Only estimates are used because the compendium indicates that in 1870 there were 20,431 black and 8,504 white voters in Perry County’s minor civil divisions, or voting districts. But, according to the same source and the *Alabama State Journal*, there were only 17,833 black and 7,142 white people living in the county during that year. Similarly, in 1872, Perry County had 4,141 black and 1,400 white voters, an excess of 208 voters compared to census data. See “Valuable Statistics,” *Alabama State Journal*, 15 September-6 November 1874.

hearings. In Alabama's Black Belt, where politically and racially motivated violence was widespread during Reconstruction, the congressman was less outspoken. Even in predominantly black communities, Hays worried that disgruntled conservatives would harass him and his family or interrupt his speaking engagements, as Ryland Randolph and others had done in Tuscaloosa in October 1868. As the November 1874 elections grew near, Hays' fears deepened.¹¹⁸

In the nation's capitol, Congressman Hays did not worry about his and his family's safety too often because they were usually beyond direct retaliation. The District of Columbia was hundreds of miles away from Alabama, and most Alabamians had never ventured outside the state. In general, writing an unfavorable editorial was the most harm that someone could do to Hays while he and his loved ones were in Washington. Moreover, the egalitarianism of congressmen such as Butler and Sumner of Massachusetts made their Alabama colleague's public support for universal equality seem minor, and Hays usually asked people like Indiana Senator Oliver P. Morton—a political opportunist who, like Hays, held conservative-to-centrist views unless political necessity dictated otherwise—to introduce civil-rights legislation into Congress despite the fact that white terrorism and voting irregularities were common in the congressional district that the Hays represented. Hays did, however, introduce legislation into Congress to relieve Ben L. Posey, Samuel W. Cockrell, and several other white Republicans from the political sanctions that the Fourteenth Amendment had imposed on them.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ See *Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor*, 3 November 1868. See also "Ryland Randolph," *ibid.*, 27 July 1869. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 40; Willard Warner to Horace Greeley, circa October 1868, in DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*, 245-246.

¹¹⁹ See "A Bill to Relieve Certain Persons Named Therein from the Political Disabilities Imposed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution," 42nd Congress, 2d. sess., 1872, H. Rept. 1650.

The Eutaw Riot of October 1870 had afforded Hays an excellent opportunity to show how committed to social justice he was. After federal marshals detained several men for instigating the riot, a hearing was held in Demopolis. Because Hays had witnessed much of the *mêlée*, he was asked to testify, but jurors never got the chance to hear him. Hays and the solicitor of either Greene or Mobile County convinced Circuit Judge Luther R. Smith—a white Republican, Union veteran, and delegate to the 1867 constitutional convention whom Democrats continuously accused of giving blacks and white Republicans preferential treatment in his courtroom—that other eyewitness accounts would suffice. Wanting to preserve peace and order in the Black Belt, Hays refused to testify a second time when the case was sent to a higher court in Mobile. No one, he said, could turn back the hands of time, so the charges against the fourteen individuals who were on trial for starting the commotion should have been dropped.¹²⁰

Hays' supposed willingness to forgive and forget was only part of the reason he did not testify. Self-preservation was an equally important motive. Hays worried that any appearance before the court would have jeopardized his safety and that of his family, whose lawyer, Samuel Cockrell, had been severely beaten at Fincher's Ferry in Greene County because he had testified against several of the defendants in the Eutaw case. Concerned about similar vigilantism, Hays ignored the subpoena that was delivered to him. Only one other person, an ex-Confederate and Republican whose last name was Brown, also refused to testify. When the trial began in January 1872, Hays justified his

See also "The Difficulty in Greene—Twenty Negroes Killed," *Alabama State Journal*, 17 September 1874; "Organized White Military Companies—What does It Mean?" *ibid.*, 19 September 1874; "The War of Races in Greene," *ibid.*, 20 September–November 1874. For contrasting views about Morton, cf. Benedict, *A Compromise of Principle*, 64–65, 69 (quote), 104, 113, 133–134, 139, 163–164, 242, 262; Seip, *The South Returns to Congress*, 95, 282; and Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 159 (footnote 6).

¹²⁰ Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865–1900*, 17–18; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 19.

decision by saying that ex post facto convictions would have done nothing more than awaken bad feelings among his constituents. Attorney Cockrell undoubtedly disagreed. His stand against white intimidation and violence might have cost him the January 1871 Eutaw mayoral race, but it helped him get elected to the state legislature in November the following year.¹²¹

Congressional debate relative to the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871 had provided Hays with another opportunity to show how devoted to universal equality he was. But when the House voted on the act, Hays abstained. The congressman's inaction surprised his former Eutaw neighbor Ryland Randolph so much that the reputed organizer of Alabama's first Klan den wondered whether "Chawles is going to turn a somersault from Loyal-Leaugism to Ku-Kluxism."¹²²

Hays' nonparticipation was planned. In a compromise, or bargain, similar to the later and more famous 1876-1877 one that sent Rutherford B. Hayes to the White House, Hays did not vote for or against the Force Act of 1871 because he wanted his political rivals to help him combat lawlessness in the Black Belt. A yes-vote would have upset the Democrats whose assistance he sought. A no-vote would have riled many of his Republican colleagues and constituents, especially the black ones. Therefore, Hays did nothing when ballots were cast on 6 April 1871.

Days later, Alabama Congressman Joseph H. Sloss sent a letter to his friend, Governor Lindsay. In it, Sloss—a Colbert County Democrat, former mayor of

¹²¹ See "Paragraphs," *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 January 1871. See also "General Assembly," *Montgomery Daily Advertiser and Mail*, 17 November 1872; "Tribute to Hays," *Alabama State Journal*, 1 September 1874. Cf. *1872-1873 House Journal*, 974-976; *The Congressional Globe*, 42nd Congress, 3077; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, 20, 61; 19 January 1871 *Marion Commonwealth* "Paragraphs."

¹²² "What's Up?" *Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor*, 11 April 1871. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*, 210, 242 (footnotes 9 and 10).

Tuscumbia, journalist, and railroad executive—praised Hays for being receptive to peace and reconciliation. According to Sloss, Hays was adamantly opposed to seeing federal troops return to Alabama, but both men knew that some type of federal intervention was probable if people continued to be verbally harassed, physically assaulted, or killed in the state. Furthermore, Alabama’s already tarnished reputation was at stake. Because Hays had not voted for the Ku Klux Klan Act and because it was impossible to rebut the charges that were being made against Alabamians as long as violence continued, Sloss advised Lindsay to back Hays’ attempt to restore peace and order in the Black Belt. The arrangement was a classic *quid pro quo*.¹²³

By the spring of 1872, Hays seemed to have reversed his position regarding the Enforcement Act of 1871. That season, congressmen debated extending the fourth section of the act, which allowed the president to suspend the writ of habeas corpus during any rebellion or significant threat to the central government or to public safety. On 4 May, Hays spoke passionately about the need to do so. In Alabama, as elsewhere in the South, Republicans were still being snatched from their homes, shot, and hanged simply because they dared to praise their party, he declared. The existing Force Act had been somewhat effective at reducing politically and racially motivated violence in Alabama, but Hays was sure that a “reign of blood and terror” would resume as soon as the act expired on 30 June 1872.¹²⁴

¹²³ See Joseph Sloss to Robert Lindsay, 12 April 1871, Alabama Governors Administrative Files, 1870-1872: Lindsay, SG 24883, Roll 2, ADAH. Cf. Brewer, *Alabama*, 190-191; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1176-1178; Trelease, *White Terror*, 309.

¹²⁴ Charles Hays, quoted in *The Congressional Globe*, 42nd Congress, 3077; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 88. See “A Bill to Enforce the Provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and for Other Purposes,” 42nd Congress, 1st sess., 1871, H. Rept. 320. See also *Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States of America, Being the Second Session of the Forty-second Congress; Begun and Held at the City of Washington December 4, 1871, in the Ninety-fifth Year of the*

Hays' May 1872 enthusiasm was probably more political than personal. Local, statewide, and national elections were being held the following November, and he wanted to return to Washington. Congress had turned out to be more rewarding than cultivating crops, which was becoming increasingly difficult because of price fluctuations, labor conflicts, and other restrictions. If the federal government did not provide proper protections during the upcoming elections, Hays was certain that Ku-Klux pistols and late-night scourging would hurt his and other Republicans' chances of being elected or reelected to office. For that reason, Hays abandoned the non-interference position that he had articulated in congressional testimony taken only one year earlier and welcomed federal intervention.¹²⁵

Hays' support for the Civil Rights Bill of 1873 reflected similar political maneuvering. He was not overly vocal about the measure until Joseph Speed and other white political opportunists encouraged him to be a strong champion of the bill. By doing so, Hays could shore up the Republican party's standing among black voters, reasoned Speed. Privately, he and Hays articulated conservative and opportunistic views. On more than one occasion, Hays admitted that his primary reason for becoming a Republican in the first place was because many of the Democrats whom he knew were determined to break the law in order to restore as much of Alabama's pre-Civil War milieu as they could. At the top of their list was preventing black men from voting.

Independence of the United States (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 116, 128-134; *Journal of the Senate of the United States of America, Being the Second Session of the Forty-second Congress; Begun and Held at the City of Washington December 4, 1871, in the Ninety-fifth Year of the Independence of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 663-666.

¹²⁵ Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; *Congressional Globe*, 42nd Congress, 3078; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 19-20; Linden, *Voices from the Reconstruction Years, 1865-1877*, 180-187; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 89.

Hays supported black manhood suffrage. Beyond that issue, ensuring order and advancing his own career—not bringing about parity among voters—were his primary goals. The congressman believed that Democratic misconduct, if carried out, would hinder Alabama’s forward progress by causing more federal intervention than was needed, but he rarely questioned Democrats’ devotion to conservative principles. In fact, Hays contemplated returning to the Democratic and Conservative party even though, by his own admission, many of its members were violently racist. He also challenged Joseph Taylor, a Tuscaloosa Democrat and journalist who despised Hays, to relate a single political act of his that had been bitter, extreme, or vindictive; made several bargains with Democrats that did nothing to help black people; and even bragged about exploiting a group of small-town Greene County blacks after using biblical quotes and references to Shakespeare to convince them to support the 1867 constitutional convention. Considering these facts, Hays might not have become as radical by 1874 as the owners of the *Birmingham Independent*, the *Marion Commonwealth*, William Rogers, Jr., and other media and individuals have contended.¹²⁶

As some Perry County citizens criticized Duskin, Hays, and Speed, other citizens announced their plans for the November elections, acknowledged the orderly conduct of the county’s diligent black laborers, and anticipated a productive growing season if blacks concentrated on raising crops rather than raising their political or social status.

¹²⁶ Cf. 25 September 1872 *Tuscaloosa Times*; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; Linden, *Voices from the Reconstruction Years, 1865-1877*, 187; Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, ix-x, xii, 21, 25, 27, 65, 70, 88-89, 100, 101, 103-104, 119, 122, 129, 134-139, 140. In a widely circulated article, one newspaper claimed that Hays was prepared to preach and practice social equality because in 1874 he bedded at the home of Archer Threatt (Threat, Thweat), who was black. The paper did not mention why Hays stayed with Threatt, but security, politics, and convenience probably played huge roles in the congressman’s decision. Cf. 12 August 1874 *Montgomery Daily Advertiser and Mail* “Fourth Congres[s]ional District,” citing *Birmingham Independent*, [n.d.].

One Uniontown editorialist was certain that black men would stay away from politics if white Republicans stopped instigating them, but the sign of the times indicated otherwise. He was partly correct. Black Republicans made plans to form a political club on 5 June 1874, or weeks before white Democrats began to create them, but it is unlikely that local white Republicans prodded them to do so.¹²⁷

At least one male Perry County Democrat did not care how many black people supported the GOP or how organized they were. Democrats, he said, could be successful in November if they selected reputable candidates during the statewide convention and led a solid campaign. Canebrake argued likewise. With a thorough canvass, Alabama could be rescued from the “northern fangs of...Radical negro rule.” As both editorialists knew, organization was pivotal to Democratic successes. Without it, the members of their party did not stand a chance of returning one of their own to the state capital or removing Hays from Congress, and any person who thought differently was delusional.¹²⁸

In line with Democrats throughout the state, Canebrake urged any person who had been affected adversely by so-called Negro rule to act quickly. Otherwise, white Republicans would succeed in emboldening black voters to press for social equality. Seeking reconciliation at any cost, the state’s moderate Democrats would allow it, professed one male Marionite.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ See “K,” letter to the editor, *Marion Commonwealth*, 4 June 1874.

¹²⁸ “Organize,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 4 June 1874. See *ibid.*, 18 June 1874. See also “The People Aroused,” *Montgomery Daily Advertiser and Mail*, 8 August 1874; “Organization—An Important Document,” *Montgomery Daily Advertiser and Mail*, 25 June 1874; “The Road to Republican Victory is Through Organization,” *Alabama State Journal*, 25 August 1874.

¹²⁹ See “Social Equality—The Ultimatum of the Negro,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 25 June 1874, hereinafter cited as “The Ultimatum of the Negro.”

Some actions, including the election of at least one Perry County Republican to an important political office, could not be stopped. That being the case, local Democrats had to decide which Republican was most tolerable. After much contemplation, Alexander Curtis was chosen. For years, white people had praised his deportment. In recent years, however, he had begun to draw a great deal of criticism for opposing state support for the widow and children of General Clanton. Curtis had also openly advocated equal rights and privileges for African Americans and helped organize a predominantly black union in Marion. Even so, he had as much sense as any white Republican in the Black Belt, according to the Democrats who claimed to support him. Curtis was also honest, they said. Many of his white colleagues were not.

Heidt was one of the Perry County Democrats who praised Curtis for his intellect and moral fortitude. The journalist's professed support for the politician, which was probably no more than "'paper-weight' rhetoric," shocked a number of people. Heidt was known throughout the Black Belt and beyond for his staunch opposition to the black upward mobility. He was also known for criticizing Curtis, whom Heidt had previously called too old to be an effective leader. Curtis, interestingly, was in his mid-forties when the statement was made. Other times, Heidt had called Curtis stupid for backing white Republicans after they and Greene Lewis blocked Curtis' congressional bid. Now, with the distinct possibility of Hays returning to Congress, Heidt evidently figured that Curtis would make a better federal lawmaker than the incumbent.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, 95. See "White vs. Black Radicals," *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 July 1874, hereinafter cited as "White vs. Black Radicals." Cf. 17 October 1872 and 30 January 1873 *Marion Commonwealths*; Bailey, *Neither Scalawags nor Carpetbaggers*, 211; "Courts as Political Machines"; DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*, 277; "Pow-Wow."

Such puffery was widespread. Oftentimes, people said Curtis harbored less hatred about perceived and actual Democratic misdeeds than most white Republicans. Without such loathing, Curtis would act on behalf of every one of his constituents rather than certain groups. Unfortunately, his chances of representing the fourth congressional district were remote. By the time that Republicans gathered in Uniontown during the summer of 1874 to choose a candidate, Hays had already coerced, earned, or purchased enough support to secure the nomination. Bearing witness to the congressman's shrewdness, one conservative Democrat said that he would not have been surprised if Hays used his words to block Curtis' nomination by making it seem as if white rebels supported his candidacy.¹³¹

Actually, most Democrats did not really approve of Hays or Curtis. For them, Curtis was simply the better of two evils because the fourth was a Republican district. Democrats were confident that his skin color and affluence would divide the Republican vote further than the railroad situation or the on-going economic depression for which Republicans were being blamed. In any event, "Herod" would be "out-Herodded," as M. M. Cooke had posited in 1870.¹³²

While Perry County Democrats announced their Republican choice for Congress, Republicans revealed their plans to run for local offices. Probate judge candidates John T. Harris, James Houston, and Joseph Speed were political veterans whose success hinged on whether they supported or opposed the various civil-rights proposals that were being debated throughout the country. Because many whites believed the federal

¹³¹ See *Alabama State Journal*, 1 August 1874. Cf. "White vs. Black Radicals."

¹³² "White vs. Black Radicals" (first quote); DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*, 277 (second and third quotes). Cf. Foner, *Reconstruction*, 552.

government had already provided the nation's black citizens with enough social and political guarantees, Harris, Houston, and Speed had to approach the equality issue cautiously. Each man knew that he needed to secure the black vote to get elected, but he did not want to alienate white voters in the process. Hence, Speed and to a lesser degree Harris and Houston wavered on controversial issues, such as the basic rights and privileges of African Americans, even though Sumner's civil-rights bill was supposedly the pet measure of their party.¹³³

At least one Perry County voter thought Sheriff Harris' support for the Civil Rights Bill of 1873 was genuine. Others did not know, and a handful of voters did not care. Harris clarified his position in a 6 July 1874 letter to editor of the *Marion Commonwealth*. In the editorial, Harris confirmed that party loyalty was the real reason he supported the Civil Rights Bill of 1873, but he made it clear that he did not mistake civil rights for social equality "as many people do.... [C]ivil rights is one thing and social equality...is another."¹³⁴

Harris was in favor of whites and blacks having the same civil rights, such as voting privileges, for a practical reason: his political success depended on black votes. Universal equality and related concerns of black voters were lower on the politician's priority lists. He explained: "I want no law to compel one man to mingle socially with another, nor do I want any law to prevent it, if they seek or desire each other's society. This is a matter that I am willing to let regulate itself as it has always done."

¹³³ See *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 and 23 July 1874. See also "Judge of Probate" and "Enough," *ibid.*, 23 July 1872; "Harris and Speed" and John T. Harris, letter to the editor, *ibid.*, 9 July 1874; "Harris Confesses," *ibid.*, 23 July 1874. Cf. 24 September 1874 *Marion Commonwealth*.

¹³⁴ Harris, letter to the editor, *ibid.*, 9 July 1874. See "Keep It Before the People," *ibid.*, 24 September 1874.

Congressman Hays thought similarly. In an address delivered on the House floor, Hays acknowledged that he approached the social-equality issue diffidently: “If in the dim vista of futurity a single ray of hope could be discovered upon which to predicate the belief that nature would work the solution of this great race problem, I should be content to bide the time,” he declared, “but when the colored people, a large number of whom I represent, look...so gloomy, the whisperings of conscience tell me the path of duty is open and clear.”¹³⁵

Many of Harris and Hays’ black colleagues were not willing to let time or nature solve existing sociopolitical problems. In June 1874, black Republicans and other concerned parties held an Equal Rights Association convention in the state capitol. Some of Alabama’s most renowned black men—William H. Council, Alexander Curtis, John C. Dozier, Jeremiah Haralson, Philip Joseph, Holland Thompson, Frank H. Threatt, William V. Turner—were in attendance (see Appendix X). Although the men knew that support for Charles Sumner’s civil-rights bill and other social-equality schemes would anger some of their white counterparts, the African American leaders still supported universal equality. They also demanded increased involvement within the state Republican party. Earlier, James T. Rapier had threatened to leave the party when William H. Smith became its gubernatorial candidate. Among other things, Rapier had objected to Smith’s derogatory statements about black people. Other blacks had criticized Smith’s propensity to allow local officials to handle Klan offenses rather than

¹³⁵ Harris, 9 July 1874 letter to the editor of the *Marion Commonwealth* (first quote); Charles Hays, quoted in *Congressional Record*, 43rd Congress, vol. 2, *loc. cit.*, 1096 (second quote). Horace Mann Bond discussed white politicians’ dependence on black votes further in *Negro Education in Alabama*.

dealing with the offenses himself. In one instance, Smith's hands-off policy had cost six Calhoun County blacks and a white Canadian their lives.¹³⁶

Defying popular opinion, Curtis and Dozier pledged to support pending civil-rights legislation as long as it would not hurt the GOP. The men knew that many of their white allies, including John Silsby, a member of the 1867 Constitutional Convention Committee on Education and one of Curtis' Lincoln Normal School colleagues, would vehemently object to their position, but neither Curtis nor Dozier worried about their detractors. Speaking for Curtis as well as for himself, Dozier said he was brave enough to stand up to the whites, Reverend Silsby included.¹³⁷

When word of Curtis and Dozier's position reached Perry County, Heidt compared it to that of Ella Smith, a black woman who had tried to sit with whites at a Judson or Marion Female Seminary graduation only to be forcibly removed. In typical manner, Heidt poked fun at the incident, saying Smith "got out quicker than she got in, and her head was not so well off as before," but he was more serious about the ERA convention. After falsely claiming that its delegates had reiterated their complete allegiance to the Republican party and had committed themselves to ensuring absolute

¹³⁶ See *Jacksonville Republican*, 30 July and 15 October 1870. See also *Selma Times and Messenger*, 24 August 1870; *Huntsville Advocate*, 17 October 1870; *Montgomery Weekly Mail and Advertiser*, 19 October 1870. Cf. 2 and 23 July 1870 *Jacksonville Republican*; Gross, "Alabama Politics and the Negro," 101, quoting "The Olive Branch and Peace, An Account of the Colored Republicans in Dallas County, Alabama, May 11, 1878," Alabama Broadside Collection, Duke University; Howard, *Death at Cross Plains*, 34-38, 53-55, 61-92, 97, 98, 99, 101, 118; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 2, 1236; "The Negro Vote—Some Common Sense"; Powell, "The Politics of Livelihood," 315-349; Schweninger, "Black Citizenship and the Republican Party in Reconstruction Alabama," 103, citing a letter from B. M. Long to Chester Arthur, n.d., *General Records of the Department of the Treasury*, Application for Assessors of the Internal Revenue, Alabama, 1865-1873, R. G. 56, Box 2, NA; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 134-135, 187 (footnote 4), and "Let Us Make Man," 316; Trelease, *White Terror*, 262-264. Over time, Carraway and Councill changed their minds about complete social equality. Cf. Councill, *The Negro Laborer*, 25-26; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 108; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama* and "Let Us Make Man."

¹³⁷ Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, citing *Montgomery Advertiser and Mail*, 23 October 1874; Going, *Bourbon Democracy*, xvii; "To the Wh[i]te Men of Alabama."; Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 4, 75 (note).

equality through legislation that would lift blacks above whites, the journalist asked white Democrats if they were willing to stand on the sideline with folded hands while social equality was forced on them and their families. Heidt then reminded his readers that “real” white men would never allow such degradation to take place. These were interesting words coming from a man who claimed to abhor racial strife and who had backed Curtis’ 1874 congressional bid.¹³⁸

Heidt purposely exaggerated the ERA’s stance to stoke white opposition. Its members had committed themselves to the Republican party and to social equality, but they had also criticized conservative white Republicans for helping perpetuate segregation in public places, including inns and restaurants. In view of that criticism, delegates supported the state GOP, but they did not support all of its positions. Even so, one white supposed the African Americans were ensuring a “*dark future*” for themselves and their families by remaining within the party. Regardless of commentator’s motives, the comment itself contained a shred of truth. When white Republicans failed to actively pursue civil-rights legislation, the Alabama House consented to a pitiful substitute. The state senate accepted an alternate act altogether, leaving the civil-rights bill in the hands of federal lawmakers.¹³⁹

¹³⁸ “Read This” (first quote) and “The Civil Rights Bill” (second quote), *ibid.*, 2 July 1874. For Silsby’s alleged position, see “Old Gray,” letter to the editor, *ibid.*, 13 August 1874. Cf. 23-26 August 1874 *Alabama State Journal* “To the People of Alabama”; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 87; McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama*, 143-144. John W. Jones, a black delegate, also objected to forced integration. Cf. 2 July 1874 *Marion Commonwealth*; 27 June 1874 *Alabama State Journal*; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 103, 315-316; Brown, “Reconstruction Legislators in Alabama,” 198; Foner, *Freedom’s Lawmakers*, 122.

¹³⁹ See *Montgomery Advertiser*, 30 June 1874. See also *Montgomery Daily State Journal*, 21 August 1874; Gerald Lee Roush, “Aftermath of Reconstruction: Race, Violence, and Politics in Alabama, 1874-1884” (master’s thesis, Auburn University, 1973), 25. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 213; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 70; Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 176; Gross, “Alabama Politics and the Negro,” 28-29.

As the ERA convention met in Montgomery, Tuscaloosa Democrats held a county convention in which they claimed that Republicans of all colors and backgrounds were forcing them to accept a supremacist platform. The Democrats vowed that they did not want to make skin color an issue, but they had to do so in order to preserve the untarnished honor and purity of the Caucasian race. Before the meeting adjourned, conventioners agreed that any Tuscaloosa citizen who supported pending civil-rights legislation or integration in any form outside the workplace would be kept from having any sort of social interaction with the “genuine” white men of Tuscaloosa or their families.¹⁴⁰

Similar conventions were held in some of Perry County’s largest political precincts. Several of the meetings were held on the fourth of July. At Heard’s Beat, Democrats nominated R. Q. Prior, C. J. Chandler, and J. J. Pardue to represent them at the party’s 18 July county convention. After accepting the nomination, Pardue delivered a speech in which he discussed the supposed evils of Sumner’s civil-rights bill. In his opinion, the measure’s passage would harm all of the nation’s citizens because the “sable sons of Ham” were not ready to vote. Eufaula Democrats agreed. Reportedly, some of them chased a black man for singing the praises of the Republican party. When the partisans caught him, they put bracelets on his wrists as if he were an escaped slave. Upon hearing about the incident, one of their Perry County associates extolled: “They

¹⁴⁰ See “Tuscaloosa Speaks Boldly,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 25 June 1874. White conservatives expressed similar views throughout Alabama. “Under compulsion,” one man wrote, white Democrats put aside their differences and assembled to end the “carnival of legalized crime and robbery. To rid themselves of the domination of the negro and his allies..., the white people of the State had no recourse but to fight the Devil with fire.” Herbert, *Grandfather Talks about his Life under Two Flags*, typescript, 202.

intend to preserve the purity of the ballot-box in that portion of the American kingdom.”¹⁴¹

In Perry’s county seat, Democrat Powhatan Lockett nominated Judge Porter King for the chairmanship of Marion Beat. Shortly thereafter, James G. Evins, John Howze (or Houze), R. H. Lee, William Modawell, John Moore, W. C. Wyatt, W. C. Zimmerman, and other delegates voted “the grand old forest” (King) into office. Later, B. M. Huey was elected secretary; and John Harrell, Cyrus D. Hogue, A. J. Marshall, J. T. Pack, Jr., and E. M. Vary were named to the executive committee.¹⁴²

In his reception speech, Chairman King claimed that Alabama was “going down, down—daily growing poorer and more pitiable” at the hands of ignorant, unprincipled, and vicious lawmakers. King thought it was useless to try to court freedmen, as a number of Democrats had advised, because most black voters were blind devotees to the Republican party. Employing the same biblical parlance that Democrats had used during the 1870 election cycle, King promised to associate only with those who had “not, Judas like, sold themselves for office and plunder.”¹⁴³

The promises of King, who had worked with black and white Republicans on a number of occasions, including the formation and development of Lincoln Normal School of Marion, were followed by a resounding round of applause. When it ceased, Francis A. Bates—a Marion councilman, physician, Presbyterian, and member of the

¹⁴¹ *Marion Commonwealth*, 27 September and 8 October 1874 (first quote); “State Items,” *ibid.*, 11 June 1874 (second quote). See “Heard’s Beat,” *ibid.*, 9 July 1874. The Hamitic Curse (Curse of Ham, Curse of Canaan) has been discussed duplicitously. See, for example, *A Letter of Inquiry to Ministers of the Gospel of All Denominations, on Slavery. By a Northern Presbyterian* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1854).

¹⁴² “Pic-Nic at Sawyersville,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 13 August 1874, hereinafter cited as “Pic-Nic at Sawyersville.”

¹⁴³ “Beat Meeting in Marion,” *ibid.*, 9 July 1874, hereinafter cited as “Beat Meeting in Marion.” Cf. Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 200, citing Richard H. Wilmer to Bishop Quintard, 2 January 1873, Charles Todd Diaries, Louisiana State University Libraries.

executive committee of the Alabama State Grange—discussed two of the most pressing issues of the day: the civil rights and the human rights of black folk. Like other Democrats, Bates swore that he did not mind black people having all the rights and privileges that other ethnic groups enjoyed. He was even willing to help former slaves become more civilized and intelligent, but he would rather die than help them become the social equals of whites. Unsurprisingly, the speaker's words were followed by as much applause as King's statements about white Republicans.¹⁴⁴

As the clapping ceased, Bates read a series of resolutions. One of them reflected Marion Democrats' desire to elect any honest and capable official as long as he was white. Another resolution dubbed Sumner's civil-rights bill as the vilest measure in United States history. According to the latter pronouncement, the highly debated act was no more than an attempt to force white Americans to place blacks in economic, political, and social positions for which they were neither entitled nor qualified.¹⁴⁵

In Perryville, G. W. Pardue was elected chairman of the local Democratic club. Daniel Parker was elected secretary. In addition to these positions, Pardue and Parker were chosen to attend the countywide Democratic convention. J. M. Ford, J. A. Fuller, J. P. Harris, J. A. Kennington, and either N. M. Walker or J. M. Watters (or Watts) joined them. Each man agreed that the white-supremacist platform that party leaders had adopted was reactionary. White people had to unite along ethnic lines because supporters of the Civil Rights Bill of 1873 were threatening to tear them and their families apart. To

¹⁴⁴ Bates was a member of the Marion Grange No. 95. John T. Harris became the secretary of the state Grange. Cf. 1870-1877 Perry County Business Licenses; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 86; "State Grange Officers."

¹⁴⁵ Cf. "Beat Meeting in Marion."

prevent that from happening, the Democrats were determined to continue fighting until it had been decided once and for all that white men would always govern the South.¹⁴⁶

Old Town Democrats met at either Caudle's Shop or Ironville. Wiley Tubb was named chairman, and W. P. Blackburn, W. C. Crub, Dr. D. P. Rawls, and G. W. Tucker were selected to attend the upcoming countywide convention. When the convention was held, they and other delegates elected Robert D. Sturdivant chairman of the 1874 Perry County Democratic convention. John Walthall was elected secretary, and Attorney John W. Bush was named associate secretary. At some point thereafter, it was announced that F. A. Bates, W. A. Bradfield, H. W. Crawford, D. S. Hogue, John Moore, Young L. Royston, and Robert Sturdivant would attend the statewide convention.¹⁴⁷

Perry County Democrats were not the only voters who were busy during the summer of 1874. On 20 June, Republicans Alexander Curtis, John Reynolds, and Joseph Speed presided over a meeting at the county courthouse. Initially, their main concern was the upcoming congressional race between either Hays or Curtis and whomever the "lordly political Pharisees" (Democrats) nominated, but a more pressing concern soon surfaced. Anticipating a physical confrontation caused by disagreements about civil rights and related issues, Curtis, Reynolds, and Speed discovered that some Republicans had brought clubs and guns to the meeting even though several municipal laws prohibited having weapons at political gatherings.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ See "Perryville Beat Meeting," *Marion Commonwealth*, 9 July 1874. See also "The Democracy of Alabama Appealing to the People for Support with a Falsehood upon Its Lips—Who Originated the Race Issue," *Alabama State Journal*, 23-26 August 1874.

¹⁴⁷ See "Old Town Beat Meeting," *The Marion Commonwealth*, 9 July 1874.

¹⁴⁸ "Democratic False Pretences," *Alabama State Journal*, 16 September 1874, hereinafter cited as "Democratic False Pretences." See "Assembly," *ibid.*, 23 July 1874.

The loyalties of Speed and most of the black men who attended the June convention were well known. Speed supported Hays, and most of the blacks supported Curtis. The loyalties of Reynolds, on the other hand, were harder to pinpoint. He seemed to support Hays and Curtis. In the end, Hays won. On 29 July 1874, he was nominated for Congress a record-breaking third time.¹⁴⁹

Over the next month, Curtis, Reynolds, and Speed held several meetings; many of which were marred by racial conflict. At some of the gatherings, disturbed blacks yelled words that were more repulsive than Indians' war cries, reported one observer. Unable to unite with their white colleagues, the blacks attempted to meet by themselves at Hamburg in south central Perry County. That, too, failed. White Republicans from Marion and elsewhere in the county found out about the meeting and, led by Speed, attended it. Curtis, the presiding officer, was cordial to Speed's group, so the early August meeting continued until 10 PM or thereabouts. The lateness of the hour prompted some attendees to seek room and board in Hamburg, but the town's white boarders turned them away. Thus, Speed and his not-so-merry band of white Republicans had to sleep with John Nall, one of Captain J. T. Pack's elderly servants, and the same black men with whom they had not wished to commingle in public places.¹⁵⁰

A similar occurrence happened to J. T. Harris. While conducting business in Heard's Beat one evening, he asked a female towns person if he could board at her residence for the night. The woman asked him if he were the same J. T. Harris who was

¹⁴⁹ According to James Baggett, Alabama was the only state in the Lower South where white Republicans were as wealthy as their Democratic opponents. Cf. 1 August 1874 *Alabama State Journal*; Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 23-24; Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 249.

¹⁵⁰ See "Civil Rights," *Marion Commonwealth*, 13 August 1874.

Perry County's sheriff. The weary traveler said that he was, and the woman told him that he could not bed at her home because he was a Republican.¹⁵¹

As Speed and Harris were reminded of how incomplete the county's social reconstruction was, local Democrats revealed that Captain James Taylor Jones, a war veteran and state senator from Marengo County, would be Hays' congressional challenger. Despite the prevailing opinion, Jones felt that he could defeat Hays for several reasons. To begin with, the Democrat's sibling, William B., was a prominent Republican, having served in the state senate and attended the 1872 Republican National Convention. The same year, William was a presidential elector. Together with his influence over conservative Republicans, whom he might have been able to convince to voter for his brother, and the national Republican party's support for the Civil Rights Bill of 1873, which continued to divide Alabama Republicans, James Jones was optimistic about his campaign. Surely, the self-respecting white people of Alabama would not stand by and let Hays, Speed, and other Black Belt Republicans force something as deplorable as total integration on them and their progeny, imagined Captain Jones.¹⁵²

Speed responded to the allegations promptly by reaffirming his personal opposition to social equality. He publicly supported the Civil Rights Bill of 1873 and similar measures because they were part of the Republican platform, and he was a devoted Republican who lived in a predominately black county. If the national platform did not contain such planks and if more white people lived in Perry, Speed would not

¹⁵¹ See "How J. T. Harris was Disappointed," *ibid.*, 8 October 1874.

¹⁵² See *Selma Southern Argus*, 2 December 1870. See also "Democratic Disturbances in Sumter Foretold," *Alabama State Journal*, 8 October 1874. Cf. 7 August 1874 *Livingston Journal*; 20 August 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* "Grand Ratification Meeting"; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 70; DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*, 359, 364, 367, 383, 390-394; Wiggins, *Scalawag*, 128, 130, 131, 145, 147.

have called for or backed the civil-rights bills. Time soon proved that he meant what he said.

Such was Perry County during the summer and fall of 1874. With important elections approaching, political and racial gaps grew wider than they had been in years. Aware of what was at stake, the county's leading politicians began to assemble their forces. In August, white Democrats formed the Young Men's Democratic and Conservative Club. The group held its first meeting in Marion on the eighth day of the month. H. C. Cooke was elected chair, and J. L. Wyatt was elected secretary. Its executive body, the "Committee of Six," was made up of former Republican official Charles G. Browne, John B. Cocke, A. J. Evins (or Ervin), Edward Goree, Chambers Graham, and T. D. Jones.¹⁵³

With the approval of the club's rank-and-file members, the Committee of Six changed the name of the organization to the A. B. Moore Democratic Club in honor of Alabama's 1857-1861 governor. After the club was renamed, members selected permanent officers. Included were Cooke, president; Cyrus D. Hogue, first vice president; E. M. Vary, second vice president; and W. C. Zimmerman, third vice president. They and other officers were installed on 18 August 1874 at the Perry County courthouse. A. R. Kelly, Edmund Winston Pettus, Thomas Seay, John F. Vary, and other party veterans spoke. Thereafter, A. B. Moore, Jr., presented a flag that his children had made. "A. B. Moore Club" was on one side, and "Do Justice, Love Mercy" was on the other side. Before departing, members agreed to make it the club's official banner.

¹⁵³ See "Moore Democratic and Conservative Club" and "Grand Ratification Meeting," *Marion Commonwealth*, 13 August 1874.

Similar organizations followed. On 7 September 1874, the all-white, all-male Duke Nall Democratic Club of Radfordsville was formed. On 3 October, Uniontown Democrats organized the Canebrake Democratic and Conservative Club of Perry County and named Robert Christian permanent president. He and other members delighted in the fact that so many local clubs were being formed. Several party leaders had been calling for them for almost two years, but few persons had seemed interested in creating them until a group of black Uniontown Republicans did so during early June 1874. Local Democrats were even more delighted when one of their own, Attorney John Moore of Marion, was nominated for the judgeship of the first judicial district. But they had less praise for their party's choice for lieutenant governor. Despite widespread support in parts of the White Belt and the middle Piedmont region of the state southward, Attorney Modawell was defeated by Robert Fulwood Ligon, a Tuskegee attorney, educator, and Confederate veteran.¹⁵⁴

With most of the state ticket decided, Perry County's most conservative Democrats mounted an all-out attack on "Negroism." Universal equality and the white Republicans who supported it were two of their first targets. Partisan Democrats said J. T. Harris, Houston, and Speed advocated a measure that not only would require white and black adults to sleep in the same hotels; it would also require them to occupy the same railroad and street cars, steamboats, and theaters. More deplorable, white children would be compelled to study alongside black ones. The Democrats were sure that such compulsion would not stop with primary and secondary education. After graduation, white and black students would be forced to attend the University of Alabama at

¹⁵⁴ See "Radsfordville Heard..." *ibid.*, 17 September 1874. Cf. Brewer, *Alabama*, 340-341.

Tuscaloosa or the Agricultural and Mechanical College at Auburn, and white women would have to toil hand-in-hand with black men in factories, fields, mills, and other workplaces. Worst of all, whites would be buried in the same cemeteries as blacks.¹⁵⁵

In the Democrats' opinion, there was not one respectable white man in Perry County who wished to be seen with Harris, Houston, Speed or any other alleged supporter of the Civil Rights Bill of 1873. Although Harris, Houston, and Speed did so principally for political rather than personal reasons, they were still deplorable to local Democrats. After ridiculing the purportedly traitorous trio, Democratic rhetoricians turned their attentions to black people and to the supposedly glorious days of old:

Freedom has taken her flight to some more favored land,
and left us naught save our untarnished honor. Our
government has been [engulfed] in a sea of anarchy and
ruin. A race, once in a state of bondage, has been made to
ride in the political chariot of the nation. The compulsive
grasp of tyranny has seized and paralyzed our country, and
to-day Liberty lies mingled and bleeding at the feet of a
despotic foe.¹⁵⁶

Such words, which reverberated throughout the state, were mere propaganda. If tyranny ever existed in the South, then it existed before the Civil War, when race-based slavery was legal. Despite what some people had claimed about there being a new South after the war, few things had changed by 1874. Women continued to suffer political injustices. Financially poor people continued to struggle. Ethnic, religious, and social minorities continued to be victimized. Simply put, the region's ostensibly ruinous state between 1865 and 1874 was caused more by thousands of white persons' prejudices and

¹⁵⁵ *Marion Commonwealth*, 23 July 1874. See "Not Banishment, but Withdrawn," *ibid.*, 13 August 1874, hereinafter cited as "Not Banishment, but Withdrawn." Cf. 20 August 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* "Grand Ratification Meeting."

¹⁵⁶ "Not Banishment, but Withdrawn."

unwillingness to change than by Republican or black rule. In fact, in certain areas, such as public education and representative government, the South was more democratic during Reconstruction than it had been during any other time in the region's history.¹⁵⁷

Facts like these had no bearing on what thousands of Perry County Democrats believed in 1874. For them, Reconstruction had been every bit as tragic as Charles Adams, Claude Bowers, John DuBose, Walter Fleming, Michael Hill, and other historians would later claim. But confident that change was about to come, a group of Heard's Beat Democrats beseeched every white man in the county to devote his mind, body, and soul to restoring the purportedly natural state of affairs. In order to achieve that goal, the Democrats believed white voters had to be more principled and united than normal, but the outcome would justify their efforts. Heidt and Hawks concurred. During the fall of 1874, the journalists thanked God for affording them an opportunity to provide their readers an effective, fearless, and useful newspaper that, despite considerable pressure to do otherwise, was not afraid to advocate white supremacy. Ironically, Heidt and Hawks vowed to make their publication worthy of being purchased by every person in the state and nation regardless of his or her class, color, creed, gender, or religious affiliation.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ See *Tuscaloosa American*, 12 July 1898. See also Hans L. Trefousse, *Reconstruction: America's First Effort at Racial Democracy* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1971). Cf. 19 June 1869 *Alabama Weekly State Journal*; Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*; Edmonds, *Facts about the South*, 1; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 8, 15; Franklin, *Reconstruction*, 108; "The Free School System in Elmore County"; Gaston, *The New South Creed*; Magaul, *The Eternal Education*, 41; McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama*, 254; "Peace and Education"; "The Public School System in Alabama"; Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 255-256; Trelease, *White Terror*, xxxi; Weiner, "The Struggle for Hegemony" chap. 7 in *Social Origins of the New South*, 186-221; Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 154-155.

¹⁵⁸ See "Letter from East Perry," *Marion Commonwealth*, 13 August 1874, hereinafter cited as "Letter from East Perry." See also "The Commonwealth and the Campaign," *ibid.*, 20 August 1874. Cf. Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*; Bowers, *The Tragic Era*; DuBose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*.

After making such a commendable, albeit contradictory, gesture toward inclusiveness, the men deviated by advising every white man in the state to know and understand to what depths of anarchy, bankruptcy, and disgrace Alabama Republicans were willing to drive the state and nation. Financially poor white men really needed to know how their money was being spent in Montgomery and Washington, argued Heidt and Cooke. Whereas rich whites would not have to mingle with innately inferior blacks in schools and public places, poor whites could not avoid the pandemonium that integration would surely cause. The journalists then speculated that black indolence would be unbearable if the civil-rights bill were signed into law.¹⁵⁹

Once more, Heidt and Hawks contradicted themselves. Previously, they had congratulated black people for their hard work, peacefulness, and refinement. Although the journalists did not like the county's black citizens forming Republican clubs or labor unions, they and other predominantly black organizations proved that many black Perry Countians were extremely active, forward-looking, resourceful citizens who had no desire to become slothful. Even so, local Democrats did not stop making derogatory remarks about ignorant, law-breaking blacks, Carpetbaggers, and Scalawags during the months preceding the November 1874 elections. Black politicians were forced to read the ad hominem attacks of the Democrats because Perry was one of many Alabama counties that did not have a GOP newspaper.

Unfortunately for the Republicans, who required a united front in the face of solidifying Democratic opposition, they instead fell into quarreling. Speed's reputed opposition to the 1868 state code and his desire to close free schools bothered some

¹⁵⁹ Cf. *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 49; "The Public Free School System," 10; "The Ultimatum of the Negro."

Republicans. Equally disappointing, he had kept a Democratic clerk while turning away a Republican who wanted the position. According to Speed, the Republican in question was a well-known criminal.

Speed's alleged transgressions did not stop there. Rumor had it that he had paid Curtis and other important black men to campaign for him. No one knew where the rumor originated, but it might have come from a white youth. Reportedly, a blind girl overheard a conversation about a dinner that Curtis and Speed were said to have attended with a black civil-rights leader in an adjacent state, possibly Mississippi. The girl figured it was okay for Negroes to dine with each other and therefore did not understand why anyone cared whether Curtis and Speed ate with another member of their race. When someone told her Speed was a Caucasian, the youth replied: "I know he is white outside, but he is black inside and the only difference between him and the other negroes is...God Almighty *forgot to turn him* when...he made him."¹⁶⁰

Curtis was infuriated by the allegation. He was even more upset by similar charges from Sheriff Harris, who substantiated the claim regarding Speed having paid Curtis to stump for him. Unable to hold back his anger, Curtis made his feelings known in a public address by daring Harris to tell him face-to-face that he had accepted money from Speed. Curtis then reminded his audience, comprised largely of black people, that Harris had not summoned a single black juror since becoming sheriff. In doing so, Curtis

¹⁶⁰ *Marion Commonwealth*, 10 September 1874. Cf. letter to the editor, *ibid.*, 20 August 1874. If Alexander Curtis did accept money from Joseph Speed, then it would have been a remarkably shrewd move by Curtis. At the time of the alleged transaction, Speed was an electioneer for Charles Hays, Curtis' congressional opponent. For additional discourse about Speed and his "colored brethren," cf. 17 September 1874 *Marion Commonwealth*.

not only distanced himself from Harris, whose campaign he had supported; Curtis also showed that he was not above racial politics.¹⁶¹

Continuing the assault, Curtis told listeners that Speed had actually paid white people during the 1874 campaign. Included were James Houston and Harris himself. At the time, they and Speed were supposed to have been political rivals. (Each man was vying for the probate judgeship.) Curtis concluded his speech by blasting every white Republican in the state who did not speak openly and often about the rights and privileges of black people. Unsurprisingly, Harris and Speed were two of the first persons whom Curtis mentioned.¹⁶²

Although the Curtis-Harris-Houston-Speed controversy was local, it reflected a larger issue within the Republican party. Throughout Alabama, black and white Republicans feuded with each other about the appropriate place of black persons within and without the organization. Whereas Harris, Hays, Samuel Rice, Speed, Charles Sheats, and other white Republicans were opposed to universal equality in general and to the Civil Rights Bill of 1873 in particular, black Republicans such as Curtis supported almost any measure that would have ended existing economic, educational, political, and social inequities. Although such divisions had always existed within the state Republican party, they were more important than usual during the summer and the fall of 1874.

¹⁶¹ Cf. *ibid.*, 5 March 1874. Alexander Curtis exaggerated. African Americans had served on the grand jury.

¹⁶² Joseph Speed's alleged campaign frauds were mentioned throughout the fall and the winter of 1874. See, for example, "Joseph H. Speed," *ibid.*, 15 October 1874.

During those seasons, Democrats successfully united countless white voters through a nostalgic, quasi-religious, white-supremacist platform.¹⁶³

Republican divisions deepened in Perry County when the party nominated Stephen Childs for the state legislature. Originally, Childs competed against Greene Lewis and Matthew Boyd, but Joseph Speed made a motion to nominate J. T. Harris for the office. Aware that Speed was trying to better his chances of becoming probate judge, Harris asked his Republican associates to reconsider Child's nomination, but they refused.¹⁶⁴

The Republican situation worsened in coming days. When the county convention was held on 12 September 1874, President Curtis was asked to lead the devotion. Disgusted by the white members' failure to address adequately the Civil Rights Bill of 1873, Curtis decided that many Caucasian Republicans were beyond racial redemption, turned down the request, and "crow-fished," laughed one Democrat. Uniontown's L. W. Temple refused to act as secretary, so a dark-skinned black man named Edward Jewett assumed the role. Jewett was joined by Orange Scott, an allegedly illiterate black whom Barry Hays nominated for tax assessor; George Duskin, John Moore's challenger for the first judicial circuit; and Richard Terrell, the convention's vice president.¹⁶⁵

Duskin's support was scant. In nearby Hale County, where he lived, Republicans refused to nominate him. When Perry County Democrats found out about the snub, they were quite amused that Duskin's own townsmen would balk at such an important

¹⁶³ See "Acto Presto Veto Change," *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 September 1874. See also *Alabama State Journal*, 25 and 27 June, 23 August 1874. Cf. Foner, *Reconstruction*, 552.

¹⁶⁴ See "A Palpable Fraud," *Marion Commonwealth*, 10 September 1874. Cf. 15 October 1874 *Marion Commonwealth*; Childs, "Non-elected Outstanding Citizens," 4.

¹⁶⁵ "The Republican County Convention," *ibid.*, 15 October 1874. The writer intentionally misspelled "crow-fished" "crow-fished" to reflect Curtis' skin color.

individual. Cognizant of how irresolute many white Republicans were about universal equality, Democrats hoped that many of them would desert the GOP in November.¹⁶⁶

Throughout Perry County, Democrats worked hard to guarantee that the “hydra-headed monster, Radicalism,” would be slain. Like Democrats throughout the state, white supremacy was their principal tool. Although politics was less important to some people than the worsening financial depression or the poor prospects for their crops, there was enough interest in Alabama’s overall condition to ensure a solid turnout at the polls on the third day of November. Midway through October, the *Marion Commonwealth* advised Democrats to continue to the good work because the “day of deliverance draweth nigh.”¹⁶⁷

The paper was correct. The time for Alabamians to decide the fate of their state was fast approaching. Having secured the Republican nomination for Congress, Charles Hays returned to the Black Belt to launch his 1874 campaign. Because Perry County had been so important to the congressman’s 1872 victory, it was one of his first stops. Hays’ entourage included some of the Black Belt’s most respected black politicians. Alexander Curtis, Hays’ former opponent, was one of them. Joining Hays and Curtis were Hale County Republican Central Club President James K. Green and Greene S. W. Lewis, whose Selma and Meridian mail route Hays had recently changed in order to protect Lewis from threats.¹⁶⁸

The Republicans convened a mass meeting in Uniontown on 12 October 1874. Several of their counterparts wondered why the campaign had not begun earlier insofar as

¹⁶⁶ See “Sheets, of North Alabama, on the Civil Rights Bill,” *ibid.*, 20 August 1874.

¹⁶⁷ *Marion Commonwealth*, 15 October 1874. See *ibid.*, 1 October 1874.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. “The Temper of the South.”

Democrats had started canvassing the fourth congressional district two months earlier. A confident Hays assured his colleagues that everything was under control. Instead of worrying about when the campaign began, the congressman and his team encouraged their associates to attend as many of the party's October mass meetings as they could, especially the GOP barbecue that was going to be held in Haysville on the last day of the month.¹⁶⁹

After a relatively trouble-free rally in Uniontown, Hays rode into Marion and checked into the King House Hotel. Hays was still confident that he would be reelected but was allegedly so scared of being attacked by some of the town's white residents that he carried four pistols. Once inside, the congressman took the weapons out of his pockets and placed them on the mantle above the barroom fireplace. Either confused or frightened by the display, one of the hotel's black waiters was said to have dashed out of the room, screaming.

A number of Marionites did not know why Hays felt that he needed to arm himself in their town. The congressman had been a regular visitor to Marion over the years, and he had never been wronged. Instead, the pistol-toting, whiskey-drinking Republican had been treated with utmost respect even though he was, as two persons put it, a "champion liar."¹⁷⁰

Hays probably was treated well during previous trips, but his October 1874 visit was different. The sociopolitical environment of the late campaign season was more

¹⁶⁹ See "Fourth Congressional District—Mass Meetings," *Alabama State Journal*, 15 September 1874, hereinafter cited as "Fourth Congressional District—Mass Meetings." See also "Republican Mass Meetings in the Fourth Congressional District," *ibid.*, 16 September 1874, hereinafter cited as "Republican Mass Meetings in the Fourth Congressional District"; "Meeting in Hale County," *Alabama State Journal*, 1 October 1874.

¹⁷⁰ "Hays, the Liar," *Marion Commonwealth*, 15 October 1874; *Tuscaloosa Blade*, 22 October 1874.

energized than previous races had been. In addition, Hays had recently written a letter to a northern journalist, politician, and war veteran that had inflamed the entire nation.¹⁷¹

Hays spoke at the Marion courthouse on 13 October. During the speech, he acknowledged having authored the infamous “Hawley Letter,” a 5,000-word exposé on Alabama violence that he had written on 7 September at the bequest of Joseph B. Hawley, a prominent Connecticut congressman and newspaper owner who felt that uninformed or simply misinformed Northerners needed to know about the real “Temper of the South.”¹⁷²

General Hawley placed Hays’ letter on the front page of his 15 September 1874 *Hartford Daily Courant*. According to its author, who pledged to present only established facts, at least thirty-five Alabama Republicans had been wounded or killed during the summer of that year for political or racial reasons. Instantly, Alabama became one of the most carefully scrutinized states in the nation. Some of Hays’ claims were true, but some of them were not. Walter P. Billings—a white lawyer from either Jefferson City, Missouri, or Brooklyn, New York, whom the *Meridian*, Mississippi, *Mercury* called a mischievous Carpetbagger—had, in fact, been killed near Ramsey’s Station in Sumter County on 1 August as he rode home from a Republican rally on a local plantation. Billings—whom many people described as an honest cotton grower,

¹⁷¹ See, for example, “What can the Governor Do,” *Alabama State Journal*, 2 October 1874.

¹⁷² “The Temper of the South.” See “The Difficulty in Greene—Twenty Negroes Killed,” *Alabama State Journal*, 17 September 1874. See also “Hay’s [sic] Letter,” *Marengo News-Journal*, 26 September 1874, hereinafter cited as “Hay’s Letter”; William Warren Rogers, Jr., “Reconstruction Journalism: The Hays-Hawley Letter,” *American Journalism* 7 (fall 1989): 7-19; Rogers, “The Hays-Hawley Letter,” chap. 7 in *Black Belt Scalawag*, 110-120. Cf. 15 October 1874 *Marion Commonwealth*; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 17; “Fourth Congressional District—Mass Meetings”; “Republican Mass Meetings in the Fourth Congressional District.”

family man, and rising GOP figure—had lived in Alabama for only one year when he was slain.¹⁷³

According to numerous Democrats and Democratic media, Billings' death was accidental. As the proprietors of the *Livingston Journal* and the *Montgomery Daily Advertiser and Mail* understood it, Billings' assaulters sought only to rob him of the \$10,000 in campaign money that he was carrying. At some point during the rally, Billings reportedly patted his breeches pocket to let people know that he had enough money with him to carry the Sumter elections. Consequently, a group of black Republicans seized, robbed, and ultimately killed him, reported a variety of Democratic newspapers.¹⁷⁴

Most Republicans were appalled. According to Congressman Hays, Billings did not have \$10,000 on him when he was attacked. Nor was the killing accidental or carried out by black Republicans or unknown parties, as conservative Democrats and Billings' wife claimed. Rather, a group of white supremacists whom Klansmen Steve Renfro led slew Billings. And, unbeknownst to many people, the Billing slaying was not the first premeditated act of violence that Renfro had carried out. Previously, he had tried to burn a seventy-year-old woman and a nine-year-old boy. Later, Renfro actually succeeded in

¹⁷³ Walter Billings chaired the Sumter County Republican party's executive committee. See "Lawlessness in Alabama," *Alabama State Journal*, 28 August 1874, quoting *New York Tribune*, 24 August 1874. Cf. "The Temper of the South." Numerous reports of the incident appeared in local, state, and national media, particularly in newspapers. The killing is also discussed in William Warren Rogers and Ruth Pruitt, *Stephen S. Renfro: Alabama's Outlaw Sheriff* (Tallahassee, Fl.: Sentry Press, 1972), 45-48.

¹⁷⁴ See "The Plotters Entrapped," *Livingston Journal*, 21 August 1874. See also "The Democracy of Sumter 'Vindicating,'" *Alabama State Journal*, 15 September 1874. Cf. "Sumter County, Ala., Assassination"; "Hay's Letter"; "A Categorical Answer."

burning an unidentified Unionist's cotton and home, and he killed a German by the name of Copeland.¹⁷⁵

Billings might have been warned of his murderers' intentions about one month before he was slain. When Republicans convened in Uniontown on 29 July to decide a state ticket, a group of blacks allegedly told Billings that he would be killed within three weeks if he continued to campaign for Republicans. Unmoved, he just laughed. A few days later, he was shot a reported fifteen times. Unable to control his frustration over the cold-blooded murder, Hays told everyone who wished to listen to him that it was ridiculous to question whether the faithful, indefatigable, and intelligent lawyer was killed for any other reasons than his former home and his affiliation with the Republican party. A hotel owner and Democrat from the North whose last name was Allen confirmed Hays' account. As a consequence, Allen was beaten badly.¹⁷⁶

Less than one month after the Billings murder, white terrorists took the life of Thomas L. Ivey (or Ivy), a black Chattanooga and Mobile Railroad agent, as he traveled through Sumter County. At some point during the journey, white assassins wearing broadcloth boarded Ivey's railroad car and fired between three and twenty shots at the allegedly insolent black. The men then strolled into the woods. According to Hays, for

¹⁷⁵ 28 August 1874 *Alabama State Journal* "Lawlessness in Alabama." See "War of Races. Three Democratic Murderers of Billings Arrested in the Democratic Nomination Convention in Sumter," *ibid.*, 4 October 1874. See also *Meridian Mercury*, 1 October 1874; "The Damnable Work in Sumter County," *Selma Times*, 2 October 1874, and *Alabama State Journal*, 6 October 1874; "The Murder of Billings! Overwhelming Testimony of the Prosecution," *Alabama State Journal*, 9 October 1874; "The Billings Murderers" and "Two Assassinations Planned by the Sumter White Leaguers," *Alabama State Journal*, 10 October 1874; "Corrupting Witnesses," *Alabama State Journal*, 13 October 1874; "Renfro! His Former Ku Klux Career in Sumter," *Alabama State Journal*, 14 October 1874.

¹⁷⁶ See "Hays Accused on Account of the Billings Murder," *Alabama State Journal*, 23 August 1874, hereinafter cited as "Hays Accused on Account of the Billings Murder." See also "Sumter County, Ala., Assassination," *West Alabamian*, 19 August 1874, hereinafter cited as "Sumter County Assassination." Cf. 28 August 1874 *Alabama State Journal* "Lawlessness in Alabama"; "A Categorical Answer"; "Hay's Letter"; "The Temper of the South."

whom Ivey had campaigned, the killing was politically and racially motivated because, contrary to what Benjamin F. Herr's *Livingston Journal* reported, Ivey was never disorderly.¹⁷⁷

Other reports of murder and mayhem, including an attempt on Greene Lewis' life, had not been confirmed by the time that Hays visited Marion, and a few of the congressman's claims had been refuted. Unlike Hays contended, white Democrats had not ambushed and killed at least ten of twenty-three black Choctaw County residents as they walked home from church. Nor had five African Americans, including one woman, been killed in northern Sumter County because of their political views. Two other blacks, a youngster named Monroe Keeton a well-to-do man by the name of Simon Edwards, were reportedly killed near the Mississippi border on the last day of August, but the details of their deaths were unclear. Edwards' daughter, mother, and wife claimed to have seen the killings, but the four men who were tried for the crime were cleared of all charges.¹⁷⁸

Despite possible and actual errors, Hays believed his letter to Congressman Hawley should have been taken seriously because respected journalists such as Arthur Bingham, a Montgomery Republican and former state treasurer, and Seaborn Saffold, a

¹⁷⁷ See *Livingston Journal*, 4 September 1874. See also "Mutilating the Dead," *Alabama State Journal*, 5 September 1874; "The Assassination of Thos. L. Ivy—His Face Mutilated and his Tongue Cut Out," *Alabama State Journal*, 11 September 1874; "The Sumter County Outlaws—Civil Authority Surrendered," *Alabama State Journal*, 29 September 1874; "About the South," *Alabama State Journal*, 1 October 1874; "The Sumter Prisoners—A Model Democratic Sheriff," *Alabama State Journal*, 7 October 1874; "The Murderers of Tom Ivy—The 'Peace' which Prevailed in Sumter," *Alabama State Journal*, 8 October, 1874. Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 14-15.

¹⁷⁸ "See "The 'Choctaw Corner' War," *Alabama State Journal*, 23 August 1874. See also "How the War of Races Inaugurated in Choctaw—A Legal Investigation," *ibid.*, 16 September 1874; "Terrible State of Affairs in Alabama," *ibid.*, 11 October 1874. Cf. "The Temper of the South."

Dallas Democrat, had reported on some of the incidents that Hays mentioned in the letter. Besides, all of the acts that Hays discussed were conceivable.

Among the most fictitious statements that Hays made was one concerning Republican Walter Lipscomb. Hays alleged that Marengo County Democrats shot Lipscomb during the summer of 1874 and that the victim succumbed shortly thereafter. What actually happened is unclear, but Lipscomb did not die. When he was seen walking around Demopolis, M. C. Burke's *Marengo News-Journal* presumed the man must have returned from the "land of the ghosts to combat Hays and prove him a falsifier and slanderer to his own native section."¹⁷⁹

The Hays-Hawley Letter was undoubtedly a major reason Hays was concerned about his life when he rode into Perry County's seat of justice on Columbus Day 1874. In addition to accurate information about Billings and Ivey and inaccurate information about Democratic misdeeds in Choctaw, Marengo, and Sumter Counties, Hays told Hawley that a group of white Perry County conservatives had attacked Joseph Speed following a speech that Speed had made in Marion. Mayor Shivers and other Democrats dismissed the claim as political sensationalism and demanded that Hays retract his statements, but Hays refused to do so, mentioning the alleged incident in his 13 October campaign speech.¹⁸⁰

Because Hays' audience was made up of what one commentator called "lesser lights and lesser liars," his address went well. Sensing a strong last-minute push among

¹⁷⁹ Cf. "Hay's Letter."

¹⁸⁰ See "An Infamous and Diabolical Lie Told by a Member of Congress from Alabama" and "Two Slanders of the Hon (?) Chas. Hays Refuted," *Marion Commonwealth*, 24 September 1874. See also "Proceedings of the Democratic and Conservative Party Convention," *ibid.*, 1 October 1874. Cf. 15 October 1874 *Marion Commonwealth*; "Temper of the South."

Perry County Republicans, local Democrats warned white voters that they and their loved ones would be fettered together if they allowed the Republicans to retain their offices. In a single statement, Democrats were able to unite individuals of varied and sometimes divergent economic, political, religious, and social backgrounds. By suggesting that white people would be chained together, visions of both slavery and prison filled the heads of many potential white voters. Moreover, the Democrats' warning implied that they had not done anything to warrant being enslaved or imprisoned. Their only crime, it seemed, was being born white. Armed with such weaponry, Perry County Democrats fired multiple verbal shots at white Republicans and ordinary blacks.¹⁸¹

Charles Hays was one of the easiest targets in the Black Belt. The centrist Republican was detested by quite a few white people and distrusted by several blacks. J. T. Harris, Houston, Speed, and L. W. Temple were also easy targets. Like Hays, they were political moderates who supposedly favored high taxes and social equality. These were shackles of tremendous weight during the ethnically charged, depression-ridden 1870s. Black people were criticized for innumerable reasons, not the least of which was their purportedly blind allegiance to white Republicans such as Hays, Houston, Speed, and Temple. One Perry County Democrat spoke for hundreds of his associates when he declared that white Republicans were convincing ignorant blacks to oppose reform, retrenchment, and rigid economy.¹⁸²

The Democrats' claim was largely unfounded. Perry County blacks were no more ignorant than their white neighbors. In some places, such as Marion, where Alabama

¹⁸¹ Cf. 15 October 1874 *Marion Commonwealth*; "Democratic False Pretenses."

¹⁸² See "The Difference" and "Speed and Harris," *Marion Commonwealth*, 22 October 1874. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 37.

State Normal School was located, the average black person might have been more informed than the average white was. Similarly, black voters opposed the types of reform, retrenchment, and strict economy for which many Democrats called because the schemes had done little, if anything, to better the conditions of the state's black citizens. Rigid economy had provided Alabama's wealthiest white citizens financial advantages unavailable to commoners, black as well as white, and retrenchment had hurt many of the people who had helped black persons protect themselves from the violence, fraud, and corruption that numerous African Americans had faced since 1865. As for reform, Democrats tended to oppose some of the most important sociopolitical reforms of the Postbellum era. Nevertheless, Perry County Democrats repeatedly called black voters stupid for allowing white Republicans to run them away from "the supremacy of virtue, intelligence, and the elevation of men of wisdom, honor, and integrity."¹⁸³

As Perry's black voters ran away from the Democratic party, white voters ran to it. On Friday, 14 August 1874, hundreds of white Democrats poured into Radfordsville, a town located in the eastern sector of the county. Soon, the Silver Cornet Band began to play a few joyful tunes, and several of the area's most respected Democrats took the stage. For almost two and a half hours, Attorneys Knox Lee, William Modawell, and John Moore reminded attentive listeners how important it was for them to defeat Republicans in the upcoming elections. On the heels of the rally, one audience member recalled how their words had motivated every Democrat who had listened to them. The men's talks on the Civil Rights Bill of 1873 were particularly inspiring. When asked about the gathering, another individual said every person who attended the rally left

¹⁸³ 22 October 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* "Speed and Harris." Cf. Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 8.

committed to do everything within his or her power to “carry on to victory the banner of the white man’s party and thereby stifle and crush out the very life-blood of that most damnable [and] devilish Congressional enactment.” The female audience members could Democrats could not vote, of course, but they could help the party by encouraging their male loved ones, hosting cookouts, and in a number of other ways.¹⁸⁴

The next major event of the Perry County Democratic and Conservative party was held on 26 September 1874 at the Marion courthouse. After calling the meeting to order, Chairman Robert Sturdivant, John W. Bush, and Cyrus D. Hogue were nominated for the state legislature. Probate Judge Howze was asked to keep his office, and L. Seawell Jones, a former Marion Female Seminary trustee and circuit-court clerk, was asked to return to the clerk’s office. Later, John C. Moore was nominated for sheriff, J. A. Kennington for tax collector, A. L. LeVert (or Le Vert) for tax assessor, and Henry W. Crawford for coroner. Peter T. Hurt, John M. Jeffries, George S. Turner, and N. M. Walker were the party’s choices for the county commission.¹⁸⁵

At some point during the convention, Charles G. Browne offered a resolution charging Hays, Spencer, and a number of other white Republicans with falsely accusing Democrats of maltreating black Alabamians. Taking great license with the truth, Browne claimed that he and his cohorts had always worked to ensure friendly relations between

¹⁸⁴ “Barbecue at Radfordsville,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 20 August 1874, hereinafter cited as “Barbecue at Radfordsville.” Cf. “Pic-Nic at Sawyersville.”

¹⁸⁵ Reportedly, Jones had paid H. Daniel Slawson to become circuit clerk during the late 1860s. Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1561. Later, Jones was elected circuit clerk. Cf. *1873 Board of Education Caption of Laws*. Jones was joined on the trustee board by Dr. F. A. Bates (president), W. R. Brown, Jason G. Evins, Dr. Robert Foster, John Houze, General J. G. L. Huey, General George Johnston, Powhatan Lockett, Charles W. Lovelace, M. A. Myatt, Dr. Samuel Perry, and Jones J. Seawell. See, for example, *Thirty-seventh Annual Catalogue of the Marion Female Seminary, Marion, Ala., 1872-1873* (Marion, Ala.: E. A. Heidt, 1873).

the state's black and white citizens. Allegedly, Democrats had even been willing to acquiesce in black manhood suffrage.¹⁸⁶

Browne focused on Perry County. There, black men had exercised the vote in "perfect freedom," he professed, vehemently denying that any Democrat had ever called for the extermination or the re-enslavement of freepersons. Quite the opposite, Democrats had wished to see black people develop intellectually and morally. This, Browne said, could never be achieved by forced integration or by any other Republican attempt to bring about universal equality.¹⁸⁷

Before the Democratic convention adjourned, Attorney Modawell offered a resolution in which Congressman Hays was called a slanderer for having accused a white mob of beating Speed following a speaking engagement in Marion, an issue that Mayor Shivers had taken up days earlier. In a 23 September 1874 letter to Congressman Hawley, Shivers called Hays' description of the Speed affair an utter lie. Speed, recalled Shivers, had been walking with Chancellor Turner when H. C. Cooke approached. Cooke, an unwavering Democrat who detested Speed, spoke angrily at him. In an attempt to prevent a full-blown brawl, Shivers stepped between the feuding men. Cooke then swung and kicked at Speed, but nothing else happened. The entire squabble had lasted only minutes, swore Shivers, who later fined Cooke for the assault. Believing

¹⁸⁶ See "The Election," *Marion Commonwealth*, 22 October 1874. Cf. 1 October 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* "Proceedings of the Democratic and Conservative County Convention"; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 176-178.

¹⁸⁷ "Proceedings of the Democratic and Conservative County Convention." Cf. 24 September 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* "Two Slanders of the Hon (?) Chas. Hays Refuted"; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 70.

Shivers' account of the incident to be correct, delegates adopted Modawell's resolution by a unanimous vote.¹⁸⁸

Perry County Democrats seemed to be well organized during the months before the November 1874 elections. Even so, they knew that an uphill battle awaited them because of the large number of African American voters who lived in Perry and other Black Belt counties. Hence, Democrats glossed over important political issues in coming days and concentrated almost solely on socio-ethnic issues. Oftentimes, they charged anyone who supported the Republican party with backing the Civil Rights Bill of 1873 and promoting integrated schools. Turning his attention to the Perry County's black electors, one Democrat declared that they would soon be given another opportunity to prove that they were not totally committed to the GOP.¹⁸⁹

The Democrat knew that he stood a better chance of persuading white voters to side with him than he did of convincing black voters to leave the Republican party, so he encouraged white men to work as hard as they could to help unseat the supposedly treacherous Republicans who had tried to destroy their homes, take their property, and degrade their beloved mothers, sisters, and children. Revisiting the days when only white men could vote or hold office and most blacks were slaves, the Democrat asked:

Shall we have men of capacity, or shall we have ignorance?
Shall we elect men who proclaim that Alabama is a
Sovereign State and has the right to administer her own
domestic affairs, or shall we have a set of dishonest chronic
office-seekers, who announce their determination to blot
out State lines and State Sovereignty[?] Shall we place the
State government in the hands of the intelligent white men

¹⁸⁸ Cf. 24 September 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* "Two Slanders of the Hon (?) Chas. Hays Refuted."

¹⁸⁹ See "The Election," *ibid.*, 22 October 1874. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 70.

of the country, or shall it descend into the greedy grasp of ignorant negroes and corrupt white renegades?¹⁹⁰

Such claims stirred many of Alabama's most conservative white citizens to frenzy. Because Perry County conservatives tended to be more reserved than those in other parts of the state, violence had been kept to a minimum during previous postbellum elections. But the 1874 race was much different than earlier campaigns. More seemed to be at stake, so emotions ran as high as they had been in 1860. Many white people believed Republicans wanted to raise black people to a point where they were equal to white people, as John C. Calhoun and other southern leaders had declared before the Civil War, because the 1874 national GOP platform included support for the federal Civil Rights Bill of 1873. According to the county's strictest white segregationists, blacks and liberal whites would become "masters," and conservative white Southerners would become "slaves" if the bill were signed into law. To prevent this from happening, Democrats such as Heidt seemed willing to use anything within their means, including violence and deceit, to prevent Republican victories during the upcoming elections. But most citizens hoped that such dishonorable tactics would not have to be used.¹⁹¹

Why anyone would have expected more than a quarter of Perry County voters, or the margin of white citizens to the total population, to support Democratic candidates is hard to understand. Several of its most notable business, political, and religious leaders were white Democrats, but the vast majority of their patrons, constituents, and parishioners were black Republicans whose most powerful and cooperative

¹⁹⁰ Cf. 22 October 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* "The Election"; Adams, *When in the Course of Human Events*, 54.

¹⁹¹ See, for example, "K," 17 September 1874 letter to the editor of the *Marion Commonwealth*.

representatives were never able to get their white counterparts to completely embrace universal equality.

Though professing to belong to a party of equality, human liberty, and inclusiveness, leading Republicans selected an all-white state ticket when they met in Montgomery on 20 August 1874 (see Appendix Y). They also rejected integrated public facilities, which some white Republicans had soft-peddled since 1867, agreed that the Civil Rights Act of 1873 had no place in the state platform, and passed a resolution clarifying most white members' objection to social equality. As one of the resolutions' authors made clear, any contrary assertion was without foundation. In fact, the purportedly "sound platform... made entirely of heart timber, disavowed all design to introduce the race issue into the canvass." Interestingly, Alexander Curtis—a black man—was chair.¹⁹²

With such generous concessions to whites, there was no reason for white voters to support Democrats, wrote one Republican editorialist. In a befuddling statement, the writer asserted the white-supremacist platform of the "'Damn-the-Nigger' Democracy" would cause a race war and consummate the state's ruin. Apparently, the state Republican party's equally supremacist platform would not. Speaking to these and other issues on Capitol Hill, James T. Rapier told congressmen that he, Curtis, and other leading black Alabama Republicans agreed to the 1874 state platform because white

¹⁹² "Republican State Convention," *Alabama State Journal*, 23 August-October 1874; "The Republican State Ticket" and "Platform of the Republicans of Alabama," *Alabama State Journal*, 25 August-October 1874; "The Republican Ticket," *Alabama State Journal*, 2 September 1874, citing the *Wilcox News and Pacifier*, [n.d.]; "Liberty-Tolerance-Peace," *Alabama State Journal*, September-October 1874; "The Civil Rights Bill—How Its Meaning had been Misinterpreted—Gen. Grant's Position," *Alabama State Journal*, 30 September 1874; "To the White Men of Alabama." See *Mobile Daily Register*, 27 and 29 May and 5 August 1874. See also "Resolutions of the Democratic and Conservative Party," *Jacksonville Republican*, 22 August 1874; *Montgomery Advertiser and Mail*, 23 August 1874. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 70; Foner, *Reconstruction*, 552.

Republicans in the northernmost parts of Alabama would not vote for their party's candidates if the state platform and ticket were not lily white. Proof positive were a number of white Republicans' attempts to form a Citizens' Union party whose members would support virtually every part of the national party platform except integration.¹⁹³

With Alabama's Republican party bitterly divided, Perry County Democrats were confident that they would be victorious on Tuesday, 3 November 1874. At least one Democrat expressed his confidence through verse:

On the fourth November morning,
The first thing our neighbors shall know,
Their ears shall be cheered with the
warning:
"Come bury the Radicals, O!

Our friends then, so quickly, shall dress
them

In wrappers as black as their sin,
And whisper, "*Be sure they're all in.*"

And, when they're to be buried, I reckon
The ladies will all like to go;
They'll form at the head of the coffin,
And follow the popular flow

We'll take, them, an hundred good fellows,
And let them all joyously go
To dig a deep hole in the meadow,
And in it force Radicals, O!

They'll chop out a couple of dorknicks,
And place them at head and at toe;
And never'll fail to chop on it;

¹⁹³ "To the White Men of Alabama." See "The 'Damn-the-Nigger' Democracy from a Northern Standpoint—The Negro and the 'Negro Haters,'" *Alabama State Journal*, 5 September 1874. See also *Congressional Record: Containing the Proceedings and Debates of the Forty-third Congress. Second Session. In Three Parts, with an Index*, vol. 3 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1875), 1001; "Civil Rights Gone Up," *Alabama State Journal*, 3 November 1874. Cf. *Affairs in Alabama*; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 46; Foner, *Reconstruction*, 552; McAfee, *Race, Religion and Reconstruction*, 152.

“They’ve gone to the devil below.”

We’ll take them the hundred good fellows,
And place them all around in a row,
And drink from a Democrat’s bottle,
“Farewell to Radicals, O!”¹⁹⁴

The lyrical writer was correct. When Perry County Democrats got out of their beds on Wednesday morning, they were met with marvelous news: “From the Lakes to the Gulf...Radicalism [had been] Rebuked!” Houston had defeated Lewis by a reported 15,091 votes, or slightly more than Heidt had predicted. The victors implored all Alabamians, blacks included, to “rejoice and be glad, for deliverance has come—and God grant that [it] may be perpetual.” As one group of historians has noted, the partisan’s words epitomized “Democratic truth and Bourbon gospel.” Unfortunately for those who spoke them, they usually did not apply to Perry County, where Republicans scored huge victories at the county and state levels (see Appendix Z [a and b]). On top of that, thirty-three black office seekers were elected to salaried positions, and Charles Hays defeated James Jones to return to Capitol Hill. The only political problem that Perry County Republicans seemed to have following the generally free and fair elections in the county was paying the bonds required to enter their new offices.¹⁹⁵

As of 12 November, not one of Perry County’s newly elected officials had paid his bond. Finding sponsors should have been easy. At least 2,000 more Republicans had voted in the recent elections than had Democrats. Although the 1874 majority was 313 votes less than it had been in 1872 and 265 fewer African Americans voted for

¹⁹⁴ “Lines by Harjoe,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 24 September 1874.

¹⁹⁵ “Alabama,” *ibid.*, 12 November 1874 (first quote); “Our State Election,” *ibid.* (second quote); Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 292 (third quote). See *Marion Commonwealth*, 5 November 1874 and 12 November 1874. Cf. McAfee, *Race, Religion and Reconstruction*, 152.

Republicans in 1874 than in 1872, the GOP still enjoyed a 2,453-vote majority, according to one source. Black votes could get men elected, assessed one Democrat, but they could not pay the men's bonds.¹⁹⁶

Reportedly, Probate Judge-elect Speed found it so hard to pay his bond that he was forced to travel to Montgomery, Selma, and other parts of the Black Belt to solicit funds. Speed allegedly asked a Mrs. Spratt to endorse his bond, but she flatly refused. Eventually, Selma Postmaster Henry Cochran, Dr. J. H. Henry, Charles Turner, and Internal Revenue Collector Barker were among a group of individuals who apparently signed Speed's bond. About the same time, Richard Terrell paid the bond required to become tax assessor, Hendrix tax collector, and Henry Perry county treasurer. Selman John Hardy signed the bond of Sheriff-elect Jeremiah (Jerry, Jere) Munn, who defeated Democrat Cal Moore, but Temple had a harder time. As of 19 November, the newly elected circuit-court clerk still had not paid his bond, and time was running out. He was scheduled to begin his new job the following day.¹⁹⁷

In a 26 November letter to the editor of the *Marion Commonwealth*, Speed corrected two rumors regarding him and his Republican colleagues. Contrary to popular opinion, Henry had not signed his bond. Likewise, Speed had not approved the bond of Sheriff Munn, whom he opposed. According to Speed, Munn's paperwork had been completed before he entered the probate judge's office. Speed was not upset, but he was

¹⁹⁶ See "Those Little Bonds," *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 November 1874. All voting data are taken from the *Marion Commonwealth*. Once, it indicated that Perry County Republicans had a 2,500-vote majority. Another time, the weekly reported a 2,453-vote majority. Although George Houston polled only 1,438 votes—the *Marion Commonwealth* suggested 1,432—in the county, Houston still garnered more support than his Democratic predecessor, Robert Lindsay, who received 1,356 votes in 1870 and between 1,384 and 1,400 votes in 1872. See "Official Vote for the State Ticket in Perry County," *ibid.*, 5 November 1874. Cf. *1875 Report of John McKleroy*, 71-72.

¹⁹⁷ See *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 November 1874. Cf. 22 October 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* "Martin T. Hendrix."

annoyed. At the time, he had more pressing personal and political issues with which to deal, starting with alleged campaign fraud.¹⁹⁸

On Saturday, 14 November, Sheriff Harris, who also sat on the Alabama House of Representatives Penitentiary Committee, arrested Speed for trying to bribe him and James Houston, as Alexander Curtis had stated during the campaign. Consequently, Speed was ordered to appear before E. M. Vary to find out the date of his preliminary trial. Ultimately, Vary decided that on 23 November, one day before Houston's inauguration, an Alabama court would decide whether Joseph Speed would ever hold another public office in Alabama.

Local Democrats were ecstatic about the news. One of the state's most powerful Republicans seemed to be on the verge of collapse, and the most damning accusations had come from another Republican. Now, if only something could be done to slow the progress of Greene Lewis, County Commissioners Curtis and Reuben Pettiford, and other members of the party, everything would be fine on the political front. As some Democrats saw it, the removal of Curtis, Lewis, and Pettiford from their respective offices would signal the end of "Othello's occupation" once and for all.¹⁹⁹

Of all the black people elected to local office in Perry County in November 1874, Pettiford truly scared some of the county's most prejudiced white residents. He was a young man, in fact still a student at Alabama State Lincoln Normal School when he was elected to the county commission. Never before had an individual like him held such an important position in the county. Pettiford thus symbolized the educational, political, and

¹⁹⁸ See "Arrested," *ibid.*, 19 November 1874.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 19 November 1874, and W. L. Bragg to Edward Moren, 15 August 1874, Edward H. Moren Papers, 1841-1887, LPR 55, ADAH, hereinafter cited as Bragg to Moren Letter. See "Lewis, Coon, Merriweather & Co.," *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 December 1874.

social mobility that black people could achieve through proper behavior, formal learning, diligence, and perhaps the greatest factor of all, chance.

Pettiford was as fortunate as he was skilled. While it is true that he was a smart, hard-working, law-abiding citizen, it is also true that his mentors were among Alabama's most influential black men. In addition, Pettiford was related to William R. Pettiford, a Marion and Selma educator-preacher who later helped raise money for and taught theology at Selma University. Additionally, W. R. served as an agent, missionary, and fundraiser for the Baptist Missionary Society of Selma, was a colporteur-Bible reader for the American and Foreign Bible Society, and co-founded the Alabama Penny Savings Bank in Birmingham. Because Marion's most conservative Democratic leaders knew about Reuben Pettiford's connections and political aspirations and envied his *savoir-faire*, they pressured George Card to encourage Reuben to devote all of his energies to being a full-time student until he was old enough to handle such an important position.²⁰⁰

Neither Card nor Reuben Pettiford was fooled. They knew that white conservatives' dislike for the student-commissioner had nothing to do with his age or his political inexperience. Card and Pettiford also knew that the Democrats' statements regarding Pettiford's matriculation were halfhearted at best. It was hoped that the commissioner's resignation would make room for another white commissioner, preferably a conservative Democrat. As it stood, there were two white men and two

²⁰⁰ In an 1871 report to the Alabama Board of Education, Perry County Superintendent of Education Houston indicated that there were thirty-one male public schoolteachers. W. R. Pettiford was one of them. Reuben was undoubtedly Reverend Pettiford's son, grandson, nephew or cousin. See, for example, "Normal School," *The Marion Commonwealth*, 26 June 1873. Cf. *1871 Board of Education County Report*; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 167; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 103, 109-110, 112, 179 (footnote 45), 181 (footnote 72), and "Let Us Make Man," 432-435, 454-455, 463.

black men on the commission. If Governor Houston replaced a black Republican with a Redeemer, the possibility of gridlock would be reduced.²⁰¹

While some Marionites discussed the ethnic makeup up of the county commission, others chatted about higher education and commerce. Unable to pay the tuition and other costs of Howard College, Judson Institute, and Marion Female Seminary, a number of white Marionites demanded that state legislators create a free college or university in the central western section of the state for white students. They preferred Marion. In other parts of county, white Democrats asked why the county's free white schools were closed when its black schools were still in session. A few inquirers vowed to support black education for as long as taxpayers paid for it, but they did not understand why black children were still being taught in December as they had been taught in May or June when white children were not.²⁰²

Local Democrats were equally vocal about economics. Although several white businessmen had moved to Georgia, Mississippi, Texas, or elsewhere in the nation and the preponderance of black Perry Countians had caused the distinguished Perryville Democrat J. J. Pardue to move to Birmingham, where he could live and do business in a predominantly White Anglo-Saxon Protestant locale, other merchants had replaced them. Included among the latter group were a number of Jewish businessmen, many of whom resided in Uniontown. As a result, local businesses were rebounding from the slumps of

²⁰¹ Reuben Pettiford and Alexander Curtis were black; Peter T. Hurt and N. M. Walker were white. See *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 and 10 December 1874. Cf. 22 October 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* "The Election."

²⁰² See "Schools," *ibid.*, 3 December 1874. See also "Our Schools," *ibid.*, 10 December 1874. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*.

earlier years, and an enterprising spirit pervaded the county. Unfortunately, a spirit of racism often accompanied it.²⁰³

Midway through November 1874, D. Howze opened a whites-only barbershop. The following month, a white blacksmith and a white shoemaker moved to Perry County. Concurrently, conservative state lawmakers began to discuss how they could legally repeal the portion of the 1871 Enforcement Act that held a county liable for any Klan or Klan-like activity that took place within its borders. The discussions drew much attention in Perry County because a black woman named McCann had used the Ku Klux Klan Act to sue the county after her husband was murdered by a group of masked assailants a few years earlier.²⁰⁴

Before state lawmakers had an opportunity to act, United States marshals took Perry County notables Charles G. Browne, Augustine C. Howze, and R. B. Scott into custody for violating the 1871 act. Reportedly, an old Scott's Beat black had sworn out a warrant for their arrests. In the end, no significant action was taken. Commissioner Dimmick ordered the release of the three Democrats after Solicitor McAfee failed to present enough evidence to justify their imprisonment.²⁰⁵

In typical Redeemer fashion, Democrats accused law-enforcement agents of targeting the wrong people. Instead of wrongfully detaining upstanding citizens like Browne, Howze, and Scott, officials needed to control the little black "devils" who had reportedly attacked and threatened to kill Gratham Crowe and George Lowry if the two

²⁰³ "K," 17 September 1874 letter to the editor of the *Marion Commonwealth*. Uniontown farmer and Attorney George W. Booker left Alabama for Mississippi during late 1874. He took 100 blacks with him. Among the people who went to Texas were Mr. and Mrs. Lattimore, Felix McCaulley (or McCauley), and Dr. O. L. Shiver's youngest daughter, Nannie. See *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 November 1874. See also "The Emigration," *ibid.*, 17 December 1874. Cf. "Off for Texas."

²⁰⁴ Cf. James J. Garrett's testimony in *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 3, 1480, 1488-1489.

²⁰⁵ See *Marion Commonwealth*, 24 December 1874.

white youths did not go home and retrieve clothes and money. After Crowe and Lowry told adults what had transpired, their assaulters were arrested. Outraged whites hoped the punishment would be severe. Their hopes proved that although Perry County's social reconstruction had been successful, it still had a long way to go before it equaled the county's political reconstruction.²⁰⁶

Conclusion

By all accounts, the unusually bitter sociopolitical campaigns of 1874 were some of the most important races in Alabama history. Virtually every person in the state had a stake in the elections' outcomes. For thousands of white persons, overthrowing the so-called radical regime that had held them hostage for nearly ten years and restoring self-rule and southern honor—which usually meant white supremacy—were of utmost importance. The vast majority of black persons, on the other hand, were determined to enjoy the human rights and political privileges that God and the federal government had granted them. However, some persons had neither the time nor the inclination to be politically active. Feeding and clothing their families were more important than voting, and the former tasks had become increasingly difficult over the past few years despite the efforts of agricultural organizations, various labor unions, crop diversification advocates, and New South boosters.²⁰⁷

In Perry County, few people had a problem with discussing the forgoing ideas and occurrences. Just about everyone from children to clerics seemed to have an opinion

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 15 October 1874.

²⁰⁷ See, for example, "The Late Campaign," *Alabama State Journal*, 4 November 1874. Cf. Sydnor, "The Southerner and the Laws."

about the economic, political, religious, and social climate of postbellum Alabama. The years 1872 to 1874 were particularly conducive to discussion. The Grange had made its way into Perry County, a state-sponsored university for black students had been established in Marion, agriculture and businesses had waned and then waxed, a black Republican from Marion had made a valiant attempt to become a United States congressman, various civil-rights bills had been debated, and several churches had been built. Most important of all, a little political fraud had taken place, but no one had been killed because of his or her political views. The November 1874 elections might not have redeemed Perry County, as many Democrats had wished; but the elections did show that, despite what many persons claimed, biracial cooperation and civility in Alabama was possible—even among people on opposite sides of the sociopolitical aisle.

TRITE BUT TRUE: PERRY COUNTY AND ALABAMA'S SECOND REDEMPTION

“[The] most significant and of evil augury is the fact that with many of the Southern whites a well-educated colored voter is as objectionable as an ignorant one, or even more objectionable, simply on account of his color. It is therefore not mere dread of ignorance in the voting body that arouses the Southern whites against the colored voters. It is race-antagonism, and that race-antagonism presents a problem more complicated and perplexing than most others, because it is apt to be unreasoning. It creates violent impulses which refuse to be argued with.”

—Carl Schurz, 1903¹

When Governor-elect Houston took the oath of office on 24 November 1874, the capitol city exploded with pomp and circumstance that it had not seen in years. After the finest inaugural ceremony in state history, according to an exaggerative *Marion Commonwealth*, which overlooked Jefferson Davis' inauguration, a midday barbecue was held. Houston and his supporters enjoyed a ball that night. For some attendees, only one word could adequately describe the jubilation that they derived from the purportedly peaceful revolution that had ended Republican rule in Alabama: “Glory! Glory! Glory!”²

¹ Carl Schurz, *Can the South Solve the Negro Problem?* 269.

² “The Inauguration,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 December 1874. See “Our Great Victory,” *Jacksonville Republican*, 7 November 1874. See also *Clarke County Democrat*, 10 November 1874. Cf. 5 November 1874 *Marion Commonwealth*; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 26-28.

Perry County Democrats celebrated Houston's victory in a number of ways. On Sunday, 8 November, thousands of them flocked into local churches to thank the Almighty for the recent redemption. The following day, they held a large festival that attracted hundreds of whites and a few blacks. The Marion Artillery fired continuous shots into the air until Major Modawell was introduced at 7 PM. Powhatan Lockett—a well-known attorney, Marion Female Seminary trustee, and the *Marion Commonwealth's* choice to head the Middle Chancery Division—spoke next. He was followed by a recent Howard College graduate named Cox, who provided a few closing remarks, and a Reverend Lowry, who gave the benediction. The whites in the audience then returned to their respective homes satisfied that their year of jubilee had finally come.³

An even larger festival was held in Marion on 10 November. Although the merriment was not scheduled to begin until nightfall, thousands of people had converged on the streets of Perry County's seat of justice by three o'clock in the afternoon. Shortly thereafter, Marshall John Moore led a procession from Judge King's downtown office to the front of the Marion courthouse. There, Judge James F. Bailey, chairman of the county Democratic and Conservative party's executive committee, introduced the speaker, Judge P. G. Wood of Selma.⁴

Wood spoke for approximately twenty-five minutes. He appreciated what Black Belt Democrats had done to ensure victory, but he was especially appreciative of the

³ See "Marion Junction," *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 November 1874. Attorney Lockett, who became superintendent of education when J. W. Morton resigned on 30 September 1875, entered the office on 6 October. See *Record of the Apportionment, Removal, and Qualification of County Superintendents of Education during the Administration of Education, during the Administration of John M. McKleroy, as Superintendent of Public Instruction* (N.P.: n.p., n.d.), Department of Education, Appointments as County Superintendents of Education, 1874-1875, SG 23764, No. 1, ADAH.

⁴ See *Marion Commonwealth*, 5 November 1874, and "After the Battle! Grand Jubilee! The Largest Crowd Ever Assembled in Marion," *ibid.*, 12 November 1874, hereinafter cited as "After the Battle."

efforts of Tennessee Valley Democrats, who had put aside former disagreements with their Black Belt counterparts to unite under the umbrella of lower taxes, retrenchment, small government, and white supremacy. Next, John B. Cocke accused Republicans of being responsible for every local, state, and national problem that had arisen since the end of the Civil War. Afterward, he thanked God that the Republicans had been cast so far into oblivion that it was impossible for them to do any more harm in the county or the state. Inasmuch as Perry County Republicans were elected to several important positions, his was an interesting show of gratitude.

When Cocke stepped down, the audience called on Charles G. Browne, Powhatan Lockett, and Cyrus Hogue, who talked for approximately fifteen minutes each before allowing Cox to deliver a few words. Attorney Modawell, the last speaker, offered a resolution that extolled Redemption and censured the federal government for imposing martial law in the state during peacetime. Like Cocke, Modawell thanked God for delivering Alabama from the political bondage of purportedly dishonest and selfish Republicans and vowed that henceforward the Democratic and Conservative party would champion peace, good will, and hostility to no one except criminals, dictators, and plunderers.

Before Modawell left the podium, he discussed the recent reelection of Congressman Hays. Echoing the sentiments of Democrats throughout the fourth district, Modawell claimed that Hays had defeated Jones in a fraudulent election that should have been contested. Allegedly, federal troops had pressured a number of people into voting for Hays, but there was no hard evidence to support the contention. Omitting this fact, Modawell thanked people nationwide for opposing the Civil Rights Bill of 1873 and

hailed the resurgence of the Alabama Democratic and Conservative party as irrefutable proof that most Alabamians did not desire any sort of economic, educational, political, or social equality. But cognizant that a few black men had voted the Democrat ticket, Modawell and other speakers praised their black colleagues.⁵

Democratic puffery flourished in coming weeks. In Calhoun County, every white member of the party who held a prominent business or social position was encouraged to remember the names of the black men who had supported Democratic candidates and, all things being equal, grant them employment and other favors. Affluent Perry County Democrats were advised to do the same thing. In other parts of the state, white Democrats reminded black voters that the Grand Old party had promised them forty acres and a mule a few years earlier but had done little since then to bring the promise to fruition. It had been more than five years since the death of Thaddeus Stevens, one of the most ardent proponents of forty-acres agitation, and most black folk had neither the land, the mule nor the franchise that Stevens had reportedly accepted as a “sorry substitute” for the former two concessions.⁶

Black Alabamians did not need to be reminded of the Republican promise deferred. Few things illustrate this fact better than the 29 December 1874 congressional testimony of the African American Lewis Neil:

- Q. Do you know of any influence being used to prevent colored men from voting as they pleased? —A. Yes, sir.
Q. Tell all you know about it. —A. One of the candidates was called upon at my house one Sunday morning, (Mr.

⁵ Cf. “After the Battle.” See, for example, *Marion Commonwealth*, 26 November 1874.

⁶ Horace Mann Bond, “Forty Acres and a Mule,” *Opportunity* 13 (May 1935): 141. See “Colored Democrats,” *Jacksonville Republican*, 14 November 1874. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 25; *Documents Relating to Reconstruction*, 44-45.

Andrew B. Griffith). I do not know what he was candidate for.

- Q. Of what party was Mr. Griffith? —A. He was a radical. He was [a] white gentleman. Me and a crowd of black gentlemen were standing there and he drove up and asked us about the election. He asked us which way we were going to vote, and we told him which way we were going to vote—a square democratic vote. I had been working with a gentleman, and he said that if we would turn and vote for the radical party, that they were going to divide out all the things, and give us all a house in town and a heap of that; and I said “I cannot go with you if that is the case.” I told him that the radical party never have done what they promised, so far, and told him I voted for them once and would not anymore.
- Q. Had they ever made promises to you? A. O, yes.
- Q. What did they promise you? —A. An old gray horse, 40 acres of land, and civil-rights bill. I just quit them, when we did not get that.⁷

A handful of Perry County blacks evidently felt the same way. Following the 1874 elections, the *Marion Commonwealth* announced that Alfred Darling, Bob, Isaac and Milton Hall, Gus McCoy, Alex Robinson, and Allen and Louis Schaffer had voted for Democratic candidates. One of them must have been an extraordinary individual, for Isaac Hall had been killed in 1871. How he could have voted, or done anything else, after this date is unexplainable unless Democrats cheated because no other Isaac Hall lived in Perry County. At any rate, leading white Democrats decided to have a dinner for him and every other black man in the county who had supported the party. Organizers promised to hold the gathering at a fine venue, the county courthouse, but made it clear that most party members would not be in attendance. The dinner, they said, would be a

⁷ *Affairs in Alabama*, 151. Cf. *Election in Alabama: Affidavits*.

black affair—with one exception. Like the Republicans’ 25 March 1867 meeting, only white persons would give speeches.⁸

Naturally, not every black Alabamian who supported the GOP had left the fold by the end of 1874. Thanks, in part, to the activism of the Republican-controlled Union League, to the courting of black voters by leading white and black Republicans, to the increasingly racist platform of the Democratic and Conservative party, and to prevalent views relative to which party was responsible for emancipation, most black voters remained pro-Republican. As a result, white Democrats had to find ways to convince the black voters who remained true to the party of Lincoln to either support Democratic candidates or to abstain from voting.⁹

Whereas obedience to the Democratic party could bring black Alabamians patronage and favors, including “porridge and kind treatment,” to quote Ryland Randolph, defiance could have an adverse effect. The congressional testimony of the African American Wesley Driver exemplifies the latter outcome:

- Q. State your age and residence. —A. I am between twenty-four and twenty-five; I live at the lime-kilm.
- Q. State whether you were employed at the Cherecla lime-works. —A. Yes, sir. I am not there now. I have not been there since the elections.
- Q. Why not? —A. Because I was discharged.

⁸ Cf. 3 March *Marion Commonwealth*; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 71; “Democratic Negroes”; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 416. Cf. Schweninger, “Alabama Blacks and the Congressional Reconstruction Acts of 1867,” 186-187.

⁹ See, for example, “Address of the Colored Convention to the People of Alabama,” *Daily State Sentinel*, 21 May 1867. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*; Goodrich and Goodrich, 130, citing the Jackson, Mississippi, *Daily Mississippian*, 14 September 1865; Going, *Bourbon Democracy*, 2, 32-40; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 45, 67-68, 71, 72, 134-135, 162, 200, 202; Linden, *Voices from the Reconstruction Years, 1865-1877*, 182; Magaul, *The Eternal Election Natural and Demoniatic Abolitionists*, 4; Osthaus, *Partisans of the Southern Press* 118-148. A small number of black voters had also been convinced to abstain from voting or to vote against Alabama’s second postbellum constitution. See, for example, *Marion Commonwealth*, 20 and 27 February 1868. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 71; “Patronize Pecuniarily, Those Who Patronize You, Politically.”

Q. Why? —A. For voting the republican ticket.¹⁰

James K. Green said a number of white Alabamians did not even try to hide the fact that they would use dirty tactics to neutralize the black vote, especially in the Black Belt. If blacks were not afraid of being fired, then their ballots would be counted out. If that did not work, then a more proven deterrent, violence, could be used. In what has to be one of the most ridiculous incidents of threatened violence, James T. Walker, a white Alabama attorney and conservative Democrat, told Green that he would slit his throat because he was tired of hearing Green's slang.¹¹

Bombarded by the spurious claims of one party and hobbled with the malicious tactics of another, black Alabamians seemed to have become disinterested in politics by the middle 1870s, concluded historian Lucille Griffith. Though provocative, Griffith's assertion is inaccurate—or at least incomplete. Black Alabamians might have harbored predilections against some politicians but hardly against politics. In fact, political scientist Hanes Walton, Jr., believes many blacks considered politics one of the few professions befitting an accomplished, professional black man. Perry County Representative Lewis was even clearer on this matter. Amidst the civil-rights battles of that decade, Lewis declared that he was tired of begging for his rights and privileges. Henceforth, he and other blacks intended to fight for complete equality whenever and wherever they could. Considering how many black Alabamians agreed with Lewis, it might have been more consistent for Griffith to have argued that white Democrats and Republicans seemed to have become less interested in African Americans by the middle

¹⁰ Ryland Randolph, quoted in *Alabama State Journal*, 1 October 1868 (first quote); Wesley Driver, quoted in *Affairs in Alabama*, 191 (second quote).

1870s or had become so exasperated with them and their demands—civil rights, free land, force bills, and integrated schools for example—that a genuine political coalescence seemed more cumbersome than rewarding.¹²

Then again, it should never be forgotten that by the time that the 1874 elections were held, the use of bribery and other types of fraud, intimidation, and physical violence had helped members of the Democratic and Conservative party obtain a degree of thralldom over black voters in many parts of the state. Hence, Democrats did not need to worry about black voters as much as they had worried about them in previous years. Nor should it be forgotten that intra-party strife had significantly weakened the state Republican party or that when all else failed, white Democrats could rely on one of the most unifying influences of the Redemption-era Democratic and Conservative party: white supremacy.¹³

Democratic coercion was enormous, but it should not be overstated. Some black persons supported the Democratic party for reasons similar to those articulated by the one-time Republican Lewis Neil, who distrusted Republicans after he did not get the old, gray horse and the forty acres of land that the Republican party had promised. Other black Democrats believed they constituted a black upper class and sought to assimilate into affluent white society by mingling with élite Democrats.

¹¹ Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 71; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 317; Logue, 342-343.

¹² See Hanes Walton, Jr., *Black Republicans: The Politics of the Black and Tans* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1975), 74. See also *Montgomery Advertiser and Mail*, 28 March 1874; *Mobile Register*, 22 and 26 February 1870 and 4 June 1875. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 147; Griffith, 490. H. C. Cooke and E. A. Heidt made the same claim as early as 1872. Cf. “Pow-Wow.”

¹³ Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 176; Freehling, *The South vs. The South*, 22-23. For Ryland Randolph’s legislative rowdiness, cf. *1869-1870 Alabama House Journal*, 188, 319-320, 321.

A second interpretation suggests that black Alabamians never held any substantial allegiance to the Democratic or the Republican party and merely voted for whichever party had the better sales pitch. This hypothesis underestimates the intellect of Alabama's black electorate. Although blacks were political neophytes, they certainly were better prepared for the suffrage than some researchers have suggested. A third interpretation assumes that the Democratic and Republican parties were virtually the same, so black persons cast votes for the same ideologies. Although there were substantive differences between the two parties' ideologies and their ethnic composition, the last interpretation has some merit. A large number of white Republicans were far more concerned about controlling black votes than they were about helping black voters. Confident that they could effectively manipulate black votes if controlling mechanisms proved futile, numerous Black Belt Democrats supported black manhood suffrage.

In some counties, making sure that inspectors, registrars, and other officials did not man their posts during elections was as common as bribery, intimidation, miscounting, and physical violence were to neutralizing the power of black voters. Although state law allowed ordinary citizens to stand in for election officials who did not report to their duty stations, many electors were unaware of the allowance. And even if they had known about them, it is likely that county canvassers would have rejected the votes that had been cast, especially if they benefited the wrong candidates.

Local officials were extremely important to Election Day shenanigans because circuit clerks, probate judges, and sheriffs determined who became inspectors, precinct-return officers, and the like. Outside the Black Belt, persons were elected to those positions. Inside the Black Belt, they were appointed. On several occasions, crafty

Democrats made sure that their party was protected by employing less-than-ethical means, such as urging legislators to place public officials' bonds so high that only wealthy or well-connected candidates could cover them. Controlled by Democrats, the legislature also mandated that only county residents could be sureties. When bonds went unmet, the governor was free to make appointments. Other times, Democrats made sure that the one Republican or Independent inspector required by state law was a politically unaware individual or an individual who could be bribed. If that failed, white Democrats simply manipulated black votes.

Once, ballot boxes were placed almost six feet off the ground, disallowing black voters to see what happened to their votes after they were cast. If every African American's vote was actually counted, explained William C. Oates, black and white Republicans would have controlled numerous county and state governments in the South. Oates swore that most white Southerners did not want to violate the law to ensure Democratic rule, but when faced with the alternative, the law did not seem too important.¹⁴

Though successful, not one of these tactics, which were rarely used in Perry County, was as important to the final restoration of Democratic rule in Alabama as white supremacy. By putting aside class, philosophical, and sectional differences and forging a union based almost solely on the most essential question of the period, keeping the state government in white men's hands, Democrats were able to direct their attentions to reawakening certain social, psychological, economic, and cultural mores of the Old South. "Pleasant memories take me back.... Oh! give me the home that I had in days of

¹⁴ See *Montgomery Advertiser*, 18 January 1889.

yore,” one person sang, asking: “Lo! The Poor Nigger[s]! What is to become of them? How will they live?”¹⁵

Black-White Similarities

The last statement was one of many comments meant to ridicule African Americans. In general, such doggerel was more rhetorical than sincere. Before the “Bald Eagle of the Mountains” (Houston) was elected governor, many black political aspirants had become convinced that in a state fraught with dishonesty, overt prejudice, and violence, their chances of ascending to positions higher than political peons were remote. Most black Alabamians were laborers. They knew they were laborers and had few qualms with being laborers. The farm, the mill, and the plant were their primary workplaces, and with these environments they had become intimately acquainted—and so had white Alabamians.¹⁶

The economic landscape of postbellum Alabama was hardly diverse by 1874-1875. Most black and whites had been either agriculturists or wage earners and had ben

¹⁵ James S. Putnam, “My Home in Alabam” (Boston: John F. Perry, 1881) (first quote); Grace Hooten Gates, *The Model City of the New South: Anniston Alabama, 1872-1900* (Huntsville, Al.: Strode Publishers, 1978), quoting *Talladega Watchman*, [n.d.] (second quote) See *Alabama State Journal*, 31 July 1874. See also Edward deGraffenreid, “The Effect of Slavery upon the Constitutions and Laws of the United States and of the State of Alabama” (address delivered to the Alabama Bar Association, Montgomery, Al., 20 June 1903), 9, Pamphlets and Brochures Vertical Files, Subjects, ADAH; *Mobile Register*, 5 February 1887; *Selma Southern Argus*, 6 and 20 March and April-July 1874; “Whom Cares for Niggers Now?” in Philip Foner, *History of Black Americans from the Compromise of 1850 to the End of the Civil War* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983), 466. Cf. 30 September 1874 *Florence Times Journal*; “A Word to Old Whigs”; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 41; “Our Next Candidate.”

¹⁶ Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 53; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 793. For the same view, cf. *1872 Superintendent’s Report*, 11; Kolchin, *First Freedom*, xv; Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution*, 7, citing Frederick Law Olmstead, *A Journey in the Back Country* (New York: Mason Brothers), 298, 349-350. For a different view, see Rose Herlong Ellis, “The Calhoun School, Miss Charlotte Thorn’s ‘Lighthouse on the Hill,’ in Lowndes County, Alabama,” *Alabama Review* 37 (July 1984): 183.

equally poor financially. They had sharecropped, and they had tenant farmed. They had borrowed, and they had owed. But they had rarely owned—save for perhaps a dogtrot, a few pieces of furniture, or a couple farm animals. Yet, in spite of obvious economic similarities, the general populations of the state had rarely been able to coalesce socially. Whereas most white Alabamians had “built a regional identity based on pride, prejudice, and an abiding sense of persecution,” black Alabamians had attempted to build a universal identity based on the premise that all persons were created equal.¹⁷

Ultimately, such beliefs had kept most black and white Alabamians apart during much of the Postbellum period even though their plight had been similarly dismal. This was especially true in relation to economics and education, two areas of deficiency with which the entire South, not just Alabama, had to deal. In sixteen southern states, approximately 1.3 million white and 666,666 black school-age children were either undereducated or not educated at all, according to Amory Dwight Mayo, a Boston-based educational specialist and author of *The New Education in the New South*. By his calculations, seventy percent of North Carolina’s black population over age ten could not read or write. Almost one-third of the state’s white residents were in the same predicament. Its economic situation was just as bad, wrote Mayo.¹⁸

¹⁷ Rogers and Ward, “The Bourbon Oligarchy and the New Old South,” 260. See Wayne Flynt, *Poor but Proud: Alabama’s Poor Whites* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1989), 15. Cf. *History of Hope in the Heart of Dixie*. Ordinary Alabamians’ working conditions have been explored in a number of works, but a useful source for the financial plight of black Alabamians is Jay Mandle, *The Roots of Black Poverty: The Southern Plantation Economy after the Civil War* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1978). Cf. Ransom and Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom*; Weiner, *Social Origins of the New South*.

¹⁸ See “The ‘Mail’ and the Free Public School System,” *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 29 May 1869. See also Amory Dwight Mayo, *The New Education in the New South* (N.P.: n.p., [1870s]), 4, Y A Pamphlet Collection, LOC; “Resolution Adopted by the Negro Democratic Club,” *Montgomery Daily Advertiser*, 8 August 1872. Cf. McAfee, *Religion, Race, and Reconstruction*, 3; Sherer, “Let Us Make Man,” 220, citing *Huntsville Gazette*, 16 April 1887.

Although data are inconclusive, Alabamians were probably worse off than North Carolinians. By 1874-1875, poor land management, a lack of finances, market fluctuations, financial panics, and prevalent racial prejudice had stifled growth in many parts of Alabama. The state government faced bankruptcy, and public education was deficient. But the problem, as Edgar Gardner Murphy—a respected author, minister, social worker, executive secretary of the Southern Education Board, vice president the Conference for Education in the South, and president of the University of Tennessee—saw it, was not a scarcity of funds. Rather, local citizens did not support education, a complaint that Joseph Speed had registered several times while serving as Alabama’s education superintendent. Whereas the state government devoted in excess of fifty percent of its general revenues to public education, according to Murphy, who also helped organize and served as secretary of both the Southern Society for Consideration of Race Problems and Conditions in the South and the National Child Labor Committee, only a small portion of local taxes was used to support public schools. Allowing county officials to use those funds to build and sustain public schools in their districts would ensure that the parents and guardians who elected them would play an active role in their children’s education and, as a consequence, a solid public school system throughout Alabama.¹⁹

¹⁹ See Robert Patton, “Governor Patton to the People of Alabama,” in *Documents Relating to Reconstruction*. See J. Mills Thornton, III, *Politics and Power in a Slave State: Alabama, 1800-1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978). See also John T. Milner, *Alabama: As It Was, As It Is, and As It Will Be. A Work Exhibiting the Agricultural Actualities of the Soil of the State, When Properly Cultivated and Tilled, in Comparison with Those of the Other States of the Union; Its Present Agricultural Deformities, and the Remedy Thereof; Its Mineral and Other Industrial Interests, Founded upon Statistical and Actual Results* (Montgomery, Al.: Barrett and Brown, 1876); W. David Lewis, “The Emergence of Birmingham as a Case Study of Continuity Between the Antebellum Planter Class and Industrialization in the ‘New South,’” *Agricultural History* 68 (spring 1994): 62-80; Gavin Wright, *The Political Economy of the Cotton South: Households, Markets, and Wealth in the Nineteenth Century* (New

Murphy's statements were not entirely accurate. Counties such as Perry did levy taxes for education, and had local taxation for education increased statewide, Alabama still would have suffered. Whereas localities in which the most socially and economically affluent Alabamians lived would have had exceptional schools, poor communities would have had mediocre schools at best. Even when the state constitution of 1901 partially removed the inhibition about which Murphy wrote, entire districts continued to suffer. Unsurprisingly, predominately black counties were hit hardest by the state's Jim Crow education system.²⁰

Segregation

While Redeemers attempted to overturn certain policies that some of their fellow Democrats had helped Republicans initiate, review the tax situation, adjust the state debt, and pass some sort of legislation, black Republicans called for an end to segregation. Unfortunately for them, total integration was a delicacy for which many white Alabamians had not acquired a taste. And even if they had, their "Christian" values would not have allowed them to eat any of it. The separation of the races was a fait accompli, they said, a plan ordained by God. Senator Morgan went so far as to make the Bible his text when he spoke throughout the White Belt.²¹

York: Norton, 1978). Cf. *Alabama's First Question*, 4, 19; *Argument of Benjamin F. Porter*, 9; Cobb, *Away Down South*, 45-46; Lewis Parsons to Andrew Johnson, 2 October 1865, Parsons Papers; Pessen, 1124-1127, 1132-1133, 1135-1136, 1145-1146; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 18.

²⁰ Other Southerners criticized railroads. See James Fletcher Doster, "Were Populists against Railroad Corporations? The Case of Alabama," *Journal of Southern History* 20 (August 1954): 395-399, and *Railroads in Alabama Politics, 1875-1914* (University, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 1957). See also Sheldon Hackney, *Populism to Progressivism in Alabama* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969). Cf. Rogers, "The Farmers' Alliance in Alabama."

²¹ Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*. For an alternate view, cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 58.

Reverend W. H. Campbell, a white minister from South Carolina, acted on behalf of countless white Alabamians when he refused to sit beside black persons during a local religious convention. Skin color was not a problem for some whites, explained Campbell, because some mulattos were as white as he was. In a distortion of biblical literalism that resembled one of the most prevalent pseudo-scientific developments of the period, Spencerianism, or Social Darwinism, the minister claimed that the trouble sprang from the “fact” that black people belonged to “an inferior race, so made by the Almighty and never intended by him to be put on an equality with the white race, in either Church or State.” He could propose “no argument on the subject [because in] the end...the voice of God must be decisive.”²²

In these and similar convictions, innumerable white Alabamians found a *raison d’être* to make European descent the primary criterion for enjoying human and civil rights in the state—and then only if the title mister was appropriate. Meanwhile, countless blacks and a number of whites continued to fight Jim Crow as hard as they had in 1869, when Representatives Carraway or Coriander introduced a bill into the state legislature to regulate public transportation carriers in Mobile. Ridiculing the stereotypical black politician’s speech and thus his fitness to hold office, the *Marion Commonwealth* reported that the measure would have prevented “dis-stink-shun” on account of any passenger’s race or ethnicity. Local officials had introduced similar

²² W. H. Campbell, quoted in Thomas Nelson Page, “The Color-Line Question: What Is It?” *American Missionary* 42 (June 1888): 150; J. Wayne Flynt, communication to the author, 10 July 2006. See Samuel Peugh, *Colored Suffrage: Report Submitted in the Board of Common Council by Mr. S. A. Peugh, from the Select Committee on the Subject of Colored Suffrage, Monday, November 6, 1865* (Washington, D.C.: [n.p.], 1865), 1-2, Miscellaneous Pamphlets Collection, LOC. See also “‘Scientific’ Racism,” chap. 2 in Hawkins, *The White Architects of Black Education*, 24-40; Sydnor, “The Southerner and the Laws,” 5-6, 12-13.

measures throughout the state. In general, blacks had supported them, and whites had not.²³

Historians such as Richard Bailey, Loren Schweninger, and Allen Trelease have argued that black education advocates did not call for integration facilities very often. Overall, this was not the case in Alabama. Blacks did not mind integrated schools; they just wanted to be schooled. William Councilll was an important exception. After becoming convinced that white Alabamians would not fully embrace integration, Councilll took a segregationist stance, saying that the workplace and other business-related environments were the only places where black, white, and other persons needed to be in close proximity. Eventually, Councilll and John Carraway, among other black leaders, even began to question universal equality. The former individual called it “the greatest of all humbugs,” the latter a “political scare crow.” It should be remembered, however, that Councilll and Carraway developed this attitude only after they had decided that the average white person would not support the integration for which Curtis, Dozier, Green Lewis of Perry County, Thomas Walker of Dallas County, and thousands of other black Alabamians continued to press. In response, the *Alabama Beacon* conceded that a day would come when white hotel owners, railroad operators, and restaurateurs would have special accommodations for blacks, but the accommodations would never be integrated. Why, the paper asked, would any self-respecting black man want to frequent a place where his presence was unwelcome?²⁴

²³ “Proceedings of the Skunkery.” Cf. Foner, *Forever Free*.

²⁴ John Carraway, quoted in Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 108 (first quote); Councilll, *The Negro Laborer*, 25-26 (all subsequent quotes). Cf. McAfee, *Religion, Race and Reconstruction*, 17; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama* and “Let Us Make Man”. William V. Turner was also skeptical of integration. At an 1874 meeting of the Equal Rights Association, he warned his colleagues about forcing integration on the people who lived in the Tennessee Valley, which was predominately white. See *Greensboro Beacon*, 1

Though laden with philosophical fallacy and overt prejudice, the tone of the piece was undoubtedly serious. Others were not. Sometimes, a mere joke was the only attention given to black concerns. Once, while traveling from Opelika to Montgomery in a crowded boxcar, a group of black citizens had to curl up around a small stove to keep warm. When they complained about their accommodations, for which they had paid the same fares as white travelers, a white person gibed: “You’re free ain’t you? Good as white folks? Then pay the same fee and keep your mouth shut.” In another instance, a Calhoun County editorialist teased: “Negroes of the legislature have ‘civil rights’ on their minds again. If they were more civil to their white superiors in the Legislature, they would get their ‘rights’ sooner.”²⁵

Though pronounced scornfully, such statements reveal a great deal about the state’s overall sociopolitical atmosphere following the November 1874 elections. With the state government back in Democratic hands, conservatives could breathe a sigh of relief. Reconstruction, the extraordinary revolution that had helped liberate blacks and most whites, even if the typical white was not willing to admit it, seemed to be moving backward. And that, the Democratic *Jacksonville Republican* exclaimed, was “GLORIOUS GLORIOUS NEWS!”²⁶

March 1873. See also *Alabama State Journal*, 4 and 16 July, 1 and 22 August, and 18 and 19 September 1874; *Selma Southern Argus*, 24 July 1874; *Mobile Register*, 1 August 1874. Cf. *A Republican Text-book for Colored Voters*, 10; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 214; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 70; Councill, *The Negro Laborer*, 25-28; Foner, *Freedom’s Lawmakers*, 217; Schwening, *James T. Rapier*, 134; Trelease, *White Terror*, xxxi.

²⁵ John B. Myers, “Reaction and Adjustment,” 7 (first quote); editorial, *Jacksonville Republican*, 12 April 1873 (second quote). See “Choice Varieties,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 31 March 1870.

²⁶ Headline, *Jacksonville Republican*, 7 November 1874. See Edward C. Williamson, “The Alabama Election of 1874,” *Alabama Review* 17 (July 1964): 210-218. See also Michael William Fitzgerald, “The Union League Movement in Alabama and Mississippi: Politics and Agricultural Change in the Deep South during Reconstruction” (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Los Angeles, 1986), 7. Cf. Kolchin, *First Freedom*, xv; Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction*, 408, citing Thomas W. Higginson, *Army Life in a Black Regiment* (Cambridge, Mass. [n.p.] 1900), 63-64; Trelease, *White Terror*, xvi.

To the extent that some Democrats were unsure about the plans of angry Republicans, whose gubernatorial victory had been stolen, the newspaper's joyousness veiled a degree of uncertainty. Would Republicans act as they had in 1870 and 1872 and establish a separate government? Would federal officials nullify the results of the 1874 election and place Alabama under military rule, as was the case in nearby Louisiana?

Democratic uncertainty was short lived. After some of the party's shrewdest schemers publicized information about Republican election wrongdoings, the already divided state Republican party split even further. While white Republicans responded to Democratic allegations, politically active blacks tried to persuade the federal government to intervene on their behalf by memorializing President Grant and by drafting an epistle to the United States Congress. Much to their chagrin, no significant action was taken. "The agony is over," extolled the *Mobile Register*, "and Alabama is still a state." Alabama was indeed a state, but the agony was hardly over.²⁷

The State Debt

The state's actual and potential debts were of utmost importance to many Redemption-era Alabamians. By one estimate, the state's actual debt had risen \$3,970,000 while Republicans had "held high carnival" in the state. Reportedly, the railroad bonds that Article IV of the 1868 state code guaranteed constituted as much as \$17,000,000 of the estimated \$25,000,000 to \$30,000,000 that the state reportedly owed. Governor Smith said the article had provoked railway companies to build lines that were not needed but failed to mention that he himself had endorsed bonds for the Alabama and

²⁷ *Mobile Register*, 5 March 1875.

Chattanooga Railroad totaling \$4,720,000. (Curiously, only 240 miles of track had ever been laid, and almost one hundred miles of that was located outside Alabama.) Governor Lindsay, Smith's Democratic successor, had made matters worse by taking control of the A&C and by continuing to offer state assistance to other railroad lines.²⁸

Even Perry County's most devoted Democrats found it difficult to support Lindsay's railroad policies. Citing the *Tuscaloosa Times*, one partisan voter felt that Lindsay and Democratic legislators were entirely responsible for the state's deplorable financial and railroad situations. In addition to the Alabama and Chattanooga, the East and Cincinnati, the Mobile and Alabama, the Montgomery and Eufaula, the Selma and Gulf, and the South and North Alabama Railroads had also benefited from the state's generosity during Reconstruction.²⁹

The voter made a good point. Although many individuals have attributed Reconstruction-era railroad corruption in Alabama to white and black Republicans, including John Caraway, the vast majority of the state's highest-level railroad promoters were Democrats. Notable exceptions included the Stantons, whom Democrats had continuously criticized and whom Republicans had initially praised for hiring blacks, but it should be remembered that the Stantons had a number of powerful Democratic allies.

Josiah Morris—a wealthy Columbus, Georgia, native and New Orleans, Louisiana, cotton

²⁸ "Alabama Affairs—The Force Bill. Speech of Hon. J. H. Caldwell of Alabama, in the House of Representatives, February 27, 1875," *Appendix to the Congressional Record* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1875), 152, hereinafter cited as "Affairs in Alabama—The Force Bill." See Alabama Department of Archives and History, "Alabama Governors: George Smith Houston"; available via Internet @ http://www.archives.state.al.us/govs_list/g_housto.html; accessed 17 August 2003. See also Kenneth W. Hollman and Joe M. Murrey, Jr., "Alabama's State Debt History, 1865-1921," *Southern Studies* 24 (fall 1985): 309-315; "Choice Varieties," *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 June 1870; "Home Rule" in the South (N.P.: n.p., n.d.), 1, J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, ADAH. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 55-59; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World*, passim; Going, *Bourbon Democracy*, 4-5, 41, 61-78.

trader turned Montgomery banker, and cofounder of Birmingham—and William Baldwin—a Democrat, capitalist, and Montgomery’s most prominent wartime physician—were two of them. Sam Rice, a former—and future—Democrat, was a third. Porter King, a one-time A&C executive and unwavering Democrat, might not have been a member of the Stanton’s inner circle, but he definitely dwelled on the periphery.³⁰

Many ordinary Alabamians, including a number of Democrats, were indifferent about the state debt per se. A more pressing concern for them was under whom the state’s real and perceived debt had allegedly grown: the “local lepers” of the South (Scalawags), their “pleasant-smiling northern allies” (Carpetbaggers), and uninformed blacks.³¹ Conversely, the wealthiest citizens of the state, including a number of Republicans, were stuck in a real quagmire. To repay the entire state debt might have given credence to the questionable financial dealings of Reconstruction-era Republicans, but this was a possibility that most Redeemers did not mind. In point of fact, they perpetuated the incorrect notion that Republicans had depleted the state treasury through actual debts that were, as historian Bond explained, merely potential debts. Redeemers worried that complete repayment, if possible, might implicate Democrats such as John

²⁹ See *Marion Commonwealth*, 7 March 1872. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 35-47; Going, *Bourbon Democracy*, 4-5; Rogers and Ward, “Radical Reconstruction,” 253-254.

³⁰ Cf. 3 March 1871 *Alabama State Journal*; 16 April 1871 *Mobile Daily Register*; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 169, citing State of Alabama, *Report of Committee to Investigate Alleged Frauds in Issuance of Railroad Bonds and Bonds of the State for the Use of Railroads* (Montgomery, AL: [n.p.,] 1871), 29; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 4, 6, 63, 108, 132. For an earlier pronouncement in favor of railroad assistance, see “Revival of Land Grant to Alabama Railroads,” *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 20 March 1869. The Stanton’s employment of black people is mentioned in “Mr. J. C. Stanton,” *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 3 April 1869.

³¹ These descriptions of southern and northern Republicans are taken from a caricature entitled “A Prospective Scene in the ‘City of Oaks,’ of March 1869.” The caption of the cartoon, which features Ohio Republican A. S. Larkin and Alabama educator Noah B. Cloud, reads: “Hang, our, hang! ***** *Their* complexion is perfect gallows. Stand fast, good fate, to *their* hanging! ***** If they be not born to be hanged, our case is miserable.” Believing the caricature contributed to Democratic losses nationwide

Hubbard and B. B. McCraw, who had worked alongside Republicans before November 1874. Redeemers also worried that complete repayment might further expose the weaknesses of Governor Lindsay. Worse, settling the state's debts might have reminded politically aware Alabamians that Democrats in February 1867 had authorized the governor to endorse the railroad bonds that many people had blamed for a huge chunk of the state's debt or who had controlled the state government for all but seventeen months during Reconstruction.³²

Despite these facts, much was written in Perry County and elsewhere in Alabama about how Republican "circus men" (terminology that Democratic journalist in Alabama and Georgia used duplicitously to describe Republican officials) had misused state funds during Reconstruction. But even a fleeting look at the state's Reconstruction-era lawmakers helps dispel the myth that Republican corruption and ignorance had characterized Alabama's postbellum governments. Most influential legislators and other important statewide decision makers had been Democrats. Furthermore, Republican state officials inherited a substantial financial burden when they took office.³³

Before Governor Smith entered the state capital, government receipts totaled \$5,942, 087.18, and expenditures exceeded revenue by \$1,772, 285.16. Included in the latter amount were bonded debts from 1850-1867 that totaled a reported \$4,925,800 and

during the 1868 presidential election, Editor Randolph tried to convince people the cartoon was merely a joke. See *Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor*, 1 September 1868.

³² Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 35-47, 51, 52, 55-59, 96-97; Bromberg, 10; Rogers and Ward, "Radical Reconstruction," 253. For a recent insistence on Republican railroad corruption, cf. Doyle, *New Men, New Cities, New South*, 70, 78.

³³ G. M. Parker to C. Parker, 26 December 1867, G. M. Parker Papers, The Museum of Mobile, Mobile, Alabama, as quoted in Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 133. See also *Montgomery Daily Mail*, 17 November 1867. Cf. 27 November 1867 *Augusta (Georgia) Weekly Chronicle and Sentinel*; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 55-59; DeGraffenreid, "The Effects of Slavery," 8; Tunnell, "Creating 'the Propaganda of History,'" 794 (text and footnote 13).

\$2,795, 210.75 for the state's education fund. These two debts alone counted for \$7,721,010.75 that Republican legislators faced before they wrote one piece of legislation. Added to that fact, House Ways and Means Committee Chairman John Hubbard controlled how many state funds were handled, and he was a Democrat. His partner and fellow Democrat, B. B. McCraw, was one of two House speakers in 1868. After 1870, Hubbard became speaker of the House. Actually, almost every important House member was a white Democrat and a native of Alabama. Considering these facts, it is illogical to suggest that Carpetbaggers, Scalawags, or ignorant blacks were responsible for Alabama's Reconstruction debt.³⁴

Governor Houston favored allowing the state debt to go unattended, but that might have stifled foreign investments and exacerbated existing problems, such as the railroad situation. Heidt and his Selma business partner, Robert McKee, who was especially vociferous about Houston's state-debt views and the penal system, favored repudiation. As early as February 1873, Heidt had pointed out that Georgia's 7 percent bonds were selling for eighty cents. Alabama's bonds, on the other hand, fared much worse. By his estimate, Georgia lawmakers had repudiated more than eight million dollars in bonds since 1870, thereby bettering that state's financial situation and its reputation. But repudiation was equally problematic for Alabama lawmakers because the state government was indebted to some of Alabama's most prominent Democrats. The resurrected democracy was at a crossroads.³⁵

³⁴ Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 56-59; Bromberg, 13-14.

³⁵ See "Clergyman," "Repudiation is Theft—Forcible Adjustment Highway Robbery," in vol. 52, book 47, J. L. M. Curry Pamphlet Collection, ADAH. See also *Marion Commonwealth*, 13 February 1873. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 65, 83; Webb, "A Jacksonian Democrat in Postbellum Alabama."

As Democrats deliberated, Houston contrived his own plan. With the approval of the state legislature, the governor selected Levi W. Lawler and Tristram B. Bethea, two very prominent Alabama businessmen, to serve on a committee that the governor himself chaired as *ex officio*. Their charge was simple: to review and, if needed, to adjust the state debt. Via Houston's arrangement, the financial survival of all Alabamians rested in the hands of a troika of the state's wealthiest men.³⁶

The 1868 Constitution Revisited

The existing state code was an additional concern of many early Redemption-era Alabamians. The proprietors of the *Mobile Daily Tribune* swore the "menagerie constitution" was not the product of the Alabama electorate but the offspring of dishonest northern politicians, a handful of traitorous whites, and former slaves.³⁷ Other Democrats and Democratic media had even harsher words for the code. Instead of encouraging ethical behavior and responsible government, as Republican Representative Jennings had maintained, one Democrat said the constitution had merely tightened the yokes that federal officials and other so-called oppressors had placed around the necks of God-fearing, good-hearted Alabamians. The *Marion Commonwealth* was not surprised. What else, it asked, should have been expected of the "pismires, clinch bugs," "cotton worms," "white-skinned cusses," "gallows refugees," jailbirds, and blacks who had made up "the

³⁶ Tristram Bethea was a planter. Levi Lawler was associated with Baker & Lawler and Company of Mobile but, like Houston, was a railroad director, heading the Selma, Rome, and Dalton. The three men's final plan lowered the state debt from approximately \$30 million to \$12.5 million, according to several reports. Some railroad bonds were renounced; others, such as those held by bondholders of the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad (Houston and Lawler's competition), received \$1 million worth of new bonds and 500,000 acres of fertile land. Other parts of the settlement are unknown. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 55; Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 17, 33; Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 265.

³⁷ "To the People of Alabama," *Mobile Daily Tribune*, 8 October 1875 (first quote).

General Ass-embly” when it was written? Reinforcing the newspaper’s point, Thomas Herndon reminded people that the 1868 code had been designed by the same Judases who had crucified the South only a few years earlier.³⁸

Leroy Pope Walker, a Madison County native who had served as the Confederacy’s first secretary of war, took a slightly different approach. Ignoring the native Alabamians who had helped create the existing state constitution, Walker said the entire constitution had been written by Northerners and forced on Alabamians at gunpoint. Even the *Montgomery Advertiser*, which under Robert Tyler’s editorship tended to be more moderate than most Democratic media, called the 1868 code a monstrosity that had been thrown together by greedy outsiders and impressionable blacks and recommended the following language as its preamble:

We negroes and mean whites representing the negroes and about one thousand white men in the state of Alabama, in order to establish injustice, insure domestic confusion, provide adventurers with offices, promote the general ruin, and secure ourselves and possibly our children the rights of living without labor by plundering honest people of their property and invoking the power of the devil and the protection of the military—do present this bogus constitution to our masters who have tempted us to do their dirty work.³⁹

The 1868 code’s registration oath—which required all registered voters to “accept the civil and political equality of all men [and] agree not to attempt to deprive any person

³⁸ “The Late Lamented” and “Hard Figuring,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 27 February 1868; “A Valuable Suggestion,” *ibid.*, 25 November 1869; “The Skunkery,” *ibid.*, 3 February 1870. See “Address of General James H. Clanton,” *ibid.*, 9 September 1869. See also Constitutional Club of Mobile, *Roll of the Black Dupes and White Renegades who Voted in Mobile County for the Menagerie Constitution, for the State of Alabama* (Mobile, AL: The Mobile Daily Register, 1868); “Herndon,” “A White Man’s Sentiment,” *The Marion Commonwealth*, 2 July 1870; advertisement, *Marion Commonwealth*, 10 June 1869. Cf. “Sound Radical Morals.”

or persons, on account of race, color, or previous condition, of any political or civil right, privilege, or immunity, enjoyed by any other class of men”—was especially disliked by many Redeemers.⁴⁰ Not only was the oath odious, they said; it was also unnecessary because white Alabamians had “sedulously endeavored” to prevent race from inhibiting social, political, and economic progress following 1865. Instead of accomplishing its fundamental purpose, the 1868 constitution was simply a constant reminder of the loss of prosperity that Alabamians had experienced as a result of “Othello’s occupation,” argued Alabama State Democratic Executive Committee Chairman Walter Lawrence Bragg.⁴¹

Perry County Democrats such as J. L. M. Curry and E. A. Heidt agreed with their part-time neighbor, Bragg. Heidt, for instance, asked white men to continue to support white governance by condemning the 1868 code. No longer courting or trying to appease blacks, the newsman declared that military satraps had tried to curtail free speech and freedom of the press so that southern whites would become “‘hewers of wood and drawers of water’ for Radical emissaries and African ignorance.” For those reasons alone, every white Alabamian owed it to himself or herself, as well as to all other purportedly self-respecting whites, to make sure that the exponents of white supremacy were not bankrupted by the Republican party.⁴²

³⁹ *Montgomery Advertiser*, 10 December 1867. See Leroy Pope Walker, *Speech of Gen. L. P. Walker on State and National Affairs, delivered at Madison, Ala., June 29, 1878* (N.P.: n.p., [1878]), 3, LPR 131, ADAH. Cf. Brewer, *Alabama*, 354-355.

⁴⁰ Article VII, sec. 4 of the *Revised Code of Alabama*. Cf. Taylor, *The Issue of the Hour*, 5.

⁴¹ Cf. Griffith, 491. One white opponent predicted: “The oath will never be taken by the honest, virtuous and thoughtful portion of our people. It will be taken by the low and vicious, as well as by the thoughtless.... No honest and intelligent and considerate white Alabamian, will ever swear as required.” The predictor was wrong. Many white Alabamians, including numerous Perry County citizens, took the oath. *Review of the Proposed Constitution for Alabama, by a Late Judge of the Supreme Court of Alabama* (Montgomery, Al.: Montgomery Daily Mail, 1867), 39, hereinafter cited as *Review of the Proposed Constitution for Alabama*. Cf. Bragg to Edward Moren Letter; 19 November 1874 *Marion Commonwealth*.

⁴² “The ‘Marion Commonwealth,’” *Marion Commonwealth*, 27 February 1868. See “State Items,” *ibid.*, 11 June 1874.

Bragg, Curry, and Heidt's beliefs were common, but they in no way reflected the opinion of every white Alabamian. As Willis Brewer, author of the 1872 tome *Alabama*, communicated to Robert McKee, some whites were about as concerned about the existing state code as they were about the existing state debt. It was almost certain nonetheless that Alabama would be reconstituted following the November 1874 elections. The only question was how. Whereas some citizens believed an entirely new constitution was in order, others wanted to amend the 1868 code, supposedly the more efficient of the two plans.⁴³

Amidst this debate, Governor Houston called the state legislature into session. In line with his personality, the governor did not advocate a new constitution outright, but he did authorize the formation of an ad hoc committee to discuss the feasibility of a constitutional convention. A principal concern of the board, which was headed by Peter Joseph Hamilton, a Mobile and Ohio Railroad executive and author, was fiscal accountability. Pursuant to this goal, committee members made plans to do away with some constitutional offices that they considered nonessential, manage the state debt, and ban government assistance to railroads and other large-scale operations. The committee also discussed judicial reform and abolishing the troubled, and occasionally troublesome, state education board. Reasons varied, but a major reason for disbanding the board was that some of its members had "sedulously endeavored" to create a college or a university and other educational opportunities for blacks.⁴⁴

⁴³ See, for example, "Constitutional Convention," *Jacksonville Republican*, 23 January 1875. Cf. Brewer, *Alabama*.

⁴⁴ See Peter Joseph Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile. An Historical Study, Largely from Original Sources, of the Alabama-Tombigbee Basin from the Discovery of Mobile Bay in 1519 until the Demolition of Fort Charlotte in 1821* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1897). Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 55, 72, 97; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 14-15. George S. Houston often avoided controversial issues. Other times,

Many Alabamians denounced the need for a new constitution and thus a constitutional convention. George Spencer, Charles Sheats, Alexander White, and other members of the more liberal wing of the state GOP led the opposition. In their eyes, the Democrats' call for a constitutional convention mirrored W. M. Brooks, J. L. M. Curry, A. B. Moore, Sr., W. L. Yancey, and other former secessionists' regrettable actions during 1860 and 1861. If a new constitution were drafted while Bourbons were in charge, the reconstruction process would end, and slavery would be reestablished. White Democrats countered the claim by saying that the 1868 state code had already enslaved sociopolitical conservatives.⁴⁵

Attempting to sway financial conservatives, some Republicans argued that a constitutional convention would cost more money than Alabama could afford. Other Republicans claimed that the apportioning of delegates would be extremely inequitable. Furthermore, any Democrat-controlled convention would try to destroy the already inadequate public school system, require all voters to meet property or educational qualifications before voting, and legalize the constitution before it had been ratified by Alabama's voting public, as had Curry, Moore, and other state lawmakers on the eve of the Civil War. A few Republicans also claimed that Democrats wanted to tamper with the exemptions allowed by the 1868 code and would imprison people who failed to pay debts.

he tailored his opinions to satisfy the people with whom he communicated. Before the Civil War, for example, Houston spoke out against secession, but during the war, he claimed that he was a neutral while helping the Confederacy. Following the war, Houston largely avoided politics as he worked steadily to bolster his financial holdings, network, and expand his law practice.

⁴⁵ See *Alabama State Journal*, 23 July 1875. Cf. "Address of the Democratic and Conservative State Executive Committee"; "The Negro Vote—Some Common Sense"; *Ku Klux Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1, 435; *Review of the Proposed Constitution for Alabama*, 3.

Not every Republican opposed a constitutional convention. Some of them believed the state needed a new constitution, and if the only way to procure it was by convention, then so be it. Two major Republican pro-convention camps existed. The first group, led by Datus E. Coon, a former Union general and Iowa journalist, assumed a strong showing at the meeting would help the Republican party regain lost strength. The second group, led by Charles Hays and other one-time Democrats, thought the 1868 state code afforded black people too much power and had to be changed for white rule to be completed. Insofar as Hays had openly supported the Civil Rights Bill of 1873 and had spent five years on Capitol Hill as a result of the support given him by Black Belt blacks, his position received a great deal of attention.⁴⁶

Ultimately, it was decided that a constitutional convention would be held in April 1875, but the meeting was postponed after Democrats issued a convention bill on 3 August to allow Alabama voters to decide a proper course of action on the first Monday in September. In the interim, Democrats countered convention opponents' claims. Writing from the state capitol on 17 July 1875, W. L. Bragg issued an address to Alabamians in which he attempted to rebut each allegation that the Republicans had made. First, Attorney Bragg made a brief reference to the separate Republican addresses issued by Coon and White's committees. Bragg insisted that separate statements were needed because Coon, Sheats, Spencer, and White disagreed about how federal perks would be divided. The chairman then attacked Sheats, Spencer, and White themselves.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ *Mobile Register*, 8 April 1871. See *Montgomery Mail*, 1 March 1871. See also *Alabama Journal*, 23 September 1871. Cf. Burnett, *The Pen Makes a Good Sword*, 136.

⁴⁷ See "An Act to Provide for the Calling of a Convention to Revise and Amend the Constitution of this State"; available via Internet @ <http://www.legislature.state.al.us/misc/history/constitutions/1875/1875enablinginst.html>; accessed 17 July 2003. Cf. "Address of the Democratic and Conservative State Executive Committee," 1.

In Chairman Bragg's opinion, it would have been quite difficult, if not wholly impossible, to find one honest European American with normal intelligence who had any respect for Sheats, Spencer, or White. Coon, on the other hand, might have been able to find one or two white men who respected him somewhat even though his ways of thinking were critically flawed. According to Bragg, Coon had been educated to believe that an honest white was, in some ways, as good as a black when any reasonable person knew that the opposite was true. Put another way, Coon was one of those "vile Yanks...in whose hearts the seeds of abolition were sown in infancy and cultivated with the utmost care until they [had become] so identified with their very existence that any attempt to eradicate them would be like separating the soul from the body." Bragg exaggerated. A number of white persons respected not only Coon but also Sheats Spencer, and White, whose support was even greater among blacks. For instance, Reuben Romulus, a black militia leader and freemason from Mobile, considered Spencer the standard bearer of the state Republican party.⁴⁸

Eventually, Chairman Bragg dealt with the real issues that his Republican foes had brought up, beginning with voting and education. Citing section nine of the 1875 constitutional convention's enabling act to support his contentions, Bragg informed Alabama voters that delegates would not have the power to make the changes suggested by his Republicans rivals:

Be it further enacted, That if such Convention be called, it shall not be authorized to make any ordinance, rule, or law which shall be binding on the people of this State..., nor to

⁴⁸ J. Minerva Abercrombie Letter, 1862, SPR 280, ADAH. See "Look Out," *Marion Commonwealth*, 27 February 1868. See also "The Legislature" and "A Provident Cuss," *Marion Commonwealth*, 30 November 1871. Cf. "Address of the Democratic and Conservative State Executive Committee," 1; Muskat, 190.

place any property or educational qualifications upon the right to vote in this State.... In the constitution so framed, it shall be the duty of the convention to provide for a system of common schools, as liberally as the means of the State will permit, and to be enlarged as those means shall increase.⁴⁹

After calling false the Republican claim that Democrats wished to legalize imprisonment for outstanding debts, Bragg addressed the Republicans' exemptions claims. The Democratic party had never sought to alter the state's exemptions laws, he said. Rather, Republicans wanted to change the law because the black men who controlled their party did not have much property to exempt. Insofar as black men were hardly in control of the state Republican party and several Democrats also detested the exemptions law, Bragg's assertions were undoubtedly political rhetoric meant to stir the emotions of poorly informed white voters.⁵⁰

Bragg also refuted Alexander White, who had spoken against a new constitution. Because White's speech would be distributed among white voters, his committee was scared to defend the 1868 constitution, which White had previously called "the unclean thing," Bragg mentioned in passing. Likewise, White's crew was afraid to discuss the way that the 1868 state code had been forced on Alabamians. Switching topics, Bragg denied that Democrats wanted to alter the way that judges were elected. Under the system established by the 1868 constitution, voters had elected capable, honest judges in every part of the state except the Black Belt. There, he argued, white Republicans had

⁴⁹ "Address of the Democratic and Conservative State Executive Committee," 3.

⁵⁰ The *Marion Commonwealth* considered the 1868 exemptions insignificant. According to it, the 1864 allowances were the only effective exemptions that state lawmakers had ever created. Local Republicans disagreed. William E. Rickard, among other persons, maintained that the 1868 exemptions had been designed to benefit only wealthy Alabamians. The laws, he said, caused Alabama's laboring classes to suffer tremendous hardships and needed to be repealed. See "Exemption Laws, Bankruptcy, &c.," *ibid.*, 4 April 1867. Cf. 20 August 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* letter to the editor.

made sure that a few incapable, dishonest judges had been elected to inferior courts.

Black Republicans willingly complied, he insisted, because they were some of the most bigoted people in the state. Interestingly, Alexander Curtis and Greene Lewis were the only black Republicans whom Bragg mentioned by name, and their alleged bigotry was false. Curtis and Lewis got along with virtually everyone who attempted to get along with them.⁵¹

After criticizing Black Belt Republicans' ethics and intellects, Bragg turned his attention to how much money a constitutional convention would cost taxpayers. According to him, expenses would be negligible. Using the estimates of respected white gentlemen who knew about finance, Bragg's committee predicted that registration would cost approximately \$20,000 and holding an election another \$10,000. Mileage and paying delegates would require \$26,000 and paying officers \$4,000. In all, the total bill would be no more than \$60,000.⁵²

Attempting to show how well the \$60,000 would be spent, Bragg and company called attention to the state census. The 1868 state code necessitated a count be taken each year when, according to the Democrats, there was no need for a yearly census, especially in 1875. At a minimum, that year's census would carry a price tag of \$75,000, they speculated (without stating how they arrived at this number). Incidental and other expenses of the officers and regents of the Alabama Education Board would cost \$4,000, and the annual salary of the lieutenant governor would require an additional \$1,500.

Adding the commissioner of industrial resources' yearly salary would bring the figure to

⁵¹ "Address of the Democratic and Conservative State Executive Committee," 3, 4. See "Darkey Repeaters," *Marion Commonwealth*, 5 January 1871. Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 8-9; "K," 12 November 1874 letter to the editor of the *Marion Commonwealth*.

\$81,000, or \$21,000 more than the projected costs of holding a constitutional convention. If a convention were held, on the other hand, there would be no 1875 census, and \$21,000 would be saved in a single year, according to Bragg's group, predicting even greater savings in the years to come.⁵³

Alabama Democrats should have been glad the political abilities of their executive-committee members were better than their mathematical or reasoning skills. The only program that committee members sought to eliminate was the state census, which, according to their calculations, would have saved the state \$75,000 in 1875. The committee did not mention any other year. Would Alabama not take a census again? Likewise, the expenses that the committee cited came from statewide offices. Would the state not have these positions in the future? The 17 July 1875 "Address to the People of the Alabama" did not provide details. A person can only wonder how many white Alabamians knew or cared about such matters anyhow.

In true Machiavellian fashion, Democrats in North Alabama played on the prejudices of white Alabamians by assuring them that the proposed constitutional changes would prevent the reemergence of either Negro or Black Belt rule, a matter also taken up in the July 1875 address. According to it, Coon's committee was intended to unite African Americans in the Black Belt by convincing them that Democrats intended to do them great harm.⁵⁴

⁵² Cf. "Address of the Democratic and Conservative State Executive Committee," 4.

⁵³ One Black Belt paper claimed the restoration of Democratic rule would save Alabama taxpayers \$20,000,000. "TWENTY MILLION DOLLARS," *Marion Commonwealth*, 2 July 1874 and 20 August 1874.

⁵⁴ Cf. "Address of the Democratic and Conservative State Executive Committee," 4.

Once more, the Democratic and Conservative party appealed to the ethnic sensibilities of white Alabamians. By doing so, they were able to tear down any class, educational or sectional divide that might have kept the state's white population from coming to an agreement on a constitutional convention. That much of what the Democratic executive committee claimed was false did not matter. Prominent Democrats urged white Alabamians to unite lest the political and other privileges that they enjoyed as a result of their "Teutonic" ancestry be jeopardized.⁵⁵

Chairman Bragg was correct in at least one sense however. Canebrake blacks did register to vote en masse. What Bragg forgot to mention was that tens of thousands of black men, not just those who lived in the Canebrake region of the state, registered to vote as soon as they were permitted to do so. Whether black voters were coerced into registering was another matter of course. In any event, black men should have been allowed to vote years earlier, according to Lewis E. Parsons, who believed that not supporting black manhood suffrage during Alabama's 1865 constitutional convention was his greatest error as provisional governor. Had he and other state lawmakers allowed the freedmen to vote, federal lawmakers might have allowed Alabama's white representatives to take their seats in Congress.⁵⁶

In the final push to get white Alabamians to understand why it was so important to support a constitutional convention, Bragg's committee encouraged white Alabamians to take a good look at the men whom the Republican party had deemed fit to attend the

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Cf. *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 1., 95. A reported 88,243 black and 72,748 white Alabamians became registered voters between 1 July and 20 August 1867. The state's registration board then declared 405 black persons ineligible to vote and added 1,702 white voters to the state's registration list.

convention. Once again, the Democrats singled out two individuals, Curtis and Greene Lewis, whom Bragg knew well. Bragg practice law in Perry County and had married a local belle, Sue Lockett. Anticipating an acceptable vote for a state constitutional convention, Bragg and other conservative Democrats, together with lily-white Republicans such as Milton J. Saffold, rejoiced. To reconstitute the state under the jurisdiction of a white man's party would truly inaugurate democracy anew.⁵⁷

On 3 August 1875, the conservatives' prayers were answered. That day, a reported 77,763 Alabamians voted for the constitutional convention and 59,928 against it. The once glorious Alabama, which had flourished when "more acres and more negroes" was the Southerners' motto," was "in a fair way of setting her house in order," announced the *Mobile Daily Register*.⁵⁸

The 1875 Constitutional Convention: Delegates

The constitutional convention of 6 September-2 October 1875 symbolized more than just a renaissance of home rule. A considerable portion of the old order—quasi élitism and the peculiar codes of honor, loyalty, and patriotism that many white Alabamians purported to treasure—was also at stake. But much of the Democratic leadership represented a marked departure from the old order. By 1875, many important antebellum and wartime leaders had either died or turned to different professions.

William Lowndes Yancey had passed on 27 July 1863 of kidney trouble. John Anthony

⁵⁷ Cf. "Address of the Democratic and Conservative Executive Committee," 8.

⁵⁸ Phillips, "Reminisces of War" (first quote); "Alabama Constitution: Press Comments on the Instrument," *The Mobile Daily Register*, 8 October 1875 (second quote). See *The Mobile Register*, 6 July 1875. Cf. *Vindication and Appeal! Heretofore Unwritten Incidents of Reconstruction*, 3, 23, 30. In South Alabama, Levi Lawler and other prominent white Democrats censured lawmakers who backed using state funds to assist mineral and transportation interests.

Winston had succumbed on 21 December 1871. John Gill Shorter had died on 29 May the following year. After completing a six-month sentence at Fort Pulaski, Georgia, in 1865, John A. Campbell had relocated to New Orleans and resumed practicing law; and J. L. M. Curry had left politics for an only partly political field, education. In their absence, Rufus Cobb, William Oates, Edward O'Neal, James Pugh, William Samford, and Leroy Walker represented the old guard.⁵⁹

By agreeing that each county could send only one district and one county delegate to the convention, Democrats reduced the power of liberal white Republicans and predominantly black counties. Not one of the 1875 meeting's thirty-two district and sixty-six delegates had attended the 1867 constitutional convention, and only three of the ninety-eight district and county delegates were black. Moreover, not one of these men—Black Belt representatives Hugh Carson of Lowndes County and Alexander Curtis and Greene Lewis of Perry County—figured prominently in the meeting. In excess of fifty percent of the attendees were lawyers or Confederate veterans (or both), and Leroy Walker, a leading Alabama 1860-1861 secessionist and former state speaker of the House, presided.⁶⁰

Over the years, the number and ethnic composition of the 1875 constitutional convention has drawn much attention from scholars interested in black Alabamians' political involvement. Scholars have quibbled about whether ninety-nine or 100 delegates attended the meeting, and Leroy Walker has been at the center of the

⁵⁹ Cf. Rogers, *Confederate Home Front*, 101; Sydnor, "The Southerner and the Laws."

⁶⁰ Other delegates included editors, large planters, merchants, and physicians. In addition to Republicans and Democrats, seven Independents were in attendance. For additional information concerning why the black population might have been underrepresented, see *Mobile Register*, 9 and 11 September 1875. Cf. *1875 Journal*, 8-10, 16-17; McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama*, 295-297.

controversy. He presided over the meeting, but he also represented district four. Some scholars have suggested that Benjamin H. Screws, the convention's secretary, was a delegate, but he did not represent any district. If Screws is included in the count, then Assistant Secretary Thomas Henry Watts should also be included. Watts would bring the number of delegates to 101, but this is also conjecture because he did not represent any district. The same is true of Pat Doran, the meeting's doorkeeper, and Tennent Lomax, its page.⁶¹

Citing historian Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins, Richard Bailey suggests a fourth black man, W. A. Long of Washington County, attended the 1875 constitutional convention; but Wiggins herself, as well as a legislative source, enumerates only three black men: Curtis, who represented the twenty-second district, and county delegates Carson and Hughes. Truthfully, no one can assert with certainty how many black men attended the convention. Oftentimes, racial lines were blurred by centuries of amalgamation, making it extremely difficult to determine whether an individual was black, white, or mulatto. Skin color is an utterly inadequate determinant because the complexions of many Alabamians were indistinguishable. Official records, such as censuses, are equally suspect because persons were deemed black if they had the slightest vestige of African ancestry even if their European ancestry was dominant. Light-skinned politicians such as William Jones, Horace King, and Mansfield Tyler are ideal cases-in-point.

After extending heartfelt thanks for being elected convention president, Walker (whose father, United States Senator John Williams Walker, had presided over the state's first constitutional convention) presented his version of the state's constitutional heritage:

⁶¹ Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawag*, 245, 283; Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 245; Wiggins,

The constitution framed by our fathers in 1819, was made for a new state, and under it our people prospered and grew into a great commonwealth. The war came and the sacred edifice [built] with such care amid the primeval forests of the Mississippi territory was dismantled and razed to the ground by alien hands in a spirit of ruthless iconoclasm. What is called the present Constitution of the State is a piece of unseemly mosaic, composed of shreds and patches gathered here and there, incongruous in design, inharmonious in action, discriminating and oppressive in the [burdens] it imposes, reckless in the license it confers on unjust and wicked legislation, and utterly lacking in every element to inspire popular confidence and the reverence of the people. [With this in mind,] we have met to-day, not indeed to reclaim the scattered fragments of the old temple...but to construct a Constitution not wholly unworthy...to succeed it.

The vast majority of attendees welcomed the younger Walker's utterances even though many of them were erroneous. Less than twenty percent of the delegates to the 1867 constitutional convention had been black, and only a few of them had wielded any influence. What is more, when Leroy Walker and his conservative colleagues were given the opportunity to draft a depurative constitution, they chose to create one that was quite similar to the 1868 code.⁶²

Old-South Myths, New-South Realities—The 1875 Constitutional Convention: Policies

Over the years, scholars have disagreed about how nostalgic or revolutionary the 1875 constitution was. Walter Fleming, whose *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* remains one of the most racist treatments of the Postbellum period, was certain that the

Scalawag, 153.

⁶² *1875 Journal*, 5. See *Daily Sentinel*, 5 November 1867. Cf. *1867 Convention*, 5-10. E. A. Heidt and M. M. Cooke called Carraway a "buck-nigger," but their description was inaccurate. "Proceedings of the Skunkery."

code returned Alabama to the pre-Civil War years. To support his contention, he highlighted the Redeemers' successful move to prohibit the state government from offering assistance to denominational and private schools. According to him, state officials' postwar experiences with the American Missionary Association and other northern-based philanthropic organizations necessitated that action. Fleming was correct, but he failed to mention at least one important fact: the state was financially strapped during much of the 1870s, but lawmakers had to provide for public schools. Giving parochial schools money that the state government needed to fund public education would have killed Alabama's already deficient public school system.⁶³

Lawmakers also dumped the constitutional provision requiring at least one-fifth of the state's revenue to be used toward public education and placed additional limitations on how much money from local taxes could be used to support local schools, but they obligated the state government to allocate at least \$100,000 per year for schools. That money was to be appropriated in addition to funds that were generated through licenses, poll taxes, and trust-fund incomes. To Fleming, these decisions were further proof of the Redeemers' desire to reestablish pre-Civil War normalcy.⁶⁴

Lucille Griffith disagreed with Fleming. Despite the elimination of several of the 1868 code's most liberal features, the 1875 constitution was no "throwback" to the Antebellum period, she argued: "While it reflected the experience of the Reconstruction years," it did not disenfranchise black voters. Nor did it abandon the popular election of executives or judicial officials. Other scholars have agreed with Griffith, but historical

⁶³ Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 634 (text and footnote 3). Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 88-89, 105-110, 203, 225; Foner and Walker, xxiv (footnote 4).

truth seems to lie somewhere between her views and Fleming's. Black persons might not have been completely disenfranchised until 1901, but innumerable attempts were made to guarantee that they did not participate fully in the voting process. Some Alabamians suggested a literacy test as a criterion for voting. Others said that people should have to present poll-tax receipts before they could vote. Both measures, which state legislators discussed but never enacted during the early Redemption years, were aimed at controlling or disenfranchising black and "venal" white voters.⁶⁵

Article VIII of the 1875 constitution did disenfranchise many black voters. It prevented idiots, the insane, or anyone who had been convicted of bribery, embezzling public funds, larceny, treason, or any other crime that carried a prison sentence from registering, voting, or holding office. Oftentimes, officials interpreted the larceny pronouncement in manners that prohibited all persons who were guilty of larcenous crimes, petit as well as grand, from voting. Previously, officials had ostracized only persons who had been found guilty of grand larceny. More times than not, the victims of the statute were black. The pages of Perry County's postbellum probate judge and commission records are replete with the names of black men and women sentenced to hard labor for committing "grand" larceny. The larceny trap also snagged some financially poor white people, but prevailing prejudices often allowed them to escape it.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 634 (text and footnote 4). Cf. *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 74; Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 18, 26.

⁶⁵ Griffith, 498 (first quote); Francis G. Caffey, *Suffrage Limitations at the South* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1905), 4 (second quote). See Article XIII, sec. 4, 1875 Constitution. Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 107, and *Negro Education in Alabama*, 128-129, 164-194; *History and Hope in the Heart of Dixie*, 180, 204-205.

⁶⁶ See Article VIII, 1875 Constitution. See also Perry County, Alabama, Commission Records of Convicts Sentences to Hard Labor, 1886-1899; Perry County, Alabama, Probate Judge Record of Convicts Sentenced to Hard Labor, 1890-1896, ADAH. Cf. Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 6-7, 114-116, 120.

Having triumphed in the 1874 statewide races, it should be of no great surprise that supremacist words rolled off the tongues of many Democratic delegates to the 1875 constitutional convention. Nor should it be surprising that attempts were made to keep black and white persons separated in public arenas. But segregation issues surfaced over time. The first days of the convention were occupied by talk of exemptions and, of all issues, secession.⁶⁷

How Alabama's secession clause would read caused a great deal of controversy. After much debate, delegates agreed the "people of this State accept as final the established fact, that from the Federal Union there can be no secession of any State." Whereas Republicans and Republican media expressed joy over the clause, several Democrats and Democratic papers considered it superfluous. What reasonable Alabamian, they asked, still suffered from *secessionitis* nine years after the War's end? Governor Lewis and his supporters had evoked memories of 1860 and 1861 during the 1872 campaign, but secession was an issue that was "dead and buried...with not a ghost of a chance of resurrection," avowed the *Huntsville Advocate*. The paper was wrong. In 1875, the Democratic and Conservative party issued a report defending secession.⁶⁸

With regard to tax exemptions, an equally controversial topic, opinion differed widely. The committee authorized to investigate the issue wanted it kept from the constitution altogether but figured any omission might bring about a rift in Democratic ranks. To be safe, committee members recommended keeping the existing law, which

⁶⁷ J. L. M. Curry to John Haralson, 21 November 1860; "Letter from Hon. J. L. M. Curry," *Greensboro Beacon*, 21 December 1860. Cf. Going, *Bourbon Democracy*, 9. For a different view, cf. *1875 Journal*, 50-54; McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama*, 210.

⁶⁸ Article I, sec. 33, 1875 State Constitution (first quote); "David P. Lewis," *Marion Commonwealth*, 10 October 1872, quoting *Huntsville Advocate*, [n.d.] (all subsequent quotes).

allowed eighty acres of land and \$1,000 of personal property to be exempted. Attendees welcomed the recommendation—in large part because the issue had already been decided by one of the Democrat-controlled “King Caucuses” on whose members Republican delegates were advised to keep a vigilant eye—but changed it slightly to allow exemptions to be waived if an appeal was made in writing. By doing so, hundreds of affluent supporters of constitutional change were able to say that the rights of common folk were being protected. Other persons, including some of Perry County’s wealthiest residents, presumed the supplemental provision nullified exemptions altogether.⁶⁹

As far as education was concerned, delegates prohibited state monies from being appropriated or used to support any denominational or sectarian institution. Delegates also eliminated the Alabama Board of Education, a costly and controversial body whose members had possessed enough legislative power to override the decisions of other state lawmakers, the governor included. In addition to having the ability to supersede the state’s chief executive, board members had been able to significantly affect any decision that state legislators made about education. Legislators could have repealed an act of the Board, but they could not have introduced an act. As historian Bond once noted, board members had lacked only three important powers: they had not been able to appropriate money from the state treasury, levy taxes, or dictate when the state government had to pay such funds.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ *Montgomery Journal*, 7 September 1875 (first quote); Going, *Bourbon Democracy*, 24 (second quote). See Article X, 1875 Constitution. Cf. *1875 Journal*, 143-152; 1875 Constitution, Article XIV.

⁷⁰ See Article XIII, sec. 7 and 8, and Article XVII, sec. 2, part 8, 1875 Constitution. See also 11 August 1868 “Act to Repeal and Adopt Certain Acts in the Revised Code of Alabama, Pertaining to Education,” in *School Laws of the State of Alabama, with Blank Forms and Instructions, as Prepared by the Board of Education* (Montgomery, Al.: John G. Stokes and Company, 1879), 11; “Education in Alabama,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 24 September 1874. Cf. 24 September 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* “Education in Alabama”; Article XIII, sec. 1, 1875 Constitution; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 43-44; *Knight Post-*

A single elected superintendent of education whose compensation, duties, powers, and terms of office were specified by law replaced the Board. Only he could appoint county superintendents. Legislators were allowed to develop and maintain a statewide public school system for the “equal” benefit of all Alabamians between the ages of seven and twenty-one, but integration was forbidden. This decision merely gave constitutional recognition to actual practice. Laws mandating segregated educational institutions had already been mandated via the 11 August 1868 “Act to Provide Separate Schools,” the 2 December 1869 “Act Supplementary to An Act to Provide for the Education of Teachers,” and subsequent legislation.⁷¹

The 1868 act made it illegal for black and white students to attend the same schools without their parents or guardians’ unanimous consent. The 1869 act, which established normal schools in Huntsville, Marion, Mobile, and Talladega, required each facility to have two distinct divisions for their black and white students. Later, lawmakers passed “An Act to Amend Section 986 of the Revised Code of Alabama,” a bill that provided for the education of all children, teenagers, and young adults in

Trial Proposed Findings of Facts, 52; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 6, citing George Arlington Hillier, “History of Educational Legislation in Alabama, 1860-1910” (master’s thesis, University of Chicago, 1924), 93-94; and “Let Us Make Man,” 14. For the Board’s official powers, see Articles I and III of the 1868 state code.

⁷¹ Part 1, title xi, chapter 4, Article IV, sec. 1157, 1875 Constitution; *1868 Organization, Supervision, and Maintenance Acts*, 4. See “An Act to Provide Separate Schools,” in *1868 Organization, Supervision, and Maintenance Acts*, 4. See also “An Act Supplementary to An Act to Provide for the Education of Teachers,” in *School Laws of the State of Alabama*, 36-37; “An Act to Amend Section 986 of the Revised Code of Alabama,” in Alabama Department of Education, *Acts of the Board of Education of the State of Alabama. Session Commencing November 16, 1874* (Montgomery, AL: W. W. Screws, 1874), 31-32, hereinafter cited as *November 1874 Education Acts*. Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 225-226; Sherer, “Let Us Make Man,” 26-28. Sherer takes a slightly different approach to the “Act to Provide Separate Schools” in *Black Education in Alabama*, arguing that the 1868 act did not mandate segregated schools. Interpreted literally, the measure did not rule out integration, but the parents or guardians of every student who attended a school had to agree to integration. Segregation, then, was de facto until 1869. Cf. Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 6, 154 (footnote 44), and “Let Us Make Man,” 30, 510.

Alabama between six and twenty-one as long as they attended a free public school for the race to which they belonged. Delegates to the 1875 constitutional convention simply agreed to perpetuate these agreements. The only way that black and white students could lawfully attend the same schools would be with their parents or guardians' unanimous consent. Delegates knew that this was unlikely because the general opinion of white Alabamians called for segregated facilities.⁷²

Colonel Howard, a one-time member of the Alabama Education Board, claimed that the state's poorest citizens would kill their offspring before allowing them to attend an integrated school. The colonel might have been correct, but his application was too narrow. White Alabamians of every socioeconomic echelon opposed integrated schools. Convinced that uneducable blacks would never become the intellectual equals of whites, many white Alabamians could not fathom their children attending the same schools as black children, and the white Alabamians who were willing to concede the intellectual parity of black people often feared that racially mixed schools would encourage miscegenation. Hence, integrated schools were as much a societal danger as the Civil Rights Acts of 1866 and 1873.⁷³

Perhaps one of the most interesting postbellum calls for segregation was made in Perry County. After noting how the concerts of Judson Professor of Music Blandner (or Biandner) had received more acclaim than all previous commencement-exercise performances combined, the *Marion Commonwealth* criticized Blandner for playing

⁷² Cf. "An Act to Provide Separate Schools"; "An Act Supplementary to An Act to Provide for the Education of Teachers"; "An Act to Amend Section 986 of the Revised Code of Alabama"; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama* and "Let Us Make Man."

⁷³ See *Alabama State Journal*, 16 July 1874. Cf. Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 15; Hoar, "History of Public Education in Alabama, 1865-1875," 153; *Knight Post-Trial Proposed Findings of Facts*, 49; "The

inappropriate selections. Amazingly, of all the musical genres performed by the skilled musician, whom the newspaper had praised repeatedly for his extraordinary success, only one variety was deemed inappropriate: the “melodies Ethiopic.”⁷⁴

A conservative white Marionite broadcast an equally interesting justification for segregated educational facilities. A reported marriage between a white Mobile Freedmen’s Bureau schoolmarm and one of her black students had caused a great deal of excitement in the port city. Although the woman, a Northerner whose last name was Jones, and her husband, an ex-slave of a dapper Creole general from New Orleans named Beauregard, had left Mobile for her parents’ home, their union remained the talk of the town. That the story was false and had to be retracted did not matter. The mere possibility that it could have been true proved for some people that black and white students needed to attend separate schools. To quote the *Montgomery Advertiser*: “Miscegenation and like abhorrent practices must not be crammed down our throats so long as we have any possible means left at our command to defeat it. Teach children that there is no difference between white and black, and miscegenation will follow as a matter of course. We cannot take that risk.” According to the paper’s owners, a white father would command his sons or daughters to destroy a school before he would allow them to be educated alongside black students.⁷⁵

Public Free School System,” 10; Tolnay, *The Bottom Rung*, 191 (footnote 8); “The Ultimatum of the Negro.”

⁷⁴ “Commencement Exercises,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 July 1866. For the musician’s on-going negotiations and final departure from Judson, see “Judson Female Institute,” *ibid.*, 7 February-4 April 1867, 26 August and 14 October 1869. See also “A Compliment,” *ibid.*, 27 January 1870.

⁷⁵ *Montgomery Daily Advertiser*, 26 May 1874. See “The Mobile Schoolmarm Who Married a Negro,” *Marion Commonwealth*, 12 July 1866. See also *Marion Commonwealth*, 19 July 1866. Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 20; Carter, *Their Words were Bullets*, 17.

State lawmakers assented to public opinion even though operating what amounted to two school systems was imprudent. Crippled by a financial panic that affecting the entire United States and facing a substantial state debt, Alabama could barely afford to operate a single adequate school system in 1875. State officials knew this, but they also knew that Jim Crow schools served psychological purposes that outweighed financial concerns, including bankruptcy.⁷⁶

Segregated schools had an immense effect on all Alabamians. They reacquainted black people with the certainty that the laws of the nation were not necessarily in line with the mores of the South. As important, they reassured white Alabamians that the laws of the nation did not always transcend the mores of the South. In short, segregated educational facilities confirmed the belief that black persons' civil and human rights were not reliant upon any act, bill, or law prohibiting "discrimination on the ground of race, color, or previous condition of servitude" but on the acquiescence of white persons.⁷⁷

As restrictive as the forgoing constitutional decisions were, several scholars agree that not every measure undertaken during and immediately following the 1875 convention was disadvantageous to black Alabamians. Whereas lawmakers could have

⁷⁶ See Alabama Department of Education, *Report of Joseph Speed, Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Alabama, For the Scholastic Year Ending October 1st, 1873 Education* (Montgomery, AL: Arthur Bingham, 1874), 3. See also Alabama Department of Education, *Report of Joseph H. Speed, Superintendent of Public Instruction, of the State of Alabama, For the Scholastic Year Ending October 1st, 1874* (Montgomery, AL: W. W. Screws, 1874), 5; Garvin F. Davenport, Jr., "Thomas Dixon's Mythology of Southern History," *Journal of Southern History* 36 (August 1970): 350-351. Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 231; Essah, *A House Divided*, 4.

⁷⁷ Civil Rights Bill of 1875. For an insightful discussion about the effectiveness, or the lack thereof, of the seven civil-rights acts that were enacted between 1865 and 1875, see *Petition to Congress for Civil Rights; Memorial of the National Convention of Colored Persons, Praying to be Protected in Their Civil Rights*, 43rd Congress, 1st sess., Misc. Doc. 21. See also Henry M. Turner, "Civil Rights: The Outcome of the Supreme Court of the United States Upon the Black Man" (Atlanta: [n.p.], 1889), reprinted, in part, in Thomas R. Frazier, ed., *Afro-American History: Primary Sources* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1970). For a laconic affirmation of southern white acquiescence, see "Huntsville Independence," *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 February 1870.

appropriated public-education funds in racially disproportionate ways, they did not. Instead, monies were appropriated according to the number of students who were expected to be in regular attendance. Numerous writers have deemed this an equitable division, but a case can be made that rural areas needed more resources to operate than did urban areas such as Mobile and Montgomery. This idea is especially plausible in relation to rural areas that had large concentrations of former slaves or where academics were not appreciated as much as agriculture. And places where formal education took a back seat to practical learning, such as “turning a crop” or butchering a hog, were plentiful in nineteenth-century Alabama. The state contained relatively few cities where erudition was prioritized, and small college towns were equally rare.⁷⁸

African Americans’ academic situation worsened over the years. In 1897, Alabama State Teachers’ Association President Nathan B. Young reiterated the well-known fact that black students had not received a fair share of the state’s public-school funds since 1868. In the Black Belt, where academic education had been needed more than any other region in the state, according to Young, financial inadequacies had given birth to short school terms, underpaid and unqualified teachers, and poorly prepared students.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Cf. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order*, 160-161; *History of Hope in the Heart of Dixie*, 199-200, 205. For a decidedly different, and seemingly contradictory, opinion, cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 104-105. Although some sources suggest that Alabama had fewer than 40,000 illiterate people during the 1850s, State Superintendent of Education W. F. Perry stated there were at least 100,000 thousand “ignorant and neglected children” in Alabama during the same period. Because many Alabamians associated literacy with only writing, it is almost certain that fewer than 300,000 thousand of the state’s citizens were truly literate, meaning they could both read and write. W. F. Perry, quoted in Davis, *The Progress and Prospect of Alabama*, 14-16. For considerably lower estimates, cf. *1868 Alabama House Journal*, 17; *Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy: Alabama*, vol. 2, 925-927.

⁷⁹ See *Common School Extension. An Address Delivered by Nathan B. Young, A.M., President Ala. State Teachers’ Association. Delivered in Birmingham, Alabama, April 14, 1897* (Tuskegee, Al.: Normal School Steam Press, 1897), 7, hereinafter cited as *Common School Extension*.

Marion in Perry County was an important exception to this general rule. As some of the town's most forward-looking black citizens had seen it, socioeconomic and political clout had usually been associated with formal learning. Thus, education's once hidden mysteries had been considered key to their elevation. Other blacks had desired an academic education for a less lofty reason: they had to have one. African Americans such as Julius S. Carr, William H. Council, and Booker T. Washington agreed, but they were convinced that practical education was as important as classical education. In a constantly industrializing age, education was worthless if it did not entail learning how to "do things," argued Carr. In 1875, Marion's Lincoln Normal School and University met each one of these needs.⁸⁰

From 1867 through 1874, Perry County's premier black school had amassed "a noble and inspiring record." It had fared as well as Judson College and Marion Female Seminary and, in some ways, better than Howard College. By December 1874, Lincoln's buildings were valued at \$5,000. The furniture and apparatuses that Commissioners Curtis, King, and John T. Harris had worked hard to acquire increased the institution's worth by \$300. The school's only major deficiencies as it entered 1875 were the absence of a library and additional state funds.⁸¹

Help came quickly. Rather than cutting the financial assistance to school, as many persons expected, lawmakers increased it. In one of its last acts, the Alabama Board of Education passed "An Act to Amend Sections One and Two of 'An Act to

⁸⁰ Carr, *The Problem of the Hour*, 5. Cf. *Common School Extension*; Council, "The Industrial Negro in the Industrial South."

⁸¹ Edgar Gardner Murphy, "A Personal Letter," included in *Alabama's First Question: Local Support for Local Schools* (Montgomery, Al.: [n.p.], 1904), 3. See "Interior Correspondence," *Marion Commonwealth*, 24 March 1870. See also "The Judson," *Marion Commonwealth*, 3 June 1869. Cf. *1875 Report of John McKleroy*, 65; Stakely, "The Baptists of Alabama in the State's Centennial," 6.

Establish a State Normal School and University for the Education of Colored Teachers and Students,' Approved December 6, 1873." When implemented on 15 December 1874, the act doubled the institution's \$2,000 appropriation.⁸²

With the \$4,000 provided by the state government during its first academic year (October 1874-June 1875), Lincoln's board of directors, or commissioners, was able to provide President Card with a \$1,500 salary and two faculty members to assist with the daily operations of the seventy-student institution. Former associates John Silsby and George Bemis became instructors. Each man received \$1,000 for his labor, but only Silsby stayed. Midway through the spring of 1875, Bemis quit. Thereupon, Silsby's salary was increased to \$1,200, and state officials hired a Ms. Ballard, whom board members deemed appropriate because of the school's large female enrollment. Ballard was paid only \$600 but not because of her gender. She was not employed until halfway through the school year.⁸³

The composition of Lincoln's board of directors also changed during its first year. The same 15 December 1874 act that doubled the school's appropriation dismissed John Sears. His firing was undoubtedly political. A year earlier, Sears had cast the deciding vote in favor of establishing Alabama's second group of white and black state-sponsored normal schools. Sears' colleague, Joseph Speed, also left Lincoln's commission board. Numerous Canebrake blacks wanted at least one African American board member to succeed them. In Selma, Peyton Finley was the top choice, but he did not receive the

⁸² "An Act to Amend Sections One and Two of 'An Act to Establish a State Normal School and University for the Education of Colored Teachers and Students,' Approved December 6, 1873," in *November 1874 Education Acts*, 52-53; Larry Gerber, 27 July 2006 communication to the author. Cf. Sherer, "Let Us Make Man," 52. One historian stated that Lincoln's appropriation was not increased to \$4,000 until 1878; even then, he added, the expenditure was only \$3,010. Clark, *History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1889*, 274.

appointment. Instead, Redeemers W. R. Brown, Peter T. Hurt, Charles W. Lovelace, N. B. Mardis, and John Moore replaced Lincoln's out-going commissioners. Moore was elected chairman, Lovelace secretary, and Brown treasurer.⁸⁴

Lincoln's enrollment increased dramatically during the 1875-1876 term. Before graduation, all students had to complete a practicum. Under the watchful eye of their instructors, the aspiring teachers taught young children. Thereafter, their supervisors called a conference in which suggestions for improvement or kudos were extended. More often, the students under review were congratulated. The previous year, between twenty and thirty of them had taught school. Despite Redeemers and local white residents' attempts to sabotage the institution, its reputation for excellence increased in coming years. This is ironic, considering that the university was created during one of the most economically, politically, and racially charged years in the state's history.⁸⁵

Conclusion

In some ways, what historian Arthur Williams calls "an ordeal of fraud, intimidation, and, in some instances, murder" climaxed on Election Day 1874. Attempting to guarantee political victory, Democrats and Republicans cast and counted votes fraudulently. They also proscribed, ostracized, and attacked voters. In many parts of the state, confrontations were limited to mere threats and bickering, but outright riots

⁸³ Cf. *1875 Report of John McKleroy*, 122; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 160 (footnote 19). McKleroy's report did not indicate Ms. Ballard's first name.

⁸⁴ One source suggests that John C. Dozier was also removed from the board. Cf. Caver, *November 1874 Education Acts*, 52-53.

⁸⁵ Cf. Hogg, *Lacks and Needs of the South Educationally*, 10; Clark, *History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1889*, 274.

took place in Eufaula and Mobile, where armed Democrats killed at least two black men for attempting to vote. Others were shot or threatened.⁸⁶

A congressional committee commissioned to investigate the sociopolitical affairs in Alabama determined that fighting usually occurred when people spread rumors of black uprisings, such as the Rowe's Farm Riot at Forkland in Greene County, or when significant black political action was expected. Immediately, white mobs began to roam through rural areas and small towns, cautioning black people to stay away from polling places and intimidating any black person who ignored their warnings. The committee also confirmed what many Alabamians already knew: campaign and Election Day fraud was common in Alabama. Polling places went unopened, ballots were stuffed, and non-Alabamians voted. In at least one instance, a dead person evidently rose from the grave to vote for his favorite Democratic candidate.⁸⁷

Such occurrences seem to validate the Republican allegation that Democrats' gabble about the state being peacefully redeemed from Republican rogues and spoilsmen was slanderous. But Republicans, including Joseph Speed and Charles Hays, also employed some questionable tactics. "Side-Meat Charley" helped local officials distribute more than 200,000 pounds of army bacon to help alleged flood victims who did not live anywhere near waterways. His and similar actions prove that Democratic

⁸⁶ Williams, "The Participation of Negroes in the Government of Alabama," 58, possibly quoting "Alabama Affairs—The Force Bill," 152. See Allen Alexander to William H. Smith, 29 June 1868, Smith Papers. See also *Alabama State Sentinel*, 4 July 1867; *Mobile Daily Register*, 4 and 5 November 1875; *Mobile Nationalist*, 9 May 1867; *Mobile Tribune*, 4 and 5 November 1874. Cf. *Affairs in Alabama*, 11, 346, 349, 375, 447, 451, 453, 455; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 55-56; Fitzgerald, *The Union League Movement in the Deep South*, 168, 186, and *Urban Emancipation*, 206-208, 210, 211-214, 234; Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, 3; Wiggins, *Scalawag*, 145. In other ways, the ordeal about which Williams wrote was just beginning.

allegations were not always as slanderous as some Republicans alleged, but members of the latter group were on much safer ground when they talked about blacks killed by prejudiced Democrats or Democrats' use of the race card, which they continued to play to bolster white opposition to the federal Civil Rights Act of 1875 that Congressman Rapier helped bring about. White opposition to universal equality persisted throughout Governor Houston's first term.⁸⁸

After Houston served a customary second term as governor, another Redeemer, Shelby County railroad attorney Rufus Cobb, was placed at the helm. Like his predecessor, who moved on to the United State Senate and died in office, Governor Cobb remained in the Montgomery statehouse for two terms before being escorted out by a third Redeemer, Edward O'Neal, a former Confederate Army general whose platform reiterated a standard Redeemer policy, strict economy.⁸⁹

Alabama's first three Bourbon governors shared more than party affiliation and ideology. During the tenure of all three men, allegations and actual cases of fraud were commonplace. The fourth and other voting districts were gerrymandered duplicitously, and black men were counted out. As one white Alabamian recounted years later,

⁸⁷ See Alabama Board of Inspectors of Convicts, Administrative Correspondence, 1881-1897, SG 018151-18155, ADAH. Cf. *Affairs in Alabama*, 11, 345-349, 565; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 11-27; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 210-214, 234; Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, 3.

⁸⁸ Rogers, *Black Belt Scalawag*, 117. See Bruce A. Ragsdale and Joel D. Treese, *Black Americans in Congress, 1870-1989* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1990), 126. See also *Alabama State Journal*, 4 and 13 June, 18 September, and 6 November 1874; "Troops in Alabama, January 19, 1875," *House Executive Documents*, 43rd Congress, 2d. sess., no. 110, 7-15. Cf. 5 and 9 August 1874 *Alabama State Journal*; 8, 11, and 13 August 1874 *Montgomery Advertiser*; 19 November 1874 *Marion Commonwealth* "Arrested"; 19 August 1874 *Carrollton West Alabamian*; 15 September 1875 *Hartford Daily Courant*; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 70; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 216 (footnote 61); Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers*, Franklin and Schweninger; Going, *Bourbon Democracy*, 16; Herbert, *Why the Solid South*, 61-62; William Warren Rogers, Jr., "Reconstruction Journalism" and "The Hays-Hawley Letter," chap. 7 in *Black Belt Scalawag*, 110-120.

Alabama Redeemers were always cognizant of how many African Americans voted Republican and therefore refused to risk losing control of the state government through a fair count. Any Democratic loss would certainly have brought about a restoration, explained the *Montgomery Advertiser*, but it would have been the restoration of “Negro rule.”⁹⁰

In 1880, a Republican state convention swore that the party’s attempts to secure fair and free elections following the Civil War had been curtailed by the “bold and shameless frauds...of a few hundred election managers, whose consciences and fears [had been] hushed, and whose hopes” had been “excited by ‘THE WILD, SWEET MUSIC OF THE REBEL YELL.’” The same convention charged the general populations of the state with abetting the crimes of the Democrats by their active participation or their “mute consent.” What the committee did not acknowledge, however, was the fact that Republicans themselves had crippled the party by perpetuating black-white conflicts.⁹¹

GOP divisions worsened during the 1880s. As had been the case during previous eras, black Republicans criticized their white colleagues for monopolizing important positions, especially appointive offices. The *Huntsville Gazette* pointed out that in 1881 there were only two black federal officials in North Alabama. By 1883, not one black person held a federal post in the region.

⁸⁹ See *Chronology and Documentary Handbook of the State of Alabama*, Ellen Lloyd Trover and William F. Swindler, eds. (Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.: Oceana Publications, 1972), 53. See also R. B. Rhett to Emmett O’Neal, 17 April 1882, O’Neal Papers. Cf. Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 138-139.

⁹⁰ *Montgomery Advertiser*, 2 August 1882. Cf. *Grandfather Talk about his Life under Two Flags*.

⁹¹ *How the South is Kept “Solid”*, 8 (first quote); Gross, 92 (second quote). One writer credits the term “mute consent” to Edward King. While visiting the state in 1875, King supposedly commented that “the political stagnation of the whites—their ‘mute consent’ to almost anything—was far worse than the damage

Sharpening racial divides within the Republican party were not limited to the Tennessee Valley. In the Black Belt and elsewhere in the state, black and white Republicans continued to feud as some in the latter group realigned themselves economically, politically, and socially. As the chances of defeating Democrats grew slimmer, many white Alabamians joined or rejoined the Democratic ranks. Others became Independents, expressing their discord through the Populist and other third parties, but not even they could rein in the Democrats. For the next century, every one of Alabama's chief executives was a white Democrat. By the time that Cullman County Republican Guy Hunt—a former Amway salesman, Primitive Baptist minister, farmer, and probate judge—was elected governor in 1986, the general platform and ethnic composition of the state's largest political parties had changed considerably. And so had Perry County.⁹²

done to the State [Alabama] during the period of Reconstruction by ignorance and corruption.” Gross, 334-335.

⁹² See, for example, Charles Bullock, III, and Mark Rozell, eds., *The New Politics of the Old South: An Introduction to Southern Politics*, 2d. ed. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 77, 84-85. For a brief but, according to one historian, overstated piece about the composition and basic contentions of Alabama's modern Republicans, see Glenn Feldman, “Ugly Roots: Race, Emotion, and the Rise of the Modern Republican Party in Alabama,” in *Before Brown: Civil Rights and White Backlash in the Modern South* (Tuscaloosa, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 268-309. See also Ralph Young, review of *Before Brown* in *Alabama Review* 58 (July 2005): 216. Cf. Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 1; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 129-132, 140-141; Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*, 34, 76, 83, 134-135; Rogers et al., *Alabama*, 268.

**CONNECTING THE DOTS—HOPE, TRAVAIL, RESURRECTION, AND
RECONCILIATION: THE IMPORTANCE OF PERRY COUNTY,
PAST AND PRESENT**

“Perhaps the best way to examine black agency is to explore the social basis of popular politics in a single location. Only this approach allows a full examination of the factional choices made by both individual leaders and their grassroots followers.”

—Michael Fitzgerald, 2002¹

“The [Lee] family lived in a shack without running water and without electricity. Inside the home there was a sad little table and a few chairs. Outside, open sewage ran in a stream in the backyard.... This was the home of the poorest kind of people in America..., the kind of people who were so poor that they barely showed up on the national census statistics.”

—David Halberstam, 1998²

“You can’t just write...off and kill the dream, because that strikes at the very heart of Alabama’s Christian message, that resurrection is always possible.”

—Wayne Flynt, 2006³

Guy Hunt was inaugurated on 19 January 1987. According to the new governor, his election signaled a “new day” in Alabama. The racial division that had plagued the state since the Civil War had run its course, enthused Hunt: “Today we have arrived full circle...at that long awaited moment in Alabama history when we have finally put to rest the forces that have divided us in this terrible struggle” in which Robert E. Lee, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and innumerable other Southerners had taken part.

¹ Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 4.

² David Halberstam, *The Children* (New York: Random House, 1998), 503.

³ Wayne Flynt, quoted in “New Racial Equation, Same Grinding Poverty.”

After 126 years of continuous sociopolitical and racial warfare, Alabama was finally ready to take its place alongside other states in the nation's interracial democracy.⁴

Most Perry Countians found little solace in Hunt's words. By 1987, their once immensely prosperous home had become one of the state's most deprived counties. Per-capita income was despicably low, poverty was widespread, the population was declining, roads and schools were shabby, and the county had one of the highest infant-mortality rates in the state. Conditions worsened in coming years. Perry was still a predominately black county, having produced some of the modern Civil Rights movement's most renowned figures and martyrs, including Jimmy (or Jimmie) Lee Jackson, whose February 1965 death at the hands of white state trooper James Bonard Fowler had motivated Reverend James Bevel, Dr. King, and other civil-rights leaders to carry out the famed Selma-to-Montgomery march to confront George C. Wallace, Alabama's "fiery, bantam-sized demagogue" and segregationist governor, that Bevel had debated for over a year.⁵ But Perry County's economic, political, and social situation

⁴ Guy Hunt, quoted in "The Fire Gone, Wallace Ends Political Reign," *Washington Post*, 19 January 1987, hereinafter cited as "The Fire Gone, Wallace Ends Political Reign." Cf. *History of Hope in the Heart of Dixie*, 4, 179-195, 208.

⁵ "The Fire Gone, Wallace Ends Political Reign" (first quote); "How Lust for Oil Turned Paradise into a Landscape of Apocalypse," *London (England) Times*, 11 November 1995 (second quote). The death of Jimmy Lee Jackson has received much attention over the years. See "New Racial Equation, Same Grinding Poverty," *Anniston Star*, 4 June 2006, hereinafter cited as "New Racial Equation, Same Grinding Poverty." See also Taylor Branch, *At Canaan's Edge: America in the King Years 1965-1968* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), passim; J. L. Chestnut, Jr., and Julia Cass, *Black in Selma: The Uncommon Life of J. L. Chestnut, Jr.* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1990), 145, 204, 360, 374; Adam Fairclough, *Better Day Coming: Blacks and Equality, 1890-2000* (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), 291; John Fleming, "'Gone Time' Lives Anew in Alabama"; available via Internet @ <http://www.aliciapatterson.org/APF2202/Fleming/Fleming.html>; accessed 9 June 2006; Frye Gaillard, *Cradle of Freedom: Alabama and the Movement that Changed America* (Tuscaloosa, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 238, 240-241, 261; John Hope Franklin, *Mirror to America: The Autobiography of John Hope Franklin* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 237; Jon Meacham, ed., *Voices in Our Blood: America's Best on the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Random House, 2003), 313, 430; J. Mills Thornton, III, *Dividing Lines: Municipal Politics and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Alabama* (Tuscaloosa, Al.: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 486, 487, 489, 690 (footnote 150); James Washington, ed., *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.*

was much different in February 1987 than it had been a century earlier. In some places, commercial buildings, family homes, and people, too, looked as if they had been “halfway through the apocalypse.”⁶

Perry’s twentieth-century collapse, which characterized much of the Black Belt, was in some ways rooted in the nineteenth century. From Alabama’s 1819 founding through the Antebellum period, Perry had grown into one of the state’s most promising counties. Its citizens had held important political offices, built thriving educational and religious centers, and become wealthy from the region’s rich black soil and the black people who worked it. During the Civil War, the county was able to maintain its physical makeup because no significant battles took place within its borders. Unbeknownst to every person who lived there during this tumultuous period, the shadows of war veiled new realities.⁷

Following the Union victory, Perry County was transformed from a white, planter-dominated slave society to one in which governance was shared by relatively affluent freed black and northern white Republicans. For once, traditionalist white Southerners “played second fiddle.” Though tenuous, the Republicans’ relationship was

(San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1986), 56, 126, 576; Paul A. Winters, ed., *The Civil Rights Movement* (San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2000), 32. Cf. Fager, *Selma, 1965*, 74-78, 81, 85-86, 111, 213; Halberstam, *The Children*, 503-504; *History and Hope in the Heart of Dixie*, 158-162; Jackson, *Inside Alabama*, 259-260; Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, 184-185.

⁶ See John Archibald and Jeff Hansen, “Life is Short, Prosperity is Long Gone,” *Birmingham News*, 12 May 2002, and “From Birth, Hardships begin Assault,” *ibid.*, 28 July 2002. See also Carla Crowder and Thomas Spencer, “Perry County Natives Find Success Far from Home,” *ibid.*, 12 May 2002; John Archibald and Jeff Hansen, “Land is Power, and Most who Wield It are Outsiders,” Patrick Dedrick, “Catfish Plants: Alabama’s New Plantations,” and Thomas Spencer, “Politics of Color: Who Deserves to Lead,” *ibid.*, 13 October 2002. Carla Crowder, “Private White Academies Struggle in Changing World,” *ibid.*, 27 October 2002; Steve Kirk, “Money, Talent, Race: A Great Divide,” *ibid.*, 8 December 2002. Cf. Crowder, “Lost in Poverty.”

⁷ See, for example, Thomas Spencer, “Politics of Color: Who Deserves to Lead,” *Birmingham News*, 13 October 2002. Cf. Alexander, foreword to *Preface to Peasantry*, xlv; “New Racial Equation, Same Grinding Poverty.”

still stronger than most Canebrake county's postwar leadership. Consequently, black politicians such as Alexander Curtis and John Dozier were able to broker substantial economic, political, and religious gains for Perry County's black populace without sacrificing any personal or political probity. Other blacks, including perhaps Greene Lewis, had to rely on political patronage once they became influential Republicans.⁸

Despite Curtis and Dozier's exceptionality, few histories of Alabama have mentioned their names let alone their contributions to the state and nation's post-Civil War reconstruction. This is tragic. Because of their and their colleagues' efforts, Perry County became a cradle of cooperation in which most blacks and some whites were committed to bringing about the "new day" that Governor Hunt would laud more than one hundred years later.

Time, or historical context, makes the ex-slaves' accomplishments even more significant. As first-generation activists, organizers, and politicians, Curtis, Dozier, and associates faced greater challenges than any successive group of black leaders, including those who participated in the modern Civil Rights movement. Not only did Curtis and his colleagues have to deal with the overt racism and the possibility of violence that their twentieth-century heirs would inherit; Curtis' group had to shoulder the responsibility of empowering an entire community of people who had known little except slavery. As historian Fitzgerald has recently pointed out, "the polemical needs of the second Reconstruction [have] obscured certain aspects of the African American political behavior in the first," but this should not be the case. As much, if not more, emphasis should be placed on First Reconstruction black leaders. Had they not risked their and

⁸ Cf. Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 170, 190.

their loved ones' lives pressing for academic education, equal wages, land ownership, voting privileges, and other civil rights, there might not have been a modern Civil Rights movement—at least, not in Perry County, Alabama.⁹

As disputable as the last statement might seem, there is ample support for it. In 1867, the American Missionary Association and nine prominent Perry County blacks, including Curtis, created Lincoln School. In 1870, it became the state-sponsored Lincoln Normal School. Then, in 1874, as conservative whites celebrated the permanent restoration of Democratic rule in the state, Lincoln Normal School became Alabama State Normal School and University.

In 1886, a scuffle between Howard College cadets and Alabama State Normal School and University students caused much uneasiness among Perry County's white and black residents. Tensions heightened during the early months of the next year when white cadets attacked a group of black students, who fled to the home of Mrs. Henrietta Curtis. Originally from Atlanta, Curtis was known for being a kind, intelligent, and pious woman who followed the Golden Rule, but the cadets' meanness prompted a different course of action. Rather than forgiving and forgetting, Curtis threatened to shoot the Howard students, who left. The local white community's action was immediate. In the coming months, several white merchants attempted to force Lincoln's closure. In

⁹ Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 266. For a broader application of this idea, see Allan Nevins, *The Emergence of Modern America, 1865-1978* (1927; reprint, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1972). See also Eric Foner, *Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980). Cf. Foner, *Forever Free and Reconstruction*; McAfee, *Race, Religion and Reconstruction*, 220-222; Robinson, "Beyond the Realm of Social Consensus," 276 (footnote 1).

response, black Perry Countians' boycotted the participants, forcing merchants Drake, Irpy, and Mason to declare bankruptcy.¹⁰

With the county's usually cooperative citizens at odds with each other and with the survival of its black university in jeopardy, two actions guaranteed the university's Marion death. In 1887, Alabama legislators decreed that henceforward not one of the school's buildings could be used to education blacks and that a state-sponsored black university could be located anywhere in the state except Perry's seat of justice. The same year, a suspicious fire destroyed Alabama State Normal School and University's primary building. After much and sometimes acerbic debate and politicking, its university department was finally relocated to Montgomery (over Booker T. Washington's objections), where it became Alabama State University's immediate predecessor, Alabama State College. The primary, intermediate, and high-school departments remained in Marion under the school's original name, Lincoln. It was there, for example, that civil-rights icon Coretta Scott King became the valedictorian of Lincoln High School's class of 1945. Jimmie Lee Jackson was a 1959 alumnus.¹¹

The name of another Lincoln graduate is enshrined in modern civil-rights lore. Albert Turner, Sr.—a one-time brick mason, tax consultant, Perry County commissioner, and regional president of the A. L. Williams Insurance Company—led Dr. King's 1968

¹⁰ Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, passim; Caver; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 10, citing Phillips, *Lincoln Normal School*, 1, *The Montgomery Herald*, 8 January 1887, and *Huntsville Gazette*, 26 March 1887; and "Let Us Make Man," 54, 57.

¹¹ See Jesse C. Duke to Booker T. Washington, 29 January 1887, in *The Booker T. Washington Papers*, vol. 2, 326. See also *Montgomery Advertiser*, 18 August 1887; *New York Freedman*, 3 September 1887; "The Normal School Relocates to Montgomery"; available via Internet @ <http://www.marionalabama.org/lincoln/directory/relocation.html>; accessed 12 August 2003. Cf. Anderson, *Black Education in Alabama*, especially 10-12; Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags* and *They Too Call Alabama Home*; Caver Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 64, and "Let Us Make Man," 34, 51 (footnote 22), 57-58, 60-67, 296-298, 511. One person has suggested that the fire occurred in 1877. Cf. Johnson, "Powerful Little School," 156.

funeral procession in Atlanta. According to Willie M. Crews, president of the Birmingham chapter of the Lincolnite Association, Turner was the only person at the funeral who knew how to command the mules, having honed his skills on farms in and around Marion. But J. L. Chestnut, Jr., a noted civil-rights attorney from Selma, remembers the occasion differently. According to Chestnut, Turner had been King's "point man during the entire struggle," having helped King lead the first attempted Selma-to-Montgomery march (the infamous "Bloody Sunday" episode), so it was only fitting that Turner lead the funeral march as well.¹²

Perry County's connection to the modern Civil Rights movement is not limited to Mrs. King, Jackson, and Turner. In June 1952, Andrew Young, a twenty-year-old Howard University graduate and Hartford Theological Seminary student from Louisiana, began a summer Bible school-recreation program in Marion. That summer, he met Jean Childs—a Lincoln alumna and linear descendant of Reverend James Childs, one of the school's incorporators—and married her in 1954. Julia Childs—Stephen Childs' daughter, Reverend Childs' granddaughter, and yet another Lincoln alumna—completed Atlanta University as well as the Universities of Chicago and St. Louis. A full-time social worker, Julia also taught Latin at Sumner High School in St. Louis.¹³

The success of James Childs' twentieth-century descendants resulted partly from the actions of their nineteenth-century ancestors. Aware that academic education was

¹² J. L. Chesnut, Jr., quoted in "Albert Turner, Sr.: Civil Rights Advocate," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 15 April 200; Willie Mae Crews, telephone interview with the author, 8 June 2006. Turner's numerous awards and honors included being the first African American licensed to produce gasohol in United States history, a feature story in *Jet* magazine, an honorary law degree from Faith College, and a 1981 Rockefeller Foundation Award. He died on 13 April 2000. See, for example, "Evelyn Gibson Lowery Leads 15th Annual African American Civil Rights Educational Tour: Special Tributes to the late Albert Turner Sr., Rev. Hosea Williams and Earl Shinhoster," *Atlanta Inquirer*, 3 March 2003. Cf. Chestnut and Cass, *Black in Selma*.

¹³ Cf. Bond, *Black American Scholars*, 170-175.

pivotal to one's success, the nineteenth-century Childs children were reared in an environment where scholastic lethargy was not tolerated. Spirituality, punctuality, and determination were equally important to the Childses, who were humble enough to affiliate with Perry County's most destitute residents but were most intimate with its black and white leaders, including the Curtises.

Julia G. Childs' marriage to William Parrish Curtis further united two of Perry County, Alabama's most affluent postbellum black families. After completing Lincoln in 1887, William Parrish finished Howard Medical School. His and his wife's son, William Childs Curtis, earned undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Illinois and a doctorate in engineering and physics from Harvard before accepting a teaching position at Tuskegee Institute. Their daughter, Constance, completed graduate work in public relations, and their grandson, Guy P. Curtis, finished dental school.¹⁴

The interconnectedness of the Childses and the Curtises was strengthened in November 1890. That month, William Curtis' older brother, Thomas, wed Lucy Simington. Thomas was a Meharry-educated dentist, and Lucy was the daughter of the child prodigy who attended Judson with her master's children and a relative of the Childses. Both Thomas and Lucy Curtis were products of the Lincoln School. Their son, Lucien Simington Curtis, did not attend Lincoln, but he did continue the academic and professional legacy that his immediate and distant family members had begun.¹⁵

Born at Montgomery in 1893, Lucien Curtis was educated at Sumner High School in St. Louis. From there, he traveled to Howard University, from which he was graduated in 1916. Later, Lucien earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Harvard and,

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., 35, 170-175.

ultimately, the Ph.D. in economics from the University of Chicago. Subsequently, he became a full-time faculty member at Harris Teachers College in St. Louis, but he also lectured at Washington University.¹⁶

The Childses, the Curtises, the Simingtons, the Webbs, and their relations represented not only Marion, Alabama's intelligentsia but that of the entire United States. These Black Belt families might not have ascribed to Henry L. Morehouse and later W. E. B. Du Bois' notion of a "Talented Tenth," but they and other well-educated, civic-minded, black professionals from Marion and other parts of Perry County were certainly been members of it. Juanita Jones Abernathy, wife of key civil-rights strategist and King advisor Ralph David Abernathy, was born in Uniontown. Reverend Abernathy himself was born at Linen in nearby Marengo County and was a 1950 graduate of Alabama State College.¹⁷

Before the Youngs or the Abernathys had ever seen each other, black Marionites had already begun to challenge twentieth-century apartheid in Perry County. In the days following World War II, black veterans such as Ritten Edward Lee—a 1943 graduate of Lincoln High School, future legal consultant, college trustee, professor, publisher, and radio personality—met regularly on the Lincoln School campus to reminisce about former schooldays, discuss their wartime service, and brood over the existing and future condition of African Americans. Many of the veterans were understandably upset

¹⁶ Ibid., 170-175.

¹⁷ Juanita Abernathy, telephone interview with the author, 9 June 2006. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 243 (citing Richardson, *Christian Reconstruction*, 125, and McPherson, *Abolitionist Legacy*, 213, 222), 244, 245; Billingsley, *Black Families*, 117-121; Bond, *Black American Scholar and Negro Education in Alabama*; Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* and "The Talented Tenth."

because they had fought and lost limbs for democracy abroad when they could not enjoy it at home.¹⁸

In 1946, between thirty and fifty black veterans marched from Lincoln School to the Perry County courthouse to protest race-based discrimination. R. E. Lee was among them. He and his compatriots walked “silently, proudly and solemnly without any spoken words, except for counting cadence.” Whites looked on with amazement as the men made their way to the courthouse, the county sheriff having directed the traffic. Once there, the protest rally was promptly broken up, and the men dispersed. Some of them retired to the nearest bar, others home, but all of them had taken their stand. “It was a meaningful tacit message,” recalled Lee. Tens of United States Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy veterans—all of them black—had begun the modern Civil Rights movement in Perry County almost one decade before Rosa Parks’ memorable act of civil disobedience in the state capitol. Years later, Lee proudly recalled: “The message was protest. It was not fun and games.”¹⁹

Yet another individual with Perry County ties was an instrumental figure in the modern Civil Rights movement before the 1950s. Reverend James and Martha Childs had eight children—Charles, James, Jr., Julia, Maggie, Patsey (or Patsy), Roberta, Stephen, and William Henry—and each one of them attended Lincoln School. After finishing Talladega College and Knoxville College in Tennessee, Roberta became an educator. Her husband, William Henry Hastie, was an alumnus of the Emerson School of Mobile, Alabama, also an American Missionary Association-affiliated institution. Their

¹⁸ See “Modern State Influence and Protest”; available via Internet @ <http://www.ruthk.net/marion/lincoln/directory/Modern%20State%20Influence%20and%20Protest.html>; accessed 9 June 2006. Cf. Bailey, *They Too Call Alabama Home*, 238.

¹⁹ Ritten Edward Lee, quoted in “Modern State Influence and Protest.”

son, William Henry Hastie, Jr., was born in Knoxville but spent many of teenage years in Washington, D. C., where he attended the academically challenging, all-black Dunbar High School. From there, the younger William Hastie went on to Amherst College, where he excelled in mathematics, physics, and poetry as well as in athletics. He and fellow African American scholar-athletes Charles Drew and Montague Cobb helped the college win several intercollegiate track championships.²⁰

Life at Amherst was a mixed bag. Although exceptional black students were recruited, school policy prevented them from participating in non-athletic extra-curricular activities, such as joining a fraternity or attending school dances, once they enrolled. Hastie, whose mother had made him ride a bicycle to school to avoid sitting on a segregated bus, was particularly bothered by Amherst's policy. William Hastie, Jr., made his concerns known to Amherst President Alexander Meiklejohn (Meikeljohn, Mickeljohn), but the president refused to integrate the college's social clubs and on-campus parties. Nevertheless, Hastie, Jr., became a well-known and well-respected figure around campus. Elected to Phi Beta Kappa as a third-year student and named valedictorian the 1925 class, Hastie taught school before winning a scholarship to attend the Harvard School of Law. One of only nine blacks to attend the prestigious law school during the 1920s, the precocious student (Hastie) became the second African American to

²⁰ See Gilbert Ware, *William Hastie: Grace under Pressure* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984). See also Karen Hastie Williams, "William Hastie: Facing Challenges in the Ivory Tower," *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 24 (summer 1999): 122-123. Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 210-211. Unless otherwise noted, the William Hastie to whom the author refers in the text is William Hastie, Jr.

edit the celebrated *Harvard Law Review*. Incidentally, Hastie's cousin, Charles Hamilton Houston, was the first.²¹

After joining the law firm Houston and Houston, a private practice in the nation's capitol, and serving a short stint on the faculty of the Howard University Law School, William Hastie, Jr., was named race-relations advisor to United States President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In 1933, at the height of the Great Depression, Hastie became assistant solicitor in the Department of the Interior. Four years later, he was appointed judge of the federal district court in the Virgin Islands. By accepting the position, Hastie became the second African American federal magistrate in United States history.²²

Over the years, Hastie's prominence increased. In 1939, he became dean of the Howard University Law School. Two years later, he was named civilian aide to United States Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson but resigned the position in 1943 as part of a protest against discrimination in the nation's militaries. Because of his activism, Hastie received the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's coveted (Joel Elias) Spingarn Medal in 1943. The following year, he joined a campaign to end poll taxes and on 7 May 1946 became the first African American governor of the Virgin Islands.²³

²¹ See Lee Finkle, "The Conservative Aims of Militant Rhetoric: Black Protest during World War II," *Journal of American History* 60 (December 1973): 702. See also "The First Black President of the Harvard Law Review," *Journal of Higher Education* (winter 2000): 22-25; "Harvard Law School Celebrates its Black Alumni," *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, 31 (Spring 2001): 85-87. Cf. Williams, "William Hastie."

²² Over the years, persons have suggested that William Hastie, Jr., was the first African American federal magistrate in United States history. However, United States President Theodore Roosevelt appointed Robert Terrell, a former slave, to sit on a municipal court in the District of Columbia forty years before Hastie's appointment. Cf. Williams, "William Hastie," 123.

²³ See Phillip McGuire, "Desegregation of the Armed Forces: Black Leadership, Protest, and World War II," *Journal of Negro History* 68 (spring 1983): 147-158; "Judge Hastie, World War II, and Army Racism," *Journal of Negro History* 62 (October 1977): 351-362; "Judge Hastie, World War II, and the

The late 1940s brought continued success for Hastie. In the early months of 1948, United States President Harry S. Truman commissioned a committee to review the impact of segregated armed forces. Consequently, the committee produced “Freedom to Serve,” a virtual blueprint for military integration. Then, on 26 July 1948, Truman signed Executive Order 9981, establishing the Presidential Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Forces and mandating the integration of the United States militaries (see Appendix AA). According to Truman, the order was “greatest thing that ever happened to America,” and Hastie was instrumental to its issuance.²⁴

In October 1949, as the United States Army adopted a policy whereby jobs would be opened to anyone who was qualified to hold the position regardless of the applicant’s skin color, ethnicity, or race, Truman nominated Hastie for the Third United States Court of Appeals. If confirmed, Hastie would become the highest African American judicial officeholder in the nation’s history. To few persons’ surprise, he was confirmed. The distinguished attorney, civil-rights activist, and civil servant sat on the appellate court for the next twenty-one years, becoming a senior judge in 1971. William Henry Hastie, Jr.—son of Roberta and grandson of James and Martha Childs of Perry County, Alabama—retired the same year.

What, then, is the point of any of this information, and how does it relate to this dissertation? As Mrs. Crews explained in an 8 June 2006 telephone interview, she and other Lincoln graduates did not constitute the proverbial exception to academic and

Army Air Corps,” *Phylon* 42 (second quarter 1981): 157-167; and “Judge William H. Hastie and Army Recruitment, 1940-1942,” *Military Affairs* 42 (April 1978): 75-79. Cf. Williams, “William Hastie.”

²⁴ Harry S. Truman, quoted in George B. Tindall and David E. Shi, *America: A Narrative History*, 5th ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), 1401.

professional excellence or to ethical, justice-driven activism. They were the rule. Horace Mann Bond had reached the same conclusion years before the interview. During the early 1960s, while conducting research on the backgrounds of between 400 and 500 leading African American professionals for an essay tentatively called “A Study of Factors Involved in the Identification and Encouragement of Unusual Academic Talent among Underprivileged Population,” Bond found that many of the African Americans who held doctorates and other terminal degrees in the United States had not belonged to an “underprivileged population,” or community. Even more surprising to Bond was the high degree of regional clustering. Many black college professors, dentists, doctors, lawyers, and other professionals had come from the South, and several of them had Alabama roots (see Appendix BB). Perhaps most surprising of all, a number of the Alabamians, their parents, or their grandparents had been educated in Perry County, and at least eleven of them had attended Lincoln (see Appendix CC). Two others had Lincoln connections.²⁵

The year 1968 was a memorable one for the academicians, activists, and other Americans. The Vietnam War raged, and on 4 April Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated. One week later, United States President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed yet another federal civil-rights act into law. Against this backdrop, R. E. Lee and other members of the 1943 graduating class of Lincoln High School of Marion held their twenty-five-year reunion. Amidst tenuous national and international relations prompted by the civil-rights law, the Black Power movement, and Vietnam and dealing with mixed

²⁵ Cf. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 245, 246, citing United States Commissioner of Education, *Report, 1889-1900*, vol. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1901), 2506-2507; Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, passim, and *Black American Scholar*, 94-98, 148-150, 170-175; Johnson, “Powerful Little School”; Sherer, *Black Education in Alabama*, 160 (footnote 16).

emotions about the death of Dr. King (and the Black Power movement and Vietnam), attendees were pleasantly surprised to find out that every one of their children who was old enough to be enrolled in a college or a university was enrolled in one. Others had already received baccalaureate degrees.

A considerable part of the Childses, Willie M. Crews, Ritten E. Lee, Coretta Scott King, other twentieth-century Lincolmites' accomplishments can be attributed to the Marion Nine and other revolutionary Reconstruction- and early Redemption-era leaders. Had the Marion Nine not incorporated Lincoln School in 1867 and meticulously guarded its and the First Congregational Church's development thereafter, Crews and hundreds of other Lincoln alumni would not be able to take pride in Lincoln's storied, albeit little-known, history today. In no uncertain terms, the Marion Nine and like-minded Perry County blacks were largely responsible for laying the cultural, economic, political, and spiritual foundations that allowed Crews and coterie to become members of the Talented Tenth.²⁶

In the previous pages, I have tried to discuss these foundations in a manner that fully elucidates Perry County's importance to the Civil War, Reconstruction, and early Redemption histories of the black and white people who lived there during these periods. By concentrating on one locality, I have been able to study in detail the various personal and professional wishes that gave rise to the limited factionalism of the white and black Republicans who controlled most of the county during the Postbellum period. The same issues that the GOP faced in other places following the war were present in Perry, but

²⁶ See Thomas Jesse Jones, *Negro Education; a Study of the Private and Higher Schools for Colored People in the United States*, vol. 2 (1917; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1969), 80. Cf. Billingsley, *Black Families*, 117-121; Bond, *Black American Scholar and Negro Education in Alabama*; Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*.

feuding was limited in the county because its prewar milieu had been different than other localities.²⁷

Because Perry was a racially moderate and educationally advanced county with little caste or religious variance among blacks before the Civil War, several of them were prepared to hold important political offices following the war. As important, there was far less competition and difference of opinion between Perry's black officials than there was in other counties with large black populations—most notably, Mobile, where the superiority complexes of certain light-skinned blacks (mainly Catholic Creoles such as the multilingual politico-socialite Ovid Gregory and the one-time slave-owning Philip Joseph) caused much intra-racial strife and factionalism during the Reconstruction and early Redemption years. Perry County certainly had its share of mixed-raced citizens after 1865, but the vast majority of them had been slaves in a tight-knit, Baptist-dominated community where individual attainment had been less significant than mutual uplift and collective identity before 1865. As a result, only a handful of postbellum blacks in Perry County believed or acted as if they were better than others were. Their shared prewar circumstance and postwar educational, political, and socioeconomic hegemony helped make their situation anomalous in Alabama.²⁸

²⁷ Cf. Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, especially 1-10, 49, 84-85, 87-133, 168, 198-199, 201, 266-267; Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, 105.

²⁸ See *Livingston Journal*, 18 October 1872. See also *Mobile Daily Register*, 21 February 1907. Cf. 22 November 1867 *Daily State Sentinel*; Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, 1865-1900*, 35; Essah, *A House Divided*, 139-142; Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation*, 10 (footnote 3), 12-16; Foner, *Forever Free*, 135; Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 221, citing Ann D. England, *A Compilation of Documented Information about the Confederate Hospital in Marion, Alabama, May 20, 1863-May 20, 1865* (N.P.: n.p., n.d.); Holt, *Black over White*; Robinson, "Beyond the Realm of Social Consensus." Ovid Gregory spoke English, French, and Spanish. Before the Civil War, he became one of the youngest members of the élitist Creole Social Club of Mobile. After the war, he became an embossing clerk in the state legislature, presided over the Mobile Union League, and led numerous black political meetings in his hometown. See *The Alabama State Journal*, 21 July 1871. See also *Alabama Weekly State Journal*, 6 March 1873. Cf.

A number of historians—Richard Bailey, Andrew Billingsley, Joseph Caver, Idella Childs, William Warren Rogers, Sr., and Jr., Jonathan Weiner, Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins—have placed Perry County in the state’s overall postbellum history. Others, including W. Stuart Harris, Weymouth T. Jordan, and the Perry County Historical Association, have written local studies from a largely white position. But no one has undertaken a full-scale local study of Civil War, Reconstruction, and early Redemption Perry County from a largely black perspective. This is what I have attempted to do in this dissertation.²⁹

As I. A. Newby has written in *Plain Folk in the New South: Social Change and Cultural Persistence, 1880-1915*, trying to reconstruct or analyze the history of a “poor, powerless, and largely [il]literate people is difficult to reconstruct, and for groups subject to continuing social prejudice the difficulty is compounded. For those groups, ordinary problems of source material [are] compounded by cultural bias.” Perry County’s postbellum black population was not poor, powerless, or illiterate, but source material is still scarce and tremendously scattered. Black persons’ private communications from the period are few, and the county’s sole immediate postwar newspaper, the *Marion Commonwealth*, was owned and operated by four of the most conservative white journalists in the Black Belt. Accordingly, Eli A. Heidt, H. Clay Cooke, Mordecai M Cooke, and Frank W. Hawks rarely published blacks’ letters or reported objectively on blacks’ concerns. Censuses, court records, and other official documents are plentiful, but

Fitzgerald, *op. cit.*, 10 (footnote 3), 12-13, 145, 147-148; Foner, *Forever Free*, 135, and *Freedom’s Lawmakers*, 124; Rogers and Ward, “Radical Reconstruction,” 250.

²⁹ Cf. Rose, *Slavery and Freedom*, 105.

they cannot convey a person's true feelings as well as a diary entry, an editorial, or a personal memoir.³⁰

However sparse, existing source material does help clarify Perry's position as one of the most progressive predominantly black counties in Alabama during the Antebellum and Postbellum periods. Marion is of utmost importance to this story. Although smaller than Huntsville, Montgomery, Mobile, Selma, and other cities and towns that had large black populations, black agency flourished in Perry's county seat. The state's first black university was located there. The town was also home to the state's first biracial labor union and the only black person to preside over the state senate during the nineteenth century. At least five of the state's most respected black Baptists either worked or lived in Marion, at which two of the state's most respected white Baptist colleges, the denominational mission board and its newspaper were located. Yet, as amazing as it might seem, this information could not be found in any single work.

Much more can be—and needs to be—written about Perry County. A thorough examination of the county from its postbellum cultural, economic, political, religious, and social promise through its late twentieth-century peril would certainly benefit general readers, students, and scholars alike. Likewise, more information needs to be collected and disseminated about Perry County's plain folk, the people most affected by the decisions of the privileged. It is hoped that this dissertation will serve as a catalyst for these and similar studies. Through them and through consequent action, the county's most downtrodden and indifferent twenty-first-century citizens might be encouraged to

³⁰ Newby, *Plain Folk in the New South*, 9.

embrace and furthermore act on what historian Flynt considers to be a crucial component of Alabama's Christian heritage: the possibility of resurrection and reconciliation.³¹

³¹ Cf. *History of Hope in the Heart of Dixie*, passim; "New Racial Equation, Same Grinding Poverty"; Robinson, "Beyond the Realm of *Social Consensus*," 277. Similar expressions of hope are included in Steve Kirk, "Beating the Odds," *Birmingham News*, 8 December 2002; John Archibald, Jeff Hansen, and Thomas Spencer, "Out of Darkness, Comes Hope," *Birmingham News*, 15 December 2002.

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Rebecca Smith Agreement, 1866
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Rev. J. F. Smith Letter, 1863
Wager Swayne Papers
William Lowndes Yancey Papers

Anniston Public Library (Anniston, Alabama)

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Birmingham Public Library (Birmingham, Alabama)

Philip Taft Research Notes on Alabama Labor History

Dillard University (New Orleans, Louisiana)

American Missionary Association Papers

Judson College (Marion, Alabama)

Mrs. James A. Smith Collection, 1853-1982

Library of Congress (Washington, D. C.)

Elihu B. Washburn Papers
Miscellaneous Pamphlets Collection
Pamphlet Collection
Papers of Abraham Lincoln, 1774-1948
William Chandler Papers

Perry County Courthouse (Marion, Alabama)

Appraisal Records, Book A: 23 September 1870-2 August 1912
Dockets of Claims, Book A: 8 August 1870-17 November 1910

Index to Probate Court Minutes, 1820-1900
Minutes and Records of Partial Settlements, 14 January 1871-20 April 1871
Minutes of County Commission Court Book, Vol. A: 5 January 1874-19 February 1878
Minutes of County Commission Court Book, Vol. D: 17 February 1868-3 November 1873
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Records of Claims v. County, Book A: 12 February 1877-15 July 1890

New York Public Library (New York, New York)

Walter L. Fleming Papers, 1865-1932

Samford University Special Collections (Birmingham, Alabama)

Books Pamphlet File

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Traditional Counties of the Alabama Black, or Cotton, Belt¹



¹ University of Alabama Center for Business and Economic Research, "Traditional Counties of the Alabama Black Belt"; available via Internet @ <http://cber.cba.ua.edu/edata/maps/blackbelt.jpg>; accessed 22 August 2006.

Appendix Ba: Property Holding in Nine Black Belt Counties, 1850 and 1860

<u>County</u>	<u>1850</u>	<u>1860</u>
Bibb	69%	70%
Clarke	77	76
Greene	60 (1844), 81 (1856)	82
Lowndes	80	77
Marengo	75	80
Montgomery	72	76
Monroe	69	84
Perry	84	79

Appendix Bb: A Comparison of the Non-slave-owning Property Holders in Perry County to the Rest of the Black Belt, 1850

Black Belt		Perry County	
Acres Owned	% of Non-slave-owning Property Owners	Acres Owned	% of Non-slave-owning Property Owners
0-50	24.29	0-50	27.93
51-100	23.9	51-100	23.79
101-200	29.66	101-200	28.97
201-300	8.7	201-300	7.59
301-400	4.77	301-400	4.14
401-500	2.72	401-500	1.38
501-1000	3.15	501-1000	2.07
Not Determined	2.81	Not Determined	4.13

Appendix C: Privates of the Marion Rifles

John G. Apsey	R. P. Lockhart
Powhatan Baptist	Roderick McIntosh
J. Bell	James Mimms
J. F. Billingsley	C. O. Milhous (or Milhouse)
J. E. Bland	W. J. Mitchell
William Caesar	Jason W. Moseley
Charles Carage	William Nave
George Cleveland	Jesse B. Nave, Jr.
John Couch	J. T. Nixon
C. Couch	Isaac Parish
J. R. Crowe	W. C. G. Parker
S. B. Cribbs	C. J. Philips, Jr.
James Dargan	D. A. Pierson
Elliott	Jason Rankin
R. M. Eskridge	T. S. Robards
W. W. Ezell	William Robards
F. M. Fitts	William M. Robbins
C. Graham	R. M. Roberts
P. Graham	P. Rutledge
A. P. Grear	R. W. Saunders
A. T. Haderler	C. H. Seawell
W. F. Herman	Jason A. Smith
Sidney Hinton	J. S. Stokes
E. R. Howell	Toler
D. G. Huntington	Chas. Tousley
S. K. Jennings	J. T. Waddle
M. B. Johnson	Beverly Waddle
J. A. Kingsry	William Waddle
E. J. Kirksey	L. W. Ward
H. C. Lea	T. J. Weakley
F. J. LeVert	W. A. Wells

Appendix D: Privates of the Uniontown Canebrake Rifle Guards

J. Y. Adams

D. A. Boyd

A. H. Cunningham
Samuel Chambers
W. A. Chambers

A. C. Davidson
William Deason

John Douglas Fowler

J. D. Goldman
Joseph Gouldman
W. W. Gray
W. Grower

J. W. Hamersley
J. H. Harrison
E. Harwood
W. H. Hill
J. H. Houston
James G. Hudson
Walter Hungerford
J. R. Hutcherson

William H. Long

John McBushard

George S. Markham
J. J. Murphy

Gilbert S. Nicolson
Robert W. Nicolson
L. P. Nonnenmacher

James Phillips
David W. Pitts
J. D. Pitts
J. L. Price

Andrew Rankin
J. M. Redding

A. K. Shepard
G. W. Sherman
J. R. Shumake
J. J. Simms

C. A. Terrell
A. W. Tinsley
E. A. Tippen

John P. Walke (Walk, Walker)
Andrew Walker
Mims Walker
J. E. Ware
William H. Ware
G. W. Webb

Appendix E: Perry County Civil War Casualties, a Partial Listing (Harris)²

<u>Name</u>	<u>Regiment</u>	<u>Battle, Cause, or Date</u>
T. R. Ballard	4 th Alabama	Bucklestown, Virginia
Powhatan Baptist		
Sam Boddie		
Captain James L. Brazelton	11 th Alabama	Petersburg
George W. Brett		1862
Captain W. B. Cathey	3 rd Alabama Cavalry	Perryville, Tennessee
J. M. Cocke		
Thomas K. Coleman	4 th Alabama	Chickamauga
Andrew T. Craig	4 th Alabama	Died of sickness near Winchester, Virginia
Captain Matthew M. England	11 th Alabama	Died in Richmond in 1861
James S. Evins		7 March 1862
General Isham W. Garrott	20 th Alabama	Vicksburg
Porterfield Graham	4 th Alabama	Richmond
John D. Fowler	4 th Alabama	Wounded at Manassas and died later
A. E. Harmon		
Adjutant Walter Hungerford	58 th Alabama	Atlanta
David Y. Huntington	14 th Mississippi	Battle of Second Bull Run
Marius Johnson		
Colonel Robert T. Jones	12 th Alabama	Seven Pines
William A. Lowery	4 th Alabama	Battle of First Bull Run
John Moseley (Mosley, Mosely)		
M. A. Moseley (Mosley, Mosely)		
Captain Thomas Norris	3 rd Alabama Cavalry	Chapel Hill
Captain Walter C. Y. Parker	11 th Alabama	Frazier's Farm
John Parker		
Adjutant Thomas Phelan	8 th Alabama	Gaines Mill
Major A. S. Pickering	20 th Alabama	Port Gibson
John Davidson Pitts	4 th Alabama	Gaines Mill
Major Duke Nall	8 th Alabama	Wounded in the Wilderness and died later
A. Rankin		
"Red Fox"	8 th Alabama	22 October 1861 ³
Paul Rutledge		
V. Smith		
Melvin Stewart		13 January 1862
J. H. Stone	4 th Alabama	Battle of First Bull Run
William Sourlock		
Thomas Anderson Tabb	14 th Mississippi	30 September 1861
Captain William Henry Tabb	14 th Mississippi	9 August 1864 in Atlanta
Ira Tarrant (or Tarrent)		
J. Turnbow		
John Marshall Walker	36 th Alabama	Wounded in Resaca, Georgia, and died on 24 May 1864
Lieutenant Jason Woley		6 September 1862
William S. Woods		

² Other casualties are discussed in the text and accompanying footnotes.

³ According to one dubious report, "Red Fox," the "Champion Wrestler of Perry County" and the "Pride of Severe Beat," died of nostalgia. Cf. Harris, *Perry County Heritage*, 218-219, citing *The Marion Standard*, 26 March 1909.

Appendix F: Minor Officers and Privates of the Uniontown Independent Troop

Corporals

Parham A. Booker, Jr. (first)
John M. Jeffries (second)
Barney P. Hill (third).

John Harmond
J. W. Harrington
L. A. Harrison
P. P. Hudson

Quartermaster

A. K. Shepard

F. N. Kitchell

Treasurer

Z. B. John

G. F. Marable
J. M. Muse

Clerk

Robert Christian

J. L. Patton
Robert Paulding

Surgeon

G. W. Browder

S. W. Pegues
Charles Pope
F. A. Pope

Privates

G. H. Blake
G. W. Booker
W. M. Booker

L. S. Ralls
H. B. Rosser
J. E. Ruffin

R. G. Clarke
A. G. Coleman

Seth Shepard
J. C. M. Showalter
Z. A. Simmons

G. B. Drake

John Talbert
W. W. Terry
A. Thomas
W. F. Tripp

G. A. Ellerbe
E. C. England

W. F. Fitts

A. H. Underwood

Henry Gouldman
G. W. Graves

A. P. Walke
William Weaver
H. J. Winn
David Woodfin

Appendix G: Members of the Marion Light Infantry

Original Volunteers

John G. Apsey
James J. Arnold
Alex H. Averett

David H. Billingslea (or
Billingsley)
Martin J. Billingslea (or
Billingsley)
Felix Butler

Thomas J. Carson
T. S. Caswell
J. Matthew Cock
Modesai M. Cooke
Andrew Craig
Robert A. Craig
Thaddeus A. Craig
William H. Craig
John S. Crosby
James R. Crowe

Vanderer Deaton
Ambrose S. Downs
Saul R. Dunlap
William D. Dunlap

R. M. Eskridge
James Selwyn (or Selwin)
Evins
Thomas J. Evins

John S. Fields
William H. Fiquett
Francis M. Fitts
Simeon Ford
William Ford

A. Cary Graham
Alex Graham
Chambers Graham
Porterfield (or Potterfield)
Graham
Edwin Goree

Beverly M. Henry
Charles H. Harris
Martin T. Hendrix
William H. Herron
Algeron S. Hinton
James Hornbuckle

Thomas D. Houston
Donadlson Huff
David Y. Huntington

James C. Jarvis
David Johnson
George D. Johnston
Marius B. Johnston
William G. Johnston

Joseph A. Kelly
E. Ford King
Joseph H. King
Porter D. King
Elihu J. Kirksey
John F. Knight

Elias A. Leak
Frank J. LeVert
William A. Lockett
Albert Lutz

Ireneas A. Marshal
William O. Marshall
William McElroy
Dunkin E. McIntosh
Roderick M. McIntosh
Saul W. McKerrall
Dr. McLeod
Willis T. Miree
Andrew J. Moore
James A. Moore
Marcus D. L. Moore
Samuel Moore
Henry H. Moseley
John W. Moseley
William W. Moseley

Jesse B. Nave
William J. Nave
Reuben F. Nix
Melvill F. Norris

John R. Parker
William D. Peoples
Jerry Perry
Christopher G. Pitts
John L. Pleasant
Steven W. Pleasant

James E. Rankin
Carlos Reese
Joseph E. Reese
Thomas S. Robards
William L. Robards
Madison Robbins
William Robbins
Joseph E. Roberson
James P. Rogers
Paul A. Rutledge

David B. Scott
R. Brice Scott
William Scurlock
Charles H. Seawell
Leonard H. Seawell
James M. Shivers
James A. Smith
Virginius S. Smith
Oliver H. Spencer
Fred G. Stevens
Andrew J. Stewart

Ira Tarrant
James C. Tarrant
Abraham Thornton
Charles B. Tousley
James M. Turnbow

John B. Wallace
William C. Ward
Charles W. Watters
John W. Watters
Jesse W. Wells
Robert White

William C. Zimmerman Conscriptions

Jefferson Breed
J. D. Griffin
Francis M. Ingram
John S. Ingram
Daniel McDaniel
James M. McDonnoh
Alex Owens
Robert F. Peacock
W. H. Pilkington
Mathew Prescott
B. C. Ragland

**Appendix H: African Americans who held “Major” Offices in
Alabama, 1867-1875 (Bailey)**

Name	County	Nativity	Office and Year(s)	Birth	Primary Postwar Occupation
Alexander, Benjamin	Greene	North Carolina	House 1868	1820	Farmer
Allen, G. W.	Bullock	Georgia	House 1874	1851	Farmer
Alston, James H.	Macon	South Carolina	House 1868	1830	Shoemaker
Avery, Matthew	Perry	North Carolina	House 1868	1834	Farmer, minister
Baldwin, Elijah	Wilcox	North Carolina	House 1874	1814	Farmer
Bennett, Granville	Sumter	Alabama	House 1872, 1874	1824	Farmer
Blandon, Samuel	Lee	South Carolina	House 1868	1846	Farmer
Blevins, William H.	Dallas	Alabama	House 1874	1842	Barber, farmer
Bliss, James	Sumter	Virginia	House 1874	1820	Broommaker, carpenter
Boyd, Matthew	Perry	Virginia	House 1874	1830	Farmer
Braxdell, George	Talladega	Kentucky	House 1870	1839	Barber
Brewington, Nathaniel A.	Lowndes	Alabama	House 1868	1841	Farmer
Burke, Richard	Sumter	Virginia	House 1868	1807	Minister, educator
Carraway, John	Mobile	North Carolina	House 1868	1834	Educator, tailor, songwriter
Carson, Hugh E., or A.	Lowndes		House 1875	1840	Farmer
Carson, William A., or E.	Lowndes	North Carolina	House 1872	1839	Laborer
Cashin, Hershel V.	Montgomery	Georgia	House 1874	1843	Lawyer
Clarke, Thomas J.	Barbour	South Carolina	House 1870	1843	Farmer
Cochran, Henry A.	Dallas	South Carolina			
Cook, Elijah	Montgomery	Alabama	House 1874	1833	Carpenter, mortician
Cox, George W.	Montgomery	Virginia	House 1874	1834	Blacksmith
Craig, Henry Hunter	Montgomery	Virginia	House 1870	1830	Barber, storekeeper
Curtis, Alexander H.	Perry	North Carolina	House 1872	1829	Barber, merchant, education administrator
Daniels, D. J.	Russell		House 1870; Senate 1872-1874		Farmer
Diggs, Thomas	Barbour	Virginia	House 1868, 1870	1815	Driver, storekeeper
Dotson, Mentor	Sumter	Georgia	House 1872	1838	Educator, storekeeper
Dozier (or Dosier), John C.	Perry	South Carolina or Virginia	House 1870, 1872	1800	Minister, educator
Drawn, Joseph	Dallas	Georgia	House 1868	1810	Carpenter
Ellsworth, Hales	Montgomery	Alabama	House 1872	1820	Farmer
Fagan, Charles	Montgomery	Alabama	House 1874	1825	Minister
Fantroy (or Fautroy), Samuel	Barbour	Georgia	House 1874	1825	Minister
Finley, Peyton	Montgomery	Georgia			
Gachet (Gatchett, Gasket), Adam	Barbour	Georgia	House 1874	1837	Minister
Gardner, Prince	Russell		House 1874	1837	Minister

Gaskin, William D.	Lowndes	Alabama	House 1870, 1874	1845	Farmer
Gee, Ned	Dallas	North Carolina	House 1870	1806	Farmer
Gilmer, Captain	Montgomery	Alabama	House 1874	1820	Farmer
Goldsby, Joseph	Dallas	Alabama	House 1872	1851	Merchant
Green (or Greene), James K.	Hale	North Carolina	House 1868-1872; Senate 1874	1823	Carpenter
Gregory, Ovid (or Ovide)	Mobile	Alabama	House 1868		Storekeeper
Haralson, Jeremiah	Dallas	South Carolina	House 1870; Senate 1872-1874; Congress 1874	1846	Minister
Harris, Charles E.	Dallas		House 1874		Educator
Hatcher, Jordan	Dallas	Georgia			
Hill, D. H.	Bullock	North Carolina	House 1868	1820	Carpenter
Houston, George	Sumter	Alabama	House 1868	1828	Farmer, tailor
Inge, Benjamin	Sumter	Virginia	House 1868	d. 1869	Minister
Johnson, or Johnston, A. W.	Macon		House 1874		
Johnson, R. L.	Dallas		House 1870, 1872	1840	
Johnson, Washington	Russell	Virginia			
Johnston, Green T.	Dallas	Alabama			
Jones, Columbus	Madison		House 1868	d. 1869	
Jones, John W.	Lowndes	North Carolina	House 1872, 1874	1842	Merchant, planter
Jones, Reuben	Madison	Alabama	House 1872	1833	Blacksmith
Jones, Shandy (or Sandy), W.	Tuscaloosa		House 1868	1817	Barber, minister
King, Horace	Russell	South Carolina	House 1868, 1870	1807	Architect, Engineer, Builder
Lee, Samuel	Lowndes	Alabama	House 1874	1843	Farmer
Lee (or Lea), Thomas	Perry		House 1868	d. 1869	Carpenter, laborer
Leftwich, Lloyd	Greene	Virginia			
Lewis, Greene (or Green), S. W.	Perry	North Carolina	House 1868, 1872-1875	1830	Farmer, storekeeper
Locke, Edwin C.	Wilcox	Alabama	House 1874	1855	Shoemaker
Martin, Jacob	Wilcox	Alabama	House 1874	1836	Farmer
Matthews, Perry	Bullock	Georgia	House 1872-1874	1850	Educator
Maul, January	Lowndes	Alabama	House 1872	1826	
McCalley, Jefferson	Madison		House 1868	d. 1869	Minister
McCleod, J. Wright	Marengo				
Merriweather, Willis	Wilcox	Alabama	House 1872, 1874	1846	
Miller, G. R.	Russell				
Odum, Edward	Barbour	Alabama	House 1874	1853	Barber
Patterson, George	Macon	Alabama	House 1872, 1874	1820	Farmer
Patterson, Samuel Joseph	Autauga	Maryland	House 1872	1824	Farmer
Rapier, James Thomas	Lauderdale	Alabama	Congress 1872	1837	Editor, planter, educator

Reese, Bristo	Hale	South Carolina	House 1874	1833	Laborer
Reid, Robert	Sumter	Virginia	House 1872, 1874	1823	Farmer
Richardson, A. G.	Wilcox	Alabama	House 1868	1840	Farmer
Rose, Edward R.	Marengo	Alabama	House 1868	1830	Farmer
Royal, Benjamin E.	Bullock	Alabama	Senate 1868-1874	1812	Farmer
Smith, Charles	Bullock	Alabama	House 1874		Farmer
Speed, Lawrence	Bullock	Georgia	House 1868-1872	1828	Farmer
St. Clair, Henry	Macon	Alabama	House 1870-1872	1837	Educator
Steele, Lawson	Montgomery	Alabama	House 1872	1820	Farmer
Stephens, Nicholas	Perry				
Stokes, Henry	Dallas	South Carolina			
Taylor, W. L.	Chambers	Georgia	House 1868	1820	
Taylor, William	Sumter		House 1872		
Thomas, B. R.	Marengo				
Thompson, Holland	Montgomery	Alabama	House 1868, 1870	1840	Waiter, storekeeper
Threatt, Frank H.	Marengo	Alabama	House 1872	1849	Minister
Treadwell, J. R.	Russell	Virginia	House 1872	1830	Farmer
Turner, Benjamin	Dallas	North Carolina	Congress 1870	1825	Farmer, Merchant
Turner, William V.	Elmore	Virginia	House 1868	1822	Educator
Tyler, Mansfield	Lowndes	Georgia	House 1870	1829	Minister
Walker, Thomas	Dallas	Alabama	House 1872	1850	Lawyer, educator
Weaver, Spencer	Dallas	Virginia	House 1868	1810	Laborer
Wells, Levie	Marengo		House 1870		
Williams, Allen E.	Barbour		House 1874		Farmer
Williams, Latty J.	Montgomery	Georgia	House 1868-1872	1844	
Witherspoon, J. R.	Perry	North Carolina	House 1874	1830	Postmaster, storeowner
Wynne, Manly	Perry	Alabama	House 1874	1835	Farmer
Young, Henry	Lowndes	South Carolina	House 1868	1828	Farmer

Appendix I: State Convention of the Colored Men of Alabama, Mobile, May 4, 1867⁴

Dear *Tribune*:

To day the colored men's State Convention for this State adjourned after a three days' session. The "Conservatives" said—"Ha, there, the colored men are going to organize a separate party to be known as the negro party, and the boast of the radicals is going to end in smoke." But lo! how disappointed they must feel now since they have ascertained the real object of the Convention! What object was simply to make some action by which the so-called "Conservatives" might hereafter avoid troubling themselves about how the colored men would vote by their coming out in the plainest terms and saying—"We are Republicans and you Democrats or Conservatives many as well know it now as the day of election."

The convention, by resolution, declared that they met merely for the purpose of securing harmony of action; that they were a part of the Republican party of the State, and of the United States, and that they did "not dream of, or intend the organization of a colored man's party[.]" It also passed a resolution to the effect that if the employees of colored men carry out their threat to discharge them because of political differences, and to otherwise torment them by the denial of their rights before the law, they will, as loyal Republican citizens, carry out, with united voice, for the presence of a standing army, and for additional legislation by Congress looking to the punishment of treason, and even to the confiscation of the property of the guilty; but, by another resolution the convention declared their opposition to any such necessity as that which would invoke such action on their part, and that nothing but the bad conduct of their opponents could be taken as a warrant for the appeal alluded to.

The Convention[ers] were opposed to confiscation except the future conduct on the part of the late rebels should point to as imperious necessity.

No convention to my knowledge, ever assembled, where there was so much decorum, and that respect for proper usages in the government of the deliberative bodies as was the case here.

Every thing moved along smoothly, and the Convention adjourned without a single seed of bitterness of anger. Happy indeed would it be if the example set by this body could be generally observed by other, and especially similar[,] convocations.

Hereafter, there will be no colored conventions in Alabama. Color will be regarded as an unnecessary prefix when bodies having political objects in view, or any other public bodies are designated. The Republican Party of Alabama will meet often but "colored" [and] "white" conventions belong to the past.

Tell us more of gross ignorance on the plantations. The brightest and strongest points made in the speeches during this convention were from unassuming countrymen. There is an eloquence in experience which can never be had elsewhere; no, not even by the most polished culture of the schools; and here at this convention, the men whose hands were hardened by honest toil, and whose faces bore the marks of a long train of punishments and sorrows, this great truth was made manifest. Thirty or forty counties were represented by working men who could speak from their eyes, and from the swelling emotions of their souls, though their tongues were unused to the nice points of rhetoric or the utterance of fine grammatical sentences. I must say that this convention, composed of honest yeomanry, give me the greatest pleasure, in that I beheld in it, an honesty of purpose, and a simplicity of motive which spoke more loudly, in the praise of its members than anything else could have done. The convention invited Mr. [Thomas] Conway, formerly of the Freedmen's Bureau in New Orleans, to address the citizens of Mobile in the public square last night, but threats of a disturbance caused the meeting to be held in the greatest

⁴ 7 May 1867 *New Orleans Tribune*; Foner and Walker, 304.

church edifice in the city. There, at an early hour, and outside on the streets, thousands were assembled to listen to the address....

The convention, before its adjournment, gave the speaker a hearty vote of thanks.

On the 15th of June next, the Republican State Convention meets at Montgomery. There are forty thousand men now united with the Union League in this State. The organization and spread of this league has already struck terror into the ranks of the enemy. The work spreads with the most remarkable rapidity. Today thirty additional councils were organized by means of the presence of so many persons from the country.

Consider an organization with three millions of members in all the States, and what they can do to promote reconstruction when the proper time comes! Means will not be wanting to enable the truly loyal to achieve a victory in this struggle.

LOYAL.

Appendix J: “Black” Delegates to the 1867 Constitutional Convention⁵

District	Delegate	Residence
01	John Carraway	Mobile
01	Ovid (or Ovide) Gregory	Mobile
06	Thomas Diggs	Barbour
07	L. S. Latham	
07	Benjamin F. Royal	Bullock
13	Washington Johnson	Russell
15	Peyton Finley	Montgomery
16	Henry Stokes	Dallas
16	Jordon, or Jack, Hatcher	Dallas
17	J. Wright McLeod	Marengo
18	Benjamin Inge	Sumter
19	Samuel Blandon (or Blanden)	Lee
21	Thomas Lee (or Lea)	Perry
22	James K. Green (or Greene)	Hale
22	Benjamin F. Alexander	Greene
42	Lafayette Robinson	Madison
42	Columbus Jones	Madison
43	James T. Rapier	Lauderdale

⁵ These data are taken from Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 311-322; Beverly, *History of Alabama*, 202, 208; *Journal of the 1867 Convention*; Wiggins, *Scalawag*, 151-152; Works et al., 64.

Appendix K: Perry County Election Results, 1868

Office	Candidate	Votes Polled
Probate Judge	Benjamin S. Williams	2,742
Solicitor	Rufus Reid (or Reed)	2,197
Circuit Court Clerk	Daniel Slawson (or Slauson)	2,741
Sheriff	J. F. Williams	2,742
Assessor	W. H. Smith	2,741
Tax Collector	John T. Harris	2,741
	W. H. Stewart	1
State Senator	F. Daniel Wyman	2,741
State Representative	Thomas Lee (or Lea) (B)	2,743
	Greene (or Green) S. W. Lewis (B)	2,741
	Thomas C. Steward (or Stewart)	2,741
Justice of the Peace	John C. Dozier (or Dosier) (B)	618
	W. R. Nutt	500
	B. R. Thomas	618
Chancellor	W. B. Woods	2,741
Circuit Court Judge	B. L. Wheelaw	2,741
United States Congressman	Charles H. Pierce	2,741
Registrar	George W. Brown	
	Alexander H. Curtis (B)	
	A. A. Hickey	
State Board of Education	Jesse H. Booth	2,741
	H. W. Davis	2,741

**Appendix L: “Alleged Outrages Compiled from the Ku Klux
Testimony” of 1871 (Fleming)⁶**

County	Killings	Outrages	Shootings	Whippings	Total	County	Killings	Outrages	Shootings	Whippings	Total
Autauga		1			1	Limestone	7	1		1	9
Blount	2	3		6	11	<i>Macon</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	7
Calhoun	6	1	1	1	9	Madison	6	19	5	19	49
Chambers	1		1		2	Marshall	1		1	1	3
Cherokee		2		1	3	<i>Marengo</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>6</i>		<i>4</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Choctaw</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>		<i>15</i>	<i>Montgomery</i>		<i>1</i>			<i>1</i>
Coosa			1	12	13	Morgan	4	2	1	3	10
Colbert	1	1		1	3	<i>Perry</i>	<i>2</i>		<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Dallas</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>			<i>2</i>	<i>Pickens</i>				<i>9</i>	<i>9</i>
Fayette	1			3	4	<i>Sumter</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>Greene</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>19</i>	St. Clair	1	1	1		3
<i>Hale</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>7</i>	Tallapoosa				1	1
Jackson	4	2	2	2	10	Tuscaloosa	8				8
Lauderdale				1	1	Walker				1	1
Lawrence	2				2						

⁶ Fleming, *The Ku Klux Testimony Relating to Alabama*, 6. This information is incomplete. Fleming maintained that the table reflected alleged outrages when, in actuality, only irrefutable Klan acts, as determined by the courts or other officials, were reported to the congressional committee. Hence, the activities of similar terrorist organizations were not included in the committee’s report, as reproduced in the table. Nor does the table include all Black Belt counties, which are italicized in the table, or verified acts of violence that followed the congressional testimony.

Appendix M: Selected *Elias Dunkin v. Mayor, Council Town of Marion, James H. Graham, and George W. Brown of 1871 Signatories*⁷

<u>Name</u>	<u>Principal Position(s)</u>
Henry Apsey	Retailer
James F. Bailey	Lawyer, politician
S. Ball	Dentist
W. R. Brown	Politician, future Marion Female Seminary trustee
John B. Cocke	Retailer
Mordecai M. Cooke	Lawyer, newspaper publisher
A. M. Fowlkes	Commission merchant
William Fiquet	Commission merchant, retailer
Amzi Godden	Politician, retailer, physician-druggist
Eli Augustus Heidt	Hotel owner, newspaper publisher
Henry H. Hurt, Jr.	Planter, politician
James H. Lee	Educator
Powhatan Lockett	Lawyer, future Marion Female Seminary trustee
Thomas S. Lowry	Band leader, retailer
William T. McAllister (or McCallister)	Physician
William B. Modawell	Lawyer, civil servant, fireman
John Moore	Lawyer, politician
Henry H. Moseley	Sheriff, politician
Jesse B. Shivers	Politician, lawyer
J. K. Thompson	Educator
William W. Wilkerson	Newspaper publisher, physician, future president of the Howard Board of Trustees

⁷ The occupations and other activities of the signers are compiled from 1870-1877 Perry County Business Licenses; 1870-1875 Perry County Cash and Checks Log Book; "Land and Negroes for Sale," *The Marion Commonwealth*, [December] 1858; "The Howard College," *The Marion Commonwealth*, 18 December 1873; and *Thirty-seventh Annual Catalogue of the Marion Female Seminary, Marion, Ala., 1872-1873* (Marion, Ala.: E. A. Heidt, 1873).

Appendix N: Perry County Public School Data, 1870-1871 (Hodgson)

White																
Enrollment			Avg. Att.		Grades		Branches					Teachers			Avg. Days Taught	
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Primary	Intermediate	Orthography	Reading	Writing	Arithmetic	Geography	Grammar	Male	Female	Rate of Pay	Avg. Days Taught
1,367	1,490	2,857	1,157	2,260	27	15	2,387	1,933	1,610	1,502	912	714	17	25	\$48	85

Black																
Enrollment			Avg. Att.		Grades		Branches					Teachers			Avg. Days Taught	
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Primary	Intermediate	Orthography	Reading	Writing	Arithmetic	Geography	Grammar	Male	Female	Rate of Pay	Avg. Days Taught
3,251	2,708	5,959	2,661	2,708	32	3	4,337	2,192	1,330	1,084	1,167	90	31	7	\$49	106

**Appendix O: Perry County Grammar and High Schools, January-May
1870 (Partial Account)⁸**

Instructor	Location	Grade(s)	Branches	No. (and Gender) of Students	Ethnicity	Dates of Instruction
Sanders A. Bolling	Radfordsville	G	O, R, W, Ar, Gr	2 (M), 5 (F)	W	Feb 1870
John W. Booz	Perryville	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo	4 (M), 2 (F)	"	"
Maurice Bundurant	Uniontown	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr	"	"	
"	"	"	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr, H, Phil, Lat	2 (M), 2 (F)	W	Jan 1870 Feb 1870
M. Caver	Bush Creek	G, H	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr, H	5 (M), 6 (F)	"	Jan 1870
"	"	"	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, H		"	Feb 1870
Miss Sallie Daniel	Radfordsville	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr, Al	1 (M)	"	Jan-Feb 1870
Georgia Dearing	Marion	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr	1 (M), 4 (F)	"	Jan 1870
"	"	"	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr, H	6 (M), 4 (F)	"	Feb 1870
John C. Dozier	Uniontown	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr	10 (M)	B	Jan-Feb 1870
W. L. Fagan	Marion	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr, H, L, Al, Fr	5 (M), 8 (F)	W	March-Apr 1870
"	"	G, H	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr, H, L, Al	5 (M), 8 (F)	"	May 1870
Mrs. E. A. Givhan (Givham)	Marion	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr, H	4 (M)	"	Jan 1870
J. Henry Hendon	"	G, H	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Al	13 (M), 6 (F)	"	"
"	"	"	"	14 (M), 6 (F)	"	Feb 1870
James B. Howell	Hamburg	G	O, R, Ar, Geo, Gr, H	2 (F)	"	Jan 1870
"	"	G, H	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr, H, Al	2 (M), 3 (F)	"	Feb 1870
J. B. Jones	Pinetucky	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr, H	3 (M), 4 (F)	"	Jan-Feb 1870
"	"	"	"	3 (M), 5 (F)	"	April-May 1870
Elmore Lipscomb	Marion	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr	1 (F)	"	Jan 1870
"	"	"	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, H	2 F	"	Feb-March 1870
John W. Melton	Perryville	"	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr, H	5 (M), 6 (F)		Jan 1870
"	"	G, H	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, H	6 (M), 10 (F)	"	Feb 1870
Matthew W. Melton	"	"	"	6 (M), 5 (F)	"	Jan-Feb 1870
Maggie Mitchell	Marion	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr	3 (M), 2 (F)	"	"
W. A. Montgomery	Bush Creek	H	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr, H, Lat Greek	3 M	W	Feb 1870
Miss Pierson	Marion	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr, H	1 (M)	"	Jan-Feb 1870
Selina A. Robards	Perryville	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, H	2 (M), 2 (F)	"	April-May 1870
Maggie Sherrill	Marion	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo,	3 (M)	"	Feb 1870
Miss H. M. Smith	Uniontown	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr, H	40 (M)	B	Jan 1870, Feb 1870
B. R. Thomas	Uniontown	G	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, H	12 (M), 36 (F)	B	Jan 1870
Anna Wallace	Marion	"	O, R, W, Ar, Geo, Gr	1 (M), 1 (F)	W	"

⁸ The data included in Appendix N are taken from the reports submitted to the Perry County superintendent of education, as found in 1870 Teachers' Monthly Reports. Perry County had additional public schools from January through May 1870, but they were primary, intermediate, or schools whose teachers did not provide enough information to be included in the table. The branches are abbreviates as follows: orthography (O), reading (R), writing (W), arithmetic (AR), grammar (GR), geography (Geo), history (H), Latin (Lat), Greek (Gr), philosophy (Phil), algebra (Al), and French (F).

Appendix P: Public School Certificate Issuances, 1873 (Houston)

White Schools	
Instructor	Amount Paid
E. A. Abernathy	\$80
L. Boddie	\$80
D. Collier	\$96
Miss Sallie Daniel	\$130
Mrs. E. A. Givhan (or Givham)	\$142.15
B. Greene	\$70
J. M. Henderson	\$100
S. D. Morton	\$142.15
Maggie E. Sherrill	\$142.15
Josie Thomas	\$40.50
W. E. Thomas	\$180
F. C. Wilcox	\$20
T. Williams	\$100

Black Schools	
Instructor	Amount Paid
C. A. Burwell	\$180
William Bledsoe	\$196.87
W. P. Jones	\$180
W. Logan	\$150.75
W. McLeod	\$150
R. McLeod (or McLoud)	\$180
L. K. Martin	\$180
L. R. Martin	\$180
S. M. Morgan	\$180
M. Mosely	\$180
Isaac Thomas	\$54
J. Thomas	\$120
J. H. Webster	\$180

Appendix Q: Perry County Business Licenses, 1870-1871⁹

Name	License	Residence	Month and Year
Lorenzo Love and Son	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
John Houze	Liquor, Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	"	January 1871
R. M. Schwarz	Retail Liquor, Tobacco	Hamburg Station	January 1870
"	Retail Liquor	"	January 1871
"	"	Tarry Mills	September 1871
D. B. Scott and Company	Tobacco	Hogues Cross Roads	
W. R. Barron (or Barrow)	Physician	Fair View (or Fairview) Church	January 1870
"	"	Perry County	February 1871
B. M. Huey	Lawyer	Perry County	January 1870
S. Ball	Dentist	Marion	January 1870
"	"	Perry County	March 1871
C. C. McLemore and Sons	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1870
Knox Lee	Lawyer	Uniontown	January 1870
"	"	Perry County	March 1871
J. B. Stockard and J. Alexander	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1870
G. W. Spears (or Sparks), Taylor, and Company	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1870
Rankin and Sherrod (or Sherrard)	Firearms, Tobacco, Wholesale Liquor	Marion	January 1870
John Chapman	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
"	"	Perry County	March 1871
A. H. Givhan (or Givham)	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Home	January 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	"	January 1871
D. R. Lide (or Life)	Insurance	Marion	January 1870
Marion Insurance and Trust Company	Brokers	Marion	January 1870
John Hall and J. W. Mackey	Tobacco	Morgan Springs	January 1870
W. S. Spencer and N. Raiford	Retail Liquor, Tobacco	Hamburg Station	January 1870
"	Retail Liquor	Near Hamburg	January 1871
A. M. Fowlkes and Company	Commission Merchants	Marion	January 1870
John M. Langhorn (or Langhorne)	Physician	Uniontown	1870
"	"	"	January 1871
Reuben (or Rubin) Tubb	Livery Stable Keeper	Marion	January 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	Jeffries Place	January 1871
"	Livery Stable Keeper	Marion	January 1871
"	Wholesale Liquor	"	September 1871
H. Marx	Tobacco	Marion	January 1870

⁹ Individuals whose names appear in *italics* were unquestionable black.

Weiss and Pake	Firearms, Liquor, Tobacco	Uniontown	January 1870
"	Retail Liquor, Tobacco	"	February 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	"	February 1871
W. T. and J. C. Airy (or Airey)	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Perryville	January 1870
S. D. Hale	Lawyer	Uniontown	January 1870
Robert Christian	Lawyer	Uniontown	January 1870
"	"	Perry County	February 1871
James H. Stewart	Lawyer	Uniontown	January 1870
"	"	Perry County	February 1871
W. T. Hendon	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
"	"	Perry County	February 1871
M. M. Cooke and E. A. Heidt	Newspaper Publishers	Marion	January 1870
"	"	"	February 1871
Jesse B. Shivers	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
"	"	"	February 1871
John C. Reid (or Reed)	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
"	"	Perry County	March 1871
G. J. Hendon	Insurance	Perry County	January 1870
F. Hornbuckle	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Home	January 1870
W. S. Johnson	Physician	Perry County	January 1870
"	"	"	July 1871
Bush Jones	Lawyer	Uniontown	January 1870
"	"	"	January 1871
J. W. Bush	Lawyer	Uniontown	January 1870
"	"	Perry County	February 1871
"	Insurance	"	July 1871
J. W. Bush and T. Tabb	Insurance, Real Estate	Perry County	January 1870
"	Insurance	"	February 1871
"	"	"	July 1871
Reuben Douglass	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1870
J. T. Hanna	Horses and Mules		January 1870
Crenshaw, Lovelace (or Loveland) and Company	Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
L. P. Nonnenmacher	Retail Liquor, Tobacco, Billiards	Uniontown	January 1870
"	Retail Liquor	"	February 1871
J. Adler and Brothers	Retail Liquor, Firearms, Tobacco	Uniontown	January 1870
M. Bradfield	Physician		
John Bradfield	Physician, Druggist, Tobacco	Uniontown	January 1870

John Bradfield	Physician, Druggist	Uniontown	January 1871
W. A. Bradfield	Physician	Uniontown	January 1870
"	"	"	January 1871
B. S. Melvin	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
Daniel Parker	Physician	Perry County	January 1870
"	"	Perryville	January 1871
M. Marx	Firearms, Tobacco, Liquor, Horses and Mules	Uniontown	January 1870
Goldsticken (or Goldstucker) and Harrell	Liquor, Firearms, Tobacco	Uniontown	January 1870
<i>Richard Terrell (or Terrel)</i>	Livery Stable Keeper	Uniontown	January 1870
L. M. Haggard and Curry	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1870
Seligman (or Seliquan), Einstine (or Eirstein) and Company	Retail Liquor, Tobacco, Firearms, Horses and Mules	Uniontown	January 1870
William Howell and Son	Wholesale Liquor	"	February 1871
"	Auctioneers	Marion	January 1870
N. H. Frockstein (or Frohlichstein)	"	Perry County	March 1871
"	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Marion	February 1870
Harwood and Brothers	Wholesale Liquor	"	February 1871
F. or S. Unger	Retail Liquor, Tobacco	Uniontown	February 1870
"	Liquor, Tobacco	Uniontown	February 1870
J. Cocke	Wholesale Liquor	"	March 1871
R. M. Flautt	Tobacco	John Bates' Place	February 1870
Kelso (or Kilso) Alexander and Company	Horses and Mules	Perry County	February 1870
Jesse Goree	Horses and Mules	Perry County	February 1870
F. A. Bates	Wholesale Liquor	Poplar Springs	February 1870
W. R. Palmer (or Palmore)	Physician	Marion	February 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	Radfordsville	February 1870
James H. Houston	"	"	February 1871
"	Physician	Uniontown	February 1870
James Rain (or Rein)	"	Perry County	February 1871
M. Cohen	Food Peddler	Perry County	February 1870
A. L., or S., Wooley (or Woolley)	Retail Liquor	Uniontown	February 1870
"	Retail Liquor	Home	February 1870

A. L., or S., Wooley (or Woolley)	Retail Liquor	Pinetucky	January 1871
H. P. Thompson	"	Lockett's Place	January 1871
L. N. Walthall (Watthal, Waltthall)	Wholesale Liquor	Home	February 1870
N. or W. H. Peak	Insurance	Marion	February 1870
T. H. Maddox	Bell Ringer	Marion	February 1870
T. H. Maddox	Physician	Perry County	February 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	Home	June 1870
A. R. Kelly (or Kelley)	"	"	March 1871
"	Lawyer	Marion	February 1870
Abram Levi and Company	"	Perry County	February 1871
Elias Dunkin and W. A. Lockett	Retail Liquor	G. T. Rogers' Place	February 1870
Augustine C. Howze	Retail Liquor	Lockett's Place	March 1870
R. G. Clark	Lawyer	Marion	March 1870
Helen (or Hellon) and Bachrach (or Bacharach)	Retail Liquor	Lee Walthall's Place	March 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	Uniontown	March 1870
Jesse L. Brown	"	"	February 1871
E. B. Thompson	Wholesale Liquor	Taylor's Depot	March 1870
"	Physician	Marion	March 1870
N. M. Walker	"	Perry County	January 1871
"	Auctioneer	Perry County	March 1870
John Robinson	"	"	December 1871
"	Circus	Marion	March 1870
S. L. Coleman	Circus and Sideshow Performer	Marion, Uniontown	November 1871
J. W. Phillips	Physician	Uniontown	March 1870
D. A. Purion (or Pierson)	Wholesale Liquor	Jericho	April 1870
"	Insurance	Marion	January 1870
J. R. Williams and J. Hornshell	"	"	April 1870
E. P. Kendall	Wholesale Liquor	Spratt's Store	April 1870
W. L. Anderson	Manager of Swiss Bell Ringers	Marion	April 1870
"	Physician	Uniontown	April 1870
F. M. Dansby (or Danby)	"	Perry County	January 1871
"	Wholesale Liquor	Home	April 1870
Morgan Hopkins and Company	Lawyer	Perry County	February 1871
"	Wholesale Liquor	Uniontown	April 1870
John Walthall (or Watthall)	Retail Liquor	"	January 1871
"	Lawyer	Marion	April 1870
E. D. Eiland	"	Perry County	March 1871

E. D. Eiland	Physician	Hamburg Station	April 1870
Thomas Jeffries	"	Perry County	January 1871
E. S. Rawls (or Rawles)	Retail Liquor	Home	April 1870
"	Physician	Pole Cat, or Polecat, Beat	April 1870
D. P. Rawls (or Rawles)	"	Perry County	January 1871
"	Physician	Old Town Beat	April 1870
Elias Dunkin	"	Perry County	January 1871
Elias Dunkin	Stud Horses, Livery Stable Keeper,		
"	Retail Liquor, Tobacco, Billiards	Marion	January 1870
"	Stud Horses	"	April 1870
Thomas B. Driver	Wholesale Liquor, Billiards	"	January 1871
"	Insurance	Perry County	May 1870
J. W. Jones, Jr.	"	"	February 1871
W. W. Tarry	Physician	Morgan Springs	May 1870
"	Livery Stable Keeper	Uniontown	May 1870
W. P. Pope	"	"	January 1871
C. T. Ames	Physician	Perry County	June 1870
W. M. McCollough	Circus Performer, Side Show	Marion, Uniontown	June 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	Home	June 1870
J. Rothkugh	"	"	January 1871
R. D. Ashe	Retail Liquor	Hamburg Station	July 1870
"	Physician	Uniontown	July 1870
John Cassidy and J. Gillespie (or Gillespee)	"	Perry County	January 1871
W. H. Tilford	Peddlers on Foot	Perry County	July 1870
Lowenyard (or Lowengard) and Maier	Retail Liquor	Perry County	July 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	Uniontown	August 1870
G. W. Pollard, Sr.	"	"	February 1871
"	Auctioneer	Perry County	August 1870
R. T. Royston ¹⁰	"	"	January 1871
"	Physician	Perry County	August 1870
Nordlenger and Brothers	"	"	February 1871
"	Wholesale Liquor	Uniontown	August 1870
C. L. Wooley	"	"	March 1871
"	Physician	Perry County	August 1870
Patton Anderson	"	"	February 1871
J. R. Woods	Insurance	Perry County	August 1870
S. R. Blakewood	Wholesale Liquor		August 1870
"	Physician	Perry County	August 1870

¹⁰ During the spring of 1870, Dr. Royston was charged with practicing medicine without a license. See *The State v. R. T. Royston*, in Perry County Court Solicitor's Dokcet, 1868-1872, 176, LG 4848, ADAH.

J. or V. W. Rush	Physician	Perry County	September 1871
Mark Allen and Company	Insurance	"	August 1870
Pardue Walker and Company	Wholesale Liquor	Uniontown	October 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	Perryville	October 1870
M. Morris and Brothers	"	"	January 1871
"	Wholesale Liquor	Marion	October 1870
"	"	"	January 1871
Bell and Son	"	"	July 1871
John Ramsey and Company	Tobacco	Uniontown	October 1870
B. F. Hatch and Company	Horses and Mules	Perry County	October 1870
W. H. Marion	Wholesale Liquor	Hatch's Plantation	October 1870
G. D. DeHaven (or Dehaven)	Insurance	Perry County	October 1870
G. G. Grady	Circus, Side Show	Marion, Uniontown	November 1870
Bacharach and Company	Circus	Marion	November 1870
Thomas Hudson and Brothers	Retail Liquor	Uniontown	November 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	Uniontown	November 1870
H. S. Royal	"	"	January 1871
L. T. Chambers	Wholesale Liquor	Uniontown	November 1870
J. B. Coleman	Wholesale Liquor	Tolbert Plantation	November 1870
William Carter	Horses and Mules	Perry County	November 1870
W. G. or H. England	Wholesale Liquor	Perry County	November 1870
Frank Wilson	Insurance	Perry County	November 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	Marion	November 1870
W. Ethridge	"	"	January 1871
H. and A. F. Davis	Wholesale Liquor	Ethridge Plantation	November 1870
Jacob Goldenson	Retail Liquor	Jones Place	November 1870
Marks and Campbell	Peddler on Horse	Perry County	November 1870
McKinney and Jones	Peddlers on Foot	Perry County	November 1870
T. M. Bondurant	Retail Liquor	Hamburg Beat	November 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	Uniontown	November 1870
J. M. Rivers	"	Vaden's Place	March 1871
L. P. Blackburn	Peddler in Wagon	Perry County	November 1870

P. H. Rudy	Retail Liquor	Blackburn Place	November 1870
Lewis Johnson	Peddler in Wagon	Perry County	November 1870
Thomas E. Flannery	Wholesale Liquor	Marion	November 1870
G. M. Heard	Auctioneer	Perry County	November 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	Tan Yard	November 1870
Frank Henderson and Brother	"	"	January 1871
S. M. Walls	Billiards		November 1870
Moore, Wyatt, and Fitzgerald	Liquor, Tobacco		
M. Moore	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
L. W. Young and Southeran	Lawyer		
J. R. Pow	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1870
"	Physician	Perry County	January 1870
W. Miller and C. A. Liele (Lile, Lisle)	"	"	January 1871
G. W. Flinn	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Home	January 1870
R. A. Tout	Wholesale Liquor	"	January 1871
J. H. Rutledge and H. H. Hunt	Liquor, Tobacco		
P. T. and H. H. Hunt	Retail Spiritous Liquor, Tobacco	Marion Depot	January 1870
R. Kilfore and T. P. Conway	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
Charles Corage and Company	Retail Liquor, Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
L. or S. J. Sherill (or Sherrell)	Retail Liquor, Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
"	Physician	Perry County	January 1870
Dennis Johnson	"	"	January 1871
A. B. Goodhue	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Oak Grove	January 1870
James F. Bailey	Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
"	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
W. L. Bragg	"	Perry County	January 1871
"	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
J. A. True and Company	"	Perry County	January 1871
J. L. Russell	Retail Spiritous Liquors, Tobacco	Browder Place	January 1870
"	Physician	Jericho	January 1870
J. L. Russell and Elias Dunkin	"	Perry County	January 1871
"	Retail Liquor	Marion	March 1870
William B. Modawell	Retail Liquor	"	March 1871
"	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
Stowe and Orton	"	Perry County	January 1871
Powhatan Lockett	Circus Performers, Concert Performers	Marion	January 1870
"	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
Thomas H. Welch	"	Perry County	February 1871
J. B. Fiquet and Sons	Spiritous Liquor	Marion	January 1870

J. B. Fiquet and Sons	Commission Merchants, Liquor, Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
Robert West and Company	Commission Merchants	Perry County	January 1871
B. Storm (or Stern) and E. Eichold (or Eichols)	Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
<i>Alexander H. Curtis and J. P. Billingsley</i>	Retail Liquor, Tobacco	Hogues Cross Roads	January 1870
E. Hurley	Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
"	Tobacco	Hamburg Station	January 1870
W. W. Wilkerson	Retail Liquor	Home	December 1871
"	Physician	Marion	January 1870
<i>John C. Dozier</i>	"	"	January 1871
"	Physician	Marion	January 1870
Robert T. Forton (or Forten)	"	Marion	January 1871
"	Physician	Perry County	1870
M. D. L. Moore	"	"	January 1871
Rufus J. Reid	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Scotts, or Scott's, Beat	January 1870
G. P. L. Reid and Company	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
"	Tobacco, Druggist	Marion	January 1870
D. Lewis and P. C. or H. P. Lewis	Druggist	"	January 1871
P. B. Lawson	Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
"	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
Henry Wells	"	Perry County	January 1871
"	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
W. M. Cattin	Wholesale Liquor	"	January 1871
"	Insurance, Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
"	Insurance	"	January 1871
"	"	Perry County	March 1871
Samuel Perry	Wholesale Liquor	Pool's Mill	February 1871
"	Physician	Perry County	January 1870
George P. Massey	"	"	January 1871
Amzi Godden and Company	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
Avery and Apsey	Druggist	Marion	January 1870
W. H. Johnson	Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
William T. McCallister (or McAllister)	Retail Liquor, Tobacco	Home	January 1870
"	Physician	Marion	January 1870
Leopold Loeb	"	"	February 1871
"	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
J. O. Bailey	Wholesale Liquor	"	January 1871
Charles G. Browne (or Brown)	Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
"	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
John F. Vary	"	Perry County	March 1871
L. A. Wyatt	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
Mooser and Lowry	Tobacco	Marion	January 1870

Alfred Lawson	Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
L. A. Morgan and Company	Tobacco	Marion	January 1870
Lee Myatt and Brother	Retail Liquor, Tobacco, Firearms	Uniontown	January 1870
W. or M. W. Watts	Firearms, Tobacco, Commission Merchants	Marion	January 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor, Tobacco	Ashe Grove	January 1870
A. B. Moore	Wholesale Liquor	"	February 1871
"	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
R. T. Fowler	"	Perry County	February 1871
John Moore	Physician	Perry County	January 1870
"	Lawyer	Marion	January 1870
J. F. Knight	"	Perry County	January 1871
"	Dentist	Marion	January 1870
W. W. Hendon and C. C. Huckabee	"	"	January 1871
T. J. Norton	Real Estate	Perry County	January 1870
John F. Reynolds	Retail Liquor, Tobacco		January 1870
Rhody (or Rhoda) Kilfore (or Kilfoile)	Physician	Perry County	March 1870
"	Wholesale Liquor	Marion	November 1870
Stone and Murray	Retail Liquor	"	January 1871
Samuel Dorra	Circus Performers	Uniontown	November 1870
P. B. Watson and Company	Retail Liquor	Browder Place	January 1871
C. L. Scott and S. Lusk	Wholesale Liquor	Oak Grove	January 1871
J. H. Rutledge and Company	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1871
A. C. Brown	Wholesale Liquor	Marion	January 1871
Moore and Fitzgerald	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1871
David Harris and Company	Wholesale Liquor	Marion	January 1871
C. C. McLemore	Wholesale Liquor	Marion	January 1871
T. D. Cole and T. D. Welsh (or Welch)	Livery Stable Keeper	Marion	January 1871
"	Retail Liquor	Marion	January 1871
Ford Mier (or Muer) and Company	Keepers of Billiard Tables	"	December 1871
J. R. Williams	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1871
A. Bradley	Wholesale Liquor	Spratt's Store	January 1871
T. M. Ragland and McCain	Physician	Perry County	January 1871
E. D. and John Paul and Company	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1871
J. W. Putnam and J. Simpson	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1871
Lorenzo Love and Company	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1871
J. S. Kid and Company	Wholesale Liquor	Marion	January 1871
W. Ethridge and Drake	Horses and Mules	Perry County	January 1871
D. A. Dew	Wholesale Liquor	Perry County	January 1871
Eichold (or Eichols) and Brother	Wholesale Liquor		January 1871
M. A. Eiland	Retail Liquor	Hogues Cross Roads	January 1871

John F. Vary	Wholesale Liquor	Near Ford Mill	January 1871
Adolph Panaus	Lawyer	Perry County	January 1871
M. Marx	Wholesale Liquor	Uniontown	January 1871
Edward Bates	Wholesale Liquor	Uniontown	January 1871
J. M. Gulley	Wholesale Liquor	Marion	January 1871
W. Bates	Insurance	Perry County	February 1871
P. Wilkerson and Allen	Wholesale Liquor	Smith Place	February 1871
J. Faas and Company	Wholesale Liquor	Near Thompson	February 1871
John M. Adams	Retail Liquor	Uniontown	February 1871
J. F. Monts	Physician	Perry County	February 1871
L. or J. A. Mooser	Wholesale Liquor	Home	February 1871
J. F. Walker	Fire Insurance	Perry County	February 1871
J. W. N. Means	Physician	Perry County	February 1871
P. S. Croom	Physician	Perry County	February 1871
W. L. Temple	Physician	Perry County	March 1871
"	Retail Liquor	Uniontown	March 1871
G. W. Tucker	Keeper of Billiard Table	"	September 1871
"	Keeper of Jack	Perry County	March 1871
J. R. Weaver and Company	Stud Horse Keeper	"	August 1871
R. A. Seober (or Scober)	Wholesale Liquor	Uniontown	March 1871
J. B. Cocke and Wadkins	Horses and Mules	Perry County	March 1871
"	Retail Liquor	Hamburg Station	March 1871
W. A. Lockett	Retail Liquor	Hamburg	August 1871
J. R. Weaver	Physician	Perry County	March 1871
T. S. Sumner	Retail Liquor	Huff Place	July 1871
S. J. Watson	Physician	Perry County	July 1871
Perry County Insurance and Trust Company	Keeper of Jack		August 1871
J. Martin	Broker	Perry County	July 1871
H. G. Henry	Wholesale Liquor	Marion	September 1871
W. T. Boyd	Physician		September 1871
P. H. Pitts, Sr.	Keeper of Stud Horse	Perry County	September 1871
Haight and Company	Insurance	Perry County	September 1871
Willis Mirie (or Myree)	Side Show	Uniontown	October 1871

J. T. Allen	Retail Liquor	Coleman Place	October 1871
Bolling (or Boling) and Thompson	Wholesale Liquor	Home	November 1871
Benjamin F. Hendon	Retail Liquor	Marion	November 1871
Sullivan and Sullivan	Insurance	Perry County	November 1871
Benjamin F. Bolling	Horses and Mules	Perry County	November 1871
George W. Brown	Wholesale Liquor	Home	November 1871
Ryatt and Brothers	Retail Liquor	Marion	December 1871
Daniel Lewis	Horses and Mules	Perry County	December 1871
"	Wholesale Liquor	Marion	November 1871
J. W. Hornbuckle	Retail Liquor	"	December 1871
W. H. Enland and Company	Retail Liquor		December 1871
L. E. Billingley	Wholesale Liquor	Plantation	December 1871
Samuel J. Matthews	Billiards	Marion	December 1871
Johnson and Black	Billiards	Plantation	December 1871
J. C. Guttenburg (or Guttingburg)	Wholesale Liquor	Marion	December 1871
Richard Edmund	Wholesale Liquor	Marion	December 1871
Robert L. Ryan	Wholesale Liquor	Jericho	December 1871
S. R. Phillips	Wholesale Liquor	Perry County	December 1871
			December 1871

Appendix R: Perry County Justices of the Peace, 1871

<u>Beat</u>	<u>Name(s)</u>
Uniontown	L. W. Temple and Greene Lewis
Old Town	Sidney W. Blackburn and A. H. James ¹¹
Perryville	J. P. Harris, S. A. Edwards, and T. G. Wallis
Heards	A. B. Davis, L. Davis, and J. A. Louis
Radfordsville	J. M. Walters, S. B. Walters, and S. A. Bolling (or Boling)
Bush Creek	J. M. Payne, J. W. Moreland, and T. N. Home
Pole Cat (or Polecat)	A. Ivie
Scotts Station	John T. Reynolds and J. W. Clarke

¹¹ Evidently, S. W. Blackburn and A. H. James were two of Old Town's three justices of the peace. The author is not sure of the other justice's name. It might have been S. Candly or Connelly. Nor is the author certain that all election returns are correct. Some names might have been misspelled, others duplicated. The official hand-written returns are difficult to decipher, and newspaper reports are contradictory. Cf. Perry County Probate Judge Records of Election Results, 1823-1930, 18 November 1872.

Appendix S: Annual Yields (in Bales) in Perry and other Major Cotton-producing Counties, 1860-1900

	Barbour	Bullock	Chambers	Dallas	Greene	Hale	Lowndes	Marengo	Montgomery	Perry	Pike	Russell	Sumter	Wilcox
1860				63,410	57,858		53,664	62,428	58,880	44,603				48,749
1870	17,011	17,972		24,819		18,573		23,614	25,517	13,449		20,796		20,095
1880	26,063	22,578		33,534			29,356	23,481	31,732	21,627			22,211	26,745
1890	33,440	30,547	27,276							24,873	25,879		25,768	32,582
1900		31,774	30,676	48,273			39,839	38,392	39,202	26,690	34,757		31,906	35,005

Appendix T: Twenty-five Wealthiest White Planters in the Black Belt (Weiner)¹²

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Real Estate Holdings (to Nearest Thousand)</u>		
		<u>1870</u>	<u>1860</u>	<u>1850</u>
Minge, G.	Marengo	\$85,000		\$30,000
Lyon, F.	Marengo	75,000	\$115,000	35,000
Paulling, William	Marengo	72,000	150,000	29,000
Hatch, Alfred	Hale	70,000	120,000	40,000
Alexander, J.	Marengo	69,000	38,000	10,000* ¹³
Whitfield, B.	Marengo	65,000	200,000*	100,000
Terrill, J.	Marengo	62,000	93,000	
Taylor, E.	Marengo	61,000		
Robertson, R.	Marengo	60,000		
Dew, Duncan	Greene	52,000	200,000*	41,000
Walton, John	Marengo	50,000	250,000	25,000
Collins, Charles	Hale	50,000	201,000*	30,000
Hays, Charles	Greene	50,000	113,000	
Brown, John	Sumter	50,000	69,000	13,000
Pickering, Richard	Marengo	50,000	42,000	15,000
Withers, Mary	Hale	50,000	40,000	75,000
Jones, Madison	Hale	50,000	36,000*	27,000
Nelson, A.	Hale	48,000		
Taylor, J.	Hale	48,000		
Pickens, William	Hale	45,000	210,000*	51,000
Reese, Henry	Marengo	45,000	52,000	24,000
Walker, R.	Hale	42,000	55,000	
Smaw (or Snaw), W.	Greene	42,000	32,000	
Banks, E.	Marengo	41,000		
Walker, Morns	Marengo	41,000		

¹² These data are undoubtedly incomplete. On 1 January 1867, the total value of Mary E. King's Perry County estate was \$106,863.14. By May, King and her family had received an additional \$45,569.26, excluding money that had not been received from a Mr. Gilmer (possibly George, the former Tallapoosa County slaveholder who had sent slaves to help build and defend Forts Gaines and Morgan and the federal arsenal at Mount Vernon on the eve of the Civil War). See Thomas Porter to Mary E. King, 25 May 1867, William Rufus King Family Papers, Accounts 1863-1873, LPR 146, ADAH.

¹³ The asterisks represent the wealth of a husband or a father.

Appendix U: Marion Municipal Election Returns, 1873

Name	Party	Office	Votes Polled
Jesse B. Shivers	Democrat	Mayor	259
A. R. Kelly (or Kelley)	"	"	198
Elias Dunkin	"	Town Council	269
J. G. L. Huey	"	"	274
Peter T. Hurt	"	"	283
Leopold Loeb	"	"	228
Lorenzo Love	"	"	274
John G. Poole	"	"	236
J. G. Apsey	"	"	199
Amzi Godden	"	"	214
Augustine C. Howze	"	"	203
W. C. Wyatt	"	"	207
Thomas Speed (B)	Republican	"	156
William Smith	"	"	179

Appendix Va: Inaugural Officers of the West Perry County Grange

Men		Women	
Name	Office	Name	Office
D. S. Hogue	Master	Mrs. M. Barron	Ceres
James G. Evins	Overseer	Miss Martha James	Pomena
D. B. Scott	Steward	Mrs. D. B. Scott	Flora
Robert Evins	Assistant Steward	Mrs. D. S. Hogue	Lady Assistant Steward
C. M. James	Treasurer		
John R. Hogue	Secretary		
Robert M. Foster	Gate Keeper		

Appendix Vb: Inaugural Officers of the Hamburg Grange

Men		Women	
Name	Office	Name	Office
W. H. King	Master	Mrs. S. J. Matthews	Ceres
Edward Goree	Overseer	Miss L. Harris	Pomena
C. E. King	Steward	Mrs. A. Graham	Flora
J. H. Hamilton	Assistant Steward	Mrs. S. H. Parish	Lady Assistant Steward
S. J. Matthews	Treasurer		
A. W. Brazelton	Secretary		
Charles Graham	Chaplain		
J. W. N. Means	Lecturer		

Appendix W: Black Reconstruction Officeholders whose Landholdings were at Least \$1,000 Dollars, According to the 1870 Federal Census¹⁴

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Principal Postbellum Occupation(s)</u>	<u>Landholdings</u>
Jacob Anderson	Mobile	Carpenter, Justice of the Peace	\$1,500
William Bates	Mobile	Constable	1,000
Samuel Blandon	Lee	Farmer	2,000
James Bragg	Mobile	Registrar, Storekeeper, Street Commissioner	4,000
Nathan Brewington	Lowndes	Farmer	30,000
George W. Cox	Mobile	Blacksmith, Registrar	1,200
John C. Dozier (or Dosier)	Perry	Educator, Legislator, Minister, Physician ¹⁵	1,600
William D. Gaskin (alias William Turner)	Lowndes	Farmer	1,000
Alexander Goldsby	Dallas	Blacksmith, City Councilman	
		Minister	1,100
James Reuben	Madison	Blacksmith	1,500
Lloyd Leftwich	Greene	Minister, Planter	1,200
Willis Merriweather	Wilcox	Farmer	1,500
Cleveland Maulton	Mobile	Judge	11,000
Constantine Perez	Mobile	Alderman, Constable, Hotelkeeper, Inspector of Weights and Measures, Storekeeper	6,000
John H. Rapier, Sr.	Lawrence	Barber, Registrar	4,000
Lewis Roberts	Mobile	Policeman	1,100
Benjamin Royal	Bullock	Farmer, Register of Bankruptcy for the United States Treasury Department, Registrar, Legislator	6,000
Benjamin S. Turner	Dallas	City Councilman, Farmer, Livery Stable Owner, Philanthropist, United States Congressman	2,150
Isaac Young	Montgomery	Policeman	2,500

¹⁴ These data are incomplete. The names of a number of black men who owned at least \$1,000 in real estate between 1865 and 1874—among them, Alexander Curtis, Jeremiah Haralson, Philip Joseph, Constantine Perez, James T. Rapier, and Albert J. Webb—do not appear. Peyton Finley owned at least \$1,000 in personal property but not real estate.

¹⁵ Some sources indicate that John C Dozier was a registrar in 1867. Dozier wanted the position, but he did not receive it. Cf. Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers nor Scalawags*, 98, 116, 341; Brown, “John Dozier,” 113, 128; Foner, *Freedom’s Lawmakers*, 65.

**Appendix X: Black Delegates to the Equal Rights Association
Convention of 26-27 June 1874**

District 1	Jeremiah Haralson and Thomas Walker
District 2	Holland Thompson and Allen E. Williams
District 3	William V. Turner and Henry St. Clair
District 4	Alexander Curtis and Frank H. Threatt
District 5	William H. Council and Alexander McLaurin
District 6	Patrick Mosley and Robert Cordovan
Delegates-at-Large	Philip (or Phillip) Joseph and Robert Whitaker

Appendix Y: 1874 Republican Party State Ticket

Governor	David P. Lewis
Lieutenant Governor	Alexander McKinstry
Secretary of State	Neander H. Rice
State Treasurer	Arthur Bingham
Attorney General	George Turner
Superintendent of Instruction	John T. Foster
Congressmen at Large	Charles Sheets
	Alexander White
Justices of the Supreme Court	Adam C. Felder
	Thomas M. Peters
	Benjamin F. Saffold

Appendix Za: 1874 Republican Gubernatorial Majorities (by County)

County	Majority
Autauga	768
Baldwin	49
Bullock	1,003
Dallas	4,681
Greene	2,240
Hale	2,168
Lowndes	2,959
Macon	789
Marengo	1,625
Montgomery	2,844
Perry	2,435
Russell	400
Sumter	1,650
Sumter	1,650
Talladega	180
Wilcox	1,600

Appendix Zb: 1874 Majorities in Perry County (by Precinct)

Precincts	Democratic Vote	Republican Vote	Democratic Majority	Republican Majority	Democratic Gain	Democratic Loss	Republican Gain	Republican Loss
Severe	75	25	50		25		1	
Pinetucky	116	31	79		22		16	
Heards	88	48	40		34		8	
Perryville	77	114		37		9		24
Oak Grove	72	130		58		45	33	
Radfordsville	63	55	8		2			
Hamburg	66	246		180		2		5
Uniontown	187	1252		1065		16		23
Scotts	52	410		358		11		184
Polecat (Pole Cat)	56	7	49			8	7	88
Brush Creek	79	9	70		42		9	
Old Town	135	3	132		49			7
Marion	372	1555		1183		35		8
Total	1438	3885	428	2881	174	126	74	339

Appendix AA: “Establishing the President’s Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity In the Armed Forces”

WHEREAS it is essential that there be maintained in the armed services of the United States the highest standards of democracy, with equality of treatment and opportunity for all those who serve in our country’s defense:

NOW THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States, by the Constitution and the statutes of the United States, and as Commander in Chief of the armed services, it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin. This policy shall be put into effect as rapidly as possible, having due regard to the time required to effectuate any necessary changes without impairing efficiency or morale.

2. There shall be created in the National Military Establishment an advisory committee to be known as the President’s Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, which shall be composed of seven members to be designated by the President.

3. The Committee is authorized on behalf of the President to examine into the rules, procedures and practices of the Armed Services in order to determine in what respect such rules, procedures and practices may be altered or improved with a view to carrying out the policy of this order. The Committee shall confer and advise the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Secretary of the Air Force, and shall make such recommendations to the President and to said Secretaries as in the judgment of the Committee will effectuate the policy hereof.

4. All executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government are authorized and directed to cooperate with the Committee in its work, and to furnish the Committee such information or the services of such persons as the Committee may require in the performance of its duties.

5. When requested by the Committee to do so, persons in the armed services or in any of the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government shall testify before the Committee and shall make available for use of the Committee such documents and other information as the Committee may require.

6. The Committee shall continue to exist until such time as the President shall terminate its existence by Executive order.

Harry Truman
The White House
July 26, 1948

Appendix BB: Birth Counties of the Grandparents of Black Alabamians who held Doctorates circa 1963 (Billingsley and Bond)¹⁶



¹⁶ Cf. Billingsley, *Black Families*, 117-121; Bond, *Black American Scholar*, passim.

Appendix CC: “Reported Earned Doctorates by Lincoln School Alumni,” 1884-1936¹⁷

B. F. Huckaby, M.D., 1884
W. E. Steers, D.D.S., 1885
Frank Watkins, M.D., 1885
Ellis Dale, M.D., 1887
Joseph M. Harris, M.D., 1887
William Parrish Curtis, M.D., 1887
Thomas A. Curtis, D.D.S., 1889
Earl McClenny, D.D., 1925
Robert Hatch, Ed.D., 1926
Leander Patton, Ed.D., 1926
Richard E. Moore, Jr., Ph.D., 1936¹⁸

¹⁷ This list, which might be incomplete, is taken from “Reported Earned Doctorates by Lincoln School Alumni”; available via Internet @ <http://www.ruthk.net/marion/lincoln/directory/earneddoctorates.html>; accessed 8 June 2006. Cf. *Freedom’s Lawmakers*, 56.

¹⁸ One source suggests that Thomas Curtis was conferred the doctorate in 1887. Curtis finished Alabama State in 1886 and Meharry Medical College three years later. Cf. Bailey, *They Too Call Alabama Home*, 99; Billingsley, *Black Families*, 119; Bond, *Black American Scholars*, passim; “Reported Earned Doctorates by Lincoln School Alumni.”