

**“Fiery Trials:” Women and the Civil War in East Tennessee, 1850-1865**

by

Meredith A. Bocian

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

Auburn University

in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Auburn, Alabama

December 12, 2020

Keywords: history, civil war, East Tennessee, women

Copyright 2020 by Meredith A. Bocian

Approved by

Kenneth Noe, Chair, Professor of History

Ralph Kingston, Professor of History

Kelly Kennington, Professor of History

Melissa Blair, Professor of History

## Abstract

This dissertation examines East Tennessee's white women and their role within the Civil War. Women, often portrayed as passive victims to the violent climate, remain minor characters in Appalachian and more specifically East Tennessee historiography. Current research in those subfields has failed to examine how Appalachian women responded to and influenced the Civil War. East Tennessee women in fact actively influenced the political, economic, and social environment of the homefront and by extension the war. Their story is not singular, however, as political affiliation and class defined women's war experience. Unionists comprised the majority of East Tennessee's population. Largely they came from the lower class, while the region's secessionists and later Confederates primarily hailed from the professional class, with economic ties to Virginia and the deep South. Regardless of political affiliation East Tennessee women experienced a different type of war than their southern sisters, with the region suffering near constant occupation that shifted from one army to the other, campaigns that destroyed the landscape, and roving armies and guerrilla bands that confiscated and decimated the region's resources. In addition, they lived in a deeply divisive environment characterized by retributive extralegal warfare and political and social alienation. Their sex did not protect them. Like all southern women, they suffered from reduced financial circumstances, a lack of subsistence items, the loss of male family members and friends, and a general upheaval of their lives. Yet, they were not just helpless, as they shaped the war in both gender acceptable and non-traditional ways. While the nineteenth-century concepts of separate spheres, the cult of domesticity, and "southern ladyhood" proved popular concepts in the media, they were a fictitious ideal. Confederate women, however, were more likely to espouse ideas that adhered to female subordination and submission, even if their actions did not always support their words. They

would donate needed supplies, volunteer with benevolent organizations, and support the cause, all the while publicly disparaging Federal soldiers and Unionists or aiding Confederate guerrillas. Unionist women's actions likewise violated those notions when they preserved the lives of targeted male Unionists, maintained supply lines for guerrillas, and generally aided Unionist resistance. Ironically, the women offered protection and assistance to men, whom are traditionally viewed as the primary players of war. Ultimately, women were not secondary but central figures who shaped the war in the region.

## Acknowledgements

What seems like a lifetime ago, I entered into ETSU's master's program with a passion for history and no conception of how to study it. Dr. Andrew Slap kindly and patiently taught me how to be a historian. He pushed me to become a better writer and researcher and believed that I could be successful in a doctoral program. I cannot thank him enough for setting me on this incredible journey.

In addition, I want to thank Auburn's history department and each professor who had a hand in my education. The department's generous funding paid for my coursework and research. In addition, I want to thank my adviser, Dr. Kenneth Noe, who never gave up on me. His knowledge on all aspects of the Civil War is astounding and he constantly pushed me to think of things differently. I can never adequately thank him for sticking with me and for pouring so much energy into this project and me; I am honored to be a part of his legacy. Lastly, I want to thank my committee members, Dr. Ralph Kingston, Dr. Kelly Kennington, and Dr. Melissa Blair for believing in this project and encouraging me to take it further. Auburn was a special part of my life and I will cherish each moment and lesson I learned.

Next, I want to thank my parents, Bill and Cheryl Grant, who always fostered my love of learning and ensured that I could continue my education and dreams. My mother taught me how to be a strong, independent woman, and my drive and tenacity derive from her. My father shared my love of history and encouraged me to pursue the discipline. I lost him halfway through graduate school, and one of the few regrets I have is that he did not live to see me cross the finish line.

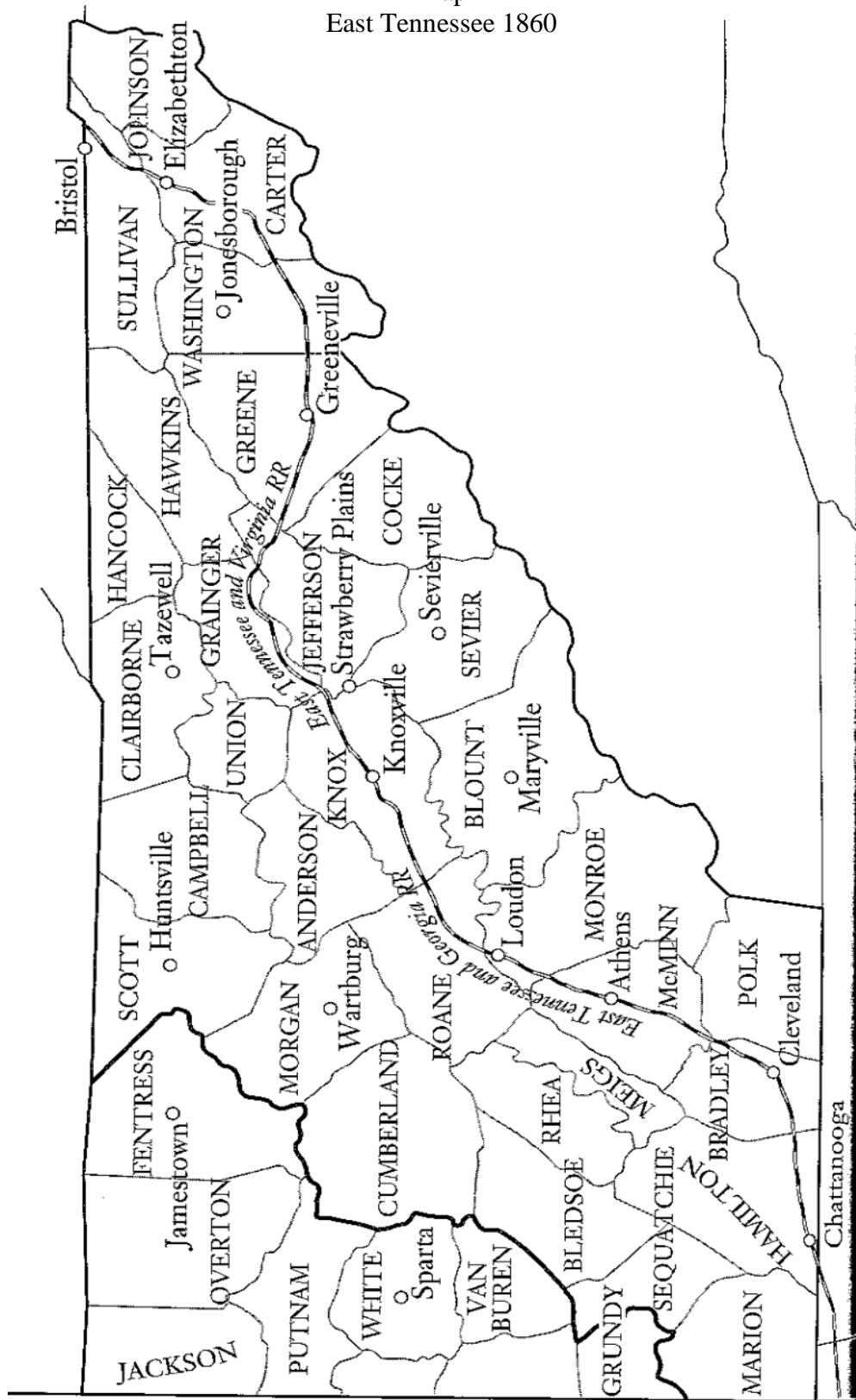
As I navigated through graduate school I rapidly added to my family, and while they may have slowed the progress my three children, Victoria, Richie, and Allie, are my greatest success and joy. I want to thank them for sharing mommy with this project. Researching and writing, more times than not, have taken me away from them, but with patience beyond their years they understood the significance. I hope they know how much I love and appreciate them. They are my reason for everything.

I nearly gave up so many times, unable to juggle the pressures of researching and writing while being a wife and mom of three young children. Richard, you refused to give up on me even when I had given up on myself; you reminded me that I was strong enough to do it all. You told me I was not just a mother, but a historian, and I could be both. You went on countless research trips with me and entertained a baby or two while I spent days in the archives. You stayed up into the wee hours of the morning keeping me company while writing. Thank you for supporting and loving me, you are my life and my love.

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	2
Acknowledgements.....	4
Map.....	6
Introduction.....	7
Chapter 1: Antebellum East Tennessee’s White Women in Myth and Reality.....	31
Chapter 2: East Tennessee Women and the Danger of Secession.....	64
Chapter 3: “Civil Discord”: The Arrival of War in East Tennessee.....	98
Chapter 4: “I Would Do What I Could”: Navigating War in 1862.....	132
Chapter 5: “Days are Dark”: The Coming of the Federal Army, 1863.....	164
Chapter 6: Liberation or Occupation in the Mountains?: 1864.....	199
Chapter 7: “The Devil Seems to be Walking At Large in East Tenn.”: Devastation, Retaliation, and the End of the War, 1865.....	237
Epilogue: The Price of War.....	273
Works Cited.....	285

Map  
East Tennessee 1860



Noel C. Fisher, *War at Every Door: Partisan Politics and Guerrilla Violence in East Tennessee, 1860-1869* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 8.

## Introduction

The Civil War was a violent and chaotic period for the women of East Tennessee, and the ravages of war were felt keenly. For over four years they experienced campaigns fought over the strategically valued land, the near constant presence of standing armies, and prolonged guerrilla conflicts. Complicating matters further, the women's story was not singular. Two narratives arose, defined by political allegiance and class. The stories of both populaces were far different and rapidly changed as the land moved between Confederate and Union hands. This dissertation seeks to explore who these women were and how both the Unionists and Confederates among them navigated the tumultuous climate. Their stories have been forgotten in the annals of history, with only cursory remarks appearing in Civil War literature. If discussed at all they largely emerge as passive victims to the violent climate and secondary to males. Stephanie McCurry tries to address this historiographical trend, finding that "women are never just witnesses to war... their imprint is all over it."<sup>1</sup> Current research, however, has failed to examine how Appalachian women, and more specifically East Tennessee women, responded to their harsh realities.

In the decades immediately following the war, prominent East Tennessee Unionists such as Oliver P. Temple and Thomas W. Humes created a narrative which presented the region as monolithically Unionist and one whose inhabitants suffered because of their unflappable loyalties. Their works represent a one-dimensional interpretation of the war--the Unionists were the victims and the Confederates depraved traitors--clearly demonstrating their biases.<sup>2</sup> Two

---

<sup>1</sup> Stephanie McCurry, *Women's War: Fighting and Surviving the American Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019), 2.

<sup>2</sup> Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War* (Cincinnati: 1899), vii-viii; Thomas W. Humes, *The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee* (Knoxville: Ogden Brothers & Company, 1888), 6-12.

decades ago, a wave of scholarship sought to remedy the stereotypical interpretation that faithful Unionists suffered at the hands of a select few traitors. Those scholars focused on East Tennessee's Confederate blocs. Noel C. Fisher, W. Todd Groce, Sean Michael O'Brien, and Peter Wallenstein all examine the region's many Confederate volunteers, emphasizing the composition of forces, motivations, and guerrilla warfare. More recently historians have reexamined the role Unionists played. James Alex Baggett explores the motivations, activities, and experiences of Tennessee's Union cavalry. While his work examines all of Tennessee's "homegrown Yankees," irrespective of section, he notes that East Tennessee Unionists comprised much of the cavalry forces, and contrasts those men with Groce's Confederates. John D. Fowler briefly discusses Unionist women's role in supporting both loyal men and soldiers, but he only provides cursory remarks regarding their actions. Women remain minor characters in East Tennessee Civil War historiography, depicted only as confidants of men and as victims of guerrilla warfare.<sup>3</sup>

Appalachian historiography more broadly likewise has failed to delineate women's roles during the war years. Historian Patricia Beaver correctly contends that "women... in Appalachian history, [are] silent or invisible bystanders to, or even nonexistent in, the acts and events of white men." In the last three decades, scholars such as Mary K. Anglin, Sarah H. Hill, and Wilma Dunaway examined women and nineteenth-century gender conceptions in the early

---

<sup>3</sup> Peter Wallenstein, "Helping to Save the Union:" The Social Origins, Wartime Experiences, and Military Impact of White Union Troops from East Tennessee," in Kenneth W. Noe and Shannon H. Wilson, *The Civil War in Appalachia: Collected Essays* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2004), 15, 17, and 18; W. Todd Groce, *Mountain Rebels: East Tennessee Confederates and the Civil War, 1860-1870* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 153; Noel C. Fisher, *War at Every Door, 176-177*; Sean Michael O'Brien, *Mountain Partisans: Guerrilla Warfare in the Southern Appalachians, 1861-1865* (Westport, CT.: Praeger, 1999), 54-55; James Alex Baggett, *Homegrown Yankees: Tennessee's Union Cavalry in the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2009), 16-31; John D. Fowler, "We can never live in a southern confederacy:' The Civil War in East Tennessee," in Kent T. Dollar, Larry H. Whiteaker, and W. Calvin Dickinson, eds., *Sister States Enemy States: The Civil War in Kentucky and Tennessee* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2009), 114-115.

republic and antebellum Appalachia. All three argue that Appalachian women violated traditional nineteenth-century gender norms - including patriarchy, separate spheres, and the cult of domesticity - by engaging in the region's industrial, agricultural, and household economies. They also demonstrated that nineteenth-century gender norms were valued ideals amid the elite and professional classes but not applicable to the wider population. Appalachian women actively shaped their economy and society. The women also demonstrate the existence of class antagonisms within the region. In stark contrast to most works about Civil War women, Anglin, Hill, and Dunaway limit their scholarship to the lower classes.<sup>4</sup>

This dissertation, in contrast, will develop the story of Appalachian women during the Civil War. It will present women as active agents that determined the homefront's political, cultural, and economic climate. It will also examine the question of whether Appalachian women's actions aided or hindered the Confederacy. The war not only affected women, but women affected the war in Appalachia. In addition, this dissertation will examine the broader continuity or discontinuity of gender roles. The guerrilla warfare and deprivation endemic to the region forced women out of the domestic sphere, causing them to simultaneously assume the roles of economic providers, nurturers, and at times protectors of men. But was this a temporary aberration or a permanent alteration of the nineteenth-century "cult of domesticity"? The

---

<sup>4</sup> Patricia D. Beaver, "Women in Appalachia and the South: Gender, Race, Region, and Agency," *NWSA Journal* 11 (Autumn 1999): xvii; Mary K. Anglin, "Lives on the Margin: Rediscovering the Women of Antebellum Western North Carolina," in Mary Beth Pudup, Dwight B. Billings, and Altina L. Waller, eds., *Appalachia in the Making: The Mountain South in the Nineteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 185-186, 187, 189-193, and 196, Sarah H. Hill, "Made by the Hands of Indians: Cherokee Women and Trade," Susanna Delfino and Michele Gillespie, eds., *Neither Lady nor Slave: Working Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), in 48, Wilma A. Dunaway, *Women, Work, and Family in the Antebellum South* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 9, 10, 55-59, 77, 124-139, 150, 164, 176, 195, 258-261.

analysis finally will explore how class affected the continuation of nineteenth-century gender norms.<sup>5</sup>

Until recently revisionist Appalachian historiography centered on destroying the myth of a monolithic Unionist mountain South. Appalachian historians argue that during the Civil War era the region was vehemently divided. They largely determine that class and access to the market served as the impetus for political divisions. Kenneth W. Noe's case study of Southwest Virginia reveals that at the war's onslaught, the region maintained new-found economic and ideological ties to Richmond and tidewater Virginia. He attributes the substantial secessionist and later Confederate population to the entrance of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad in the 1850s. The railroad increased production of cash crops and simultaneously the acquisition of slaves by providing access to Richmond. Noe argues that the railroad also created hostilities and class divisions which finally manifested in guerrilla warfare. Brian McKnight similarly finds that the Kentucky's and Virginia's railroads linked the borderland to national markets, also dividing the region politically. The geography of the mountains created an international barrier and hostilities within the region. McKnight also asserts that self-preservation determined

---

<sup>5</sup> Diary of Margaret Barton Crozier Ramsey, 1864-1885, accession MS-0322, Special Collections at the University of Tennessee, 11 March 1865. Charles Frazier's novel *Cold Mountain* remains one of the few works of literature that depicts the deprivation that Appalachian women endured during the Civil War. One of the primary themes centers on two Western North Carolina women, the wealthy middle-class Charleston, South Carolina native Ada and the impoverished Appalachian Ruby, and their struggle to survive the war. Ada, unable to cope with her father's death and assume the role of managing his property, relies upon Ruby's native skill in farm production. Frazier depicts Ruby and by extension all Appalachian women as possessing the know-how that is often viewed by nineteenth-century standards as male; Ruby is able to cultivate crops, barter, and make home-improvements. Conversely, he presents Ada as a middle-class woman who struggles during the war, citing her gender and class as the cause of her deficiencies. The war forces Ada to acquire the skills necessary for self-sufficiency. Frazier's story also documents the retributive Appalachian environment; Unionists, Confederates, and deserters retaliate violently against perceived wrongdoings. *Cold Mountain* thus addresses many of the current historiographical areas of research in Civil War scholarship better than most works of Appalachian scholarship do. Charles Frazier, *Cold Mountain* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1997), 20-52 and 71-85.

Appalachians' political affiliations. The region's inhabitants risked their livelihood on the success or failure of their political choice.<sup>6</sup>

The political and class-based hostility endemic to Appalachia resulted in bloody local guerrilla conflicts. Appalachian historians often explore this irregular warfare through case studies. Philip S. Paludan examines the murder of thirteen alleged Unionist guerrillas at Shelton Laurel, North Carolina in January 1863. Paludan determines that Shelton Laurel's isolation caused nearby local town dwellers to stereotype its residents as impoverished, "quaint," and ignorant. Paludan creates a town versus country dichotomy, arguing that the differences developed into a violent relationship between Appalachia's Confederate and Unionist populations. The massacre, Paludan argues, derived from both class divisions and the inherent violent culture of Appalachia. Robert Tracy McKenzie in contrast explores Knoxville during the war, emphasizing Federal occupation. McKenzie finds that the town's divided loyalties prior to the war manifested itself in violence during Unionist occupation. Hostile Unionist men exacted revenge on their Confederate neighbors. This violence and chaos extended into the postwar period in what McKenzie terms a "troubled peace."<sup>7</sup>

Women are largely nonexistent in this Appalachian Civil War historiography, and when they appear, themes of male agency and female victimization are prominent. Margaret Storey, for example, analyzes northern Alabama Unionists and focuses on the shortage of foodstuffs, retributive environment, and guerrilla warfare within the region. She asserts that the community

---

<sup>6</sup> Kenneth Noe, *Southwest Virginia's Railroads: Modernization and the Sectional Crisis in Civil War Era* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994; reprint, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 2003), 4, 8, and 43; Brian D. McKnight, *Contested Borderlands: The Civil War in Appalachian Kentucky and Virginia* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 13, 5, 103, 28.

<sup>7</sup> Phillip Shaw Paludan, *Victims: A True Story of the Civil War* (Knoxville: T University of Tennessee Press, 1981), 8, 20, and 126-130; Robert Tracy McKenzie, *Lincolmites and Rebels: A Divided Town in the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 178-195, 217, 223, and 9.

refused to assist Union women. Storey's Appalachian women are thus passive agents who are victims of the war. Likewise, Martin Crawford explores the role of community during the Civil War through a study of Ashe County, North Carolina. Women appear in Crawford's study as a motivating factor for desertion; familial obligation enticed Ashe County's men to return home. Similarly, Jonathan Dean Sarris examines North Georgia, again stressing a town-versus-country dichotomy and arguing that town dwellers were largely Confederate while those who resided in rural localities remained Unionists. Family affected how North Georgians responded to the war. Sarris notes that after the Conscription Act desertion rates increased, concern over their family's safety enticed men to return home. All of these works focus largely on male action.<sup>8</sup>

In contrast, a monograph devoted to Appalachian women and the Civil War does not exist. A handful of articles and chapters of edited collections still focus on how Appalachian men affected their female counterparts. Michael Fellman for example argues that "guerrilla warfare during the [war] blurred gender boundaries and gender decorum in... horrifying ways." Guerrillas sought to defend women, whom they viewed as weaker and vulnerable. Appalachian guerrillas likewise coped with the atrocities associated with the irregular warfare by implying that the defense of their most sacred institutions, family and community, served as motivation. Only John Inscoe and Gordon McKinney, in *The Heart of Confederate Appalachia*, present Appalachian women as active participants in the war. Inscoe and McKinney find that Western North Carolina women kept their "communities functional and their households intact." They also point to Appalachian women's involvement within their communities' political and

---

<sup>8</sup> Margaret M. Storey, *Loyalty and Loss: Alabama's Unionists in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 1-8 and 12-17; Martin Crawford, *Ashe County's Civil War: Community and Society in the Appalachian South* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001), xi-xiv; Jonathan Dean Sarris, *A Separate Civil War: Communities in Conflict in the Mountain South* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 1-5.

economic affairs, and even argue that Appalachian women's disgust with the Confederate government aided in its destruction. This work demonstrates the need for literature that moves beyond the notion of Appalachian women as victims.<sup>9</sup>

The dissertation's second thread of inquiry will be the continuity/discontinuity of nineteenth-century gender roles. Historians have argued that a "cult of domesticity" characterized nineteenth-century gender norms. The "cult of domesticity" describes the notion of two separate spheres: women remained close to home and hearth while men engaged with the outside world. The "cult" created an ideal of women as the morally flawless and subservient partner. Kathryn Sklar argues that by the 1830s women in reality were society's moral and cultural caretakers. Morality largely was taught in the home, although society accepted that the church and school also were appropriate venues where women could perpetuate values. The professional class's social values theoretically confined women to the domestic sphere. Society praised what they viewed as traditional female traits such as self-sacrifice, submission, and meekness, creating a false image of womanhood. Sklar's work explores the creation and perpetuation of the "cult of domesticity," particularly Catherine Beecher's role in its evolution, but does not address the validity of the "cult of domesticity."<sup>10</sup>

In contrast, Linda Kerber refutes the existence of separate spheres. She finds that the term appeared in nineteenth-century literature, but contemporary historians have incorrectly used it to describe nineteenth-century gender roles. She contends that the nineteenth-century definition

---

<sup>9</sup> Michael Fellman, "Women and Guerrilla Warfare," in Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber, eds., *Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 149; John C. Inscoe and Gordon B. McKinney, *The Heart of Confederate Appalachia: Western North Carolina in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 206 and 207.

<sup>10</sup> Kathryn Sklar, *Catherine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1973), xi-xiv.

remained fluid, and that women's actions and choices defined not only theirs but men's acceptable spheres. Kerber adds that "the sphere was socially constructed both *for* and *by* women." Ultimately, the term is "ambiguous" and the contemporary notion that women remained at home is inaccurate. Nineteenth-century women worked both in and out the home. They also helped to construct the myth of separate spheres and used it to their advantage.<sup>11</sup>

Gender historians generally do acknowledge the centrality of the "cult of domesticity" to nineteenth-century gender norms, yet in practice women of all classes violated the idea. The submissive and subservient nineteenth-century woman proved to be largely fictitious. Anne Firor Scott, for example, examines the idea of "southern ladyhood" and by extension the prominence of the "cult of domesticity" in practice in the antebellum South. She argues that southern men viewed plantation mistresses as the model of "softness, purity, and spirituality" unscathed by business and finance, but in reality, plantation mistresses managed households. More recently, Judith Giesberg and Randall M. Miller find that historians do a disservice to women by depicting them as "angels" and "martyrs," notions that adhere with nineteenth century gender stereotypes. In reality there "were no angels" and at times women were "less than commendable." Catherine Clinton likewise states that the "majority of American women failed to realize...the ideal" of the "cult of domesticity." She does acknowledge that society limited women's autonomy, as most responsibilities and activities were confined to the home. Professional class women who worked outside of the home largely labored as educators who espoused lessons of female subordination. Yet Clinton points to women engaged in the abolition, temperance, and suffrage movements as evidence that others violated the notion of

---

<sup>11</sup> Linda K. Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Women's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," *The Journal of American History* 75 (June, 1988): 10, 18, 28 and 30.

separate spheres. Both Scott's and Clinton's works thus center on the falsity of the "cult of domesticity," yet correctly acknowledge the centrality of the myth to the upper class' social norms. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese conversely argues that the "cult of domesticity" did not exist at all amid elite southern women. She finds that the South's inherent patriarchal culture prohibited females from managing the household. Female autonomy failed to exist in either the public or private worlds; women were inherently subordinate to men. Males physically and mentally abused all females, irrespective of race. Elite southern women supported patriarchy and subsequently their subordinate role in an effort to maintain the superiority that their class and race.<sup>12</sup>

In contrast, Thavolia Glymph has centered her recent monograph *Out of the House of Bondage* on the power female slaves owners welded from the plantation household. The patriarchal and paternalistic culture that defined slavery publicly and culturally diminished the role of women within their private households, when in reality plantation mistresses demanded deference and obedience sometimes with a brutality that rivaled their male counterparts. Traditionally plantation households have been viewed as domestic spaces, but Glymph instead finds them to be a "workplace" firmly entrenched in the "economic world" where women exerted control. On the outside the South's patriarchal culture created powerless women and slaves, but this notion ignored the fact that plantation women indeed held great power over their chattel. Their ownership in itself designates control and comparisons between the two groups simply cannot be made. Emancipation destroyed the power structure of the plantation household

---

<sup>12</sup> Anne Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), x-xii; Judith Giesberg and Randall M. Miller, *Women in the American Civil War: North- South Counterpoints* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2018), xii; Catherine Clinton, *The Other Civil War: American Women in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1984), 54-55, 58-59, and 72; Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 28-37.

and without slaves the mistresses lost the power they had become accustomed to; whereas, freewomen could for the first maintain and control their own homes.<sup>13</sup>

By the 1980s, historians such as Suzanne Lebsack and Jeanne Boydston had explored the validity of separate spheres in women of the lower classes. Lebsack argues against the idea that antebellum women were confined to the domestic sphere. In her case study of Petersburg, Virginia's free women, she finds that antebellum southern women "experienced increasing autonomy... from utter dependence on particular men." Lebsack adds that the number of unmarried widows or wealthy women and the instances of female employment and property ownership rose during the antebellum period, indicating that women sought financial security. Lower class white women typically maintained jobs in order to supplement meager family incomes, and many professional class women also sought employment. Upper class women stepped outside of the domestic sphere by working with benevolent organizations. Jeanne Boydston meanwhile points to the persistence of home production as evidence that females participated in their families' finances. The cult of domesticity is not an applicable gender ideal to all classes in the nineteenth-century.<sup>14</sup>

The idea is also not congruent with the fact that antebellum southern women engaged in politics. Elizabeth Varon argues that professional class and elite women played "an active, distinct, and evolving role in the political life of the Old South." She points to Virginia women's involvement in the crafting of legislative petitions, voluntary associations, political campaigning, and creative writing ventures. Abolitionism is another avenue in which antebellum women

---

<sup>13</sup>Thavolia Glymph, *Out of the House of Bondage: The Transformation of the Plantation Household* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2008), 17-35.

<sup>14</sup>Suzanne Lebsack, *The Free Women of Petersburg* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1985), xvi, xviii, and xx; Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 1-15.

engaged in the public sphere prior to the Civil War. Wendy Venet argues that female abolitionists entered the political realm by calling for emancipation and often suffrage. These women, largely originating from the northern middle class, created petitions, spoke publicly, and aided in the movement's organization. Abolitionism legitimized women's roles in nineteenth-century politics. These studies to be sure are limited to the elite, middle, and professional classes, which poses the question of how and if lower class women engaged in politics. Most recently Stephanie McCurry has examined "poor white rural" Confederate women. She politicizes them, arguing that their resistance aided in the Confederacy's defeat. McCurry states "the mass of white Southern women emerged as formidable adversaries of their government." They demanded aide from the Confederacy and publicly retaliated when refused or ignored. McCurry addresses the debate of continuity/discontinuity of gender roles by arguing that prior to the war poor white women were excluded from politics, but during the war these women publicly criticized and shaped Confederate politics. She finds that poor Confederate women represented "a powerful challenge to the Confederate vision of the 'the people' and the republic." By examining lower class women and politics, McCurry is able to demonstrate how the war provided women the opportunity to participate in the public sphere.<sup>15</sup>

Like, McCurry, Civil War historians recently have begun to focus on gender and more specifically the continuity of nineteenth-century gender conceptions. George C. Rable and Drew Gilpin Faust both argue that the Civil War did not fundamentally undermine elite southern women's nineteenth-century gender conceptions. Indeed, Rable argues that the Civil War

---

<sup>15</sup> Elizabeth Varon. *We Mean to be Counted: White Women and Politics in Antebellum Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 1, and 2-9; Wendy Hamand Venet, *Neither Ballots Nor Bullets: Women Abolitionists and the Civil War*, (Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press, 1991), ix-xii; Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 4, and 5-10.

heightened Confederate women's support of the South's hierarchical racial structure. Two struggles defined the Civil War, "a battle against the Yankees" and a "cultural contest." He finds that "by the end of the war, many women wavered in their support for the Southern cause, but they seldom questioned the racial, class, and sexual dogmas of their society." He concludes that the Civil War induced feminine labor and a brief aberration of gender roles, but during Reconstruction elite women returned to their domestic environment.

Faust similarly argues that the war altered gender conceptions by forcing women to assume traditionally male roles, such as supervising the economic and social needs of the household. She notes, however, that women shaped the post-war environment in an effort to retain a degree of antebellum culture, particularly its racism. Faust concludes that elite Confederate women remained subordinate to men and supported white supremacy. Southern women's "disillusionment with the Confederacy arose chiefly from its failure to protect and preserve that privilege, to serve white female self-interest." The lower classes meanwhile felt abandoned because the upper class did not make frequent charitable donations, while the upper class became angry, believing that the lower class no longer respected their socioeconomic status. Ultimately, elite Confederate women's independence arose out of necessity and they longed for the prewar gender relations which promoted class superiority. Catherine Clinton succinctly echoes Rable and Faust, arguing that "traditional sex roles were rigidly reinforced following a brief period of women's agency and achievement."<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> George C. Rable, *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), x, xi, 29, 72, 135, Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 5,6, 7,254, 247; Catherine Clinton, "Public Women' and Sexual Politics During the American Civil War," in Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber, eds., *Battle Scars: Gender and Sexuality in the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 73.

Anne Sarah Rubin and Victoria Bynum also argue for southern continuity. Rubin determines that after the war Confederate men sought to reestablish the antebellum South by securing white property, voting rights, and the hierarchical racial order. Rubin admits that the war disrupted traditional gender roles and that women overwhelmingly entered into the public sphere. After the war, Confederate men reassumed their roles and women's gains were reversed. Bynum compares North Carolina divorce petitions from 1840 to 1880 determining that following the war men overwhelmingly petitioned for divorce. She finds that women's identity remained rooted in marriage and the court upheld female subordination. Bynum also notes that men largely filed for divorce from women who refused to return to their prewar roles of subordination.<sup>17</sup>

In yet another important work, Laura F. Edwards debunks the *Gone with the Wind* stereotype of a South populated by intensely nationalistic planter women and complacent slaves, instead describing southern women as a heterogeneous population with varying experiences within and commitment to the Confederacy. Echoing Faust and Rable, she maintains that elite women's commitment to the South's social hierarchy and the Confederacy was contingent upon the perpetuation of their economic and social interests. After the war elite women shaped the New South by formulating Lost Cause mythology and advocating for domesticity, female education, and later suffrage. Unlike Faust, Edwards contrasts elite women with poor whites and free African Americans. During Reconstruction poor white women altered southern society, providing their class legal creditability, challenging male assailants, and increasing female

---

<sup>17</sup> Anne Rubin, *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), xvii-xx and Victoria Bynum, "Reshaping the Bonds of Womanhood: Divorce in Reconstruction North Carolina," in Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber, eds., *Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 331-333.

participation in wage labor. Freedwomen reformed southern society by resisting patriarchy, refusing domestic employment, demanding more equitable workdays, and transcending social limitations such as dress. Edwards' monograph centers primarily on how the Civil War altered gender conceptions.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers' *They Were Her Property* explores slave-owning women and how the nineteenth-century patriarchal culture created and perpetuated a myth that men were the true masters of slaves, and women deferred to their authority falling "short of wielding a 'master's power.'" Instead, Jones-Rogers finds that slave-owning women were masters in their own right and that they viewed slaves not as an obligatory dependent, but as an economic investment. They were not just slaveowners, but "mistresses of the market" and "were fundamental to the nation's economic growth and to American capitalism." Women throughout the South retained control of their slaves even amid the legal challenges of marriage, finding that as slaveowners they had economic freedom. Their actions challenged the notion of patriarchy. Jones-Rogers notes that while emancipation destroyed the institution, they sought to retain power during Reconstruction by constructing and supporting racial segregation. Simply, "they were not passive bystanders... [but] co-conspirators" in the New South.<sup>19</sup>

Stephanie McCurry's latest work, *Women's War*, addresses the role of patriarchy and paternalism in marriage and family, and how the United States government and American men used the social institution to negate the changes made to women's lives. She reconciles the myth that women were innocent noncombatants with the Union policy of hard war, finding that while

---

<sup>18</sup> Laura F. Edwards, *Scarlett Doesn't Live Here Anymore: Southern Women in the Civil War Era* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 1-9.

<sup>19</sup> Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers, *They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 9-16. Quotations 9 and 11.

men such as General William T. Sherman temporarily engaged in this type of warfare and viewed women as players, the gendered conception of innocent women and war persisted. Expanding her study beyond white women, McCurry examines fugitive slave women. Union officers viewed them as incapable of rebellion and dependent upon husbands, when in reality many women had independently sought and gained freedom without male assistance. Inconceivably, the Union Army used marriage to turn them into dependents. McCurry finally examines Augusta, Georgia's Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas, a wealthy planter's wife who lost her fortune to her husband's inability to navigate an economy no longer based on slave labor. Thomas remained subordinate and subject to her husband's bad decisions. At the root of each of these stories is the reality that marriage remained a tool to subordinate women in citizenship and state building. Even amid the radical changes associated with the war, the patriarchal society that characterized antebellum society persisted.<sup>20</sup>

While Civil War historians have argued over the question of continuity in regard to nineteenth-century gender roles, overwhelmingly they agree that the war offered a temporary aberration in women's lives. Lee Ann Whites examines women in Augusta, Georgia during the war and Reconstruction, noting the irony that Confederate women sacrificed their physical and emotional well-being to defend a patriarchal republic centered on their inferiority. She finds that Augusta's women labored in both the private and public sector. Examples include women making Confederate uniforms, providing foodstuffs, and nursing the sick. Jacqueline Campbell

---

<sup>20</sup> Stephanie McCurry, *Women's War*, 1-13.

also examines Confederate women's resistance. Campbell argues that their political activism signifies how a shared sense of "moral outrage" united the Confederacy.<sup>21</sup>

Confederate memorial organizations after the war have served as a mechanism in which historians have continued to examine the issue of postwar gender continuity/discontinuity. Karen Cox examines the United Daughters of the Confederacy, determining that this organization allowed women to remain in the public sphere through memorializing and glorifying the Confederacy's lost males. She notes the success of United Daughters of the Confederacy, determining that the organization "rewrote history" praising Confederate men as patriots. The historical interpretation that women perpetuated upheld southern traditions of racial and gender inferiority. Caroline Janney, like Cox, argues that memorializing the dead allowed Confederate women to remain in the public sphere after the war. Janney examines Virginia's Ladies' Memorial Associations, a precursor to the United Daughters of the Confederacy, also finding that these women were "responsible for remaking military defeat into a political, social, and cultural victory for the white South." These elite Confederate women remained in the public sphere by preserving the memory of the fallen.<sup>22</sup>

The question of gender continuity is not relegated to Confederate women, as many historians have examined the question in the context of northern women. Jeanie Attie analyzes northern women's role in the United States Sanitary Commission, arguing that northern women who participated in the benevolent organization failed to remain in the public sphere following

---

<sup>21</sup> LeeAnn Whites, *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender: Augusta, Georgia, 1860-1890* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 1-14; Jacqueline Glass Campbell, *When Sherman Marched North from the Sea: Resistance on the Confederate Home Front* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 92 and 3-7.

<sup>22</sup> Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of the Confederate Culture*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), xii and xv-xix; Caroline E. Janney, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 3 and 1-14.

the war. Nina Silber also argues for the continuity of female subordination. She finds that the Civil War brought women into the public when they labored in factories, mills, benevolent organizations, and hospitals, but they were still subservient to men in the economic, political, and military realms. Historians such as Judith Ann Giesberg and Lyde Cullen Sizer conversely argue that the war provided northern women with a platform to enter into the public sphere. Giesberg also examines the United States Sanitary Commission determining that it politicized its female workers and provided a forum for the Progressive Movement. Sizer finds that following the war many northern women penned its history. Their writings were distinctly political in nature.<sup>23</sup>

Only William A. Strasser has explored Appalachian women in the context of the continuity/discontinuity of nineteenth-century gender norms such as separate spheres. Strasser argues that during the war, East Tennessee's Confederate women stepped into the public sphere by caring for soldiers, organizing fundraisers and benevolent societies, and laboring as nurses, laundresses, or seamstresses. East Tennessee Confederate women ardently supported their government, yet after the war they became less politically active. Strasser also examines East Tennessee women's later participation in local chapters of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, noting their small enrollment and the lack of regional monuments. He explores the similarities and dissimilarities of East Tennessee's Confederates and Unionists. Unionist women worked with their husbands to enhance their families' economic well-being, but during the war they took on a number of new roles. Unionist women petitioned the government and served as couriers, spies, and even members of the Home Guard. Strasser concludes by stating, "women

---

<sup>23</sup> Jeanie Attie, *Patriotic Toil: Northern Women and the American Civil War*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 1-18; Nina Silber, *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 1-13; Judith Ann Giesberg, *Civil War Sisterhood: The US Sanitary Commission and Women's Politics in Transition* (Lebanon, NH: Northeastern University Press, 2000), 3-13; Lyde Cullen Sizer, *The Political Work of Northern Women Writers and the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 1-16.

took on new, traditionally male roles during the war and enjoyed new opportunities immediately afterwards; but eventually, women retreated to prewar roles in an attempt to recreate antebellum normalcy and stability.” While he argues that Unionist women reverted to their preexisting gender roles, Strasser never describes how. His examination also is brief and only begins to tell the story of East Tennessee women and the Civil War.<sup>24</sup>

\*\*\*

This dissertation will begin by examining the ideas of the cult of domesticity and southern ladyhood versus reality. The region’s media, much like the rest of the country, perpetuated the myth. Women were described as almost childlike, virtuous, and deferential. They were depicted as mothers, saviors, and the center of the home, but almost never discussed as participants in the economy or politics. Popular culture ignored the facts that women owned businesses, worked both inside and out of the home, and were sometimes even the heads of their households. Further, lower class women did not fit into this stereotype at all, as often their families’ economic needs required their contributions. Women stepped out of their proverbial sphere and participated in politics; simply they were engaged.

The second chapter focuses on the secessionist crisis and how the region’s women navigated those turbulent times. Amid all the upheaval their primary concern remained their family. Secession, if mentioned at all, remained of secondary importance. Not until Tennessee

---

<sup>24</sup> William A. Strasser, “‘Our Women Played Their Parts’: Confederate Women in Civil War East Tennessee,” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 59 (2000): 89-90 and 104-105; Strasser, “‘A Terrible Calamity Has Befallen Us’: Unionist Women in Civil War East Tennessee,” *Journal of East Tennessee History* 71 (1999): 70-79 and 88.

seceded did women really begin to actively publicly and privately discuss their opinions concerning the crisis. The chapter will also explore how class afflicted political affiliation and their reaction to secession. East Tennessee, unlike many other southern regions, did not have a large planter class. Instead the region held a dominate professional class, which included bankers, lawyers, railroads investors, merchants, and small business owners. They often had financial connections to Virginia and the deep South, and many supported Tennessee's secession. Many secessionists resided in towns and along the East Tennessee and Virginia's and the East Tennessee and Georgia's Railroads routes, making secessionist and later Confederate populations concentrated in these urban centers. In contrast, Unionists populated East Tennessee's rural areas and largely hailed from the lower class. This chapter will provide the background material necessary to understand the deprivation and hostilities unique to the Appalachian homefront.<sup>25</sup>

1861 brought war and a standing Confederate Army to the mostly Unionist East Tennessee. Chapter three explores how women navigated that pivotal year. While Unionists comprised the vast majority of the populace, Confederates quickly targeted their neighbors securing their hold on the region. The political divisions that simmered during the secessionist crisis deepened and Unionists became the enemy. Harassed and targeted Unionists fled for their safety. Those women who remained were stigmatized by their political affiliation. While Confederate civilians wanted to rid the region of the threat, Confederate authorities sought to placate Unionists with a conciliatory policy. Confederate women meanwhile supported the war

---

<sup>25</sup> Grant, 6-13. East Tennessee's average slave population in 1860 892, whereas the region's general population averaged 9,711. Slaves, therefore made up less than ten percent of East Tennessee's population. "Historical Census Browser," University of Virginia Library, <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu>, accessed 30 November 2011.

effort and their troops physically and emotionally, while Unionist women sought to protect their families. At the end of the year Unionist William Blount Carter organized and executed the first large scale act of insurrection by burning several bridges throughout the region. As the year closed both the Confederate military and populace viewed and treated Unionists as enemies and retaliated demanding submission. This chapter will detail the hardships that Unionist women endured, including references to property destruction and instances of personal victimization. It will also include a discussion of how Unionist women coped with acts of revenge, and how those experiences affected the relationship between Unionist and Confederate women.

A culture of political and personal retribution developed in 1862 after the bridge burnings. Chapter four will highlight how the war raged both on the homefront and the distant battlefields. The region's women protected their families amid the chaos. Women were not innocent bystanders in their war, but instead actively engaged by aiding the war effort and even protecting their men. By 1862 women began to feel the war's economic repercussions and experienced shortages ranging from luxury items to basic commodities such as wheat, salt, and coffee. Assailants confiscated or destroyed both Confederate and Unionist property. East Tennessee became a vastly different place than it had been in even 1861. Women balanced having to emotionally, physically, and financially support their families all while fearing and sometimes even suffering from retributive actions.

The first two years of the war brought economic and emotional hardship, along with an irregular war that continued to proliferate, but in 1863 East Tennessee also became the site of a major military campaign. Chapter five will chronicle 1863, how the region changed hands, and what that meant for the women. Previous small-scale military operations had tried to regain the region, rich in transportation avenues and a large loyal populace. Women wrote of the increasing

hostility between the two political factions and how guerrillas and irregulars continued to plague the region. Women were not just victims, but instead aided the culprits and helped them successfully wage war on the homefront. Throughout 1863 the Confederacy continued to lose on the western front and as the Union Army controlled much of Tennessee, Confederate women feared that East Tennessee would be next. Their morale began to erode. As Union troops entered into the region that autumn, some Confederate women fled, but others chose to remain and experience what it meant to be an enemy in one's own homeland. Soldiers and Unionists, who had long been oppressed, sought revenge, and their lives quickly changed. While often the object of retaliation, they still found ways to exert some control and protect their families. They hid food, tricked and bargained with soldiers, worked with their neighbors, and cared for or hid Confederate soldiers. Some "She Rebels" even publicly denounced their occupiers. On the other hand, Unionist women greeted the Federal soldiers with jubilation, protection had finally arrived.

The occupied became the occupiers in 1864. The sixth chapter will explore the climate of retribution that characterized East Tennessee and how location, class, and political affiliation affected their experiences. Unionist women who resided in garrison towns finally received the protection they had craved; yet, those that lived beyond its borders were still harassed by their Confederate neighbors, roving Confederate troops and irregulars. Lower class women who could barely sustain their family had a more difficult time weathering the chaos. A culture of revenge characterized the countryside. Women were not just bystanders in this war, but sometimes welcomed participants. They sustained and protected the roving guerrillas and irregulars, even knowing their depraved acts. In the towns, Confederate women openly and aggressively denounced Federal troops. The Union Army thought them dangerous, not innocent,

and exiled the most hostile to Confederate lines. Political allegiance though did not protect the women from suffering, a scarcity of food and subsistence items plagued all.

After the war, East Tennessee women coped differently. Women of both sides were forced to deal with the chaos, the loss of male family members or friends, and the destruction of their countryside. Confederate women also were surrounded by Unionist enemies who held on to past injustices. Chapter Seven will center on the uncertainty that surrounded the women and how they reconciled the war and their subsequent losses? It will specifically focus on the dynamic between the minority Confederates and the populous Unionists. As the war drew to a close, Confederate morale plummeted and secessionist women redirected their focus on protecting their families in this new environment. The end of the war only intensified the conflict and it soon moved beyond irregular warfare to political action. The post-war government demanded allegiance, and those that did not accept the terms were disenfranchised, banned from patronizing businesses, had property confiscated, and at times exiled. Exhausted from the war's social, economic, and political ramifications the region's women longed for what they perceived as normality. That desire would influence their post-war experiences.

\*\*\*

This dissertation depicts how the region's white women navigated the tumultuous environment, but unfortunately does not provide an in-depth exploration of East Tennessee's freed or enslaved population. This limitation is caused by a dearth of sources discussing the region's blacks. While elite and professional class Confederate sources are plentiful, those women largely did not discuss race and its role until the Confederacy's demise seemed

imminent. Women then acknowledged that the impetus of the war was the South's desire to preserve and perpetuate slavery and wondered if it worth the price. The slaveowners certainly detested their increased workload after emancipation, but these conversations were not explored until after the war. Their failure to discuss slavery is probably due to the region's small number of slaves. Wilma Dunaway and John C. Inscoe have explored slavery in Appalachia and more work needs to be done in regard to East Tennessee. Newspapers and the Freedmen's Bureau documents indicate that freedmen and freedwomen gravitated towards the region's towns and that suffering and poverty characterized their experiences. These documents point to the widespread prevalence of racially motivated crimes throughout Middle and West Tennessee; however, racism abounded in East Tennessee too. Simple questions such as how did freedwomen navigate their new environment and how was their experience different need to be answered. Unfortunately, this dissertation did not provide those answers, but indicates that future inquiry is needed.

Another problem associated with this dissertation's subject content is that it is largely grounded in Confederate sources. This bias most likely results from the fact that East Tennessee political affiliations reflect a class bias. East Tennessee's wealthier citizens were largely Confederate, while the lower class tended to be Unionist. Wealthy citizens often documented their experiences while the written records associated with the lower class remain sparse. To supplement the meager Unionists sources, this dissertation utilized documents from newspapers, prominent politicians, soldiers, and Federal pension records. By relying on these primary sources, the story of East Tennessee and further Appalachian women will be told.

Civil War historiography has largely ignored Appalachian women, instead focusing on the violent and retributive nature of the mountain homefront. They are almost exclusively

depicted as passive victims; historians have largely failed to integrate women in the larger gender narrative. This dissertation will add to the field in multiple historiographic genres; including presenting women as active agents in the war and dialogue the war's effect on the continuity/discontinuity of the cult of domesticity. This work is desperately needed; the historiography regarding Appalachian women is sparse at best. While the historiography concerning the continuity/discontinuity of the cult of domesticity is vast, it is centered on elite Confederate and northern women. This dissertation will explore gender continuity in East Tennessee's professional and lower classes, specifically examining the correlation between class and gender. East Tennessee provides an excellent case study to explore Appalachian women's role within a war that altered at least temporarily the southern economy, culture, and society.

## 1. Antebellum East Tennessee's White Women in Myth and Reality

Like other white editors around the antebellum South, Appalachian East Tennessee's male-dominated media presented two images of white women during the 1850s, regardless of their subjects' socioeconomic status. One depicted them as loyal wives and mothers. The other image portrayed women as ignorant, frivolous, and almost childlike. Ultimately, both circumscribed white women as subservient partners in a patriarchal community further defined by race. Rarely did an article or editorial appear within the region's newspapers that did not adhere to these stereotypes. East Tennessee's media also reinforced the notion of "true womanhood," a nineteenth century social construct that free women should be pious, virtuous, and submissive. Historian Anne Firor Scott examined this phenomenon in southern upper class white women and stated that "churches, schools, parents, books, magazines, all promulgated the same message: be a lady and you will be loved and respected and supported...if you defy the patterns, you will be unsexed, rejected, [and] unloved."

In addition, publications reinforced the professional class notion of separate spheres: decent white women remained home caring for their household while men engaged in the political and economic world. This "cult of domesticity" viewed white women as the spiritual and moral caretakers of their families and did not provide them with political or economic agency.<sup>1</sup> In an article printed in the *Athens Post*, for example the writer described mothers first and foremost as loyal protectors of their children. He wrote, "while [a man's] mother lives he

---

<sup>1</sup> Anne Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics*, 7-18 and 20-21; Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Catharine Beecher*, xi-xiv; Leeann Whites, "The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender," in Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber, eds., *Divided Houses*, 1-8.

will have one friend on earth who will not desert him when he suffers, who will soothe him in his sorrows, and speak to him of hopes when he is ready to despair.”<sup>2</sup>

Newspapers denounced those women who stepped outside of their preconceived gender boundaries. The *Athens Post* reprinted an article in 1850 concerning the admission of Almira Fraim and Mary Ward into the Memphis Institute’s medical department, the first Tennessee women to enter into medical school. The editorial hinged upon the question, “may not ladies be Doctors?” The writer believed that female physicians would soon be prevalent throughout the country but contended that men “should not like the idea of our wife being a doctor.” He abhorred the idea of caring for his children while “the feminine doctor is [tending to] other people’s brats.” Women, he argued, should “stick to their pies and puddings, their broom sticks and dust rags.” Females belonged in the home, not men. In 1855 an anonymous letter to the editor of *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig* similarly criticized “a portion of the ladies of Knoxville, for the intemperate use of Wine at a recent gathering.” The article stated, “We have received a communication signed ‘A Lady,’ but in the handwriting of a man.” A male had written into the newspaper to denounce women for what he perceived to be a violation of social gender norms, drinking publicly.<sup>3</sup>

Another article, entitled “Advice to Wives,” published in 1853, instructed women in how to maintain a successful marriage. The author determined that a relationship hinged upon a wife’s ability to “learn how to form her husband’s happiness.” Women needed to ignore their husband’s faults and concede to their demands. The author further advised wives to avoid

---

<sup>2</sup> “The Mother”, 8 March 1850, *Athens Post*.

<sup>3</sup> “Feminine Doctors,” 8 February 1850, *Athens Post*; Regina Morantz-Sanchez, “The ‘Connecting Link:’ The Case for the Woman Doctor in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century America,” in Leavitt and Numbers, eds., *Sickness and Health in America*, 213-216; and “A Lady,” 20 January 1855, *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig*. Almira Fraim’s father exposed her to medicine at early age. P.P. Fraim was a doctor in Shelby County in 1850. Records for Shelby County’s Mary Ward cannot be found in the 1850 Federal Census. “U.S. 1850 Federal Census Record – Record for Almira Fraim,” Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>.

confrontation, “never, if possible to have scenes.” Within the article, men are described as prone to irritability and easily angered, characteristics endemic to the male gender. Instead of responding in kind, the wife should never “say anything sarcastic or violent in retaliation” and instead placate their husband by reaffirming his superior position. A similar newspaper article in the *Athens’ Post* advocated women’s subservience to their husbands noting “A wife cannot make home comfortable who ‘dears,’ and ‘my loves,’ and ‘pets’ her husband, yet don’t sew the buttons on his shirt, or tape on his drawers.”<sup>4</sup>

East Tennessee’s newspapers more broadly reaffirmed the “cult of domesticity” and especially the notion that a woman should remain within the home and create a refuge for their husbands. An East Tennessee newspaper described home as “a world where no storms intrude, a haven of safety against tempests of life.” Women created a world devoid of suspicions, jealousies, lies, and slander. The author ends determining that the world is created by a “virtuous and amiable woman.” Another article written in March of 1853 reinforced the cultural notion that women managed the home regardless of social class in order to make a comfortable retreat for their husbands and families. The author specifically addressed the notion that professional class women should not engage in any type of labor, including work both in and out of the house. Instead, he found “every female ought to learn how all household affairs are managed...there cannot be any disgrace in learning how to make the bread we eat, to cook our dinners, to mend our clothes or even to clean the house.”<sup>5</sup>

A poem appeared in 1854 in the *Loudon Free Press* entitled “Women’s Rights” that propagated the nineteenth-century notion that women were the moral center of the home. The author portrayed women as overly sentimental, stating a woman’s rights are

---

<sup>4</sup> “Advice to Wives,” 11 December 1852, *Loudon Free Press*; 5 January 1855, *The Athens’ Post*.

<sup>5</sup> “Female Occupation,” 19 March 1853, *Loudon Free Press*.

The right to weep, the right to pray,  
To wipe the tear from sorrow's cheek;

He argued, "her place is home, her only care." A woman's responsibility included being the moral and spiritual guide of her husband and children. The poem stated that a wife "leads a manly soul to do daring deeds." Essentially, women should create an environment within the home that inspired their husband to succeed within the public sphere. The poem symbolized the nineteenth-century tendency to present women as the physical and emotional center of the household.<sup>6</sup>

Historians such as Anne Firor Scott argue that southern men placed women on a pedestal while attributing to the gender almost unobtainable characteristics such as beauty and selflessness. This mythical illusion of southern women nonetheless appeared throughout the South's public sphere, including East Tennessee. The poem "Women's Rights" demonstrated the tendency. The poem described women finding:

Her life exhales a smile, a sigh,  
Light giving smiles, in earth's dark sky...  
Her love is like the breath of spring,  
Or fragrance that bright fling  
In lavish sweetness on the air

In another poem, the author compared the sound of a woman's laugh to that of the "the sound of flutes on the water." In an article entitled "Tell Your Wife," the writer instructed men to educate their wives on household finances. If men advised women of budgetary concerns than a woman's desire to place their family's needs above their own would cause them to restrict their spending to below the necessary budget. He described how this type of knowledge would alter the wife's financial decisions, he stated "whereas, [your wife] always fancied what was... just

---

<sup>6</sup>"Home," 15 January 1853, *Loudon Free Press* and "Women's Rights," 28 March 1854, *Loudon Free Press*.

coming into market – now, if beef is dear, she thinks boiled mutton is delightful – tender as chicken.” The *Athens Post* meanwhile included a short story which described the depth of a husband’s grief after the death of his wife. The author of “The Dead Wife” argued that “in comparison with the loss of a wife, all other earthly bereavements are trifling.” The author praised wives and mothers for maintaining a “domestic heaven” for their husbands and children during her life. Adjectives such as “noble,” tender, gentle, beautiful, and pure described a wife and mother. This piece depicted wives and mothers as almost saintly dedicated solely to ensuring their families’ safety, comfort, and happiness.<sup>7</sup>

Yet if East Tennessee newspaper editors described ideal white women as beautiful, ethereal helpmeets, they also presented them as ignorant, wholly dependent upon husbands and fathers for knowledge, guidance, and monetary support. Newspapers throughout the 1850s included jokes and condescension at the expense of women. The *Loudon Free Press* ran an ad in 1852 that advocated women buying the newspaper because “it familiarizes them with the popular topics of the day and enables them to converse with intelligent persons.” The editor sought to educate women who were inherently unintelligent. Another newspaper article in 1853 argued that “trivial amusements” distracted young women from their education. Frivolous behavior would later result in regret, and women would “come to feel themselves inferior in knowledge to almost everyone they converse with.” Women who allowed their natural inclination towards frivolity to impede an education became “trifling insipid companions, so ill-qualified for the friendship and conversation of a sensible man, or for the task of instructing or governing a

---

<sup>7</sup> “Women’s Rights” and “Tell Your Wife,” 12 February 1853, *Loudon Free Press*, 12 February 1853; and “The Dead Wife,” 4 March 1853, *Athens Post*.

family.” This article presented women as almost childlike in their inability to focus on pursuits other than those which gave immediate gratification.<sup>8</sup>

East Tennessee newspapers often also included anecdotes which demeaned women. The *Loudon Free Press* included a short story of a Mr. Evans, whose angry and irrational wife destroyed his portrait. Evans brought vandalism charges against his wife and in return the magistrate fined her three dollars “which the husband had to pay.” This story, while meant to be humorous, presented an image of emotional women who were financially dependent upon their husbands, childlike in demeanor and dependency.<sup>9</sup>

Antebellum regional newspapers’ advice columns meanwhile instructed women on how to obtain a husband and maintain a happy home. The *Loudon Free Press* published a piece which dictated the appropriate steps for a woman to attract the opposite sex. A woman should excel in domestic pursuits, specifically cooking and maintaining a home. The author warned against professional class white females displaying disdain for domestic affairs, and believed that their socio-economic class prevented them from engaging in such activities. The article offered the following advice: “Girls do you want to get married...if so, don’t take pride in saying you never did housework, never cooked a pair of chickens, never made a bed...don’t turn up your pretty nose at homes industry.” The *Athens Post* likewise included an article in February 1855 which criticized women who neglected their “household duties,” which included cooking, cleaning, and caring for their husband and children. The author described the home as a woman’s “happiest sphere.” He warned women against the perils of “the wife who leaves her household cares to the servants, pays the penalty which has been affixed to idleness since the

---

<sup>8</sup>“Shillaber’s Ike,” University of Virginia, <http://twain.lib.virginia.edu/tomsawye/shillaber.html>; “The Last Speech of Mrs. Partington,” 1 February 1850, *Athens Post*; “For the Whole Family,” 13 November 1852; *Loudon Free Press*; and “Hints to Young Women,” 19 February 1853, *Loudon Free Press*.

<sup>9</sup> 26 February 1853, *Loudon Free Press*.

foundation of the world, and either wilts away from ennui or is driven to all sorts of follies to find employment for the mind.” Those women who refused to remain in the home or delegate the arduous tasks of household management failed to meet what the author believed were acceptable gender norms.<sup>10</sup>

Throughout the antebellum period East Tennessee’s regional media portrayed white women as the moral compass of home but simultaneously intellectually inferior to men and dependent upon them for survival. Newspapers sometimes spoke of women existing outside of the home in the political and cultural world, yet reduced their agency by always linking women to domestic activities such as child rearing, cooking, cleaning, or planning parties. In this, East Tennessee editors were little different than anywhere else in America.

\*\*\*

The ideal of “true womanhood” and separate spheres proved to be an illusion. Throughout East Tennessee, women worked on farms, in manufacturing establishments, and in small businesses, both with male companions and independently. Women actively influenced the region’s culture, and some even participated in the political discourse. For the white women of East Tennessee, reality often was quite different from the theory.

While men dominated public rhetoric regarding women, some East Tennessee women did enter into the public sphere through print. Frequently regional newspapers published their poetry. Mrs. R.S. Nichols, for example, published a poem entitled “Gentle Eva” in April 1853 in

---

<sup>10</sup> 19 February 1853, *Loudon Free Press* and “Despised Household Duties,” 2 February 1855, *The Athens’ Post*.

the *Loudon Free Press*. It spoke of the untimely death of a young child. Nichols wrote “Golden-haired and starry eyed – Young in years by thought o’er laden, who in angel beauty died.” The poem poignantly referred to the child’s beauty and innocence and those who were left behind to mourn her. Nichols’ work allowed her to be a part of the public sphere, but her theme reflected the acceptable topic of motherhood. S. Belle Foland likewise published “Fleeting Hopes” in February 1854 in *Loudon Free Press*. Foland described the miseries associated with life. The poem evoked images of anguish and the ultimate lack of meaning associated with life. Foland wrote:

Oh! Life is naught but weariness  
And love is only pain;  
Earth’s blessings pass like summer flowers  
Then all is gloom again.  
The brightest day of’t ends in storms  
Our hopes dissolve in tears;

Literary publication which expressed emotions proved to be an acceptable topic for women to publicly write about during the 1850s.<sup>11</sup>

White women also participated in the public sphere during the 1850s by engaging in benevolent organizations and politics. Federal law during the nineteenth-century prohibited women from casting a vote, but women throughout the United States still actively participated in politics. Whigs and their successors were especially open to women’s involvement. Elizabeth Varon finds that Whigs were the first to incorporate women in their campaigns, and the party valued women’s role in bringing recognition and popularity to their platform.<sup>12</sup> East Tennessee

---

<sup>11</sup> “Gentle Eva, 9 April 1853, *Loudon Free Press*; “1860 Federal Census – Record for S. Foland” and “1860 U.S. Federal Population Schedule” in Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>; and “Fleeting Hopes,” 21 February 1854, *Loudon Free Press*. Foland’s husband died, leaving her with seven children, after she wrote the poem.

<sup>12</sup> Elizabeth R. Varon, *We Mean to be Counted*, 3.

was no exception. The Know Nothing Party, for example, the local successor to the collapsed Whigs, held a regional barbeque in Knox County during the summer of 1856 for the party's local constituents. The party placed specific instructions in William G. Brownlow's newspaper, *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig*, for attendees and organizers. The organizers also created a specific committee of forty-two prominent members of the Know Nothing Party to address any of the female attendants' requirements. A special committee would "see that [the women] are furnished with comfortable seats at the Stand, and suitably provided for at the Table." While the inclusion of these directives seemed to support the antebellum notion of women as fragile and needing male assistance, it also demonstrates the presence of women at political gatherings.<sup>13</sup>

\* \* \*

By the 1830s and 1840s, a specific economy had developed in East Tennessee. Local goods traveled to markets on steamboats, wagons, or on foot. The buying and selling of livestock beyond the region dominated its interregional economy. Lacking a railroad line isolated the market, and by the 1840s other regions that already contained these vital transportation links began to infringe upon East Tennessee's once lucrative livestock trade. The region's mountainous geography and a lack of capital impeded the creation of a railroad there for years, while the region's economic production reflected increasingly limited markets. The absence of a railroad also meant that farmers continued to produce a variety of subsistence crops in addition to cash crops. Corn, wheat, and oats dominated the agricultural economy. At the

---

<sup>13</sup> 26 February 1853, *Loudon Free Press* and "Mass Meeting and Barbecue!!!," 30 August 1856, *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig*.

end of the 1840s, East Tennesseans produced 12,295,256 bushels of corn, 3,119,571 bushels of oats, and 713,881 bushels of wheat. In the 1840s many of East Tennessee's farms also contained gardens which supplemented their owners' diets and pocketbooks. The 1850 census estimated the value of garden produce at 37,139 dollars.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout the late 1830s and 1840s, politicians, merchants, and bankers facing out-of-state competition--and under the impression that the railroad would bring more varied economic opportunities--called for a railroad to connect the region to other southern lines. They had some initial success. The state legislature committed to internal improvements in the region and voted and approved funds for a line to be run between Memphis and Knoxville in 1836 with the Hiwassee Charter. The state revoked the internal improvement legislation, however, after the Panic of 1837. The lack of funding prevented the creation of a regional line until 1848 with the chartering of the new East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad (ET&VA). Virginian Congressman Thomas Bocock, in a letter to Tennessee congressmen William Cocke and John Rogers, called for such a connection of that proposed line to Virginia's expanding railroad system, writing, "It would confer immense local benefit by opening a business and commercial highway for those interesting regions, Southwestern Virginia and Eastern Tennessee – regions whose resources, though heretofore undeveloped, are beginning to make themselves known, and whose vast mineral wealth and agricultural capabilities are only equaled by the neglect with which they have heretofore been treated." The ET&VA upon completion connected Richmond, Virginia, to Knoxville. The incomplete Hiwassee Railroad, meanwhile, was resurrected and became the

---

<sup>14</sup> W. Todd Groce, *Mountain Rebels: East Tennessee Confederates and the Civil War, 1860-1870* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 2-4; Stanley John Folmsbee, *Sectionalism and Internal Improvements in Tennessee, 1796-1845* (East Tennessee Historical Society: Knoxville, 1939) 1-3 and 84 and J. D. B. De Bow, *The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850* (Washington: Robert Armstrong Public Printer, 1853), 586-589.

East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad (ET&GA). It eventually ran from Knoxville to Dalton, Georgia. The ET&VA and the ET&GA met in Strawberry Plains in 1858 and offered for the first time a continuous route throughout the region. Knoxville's Elisa Bolli Buffat remembered the excitement surrounding the entrance of the railroad into Knoxville more than sixty years later when she wrote, "we saw the first train that arrived in Knoxville...the cannons were fired and at night they had fire-works."<sup>15</sup>

Not content with a single line bisecting East Tennessee, editors across the south throughout the 1850s expounded on the railroad's ability to transport the region's agricultural, industrial, and manufactured goods throughout the country and called for expansion of the system. In the Fall of 1852 the *Charleston Courier*, for example, called for a spur to connect that city to the upcoming ET&VA and ET&GA railroads. The editors stated that the "grain crop in... Tennessee... beyond question [is] an extraordinary good one" and sought funds in which to create this spur. The editors spoke of Charleston's ability to serve as a railroad hub which would store and send to market East Tennessee's crops and other goods. "Tennessee alone can send us three million bushels of corn," it read, "which formerly was almost valueless to them, as they could not get it to market." A similar letter to the editor in the *Athens' Post* in 1855 celebrated the railroad's perceived ability to increase the region's manufacturing segment. John Caldwell of Baltimore commented, "when I see... her railroads being laid along the beautiful and fertile valley, from the Lookout Mountain to the Virginia Line, and contemplate the rich productions

---

<sup>15</sup>Thomas S. Bocoek, Washington D.C., to William M. Cocke and John A. Rogers, Washington D.C., 6 January 1849, transcript by: Richmond, Samuel Shepard Public Printer, 1849, Accession Number HE2791L993 R5, Virginia Tech Special Collections, Blacksburg, VA; Dunn, *An Abolitionist in the Appalachian South*, 18 and 19; Elisa Bolli Buffat, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli Buffat* (Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1916), 93-96, 98, in "Bolli-Buffat," Calvin M. McClung Historical Digital Collection, [www.cmdc.knoxlib.org](http://www.cmdc.knoxlib.org), Accessed 9 September 2012.

which may be realized by scientific culture, I cannot but indulge the most sanguine hopes of her future prosperity and greatness.”<sup>16</sup>

East Tennessee’s economy thus changed significantly in the mid-1850s with the construction of the ET&VA and ET&GA railroads. They created an incentive for East Tennesseans to improve their lands and expand crop production. In 1859 approximately 21,526 farms peppered the landscape. One third of East Tennessee’s farms, or 7,292 measured between fifty to ninety-nine acres. Another third of the region’s farms measured between one hundred to 499 acres. The majority of East Tennessee’s remaining farmers labored on farms between twenty to forty-nine acres. Large farms over five hundred acres were extremely rare, comprising less than 1 percent of the region’s farms. The region meanwhile “improved” almost 27,000 acres of land between 1850 and 1860.

The introduction of the railroads spurred the development of cash crops into the region, as newspapers and politicians had advocated for years.<sup>17</sup> Improved land on these farms increased by 25.6 percent from 1850 to 1860, with, the largest gains in the railway counties. Throughout the 1850s the level of improved land in the region increased overall by 26 percent, from 1,557,427 to 1,955,551. The railroad also stimulated crop production for the market economy. Some East Tennesseans increased production and took advantage of the railroad’s ability to efficiently transport their crops to distant markets. These farmers continued to primarily grow cereal products. Corn persistently dominated the region’s agricultural economy, and farmers produced 13,674,279 bushels by the end of the 1850s. Corn production, stated

---

<sup>16</sup> “The Raburn Gap Railroad,” 13 November 1852, *Charleston Courier*, in *Loudon Times*; John Caldwell, “East Tennessee – Its Minerals, - and Policy,” 26 January 1855, *Athens Post*; and Grant, “Internal Dissent: East Tennessee’s Civil War, 1849-1865,” 24-25.

<sup>17</sup> “Historical Census Browser: Census Data for Year 1860;” Secretary of the Interior, *Statistics of the United States, (Including Morality, Property, &c) in 1860, 133-134*; and J.D.B. De Bow, *The Seventh Census of the United States*, 586-589.

differently, increased 11.2 percent from 1850 to 1860. East Tennessee farmers also grew wheat and oats in large numbers during the decade. In 1850 the region had produced only 713,881 bushels of wheat, but just a decade later that number grew to 2,482,280 bushels, a staggering 248 percent increase. Farmers additionally produced 1,439,297 bushels of oats. Many farms throughout the northern region of East Tennessee also grew tobacco, the total reaching 622,943 bushels in 1860.<sup>18</sup>

This dramatic reorientation of the regional economy affected women directly. Eight hundred and eighty-two of the region's freewomen claimed to be farmers in the 1860 census, with the majority residing in Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Claiborne, Greene, Hamilton, Knox, Sevier, and Washington Counties. The overwhelming majority were either widowed or the eldest child of a fatherless family; this number does not include married women whom labored with their husbands on shared property. Women not bound by the confines of marriage, in other words, were able to actively participate in the economy and make decisions regarding themselves and families in a patriarchal society. They managed their farm and family's finances. At times they also hired outside male labor or utilized the labor of their male children. Minerva Walters, for example, age forty-three in 1860, managed the family farm following her husband's death. John Walters had died sometime during the 1850s, leaving his illiterate wife with a small farm valued at three hundred dollars. Minerva Walters relied upon her twenty-six-year-old son John Jr. and his young family to provide labor for her. In contrast, Isabell M. Humphreys utilized her three sons on her large Blount County farm. She managed, with the aid of her sons, a farm worth

---

<sup>18</sup> "Historical Census Browser: Census Data for Year 1850," University of Virginia Library, <http://lib.virginia.edu>, Accessed Date 15 March 2014; "Historical Census Browser: Census Data for Year 1860," University of Virginia Library, <http://lib.virginia.edu>, Accessed Date 15 March 2014; Secretary of the Interior, *Statistics of the United States, (Including Morality, Property, &c) in 1860; the Eighth Census* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864), 5, 133-134; and Ezekiel Birdseye, New Port, to Gerrit Smith, 2 September 1841 in Dunn, *An Abolitionist in the Appalachian South*, 181.

six thousand dollars in 1860. It is not known if Humphrey hired outside labor to manage the daily tasks associated with her property. Sixty-year-old neighbor Sarah Bivins owned and operated a considerably larger farm which the 1860 Federal Census valued at ten thousand dollars. She also owned eleven slaves, ranging in age from fifty-six to two. Bivins hired a forty-year old native Kentuckian, James Simmerman, to manage her holdings.<sup>19</sup>

Elisa Buffat Bolli wrote of her childhood experiences on a farm operated by a woman, her family's 265 acre farm in Knox County. Her ill father had moved the family from Brazil to Knoxville in 1853, hoping that the region's temperate climate would alleviate his suffering. He died six months after arriving in East Tennessee, most likely from pneumonia. Her mother knew little of farming and hired male labor to manage the farm, but along with her mother and sisters, she learned to work the land. She later stated that "we girls would help plant corn or potatoes and also rake hay with hand rakes." The family had difficulty in maintaining a long-term male manager and quickly her mother had to take over that role. Eventually Bolli Buffat parceled out the land for rent.<sup>20</sup>

Other unmarried women labored and managed their agricultural holdings without the assistance of men. Margaret Ray, a small farmer in Greene County, ran her farm without the assistance of permanent male labor. Indeed, women solely worked the Ray farm. In addition, to Ray four other white women and a mulatto woman shared the burden. Ray possessed a small tract of land valued at one hundred dollars with twenty dollars of personal property in 1860.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> "Historical Census Browser: Census Data for Year 1860;" "Minerva Walters in 1860 U.S. Federal Census" and "Minerva Walters in 1850 U.S. Federal Census;" "Sarah Bivins in 1860 U.S. Federal Census;" "Sarah Bivins in 1860 U.S. Federal Slave Schedules;" and "Isabell M. Humphreys in 1860 U.S. Federal Census," *Ancestry.com*, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com).

<sup>20</sup> Bolli Buffat, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli Buffat*, 93-96 and 98.

<sup>21</sup> "Margaret Ray in 1860 U.S. Federal Census," *Ancestry.com*, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com).

Most women resided on farms in households headed by men. An evolving agriculture defined their lives, nonetheless. Home production was one avenue through which East Tennessee women participated in the region's economy, whether married or single. Throughout the region women sold surplus goods at market in an effort to supplement their family's income. Historian Wilma A. Dunaway points to the prevalence of home production within Appalachia during the nineteenth-century, concluding that "a majority of mothers... earned income through informal sector exchanges of their butter, cheese, farm outputs and home manufactures." Women within East Tennessee similarly supplemented their families' diets and incomes by producing butter, cheese, honey, and sorghum molasses. Throughout the 1850s butter remained the most important commodity produced by the region's women. The federal census recorded 2,985,138 pounds of butter produced at the close of the decade. Home production of almost everything but cheese, meanwhile, steadily increased throughout the decade. East Tennesseans dramatically decreased the production of cheese throughout the 1850s, with production dropping from 163,091 pounds of cheese in 1850 to only 99,537 pounds in 1860. This at least suggests that the railroad made cheese more readily available for purchase via the town merchants. Such goods were largely produced in the region's railroad counties, where women used the railroad to get their surplus goods to market.

East Tennessee women also participated in their local and regional economy by growing and producing surplus food to sell on the larger market. Elisa Bolli Buffat recalled the significance of surplus goods to the local economy. She described Knoxville as "a small town" which only had "two or three dry goods stores... one hardware store [and] a blacksmith shop." Women did not have a "Market House" in which to sell their surplus goods. "Before the Civil War," she continued, "they put up a shed where country people would take their produce to sell."

Most women avoided the public market, however, and instead drove “to the houses and offer their fruits, vegetables, butter and eggs for sale.”<sup>22</sup>

Manufacturing comprised a smaller but significant segment of East Tennessee’s transforming economy during the 1850s. East Tennessee manufactures produced a variety of products during the 1850s, which included heavy industrial products such as iron, pig iron, tin, and copper; consumer goods such as agricultural implements, boot and shoes, cabinetry, carriages, cooperage, cotton goods, and leather; and agricultural goods such as flour, corn meal, liquor, and tobacco. By 1860 the various manufacturing segments of the region’s economy employed 463 individuals, including 158 women. They worked within a variety of manufacturing occupations including the manufacture of cotton goods, wool carding, flour milling, processing pork and beef, iron and bar manufacturing, paper printing, boots and shoes, mattresses, saddlery and harness, furniture, and the distilling of liquor.<sup>23</sup> The cash value of manufactured products in 1860, including both heavy and home manufactured goods, was \$5.1 million. While this figure is small in comparison to cash value of the region’s farms, which in 1860 numbered 62,437,725 dollars, manufacturing grew steadily within East Tennessee during the 1850s. The value of annual product in East Tennessee’s manufacturing establishments grew by \$447,689 between 1850 and 1860, over a 280 percent increase. A few counties moreover experienced tremendous growth. Hamilton County’s value of annual manufactured products, for

---

<sup>22</sup> Wilma A. Dunaway, *Women, Work and Family in the Antebellum Mountain South* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008): 163-166 and 186-188; Bolli Buffat, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli Buffat, 100*; Secretary of the Interior, *Statistics of the United States (Including Morality, Property, &c) in 1860*, 133-134; J.D.B. De Bow, *The Seventh Census of United States: 1850*, 588-589. The counties in which the East Tennessee and Virginia and the East Tennessee and Georgia railroads traveled throughout were Bradley, Carter, Grainger, Greene, Hamilton, Jefferson, Knox, McMinn, Monroe, Roane, Sullivan, and Washington. Grant, 10.

<sup>23</sup>U.S. Census Office, *Seventh Census of the United States: 1850* (Washington: Robert Armstrong, Public Printer: 1853), 564 and U.S. Department of Interior, *Manufactures of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1865), 560-574

example, grew from \$12,975 in 1850 to \$395,380 in 1860, while Marion County's production increased from \$9,600 to \$428,974, and Polk County's increased from \$31,166 to \$404,000.

Thanks to the new railroad connections, the extraction of natural resources from the region also grew rapidly during the 1850s. Lumber, copper, and coal were the leading natural resources removed from the region during the decade and remained an important part of the region's economy. F.G. Chanannes, a European engineer who traveled throughout East Tennessee in 1855, commented that "I have been struck with the immense mineral resources which [East Tennessee] possesses." The region by 1860 contained 192 lumber or sawmills alone, as well as six coal mines and two copper mines. The copper mines, located in Polk County's Ducktown, boasted an annual income of \$404,000.

Throughout the 1850s, moreover, northern capitalists entered the region, purchased mineral rights, and set up manufacturing centers which built up the region's small industrial base. Historian Durwood Dunn describes how New York manufacturers employed Ezekiel Birdseye to acquire mineral right leases during the 1850s. Frederick Law Olmsted, during his travels throughout East Tennessee in the winter of 1853 and 1854, also described the prevalence of northern capitalists who purchased mineral rights and land throughout East Tennessee. He wrote, "a New York company bought a tract of land three years ago, and immediately commenced operations...the mines in operation at present are owned almost entirely in New York and London." Olmsted spoke of how local miners mistakenly assumed that he was yet another "speculator or mineralogist" and asked him "to look at a good piece of mineral land, and often requested to give my opinion of specimens." Chanannes meanwhile explained how European investors and manufacturing companies surveyed East Tennessee in an effort to capitalize on the region's rich coal, salt, and copper resources. The ease in which products could

be shipped to market on the region's waterways and nascent railroads particularly interested foreign investors. He encouraged East Tennesseans to utilize outside investors which would allow East Tennessee to profit handsomely from the region's mineral resources. He added: "I cannot help regarding with admiration the future destiny of East Tennessee...if the people of East Tennessee understand the advantages to be derived from their soil, if capitalists desire to increase their capital...if the owners of the soil will facilitate the formation of companies, there is no doubt East Tennessee, will not only rival West Tennessee, so rich by her Agriculture."<sup>24</sup>

The 1860 U.S. census reveals that the region's women, however, remained largely excluded from mineral or lumber extraction. East Tennessee women who worked in the manufacturing segment thus overwhelmingly labored in the cotton goods industry. One hundred and thirteen of the 158 women listed as industrial workers in the census worked in the production of cotton goods. This figure does not reveal how many produced cotton goods through home manufacturing. Iron and bar manufacturing employed the second highest number of women in East Tennessee, all of whom resided within Campbell County. McMinn County had the highest population within the manufacturing segment, forty workers. The vast majority worked as blacksmiths, carpenters, and in grist or lumber mills. They made up 19 percent of McMinn's manufacturing laborers. The majority of East Tennessee women workers, however, produced cotton goods and carded wool, realms of manufacturing that nineteenth-century females traditionally dominated. Within East Tennessee many women who worked in the manufacturing

---

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Census Office, *Seventh Census of the United States: 1850*, 564; U.S. Department of Interior, *Manufactures of the United States in 1860*, 560-574; Dunn, *An Abolitionist in the Appalachian South*, 62; Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey in the Back Country* (New York: Mason Brothers, 1860), 242, 245; 20 January 1855, *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig*. East Tennessee trailed only West Tennessee in its manufacturing capabilities in the 1850s. West Tennessee produced 8.9 million dollars of manufactured product, whereas East Tennessee produced 5.1 million.

segment worked in skilled areas that traditionally had been restricted to men. In addition to the eleven women involved in iron and bar manufacturing, this figure included five in paper printing, three in the crafting of saddles and harnesses, two in the production of boots and shoes, and one each in the manufacturing of furniture and lumber. By 1860 East Tennessee women made up a remarkable 34 percent of the region's manufacturing laborers.<sup>25</sup>

During the 1850s East Tennessee's economy grew as a result of the introduction of railroad lines that connected it to Virginia and the deep South. While the cult of domesticity theoretically relegated professional class white women to the home, in reality many of the region's poor and yeomen white women participated in the market economy in a variety of ways, including farming, home manufacturing, and traditional manufacturing. They maintained economic agency in their overwhelming patriarchal society.

\* \* \*

Economic class thus relegated domesticity to the professional class and labor to the poor. The profound economic changes that occurred within the agricultural and manufacturing segments of East Tennessee's economy during the 1850s largely did not affect the region's white class structure. There remained in 1860 a large lower class of propertyless individuals, wage laborers, and small subsistence farmers; a smaller but exceptionally politically and economically powerful professional class who were largely urban and professionals; and a fractionally marginal planter population. The economic changes the railroad brought during the 1850s

---

<sup>25</sup> U.S. Census Office, 564 and U.S. Department of Interior, 560-574. The 1850 U.S. Census provides only the number of males employed by the region's various professions; therefore, the data regarding the number of women employed within East Tennessee's various manufacturing segments between 1850 and 1860 could not be compared.

largely increased the wealth of many of the region's farmers and enriched the professional class.<sup>26</sup>

The vast majority of white East Tennesseans hailed from the lower class. These men and women labored in a variety of segments of the regional economy, including agricultural, manufacturing, and service. The agricultural segment provided income to the vast majority of lower class East Tennesseans through small property ownership of subsistence farms, as tenant farmers, or as farm laborers. Lower class white women worked either independently or alongside husbands, fathers, or brothers to bring crops to the table or market. While the 1860 census takers did not label women as farmers unless they were the head of the household, their day-to-day activities defined them as such. Like lower class women prior to the Civil War elsewhere, they typically maintained jobs or sold excess foodstuffs or home manufactures to supplement their meager family incomes. They worked as laborers, servants, seamstresses, washerwomen, cooks, spinners, and weavers. One example was Greene County's Catherine Cornwell. In the 1850 U.S. Federal Census, she did not claim any employment. She lived in her mother's household along with her husband James and their three teenage children. James died during the 1850s and left Catherine to care for their children, without any property or real estate. After James died, Catherine, already in her fifties, sought employment as a seamstress and washerwoman. Her seventeen-year-old son James Jr. supplemented the family's income as a hired farm laborer. Other women economically supported themselves and at times their families. In 1860 forty-two-year-old Knox County resident Levina Fleming supported six children, ranging in age from three to nineteen, as a washerwoman. Through her labor she possessed a mere fifty dollars in personal property.

---

<sup>26</sup> W. Todd Groce, *Mountain Rebels*, 15-20.

Three hundred and fifty-four women throughout the region meanwhile earned income as servants. Often these women left their families and resided with their employers. In 1860 seventeen-year-old Matilda Brook and twenty-two-year-old Eliza Robertson labored as servants in Meredith Webb's moderately large Hamilton County farm, valued at six thousand dollars. Both Brook and Robertson hailed from economically struggling families. Matilda Brook grew up in a Grainger County home in which her father, James Brook, claimed employment as a laborer with no wealth in the 1850 U.S. Census. Similarly, Eliza Robertson most likely hailed from a lower class family from Carroll County. In 1850 the Robertson family labored as farm laborers and had no wealth to claim.<sup>27</sup>

While the region's lower class comprised a significant portion of the population, the professional class remained a politically and economically powerful class. Typically, the region's professional class resided within towns. They were merchants, railroad investors or managers, bankers, lawyers, newspaper editors, manufactures, and doctors. Married women typically worked in the home or assisted their husbands in their business ventures, but instances of unmarried women claiming professional occupations were numerous in the 1850s. Many wealthy professional class women labored in political and civil service positions.

Married professional class women usually did not seek employment outside of the home, however. They generally managed their home and children, which gave the illusion that the nineteenth century notion of separate spheres was valid. A newspaper article in the spring of 1853 addressed the idea, determining "women in the middle rank are brought up with the idea that if they engage in some occupations they shall lose their position in society." The author

---

<sup>27</sup> "Catherine Cornwell in 1860 U.S. Federal Census;" "Catherine Cornwell in 1850 U.S. Federal Census;" "Matilda Brook in 1860 U.S. Federal Census;" "Levina Fleming in 1860 U.S. Federal Census;" "Matilda Brook in 1850 U.S. Federal Census;" "Eliza Robertson in 1860 U.S. Federal Census;" and "Eliza Robertson in 1850 U.S. Federal Census," *Ancestry.com*, <http://search.ancestry.com>.

encouraged women to not rely upon servants, but to do the work themselves. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain of Rogersville was one East Tennessean who exemplified this mindset. Throughout the 1850s she managed a household of twelve children, ranging from infancy to early twenties, as well as eight slaves in ages ranging from three to eighty. Fain, the daughter of Audley Anderson and Elizabeth Rhea, was born in Blountville, located in Sullivan County. She married Richard G. Fain, a merchant, bank officer, graduate of the United States Military Academy, and slaveowner, in 1833. In 1859, he became president of the Rogersville and Jefferson Railroad, a spur line connected to the East Tennessee and Virginia, that solidified his role in East Tennessee commerce. Elizabeth “Lizzy” Lenoir likewise did not maintain outside employment. The daughter of a wealthy Roane County farmer, she married lawyer David McKendree Key in 1857. Lizzy Lenoir Key moved from the comfort of her father’s \$24,000 farm and fifteen slaves to her husband’s home in Chattanooga. By the end of the decade she had two small children.<sup>28</sup>

Professional class widows or single women alternatively could be found managing their families’ and their economic livelihoods throughout the antebellum period. Their unmarried status allowed for them to participate more readily within the public sphere. The 1860 census reveals that 195 East Tennessee women independently held professional class occupations. The vast majority, 152, were employed as teachers during the 1850s. They served as instructors at both public institutions and academies. Throughout East Tennessee, public schools were far more common than academies. At the beginning of 1850, 936 public schools operated in East

---

<sup>28</sup>“Female Occupation,” 19 March 1853, *Loudon Free Press*; John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial: The Diary of Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain a Confederate Woman in East Tennessee* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2004), 4, 13, 36 xxvi-xxix, and xlv; and “1860 U.S. Federal Census Slave Schedules – Record for Richard G. Fain;” “1860 U.S. Federal Census – Record for Richard G. Fain;” “1850 U.S. Federal Census – Record for A.S. Lenoir;” “Tennessee State Marriages Record for David M. Key;” and “1860 U.S. Federal Census – Record for David M. Key,” Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>.

Tennessee, and employed 1,037 teachers. Washington and Knox counties had the largest number of public schools within their districts. These were small schools where one teacher educated all ages. Knox County claimed eighty-one public schools and Washington County had sixty-five. In contrast, East Tennessee had forty-two academies with seventy-four total instructors. All were concentrated within the region's towns and along the railroads. Grainger, Greene, Knox, McMinn, and Washington counties all had at least three academies each. Jonesborough in Washington County hosted five academies with nine teachers. Knoxville in Knox County had the second highest number of academies with four, however these four academies employed fourteen teachers. While the 1860 census did not include statistics regarding the student growth at public schools and academies, it did record statewide data concerning the growth of the state's schools and instructors. The number of public schools within Tennessee grew by 11.1 percent throughout the 1850s, whereas the growth in number of academies increased by a marginal 4 percent.<sup>29</sup>

While the censuses did not differentiate between male and female teachers, women's presence in both the classroom and administration was constant throughout the 1850s. The Loudon Female School advertised "the talents and efficiency of Mrs. Davis to impart useful knowledge," and encouraged East Tennesseans to send their daughters to her to educate them in both domestic and academic matters. She could "instruct young minds in the way of science, and all the politeness of a well cultivated mind." The administration of Maryville's Masonic Female Institute meanwhile included two unmarried women, Miss M.J. Cates, listed in the "Assistant Academic Department," and Miss M.J. Love, Principal of the Preparatory Department. Three unmarried women presided over and staffed Monroe County's Madisonville

---

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Census Office, *Seventh Census of the United States: 1850*, 506 and J.D.B. DeBow, *The Seventh Census of United States, 1860*, 578-579.

Female Academy: Miss C.M. Melville, principal, and Misses Dickson and Stakely, assistant teachers. Knoxville's East Tennessee Female Institute, while headed by a man, lauded the significance of "accomplished and experienced Ladies...[which] assisted in the various Departments of the School."<sup>30</sup>

Hamilton County's Elizabeth Kent meanwhile claimed to be a physician in the 1860 Federal Census. A female physician would be a rarity not only in East Tennessee, but also the United States, as the 1850s marked the matriculation of the first female medical students in the United States. She resided with Wiley Kent, most likely her brother. He claimed to be a farm laborer in the census and reappeared in subsequent censuses as a farmer. Elizabeth Kent claimed 250 dollars of personal property in the 1860 census, whereas Wiley claimed only twenty-five. Kent does not reappear in any subsequent censuses after 1860; therefore, it is possible that she married, moved away, or perished in the interim.<sup>31</sup>

More acceptable position for females within the medical community included positions as midwives. East Tennessee had seventeen midwives during the 1850s. Historians point to a push by the nineteenth-century medical community for childbearing to be attended by physicians rather than midwives. Historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich argues that by the mid-nineteenth-century midwifery became relegated to "isolated rural communities." This is largely true of East

---

<sup>30</sup> "Loudon Female School," *Loudon Free Press*, 13 November 1852; "Masonic Female Institute, Maryville, Tenn.;" and "Madisonville Female Academy," 25 February 1853, *Athens Post*; "East Tenn. Female Institute," in 30 August 1856, *Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*.

<sup>31</sup> Regina Morantz-Sanchez, "The 'Connecting Link:' The Case for the Woman Doctor in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century America," in Judith Walzer Leavitt and Ronald L. Numbers, eds., *Sickness & Health in America: Readings in the History of Medicine and Public Health* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), 213-216. Elizabeth Blackwell being the first to graduate from New York's Geneva Medical College in 1849. Kent's assertion that she worked as a physician in the 1850s cannot be verified

Tennessee's midwives. Of the six counties which claimed to contain midwives, four are rural counties with small populations.<sup>32</sup>

Ann Jarnagin Lea Inman of Cleveland meanwhile owned the Railroad Inn. Her husband died on 25 March 1851 and left her the property and five children to care for. Throughout the 1850s Inman made economic decisions for her family including selling off real estate. She posted an advertisement in the *Athens Post* in 1853 announcing the sale of the Railroad Hotel and its adjacent property including two lots and stables. By the close of the 1850s she owned \$9,700 in personal estate and seven slaves ranging in age from eight to sixty. Inman's daughter Myra recorded in her diary multiple instances of her mother managing their business and wealth. For instance, in February 1859 Myra wrote that her mother negotiated with a male neighbor, Joseph Middlecoff, for land which she bought. Myra Inman stated that it was Ann Inman, not her maternal Uncle Caswell Lea, who made other household decisions, such as when to sell livestock.<sup>33</sup>

\* \* \*

While the wealthy professional class largely comprised the region's elite, East Tennessee also possessed a small population of planters and large slave owners. Many female slave owners maintained their chattel with their husbands, but seven wealthy women in the region independently maintained large slave holdings ranging from twenty to thirty-eight slaves.

---

<sup>32</sup>Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "Martha Moore Ballard and the Medical Challenge to Midwifery," in Leavitt and Numbers, eds., *Sickness & Health in America*, 72, and 89.

<sup>33</sup>William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman: A Diary of the Civil War in East Tennessee* (Macon, G.A.: Mercer University Press, 2000), x-xiii; "U.S. 1850 Federal Census Record – Record for J.W. Inman," and "U.S. 1860 Federal Census Record – Record for Ann J. Inman," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>; Snell, 8 and 46; and "Valuable Property for Sale – Railroad Hotel, Cleveland, Tennessee," *The Athens Post*, 25 February 1853.

Female planters were largely widowers or mothers whom retained control over the property until the heirs reached adulthood. Their holdings are even more notable considering that only 0.05 percent of East Tennesseans were planters--owning 20 or more slaves--and East Tennessee planters comprised less than 3 percent of the region's total slave owners.<sup>34</sup>

Sevier County's Elizabeth Brabson in fact was the largest female slave owner of all in East Tennessee, with thirty-eight slaves in 1860, and a sizeable fortune of \$20,000 of real estate holdings and \$32,425 dollars of personal property. An elderly widow, she retained control of her farm for over twenty years while her children married and ran their own farms. Brabson failed to appear in the non-population schedules, and it is unknown how she utilized her slaves.<sup>35</sup>

Monroe County was the only one in East Tennessee that contained more than one unmarried female planter, however. Jane E. McDermott independently owned thirty-seven slaves and cared for six children ranging in age from twenty-two to nine. Her husband died at some point between 1850 and 1860, but during that time the McDermott's fortune increased by 66 percent. By 1860 she one of the wealthiest women in East Tennessee, with real estate holdings of \$30,000 and personal property worth \$40,000. Her farm primarily maintained livestock, which the Census Bureau valued at \$700. She also grew small amounts of wheat. The data suggests that McDermott hired her slaves out. Ann E. Henly, the other female planter in Monroe County, owned more land than any other single woman in East Tennessee during the 1850s. Her 1,500 acre farm grew \$23,000 of corn and she maintained \$2,000 worth of livestock.

---

<sup>34</sup> "1860 US Federal Census – Slave Schedules," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>; "Historical Census Browser: Census Data for Year 1850;" and "Historical Census Browser: Census Data for Year 1860."

<sup>35</sup> "1860 US Federal Census – Elizabeth Brabson," and "1860 US Federal Census – Elizabeth Brabson Slave Schedules," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>.

Henly also owned twenty-six slaves, thirteen of each sex, who ranged in ages from three to seventy, and more than likely were used for agricultural purposes.<sup>36</sup>

Sarah Wasson of Meigs County likewise maintained a sizeable slaveholding estate and large family without a husband. The household included twenty-four slaves which ranged in age from one to fifty and five children fifteen years and younger. Wasson owned \$20,000 in real estate in addition to almost \$28,000 in personal property. She did not appear in the non-population schedules for the 1860 census, and it is not known what she produced on her property or if she hired out her slaves. This 43-year-old widow was one of only four of Meigs County's planters. Jane Buttram an eighty-seven-year-old widow from Scott County, also managed a considerable amount of property. She claimed the occupation of a housekeeper in the 1860 Federal census; however, she managed twenty-two slaves, owned \$2,000 in real estate, and 18,150 in personal property. Buttram also was not listed on the non-population agricultural schedule for 1860, thus her slaves were more than likely rented out. Mary Easley, like the others controlled a vast amount of property as a single woman during the 1850s. Easley failed to appear within the non-population agricultural schedule for 1860; however, she did in the 1850 census and claimed a 320 acre farm that grew primarily cereal crops including corn, wheat, oats, and rye. In addition to the crops, Easley owned and maintained cattle, sheep, and swine. Mary Allen a widow for over thirty years in Cocke County maintained a sizeable estate with the assistance of her middle age son, George W. Allen. The 1860 Federal Census valued her real estate at five thousand dollars and her personal property at \$17,625. Allen maintained a 350 acre farm that grew primarily corn which she supplemented with wheat and oats. She also owned

---

<sup>36</sup> "1860 US Federal Census – Jane McDermott;" "1860 US Federal Census – Jane McDermott Slaves Schedules;" "1860 US Federal Census – Ann E. Henly;" and 1860 US Federal Census – Ann E. Henly Slave Schedule," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>; "Historical Census Browser: Census Data for Year 1850;" "Historical Census Browser: Census Data for Year 1860."

twenty slaves, ten males and ten females, ranging in age from three to sixty-five. Nine of Allen's slaves were over the age of eighteen. By 1860 Allen a seventy-three-year-old widowed woman with her large slave holdings could claim the title of a planter.<sup>37</sup>

While these seven women held large numbers of slaves, such holdings to be sure were an anomaly within the region. East Tennessee's small slave population, 27,226 people, comprised only 9.3 percent of its population. Its economy founded on small farming and manufacturing has caused many historians to erroneously view the region as racially tolerant and at times even a southern center for abolitionism. It is true that East Tennessee had the state's strongest abolitionist and colonization populations during the 1820s. The region first gained its reputation as a bastion for the antislavery movement with the presence of prominent abolitionists such as Reverend John Rankin, Reverend Samuel Doak, R.G. Williams, Elihu Embree, and Ezekiel Birdseye. Embree published the nation's first abolitionist paper in Greenville in 1819. During the 1820s Jonesboro, located in Washington County, housed Benjamin Lundy's abolitionist journal, *Genius of Universal Emancipation*. In addition, the Tennessee Manumission Society originated in East Tennessee in 1815 and all of its branches were located within the region. Marie Tedesco, examining the court cases of Adam Waterford, a free black slave owner from Sullivan County, reveals that the court and other whites during the late 1820s and early 1830s treated Waterford as an economic equal. She extends this thesis to conclude that East Tennessee was more racially tolerant than other portions of the South. Richard P. Drake went as far as to say that the "eastern mountain portion... became the nation's center of antislavery activity for a time."<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> "1860 Federal Census – Record for Sarah Wasson, Jane Buttram, Mary Easley, and Mary Allen" and "1860 U.S. Federal Slave Schedule" in Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>.

<sup>38</sup> Patterson, *The Negro in Tennessee, 1790-1865*, 82, 209, and 180-184; Drake, "Slavery and Antislavery in Appalachia," 22; and Marie Tedesco, "A Free Black Slave Owner in East Tennessee: The Strange Case of Adam

Many abolitionists including Lundy had moved north by the 1830s, however, and this population had diminished substantially. By the 1850s, many white East Tennesseans supported slavery and instead directed their disdain towards the slaveholding middle and western portions of the state which held political supremacy.<sup>39</sup> This was true even though East Tennessee had only a small slave population. The region's 27,660 slaves made up only 9 percent of the total regional population. Women comprised roughly half of that number. The region's planter population made up only 2.6 percent of the region's slave owners. Those who held ten to nineteen slaves still only comprised 11 percent of the slave owning population. They often utilized their slaves as labor for businesses, manufacturing, households, and agricultural labor. The region's slaves were almost always used in conjunction with white labor. Gender stratification within labor tasks was largely nonexistent. The region's tendency for slaveholders to own less than ten slaves routinely caused women and men to labor beside one another in the region's fields.<sup>40</sup>

East Tennessee's slave population, however, grew at faster pace than the region's total population during the 1850s. The region's new railroads, cash crops, and industries likewise revitalized the institution. Throughout the decade the total population within the region grew by

---

Waterford," in Inscoc, *Appalachians and Race*, 147; Richard B. Drake, "Slavery and Antislavery in Appalachia," in John C. Inscoc, ed., *Appalachians and Race: The Mountain South from Slavery to Segregation* (Lexington: University of Press of Kentucky, 2001), 21. This work uses Richard B. Drake's terms for the differentiation of antislavery individuals during the antebellum period located in "Slavery and Antislavery in Appalachia." For instance, Drake defines an abolitionist as an individual who called for the immediate end to slavery within the United States; whereas a colonizationist believed that free blacks could not coexist with white Americans and thus should be freed and colonized in Africa.

<sup>39</sup> Caleb Perry Patterson, *The Negro in Tennessee, 1790-1865* (New York: Negro University Press, 1922; Reprinted, 1968), 197; Richard B. Drake, "Slavery and Antislavery in Appalachia," in John C. Inscoc, ed., *Appalachians and Race: The Mountain South from Slavery to Segregation* (Lexington: University of Press of Kentucky, 2001), 21. This work uses Richard B. Drake's terms for the differentiation of antislavery individuals during the antebellum period located in "Slavery and Antislavery in Appalachia." For instance Drake defines an abolitionist as an individual who called for the immediate end to slavery within the United States; whereas a colonizationist believed that free blacks could not coexist with white Americans and thus should be freed and colonized in Africa.

<sup>40</sup> "1860 US Federal Census – Slave Schedules," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>; "Historical Census Browser: Census Data for Year 1850;" "Historical Census Browser: Census Data for Year 1860;" Dunn, *Slavery in the American Mountain South*, 54-60.

16 percent, whereas the slave population grew by 23 percent. W. Todd Groce noted that the railroads brought an influx of cash into the region, causing the beneficiaries, the professional class, to purchase slaves. In neighboring Southwest Virginia, Kenneth W. Noe finds that the slave population proliferated along the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad but remained largely stagnant in the rest of the state. Some of the largest gains in the East Tennessee's slave population occurred within the counties that the ET&VA and the ET&GA railroads crossed, particularly in southeast Tennessee. Hamilton County saw the largest increase in its slave population, 111 percent, whereas its total population grew by only 32 percent. Bradley County had the second largest increase in the region's slave population, growing by 58 percent. This growth is particularly impressive because Bradley County's total population decreased by 558 during the 1850s. Monroe also had an impressive increase in the region's slave population, growing by over 35 percent, whereas the general population grew by only 6 percent. Female slaves within East Tennessee were largely concentrated in the counties which were home to the region's largest towns and those southeastern counties with the highest agricultural output.<sup>41</sup>

The region also contained a small free black population, which comprised approximately one percent of its total population. Women made up 51 percent of the region's free blacks. These women, like much of the region's lower class, often contributed monetarily to their families. Free African American women were seen most often in the service industries, washing, and cooking. The Hale family lived in Buffalo Ridge, Washington County, and drew monetary support from both male and female members. Two brothers, Thomas and James Hale, the

---

<sup>41</sup> "Historical Census Browser: Census Data for Year 1850" and "Historical Census Browser: Census Data for Year 1860;" W. Todd Groce, *Mountain Rebels*, 18-20; Kenneth W. Noe, *Southwest Virginia's Railroad*, 77-82. The counties in which the East Tennessee and Virginia and the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroads traveled throughout included: Bradley, Carter, Grainger, Greene, Hamilton, Jefferson, Knox, McMinn, Monroe, Roane, Sullivan, and Washington.

patriarchs of their perspective families, drew compensation from wage labor. Their wives and female children brought money in through, knitting, weaving, spinning, washing, and various jobs. The Graham family from Washington County lived primarily off income derived from shoemaker Allen Graham, but his wife and daughters brought additional funds through washing and wage labor. Knox County's Holly family also relied upon both the male and female members to bring capital into the household. Forty-year-old black Nelson Holly and his three sons were laborers, whereas his wife and teenage daughter brought in cash as washerwomen. Eleven year old Sarah Holly was only member of the family which did not claim an occupation in the 1860 census.<sup>42</sup>

Ezekiel Birdseye, a dogged abolitionist who resided in East Tennessee from 1838 until 1861, commented on the morality of regional slave holders. He stated that "public sentiment here revolts at... barbarities but it should be recollected that we are in a district where there are but few slaves and... more enlightened on the subject than most others at the South." Slavery as an institution nonetheless engendered brutality which could be seen throughout East Tennessee during the antebellum period. While Birdseye wrote of East Tennesseans' general distaste of the inhumanity associated with slavery, he also told stories of atrocities such as beatings and the heart-wrenching slave auctions.

Women in the region, like all southern women, were immersed in the culture of slavery, and witnessed the misfortunes. A woman from Newport, for example, spoke to Birdseye concerning the beating of a neighboring female slave. She described how R.W. Pulliam gave his

---

<sup>42</sup> "Thomas and James Hale in 1860 U.S. Federal Census;" "1860 U.S. Federal Slave Schedules;" "Graham in 1860 U.S. Federal Census;" and "Nelson Holly in 1860 U.S. Federal Census," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>.

female slave “200 stripes” because she criticized his decision to whip her husband. The female slave’s “back was cut to pieces...[and] the blood ran freely down.”<sup>43</sup>

Throughout the antebellum period, East Tennessee women slave owners either directly or indirectly presided over the purchase or selling of slaves. Ezekiel Birdseye wrote to the noted abolitionist Gerrit Smith how a Mrs. Jones in Cocke County lamented having to sell her slaves in order to satisfy her late husband’s debts. Birdseye provided Smith with a detailed account of the transaction, describing how the auctioneer separated the family. Only the mother and her infant were sold together, the husband and remaining siblings would labor on farms throughout the South. He argued that slave owners believed that “the claims of humanity [had been] satisfied” by allowing the infant to remain with its mother.” After the sale of her slaves Birdseye described Mrs. Jones as “distress[ed]...to have her colored family scattered... but she had no power to prevent it.”<sup>44</sup>

By the 1850s, however, East Tennesseans were far more concerned with their perceived political inequality than slavery, arguing that the middle and western planter oligarchy controlled the state’s politics. With the exception of a few, East Tennesseans no longer opposed slavery from a moral standpoint. Instead, as Durwood Dunn points out, “the majority of East Tennesseans... viewed abolitionism as a type of irresponsible extremism associated with fanatics in the North.” He continues, “most East Tennesseans viewed slaves...as tools of the planter aristocracy, the invidious means of creating a privileged elite in the South.” Wilma A. Dunaway likewise argues that Appalachians, including East Tennesseans, were virulently racist, even more so than their lowland neighbors. She accredits this racism to the region’s large population of

---

<sup>43</sup> Ezekiel Birdseye, Newport, Cocke County, to Gerrit Smith, 22 March 1841 in Dunn, 142-143 and Ezekiel Birdseye, Greenville, to Gerrit Smith, 18 June 1842, in Dunn 229.

<sup>44</sup>Ezekiel Birdseye, Newport, Cocke County, to Gerrit Smith, 21 June 1841 in Dunn, 153-154 and Ezekiel Birdseye, Newport, Cocke County, to Gerrit Smith, 21 June 1841 in Dunn, 154..

poor whites who were forced to work alongside isolated slaves in various occupations. Contrary to stereotypes, Dunaway concluded that slavery may have been at its worst in the mountains.<sup>45</sup>

\* \* \*

They myth that East Tennessee's media perpetuated of submissive, subordinate, and morally righteous women confined to the home reflected the standards of nineteenth-century decorum and morality but did not coincide with the reality. A few women published literary writings and more participated in and even organized political gatherings. East Tennessee women could be found working both inside and outside of the home, in agriculture, manufacturing, and in professional occupations. Some women owned slaves. They maintained their own finances. Throughout the 1850s these women maintained their households' social and economic welfare amid a drastically changing economy which the railroad stimulated. Yet, while these women actively engaged in their socioeconomic environment, it is important to remember that in the antebellum period they still resided in a racialized and patriarchal environment. Men and the notion of male superiority influenced just how they could participate.

---

<sup>45</sup>Dunn, *An Abolitionist in the Appalachian South*, 22; Wilma A. Dunaway, *Slavery in the American Mountain South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 148-153.

## 2. East Tennessee Women and the Danger of Secession

By 1860 the nation politically had reached the brink of what New York Republican William Henry Seward termed an “irrepressible conflict.” In his celebrated 1858 speech Seward controversially maintained “that the United States must and will, sooner or later, become either entirely a slaveholding nation, or entirely a free-labor nation.” That question lay at the heart of the nation’s sectional tensions. Throughout the 1850s the country had faced numerous political crises that stemmed from the South’s desire to preserve and proliferate slavery. At the start of the decade, a majority of white Americans hoped that the prospect of disunion had been averted with the great Compromise of 1850. Kentucky senator Henry Clay and Illinois senator Stephen A. Douglas had seemingly successfully settled the contentious question as to how the newly acquired territories taken in the war with Mexico would be settled and cleared up other areas of potential conflict. The compromise ultimately failed to offer a lasting solution to the national crisis. The unpopularity of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law in the North, and at times northerners’ flagrant refusal to enforce the law, again inflamed sectional tensions. The question of how western territories would be organized in regard to slavery rose to prominence once again in 1854 with Douglas’ Kansas-Nebraska Act. In an effort to organize the territories, he appealed southern politicians by repealing the Missouri Compromise and instituting “popular sovereignty” as a solution to the slavery question. At some point, the new states themselves would vote on the legality of slavery. Popular sovereignty seemed to make it possible for slavery to expand into areas where it previously had been prohibited, notably the new Kansas Territory, where violence soon broke out between free state and slave state forces. The debate over the extension of

slavery meanwhile had violent consequences with the 1856 caning of Massachusetts Republican Senator Charles Sumner on the Senate floor. The next year, the Dred Scott case seemingly dealt free-soilers a devastating blow when the Supreme Court ruled that Congress could not prohibit slavery from the territories. John Brown's 1859 raid on Harper's Ferry brought the violence back east. These events exasperated sectional tensions. As Norman A. Graebner states, "American politics had reached the dead end predicted for it by the very nature of the slavery." Slavery had irrevocably fractured the United States, and by 1860 the nation could be described as a tinderbox waiting to be ignited by the political firestorm.<sup>1</sup>

The people of Appalachia, including East Tennessee, were fully aware of all these issues and their consequences. The national political crisis played out in East Tennessee through local media outlets, political meetings, and rallies. Regional newspapers printed articles that focused upon the nation's increasing sectionalism. Editors juxtaposed the economic and political independence of the North and South, debated the viability of an independent South and the role of sectionalism within the nation's political parties, and tried to shape East Tennessee's stance within the mounting sectional crisis. The presidential election of 1860 brought the threat of disunion to the fore. Local, regional, state, and national politicians traveled throughout East Tennessee during 1860, campaigning for either themselves or their political party. Weekly newspapers printed articles that announced upcoming political rallies or published synopses from the events.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> William H. Seward, "The Irrepressible Conflict," Rochester, NY, 25 October 1858, *Internet Archive*, <https://archive.org/details/irrepressiblecon00insewa>; David M. Potter, *The Impending Crisis: 1848-1861* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1963), 114-120; and Norman A. Graebner, "The Politicians and Slavery," in Norman A. Graebner, ed., *Politics and the Crisis of 1860* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961), 30.

<sup>2</sup> "Southern Independence," 6 January 1860; "A Union Party Indispensable," 13 January 1860; "The Power and Wealth of the South, 20 January 1860; "Revolutions and Traitors Rebuked," 27 January 1860 in *Athens Post* and "Politics of Kansas" and "More Democratic Harmony," 7 January 1860; "Listen at Democracy" and "Union League," 14 January 1860; and "Trade of New England with the South," 21 January 1860 in *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig*.

Yet the region's women rarely commented on the sectional crisis that dominated the public sphere in the winter, spring, and summer of 1860. Instead, their private comments prior to the November 1860 elections largely continued to center upon their families, communities, and household affairs. Women wrote not of the nation's ills, but of the familiar factors that directly affected themselves and their families.

A series of letters between William Richard Caswell and wife, Elizabeth, for example, still centered on the daily concerns of life in their professional class Jefferson County home. During the summer months of 1860, Elizabeth Caswell visited her daughter, Eliza Branner, in Knoxville. Branner had just given birth to her daughter, and Caswell had traveled to the Branner home to assist with household chores and the newborn. William Richard Caswell remained in Jefferson County, simultaneously caring for their fourteen-year-old son, Willie, while working at the Danridge Bank, serving on the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad's Board of Directors, and managing the family's home and eighteen slaves. Throughout the Caswells' lengthy correspondence, neither mentioned rising sectional tensions. Instead, Elizabeth peppered her husband with questions centered upon the emotional and physical well-being of their son, who was ill much of the summer. He responded with meticulous accounts of Willie's health, down to the frequency, color, and consistency of the teenager's bowel movements."<sup>3</sup>

Myra Inman of Cleveland meanwhile meticulously kept a diary from 1859 through the war to 1866. Throughout 1860 the fourteen-year old's daily entries centered upon family life. The Inman family belonged to Cleveland's professional class. Her mother, Ann Jarnagin Lea

---

<sup>3</sup>“William Richard Caswell in 1850 U.S. Federal Slave Schedules,” *Ancestry.com*, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com); William Richard Caswell, Danridge, to Elizabeth Caswell, Knoxville, 22 no month 1860, no date 1860, 12 July 1860, 4 August 1860, and 12 August 1860, William Richard Caswell Papers, 1805-1900, CS07-07 MSC 18, McClung Collection, East Tennessee Historical Association, Knoxville. William Richard Caswell did not appear in the 1860 U.S. Federal Slave Schedules.

Inman, owned Bradley County's Railroad Inn as well as seven slaves ranging from ages eight to sixty. Myra lived in her mother's home with three of her four siblings. She wrote almost daily of the activities she shared with her family, which included household chores, school, church, and social events. Her seventeen-year-old sister, Rhoda--and Rhoda's suitors-- figured especially prominently. She also described church services and the lives of her neighbors. Conversely, Myra wrote nothing about national politics.<sup>4</sup>

The abundance of gossip in East Tennessee women's personal correspondence again reflected their preoccupation with communal relations in the year prior to the war. For example, Jack Brazelton sent his cousin, Jefferson County's Elizabeth Caswell, fruit seeds in January 1860. He used the opportunity to relay gossip regarding the alleged promiscuity of William Brazelton, a relative in Knoxville. William had announced to his family members his engagement but asked that they not mention his upcoming nuptials to anyone outside of the family. Jack's letter slandered his cousin's reputation and questioned his ability to remain a faithful companion.<sup>5</sup>

Gossip, courting, and special occasions attracted so much attention because day-to-day life otherwise could be tedious. That tedium featured prominently in East Tennessee women's writing. Myra Inman, for example, laboriously recorded her daily activities in her diary. She spent her days repairing and creating clothes for her family and herself, cleaning, preparing meals, and attending school and church services. Entries such as: "finished my stocking and commenced another...sewed on my calico apron all day...went deer driving," were common throughout her diary. She also frequently included a sentence describing the weather. On 12 August 1860, for example, she entered only that she "read all day" and described the day as "a

---

<sup>4</sup> William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman: A Diary of the Civil War in East Tennessee*, 49-79, 52, 71, and 74.

<sup>5</sup> Jack R. Brazelton to Elizabeth Caswell, 12 January 1860, William Richard Caswell Papers.

very rainy and very dark and gloomy day.” Elizabeth Caswell likewise requested that her husband keep her informed of their farm’s activities, while William explained how in her absence, he had repaired their carriage, harvested the family’s wheat, tended to the tobacco, and whitewashed their home. In August he wrote to Elizabeth Caswell that he could not buy a horse that they had hoped to acquire.”<sup>6</sup>

Martha Stakely of Monroe County wrote several similar letters to her sister and her future husband during 1860. Most centered on the mundane goings on of a community, the primacy of religion in her life, and her desire to bring her beloved fiancé into the church and strengthen his faith. In June of 1860, when the national Democratic Party fractured along sectional lines, Stakely wrote to her cousin Martha Stakely concerning the laborious processes behind housekeeping, specifically relating her dislike of laundry and citing the minor injuries she sustained to her hands while doing it. Stakely felt that her “hands were not formed for the piano...they suit the washtub... or the hoe a great deal better.”<sup>7</sup>

Yet while East Tennessee women primarily wrote of their families, communities, and their daily activities during the winter, spring, and summer of 1860, they were not unaware of the political crisis unfolding in the country. Nor were they confined to the proverbial private sphere while their husbands and other male relatives pondered, discussed, and participated in politics. Perhaps the lack of evidence of the politicization of East Tennessee women simply lies in the relative dearth of correspondence and diaries from East Tennessee women. The evidence available from before the war is comparatively scant and is largely but not exclusively confined

---

<sup>6</sup> Myra Inman, January-August 1860 and 12 August 1860, in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 49-79, 49, 55, 57, and 66 and William Richard Caswell, Danridge, to Elizabeth Caswell, Knoxville, 12 July 1860; William Richard Caswell, Danridge, to Elizabeth Caswell, Knoxville, 4 August 1860, William Richard Caswell Papers.

<sup>7</sup> Carrie Stakely, to Martha Stakely, Madisonville, 5 June 1860, Hall-Stakely Papers, CS07-07 MSC 17, McClung Collection, East Tennessee Historical Association, Knoxville.

to professional class women. Expectations probably played a role as well. Drew Gilpin Faust argues that elite southern women during the secession crisis did not readily speak of the political issues because their class ideology prohibited it. They believed that men were best suited to political endeavors and musings. It is not that women did not have political ideas, in other words, but that they did not or could not actively express them. When they did, moreover, it came with an acknowledgement that politics were not an appropriate topic of conversation. Class further affected how some East Tennessee white women viewed the secession crisis. It nonetheless seems clear that they were more interested in local events than national ones prior to the 1860 presidential election.<sup>8</sup>

\*\*\*

The sectional distrust that had long existed in national politics finally erupted in the 1860 presidential election. The Democratic Party first fractured at the Charleston, South Carolina convention. The *Athens Post* had predicted as much prior to the convention, as the editor believed that the Democratic Party was dead and all that remained was “mechanical movements of the party drill.” The convention was “going to bring together... for the last time... the advocates of squatter sovereignty and... the ultra-pro-slavery men of the South... the whole country waits to see if the men thus brought together by party drill will recognize the greatness of the emergency that is before them, and, putting aside their petty local fancies, adopt a platform

---

<sup>8</sup> Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 10-12.

broad as the Union, and place upon it a man who will command the confidence of the conservative feeling now everywhere aroused by the sense of danger.”

Once they met, northern and southern Democrats could not agree upon a Democratic nominee or a platform for the 1860 presidential ticket, with the issue of a federal slave code in the territories uppermost. Stephen A. Douglas, had long been in the national spotlight and--as historian Robert W. Johannsen described him--was “the most controversial figure in American politics.” Since 1854 and the passage of his Kansas Nebraska Act, Douglas had viewed popular sovereignty as a solution to the contentious question of western slave expansion. In light of events in the 1850s, Southern Democrats feared that if the nation elected Douglas, slavery would be prohibited from western territories. They demanded that a federal slave code, which would assist slave owners in bringing their chattel into the western territories, be part of Democratic national platform. This concession “marked the determination of the South to... formulate a new policy that would guarantee... Southern rights in the territories against the ambiguities of popular sovereignty.” Tennessee’s delegates, even those from the eastern counties, wanted the slave code in the party’s platform. They also almost unanimously voted to place an East Tennessean and avowed enemy of the planter class, Senator Andrew Johnson, on the Democratic ticket.

Neither northern nor southern Democrats could reach a consensus regarding a candidate or national platform, particularly regarding the inclusion of a proslavery platform which would allow slavery in the territories. Delegates from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina and Texas viewed expansion of slavery as paramount and walked out of the convention. The convention disintegrated, but the remaining delegates agreed to reconvene in Baltimore, Maryland on 16 June. After two votes they elevated Douglas to the

party ticket. The southern delegates, who again walked out of the convention, chose Vice President and Kentucky native John C. Breckinridge.<sup>9</sup>

In between the two Democratic meetings, the Republican National Convention seized upon Democratic chaos. In May, delegates placed Illinois' Abraham Lincoln atop the party ticket. He had gained notoriety through his participation in the Lincoln-Douglas debates during the 1858 senatorial race and a later speaking tour in the east, but it was the fact that he hailed from one of the four vital moderate border states that made him an attractive option for the party. Republicans believed that they needed to carry Pennsylvania, Illinois, Indiana, and New Jersey, all of which bordered slave states, in order to win the presidential race. Perceived as more moderate than men such as Seward, Lincoln was willing to permit the continuation of slavery in states where it already existed, protect the domestic slave trade, and enforce the fugitive slave law, while prohibiting the expansion of slavery in the western territories. In that way, slavery would embark on a "course of ultimate extinction." Lincoln believed that the Constitution protected slavery where it already existed, but that the institution was morally abject and should be prevented from spreading. This policy proved to moderate Republicans that he "was a man of the border" and not an abolitionist.<sup>10</sup>

In contrast to Southern organs elsewhere, East Tennessee's media generally did not perceive the possible election of Lincoln as a danger to the nation. For example, the *Athens Post*

---

<sup>9</sup> "Importance of the Charleston Convention," 20 April 1860, *Athens Post*, Robert W. Johannsen, "Douglas at Charleston," in Graebner, ed., *Politics and the Crisis of 1860*, 62, 70, 85, 86; Potter, *The Impending Crisis*, 405-413; Jonathan M. Atkins, *Parties, Politics, and the Sectional Conflict in Tennessee: 1832-1861* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 221-222; and "What did the Democratic Party Die of?," 22 June 1860, *Athens Post*.

<sup>10</sup> Edward L. Ayers, *In the Presence of Mine Enemies: War in the Heart of America, 1859-1863* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003), 63-64; Potter, *The Impending Crisis*, 419 and 420-424; Michael S. Green, *Lincoln and the Election of 1860* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2011), 46, 51-53.

addressed the fear that if elected to office Lincoln and his “Black Republicans” would prohibit slavery in the western territories. The editors reassured its readership that “if we had a Black Republican President to-day and that treasonable organization had a majority in both Houses of Congress they would not dare to put their doctrine in practical operation! We have nothing, whatever, to fear.” *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig*, generally proslavery like its editor in 1860, argued that it was the Republican Party’s inability to compromise on the issue of slavery that created “all our troubles.” Yet while blaming the sectional crisis on the “antislavery” Republican Party, however, Brownlow did not list the dangers that the party posed in the future. Overall, both Democratic National Conventions received far greater attention in the region’s media than the Republican Party.<sup>11</sup>

East Tennesseans showed a great deal of early support for the newly-minted Constitutional Union Party. Former Whigs and Know-Nothings formed the membership of the party under Kentucky Senator John Crittenden in 1859. Delegates met in Baltimore in 9 May 1860 and offered an alternative to the increasing sectionalism associated with the Democratic and Republican parties. The new party “avoided ... the direct discussion of the slavery issue” and refused to adopt a party platform. Instead they reinforced their commitment simply to uphold the Constitution and the Union. Middle Tennessean John Bell received the party’s nomination. William G. Brownlow personified the allure of Bell to the Constitutional Union Party when he described Bell as “statesman, a patriot, and a conservative Union man.” Brownlow pointed to his “Southern” heritage and his status as a slaveholder as evidence that if

---

<sup>11</sup> “Our Real Enemy,” *Athens Georgia Watchman*, in 22 June 1860, *Athens Post*; and 2 June 1860, *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig*.

elected president he would “honor” the “welfare” of not only the South, but the “whole country.”<sup>12</sup>

To an extent, women took part in the campaigns that followed. Myra Inman, in late August 1860, reported that she attended a speech given by Governor Isham G. Harris. A firebrand Democrat, Harris spoke for Southern Democratic candidate John C. Breckinridge in the upcoming presidential election. At the meeting Inman publicly demonstrated her support for both of the two prospective presidential candidates from the South when she “sent up...balloon[s] with John Bell’s name on it... [John C.] Breckinridge and [his running mate, Joseph] Lane.”<sup>13</sup>

The 1860 Presidential election nonetheless revealed a region as politically divided as Myra Inman. East Tennessee’s voters largely split their votes between Bell and Breckinridge. Lincoln’s name did not appear on Tennessee’s ballot at all, while Douglas had only minimal support within East Tennessee. Bell garnered the majority of East Tennessee’s votes with 53 percent, Breckinridge claimed 43 percent, and Douglas only received a meager 4 percent. The southern Democratic Party, many in the upper South believed, represented the aristocratic deep South and did not express their economic interests. The rise of the Republican Party had simultaneously created the oppositional party, southern non-Democrats who voted for Bell in the 1860 presidential election. They feared that a Republican or southern Democratic victory would result in a great calamity.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup>Green, *Lincoln and the Election of 1860*, 41-42; Atkins, *Parties, Politics, and the Sectional Conflict in Tennessee*, 225-226; Mary Emily Robertson Campbell, *The Attitude of Tennesseans Toward the Union: 1847-1861* (New York: Vantage Press, 1961), 119; Potter, *The Impending Crisis*, 417; “Keep it Before the People,” 1 September 1860, *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig*; and “Only a Few Days Off!,” 27 October 1860, *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig*.

<sup>13</sup> Snell, *Myra Inman*, 67.

<sup>14</sup> Daniel W. Crofts, *Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 75-80, 109-115; Noel C. Fisher, *War at Every Door*, 22-23; W. Todd

Nationally, Lincoln won. In the days following the election, Brownlow declared that Lincoln “has carried all the North Western and New England States, and he is consequently elect President by the people.” Lincoln’s election quickly brought forth the reality of South’s potential secession. Overwhelmingly, white East Tennesseans resented Lincoln’s election, regardless of their political affiliation, at least in public. Governor Harris called for the day following the election to be a day devoted to fasting and prayer. Brownlow argued that people should pray for “the peace and prosperity of our common country.”<sup>15</sup>

In the weeks following Lincoln’s election, political meetings throughout the region discussed East Tennessee’s future in the mounting political crisis. Widely attended and discussed in the public sphere, these meetings revealed the varied reactions of East Tennesseans to the election of a Republican to the White House. “Immediatists” believed the “Union was permanently and irrevocably disrupted” and they wanted the entire South to unite and create an independent nation. While this sentiment existed in East Tennessee, the vast majority of the populace urged caution and claimed to be Unionists. Yet even that title was not a blanket term that adequately described the population. Daniel W. Crofts finds that Unionists in the upper South could be further divided into “unconditional Unionists” and “ultimatists” or “conditional Unionists.” Unconditional Unionists, as the name reveals, believed that no action should cause states to separate from the Union. The remaining Unionists believed that certain conditions must be met in order to maintain their allegiance. They pledged to support the Union as long as the nation did not coerce any section of the South into abolition and maintained

---

Groce, *Mountain Rebels: East Tennessee Confederates and the Civil War*, 34; and Anne H. Hopkins and William Lyons, *Studies in Tennessee Politics*, 43.

<sup>15</sup> “The Presidential Election,” and “Prayer for our Country,” 10 November 1860, *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig*.

peaceful relations with the seceded states. Crofts argues, that they “would stay in the Union until all reasonable hope for compromise was exhausted.”<sup>16</sup>

Political meetings flourished. The *Athens Post* published a call for a meeting to be held on 24 November in Athens to discuss “the welfare of the Union and rights of the South under the Constitution.” The call alluded to the sectional discord and mistrust present within the region and acknowledged that the region’s secessionists thought the “meeting was a party movement, gotten up by members of the Opposition.” The authors warned that “all party distinctions will be disregarded,” and it described the intent of the meeting as a “day for our common country!” Another political meeting in Chattanooga on 20 November called upon “citizens, irrespective of party” to discuss the “present state of political affairs” following Lincoln’s election. The ‘non-partisan’ meeting went on to denounce Lincoln and the “Black Republican” party, yet the attendees did not feel that Lincoln’s election warranted Tennessee’s separation from the Union. Those present resolved “that we deplore the election of Abraham Lincoln and Hannibal Hamlin, to the Presidency and Vice Presidency of the United States, as a great national calamity – as a triumph purely sectional, and therefore dangerous to the Government.” They then warned:

that if Lincoln or his party shall perpetrate any act, which shall violate or impair the rights of any citizen or State, or shall endanger the peace or safety of any portion of our people, for which the Constitution and Laws shall fail to provide adequate and efficient remedies, the time will then have arrived for those who think the Constitution has been disregarded, and the Federal power perverted to purposes inconsistent with their safety, honor and equality, to consult and deliberate upon the nature, extent and mode of redress.

Never once did the word *secession* or a derivative of that word appear in the meeting’s resolutions, yet the meaning was clear enough: Tennessee would secede if Lincoln overstepped

---

<sup>16</sup> Daniel W. Crofts, *Reluctant Confederates*, 129-130 and 133-135

his bounds. The sentiment of the resolutions were summed up with the statement “the Constitution of the United States, gives to Tennessee equal rights with any other State – no more nor no less.” Tennessee had the constitutional right to secede from the Union if Lincoln violated Tennesseans’ rights or threatened their safety, in other words, but the resolutions tempered the possibility by including a resolution which stated “that we would regard a dissolution of the Union, not only as the ruin of our own hopes as a nation, but as a death-blow to the cause of liberty throughout the world.”<sup>17</sup>

A similar event occurred in McMinn County on 24 November. It gave “expression to [McMinn County citizens’] views upon the alarming condition of affairs now prevailing and threatening the peace and permanency of the Union.” The participants elected a committee of five representatives who drafted six resolutions similar to those produced in the Chattanooga. The resolution argued that Lincoln, “a Black Republican and sectional man,” heightened sectional tensions, but his election did not provide “sufficient cause for [the] dissolution of the Union.” Instead, the committee offered two alternatives to secession: impeachment of Lincoln and that “Southern Senators and members of Congress... to take their seats and insist upon a faithful execution of the laws... and impartial justice.”<sup>18</sup>

Yet another political meeting held in Sevierville on 21 November 1860, however, produced a much different interpretation of Lincoln’s election and Tennessee’s role in the sectional dispute. The minutes included the by-now standard resolution that the people of Sevier County “deplore the election of Lincoln and reprobate the leading doctrine of the party that elected him, we nevertheless recognize the fact that he has been chosen under the acknowledged

---

<sup>17</sup>“The Call for a Meeting To-Morrow,” 23 November 1860, *Athens Post*; “Public Meeting,” *Chattanooga Advertiser* in 30 November 1860, *Athens Post*.

<sup>18</sup>“County Meeting,” 30 November 1860, *Athens Post*.

forms of our Federal Constitution.” The Sevier County meeting also continually referenced the primacy of the constitution and that Lincoln’s election did not provide grounds for southern secession. One resolution, however, stated flatly that “we deny the right of secession and nullification.” The meeting concluded with the assertion that “in our opinion the secession of the Southern States will result in rendering our slave property less secure, and in entailing upon the people thereof incalculable evils, such as the prostration of commerce, the suspension of banks, and the funeral depression of business in all its various branches.”<sup>19</sup>

Men voted and wrote resolutions, but women participated in the debate. In the wake of the election results, the region’s women opened a dialogue with both sexes regarding the significance of Lincoln’s election. Knoxville’s J. Thomas Moffett, a noted secessionist and “fire eater,” had attended a dinner at his mother’s house with a number of Knoxville’s Unionists in the days following Lincoln’s election. The evening quickly descended into a lively debate “on politics, secession, [and] disunion.” The members at the dinner chastised Moffett for his political allegiance and denounced “Disunion...proclaiming it to be treason.” He later wrote to his wife Sallie that “when I hear a man with southern blood in his veins, say he is willing to trust Mr. Lincoln’s party that there is no danger... I at once think in my mind that he is afraid.” He went on, “if we can’t have our rights in the Union...let the Union slide...what is life without liberty.”<sup>20</sup>

Rogersville’s Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain more or less agreed. In 1860 she stated that Lincoln would be a “sectional president” and assemble a cabinet that “the South cannot approve of.” She lamented the dissolution of the United States and stated “I love my country, I love her

---

<sup>19</sup>*Athens Post* “County Meeting,” 21 November 1860 and *The Post* in 30 November 1860, *Athens Post*.

<sup>20</sup> J. Thomas Moffett, Knoxville, to Sallie McDowell Moffett, 19 November 1860, Sallie McDowell Moffett Papers, CS08-05, McClung Collection, East Tennessee Historical Association, Knoxville.

constitution. I love everything connected with her whole history, but... I cannot find it in my heart to say I submit.” She believed Lincoln’s election provided the South with the grounds necessary to break with the oppressive “northern fanaticism.”<sup>21</sup>

South Carolina’s withdrawal from the Union on 20 December 1860 set off a wave of secession throughout the lower South. Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas all seceded between 9 January and 1 February 1861. Governor Harris, an ardent secessionist, convened the Tennessee legislature on 7 January to discuss its course. He argued that the decision to sever ties with the Union should be left to Tennesseans. The legislature agreed and put it to the voters whether or not to hold a secession convention, and if so which delegates to send. Fain and Moffet soon found themselves in a minority. Tennesseans voted against holding a secession convention on 9 February, with a disputed tally of about 68,000 to 59,000. East Tennesseans in particular overwhelmingly voted against holding a convention; 79.9 percent of East Tennesseans opposed it. Indeed, only four of the region’s thirty-one counties saw a significant portion of the population elect to hold a secession convention: 51.1 percent in Meigs County, 42.7 percent in Monroe County, 46.3 percent in Polk County, and 61.7 percent in Sullivan County.

Women were unable to voice their opinions concerning the question of secession by voting, but they found other venues in which to showcase their ideas. For example, eleven Monroe County Unionists women raised the Stars and Stripes and preformed a gun salute in support of Tennessee vetoing the secession convention. Their actions are an overt and public symbol of defiance to the secessionist movement. By raising the flag, they are indicating that they do not submit and that their voices and views, like many other Unionists, deserve

---

<sup>21</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 24, January 1861 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified*, 4.

recognition. They then drafted a petition calling for Governor Harris' resignation, writing, "you have disregarded the will of the people of this great and growing State, by becoming the partisan of a miserable Southern Confederacy." The patriarchal culture depicted women as subservient and confined to the domestic sphere; yet, Monroe County's Unionist women violated that notion and publicly engaged in political discourse, even though they could not submit ballots. The Unionist women's actions indicate that they viewed themselves as participants in politics, even when legality and culture prevented such actions on the surface.<sup>22</sup>

Most of these protestors came from lower class laboring families with little wealth. In fact, only one, seamstress Nancy P. Davis, possessed in 1860 any type of substantial wealth, claiming over 10,000 dollars in real estate and 5,000 dollars in personal wealth. She also was the eldest at 50, and was married to Charles Davis, a landowning farmer. Married housewife Mary C. Dunkin, the only other woman to claim any wealth, cited \$200 in both personal wealth and real estate in the 1860 Federal Census. Notably, several of the other petitioners resided in the same household as another signee. Nancy P. Davis lived with her daughter, eleven-year-old Nancy E. Davis, and her unmarried forty-nine-year-old sister-in-law, seamstress Margaret C. Davis. Unmarried eighteen-year-old Mary Mizell resided in a low income household with no wealth to claim and worked as a laborer to provide for her younger siblings. None owned slaves and only Davis' family hired a laborer to assist with their farm. These Unionists essentially were lower class women who simultaneously lauded Tennessee's refusal to secede and condemned the secessionist movement in a public forum.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup>"Our Governor and the Ladies," *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig* (Knoxville), 23 February 1861; "The Vote on the Convention," 3 March 1861, *Nashville Union and American*.

<sup>23</sup>"1860 U.S. Federal Census – Record for Nancy P. Davis," "1860 U.S. Federal Census – Record for Mary Mizell," "1860 U.S. Federal Census – Record for Margaret C. Davis," "1860 U.S. Federal Census – Record Nancy E. Davis," "1860 U.S. Federal Census – Mary C. Dunkin," and "1860 U.S. Federal Census – Record Catherine

Class in fact often dictated East Tennesseans' response to the sectional crisis. Much of the region's professional class supported the notion of East Tennessee's secession, but the yeomen and lower class remained Unionists. The region's towns, ripe with professionals with financial connections to the lower south and Virginia, in contrast notably housed some of the region's most ardent secessionists. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain resoundingly supported South Carolina and the other southern states involved in the first wave of secession. She now viewed secessionists as her "brethren" and condemned East Tennessee's Unionists who vowed "not... to fight for their negroes." The presence of such "traitors" baffled Fain, as regional identification trumped that of a national one when the government restricted the South's freedom and threatened slavery.<sup>24</sup>

Above all, secession created anxiety amongst the region's women. East Tennessee women understood that South Carolina's secession inevitably would create repercussions, but they failed to comprehend what those consequences would mean to their families and themselves. Eliza Fain recognized the enormity of South Carolina's decision and questioned "what is to be the result." Reports meanwhile circulated that East Tennessee's secessionists had targeted the region's Unionists after South Carolina seceded. Bledsoe County's Redfield family experienced hostility for their perceived loyalties during late December 1860. Sarah Redfield was a native of Vermont, while her husband James was a New York physician and surgeon. They had moved to Bledsoe County during the late 1850s. Two days after South Carolina

---

Mizell," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>. Five of the eleven Monroe County women which signed the declaration were not present in the 1860 U.S. Census. The five women were: Sarah McKinley, C. Angeline McKinley, Letitia H. Dunkin, Ann E. McDonald, and Emmilie J. Hays. Also, in the 1860 U.S. Census Mary C. Dunkin resided in Johnson County and not Monroe County.

<sup>24</sup> Fisher, *War at Every Door*, 22-23; Groce, *Mountain Rebels*, 34; John D. Fowler, *Mountaineers in Gray*, 3; John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, xxvi-xxix, xlv; "1860 U.S. Federal Census – Record for Richard G. Fain," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>; and Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 24 January, 1861, in John N. Fain, *Sanctified Trial*, 4.

seceded, Sarah Redfield wrote to her father that the community had ostracized her family for their northern ties. She referred to the “the deep-seated prejudice of all southerners against the ‘damned Yankees’ as all northerners are called without exception” and the tendency for the locals to slander them. She added that the “secession question” strengthened local hostility against her family. She refused to purchase property for “no southerner would care if it were destroyed considering to what part of the country the owners belonged.” She finally pondered her family’s uncertain future stating, “I do not fear that we shall be in any danger for a while, no matter what takes place between the two sections of the country... but after that time I cannot be so sure of our safety.”<sup>25</sup>

Eliza Fain simultaneously condemned the tyrannical actions of northern politicians and unequivocally offered her allegiance to the southern political machine which sought to separate from the Union. Two distinct fears dominated her diary in the winter of 1861, the potential for Lincoln to politically, economically, and militarily suppress the South, and the internal dissension within the southern populace. In January, Fain believed that Lincoln and his future cabinet would exclude the remaining South’s interests when formulating policy, particularly when addressing the sectional crisis. She wrote that Lincoln “will appoint a cabinet of his own selection which the South cannot approve of... we are asked to submit to this rule without any definite arrangement for our rights as free born citizens... I... feel indignant at such a thought.” Later she referenced a conversation with her husband in which he spoke of the increasing dissent amid the region’s slaveholders and non-slaveholders. Fain spoke of the prevalence of “Southern born citizens... trying to set into motion the ball of discontent and dissatisfaction by saying we

---

<sup>25</sup> “1860 U.S. Federal Census – Record for J.W. Redfield,” Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>; Sarah H. Redfield, Bledsoe County, to Charles E. Bowen and Esther Bowen, 26 December 1860, Dr. James W. and Sarah H. Redfield Papers, 1853-1863 ACC 277, Chattanooga Bicentennial Library, Chattanooga; Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 14 January 1861, John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 3.

are not going to fight for their negroes.” Discord amid the southern population angered and frightened Fain, who wrote “My soul sinks and exclaims have we traitors of that kind in our midst for if true in love of country have they counted the cost of such an expression.”<sup>26</sup>

On 9 February 1861 the first wave of seven secessionist states joined together in Montgomery, Alabama, to form the Confederacy. The creation of the new government forced Fain to reexamine the history of the United States and the possible future of the nascent Confederacy. She contemplated the role of freedom in the formation of the United States during the eighteenth century, while recognizing the irony that February now marked both the anniversary of the birth of George Washington and the creation of the Confederacy. She believed that Washington “would be in in anguish; to see thy children for whom thou hast done so much; and to whom thou didst bequeath the richest legacy ever given to man; just on the verge of one of the most terrific revolutions ever recorded by man; and with no possible prospect on this day... of a peaceful adjustment....What didst thou sacrifice so much for; was it not that we might be a free people; that each section of our county might enjoy undisturbed her peculiar institutions; that each should have an equal right in all things pertaining to our form of government that we should love one another.”

Lincoln’s inauguration in March brought forth the revolution of which Fain spoke of following the Confederacy’s creation. She simply stated that “today is the inauguration of President Lincoln. The struggle has come.”<sup>27</sup> The question of Tennessee seceding from the Union had been an issue since Lincoln’s election, but when P.G.T. Beauregard’s troops fired upon Fort Sumter in the Charleston Harbor on 12 April 1861, the time for indecision ended. The election of Lincoln still had not created a secessionist movement throughout East Tennessee, as

---

<sup>26</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 24 January 1861, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 4.

<sup>27</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 22 February 1861, 4 March 1861 in John N. Fain, *Sanctified Trial*, 5-6.

the majority overwhelmingly preferred to wait and see how Lincoln and his cabinet responded to the lower south's secession. Lincoln's response to Fort Sumter spurred many other Tennesseans to action, however, especially when he issued a proclamation in which he declared that the seceded states had subverted the nation's laws and were "too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings." Further, he stated that the "power...vested by the Constitution... call forth, the militia in the several States of the United States... seventy-five thousand in order to suppress said combinations, and to cause the laws to be duly executed."

Many East Tennesseans criticized Lincoln's call for volunteers. The *Athens Post* reflected the abrupt shift of the region's conditional attitude towards Lincoln and the sectional crisis after Fort Sumter. One week following the bombardment, the newspaper slandered Lincoln while simultaneously diminishing the Confederacy's role in the event. In response to the question of "who were the aggressors... or who fired the first gun" the editor wrote that "it is not important or proper to discuss at this moment." He also refused to discuss how Beauregard's forces fired upon Sumter. He instead described Lincoln and his "Black Republican Administration" as having acted with "duplicity and bad faith to... the slave states." The Lincoln administration's "disposition to cling to the Union, and at a moment when [the South] were led to look hopefully for a peaceful solution, it lifts the curtain and invites [the South] to a feast of blood and carnage." Discussing Tennessee's role in the conflict, the *Post* stated "war between the sections has been inaugurated, and Tennessee cannot long remain an idle... spectator of the contest." The article concluded with the claim that "action is... unavoidable."<sup>28</sup>

Lincoln's call for volunteers pushed others off the fence. William M. Stakely of Madisonville wrote to his niece Carrie Stakely regarding the rapid increase in number of

---

<sup>28</sup> "A Proclamation," 19 April 1861 and "The War Commenced," 19 April 1861, *Athens Post*.

secessionists in East Tennessee after Fort Sumter. He sent his niece a “states’ rights paper” to provide her with “something of the political feelings in the state.” He believed that the “States’ rights party is gaining rapidly in [Tennessee].” Secessionist Eliza Fain likewise hoped that Fort Sumter would settle the question of the United States coexisting with the Confederacy. She again lambasted Lincoln for what she believed to be his failure to remove American troops from Fort Sumter.

Support for secession as not necessarily pro-war, however, in that many immediatists had promised a peaceful separation. After hearing the news Fain stated, “May it O God close the scene of deadly strife and may we be willing for each section to have their rights without molestation.” She now knew that Fort Sumter was simply a prelude to a much larger civil war. Chief among Fain’s fears was the safety of her sons in the upcoming war. She could only hope that God’s favor would lead the South through this period of uncertainty and secure its independence.<sup>29</sup>

In response to Lincoln’s call for 75,000 volunteers, Governor Harris immediately called for Tennessee’s legislatures to convene on 25 April 1861. When it met, he vehemently pushed for Tennessee’s secession. Throughout the region’s counties, secessionists and Unionists called political meetings. Pro-secessionists had already met in Sweetwater, Monroe County, to discuss Tennessee’s future amid the secessionist crisis. A committee appointed by the meeting’s attendees drafted three resolutions which summarized the “unanimous sense of the meeting.” These resolutions condemned Lincoln’s call for troops, which it described as a “despotic war policy;” stated that Monroe County “heartily approves of the course of... Isham G. Harris, in

---

<sup>29</sup>William M. Stakely, Madisonville, to Carrie Stakely, 15 April 1861, Hall- Stakely Papers; Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 16 April 1861, in John N. Fain, *Sanctified Trial*, 6-7.

absolutely refusing to respond to the bloody and warlike proclamation;” and argued “that steps be taken immediately to arm Tennessee for the conflict now unconstitutionally inaugurated.” The attendees also called for East Tennesseans to resist Lincoln’s call to arms “even to the death.” More ominously, during the meeting Captain J.C. Vaughn and Captain G.W. Morgan sought volunteers for a Confederate company. By the meeting’s end a company had formed, and the attendees had donated “about two thousand dollars” to fund it. Bradley County’s pro-secessionists met in Charleston on 22 April 1861 to discuss recent events. The meeting’s attendees too vilified Lincoln and his response to Fort Sumter while they simultaneously extolled Harris’ actions in refusing to provide Lincoln with troops from Tennessee. The consensus of the meeting proposed that Tennessee “should disconnect herself from the Northern States at once, and arm herself and prepare to maintain her honor.”<sup>30</sup>

Only following Fort Sumter, in other words, did East Tennessee secessionists, including women, begin to publicly and privately identify with the movement. Eliza Fain acknowledged the primacy of slavery in the secessionist movement. The Fain family owned eight slaves in 1860, six men and two women. She believed that the animosity present between the North and South essentially stemmed from the North’s hostility of southern slavery, writing at the end of April 1861 that northerners “have felt because my brother or sister in the South is a slaveholder therefore I am holier than thou.” The mythical gendered image of southern women as selfless wives and mothers also appeared within Fain’s justification for the perpetuation of slavery. She rhetorically challenged northern women to “come into one of our black peoples homes and there see stretched on a bed of sickness on our servants man, woman or child and see us in tender solicitude bending over the sufferer doing all that we can to relieve their sufferings, and then

---

<sup>30</sup> “Southern Meeting,” 26 April 1861, *Athens Post* and “Public Meeting,” 26 April 1861, *Athens Post*.

know the great anxiety we are often suffering in regard to their spiritual well-being, methinks you would turn from the spot and say if this is slavery so let it continue unmolested by me until the great head of the church sees fit to change it if it is his will.” Love, in other words, characterized Fain’s definition of slavery, while secession in her mind proved to be the only avenue in which to protect the institution. The north would incur the wrath of God for their role in trying to eliminate slavery.<sup>31</sup>

Madisonville’s pro-secessionist citizens publicly supported the Confederacy by illuminating the front windows of their businesses and residences each night following Fort Sumter. An anonymous letter written to the *Athens Post* described how “the citizens of our town and vicinity, obeying the generous impulse of freemen, without distinction of party, illuminated the... buildings... in honor of the bold and daring defense at Charleston.” Ada Smith of Madisonville confirmed the newspaper’s claim when she wrote to her cousin less than a week following Sumter that “every cessationist (sic) had his house illuminated in town tonight.” She also praised her Cousin Sam’s home for placing “a lantern on top of the flag-pole.”<sup>32</sup>

Other accounts suggest a rage in flag-making. One week following the bombardment of Fort Sumter, a citizen from Madisonville in Monroe County wrote a letter to the *Athens Post*’s editor which described how the town’s women made “a beautiful specimen of the flag of the Confederate States” to hang on the courthouse once news of Sumter reached Monroe County. The anonymous “citizen” added that the “patriotic matrons and young ladies of our quiet town... hastily but neatly” placed the Confederate flag as a visible symbol of their loyalty to the

---

<sup>31</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 12 May 1861 and 2 June 1861 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 10-13.

<sup>32</sup> Citizen, Madisonville, 16 April 1861 in “From Monroe,” *Athens Post*; Ada Smith, Madisonville to Carrie Stakely, 16 April 1861, Hall-Stakely Papers; and “Southern Meeting,” 26 April 1861, *Athens Post*.

Confederacy.<sup>33</sup> Ada Smith described hanging “a secessionist flag made by several of the young ladies here” in her home. William Stakely declared that two Madisonville women, HESSIE and Maranda, had outfitted four Confederate companies with secessionist flags. J.A. Caldwell of Madisonville also commented on how the town’s young women crafted flags for the region’s secessionists and the Confederate companies in route to Virginia, writing that “a southern flag waves over the courthouse... the young ladies made the flag [and] one for a Tellico Company.” Those young women sewed eight stars on the flag, which represented the seceded states of South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, and Virginia. Caldwell believed the flag to be incomplete and instead “wanted fifteen to represent the whole South.”

In addition, to the creation of flags Madisonville’s secessionist women also helped the cause by making local companies’ military uniforms. A few Monroe County women in late April volunteered to make uniforms and tents for the county’s men who sought to enlist in the Confederate Army. Ada Smith assisted in creating coats for the Tellico Plains company. Smith, a professional class woman, had never made a man’s coat and found the process simultaneously difficult and amusing. She wrote to her cousin, stating “none of us had ever sewn a coat in our lives before... we little girls had a fine time by ourselves... but we were very much afraid that we had put the coat together wrong.” The creation of secessionist flags and the crafting of military equipment nonetheless provided Madisonville’s women with an acceptable forum in which to participate in the political arena.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup>Citizen, Madisonville, 16 April 1861 in “From Monroe,” 19 April 1861, *Athens Post*.

<sup>34</sup> Ada Smith, Madisonville, to Carrie Stakely, 16 April 1861; William Stakely, Madisonville, to Carrie Stakely, 27 April 1861, J.A. Caldwell, Madisonville, to Carrie Stakely, and 6 May 1861, Ada Smith, Madisonville, to Carrie Stakely, 6 May 1861, Hall-Stakely Papers, CS07-07 MSC 17, McClung Collection, East Tennessee Historical Collection.

The loss of male members to the nascent Confederate military soon became a reality for the region's secessionist women, however, and they greeted that with less enthusiasm. Many of the region's white professional class youths joined the Confederate Army after Fort Sumter. Sallie McDowell Moffett feared first and foremost for her twin brother's safety. His inclination to join the Confederate Army caused her "heart to grow chill, and [her] senses shudder, at the very idea...of having a dear and only brother leave us – perhaps never to return again." She refused to give her consent for she believed if he died serving his country, even for a noble cause, "I fear I never... [will] enjoy life again." Chattanooga Lizzie Key received a letter from her brother Henry Lenoir a week after the bombardment of Fort Sumter. A native of Roane County, she had married Chattanooga lawyer David McKendree Key in June of 1857. Her brother Henry Lenoir now wrote Key from the University of Virginia that "I have 'seceded' from the university and expect to 'secede' from the state tomorrow... 'the die is cast' my school days are over." Madisonville's William Stakely wrote to his niece Carrie at the end of April commenting on the prevalence of troops within the town. Since Fort Sumter Stakely counted "four volunteer companies have left this place, carrying the southern flag where they will go to VA or KY, as needed."<sup>35</sup>

But Unionist voices could be heard as well. Following Fort Sumter, regional politicians and prominent members of the community began to travel throughout East Tennessee, speaking to large audiences propagating Unionist or secessionist ideals in anticipation of Tennessee's secessionist vote. The political climate and the Unionist presence figured prominently within

---

<sup>35</sup>Sallie McDowell Moffett, Knoxville, to J. Thomas Moffet, 24 April 1861, Sallie McDowell Moffett Papers; "1850 U.S. Federal Census – Record for A.S. Lenoir," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>; Henry Lenoir to Lizzie Key, 15 April 1861, David McKendree Key Papers; and William Stakely, Madisonville, to Carrie Stakely, 27 April 1861, Hall-Stakely Papers. Their father, a moderately wealthy Roane County farmer, valued his real estate in the 1850 census at \$24,000 and owned fifteen slaves.

secessionist Lizzie Key's correspondence. Her brother specifically pointed to the prevalence of Unionists traveling throughout the region hoping to dissuade Tennessee's secession. A month following Fort Sumter, Henry Lenoir wrote that if Andrew "Johnson and [Thomas A.R.] Nelson go around here speaking much more they will make our backwoods yeomanry think that the 'Southern Confederacy is about to try and divorce them; take all their liberties and elect a king to rule over them.'"<sup>36</sup>

Madisonville's secessionist William Stakely also complained about the frequency of Unionist political meetings in the weeks following Fort Sumter. He found that a "weak affair" of a Unionist meeting occurred in Knoxville "led on by [William G.] Brownlow, [Thomas A. R.] Nelson, [Horace] Maynard, and others." Stakely erroneously believed that secessionists dominated East Tennessee and claimed that "all the people are ripe for Secession... there is not one Union man in this town and but four in the county." He conceded that a Unionist pocket existed in Loudon, but he believed their political attachment to be weak because they "hissed" at Andrew Johnson as he spoke from a railway car in the town.<sup>37</sup>

Days prior to Tennessee's secessionist vote, Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain failed to understand how Unionists could exist within East Tennessee. She wrote that "there seems to be so much dissatisfaction among our people." Fain simply stated, "do we yet wish to cling to people for whom we cannot have that respect we should feel."<sup>38</sup> Unionists not surprisingly feared that the increasingly secessionist population would gain adherents and force Tennessee out of the Union. Athens' unionists utilized the *Post* to publicize the prevalence of Unionism and hopefully to quell the rising secessionist sentiment amid Lincoln's proclamation. They

---

<sup>36</sup> Henry Lenoir to Lizzie Key, 6 May 1861, David McKendree Key Papers.

<sup>37</sup> William Stakely, Madisonville, to Carrie Stakely, 27 April 1861, Hall-Stakely Papers.

<sup>38</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 2 June 1861 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 14.

“warn[ed]” Athens’ citizens to ignore the rise in pro-secessionist propaganda that East Tennessee was rapidly transforming from a Unionist stronghold to a secessionist. In fact, “secession is no remedy for any of the evils,” specifically Lincoln’s call for a military buildup following Fort Sumter. They continued “we regard it as the worst step Tennessee could take... it would precipitate our State into the vortex of a bloody revolution, and entail upon ourselves and children untold evils, inevitable ruin and desolation.”

Unionist Sarah Redfield also pondered the dire ramifications of Tennessee’s potential secession in the days leading up to the event. Already concerned that her Bledsoe County neighbors would target her Unionist family, Redfield’s fears escalated during Tennessee’s secession crisis. Her husband and she wrote to her father that the “State seems already in the grasp of the Southern Confederacy.” They described the social and political climate of the region, writing that “the free air of the mountain inspires patriotism as it does in Vermont, only that here it is contaminated with the rice swamps and the cotton plantations.” If Tennessee joined the Confederacy, the Redfields assumed that Unionists like them would be immediately persecuted, and that East Tennesseans who criticized the Confederacy would be considered traitors and their actions “punishable with death.” The Redfields nonetheless decided to refuse Confederate citizenship if Tennessee joined the Confederacy. She feared that her family would be immediately targeted for their political affiliations and northern heritage. They hoped that members of the nascent Confederate government would “give those...who will not take the oath of allegiance to theirs, the privilege of leaving within a certain number of days, and that before the expiration of that time the crime of treason cannot be preferred against them.”<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> Dr. James W. and Sarah H. Redfield to Charles E. Bowen and Esther Bowen, June 1861, Dr. James W. and Sarah H. Redfield Papers.

On 6 May 1861, Tennessee's legislature voted twenty to four in favor of secession in the senate and forty-six to twenty-one in the house in favor of separation. They immediately drafted a Declaration of Independence. Tennesseans voted on the declaration on 8 June 1861, and laid bare the state's divisions. Contrary to William Stakely's assumptions, East Tennesseans voted largely against secession, with only five of the region's thirty-two counties voting in favor. But the region was not a Unionist monolith either. Sullivan and Washington counties voted for dissolution, 41.4 percent and 71.7 percent respectively. Two of East Tennessee's largest towns were in these counties, Kingsport and Jonesborough. Those urban centers housed the region's professional classes, including merchants, doctors, and lawyers, many of the same individuals who would later identify with the Confederacy. The towns were also sites of the East Tennessee and Virginia and East Tennessee and Georgia Railroads, which provided the ever-important market access to Virginia and the deep South. The *Nashville Union and American* reported a pro-secessionist rally in Jonesborough where the participants proclaimed "we are for Tennessee taking her stand now and forever with her sister States of the South, believing that her every interest, political, social, commercial and otherwise imperatively demand her to assume that position." Even in Greene County, where almost 80 percent of the population voted against secession, similar calls could be heard. The *Greenville Democrat* requested "the friends of their homes and their firesides...to come in masse...to attend a meeting that we may unite as one man in Greene county to resist the coercive war policy of Lincoln." The editor argued that "Tennesseans will never be subjugated! No, never! never!!" Only about 30 percent of Knox County's population voted in favor of secession, yet the region held some of the most outspoken secessionists and Confederate volunteers at the beginning of the war. Southeast Tennessee overall held the largest population of mountain secessionists. Of the fourteen counties of

southeast Tennessee, eight saw over 40 percent of its citizen's vote in favor of secession; half of those were the counties in which the railroad traversed. Chattanooga lawyer David McKendree Key wrote to his wife on 10 June and argued that while East Tennessee voted largely to remain in the Union, a sizeable secessionist population resided within East Tennessee. He found that the "election passed off quickly...from the news we have here is no doubt but the State has gone out by a large majority... [the] secession vote in East Tennessee is larger than was expected." McKendree represented East Tennessee's small, but economically significant secessionist population when he wrote, "We are in the South, and long live the South."<sup>40</sup>

Tennessee's withdrawal from the Union in June of 1861 sparked another anti-secessionist wave from the region's disgruntled Unionists. Nine days after Tennesseans voted to secede, a group of prominent Unionist delegates convened in Greenville to discuss East Tennessee's role in the sectional crisis. For four days, delegates from all of East Tennessee's counties with the exception of Rhea compiled the region's grievances associated with Tennessee's secession. Sevier County's Reverend James Cummings opened the East Tennessee Convention with a prayer which requested that the Lord impart the "enlightenings [*sic*] of The Holy Spirit" on the assemblage of Unionists. Cummings prayed to "our Heavenly Father [to]... allay the fierce and hostile excitement that prevails in many sections of our country, suppress the further shedding of blood in civil war." After four days of deliberation the delegates adopted the "Declaration of Grievances and Resolutions" which detailed East Tennessee's Unionists response to the state's secession. The declaration opened with the assumption that Western and Middle Tennessee

---

<sup>40</sup>Anne H. Hopkins and William Lyons, *Studies in Tennessee Politics*, 43; Robert E. Corlew, *Tennessee: A Short History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1981), 289-295; Noel C. Fisher, *War at Every Door*, 34-40; "Meeting at Washington: Jonesboro, May 6, 1861," 11 May 1861, *Nashville Union and American*; "Anti-Coercion, Anti-Abolitionist, Anti-Subjugation, Anti-Lincoln Meeting and States Rights Convention at Greenville," 27 April 1861, *Greenville Democrat* in *Nashville Union and American*; and David McKendree to Lizzie Key, 10 June 1861, David McKendree Key Papers.

secessionists had intimidated Unionists with tactics that included limiting free speech and poll intimidation. Throughout the convention the delegates reached the consensus that East Tennessee should remain in the Union despite Tennessee's decision to secede. The minutes of the Convention stated that "We prefer to remain attached to the Government of our fathers...the Congress of the United States has passed no law to oppress us...The President... has made no breath against the law abiding people of Tennessee [and] we have enjoyed as a nation more of civil and religious freedom than any other people under the whole heaven." The delegates outlined these grievances which included: "our people have been insulted; our flags have been fired upon and torn down; our houses have been rudely entered; our families subjected to insult; our peaceable meeting interrupted; our women and children shot at by a merciless soldiery; [and] our citizens rubbed and some of them assassinated and murdered." The delegates created six resolutions. They feared that the Confederacy would draw Tennessee into a Civil War and thus resolved to protect East Tennessee. The convention argued that East Tennessee should secede from the state while simultaneously dissolving the region's military alliance with Confederacy. Once dissolved East Tennessee would refuse the Confederacy access to its railroads and navigable waterways, diminishing their ability to move troops, munitions, or supplies. In addition, they called for the region to repudiate Tennessee's Declaration of Independence. The conventioners realized that if East Tennessee seceded they would need to put in place a provisional government, the General Assembly, which would allow for free elections. They argued that Tennessee's Declaration of Independence did not include East Tennessee. and refused that possibility. An ominous warning closed the convention: "while we object... to any violence to the Railroads...if the grievous wrongs inflicted by some of the troops are not

stopped, we warn all persons concerned...that there is a point at which a population of 300,000 people outraged, insulted and trampled upon, cannot be and ought not to be restrained.”<sup>41</sup>

Regional media expounded upon the significance of this meeting. Many editors believed that East Tennessee would be successful in forming a separate state. Hypocrisy characterized the Confederacy, argued prominent Unionist William G. Brownlow in his *Tri-Weekly Whig*. He found that Confederates viewed a state’s ability to secede as a fundamental right; yet they refused to grant such a liberty to East Tennesseans. Brownlow wrote that “if this liberty is refused, civil war is inevitable, and the free and unbought Union men of East Tennessee, will fall back upon the rights guaranteed to them by God and Nature, and by the laws and constitution of their country and meet the consequences, let them be what they may.”<sup>42</sup>

The Unionist Greenville meeting simultaneously baffled and irritated Knoxville secessionists such as Martha Hall. She pondered the convention’s motive simple stating, “I do not know what they are trying to do.” After the convention’s resolutions became public, Hall condemned the Unionist’s intentions and described the movement as “worse than the height of folly and madness.” She concluded “how any Tennessean can be for the Lincoln government... is to me a mystery of mysteries.” Those individuals who continued to support Lincoln and his government should not refer to themselves as Unionists. She believed that “unionists... is a perversion of the term.... [and] there can be no such thing now.”<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup>“The Greenville Convention” and the “Proceedings of the E. Tennessee Convention,” 25 June 1861, *Tri-Weekly Whig*.

<sup>42</sup> “The Greenville Convention,” 25 June 1861, *Tri-Weekly Whig*

<sup>43</sup> Martha Hall, Knoxville, to Carrie Stakely, Montgomery, 18 June 1861, Martha Hall, Knoxville, to Margaret Stakely, Arkansas, 1 July 1861, Hall-Stakely Papers.

Once Tennessee joined the Confederacy, East Tennessee women began to experience the repercussions of war. It first touched Washington County's Adeline Deaderick with the loss of her sons to the Confederate military. Wife of prominent Washington County lawyer James William Deaderick, she had lived a comfortable existence on the Nola Chucky with her eight children, seven of which were boys. During the 1890s she prefaced her memoir with the statement that her family voted to remain in the Union, yet once Tennessee seceded, her sons enlisted in the Confederate military. Knoxville's Martha Hall wrote to her cousin Carrie in Montgomery, Alabama, concerning the changes in Knoxville after secession. Hall had just moved to Knoxville with her husband, and as was typical for her she wrote a painstakingly detailed letter which described every detail of her new home including architecture, furnishings, and landscape. But unlike her previous letters, she closed by discussing the war in Knoxville. She stated, "the morning I came, a great many troops came on the same train... a long train going down passed us, on which I counted thirteen large cannons... I can see the students at college drilling nearly every day from the window of my room." Hall continued, "two companies of cavalry have come into town... I get very little news from the seat of the war." Once Tennessee seceded, Martha Hall's correspondence focused less on community gossip and her domestic life and more on the region's political and military affairs. She discussed the influx of troops into the region and their ability to quickly transform into a formidable fighting force. Those who entered into Knoxville in early July 1861 as "the best looking and most orderly companies I have seen." The prospect of war frightened Hall; she described herself as typically "calm and hopeful," but

believed the imminent conflict to be “dark.” Lincoln hastened to bring war to the South, and she found that “we may expect...the war to be prosecuted with rigor.”<sup>44</sup>

\*\*\*

East Tennessee’s secession politicized and polarized the region’s women. As the decade opened women wrote of domestic and communal concerns and the tedium associated with everyday life, not about whether the issue of slavery would cause Tennessee and other southern states to separate from the Union. East Tennesseans recognized the danger associated with Lincoln’s election, but most still refused to endorse secession unless the newly elected president violated Tennessee’s citizens’ rights. Beauregard’s bombardment of Fort Sumter and Lincoln’s subsequent call for 75,000 troops incited Tennessee’s secession and brought the dangers of disunion to the doorsteps of women. Women entered into the political discourse surrounding secession after the Fort Sumter crisis. Some women such as the Monroe County Unionists also violated gender norms by petitioning for the removal of Tennessee’s governor Isham G. Harris when he pushed for Tennessee’s secession. Most, however, supported or condemned the secessionist movement largely through actions deemed acceptable for nineteenth-century gender ideals. They lit candles in their windows in support of secession, crafted Confederate flags, made Confederate uniforms, and privately discussed their opinions on secession. Such actions allowed women to take part in the political firestorm without entering into what was deemed a masculine world. By the summer of 1861 the region’s women felt the reverberation of secession with the

---

<sup>44</sup> “U.S. 1860 Federal Census Record – Record for Adeline Deaderick,” Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>; Martha Hall, Knoxville, to Carrie, Montgomery, 18 June 1861 Martha Hall, Knoxville, to Margaret Stakely, Arkansas, 1 July 1861, Hall-Stakely Papers.

militarization associated with the Confederate Army's buildup and the loss of male family members to its call. In the summer of 1861 East Tennessee women found themselves residing in a politically divided region of a new country, which the large majority had voted against joining, and facing the prospect of war.

### 3. “Civil Discord”:” The Arrival of War in East Tennessee

The Confederate government feared the volatility of East Tennessee’s Unionists in the summer of 1861. While it needed to control the region’s resources and vast transportation network, the large Unionist population threatened their hold. Throughout the summer, members of the political elite received numerous foreboding letters concerning a possible insurrection. In late June, for example, Memphis & Charleston Railroad president Sam Tate warned Confederate Secretary of State Robert Toombs that during a recent trip to East Tennessee, he “saw some of our friends, but many more of our enemies.” He alerted Toombs to a potential Unionist coup and concluded that East Tennessee Unionists would descend into violence if “the [Confederate] Legislature refuses to let them secede.” Colonel Henry S. Bowen of 188<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Virginia militia shared Tate’s fears. He wrote to Confederate Brigadier General Felix K. Zollicoffer, commander of the District of East Tennessee, requesting that more troops be sent to Southwest Virginia’s Buchanan County to prevent the region’s Unionists from receiving reinforcements in the form of men, arms, and ammunition. Zollicoffer needed to prepare for such an invasion.<sup>1</sup>

Despite such warnings of potential rebellion or invasion, the Confederate government initially followed a conciliatory policy towards East Tennessee Unionists. Zollicoffer, born in Maury County of Middle Tennessee, seemed the perfect choice to hold command. He had served in the Second Seminole War in Florida and followed that with a long political career as a

---

<sup>1</sup>Sam Tate, Chattanooga to Robert Toombs, Richmond, 28 June 1861 and Henry S. Bowen, Maiden Springs, Virginia to General Felix K. Zollicoffer, Knoxville, Tennessee, 29 August 1861 in *War the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* Vol. 52, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1866), 116.

state senator and United States Congressman. No radical, Zollicoffer had been a Whig and later a Know Nothing who supported John Bell in the 1860 presidential election and urged Tennesseans to remain in the Union. During the secession crisis Zollicoffer hoped to ensure the rights of southern states but still did not advocate for secession. Only after Tennessee seceded did he pledge his loyalty to the Confederacy. Governor Harris awarded him the rank of Brigadier General and in July sent him to East Tennessee with around four thousand men to protect railroad lines, suppress the Unionist populace, and prevent them from obtaining weapons. Confederate Secretary of War Judah P. Benjamin further instructed Zollicoffer to gain favor with the dissidents.

Historian Robert Tracy McKenzie argues that as soon as Zollicoffer took command, he feared “subversion from within, as well an invasion from without.”<sup>2</sup> In early August he promised Unionists fair treatment if they abided by Confederate law. Zollicoffer also requested that the region’s Unionists “no longer...resist the recent decisions at the ballot-box.” Zollicoffer promised “perfect freedom of the ballot-box...and no man’s rights, property, or privileges, shall be disturbed.” He assured Unionists that “the Military authorities are not here to offend or injure... but to ensure peace... by repelling invasion and preventing the introduction of horrors of civil war.” The military would not tolerate “treason to the State,” however, and “no aide shall be given within [Tennessee’s] borders to the army of the tyrant Lincoln.”<sup>3</sup>

Zollicoffer was true to his word, for a while he tried to limit contact between Unionists and Confederate troops while reiterating that his men were to respect the region’s Unionists. Thomas Humes, an Episcopal clergyman and Knoxville Unionist, later described Zollicoffer’s policy as conciliatory. Zollicoffer, Humes noted, allowed the continuation of pro-Unionist

---

<sup>2</sup> Robert Tracy McKenzie, *Lincolnites and Rebels*, 90; Noel C. Fisher: *War at Every Door*, 44-45.

<sup>3</sup> Felix K. Zollicoffer, “To the People of East Tennessee,” in *Brownlow’s Weekly Whig*, 10 August 1861.

publications even though these papers contained inflammatory remarks towards the Confederacy and its local troops. In August 1861, Brownlow even printed an editorial which praised Zollicoffer and his military operations in East Tennessee. While Brownlow increasingly used print to attack and vilify Confederates in and around the region, he described Zollicoffer as a “man of fine sense, of great firmness of character and of true courage...and...our citizens will find him generous as reasonable – not disposed to oppress anyone.” Brownlow concluded that Zollicoffer “is really desirous of avoiding any collision with the people of East Tennessee – [and] will labor to promote peace.”<sup>4</sup>

While Zollicoffer hoped his conciliatory Confederate policy would placate the region’s Unionists, President Abraham Lincoln viewed them as marooned patriots and potential recruits for the Federal Army. Almost immediately following Tennessee’s secession, Secretary of War Simon Cameron and Lincoln sought to gain ten thousand enlistments from the region. They asked Kentuckian and U. S. Navy officer William Nelson to “muster in five regiments of infantry and one regiment of cavalry” from the region. Throughout the summer of 1861 several thousand Tennesseans slipped into Kentucky to enlist in the Union Army at Camp Dick Robinson, near Rogersville.

\*\*\*

Throughout the opening months of the war, East Tennessee women watched the drastically changing and increasingly unstable political and military atmosphere with increasing concern. In Rogersville, Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain claimed in late July 1861 that “the dark and

---

<sup>4</sup>Thomas William Humes, *The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee*, 122-123; “General Zollicoffer,” *Brownlow’s Weekly Whig*, 17 August 1861.

lowering clouds of civil discord seem to threaten the destruction of our loved East Tennessee.”<sup>5</sup> Fissures resultant from differing political loyalties began to fracture their communities and compromise relationships between neighbors, family, and friends. Confederate women avidly participated in political discussions, often voicing their displeasure at the large Unionist population. One such woman was Knoxville’s Martha Hall. She could not understand “how any Tennessean can be for the Lincoln government...is to me a mystery of mysteries.”<sup>6</sup> William Brownlow addressed the rising friction between the two groups in early August 1861, concluding that “some people have become so offended at families who still adhere to ‘the old rotten Union’ that they threaten to break up all social relations with such.” Brownlow for the moment believed these threats hollow, however, and found that Unionists families could “live without the visits, smiles, or prayers” of Confederates.<sup>7</sup>

The hostility present within the King family is indicative of Brownlow’s claims. Unionism became increasingly uncomfortable, even within families. Knoxville’s Oliver Caswell King, for example, described how Tennessee’s decision to secede had created discord within his extended family. King’s father had criticized his wife’s sisters for their steadfast faith to the Union. Oliver King wrote that “Aunt Barsha and Aunt Alsy are still strong for the Union” and “did not relish Pappa’s [pro-Confederate] letter very much.”<sup>8</sup> Reports surfaced in secessionist Sullivan County of Confederates there even alienating their Unionist church parishioners for

---

<sup>5</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 23 July 1861 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 21.

<sup>6</sup> Martha Hall, Knoxville, to Margaret, Arkansas, 1 July 1861 Hall-Stakely Papers.

<sup>7</sup> “Breaking Up Social Relations” and “Brownlow Can’t Get Away,” *Brownlow’s Weekly Whig*, 3 August 1861.

<sup>8</sup> Katherine Rebecca Rutledge, Blountville, to Oliver Caswell King, Knoxville, 23 June [n.d.] and Oliver Caswell King, Loudon, to Katherine Rebecca Rutledge, Blountville, 28 August 1861, Oliver Caswell King and Katherine Rebecca Rutledge King Papers; and “L.M. King in 1860 Federal Census,” *Ancestry.com*, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com). Oliver Caswell King called his aunts “Barsha” and “Alsy” in his 28 August 1861 letter which were likely nicknames for his mother’s, Penelope Louisa King, sisters, Barsheba Stuart Tipton and Louisa Elizabeth Goodman. “William R. Tipton,” and “William W. Goodman,” in 1860 United States Federal Census, *Ancestry.com*, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com).

their political ideals. Churches, a central social organization to the region's women, were no longer a welcome haven for Unionists, but instead became places where ministers targeted them in sermons for unholy and incorrect political ideologies. Brownlow suggested that Unionists withdrawn from such congregations and create their own churches in which pastors "will refrain from denouncing one party in his congregation as traitors to their country and their God – and who will not attack private families in public prayers."<sup>9</sup>

Open Unionists soon worried for their safety. In Bledsoe County, James and Sarah Redfield felt so threatened by their Confederate neighbors that they decided to move back north, even though they knew that such a transition would be an arduous task and create a financial burden. The couple wrote a letter to Sarah Redfield's parents and posed, "a serious question... without money, and without communication with our friends, how are we to remove ourselves and our little ones to a free state?" They pondered selling many of their personal items for "an ox team of our own."<sup>10</sup>

Confederates too, and particularly the region's women, also feared violence and retaliation. Madisonville's Carrie Stakely related aggressive behavior from local Unionists. She feared that the Unionists soon would burn Madisonville for its Confederate ties. Confederate soldier T. Matt White responded by assuring her that "you need not be...alarmed...for the Unionists make great threats but to no purpose....they call themselves Unionists but it is a perversion of the term."<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> "Forming a Union Church," *Brownlow's Weekly Whig*, 10 August 1861.

<sup>10</sup> Dr. James W. and Sarah H. Redfield to Charles E. Bowen and Esther Bowen, 9 June 1861, ACC 277, Dr. James W. and Sarah H. Redfield Papers. Sullivan County voted over seventy percent to secede in the June referendum, while Carter voted almost ninety-four percent and Greene over seventy-eight percent to remain in the Union. "Forming a Union Church," 10 August 1861, *Brownlow's Weekly Whig*.

<sup>11</sup> Carrie Stakely, Madisonville, to T. Matt White, Camp Rowan, 13 August 1861, Hall-Stakely Papers.

Rumors spread quickly in such an environment. A meeting of “about five hundred Union men” outside of Cleveland meanwhile surprised teenager Myra Inman in July. She worried that the Unionists were “collected....together to attack some troops they heard were going to Jimtown.”<sup>12</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain recalled a conversation with her brother-in-law in which he believed a “difficulty was likely to occur at Sneedville [located in Hancock County] – that the Union men were or had taken H. Rose’s company of volunteers prisoners.” She found “I cannot help feeling uneasy, but trust all may be ordered alright.”<sup>13</sup> Blountville’s Katherine Rebecca Rutledge, wrote to her Confederate soldier beau in late June that a Unionist neighbor planned to relocate after Tennessee seceded “for a more congenial life.” She suggested that a move to “Carter or your old County Greene would suit him better than Sullivan,” since that county contained the highest number of secessionist voters. Blountville’s Katherine Rebecca Rutledge explained in September 1861 how local Confederate men had harassed a mule trader who traveled through Sullivan County in route to Georgia. A few locals “suspected him...of being a Unionist” and demanded information regarding his political affiliation from neighbors. Rutledge’s father defended the traveler and proclaimed him a “Southern man.” To prevent future trouble, Katherine Rebecca Rutledge sewed the traveler “two little flags for one pair of his matches [mules].” She believed the mules “looked as if they felt very proud to have a Southern flag waving over them.”<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> Myra Inman, 7 July 1861 in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 105.

<sup>13</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 23 July 1861 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 21.

<sup>14</sup> Katherine Rebecca Rutledge, Blountville, to Oliver Caswell King, Knoxville, 23 June [n.d.] and Katherine Rebecca Rutledge, Poor Hill to Oliver Caswell King, 14 September 1861, Oliver Caswell King and Katherine Rebecca King Papers. Katherine Rebecca Rutledge’s letter fails to record the year. Rutledge’s mention that she attended the “first sacramental meeting” without her beau, Oliver Caswell King, King left to enlist in the Nineteenth Tennessee Infantry in June of 1861 which indicates that the letter was written soon after his departure. In addition, throughout 1862 and 1863 Rutledge’s letters indicate a growing animosity between the couple, whereas Rutledge’s tone in 1861 in one of adoration and longing to reunite.

While the region's women noted the political instability within their diaries and correspondence, Unionist men used the ballot box once again to demonstrate their distaste for the Confederacy. On 1 August 1861, Tennessee's counties voted on whether to accept the Constitution of the Confederate States of America. Of the region's thirty counties, twenty-one voted against it while only six voted in favor of the constitution. Hancock, Morgan, and Scott counties did not report voting statistics. Notably, the six counties that voted in favor of the constitution--McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Sequatchie, and Sullivan--were the only six that voted to secede in the June referendum. Aside from those counties, East Tennesseans' rejection of the constitution signaled a strong Union presence even after secession.<sup>15</sup>

The 1861 governor's race, also held on 1 August, similarly reflected the region's strong identification with the Union. The region largely rejected Harris's reelection. Only six counties voted in favor of Harris: McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, and Sullivan--the same six counties which also voted to secede and favored of Tennessee's new Confederate Constitution. Moreover, while the Confederate government expected East Tennesseans to send representatives to the Provisional Confederate Congress, voters elected three candidates to the United States Congress. They hoped to travel throughout the Cumberland pass to Kentucky and then to Washington D.C.<sup>16</sup> Horace Maynard of Knoxville safely exited the state as he was in route to Kentucky at the time of the election. Confederate authorities arrested T. A. R. Nelson, however, for "treason against the Southern Confederacy" and sent him to prison. Brownlow argued that the military had wrongly arrested Nelson and that "the treason of Mr. Nelson consists in his having advocated the cause of the Union...to this grievous offense, he has added the

---

<sup>15</sup>Anne H. Hopkins and William Lyons, *Studies in Tennessee Politics*, 43; "Election Returns," *Nashville Union and American*, 11 August 1861.

<sup>16</sup>"Election Returns," *Nashville Union and American*, 11 August 1861; Thomas William Humes, *The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee*, 127, 128, and 129.

unpardonable sin of permitting his fellow-citizens to elect him to Congress so as to be consistent...with their principles.” Brownlow further dared the Confederate government to arrest all of Nelson’s constituents who voted for him. The military eventually released Nelson after forcing him to take an oath in which he promised “to abstain from overt acts of hostility against [the Confederacy].”

The third Unionist who tried take a seat in the United States Congress was McMinn County’s George W. Bridge. Like Nelson, Bridge sought passage through the Cumberland Gap. As he attempted to leave Tennessee, Confederate authorities detained his wife and children. Bridge returned and the local military arrested him and forced him to sign a loyalty oath similar to Nelson’s. Thomas Humes found a life lesson in the event, writing that “in all important and dangerous enterprises it is wise to ‘look not back,’ even for the sake of cherished objects of natural affection, lest through the adroit use of them by enemies, they become fatal impediments.”<sup>17</sup>

Elected officials were not the only people who flooded out of East Tennessee during the summer of 1861. Many male Unionists of all socioeconomic levels began to fear for their livelihoods and safety and made the trek across the mountains into Kentucky and beyond. Some of which were the Unionists who had been vocal in their attempts to suppress Tennessee’s secession through speeches and editorials. Men such as James P. Carter, Rev. William B. Carter, Frederick Heiskell and Robert K. Byrd left that summer. Historian and Unionist Oliver P. Temple described the outflux as “ a constant stream of refugees silently working their way by night...many of these left without any settled purpose...they fled from what they regarded as a present and terrible danger.” They often traveled at night through Cumberland Gap as

---

<sup>17</sup> “Arrest of Thos. A. R. Nelson,” *Brownlow’s Weekly Whig*, 10 August 1861; “T.A.R. Nelson,” *Nashville Union and American*, 6 August 1861; and Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War*, 367-368.

Confederate guards patrolled the Tennessee-Kentucky border to prevent the passage of such refugees. Most sought Camp Dick Robinson. By fall, Byrd commanded the First Tennessee Infantry (U. S.), which was manned by the region's refugees.<sup>18</sup> In October, *The New York Times* reported that 1,800 East Tennesseans had enlisted at Camp Dick Robinson, reporting that "these heroes... left behind their families, in the very heart of the country now occupied by Zollicoffer's invading army." The writer added that the men worried about their wives' and children's safety as they have "become traitors to their section" and feared they their dependents would be "deprived of the means of subsistence and exposed to constant insults."<sup>19</sup>

\*\*\*

Distance separated East Tennessee from the major battlefields in Missouri and Virginia that summer, but the region's populace nonetheless lived in a divisive environment where strained political tensions manifested. Unionist women had to learn to survive in a new government, whereas Confederate women learned how to fuel the war machine while surrounded by local hostility. As autumn approached, the war forced them all to create a new normal which included participating in activities that both adhered to and conflicted with nineteenth-century gender ideals.

Throughout the summer and early fall, Confederate women grew militarized. One Confederate soldier wrote kindly of Knoxville's Confederate women and their ability to ease camp life for soldiers at Camp Cummings, located just outside of Knoxville. William J.

---

<sup>18</sup> Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War*, 368-370 and Sanders, "Camp Dick Robinson," *Explore Kentucky History*, accessed 15 May 2018, <https://explorekyhistory.ky.gov/items/show/18>.

<sup>19</sup> "Affairs at Camp Dick Robinson," *New York Times*, 13 October 1861.

Worsham of the Nineteenth Tennessee described how “the Ladies...gave us a ‘Barbacue’ [sic]...Men, women, and children were there from all around.”<sup>20</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain meanwhile visited her sons at Camp Cummings after they enlisted. She commented how the soldiers greeted her warmly and enjoyed the neighborly visit.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, the ladies of Loudon County socialized with the newly organized Confederate soldiers at Camp Fulkerson, singing and dancing throughout the night on 21 July. Katherine Rebecca Rutledge in July reassured her beau, Oliver Caswell King, that he had made the correct decision enlisting in the Confederate Army. She stated, “If my sweet heart had’nt [sic] to have went! don’t believe I would claim him any longer for I don’t know how he could have shown his...love for me more plainly than...by volunteering to defend our homes.”<sup>22</sup>

The morbid subject of death soon entered women’s thoughts. One of Fain’s neighbors told her that he had recently travelled to Knoxville with a father of a slain Confederate soldier bringing his son’s remains home. She asked, “if he thought his father seemed much distressed.” The neighbor replied that the father “seemed so much elated at the success of our armies he did not seem to feel the death of his child much.” Fain already had sent three of her sons to the Confederate Army and most likely doubted the validity of that statement. She instead pondered the possibility that she also might lose a son. Fain concluded, “I have always felt to the truly

---

<sup>20</sup> William J. Worsham, *The Old Nineteenth Tennessee Regiment, C.S.A.*, 23 June 1861, Special Collections, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, [http://dlc.lib.utk.edu/spc/view?docId+tei/0012\\_003579\\_000201\\_0000/0012\\_003579\\_000201\\_0000.xml](http://dlc.lib.utk.edu/spc/view?docId+tei/0012_003579_000201_0000/0012_003579_000201_0000.xml).

<sup>21</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 28 July 1861 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 22.

<sup>22</sup> Isham G. Harris, Nashville, TN to Executive Department, Nashville, TN, 16 October 1861 in *War the Rebellion*, 176 and Katherine Rebecca Rutledge, Blountville, to Oliver Caswell King, July 15 [no year], Oliver Caswell King and Katherine Rebecca King Papers; Oliver Caswell King, Camp Fulkerson, Loudon to Katherine Rebecca Rutledge, Blountville, 21 July 1861, Oliver Caswell King and Katherine Rebecca King Papers. Katherine Rebecca Rutledge’s 15 July letter does not have a year attached to the date, but it can be inferred by the content of the letter that the year is 1861. In the letter Rutledge speaks to how proud she is of his recent enlistment; Private Oliver C. King enlisted in June of 1861 and wrote his first letter to her during his military service on 7 June 1861 from Knoxville.

patriotic heart there is no cause where we could lose our sons which would carry with it an alleviation of sorrow so much as the thought of Liberty, Liberty.”<sup>23</sup>

Monroe County’s Carrie Stakely wrote to her sister in late September addressing how the war pervaded her life. She stated, “Oh! I begin to realize indeed that war is going on in our own country.” Stakely pointed to the frequency in which she had to bid goodbye to her male friends.<sup>24</sup> Elisa Buffat Bolli spoke fondly of the pre-war days in which she would socialize with neighbors, yet “the war put an end to all these pleasures, the young men having joined the army or gone across the mountains to the Northern States...many homes were left with only women and children...being protected by our Heavenly Father.”<sup>25</sup> Sallie McDowell of Greenville felt it her patriotic duty to urge her sweetheart, John Thomas Moffett, to enlist. McDowell and Moffett had exchanged numerous letters throughout the summer and fall which discussed the prospect of their marriage, but Moffett thought it foolish to marry if he intended to enlist with the potential of being maimed or killed. McDowell countered that the Confederacy’s need of manpower superseded her desire to keep Moffett safe, but she promised to marry him even amid the dangers. Moffett praised her, writing, “your love, dear Sallie has exalted you into a heroine...to be willing to face the dangers and trials and uncertainties that loom up in the future so threateningly, proves that the blood of Spartan mothers still flows in the veins of women.” He continued “you shirk not from the trial...you fear not the dangers...the test is severe, trying, and painful, but when strength is given to endure, the result is glorious.” Moffett asked McDowell to pray for him in hopes that they “may shield and protect me.”<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 28 July 1861, in John N. Fain, ed. *Sanctified Trial*, 22.

<sup>24</sup> Carrie Stakely, Madisonville, to Martha Hall, Knoxville, 23 September 1861, Hall-Stakely Papers.

<sup>25</sup> Elisa Bolli-Buffat, *Memoirs and Diary of Elisa Buffat (Nee) Bolli* (Spring Place, Knox County: n.p. 1916), 101.

<sup>26</sup> John Thomas Moffett, New Market, to Sallie McDowell, Greenville, 15 October 1861, Sallie McDowell Moffett Papers.

The war increasingly influenced women's day-to-day lives as well. Shortages throughout the Confederacy, including East Tennessee, began as a result of the Federal coastal blockade. The growing lack of imported coffee especially spurred East Tennessee newspapers to recommend alternatives. Brownlow published a suggestion to roast a fresh red garden beet "till thoroughly parched, but not burned." Once cooked the beet would be ground and mixed with hot water. The letter writer proposed that the beet coffee mixture should be mixed with sugar and cream and testified that "I will defy you or anybody else to tell the difference between it and the best Java."<sup>27</sup> The *Athens Post* meanwhile published a piece that criticized the inferiority of coffee substitutes, and instead recommended that readers drink a bowl of milk with mush.<sup>28</sup> Salt became another commodity for which women had to pay exorbitant rates. Brownlow argued that "prices now demanded for salt...are disgraceful....and the war is made the occasion of oppressing them." Another article alluded to shortages in shops throughout the region, arguing that "the utter impossibility of getting new and additional stocks of goods" had made it difficult for merchants to make the necessary revenue to pay their rents.<sup>29</sup>

Confederate forces stationed in Knoxville compounded the problem of shortages for local farmers and families. The army purchased foodstuffs at discounted prices, which left farmers with less money and goods. Brownlow described "a curious phenomenon that the farmer is required to pay a double price for what he gets, whilst he is taught that he must drop his prices for...half rates!"<sup>30</sup> The pro-Confederate *Athens Post* similarly published an article entitled "Who Suffers Most?," that argued that "provisions and groceries are selling... very high at the South." It addressed the frequency of inflated prices on household goods and foodstuffs but did not

---

<sup>27</sup> "Coffee! Coffee!! Coffee!!!," *Brownlow's Weekly Whig*, 14 September 1861.

<sup>28</sup> "New Substitute for Coffee," *Athens Post*, 8 November 1861.

<sup>29</sup> "Extortion in Salt" and "High Rents," *Brownlow's Weekly Whig*, 21 and 14 September 1861.

<sup>30</sup> "Smuggling," *Brownlow's Weekly Whig*, 12 October 1861.

discuss how these inflated prices affected consumers, particularly families without present male wage earners. A later article blamed speculators, “moneygrabber[s]” who attained goods made scarce by the blockade and the war and sold them at elevated prices. The author stated that “as winter approaches the prospect becomes more immediate of great and bitter suffering among the poorer classes, not on account of any prostration of business, but solely on account of the...extortions practiced by speculators to advance the price of article prime and indispensable necessity.” Speculators, he added, were “people having a good time out of this war...[the] spoilers, sharpers, extortioners, who are bleeding the soldiers and the community at every pore, and who are growing rich and fat upon their blood.”<sup>31</sup>

Women’s correspondence also suffered as a result of the blockade. Oliver Caswell King had difficulty procuring paper to write letters to his sweetheart. He wrote Katherine Rutledge that “thanks to Lincoln and his blockade...I am now so destitute as to have nothing on which to write to you but ‘fools cap’ with the exception of some very small note paper which I intend to serve me in the capacity of cards, ever it would consume the whole case of it to write one ‘good, long’ letter.” Soldiers and families maximized every available space to communicate. The loss of men and now the loss of familiar goods brought the war to the front door of these women.<sup>32</sup>

Other Confederate soldiers became commonplace in these women’s lives during the summer of 1861. Viewing soldiers became a social activity for Myra Inman. She made an event out of a flag presentation to the Hamilton County Volunteers. The excitement continued into the evening hours and Inman “did not go to sleep till four o’clock.” Later that month, she wrote that “Rhoda and I went up to Mr. Campbell’s and marched down with the rest of the girls where

---

<sup>31</sup> “Who Suffers Most?,” “The Money-Grabbers in War Times,” and “The Harpies,” *Athens Post*, 25 October and 1 and 8 November 1861.

<sup>32</sup> Oliver Caswell King, Carter’s Depot to Katherine Rebecca Rutledge, Blountville, 19 October 1861, Oliver Caswell King and Katherine Rebecca King Papers.

Sallie Grant presented the flag to our company,” the Bradley Lancers. Men from throughout Bradley and Polk officially mustered into service in August of 1861. Inman also wrote of how she, her family members, and friends went to “Mrs. Stuart’s to see 8000 soldiers” in Cleveland. In November, Inman again recorded how she and her two sisters attended a public ceremony where Bradley County’s Florence Johnston “present[ed] Billy Brown’s Company with a flag.”<sup>33</sup>

Confederate women did more than look at soldiers, however. They often crafted and donated supplies and foodstuffs to local companies. Myra Inman not only attended flag presentations but helped make the flags themselves. She greatly enjoyed volunteering to sew flags for newly enlisted men, meeting with other women sometimes weekly at various homes. Such socialization extended to the flag presentation ceremonies where the women could publicly demonstrate their support. Knoxville’s Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey, a devoted secessionist and Confederate, described how his twenty-three-year-old daughter Charlotte demonstrated her generosity and adoration for the local enlistees in her making of flags. Charlotte Barton Ramsey would wave one of her flags to soldiers as they passed in front of her Knoxville home, Mecklenburg. These flags provided an early representation of Confederate women’s commitment to the Confederacy.<sup>34</sup>

Women also made and acquired clothing and blankets for soldiers. Inman wrote of how Confederate women traveled throughout the community seeking clothing donations, including one August morning when “Florence Johnston and Mrs. Montgomery... [came] to get blankets for the wounded soldiers.” Inman’s mother gave them cloth from a slave’s coat. Weeks later Inman went with her sister Rhoda to the Soldiers’ Aid Society “for the benefit of the volunteers.”

---

<sup>33</sup> Myra Inman, 6 and 16 August, 12 July, and 9 November 1861, in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 109, 111, 105, and 123.

<sup>34</sup> William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey: Autobiography and Letters* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2002), 164.

For days in late September Inman, her sisters, and neighbors knitted socks for men who had enlisted, even traveling to a neighbor's just to dye the yarn. While the younger Inmans were making socks, Inman's mother made "a pair of pantaloons for soldiers."<sup>35</sup> In her spare time, Carrie Stakely collected and boxed "blankets, clothing, and etc. for Colonel V[aughn's] regiment" in Monroe County. In two days she packed multiple boxes for the soldiers, valued at \$320.<sup>36</sup> A group of women from Rhea County's Prestonville created a Soldier's Aid Society in late September and within five weeks produced "80 pairs Socks, 36 pairs Pants, 16 pairs Drawers, 20 Shirts, 18 Blankets, 5 Vests, [and] 2 Coats" for a company comprised of volunteers serving in Kentucky. They wrote to the *Athens Post* at the end of October to encourage other Confederate women to send soldiers these subsistence items. They stated, "Although we cannot share with them the perils of the battlefield, yet we wish to prove to them by our deeds that they leave behind them women who possess true Southern patriotism enough to labor incessantly to promote their comfort and happiness."<sup>37</sup> Greenville's Sallie McDowell wrote to her father, Tennessee representative J.P. McDowell, asking permission to knit clothing for local soldiers. Her father, no Confederate, stated "I cannot help sympathize with the hero soldier in his sufferings, and although I may think he is engaged in a curse...I think they are suffering for this country." He closed his letter, "If you feel like it is your duty to bid the Suffering Soldiers...I can't object...I would prefer you should do it a way as to cause as little talk about as possible." Unlike her father, she regularly attended Confederate political rallies and encouraged local men to serve.<sup>38</sup> As Dr. Ramsey described her early involvement in the war, "Charlotte...was the first

---

<sup>35</sup>Myra Inman, 5 and 19 August and 24 September 1861, in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 109, 111, and 116.

<sup>36</sup> Carrie Stakely, Madisonville, to Martha Hall, Knoxville, 23 September 1861, Hall-Stakely Papers.

<sup>37</sup> "More Clothing for the Volunteers, *Athens Post*, 1 November 1861.

<sup>38</sup> J.P. McDowell, Nashville, to Sallie McDowell, Greenville, 23 October 1861, Sallie McDowell Moffett Papers.

to devote the beauty and fashion of Knoxville to the southern cause, the first to sing and play Dixie and to inspire her hearers with a passion for the sunny South.”<sup>39</sup>

Confederate women offered their support for the war machine in other ways. One unidentified “lady” urged Confederates to pray each day for God’s favor. She feared the North was “superior in numbers and has advantage of us in many respects.” This East Tennessee “lady” asked for the *Athens Post* readers to “bless our soldiers – shield and strengthen them in the hour of battle, and give us wise and Christian rulers, to guide our Ship of State in its day of trial.”<sup>40</sup> Carrie Stakely replaced her father as head clerk at Stakely & Company store after he enlisted in the Confederate Army. She wrote of her pride in assuming the traditionally male occupation, writing that “I guess some of our Foremothers attended to their fathers’ and brothers’ and husbands’ business[es], while they went to defend their rights and liberties, their home and friends against an invading foe...if they didn’t or if they did, I know very well that I should be proud to know that they did, and should consider myself unworthy to be a descendant of them.” She added that “I go to the store as soon as I eat breakfast...I come home at dinner...I generally find a little time to sew at the store in the afternoon and come home at twilight.” Surprised, she wrote of how she had to assist with baking bread one day when she returned from the store, finding the family slaves were too busy with laundry to take on this chore. The anomaly of the war and the enslaved at home allowed Stakely to participate in the economic sector. Her status in the professional class had prevented her taking part in such traditional male affairs, but the war created a microcosm in which society at least tolerated the bending of gender conceptions.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 16.

<sup>40</sup> “Prayer,” *Athens Post*, 25 October 1861.

<sup>41</sup> Carrie Stakely, Madisonville, to Martha Hall, Knoxville, 10 October 1861 and 23 September 1861, and Carrie Stakely, Madisonville, to Martha Hall, Knoxville, 23 September 1861, Hall-Stakely Papers.

\*\*\*

Meanwhile, small sporadic instances of violence and rebellion from the dissident Unionist population began during the fall of 1861. Zollicoffer accused local Unionists of burning “the Hiwassee bridge and two other bridges of railroad near Chattanooga” on 8 October 1861. He also stated an “attempt [on] Strawberry Plains bridge failed,” but that the burning prevented eastern bound cars from entering in the region.<sup>42</sup> Brownlow reported an incident in early October involving an altercation between five prominent Union men in Sevier County and local Confederate militia. The militia took the Unionists from their homes, regardless of age of health, and “drove them on foot” to Knoxville. While under arrest the men “were compelled to kneel in the mud...and beg, and made to cry out whatever was dictated.”<sup>43</sup>

In October the Confederate Army finally arrested Brownlow for treason. Brownlow stated in his last newspaper editorial that “the indictment will be made because of ‘some treasonable articles in late numbers of the *Whig*.’” He also had refused to take a Confederate loyalty oath, believing it demeaning. He had “committed no offense – I have not shouldered arms against the Confederate Government, or the State, or encouraged others to do so – I have discouraged Rebellion, publicly and privately – I have not assumed a hostile attitude towards the Civil or Military authorities.” He had “refused to make war upon the Government of the United States...refused to publish to the world, false and exaggerated accounts, of the several engagements had between the contending armies...refused to write out and publish false versions of the origin of this war, and of the breaking up of the best Government the world ever knew;

---

<sup>42</sup> Felix K. Zollicoffer, Knoxville, TN to Colonel W.W. Mackall, Jacksborough, 9 October 1861 in *War in Rebellion*, 170.

<sup>43</sup> “Outrage by Volunteers,” *Brownlow’s Weekly Whig*, 12 October 1861.

and all this I will continue to do, if it cost me my life.” Brownlow concluded that the Confederate Government arrested him so as to “dry up, break down, silence, and destroy, the last and only Union paper left in the eleven seceded States, and thereby to keep from the people of East Tennessee, the facts which are daily transpiring in the country.”<sup>44</sup>

Tension continued to grow. The *Athens Post* reported that five thousand Federal soldiers were ready to enter East Tennessee through Jamestown in Fentress County. The editor of the newspaper, a pro-Confederate outlet, minimized the danger, arguing that “there are...parties in East Tennessee in correspondence with [Andrew] Johnson and other enemies; but they are marked and watched...no Federal troops will cross our borders, and at the end of six weeks there will not be a Federal soldier on the soil of Kentucky.”<sup>45</sup> Nonetheless, throughout October, the Confederate Command feared that Unionists would inflict further damage on East Tennessee’s bridges, preventing the transport of men and supplies along the vital rails. Colonel W.B. Woods wrote to Zollicoffer, “I am not certain that it is safe to leave the bridges unguarded.” By late October, Zollicoffer feared that Union troops would enter East Tennessee, incite the local Unionists, and endanger the Confederacy’s control over the vital railroad region. He wrote to Lieutenant Colonel William W. Mackall, Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston’s assistant adjutant general at Bowling Green Kentucky, asking Johnston to move troops into Cumberland Gap to prevent Federal forces from coming. He worried that “indications give some ground for uneasiness as to East Tennessee population in event the enemy enters the State.”<sup>46</sup> Oliver Caswell King, now a Confederate private stationed at Carter’s Depot, wrote to his sweetheart on

---

<sup>44</sup> “Closing out the Knoxville Whig,” *Brownlow’s Weekly Whig*, 26 October 1861.

<sup>45</sup> *Athens Post*, 25 October 1861.

<sup>46</sup> Colonel W.B. Woods to Felix K. Zollicoffer, Knoxville, TN, 17 October 1861 and Felix K. Zollicoffer, Knoxville, TN, to Lieutenant Colonel Mackall, Bowling Green, KY, 31 October 1861 in *War the Rebellion*, 170-171.

19 October 1861 that “threats to burn the bridge have been frequent since our departure.”<sup>47</sup> Then on 4 November, Colonel John P. Murray of 28<sup>th</sup> Tennessee alerted Johnston that “Federal troops are moving in the direction of this section of the State, from which I infer they aim to penetrate East Tennessee.” He asked Johnston to send artillery to the region’s mountain passes in order to prevent the infiltration of Federal troops.<sup>48</sup>

Bridge burnings in the fall of 1861 finally brought the violence endemic to war to East Tennessee’s women. At Camp Dick Robinson, Presbyterian minister William Blount Carter and his brother Samuel devised a scheme to strike a blow to the Confederates and usher Federal troops into East Tennessee. Working with Brigadier General William Tecumseh Sherman, who commanded Federal troops in Kentucky, and his subordinate George H. Thomas, Carter and other East Tennessee Unionists would destroy portions of nine of the region’s railroad bridges stretching from Bristol, Tennessee to Bridgeport, Alabama. Once damaged, the bridges would immobilize two hundred and fifty miles of track and stop Confederate forces from transferring goods and troops between the eastern and western portions of the Confederacy. William Blount Carter traveled to Washington D.C. to inform Lincoln and U. S. Army general-in-chief George B. McClellan of his plan. Lincoln, eager to liberate East Tennessee, approved and ordered troops into southeast Kentucky to plan an invasion in conjunction with the bridge burnings. Lincoln also gave Carter \$2,500 to finance the operation. Carter and Thomas agreed that the attacks would take place on 8 November 1861, and that Thomas would move troops to the Tennessee-Kentucky border. Zollicoffer, already fearful of an invasion, had by then moved more than four thousand troops fifteen miles north of the Cumberland Gap. Carter County physician

---

<sup>47</sup> Oliver Caswell King, Carter’s Depot to Katherine Rebecca Rutledge, Blountville, 19 October 1861, Oliver Caswell King and Katherine Rebecca King Papers, 1856-1893.

<sup>48</sup> Colonel John P. Murray to General Albert Sidney Johnston, Camp Zollicoffer, 4 November 1861 in *War the Rebellion*, 170-171.

Abraham Jobe wrote that “every road and gap was guarded to prevent [Unionists] from getting through the mountains into Kentucky.”<sup>49</sup>

Once the time came, Carter’s plan did go as envisioned. Sherman decided that he did not want to waste Thomas’ manpower on East Tennessee and pulled his troops back. Carter never received word of the change. On the night of 8 November only five bridges burned, “the bridge over the Hiwassee River at Charleston...the bridge over Lick Creek...the bridge over the Holsten River, at Union...[and] two small [Western and Atlantic] bridges on Chickamauga Creek” outside of Chattanooga. East Tennesseans had traveled eighty miles to burn the bridge at Bridgeport, but found the bridge guarded by Confederate troops and returned home without accomplishing their goal. Unionists in Strawberry Plains also made an unsuccessful attempt on the local ET&VA. The Strawberry Plains bridge stood at an impressive forty feet and 1,600 feet long, the largest bridge on the ET&VA. James Keelan, a Confederate civilian and employee of the ET&VA, shot and wounded several of the conspirators and deterred their attempts while sustaining significant injuries, including the loss of his hand.<sup>50</sup> The *Knoxville Register* reported that an injured Keelan shot and killed William Pickens, son of previous United States Senator, and an unknown man. Local Confederate forces also blocked any attempts to burn the Loudon Bridge on the Tennessee River. The Unionists at Carter’s Depot, a bridge across the Watauga River, also failed, fearing nearby Confederate forces. The Lincolnites did manage to cut telegraph wires between “Knoxville and Chattanooga, and Knoxville and Bristol.”<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> Dorothy Kelly, “The Bridge Burnings and Union Uprising of 1861,” *Tennessee Ancestors* 21 no.2 (August, 2005): 124; Digby Gordon Seymour, *Divided Loyalties: Fort Sanders and the Civil War in East Tennessee* (Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1982), 32; Robert Tracy McKenzie, *Lincolnites and Rebels*, 91; Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War*, 370-371; David C. Hsiung, ed., *A Mountaineer in Motion: The Memoir of Dr. Abraham Jobe*, 77. Abraham Jobe started writing his memoir in 1849, but as he added entries he did not include any dates. It is difficult to know when his entries on the Civil War were written.

<sup>50</sup> Dorothy Kelly, “The Bridge Burnings and Union Uprising of 1861,” 123-124.

<sup>51</sup> “The Incendiary Plot of the East Tennessee Lincolnites,” *Knoxville Register* 12 November 1861 in *Nashville Union and American*, 17 November 1861.

Nonetheless, the November bridge burnings were the first large scale act of rebellion against the Confederacy in East Tennessee. Knoxville's Thomas William Humes described the Unionist men's intent as "committed, no doubt, not in a spirit of mere wanton mischief, but of war upon an enemy and for the purpose of seriously interrupting the military communications of the Southern Confederacy."<sup>52</sup> Brownlow in contrast asserted that the wanton oppression experienced at the hands of Confederates motivated the bridge burners. The "authorities, civil, and military" had ignored attacks until "our people rose up in rebellion...one Saturday night...at eleven o'clock...from Chattanooga to the Virginia line...the railroad bridges took fire."<sup>53</sup>

The bridge burnings left a deep psychological impact upon a furious Confederate population. The media described the event as "diabolical" and the Unionist actors as "traitors" and "cowards." An editorial called for "authorities" to be "prompt, vigorous and unrelenting until every one of the conspirators is apprehended and punished...at this time any other course would be weakness and not mercy...otherwise anarchy and indiscriminate slaughter will step in to take its place."<sup>54</sup> In an anonymous letter to the editor of the *Nashville Union and American*, a Rogersville citizen requested that "all East Tennessee should...be put under MARTIAL LAW at once." The writer compared the state of affairs within the region to "a state of actual war" with "enemies amongst us, many of whom are known to us, but, by stealth and duplicity, they manage to elude the civil authorities."<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> Thomas William Humes, *The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee*, 133.

<sup>53</sup> William Gannaway Brownlow, "Speech against the Great Rebellion," (Washington D.C.: Scammell and Bros., 1862) in Jon L. Wakelyn, ed., *Southern Unionist Pamphlets and the Civil War* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 114.

<sup>54</sup> "The Troubles in East Tennessee," *Athens Post* [no date], in *Nashville Union and American*, 20 November 1861.

<sup>55</sup>[No Author], Rogersville, TN, 26 November 1861 in "Letter from East Tennessee," *Nashville Union and American*, 30 November 1861.

Stationed in Bristol, Tennessee Colonel Daniel Leadbetter of the Confederate Provisional Army wrote to department commander General Albert Sidney Johnston five days after the bridge burnings and summarized the destruction. Leadbetter assessed the damages, stating that “the country traversed by the road is represented as being in a very disturbed condition.” The attacks had accomplished little, however. He asserted that “passengers continue to traverse the road, the only difficulty being detention from the destruction of bridges at the points named.”<sup>56</sup> The *Knoxville Register* meanwhile estimated that the \$50,000 worth of damage had been done, but “the loss on all the roads, however from the destruction of property, is trifling, compared with that resulting from the interruption of the transportation.” The damage slowed the speed in which the Confederate Government could acquire vital supplies. Railroad employees had to unload the passengers, soldiers, and cargo at the damaged bridges and transport them across the bodies of water via barges. The author estimated that the bridges could not be repaired until after the first of January 1862.<sup>57</sup>

News of the night’s events meanwhile traveled fast. A neighbor came to the Inman household and stated, “there were five bridges burned last night by the union people.”<sup>58</sup> Two days following the bridge burnings, Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain wrote “this morning finds heart, soul, and body in a state of great excitement from the rumor of burnt bridges and strong apprehensions of a rebellious movement on the part of the Union desperados of East Tennessee.” She feared that the bridge burners had brought “irretrievable ruin” on East Tennessee.<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>56</sup> Colonel D. Leadbetter, Bristol, Tennessee to General Albert Sidney Johnston, Bowling Green, KY, 13 November 1861 in *The War of Rebellion*, Vol. 52, 207.

<sup>57</sup> “Damage to the Railroad,” *Knoxville Register*, 14 November 1861 in *Nashville Union and American* 17 November 1861.

<sup>58</sup> Myra Inman, 9 November 1861, in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 123.

<sup>59</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 10 November 1861 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 29.

Tension and new rumors rose in the days and weeks following the bridge burnings. Local media outlets reported that eight hundred armed Unionists from Carter and Johnson Counties had gathered in Carter County. The *Knoxville Register* reported that they aimed to protect locals whom the Confederate authorities suspected of burning bridges. In an anonymous letter to the *Nashville Union and American*, meanwhile, a Rogersville man wrote that “a large force of private citizens from this county are now gone with their arms to break up a rendezvous of avowed Lincolnites in the mountains between this and Jonesboro.” The newspaper also reported that “five hundred to one thousand, are in arms, under Colonel Clift” in Hamilton County and are making their way to Kentucky to join Union forces.<sup>60</sup>

For months prior to the bridge burning, the Confederate government had feared that East Tennessee’s Unionists would rebel. The bridge burnings “confirmed the... worst fears.” R. O. L. Owen, president of the ET&VA, feared further damage from the region’s Unionists. He wrote, “there is no doubt but that re-enforcements are every moment reaching them from Watauga County, North Carolina, and Johnson, Carter, and Washington Counties, Tennessee.”<sup>61</sup> The Confederate Army sent troops and local militia into East Tennessee to prevent further damage and make repairs. The War Department placed Colonel Leadbetter in “command of troops...stationed for the protection of the railroad from [Bristol] to Chattanooga, rebuilding bridges, and keeping open the communication.” Brigadier General W. H. Carroll wrote four days after the events that “one regiment, 900 strong, left this morning for East Tennessee...another will follow as soon as transportation can be procured.” The next day

---

<sup>60</sup> “The Confederacy,” 17 November 1861, *Knoxville Register* in 19 November 1861, *Nashville Union and American* and [Unknown Author], Rogersville, Tennessee, “Letter from East Tennessee,” in 30 November 1861, *Nashville Union and American*.

<sup>61</sup> Jubal P. Benjamin, Richmond, VA to R.O.L. Owen, 11 November 1861, ed. James B. Jones Jr., *Tennessee Civil War Source Book*, Tennessee Historical Commission, <http://tennesseecivilwarsourcebook.com>.

Leadbetter wrote to Johnston that “Stovall’s battalion, Georgia Volunteers, is hourly expected from Richmond, and a regiment from General Bragg’s command is ordered to report at Chattanooga.”<sup>62</sup>

Historian Dorothy Kelly argues that “the burning of the bridges so alarmed the Confederate government that it set in motion a campaign of suppression, persecution, imprisonment, and death for suspected Unionists.”<sup>63</sup> Oliver Temple, agreed that “the attempt to burn these bridges...did but little injury to the enemy, while it brought untold calamities and sufferings on the Union people.” Confederate authorities believed that unrest spread throughout East Tennessee, although Temple later argued that “not three hundred people in East Tennessee, outside of those actually engaged in the work, knew of the purpose to destroy the bridges, yet the belief generally existed in the minds of the Confederate authorities that nearly all the Union men knew in advance of this contemplated movement.” East Tennessee’s representatives wholly denounced the bridge burning and attributed the “violence to a few extreme men, acting without concert, and against the motives and consciences of the mass of the people.” The writer feared another instance and demanded “new vigilance for the suppression of such outbreaks, and the sternest application of unrelenting punishment to every person detected in having any share in the villainy.”<sup>64</sup>

The participants and their families were the first to experience Confederate wrath. Immediately following the event the Confederate authorities sought to find those who were responsible. W. H. Crowder, one of the Union men who had burned the Chickamauga Creek

---

<sup>62</sup> Colonel D. Leadbetter, Bristol, Tennessee to General Albert Sidney Johnston, Bowling Green, KY, 13 November 1861; W.H. Carroll, Memphis, TN to J.P. Benjamin, Richmond, VA, 12 November 1861; and Colonel D. Leadbetter, Bristol, Tennessee to General Albert Sidney Johnston, Bowling Green, KY, 13 November 1861, *The War of Rebellion*, 206, 207.

<sup>63</sup> Dorothy Kelly, “The Bridge Burnings and Union Uprising of 1861,” 123, 125-128.

<sup>64</sup> Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War*, 387 and 400-401 and “Bridge Burners of East Tennessee,” *Daily Picayune*, 19 November 1861.

bridges, had accidentally left behind his saddle blanket emblazoned with his name. Confederate authorities set out to find and try him for treason, and even offered a reward for his capture. Crowder escaped the soldiers as they tried to arrest him at his home. He spent the next three months hiding from troops before escaping to Kentucky. His family suffered greatly. Crowder left behind a wife and six children whom Confederate troops forced out of her home. Soldiers soon turned it into a Confederate camp. Crowder's partner, W. T. Cate, also was suspected of the burnings and fled to Kentucky, leaving a wife ill with consumption and three children. A. M. Cate, Thomas L. Cate, Adam Thomas, and Jesse and Eli Cleveland burned the ET&GA's Hiwassee Bridge located just outside of Charleston. Confederate authorities summarily jailed and transported them to a Confederate prison in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, but not before Confederate soldiers raided and looted their families' homes. Soldiers hunted down the men who burned Union Depot, located over the Holston River in Sullivan County.<sup>65</sup>

Beyond the men who actually took part in the bridge burnings, local Confederates soon took it upon themselves to rid the region of all traitors to the Confederacy. Myra Inman reported in a week following the bridge burnings that "volunteers went out to look for Mr. [William] Clift's men."<sup>66</sup> A staunch Hamilton County Unionist, Clift had spoken out against the Confederacy and urged East Tennesseans to join his cause. A wealthy man owning over ten thousand acres, he soon created and led the Federal Seventh Tennessee, largely a guerrilla force because the United States government did not authorize its creation.<sup>67</sup> One week following the bridge burning, Governor Harris "issued an order to capture Clift and his men, dead or alive." Inman wrote that Clift's men had "fled" and that they "took citizens' guns away from them

---

<sup>65</sup>Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War*, 387 and 400-401.

<sup>66</sup>Myra Inman, 14 November 1861 in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 123.

<sup>67</sup>Clift Family Papers: ca. 1820-1968, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Accession Number 1968383 and "William J. Clift in 1860 U.S. Federal Census," *Ancestry.com*, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com).

today.” She most likely referred to local Confederates taking arms away from their Unionist neighbors.<sup>68</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain’s seventeen-year-old son Ike belonged to a local partisan group that targeted Union men after the bridge burnings. On 24 November, Fain wrote that Ike had traveled to Bays Mountain “where it is said a number of our poor deluded and infatuated Union men have collected for resistance to the law and to work wickedly.” She feared that violence would certainly ensue. Fain could not understand why these men “could murder our own brothers” and questioned “who does not feel they could weep day and night when we think of the calamities which are upon us.”<sup>69</sup>

Thomas William Humes described local Unionists as having been “violently treated by over-zealous neighbors or by lawless soldiers in small squads – whipped with hickories or arrested for their Union sentiments and forced to pay money for their release.” Local Confederate officials ignored such wrongdoing even though such acts were illegal. He ascertained that local Confederate officials believed “to be a Union man” was “...itself a crime, and injustices suffered on that account outside the operation of the law, could not rightfully be appealed to the court.”<sup>70</sup>

Amid the upheaval following the bridge burnings, Unionists again began to flee in a second wave of flight. J. G. M. Ramsey wrote to Jefferson Davis regarding the “simultaneous stampedes of the Union men in the direction of Kentucky.” He believed that “large numbers of Tories unarmed and on foot have stealthily withdrawn from nearly all East Tennessee, and are no doubt in the enemy’s service, and if the invasion of the border counties is prosecuted further these refugees will come against us; and acting as pilots through that mountain region will

---

<sup>68</sup> Myra Inman, 14 November 1861 in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 123.

<sup>69</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 24 November 1861, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 30.

<sup>70</sup> Thomas William Humes, *The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee*, 138.

endanger several important points.” Ramsey also argued that the newly appointed commander of the East Tennessee District, Major General George B. Crittenden, could not prevent the fleeing of Unionists to Kentucky. He claimed that if the government did not appoint a competent leader then “East Tennessee will be invaded and held, the bridges burned again, and our territorial disintegration temporarily effected.”<sup>71</sup>

The Confederate War Department thereafter received numerous notifications regarding treasonous Unionist activity in East Tennessee. After the bridge burnings, Unionist men congregated throughout the region waiting and preparing for General Thomas’ invasion, which never materialized. Historian Dorothy Kelly determined that “Unionists numbering 1,500 were reported...near the unscathed Watauga Bride, 1,000 were said to be near the Strawberry Plains Bridge, 1,500 in Hamilton County, and a new camp already containing 300 in Sevier County just 10 miles from Knoxville.”<sup>72</sup>

Dr. Abraham Jobe of Elizabethton wrote that the day after the bridge burnings “about 1000 Union men, citizens of Carter, Johnson, Washington, and Sullivan counties, assembled in Elizabethton” armed with weapons ready to march to Kentucky and join what they thought would be an impending Union invasion. Tasked with capturing the bridge burners, Colonel Leadbetter confirmed this when he asked Johnston for permission to attack “a force of Unionists, some 1,000 strong...at Elizabethton.” Jobe formed a Unionist regiment and they encountered a small contingent of Confederates at Carter’s Depot. A skirmish ensued which resulted in no casualties, but several of his men were captured. After only a week, Jobe’s men disbanded and hid in the mountains to evade Confederate troops. Jobe went home to his wife and hid in his

---

<sup>71</sup> J. G. M. Ramsey, Knoxville, to President Jefferson Davis, Richmond, Virginia, 24 January 1862 in *The War of the Rebellion*, 256-257.

<sup>72</sup> Dorothy Kelly, “The Bridge Burnings and Union Uprising of 1861,” 128.

cellar for six weeks, fearing that the Confederate Army would arrest him like many of his neighbors. His thirty-four-year-old wife Sophrina, cared for him, even fielding a Confederate soldier's inquiries as to his whereabouts. Jobe relied upon his wife for news and protection. Sophrina Jobe kept his secret, not even revealing his location to family. Jobe finally escaped with help from two old friends, Confederate officers Nathaniel M. Taylor and Robert B. Vance.<sup>73</sup>

Beyond East Tennessee's borders, neighboring governors sensed an ideological disease that had to be quarantined. North Carolina Governor Henry T. Clark feared that East Tennessee's Unionist unrest would spread across the mountains to Western North Carolina. Clark asserted that "a border warfare must ensue" and warned that "unless our people are protected they may be somewhat affected either by the superiority of the traitors or their artful promises." He wrote to Secretary of War Benjamin that he could had furnish two regiments from Buncombe and Ashe Counties with "some flint-and-steel muskets and hunting rifles" and send them to the Tennessee-North Carolina border if Benjamin approved. Two days later, Clark wrote again to Benjamin regarding his fears of the Unionist insurrection in East Tennessee. He determined that "the troubles are greatly increasing in East Tennessee, and treason is becoming more bold and more common...it is assuming formidable proportions." He stated the North Carolina's border counties reported that East Tennessee Unionists were traveling throughout the counties trying to incite fellow Unionists and gain adherents. He asked Benjamin to send one of North Carolina's regiments stationed in Jonesborough, Tennessee, to North Carolina's border counties. He also requested arms enough to equip two thousand men, and the ability to create a twelve-month regiment for the protection of western North Carolina from East Tennessee Unionism. Benjamin refused Clark's request for arms, stating that War Department was

---

<sup>73</sup> David C. Hsiung, ed., *A Mountaineer in Motion*, 78-80 and Colonel D. Leadbetter, Bristol, TN to General Albert Sidney Johnston, Bowling Green, KY, 13 November 1861 in *War of Rebellion*, Vol., 52, 207.

experiencing a shortage of weapons, but closed the letter, “I can assure you...that arrangements have been made to secure the safety of Eastern Tennessee and Northwestern North Carolina, and to crush out all treason in that section, which will doubtless prove effectual.” Georgia Governor Joseph E. Brown meanwhile suggested that Benjamin send troops to East Tennessee’s border to prevent the spread of Unionism into northern Georgia. Brown wrote “I think it very important that troops be thrown upon the frontier of Georgia at once... may I beg you to direct General [Robert E.] Lee to arm Colonels Bailey’s and Littlefield’s regiments with Enfield rifles, and order them immediately to the line of Tennessee.”<sup>74</sup>

The bridge burnings proved to be a turning point for the region. Historian Dorothy Kelly argues that “the time for leniency in East Tennessee was past...repercussions from the events of 8 November would affect not only perpetrators but their families, their neighbors, and the whole region.”<sup>75</sup> At the end of November, Benjamin instructed Colonel W. B. Wood in Knoxville that “all such as can be identified in having engaged in bridge-burning are to be tried summarily by...court martial and if found guilty, execute on the spot by hanging.” He even continued, “it would be well to leave their bodies hanging in the vicinity of the burned bridges” as a warning to the consequences of rebellion. He closed, “in no case is one of the men known to have been in arms against [the Confederacy] to be released on any pledge or oath of allegiance... the time for such measures is past.” Wood placed Knoxville under martial law and disarmed Unionist citizens. Many of the region’s suspected bridge burners were jailed and some indeed hanged as

---

<sup>74</sup> Governor Henry T. Clark, Raleigh, NC to Jubal P. Benjamin, Richmond, VA, 16 November 1861; Governor Henry T. Clark, Raleigh, NC to Jubal P. Benjamin, Richmond, VA 18 November 1861; Jubal P. Benjamin, Richmond, VA to Governor Henry T. Clark, Raleigh, NC, 21 November 1861; Governor Henry T. Clark, Milledgeville, GA to Jubal P. Benjamin, Richmond, VA, 17 November 1861 in *War of Rebellion*, Vol. 52, 209, 210, 214, 209; Thomas William Humes, *The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee*, 138.

<sup>75</sup> Dorothy Kelly, “The Bridge Burnings and Union Uprising of 1861,” 128.

punishment for their treasonous activities.<sup>76</sup> Colonel Leadbeater ordered two individuals, twenty-year old Jacob Madison Hinshaw and thirty-six-year-old Henry Fry, to hang along the railroad track in Greenville after a quick court martial for their involvement in the burning of the Lick Creek Bridge. Hinshaw and Fry died on 30 November and their bodies indeed hung by the tracks for twenty-six hours as visual representations of the repercussions of treason.<sup>77</sup>

The punishment extended to their wives and young children of the bridge burners, who were forced to live in a contentious environment labeled as traitors for their husbands' actions. Fry left a thirty-six-year old wife and four children ranging in age from seventeen to one. Hinshaw left behind a young pregnant wife and a not yet two-year old son. Their death inspired family members to join the Federal Army. On 11 December 1861, C. A. Haun was executed in Knoxville for his involvement at Lick Creek, leaving his pregnant wife and four children ranging from thirteen to two. Jacob and Henry Harmon were hanged at Knoxville on 17 December for their involvement at Lick Creek.<sup>78</sup> Oliver Temple wrote that Confederate soldiers forced the elder Harmon to watch his son hang prior to his own execution. Once again Confederate soldiers left a visual reminder, the rope, to terrorize Knoxville's Unionists from further traitorous acts. Temple wrote "the gallows remained standing... until after the Federal army entered the city, when it was destroyed by the soldiers with a fury similar to that which characterized the destruction of the Old Bastille by the populace by Paris."<sup>79</sup>

---

<sup>76</sup> 25 November 1861, Secretary of War Judah P. Benjamin, Richmond, Virginia, to Colonel W.B. Wood, Knoxville in "The First Hanging During the Rebellion – East Tennesseans Must be Hung!," *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 6 September 1865.

<sup>77</sup> Donahue Bible, "The Hangings of the Greene County Bridge Burners," *Tennessee Ancestors* 21 no. 2 (August 2005): 130-136; "East Tennessee," *Athens Post*; 21 February 1862; and "Bridge Burners Hung in Greenville," *Nashville Union and American*, 3 December 1861.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War*, 398 and 399.

Jacob Harmon's other son, Thomas Harmon, died days after being released from a Knoxville prison. Only Harrison Self, convicted of treason, did not hang for his involvement in the Lick Creek burning. Brownlow also discussed twenty-one-year-old Elizabeth Self of Greene County, who traveled to Knoxville to visit her father in jail prior to his execution. He described the encounter of the father and daughter, "she entered the cage where her father was...she clasped him around the neck...they sobbed and cried; they shed their tears and made their moans." Brownlow described Self after the meeting with her father, writing that "she came out of the cage, stammering, and trying to utter something intelligible. Elizabeth Self asked Brownlow to write President Jefferson Davis to stay her father's execution. Brownlow obliged and "Jeff. Davis, who had a better heart than the rest of them...for he could not withstand the appeals of a woman...told him not to hang that man." Brownlow concluded the story finding that "Self has served his time out and has gone home, and that girl is saved the wretchedness of being left alone without a father."<sup>80</sup>

Following the hangings, the other men's bodies were transported to Malinda Harmon, wife and mother of the executed, along with a bill for their transport. Brownlow viewed the hangings as atrocities and vilified Leadbetter, whom Brownlow believed ordered trains passing by to slow down and give passengers a chance to "kick the rigid bodies and strike them with a rattan."<sup>81</sup> In a speech in 1862, Brownlow later stated, "I pledge you my honor that on the front platform they made a business of kicking the dead bodies as they passed by; and...the women,

---

<sup>80</sup> William Gannaway Brownlow, "Speech against the Great Rebellion," in Jon L. Wakelyn, ed., *Southern Unionist Pamphlets and the Civil War*, 113, 114, 116, 117, 118. J.C. Haum and his wife were unable to be located in the United States 1860 Federal Census.

<sup>81</sup> *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 6 September 1865.

the wives and daughters of men in high position, waved their white handkerchiefs in triumph through the windows of the car at the sight of the two dead bodies hanging there.”<sup>82</sup>

Hangings were not the only punishment for those suspected for participating in the bridge burnings. Historian David C. Hsiung found that Confederate authorities sent over two hundred East Tennessee Unionists to prisons in the South, while over a thousand were imprisoned in local jails. Temple wrote that suspected men were treated as prisoners of war and transported under armed guard. Many of the imprisoned men had no involvement with the bridge burnings or the military congregations.<sup>83</sup>

Mass arrests and refugees left many Unionist women alone to cope with a hostile environment and diminishing resources. Brownlow spoke of how after his arrest and imprisonment in Knoxville in early December 1861, his wife sent “three meals a day” for him and “two old clergymen” via his son. He told another story of how one of his prison mates, James Madison Cate, was incarcerated for his failure to volunteer for the Confederacy. Cate contracted an illness while in prison. His wife begged the guards to visit her husband, whom she believed would perish. Brownlow described the encounter “as she came in and looked upon her husband’s wan and emaciated face and saw how rapidly he was sinking, she gave evident signs of fainting and would have fallen to the floor with the babe in her arms, had I not rushed to her...then she sank down...unable at first to speak a single word.” He also described how the Confederate troops in Greenville forced Andrew Johnson’s ill wife, Eliza McCardle Johnson, to vacate their home in late 1861. Landon Carter Haynes, a newly elected Tennessee Senator, sent a notice of sequestration proceedings to Eliza McCardle Johnson and her sons and son-in-laws

---

<sup>82</sup>William Gannaway Brownlow, “Speech against the Great Rebellion,” in Jon L. Wakelyn, ed., *Southern Unionist Pamphlets and the Civil War*, 115.

<sup>83</sup>David C. Hsiung, ed., *A Mountaineer in Motion*, 7 and Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War*, 392.

which informed Andrew Johnson's family that per the Confederate Provisional Congress his property would be seized due to his status as an alien enemy for the benefit of the "citizens of the Confederate States, and persons aiding the same in the existing war with the United States." The troops forced Eliza McCardle Johnson "to take shelter with one of her daughters in an adjoining county" and "appropriated [the] house, carpet, and bedding, for a hospital."<sup>84</sup>

Less prominent families suffered as well. Itinerant preacher Hermann Borkum wrote that one of his dear friends, a Reverend Duggan, had been taken prisoner twenty miles outside of Knoxville for praising Lincoln in his sermons and forced to walk to a Knoxville prison in the oppressive heat. The prison released Duggan and Borkum declared "that journey on foot had become the cause of his death." Brownlow spoke of the widow of a Knox County man, J. C. Haum, who after her husband's execution was left with "four or five helpless children." He described that as "my wife passed the farm of Haum's... [she] saw his wife ploughing endeavoring to raise corn for her suffering and starving children."<sup>85</sup>

The bridge burnings in November of 1861 drastically altered life for Unionists. Historian Dorothy Kelly argues that "instead of liberation, it brought [East Tennesseans] oppression, persecution, unbelievable suffering, and death...the bridges were soon rebuilt, and Confederate men and material were once again shipped to the armies on the railroads of East Tennessee." Confederates responded swiftly and brutally. An environment characterized by retribution and violence developed. Unionists women lost fathers, husbands, and sons to the wave of violence. Suddenly, many became the economic and emotional heads of their households labeled as

---

<sup>84</sup> William Gannaway Brownlow, "Speech against the Great Rebellion," in Jon L. Wakelyn, ed., *Southern Unionist Pamphlets and the Civil War*, 113, 114, 116, 117, 118; William G. McAdoo, Knoxville, to Eliza McCardle Johnson, David T. Patterson, Charles Johnson, Robert Johnson, and Daniel Stover, 27 November 1861 in LeRoy P. Graf and Ralph W. Haskins, eds., *Papers of Andrew Johnson* Volume 5 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1967), 359. J.C. Haum and his wife were unable to be located in the United States 1860 Federal Census.

<sup>85</sup> Hermann Borkum, *The Testimony of a Refugee from East Tennessee* (Philadelphia: n.p., 1863), 8.

traitors. The war had rapidly changed these women's lives particularly their gendered roles in the family. All of Appalachia, like East Tennessee, experienced this contentious environment between Unionists and Confederates, but East Tennessee uniquely had to contend with a standing Confederate Army in Knoxville that emboldened and even defended attacks on Unionists.<sup>86</sup>

Yet while that Confederate Army and private citizens shunned and abused Unionist families in the months following Tennessee's secession, Confederate women looked on in support. They also assisted the Confederate war machine. Women still accustomed to the nineteenth-century conceptions of femininity labored in domestic activities such as making flags, sewing clothing, and encouraging soldiers to enlist and fight. The large Unionist presence around them alarmed them too, while shortages of luxury goods and basic subsistence items irked them, a general undercurrent of excitement remained as long as the Confederacy controlled East Tennessee.

---

<sup>86</sup> Dorothy Kelly, "The Bridge Burnings and Union Uprising of 1861," 123-124.

#### 4. “I Would Do What I Could”: Navigating War in 1862

As the last days of 1861 waned, East Tennessee descended into turmoil. Confederates hunted down suspected bridge burners or other notorious Unionists. Many prominent ex-politicians and speakers were arrested and incarcerated. Fearing a similar fate, many other men fled. Knoxville’s Oliver P. Temple compared the Union men to “partridges when the hawk is abroad” that hid and sought “safety in the hills and mountains.”<sup>1</sup> Confederate authorities jailed individuals such as Sevier County’s Edmond and William E. Hodges, as well as Jefferson County’s James Monroe Meek and Samuel P. Johnson, and immediately transferred them south. Often Confederates did not or could not specify an exact crime, but imprisoned men anyway. Sevier County’s Samuel Pickens’ only apparent crime was simply being the father of W.C. Pickens, who had burned the Strawberry Plains bridge. Carter County’s itinerate doctor, Abraham Jobe, did not participate in the bridge burnings either, but Confederate authorities tried to arrest him anyway. He wrote that “the leading Rebels had a spite at Union men who had taken an early and active part in molding public opinion on what the people of East Tennessee ought to do in regard to secession.” Jobe believed that his opposition to secession made him guilty with no regard to the fact he had not participated in the bridge burnings.<sup>2</sup> Oliver P. Temple wrote that “arrests were made until the prisons overflowed.” He argued that the bridge burnings sent thousands of Unionists needlessly to prison.<sup>3</sup> Former Tennessee legislators Levi Trewhitt, William Hunt, and Montgomery Thornburg all died there without the luxury of a trial.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee in the Civil War*, 402.

<sup>2</sup>David C Hsiung, ed., *A Mountaineer in Motion*, 81.

<sup>3</sup> Temple, *East Tennessee in the Civil War*, 402, 408.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 404-406

As arrests of Unionists became commonplace, so too did violence. Unionist bridge burner Daniel Ellis wrote in the months following the burnings that in Carter County “the rebels were ransacking the country in every direction.” He added that Confederate troops under Landon Ellis murdered young Andrew J. Ward when he refused to take the loyalty oath or join the army on 14 December. They fatally shot Ward in the chest and then “his murders pounced upon him like beasts of prey.” Ellis and other Unionists went into hiding. Eventually, he served as a “pilot” leading Unionists out of Northeast Tennessee into Kentucky via the Cumberland Gap.<sup>5</sup>

Enraged Union men retaliated against the army and home guards when they could. Chaos became endemic as irregular warfare erupted. Unionist men picked up arms and used guerrilla tactics to strike Confederate soldiers, significant military targets, Confederate families, and home guards. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain’s sons, for example, left home to guard the Watauga Bridge. As they traveled to the bridge, Unionists fired upon them. Fain reported that “some were slightly wounded but no lives lost.”<sup>6</sup> Shortly thereafter, Fain related how a local Union man, Thomas Colwell, attacked a detail of Confederate troops. Colwell shot one of the Confederate soldiers, Douglas Young. Incensed, Young retaliated and acted like “a tiger let loose on his prey, he shot [Colwell], broke his gun over his head mashing his skull and then plunged his bayonet through him.” The magnitude of such violence frightened Fain. She constantly worried that her sons or husband would share the same fate. Describing the war as a “deplorable... state of affairs,” she had difficulty reconciling this world with that of her prior peaceful existence.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup>Daniel Ellis, *The Thrilling True Adventures of Daniel Ellis: 1861-1865, The Great Union Guide of East Tennessee* (n.p., 1867, Reprint ed., Lexington: Big Byte, 2014), 27-28.

<sup>6</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 14 November 1861, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 29-30.

<sup>7</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 24 November 1861, in *Ibid*, 30.

Even Unionist Dr. Abraham Jobe condemned the violent actions of his peers when he recounted how on one evening seventeen Unionist bushwhackers attacked two Confederate civilians, murdering one and kidnapping the other. A local unidentified Confederate regiment demanded the return of the survivor and threatened to arrest five prominent Unionists, including Jobe. Eventually, Jobe had the man returned. He described bushwhackers as men with “no principles... no patriotism...[and] did not know on one day which flag they would prefer to follow.” Criminality described the men’s behavior, not a patriotic impulse to secure the region for the Union.<sup>8</sup>

Jonesborough’s Adeline Deaderick’s life drastically changed with the rise of irregular warfare. Forty-seven-year-old Deaderick enjoyed a comfortable life firmly entrenched in the professional class prior to the war. Her husband, James practiced law and claimed almost twenty thousand dollars in personal property and real estate in 1860. They had ten surviving children ranging in age from 26 to 7.<sup>9</sup> Once the war commenced, her daughter and daughters-in-law resided in the Deaderick family home while her sons and son-in-law fought in the Confederate Army. This living arrangement provided Deaderick with a modicum of safety, especially as “the whole land, was filled with bands of marauders, not belonging to any army.” Yet she so greatly feared an attack that she and her neighbors developed an alarm system to alert one another of an attack or robbery. While Confederate families remained the minority in Washington County, the alarm should have provided like-minded neighbors with a chance to band together for safety. Unfortunately, Deaderick added that during attacks her neighbors were too frightened to ring their bells.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> David C Hsiung, ed., *A Mountaineer in Motion*, 81.

<sup>9</sup>“James W. Deaderick in 1860 U.S. Census,” *Ancestry.com*, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com).

<sup>10</sup>“Anna Mary Moon, “Civil War Diaries of Mrs. Adeline Deaderick,” 54-56.

Bushwhackers in Bledsoe County attacked their Confederate neighbors in the spring of 1862. Counties near the Cumberland Gap reported instances of violence from “Lincoln depredators and bushwhackers from the Kentucky border.” The *Athens Post* claimed that Unionist bushwhackers terrorized the countryside unmolested because the Confederate military had erroneously confiscated the region’s weapons. The editor concluded that “had the people been allowed to retain their arms, they could hold the valley and protect their persons and property.” Disarming loyal citizens “was a miserable mistake.”<sup>11</sup> The editor offered a solution by calling for “a few thousand men, organized into guerrilla bands, under active enterprising leaders.” These men would attack the offending party and could “do more to harass the enemy than five times their number, massed as a single body.”<sup>12</sup>

Hoping to tighten control of pro-Confederate guerrillas, the Confederate government enacted the Partisan Ranger Act in April 1862. This act exclusively gave President Jefferson Davis the authority to organize guerrilla bands under a Confederate commander, provided partisans with “the same pay, rations... quarters” and “regulations, as other soldiers,” and “authorized quartermasters to pay partisan soldiers for any captured munitions or weapons.”<sup>13</sup> Confederates placed advertisements in local newspapers calling for men to enlist in these partisan companies. For example, Lieutenant Natt Atkinson secured an advertisement in the *Athens Post* calling for men to “report to him immediately at Charleston, Bradley county” for twelve months of service.<sup>14</sup>

Unionist bushwhackers nonetheless continued to plague the region. In the summer of 1862, a Rhea County man wrote to the *Athens Post* regarding numerous instances where

---

<sup>11</sup> “Bledsoe County, *Athens Post*, 14 March 1862.

<sup>12</sup> “Guerrillas,” *Athens Post*, 14 March 1862.

<sup>13</sup> “An Act to Organize Bands of Partizan Rangers,” *Athens Post*, 2 May 1862.

<sup>14</sup> “Guerrilla Company,” *Athens Post*, 23 May 1862.

“Federal marauders [are] ravaging the country and stealing everything they could lay their thieving hands upon – provisions, stock, and niggers – and capturing and carrying off Southern men, at the instance of Lincolnite residents.” Women found themselves at the center of many of these incidents, and like the letter writer, the media often portrayed women as helpless victims of both war and circumstance.<sup>15</sup>

Not all women were victims, however. Many Unionist women actively undermined Confederate military policy. Some took in and cared for refugees seeking asylum north. Ellis, one of the most notorious Union guides, described multiple instances of women in Sullivan County assisting his refugees. That was particularly surprising to Ellis, for Sullivan County had the largest Confederate population in the region. He praised them, arguing they always fed the runaways, even when food and money were scarce. As minorities Sullivan County’s Unionist women took a great risk in offering hospitality and safety to the refugees; yet, the women accepted the possible consequences in a desire to shield their men. In this situation the Unionist women held more power than their male counterparts, their gender did not prohibit them from assisting in the war effort, but instead allowed them to do it in ways unavailable to men.

One widow, a Mrs. Grills, proved especially instrumental to his operation. He stopped every time he traveled through Sullivan County and Grills always provided him with food. When Grills did not have enough to share, she would solicit subsistence items from loyal neighbors. She also provided intelligence, keeping him apprised of Confederate movements. Ellis said, “I found her to be truly a ‘friend in need.’”<sup>16</sup> Grills’ repeated distribution of food is not just a charitable act, but a condemnation of the Confederacy and its treatment of the native Unionist population. Oliver P. Temple likewise described Knox County’s Jeannette Laurimer

---

<sup>15</sup> “Sequatchie Valley,” *Athens Post*, 13 June 1862.

<sup>16</sup> Daniel Ellis, *The Thrilling True Adventures of Daniel Ellis*, 46 and 42.

Mabry's generosity to Unionist families. While Mabry resided within her husband's Confederate household, she provided food and money to fleeing Unionists. Temple wrote "the poor starving, needy refugee, always found in her a generous friend." He continued "the timid and the fearful loyalist took new hope from her unshaken faith and courage." By helping Unionist refugees Mabry defied her husband, she was not subservient to his demands or causes. She took money and provisions that legally were his and redirected them to help the Union. Unionist women were far from powerless and worked independently to help the war effort, irrespective of males.<sup>17</sup>

Women opened their doors and gave their limited resources to protect those who shared their political ideology. They were no longer spectators in a male dominated political landscape, but rather active agents who ironically shielded men. They offered sustenance and safety, gifts that they could give in their domestic capacities.

\*\*\*

President Abraham Lincoln desperately wanted to liberate East Tennessee's loyalists from Confederate subjugation, but he also recognized the region's strategic value. Lincoln hoped that General Don Carlos Buell would be the man to rescue and hold the region, but Buell refused to make a move in the fall of 1861. Steven D. Engle argues that while Buell wanted to move into the region via the Cumberland Gap, the logistical details of Kentucky's rugged terrain and relative lack of food and forage--coupled with an undisciplined army, fear of guerrilla attacks, and the approaching winter--stalled his efforts. Believing such an approach dangerous, Buell

---

<sup>17</sup> Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War*, 427-428.

advocated instead moving south to the more strategically valuable Nashville and entering the region from the west. He hoped that if Union forces held Nashville “the Confederates defending East Tennessee would be outflanked: and... would abandon the region allowing Buell to march in unopposed.” General Henry Halleck, the newly minted commander of the Department of the West, agreed with Buell, arguing that the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers provided the best route for a foray into the west. Yet while both men decided on how to proceed, neither would move. They felt unprepared for the possible campaign, and Washington had not yet stipulated who would lead and who would take a more deferential role. Finally, in December Buell moved a few small detachments towards southeastern Kentucky aiming to attack Zollicoffer at Mill Springs. Fearing themselves vulnerable, the Confederates decided to attack the Union camp at Logan’s Cross Roads on 19 January 1862. There Federal Brigadier General George H. Thomas defeated the Confederates and laid open the Cumberland Gap and by extension East Tennessee. Zollicoffer died during the battle. Thomas, however, refused to advance, questioning how to supply and feed his army through rough terrain during a bad winter. Once again East Tennessee remained out of reach.<sup>18</sup>

While Union forces moved into southeastern Kentucky some of Halleck’s other men, under Major General Ulysses S. Grant, were dispatched to western Kentucky in hopes of occupying the Confederates and preventing any type of reinforcement at Mill Springs. While there, Grant convinced Halleck to let him move against Fort Henry on the Tennessee River. On 3 February, 17,000 of Grant’s men left Cairo and Paducah. Grant planned a dual-pronged attack with his men approaching the fort over land while Flag Officer Andrew H. Foote and his

---

<sup>18</sup> Steven D. Engle, *Don Carlos Buell: The Most Promising of All* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 120-127; Steven E. Woodworth, *Decision in the Heartland: The Civil War in the West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 9-10; Steven E. Woodworth, *Decision in the Heartland: The Civil War in the West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 10-11.

ironclads would bombard the fort from the water. The ironclads alone proved too much and over 2,000 Confederates abandoned the fort and escaped to nearby Fort Donelson before those who remained surrendered. The fall of Fort Henry came as a major blow to the Confederacy with the Union now controlling the Tennessee River and essentially cutting off western Tennessee and giving Union forces easy access to Corinth, Mississippi, a vital railroad junction.<sup>19</sup>

Next, Grant set his sights on Fort Donelson, which would give him the ability to control the Cumberland River all the way to Nashville, an important manufacturing and agricultural center. In addition, Union forces hoped that by controlling the Cumberland, General Albert Sidney Johnston's Confederate army would be isolated at Bowling Green, Kentucky and would have to retreat, giving the Federal Army control of Middle Tennessee. On 12 February Grant moved into position. The next day he prodded the line, but it was not until 14 February did Foote attack. The defensive position of Fort Donelson was much stronger than Fort Henry, and fire from the fort rendered Foote's ironclads useless. With the naval assault failing, Grant decided to besiege the fort. The fort's commanding officers--Brigadier Generals John B. Floyd, Gideon J. Pillow, and Simon B. Buckner--sought to avoid a prolonged siege and decided to attack Grant's men south of the fort and clear a path for evacuation. On the morning of the 15<sup>th</sup> Grant had left his men to consult with Foote. Not anticipating an enemy movement, he forbade his men to initiate any action and neglected to name a commander in his absence. The Confederates attacked and were able to gain control of the road out. Instead of immediately preparing for evacuation, however, the three commanders squabbled over when and whether to leave. As soon as Grant returned, he took stock of the situation and attacked the small Confederate contingent that held the vital escape route, regaining control of the road along with

---

<sup>19</sup> Steven E. Woodworth, *Decision in the Heartland*, 11-13.

the high ground. In the early hours of the morning the commanding officers along with Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest convened to discuss their next move, Floyd, Pillow, and Forrest escaped, leaving Buckner to surrender. Grant demanded an “unconditional surrender” and the Confederacy lost nearly 15,000 men and countless muskets, cannons, and other valuable supplies. The surrender devastated the Confederacy; they lost two vital avenues for transportation and abandoned vital factories, farmland, and railroads. Steven E. Woodworth argues that the loss of forts Henry and Donelson “represents the greatest actual turning point of the war.”<sup>20</sup>

Grant continued to push southward along the Tennessee River towards Corinth as Johnston’s army abandoned first Bowling Green and then Nashville, not stopping until they reached the vital railroad junction at Corinth, Mississippi. Knowing that Buell intended to reinforce Grant, Johnston then decided to initiate the attack before Buell arrived. On 6 April, Johnston’s reinforced army attacked Grant’s army at Pittsburg Landing. The Union forces were not prepared for the Confederate onslaught and the fighting raged ferociously throughout the day, claiming Johnston’s life. Even with the casualties the Confederates had succeeded in driving the Federals back to the river. Beauregard--second-in-command until Johnston’s death--called off the assault. The stall allowed Buell to reinforce Grant and push the Confederates back the following day until Beauregard ordered a retreat. The two-day engagement was the single bloodiest battle in American history up to the date, with over 23,000 casualties. With the Battle of Shiloh, the Union managed to retain most of Tennessee. Halleck then advanced towards Beauregard at Corinth with an immense force consisting of Grant’s, Buell’s and John Pope’s

---

<sup>20</sup> Steven E. Woodworth, *Decision in the Heartland*, 11-18.

armies. Halleck refused to attack, and Beauregard abandoned the railroad town. Corinth had fallen.<sup>21</sup>

While Beauregard's Confederates continued to evade capture, Federal forces kept amassing victories in the western theater. One notable gain was Island Number 10 on the Mississippi River, at the tristate region of Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee, along with the nearby town, New Madrid. The Confederates had constructed a battery to defend the Mississippi River on Island Number 10 which threatened even the safety of the Federal's ironclads. The island overlooked turns on the Mississippi River which made it difficult to pass without opposition. From 28 February to 8 April, Brigadier General John Pope successfully captured New Madrid and worked in conjunction with Flag Officer Andrew H. Foote to take the garrison on the island; in all Pope and Foote captured 7,000 men. Larry J. Daniel and Lynn N. Bock argue that historians have longed overlooked the battle's significance, finding that it gave the Union Army control of the upper Mississippi River Valley and marked a further decline in southern morale. Later, that summer on 6 June in less than two hours Union gunboats destroyed a Confederate flotilla on the Mississippi River at Memphis. Once the naval battle concluded the city surrendered. The victory at Memphis opened the Mississippi River all the way down to Vicksburg Mississippi, while the combined Union victories gave them control of most of Tennessee eastward to Nashville.<sup>22</sup>

\*\*\*

---

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 20-23; Thomas Lawrence Connelly, *Army of the Heartland: The Army of Tennessee, 1861-1862* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), 152-174.

<sup>22</sup> Larry J Daniel and Lynn N. Bock, *Island No. 10: Struggle for the Mississippi Valley* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996), ix-x; Steven E. Woodworth, *Decision in the Heartland*, 24; Barbara Brooks Tomblin, *The Civil War on the Mississippi: Union Sailors, Gunboat Captains and the Campaign to Control the River* Lexington: University of Kentucky, 2016), 109-116.

The possibility of a Federal occupation of East Tennessee became a reality in the spring of 1862 with the Confederates losses of West and much of Middle Tennessee. Not only were Union forces closer, but the Confederates had transferred troops west from there to stop Grant and Buell. J. G. M. Ramsey described the region as “perfectly defenseless, not troops enough to guard the public stores.” Less than 3,000 men... and one-fourth of these unarmed” manned the region and they concentrated at the “Cumberland Gap, or at bridges, or scouting near the largest passes across the mountain.” He warned that without sufficient manpower, the region would be lost. The food situation also was critical. The army relied upon pork to feed soldiers, and East Tennessee was one of the chief producers. Ramsey feared that the Confederacy would lose “the meat of 100,000 hogs at several points along our railroad.” He suggested that the hogs be moved to north Georgia or Chattanooga, or else be killed before they fed Yankee bellies.<sup>23</sup>

Military reverses also shook Confederate civilian morale. Knoxville’s Martha Hall passed a rumor to her sister, that “among the ten thousand things ever afloat” is that “the Confederate Government designs giving up Tennessee.” She wondered what to do if the Federals invaded East Tennessee.<sup>24</sup> James Scruggs warned Carrie Stakely, Martha Hall’s sister, that if the Federals got “possession of E.T. such another stealing of property, freeing of slaves, and insulting ladies never has been heard of before.” He tempered this fearful picture with the conclusion that “before...E. Tenn, shall be given up, every southern Tennessean will rush to the battlefield....before our property shall be destroyed, our mothers abused, and our sweethearts, the temples of virtue, shall be desecrated by Northern foe.” Sullivan County’s Katherine

---

<sup>23</sup> J. G .M. Ramsey, Knoxville, to President Jefferson Davis, Richmond, Virginia, 10 February 1862 in *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898; Reprint, Harrisburg, PA: National Historical Society, 1971), 267.

<sup>24</sup> Martha Hall, Knoxville, to Carrie Stakely, Madisonville, 5 March 1862, Hall-Stakely Papers, CS07-07 MSC 17, McClung Collection, Knoxville.

Rebecca Rutledge meanwhile mourned the recent Confederate losses, stating, “I have never felt as much like giving up since the war commenced as I have for the last three or four weeks.”<sup>25</sup>

Newspapers kept women apprised of the Confederate defeats. Articles instructed their female readership how women should publicly display their patriotism even amid occupation. Writers also praised the actions of Confederate women currently under Federal occupation, and thus created an acceptable standard of behavior for women if Federal soldiers occupied the region. The *Athens Post*, for example, celebrated the women of Middle Tennessee’s Clarksville and their behavior amid constant Federal troops. The editor wrote that the “Secesh girls in Clarksville, Tennessee are conquered but not subdued; for they have, right under the very noses of Yankee oppressors formed themselves into a *bona fide* company well drilled, which they call...’the Rebel Masked Batteries.” He continued, “they appear on the street frequently in complete Confederate uniform, which consists of rather short grey dress...turned up black hats with a long black feather in front...deadly pistol and dagger.... the Feds at Clarksville had ‘Better let the girls alone.’”<sup>26</sup>

Still another article in the *Post* lauded Confederate women who publicly defied Federal soldiers in occupied territory. The author of a reprinted article from the *Nashville Union* asked its “sweet; bewitching ladies, please don’t make mouths and talk saucy anymore.” Fear of harsh repercussions from Federal soldiers motivated this request. A citizen of Nashville wrote a letter to the editor requesting that the city build a prison for female “rebels” such as these who violated the Federal law.<sup>27</sup> Yet another article stated that Federal authorities had arrested a Miss Green, a

---

<sup>25</sup> Katherine Rebecca Rutledge, Blountville, to Oliver Caswell King, 9 March, Oliver Caswell King and Katherine Rebecca Rutledge King Papers. Katherine Rebecca Rutledge’s 9 March letter to Oliver Caswell King did not include the year in the dating of her document, but her references to the recent loss of Western and Middle Tennessee indicate that she wrote the letter in the spring of 1862. James Scruggs, Knoxville to Carrie Stakely, Madisonville, 24 June 1862, Hall-Stakely Papers.

<sup>26</sup> “‘Secesh’ Crinoline in Clarksville,” *Athens Post*, 9 May 1862.

<sup>27</sup> “A Prison for Women,” *Nashville Union*, 2 July 1862, in *Athens Post*, 18 July 1862.

young woman in Northwest Virginia, and charged her with cutting Federal telegraph wires. It included a confession that “she had had cut the wires and said that she would do so again if set at liberty.” The writer ironically went on to advocate for women to publicly engage in political rhetoric, even denouncing men while nineteenth-century gender norms had called for submissive women in a patriarchal world. By mid-1862, the war had created a temporary aberration in gender ideals. Suddenly it was acceptable for women to question and even attack men, at least as long as Confederate patriotism motivated such actions.<sup>28</sup>

\*\*\*\*

By the spring of 1862, the Confederate Army was desperate for manpower. Casualties, western defeats, and disease had devastated the ranks, volunteering had all but dried up, and massive Federal armies were on the march. In addition, the Confederate Government feared a serious manpower issue with the twelve month enlistment terms set to expire soon for the volunteer regiments. The Confederate Congress on 16 April thus instituted the first conscription act. While Congress hoped to encourage enlistment through bounties and other benefits, it forced “all able-bodied white men between eighteen and thirty-five” into three years of service unless they could obtain one of several exemptions or provide a willing substitute. In addition, the act extended the length of service for existing soldiers and sailors by three years.<sup>29</sup> With a degree of hyperbole, Oliver P. Temple argued that “when it became evident that the conscript act would be enforced, nearly every male inhabitant... who was able to endure the hardships of the

---

<sup>28</sup>“Arrest of a Young Lady,” *Athens Post*, 19 September 1862.

<sup>29</sup>John D. Fowler, *Mountaineers in Gray*, 70.

journey... determined to seek safety in flight.”<sup>30</sup> Noel C. Fisher agreed that Confederate conscription “accelerated this exodus” and led to an increasing number of East Tennessee men enlisting in the Federal Army.<sup>31</sup> Starting in August 1862, Carter County’s Daniel Ellis piloted hundreds of them into Kentucky. They traveled largely at night through mountainous terrain, often with only the food they could carry in their haversacks. Ellis repeatedly commented that only desperation could motivate a man to make such a journey. He also described the moment when a group of unnamed refugees arrived for the first time in Kentucky, writing, “never did poor toil-worn mariners upon the raging ocean, whose vessel had been driven with violence amid the darkness of night... enjoy more real happiness and emotions of delight upon reaching a calm haven of repose, than did our tired and worn-out company of weary fugitives from rebel oppression, when they found themselves within the Union lines.”<sup>32</sup>

Unionist women left behind felt threatened under the Confederate flag. Safety occupied Jefferson County’s Elizabeth Walker Meek’s mind while her husband, prominent lawyer and Unionist politician James Monroe Meek, resided in Nashville. Meek wrote to her husband complaining how local women chastised her for his political affiliations and absence.<sup>33</sup> Meek’s husband replied, advising her to stay at home with their children. He also spoke to his wife regarding Confederate women’s treatment of her. While her letters to him are not present, his advice indicates that the New Market’s Confederate women treated her as an inferior. He reassured her that “you are entitled to consideration and respect and no one has a right to dictate, impose on, or taunt or turn you from your good sense and judgement...you are the peer of any

---

<sup>30</sup>Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War*, 424.

<sup>31</sup>Noel C. Fisher, *War at Every Door*, 68.

<sup>32</sup>Daniel Ellis, *The Thrilling True Adventures of Daniel Ellis*, 30-33 and 34.

<sup>33</sup>Elizabeth Walker Meek, New Market, to James Monroe Meek, Nashville, 22 January 1862; Meek Family Correspondence, Manuscripts of the American Civil War in University of Notre Dame’s Rare Books and Special Collections, [https://rarebooks.nd.edu/digital/civil\\_war/letters/meek](https://rarebooks.nd.edu/digital/civil_war/letters/meek).

lady.” Women did not resort to arms to injure their political opponents, but words or rumors that besmirched their reputations.<sup>34</sup>

Unlike Meek, Bledsoe County’s Sarah and James Redfield could not tolerate the insults and harassment and fled their East Tennessee home in 1862. They had hoped to travel as early as the summer of 1861 but were unable to get their affairs in order and did not flee to Cincinnati, Ohio until 1862. James Redfield stated, “we could not have left before without imminent danger owing to the suspicions of the secessionists.” Scarce foodstuffs and “the prospect of certain starvation if we remained” finally provided the impetus behind their migration. The couple nonetheless hated leaving Bledsoe County because “our beautiful twins, as well as little Arthur, have left their graves in Tennessee.”<sup>35</sup>

More prominent Unionists faced similar decisions. Fearing retribution, Andrew Johnson left his wife, Eliza and family in East Tennessee shortly following the state’s secession. He had remained active in the Federal Government as one of Tennessee’s Senators during the war. Eliza McCardle Johnson lived without her husband for over a year, reliant on her daughter Mary Stover’s generosity until Confederate Secretary of War Judah P. Benjamin, provided the Johnson family with the necessary permits to travel into the United States. Confederate authorities had tried to exile Johnson and her family as early as the spring of 1862, but she requested to stay temporarily due to poor health.<sup>36</sup> During that year of separation, Andrew Johnson received updates from friends regarding the well-being of his wife and five children. She worried over her son, Robert Johnson, and son-in-law, Daniel Stover, who hid out in the “bushes” for fear of

---

<sup>34</sup>James Monroe Meek, Nashville, to Elizabeth Walker Meek, New Market, 22 January 1862, Meek Family Correspondence.

<sup>35</sup> James Redfield, Cleveland, OH, to Mr. and Mrs. Redfield, 31 October 1862, Dr. James W. and Sarah H. Redfield Papers.

<sup>36</sup> “Andy Johnson’s Family,” *Athens Post*, 26 September 1862.

retaliatory legal action. Another son, Charles Johnson, came out of hiding and took the Confederate loyalty oath.<sup>37</sup>

Knoxville's Confederate Provost Marshall meanwhile forced both Laura Ann Washburn Maynard, the wife of prominent Unionist Horace Maynard, and Eliza O'Brien Brownlow, the wife of William G. Brownlow, out of East Tennessee. Both women described the region as "gloomy and distressing." They added that Unionist women who remained had once faithfully believed Andrew Johnson and Horace Maynard would bring Federal support back to the region, but the men had left them to suffer under Confederate tyrants. Maynard relocated to northern New York and in the summer and pleaded with President Lincoln to send troops and "deliver E. Tennessee from her prudent misery."<sup>38</sup>

William G. Brownlow, after speaking with his wife, wrote to Andrew Johnson regarding the plight of the region's Unionists. Brownlow determined that the Provost Marshall only provided his wife and Laura Ann Washburn Maynard with thirty-six hours in which to vacate their homes and leave for Fort Monroe. They only "got off with their wearing apparel, but left... house and furniture, which were used for [Confederate] hospital purposes." The women told Brownlow that the Confederates were "driving the Union families out of the country by the scores and are murdering and shooting them down on all occasions." Confederate soldiers also had ripped Unionists men from their families and sent them to Atlanta, Georgia to build fortifications. During Brownlow's tirade, however, he noted that the region's Unionist women

---

<sup>37</sup> Michael L. Patterson, Greensburg, Indiana to Andrew Johnson, Washington D.C., 31 January 1862 and Horace Maynard, Washington D.C., to Andrew Johnson, Washington D.C., 30 April 1862, William G. Brownlow, Bordentown, N.J., to Andrew Johnson, Washington D.C., 3 May 1862 in LeRoy P. Graf and Ralph W. Haskins, eds., *The Papers of Andrew Johnson* Volume 5 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1967), 113, 352, 357, 358.

<sup>38</sup> Laura Ann Maynard, New York, to President Abraham Lincoln, Washington D.C., 29 August 1862, Abraham Lincoln Papers: Series 1, General Correspondence, 1833-1916, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/mal.1810400>.

helped one another. Local Unionist women helped his wife pack what they could before the forced evacuation.<sup>39</sup>

In April 1862 Confederates arrested James Monroe Meek in New Market and transferred him to jail in Knoxville. His wife Elizabeth wrote to Tennessee Confederate Representative William Graham Swan to get her husband released from prison. She argued that “the arrest was not made for any act, he has committed, but his own personal enemy’s... gratification.” Meek continued that her husband “has been guilty of no word or act contrary to our new Government, and this can be testified to by the most upright and influential men in our town and country.” She further evoked an image of a broken helpless woman in hopes of persuading Swan to do her bidding. She wrote, “feel for me and my darling boy, as you would...your wife and little ones, were they placed in the same place and circumstances.” She begged him “to exert all your influence and power for his immediate release, and you shall be amply rewarded in pecuniary aid and heart felt thankfulness.”

The letter did little good. Confederate authorities in Knoxville quickly transported Meek and another prominent New Market Unionist, William Galbreath, to Alabama without trial. Their wives again inquired as to why these men were arrested. They found that their husbands were rumored to have encouraged and aided several of New Market’s Union men to flee to Kentucky. Elizabeth Meek and Eliza Galbreath appealed to President Jefferson Davis in hopes of getting their husbands released. They wrote, “all we desired for our husbands, was that they should have a fair and impartial investigation of any charges preferred against them, feeling perfectly confident that they would have been honorably acquitted....they were denied that privilege, and our only hope now for justice... is centered in you.” Notably, they used the

---

<sup>39</sup> William G. Brownlow, Bordentown, N.J., to Andrew Johnson, Washington D.C., 3 May 1862 in LeRoy P. Graf and Ralph W. Haskins, eds., *The Papers of Andrew Johnson* Volume 5, 113, 352, 357, 358.

nineteenth-century notion of “true-womanhood,” evoking the image of men as protectors and expounding upon the notion of female fragility by arguing that “being deprived of our husband our only means of support and protection under any circumstance would be painful in the extreme, but doubly so under the present excited state of the country.”<sup>40</sup>

Monroe also wrote to her imprisoned husband at Camp Oglethorpe in Macon, Georgia in June 1862, and explained that she had written letters to Confederate officials regarding his innocence and false imprisonment. She added that a petition had been signed by many of New Market’s and Knoxville’s secessionists to release him from prison. Meek reflected on the hardships she and her son incurred during her husband’s absence, writing “would I ever have believed I could have gone through with what I have the troubles of troubled days, and the sleepless of sleepless nights... I know and feel every trouble you have gone through since then [and] pray this will not last long.” Without her husband, Meek had to move in with her in-laws. Her husband apologized to her, but avowed that “I was greatly relieved that you had gone to my father to remain until I return... [I] do not desire that Jimmie should be raised about a Hotel.” James then warned her that a few of her sentences had “been eliminated before it reached me....no political topics are to be touched and as I know you are no politician it will not require any effort on your part to avoid it.” This was an ironic statement. For months, she had been in contact with numerous politicians trying to get her husband released, all the while engaging in political rhetoric to prove that her husband had not committed any treasonous activities. Yet the plight of the Meeks was not unique. James Monroe Meek estimated that there “were some 100

---

<sup>40</sup> Elizabeth Walker Meek and Eliza C. Galbreath, New Market, to Jefferson Davis, Richmond, V.A. 28 April and 3 May 1862, Meek Family Correspondence.

to 115 Tennesseans” imprisoned in Macon. Confederate authorities finally released Meek in July, but he still was unable to return to East Tennessee.<sup>41</sup>

\*\*\*\*

The war now pervaded every aspect of the women’s lives. The presence of Confederate soldiers became commonplace and quickly became a popular topic amid women’s conversations or musings. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, writing on a snowy January evening, missed her sons. “O how sad I feel this night as I sit listening to the merciless elements, “she wrote, “... Where are my soldier sons? My heart is so grieved when I think of our poor soldiers who have to face the storm of rain, wind and sleet with but little to protect them from its chilling effects.”<sup>42</sup>

For others, however, the heightened presence of soldiers made women uncomfortable. Madisonville’s Margaret wrote to her sister in September that “the soldiers are thick through the country” and that they often stop by their home to call. She stated that: “we have some every night – five last night.”<sup>43</sup> Fain feared unfamiliar soldiers. While in her garden a soldier asked if he could use Fain’s blacksmith tools to shoe his horse. He also wanted to pray with her and for the Fain family. Fain thought him “suddenly deranged and...told him I would defer having prayers at that time.” She added that “he was a perfectly harmless man” and “his eccentricity seems to arise from his religious feelings.” Fain regretted her treatment of the soldier and invited

---

<sup>41</sup>Elizabeth Walker Meek, New Market, to James Monroe Meek, 5 June 1862, James Monroe Meek, Macon, GA, to Elizabeth Walker Meek, New Market, 20 June 1862, James Monroe Meek, Macon, GA, to Elizabeth Walker Meek, New Market, 20 June 1862, and Elizabeth Walker Meek, Strawberry Plains, to James Monroe Meek, Macon, GA, 28 June 1862, Meek Family Correspondence.

<sup>42</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 13 January 1862 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trials*, 34.

<sup>43</sup> Margaret, Madisonville, to Sister, 10 September 1862, Hall-Stakely Papers.

him to return. When he did she stated, “I do feel so glad he came back...I believe he is a true Christian.”<sup>44</sup>

The region’s women continued in earnest the work they had taken up in the first few months of war, securing military supplies for local soldiers. Monroe County’s women continued making flags.<sup>45</sup> Carrie Stakely sat up late into the night sewing a flag for “Pryor’s Company.” She made it out of “oil, calico, blue gingham, and jaconet” and wrote on it the “sentiment ‘Liberty or Death.’” Stakely’s friend “pronounced it the handsomest one...from this place.” Local women also collected food and clothing for male friends in the Confederate service. Stakely wrote how the women filled the boxes with pies, biscuits, and meats to demonstrate their gratitude and present “them with a specimen of their cooking.” They then decided to repeat the gesture and provide the soldiers with two more boxes, which included eggs, dried fruit, blankets, and knapsacks. Stakely commented on the prevalence of boxes in the mail, stating “someone sends a box every few days.” The process of collecting supplies and packing soldiers’ boxes eventually prevented her from finishing her household tasks.<sup>46</sup> Her friend, J. I. Wright, thanked her for the recent gift of “comforts and blankets” for himself and company. Wright concluded his letter by stating “we will gratefully remember our kind benefactress when far away from the sweet endearments of home...my company is now pretty well supplied with necessary clothing.”<sup>47</sup> Confederate soldier, J.A. Caldwell also thanked Stakely for her benevolence. He wrote, “when I reached camps I found [the soldiers] sumptuously on the very nice box of provisions sent to them by the young ladies of Madisonville.”<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 30 June 1862 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trials*, 41-42.

<sup>45</sup> Carrie Stakely, Madisonville, to Martha Hall, Knoxville, 6 January 1862, Hall-Stakely Papers.

<sup>46</sup> Carrie Stakely, Madisonville, to Martha Hall, Knoxville, 4 April 1862, Hall-Stakely Papers.

<sup>47</sup> J.I. Wright, Sweetwater, to Carrie Stakely, Madisonville, 4 April 1862, Hall-Stakely Papers.

<sup>48</sup> J.A. Caldwell, Morristown to Carrie Stakely, Madisonville, 9 April 1862, Hall-Stakely Papers.

Soldier's Aid Societies utilized women like Carrie Stakeley to acquire needed items. The *Athens Post* reported that Rhea County's Sulphur Springs Soldier's Aid Society had donated "150 to 200 blankets and comforts for the suffering soldiers." The newspaper praised them "for their generosity and patriotism."<sup>49</sup> The *Chattanooga Rebel* likewise celebrated the ladies of McMinn County's Soldiers Aid Society when they donated "9 bags of dried fruit, 8 loaves of bread, 1 bag rice, 1 bag sage, 2 larges bags Irish potatoes, 1 bundle of clothing, 17 chickens [and] 2 sheep." It stated that the "articles were much needed, and our brave but suffering soldiers will remember with affectionate kindness the generous donors...all thanks to the ladies of McMinn!"<sup>50</sup> The *Daily Rebel* published another account of how "the ladies of the Methodist Church in Chattanooga...have taken the carpet from their church and given it to the soldiers as blankets. The editor asked "can a people be conquered when the ladies are so patriotic?"<sup>51</sup> The *Athens Post* eagerly reported that the Confederate Congress had even thanked "the patriotic women of the Confederacy, for the energy, zeal, and untiring devotion, which they have manifested in furnishing voluntary contributions to our soldiers in the field and in the various military hospitals throughout the country."<sup>52</sup>

Women outside of benevolent organizations also provided their loved ones with support, whether through written encouragement or subsistence items that eased the hardships associated with army life. Katherine Rebecca Rutledge of Blountville sent Oliver Caswell King multiple notes of encouragement and professions of love along with care packages. While convalescing at his Sullivan County home in Poor Hill, King found that Rutledge's presence and proclamations of love and faithfulness could quell the misery he endured from injuries sustained

---

<sup>49</sup>"More Aid for the Soldiers," *Athens Post*, 28 February 1862.

<sup>50</sup>"McMinn County," *Chattanooga Rebel* 26 August 1862 in *Athens Post*, 29 August 1862.

<sup>51</sup>"From Chattanooga," *Chattanooga Rebel* 4 November 1862 in *The Athens Post*, 7 November 1862.

<sup>52</sup>"Complimentary to the Ladies," *Athens Post*, 25 April 1862.

during battle. He added, “the consciousness of thy love fills my heart with tumultuous joy, and my soul tells its happiness in the melody of song...those demons, doubt and fear, now a shadow of blight between my heart and the glorious conceptions of love.”<sup>53</sup> King praised Rutledge for her thoughtfulness regarding a scarf she sent him and stated, “many times have I blessed your gentle hands which fashioned the warm comfort that has encircled my neck and protected it from the chilly blasts which mercilessly cut the shivering forms of my less favored comrades.”<sup>54</sup>

Other Confederate women throughout the region provided support to injured or sick soldiers at local hospitals. Elite southern women at times felt that working as nurses or matrons or volunteering in hospitals violated the “respectability” afforded to their class and gender. Historians such as George C. Rable have argued that while these women existed, they were a rare occurrence. Recent work, however, demonstrates that while Confederate women did work in the medical field at a lower rate than their northern sisters, many nonetheless felt the “pressure to contribute meaningfully to the cause” and meet the needs of the sick and injured.<sup>55</sup> East Tennessee women were not different. Martha Hall’s Knoxville neighbor, a Mrs. Wilson, worked tirelessly with injured or sick soldiers in the local hospital. Hall recounted that Mrs. Wilson “takes much interest in the soldiers” and that Wilson felt led to assist the “many sick southern soldiers in the hospital.”<sup>56</sup> Soldiers themselves sometimes sought out treatment from women to alleviate the stress on the local doctors and hospitals. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain wrote in her diary that over dinner three local Confederate soldiers had inquired if she might care for two sick soldiers. They had been tasked by their commander to find the men suitable lodgings

---

<sup>53</sup> Oliver King Caswell, Poor Hill, Tennessee, to Katherine Rebecca King, Blountville, 27 November 1861, Oliver Caswell King and Katherine Rebecca Rutledge King Papers, 1856-1893.

<sup>54</sup> Oliver King Caswell, Kingston, Tennessee to Katherine Rebecca King, Blountville, 9 July 1862, Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> George C. Rable, *Civil Wars*, 121-128; Libra Hilde, “Needles as Weapons: Southern Women and Civil War Relief,” in Judith Giesberg and Randall M. Miller, eds., *Women and the American Civil War*, 132-133.

<sup>56</sup> Martha Hall, Knoxville, to Carrie Stakely, Madisonville, 5 March 1862, Hall-Stakely Papers.

where they could convalesce. Fain initially refused but soon relented, saying “if not successful to bring them to me and I would do what I could for them.”<sup>57</sup>

The *Chattanooga Daily Rebel* praised the town’s women for their charity stating, “the ladies of Chattanooga have quietly and unobtrusively done as much for the sick as the ladies in any other place in the South.” It went on “before any regular hospitals were established... [the women] established private hospitals kept at their own expense and took care of thousands of sick soldiers without a cent of compensation.” In fact, the local hospitals only needed “bedding and bed clothing” and directed the women to send further supplies to the army who had a greater need. Later the “Ladies of Chattanooga” placed an ad in the *Chattanooga Daily Rebel* requesting cotton goods, specifically old dresses, for “making comforts for the soldiers.” Elite women, with the time and funds in which to donate, spearheaded these benevolent movements and organizations.<sup>58</sup>

\*\*\*

Throughout 1862, the region’s women felt the economic repercussions of the war. The professional class and yeoman were unable to obtain the luxury items to which they had grown accustomed. While visiting family in Blountville, Ada Stakely of Madisonville pleaded with her cousin to “influence ‘Uncle’ for 150 to 175 dollars” in which she could pay her debts. But tellingly, she also complained that she had “not had a set of hoops for months...and my old ones... are broken so...it is impossible to mend them.” Stakely further commented on the exorbitant prices of the fashion accessory, writing that “hoops are selling at eighteen and twenty dollars a set.” It was astounding to Stakely that the war had raised prices on goods that her and

---

<sup>57</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 28 June 1862, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 41.

<sup>58</sup>“Chattanooga Hospitals Again,” *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 1 and 30 October 1862.

other professional class women viewed as essential items. She reassured her cousin that she would not go into further debt to obtain hoops, no matter “how badly I look.”<sup>59</sup>

More importantly, the war created shortages in many common or subsistence items. An unnamed East Tennessee woman offered a solution to female readers of the *Athens Post* on how to make baked goods without baking soda.<sup>60</sup> Another article published discussed local shortages of wheat. The 1861 crop of wheat in East Tennessee had been lean, intensifying the war-induced shortages. In 1862, disease and drought again damaged the season’s wheat crop. The *Post*’s editor called upon the region’s families to “plant as much land in corn, potatoes, peas, and beans as they can tend...thus an abundance of wholesome food may be secured.”<sup>61</sup> A Chattanooga resident stated that “wheat round here is bad, but there is a promise of a luxuriant harvest of dog fennel.”<sup>62</sup> By the summer of 1862 wheat, previously a subsistence item, had become a luxury. Indeed, the war and bad weather made wheat scarce throughout the South, and if East Tennesseans wanted to purchase flour for their baking needs, had to buy it at exorbitant prices. The *Athens Post* went on to advise women and families to purchase corn meal as an alternative to the more expensive flour. The article read “speculators in Flour can now have the consolation that they cannot compel the people to use it, at twenty to forty dollars a barrel, or whatever they choose to ask, and the people will submit to a cheaper substitute rather than starve, or pay starvation prices.”<sup>63</sup>

Salt likewise became a scarce commodity during 1862. Farmers quit fattening their hog stock, believing that salt would not be available for the seasonal slaughter. The article tried to

---

<sup>59</sup>Ada Stakely, Blountville, to Carrie Stakely, Madisonville, 12 April 1862, William Richard Caswell Papers.

<sup>60</sup>“Substitute for Soda,” *Athens Post*, 14 March 1862.

<sup>61</sup>“The Wheat,” *Athens Post*, 2 May 1862.

<sup>62</sup>“From our Chattanooga Correspondent,” *Athens Post*, 6 June 1862.

<sup>63</sup>“The Season and Crops,” *Macon Journal and Messenger Athens Post*, 18 July 1862.

alleviate these fears and instructed farmers to fatten their hogs anyway, as the Virginia Salt Works promised a shipment. Regardless of these reassurances, salt continued to be an issue.<sup>64</sup> In a letter to the editor of the *Athens Post*, W. C. V. wrote that he had traveled to salt works throughout East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia and “one thing is certain, for the next twelve months, salt will be very scarce and very high in the South.” When he arrived at Saltville, Virginia days earlier, he “found a crowd of planters and speculators.” In three days, the price of salt had risen from ten dollars to fifteen dollars a bushel. He could not purchase salt either, because the Tennessee Company had already sent its salt to the state’s counties, where it would be sold for \$2.75 per bushel. He argued that by distributing salt throughout Tennessee, East Tennessee’s allotment would be minimal.<sup>65</sup> In December the *Athens Post* again addressed the “serious question” of “what are the people to do for Salt?” It published an announcement that the government would “first be supplied” and then salt manufactures would sell to civilians. The newspaper argued that the lack of salt delayed the slaughtering of livestock and the hog stock should already have been in the “pickling tub.”<sup>66</sup> Even Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain discussed the difficulty of procuring salt. Her brother-in-law promised to purchase it for them both from Saltville, but she doubted his ability.<sup>67</sup>

The presence of the Confederate Army throughout the region meanwhile placed additional demands on food. The army, local hospitals, and other benevolent organizations bought constant ads requesting foodstuffs for the soldiers, sick, and injured. J. L. Abernathy, the Acting Surgeon of Post in Loudon, simultaneously praised the region’s women for their donations to the local hospital and called upon them to outfit a soldiers’ convalescence home at a

---

<sup>64</sup> “Salt,” *Athens Post*, 19 September 1862.

<sup>65</sup> W.C.V., “Salt-Salt-Salt,” *Athens Post*, 10 October 1862.

<sup>66</sup> “Salt,” *Athens Post*, 7 December 1862.

<sup>67</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 29 October 1862 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 51.

hotel. Specifically, he requested furnishing, bedding, luxuries, and money.<sup>68</sup> Chattanooga hospitals meanwhile requested that “the people...bring eggs, chickens, butter, milk, mutton and vegetables” to the hospitals. The hospital promised to pay “fair prices” and that the goods would “do a great favor to the sick.”<sup>69</sup>

Women faced other constant requests for foodstuffs from the Confederate Army. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain baked bread for a local Confederate company after a Mr. Warren brought her flour. She also wrote of how numerous Confederate soldiers commandeered food from the family. On 6 July 1862, she wrote that “Mr. Collier came after potatoes for his Lt. a few days ago.” Often when the soldiers visited the Fain residence, she requested they stay for the next family meal.<sup>70</sup>

Local newspapers meanwhile requested “all the Hogs and Cattle you can fatten.” Major J.F. Cummings placed ads directing East Tennessee farmers to sell hogs and corn to the Confederate Army. Cummings notified the region that he would “make prices ‘uniform’ and liberal,” and that he intended to hire agents with predefined territories that would be tasked with ascertaining food. He also notified East Tennesseans that he would be moving his headquarters to Knoxville in order to easier facilitate the acquisition and distribution of supplies.<sup>71</sup> The *Athens Post* requested that women dry fruit, particularly peaches, as the crop proved abundant in the summer of 1862. It stated, “the dried fruit will make pleasant food and an agreeable drink for the soldiers.”<sup>72</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> “Frank Ramsey Hospital, Loudon Tennessee,” *Athens Post*, 18 April 1862.

<sup>69</sup> “Chattanooga Hospitals Again,” *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 1 October 1862.

<sup>70</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 6 July 1862 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 42.

<sup>71</sup> “To the Farmers of East Tennessee,” *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 1 October 1862.

<sup>72</sup> “Dried Fruit,” *Athens Post*, 30 May 1862.

The army requested not just food from women, but other supplies. James S. Edward took an ad out in the *Chattanooga Daily Rebel* requesting “all the old Linen and Cotton Rags, old pieces of rope, gunny sacks, pieces of tents and all old rags.” He offered to pay cash for the products as long as the seller cleaned the textiles prior to bringing them in. These rags would be sold or donated to the Army or hospitals caring for sick or injured soldiers.<sup>73</sup> The *Athens Post* published another ad which requested locals to contribute “rags for bandages, &c., for wounded soldiers.”<sup>74</sup> J. H. Hale of Athens requested that the “people of McMinn, Monroe, Rhea, and Meigs” provide the Army with “jeans, linseys, and socks, for the use of the army.” He especially entreated the counties’ women to “manufacture [such goods] as fast as possible.”<sup>75</sup>

Not only were women inundated with requests for food and other items, but theft also diminished their valuable and limited supplies. While many soldiers and officers often requested goods, others simply took what they wanted. Property loss and damage became commonplace throughout 1862. Unknown assailants burned a Mrs. Arwine’s McMinn County barn in October, and she lost “most of its contents.”<sup>76</sup> An article in the *Athens Post* cited the frequency of Confederate troops “burning fences, killing stock, &c., in the neighborhood of their encampments and along the line of march.” This behavior seemed counterintuitive. East Tennessee’s cultivation of grain and pork production made it one of the Confederacy’s most important food producing regions, but the wanton destruction of farms decreased the country’s ability to feed its citizens and soldiers. The writer closed stating, “that by such conduct they are cutting their own throats and essentially aiding the work of subjugation.”<sup>77</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup>“Rags! Rags! Rags!,” *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 18 October 1862.

<sup>74</sup> “Bandages for the Wounded,” *Athens Post*, 26 September 1862.

<sup>75</sup>J.H. Hale, 22 August 1862 in “To the People of McMinn, Monroe, Rhea, and Meigs,” *Athens Post*, 3 October 1862.

<sup>76</sup> “Incendiarism,” *Athens Post*, 7 November 1862.

<sup>77</sup> “Reckless Destruction of Property,” *Athens Post*, 7 March 1862.

Diminished food supplies became reality for all Tennesseans throughout 1862, but those residing in Chattanooga during the summer lived amid Confederate General Braxton Bragg's Army of the Mississippi. The army further exasperated shortages. Following the Battle of Shiloh, Bragg used the railroad to move his troops from Mississippi to Chattanooga before a campaign through East Tennessee to Kentucky. On 25 August, an anonymous Chattanooga resident wrote into the *Athens Post* recounting the hardships he and his fellow neighbors suffered as a result. The summer drought had caused the region's wheat and oats to fail, and then "the immense army that has passed through here has cleaned us out of everything nearly that was eatable." The editor responded to the desperate letter calling for the Chattanooga to "come up here to God's country, he will find a different state of things – not a land literally flowing with milk and honey, but plenty of apple-brandy and good water."<sup>78</sup>

The army tried to help as well. On 25 September 1862 Confederate Headquarters in Chattanooga issued orders for "troops in this command...to respect the rights of property in all of the inhabitants, and not to cut any trees or shrubbery, nor to enter any private enclosure unless with the consent of the proprietor."<sup>79</sup> Soldiers were not the only problem, however. In October the Department of East Tennessee's Major General Samuel Jones published a call to citizens in the *Athens Post*, *Greenville Banner*, and *Jonesboro Express* which urged Confederate citizens to stop illegally confiscating Unionist property under guise of the Confederate Sequestration Act, which allowed the government to confiscate and sell the property of "alien enemies" through a formal process.<sup>80</sup> Jones advised that "the law of the land prescribes the mode of dealing with the

---

<sup>78</sup> "Chattanooga," *Athens Post*, 29 August 1862.

<sup>79</sup> Gill Shorter, Montgomery, AL, to Colonel Samuel Jones, Chattanooga, 3 September 1862 in *The War of the Rebellion*, 345.

<sup>80</sup> Rodney Steward, *David Schenck and the Contours of Confederate Identity* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2012), 44-45.

property of alien enemies...in all such cases the authority to impress must emanate from these headquarters; and just reasonable payment be made.”<sup>81</sup>

The loss of all property, but particularly slaves, became more of a concern when the United States Government issued the Second Confiscation Act on 17 July 1862. This act essentially allowed Federal soldiers to confiscate all Confederate property, which included slaves, and refuse to return fugitive slaves.<sup>82</sup> President Abraham Lincoln’s announcement of the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation on 22 September 1862 further increased the number of escapees in the region. Lincoln announced that he would free all slaves in the rebellious states still under Confederate control on 1 January 1863. The *Athens Post* responded with an article which stated, “it seems that the skeddaddling towards Abraham’s domain is not confined entirely to the ‘poor white trash,’ but that the colored brethren are beginning to move toward the mountain....we would advise slaveholders to keep a little watch over their property, and see they are at their proper places at reasonable hours.”<sup>83</sup> One escapee allegedly murdered Jefferson County’s General William Caswell near his property in August of 1862.<sup>84</sup> His wife and daughter were at home when the crime occurred and were rushed to his side. The *Knoxville Register* reported that they “reached the spot only in time to witness his expiring breath.”<sup>85</sup>

As women’s trials increased, the region’s media dictated how women should adjust to the numerous physical and mental hardships associated with the war. The *Athens Post* published an excerpt from Elizabeth Fries Lummis Ellet’s 1845 book, *The Women of the American Revolution*, which detailed the commonality of women’s deprivation, the prevalence of women

---

<sup>81</sup> Samuel Jones, “To the People of East Tennessee,” 30 September 1862 in *Athens Post*, 10 October 1862.

<sup>82</sup> “The Confiscation Bill a Law,” *Athens Post*, 1 August 1862.

<sup>83</sup> *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 18 October 1862 and “Runaway Negroes,” *Athens Post*, 7 November 1862.

<sup>84</sup> Thomas William Humes, *The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee*, 126.

<sup>85</sup> “Horrible Murder,” *Knoxville Register*, 7 and 8 August 1862, in *Athens Post*, 15 August 1862.

to preform traditionally both male and female tasks, and the frequency of insurgents. One excerpt described how a woman fished each day in the frigid weather to provide sustenance for her children. Another excerpt offered a solution to the war induced shortages, describing how women traveled amid one another's farms to help to cultivate and harvest crops "with the assistance of the matrons and a few old men." Another excerpt which described the plight of a woman, whom lived off "roasted corn, without bread, meat or salt...[used] hickory ashes...with a small quantity of salt for preserving beef...leather shoes were replaced by woolen rags." Her story also described the frequency of soldiers who destroyed their homes and confiscated bedding and ticking "for tent cloths" and textiles for uniforms and other clothing. "resorted to various expedients to manufacture clothing and prepare it for their own use."<sup>86</sup> This article intended to serve as reminder that the region's women would have to assume male roles and work together to survive the shortages and effects.

\*\*\*

The end of 1862 looked quite similar to its start. An antagonistic and violent conflict deepened between the region's Unionists and Confederates. A Knoxville citizen wrote a letter to the editor of the *Charleston Mercury* regarding the deterioration of communal relationships. He believed the situation in East Tennessee had not been changed and the region suffered "gross injustice and violence."<sup>87</sup> Calls for a Union invasion continued unanswered. William G. Brownlow traveled for six months throughout northern cities on a stump speaking tour and spoke of Unionists' tumultuous existence. He hoped to accompany Federal troops into East Tennessee

---

<sup>86</sup> Elizabeth Fries Lummis Ellet, *The Women of the American Revolution* (Spartanburg: *Spartanburg Express*, 1845) in "Lessons for the Women," *Athens Post*, 14 March 1862.

<sup>87</sup> "The Condition of Affairs in East Tennessee: The Leaders and the People," *Charleston Mercury*, 4 April 1862.

and “shoot [Confederates] down like dogs, and hang them on every limb we come to...[they]have had their time of hanging and shooting, and our time comes next, and I hope to God that it will not be long.”<sup>88</sup> Federal Brigadier General James G. Spears, an ardent Unionist from Bledsoe County who fled after Tennessee seceded, likewise spoke “confidently of returning to East Tennessee at an early day and [swore] vengeance against all their former neighbors who adhere to the Southern Government.”<sup>89</sup>

Then in December of 1862, another set of bridge burnings surprised Confederate authorities and served as a reminder that Lincoln’s government had not forgotten East Tennessee. The initial bridge burnings continued to haunt Reverend William B. Carter and his brothers, Brigadier General Samuel P. Carter and Colonel James P.T. Carter. East Tennessee had been their home and they hated to see their Unionist neighbors in the hands of the Confederacy. Samuel Carter told Daniel Ellis that “he was very sorry that we were in so bad a condition, and...that he would use his best exertions to relieve us, and treated us with the utmost kindness.”<sup>90</sup> William Carter once again contrived a scheme to destroy the ET&VA at Union Depot and Strawberry Plains. This loss of the region’s railroads would logistically cut the region in two and allow Union forces to liberate those long suffering Unionists.<sup>91</sup> Lincoln endorsed the plan as “ part of [his] never-abandoned scheme to bring relief... to loyal....citizens of East Tennessee.”<sup>92</sup> Fraught with problems from the start, Samuel and James Carter left Kentucky on 20 December with approximately 980 men--2,000 fewer than anticipated. Half of the men he did have were raw recruits. Destroying both bridges accordingly seemed unrealistic to Samuel

---

<sup>88</sup> William Gannaway Brownlow, “Speech against the Great Rebellion,” in Jon L. Wakelyn, ed., *Southern Unionist Pamphlets and the Civil War*, 114.

<sup>89</sup>“The East Tennessee Renegades,” *Athens Post*, 19 December 1862.

<sup>90</sup> Daniel Ellis, *The Thrilling True Adventures of Daniel Ellis*, 34.

<sup>91</sup> William Garrett Piston, *Carter’s Raid*, 17-24.

<sup>92</sup> Campbell H. Brown, “Carter’s East Tennessee Raid: The Sailor on Horseback who Raided his own Back Yard,” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 22 (March 1963): 67.

Carter, who choose to concentrate his men on the Northeast Tennessee bridges at Union Depot over the Holston and Carter's Depot at the Watauga. The mountainous terrain complicated things, slowing the men's progress and prohibiting the supply train from continuing with the men. Winding their way through Kentucky and Southwest Virginia, the Federal troops barely evaded Confederate and partisan armies. James Carter nonetheless seized and burned the Union Depot bridge on 30 December. The men also "torched a nearby wagon bridge, the railroad depot, three cars filled with various food stuff and a large quantity of salt, more than a ton of potassium nitrate... 700 muskets, and miscellaneous telegraphic equipment." Later that same day Samuel Carter dispatched his brother James to seize Carter's Depot. Another small contingent of Confederate troops waited for the ambush at dusk and a quick skirmish ensued before the Federals destroyed the bridge, arms, and supplies. Slipping back through Confederate line the Carter brothers returned to Kentucky on 2 January 1863. Carter was proud that with fewer than a 1,000 men he had burned two major bridges, but he was frustrated that with such a small force he could not attack the bridge at Strawberry Plains. More importantly, the damages demonstrated the fragility of the Confederacy's hold on East Tennessee.<sup>93</sup> The new bridge burnings certainly frightened Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain. She thought that the Union Army had successfully invaded the region and that they would soon be at the mercies of the Unionists. She could only hope "that favors will be shown to us as we have shown to those amongst us who have taken sides with them."<sup>94</sup>

---

<sup>93</sup> William Garrett Piston, *Carter's Raid*, 25-27, 29, 36-39, 48-54, and 62-65.

<sup>94</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 31 December 1862 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 55.

## 5. “Days are Dark”: The Coming of the Federal Army, 1863

General Samuel P. Carter’s Federal cavalry raid during the last days of 1862 destroyed the illusion that East Tennessee offered sanctuary to those who supported the Confederacy. In its immediate aftermath, Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain wrote of the sheer terror she felt on New Year’s Day, certain that Carter’s men would plunder and destroy indiscriminately. Fain had immediately hidden her family’s valuables even though she believed those “dark hearted invader[s]” would probably “beat” her until she relinquished the items. Later that evening, as Fain lay awake, her daughter asked, “if they shoot us will we go to heaven?” When Fain replied yes, her daughter simply responded, “they can’t hurt us when we get there.” The child’s unflappable faith temporarily eased Fain’s fears. She believed that her prayers had “been heard and [her] enemies turned back.”<sup>1</sup>

Yet the potential for similar incursions remained. Confederate women like Fain deeply feared that the new year would bring a Union army to East Tennessee. Carter’s raid and the Confederacy’s debacle in West and Middle Tennessee provided little assurance that their soldiers could keep the Federals at bay. The indecisive battle on Stone’s River at Murfreesboro at year’s end further demonstrated the Confederacy’s weakness in the west. Prior to the battle, responding to orders from Jefferson Davis, General Braxton Bragg had sent reinforcements to Vicksburg, reducing his force. From Nashville, General William S. Rosecrans moved to take advantage as quickly as bad winter weather would allow. Bragg attacked first near Murfreesboro on 31 December 1862 and almost routed the Federals, but Rosecrans refused to retreat. Another

---

<sup>1</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 3 January 1863 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 59-62.

Confederate assault on January 2 was a dismal failure. The next day, Bragg fell back toward Shelbyville and Tullahoma. Rosecrans refused to engage further, believing that he needed to adequately supply his army before moving. For months he sat at Murfreesboro, close to East Tennessee, building and equipping a massive supply base.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the Battle of Stone's River signaled to some that the United States Government was "determined to conquer East Tennessee." Fearful of this eventuality, one Confederate wrote that "the time has arrived when the Government can no longer, with prudence, neglect the defenses of that country... or we shall lose East Tennessee."<sup>3</sup>

Unionist women at the same moment desperately hoped for Federal intervention, as the first two years of the war had left their families and them exhausted. Letters traveled across Union lines. Both men and women wrote to government officials and family members lamenting their treatment. One Knox County Unionist was arrested smuggling over three hundred letters through the Cumberland Gap.<sup>4</sup> Another Unionist described to President Abraham Lincoln how families were "stripped of all provisions deemed by the authorities [as] unnecessary." Conscription and many Unionist men's evasion of it left women alone to manage farms and children. He argued, "There are but few left to till the soil." This writer chose to discuss Unionist women's hardships in hopes of pushing Lincoln towards intervention. He inaccurately described these women as helpless without their male companions, but the thing to note is not his view of female dependence but that the writer used these women's plight to

---

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Lawrence Connelly, *Army of the Heartland: The Army of Tennessee 1861-1863*, 3-5, 51-53, and 280; Peter Cozzens, *No Better Place to Die: The Battle of Stones River* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), x-xi.

<sup>3</sup>"The East Tennessee Campaign – Its Importance and Situation," *Richmond Inquirer*, 14 January 1863 in *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 21 January 1863.

<sup>4</sup> "Arrest of a Notorious Lincolnite," *Athens Post*, 3 April 1863.

convince Lincoln to rescue East Tennessee.<sup>5</sup> And so the specter of Union invasion hung over women's lives in 1863 until it became a reality.

\*\*\*

For the first two years of the war, East Tennessee women lived in an environment where both Unionists and Confederates targeted one another for their political affiliation. The instability and contention saddened Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain; she did not know whom she could trust. Family and friendship once a haven, had proven troublesome for Fain, and she concluded that no relationship was immune to the divisive nature of war. She wrote, "days are dark and friends of earth are few."<sup>6</sup> As the new year rang in, women on both sides recognized that the war had irrevocably altered their lives. It had forced women to challenge their preconceived gender notions while residing in a violent and rapidly changing environment. While the conventional battlefields lay outside of East Tennessee for the moment, the war permeated the social, economic, and cultural fabric of their lives. They feared the new landscape and their role in it.

The war also had brought an increase of criminal activity which many have attributed to guerrillas and bushwhackers. Historians until recently described guerrillas as hardened criminals hailing from the lower class and devoid of humanity. A new wave of historiography counters that such men resorted to local violence to protect their homes and communities and maintain a crumbling social order. Joseph M. Beilein Jr., for example, argues that "violence could not be random nor could killing be anonymous; they were personal acts for the good of the

---

<sup>5</sup>Benjamin Tatham, to President Abraham Lincoln, 31 January 1863, Abraham Lincoln Papers: Series 1, General Correspondence, 1833-1916, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/mal.2145500/?sp=2&r=0.137,1.018,0.766,0.327,0>.

<sup>6</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 2 June 1863, John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 73.

community.” Christopher Phillips likewise does not believe that Confederate guerrillas acted indiscriminately, but that the loss of slavery motivated them. Union soldiers directly threatened southern society by destroying a central component of it, slavery. Daniel Sutherland argues that guerrillas were largely middle-class men and their acts were of a retaliatory nature, often resulting from a perceived injustice to their community.

Events in East Tennessee suggest that Sutherland is right. In Carter County, for example, an unknown assailant shot a woman and her Unionist fiancé while they socialized one evening. Both sustained significant facial injuries as the bullet passed through their mouths and head. Luckily, they survived. Local doctor Abraham Jobe refused to administer medical attention, however, because he feared going out into a “dark... neighborhood where men were being shot, and women too, without provocation.” The identity and motivation of the shooter remained a mystery. He could have chosen to attack this Unionist man for his failure to enlist, or this could have been simply an act of personal retribution. In East Tennessee, no one could know for sure.<sup>7</sup>

Unionists continued to retaliate as well. Confederate Adeline Deaderick wrote at length of the constant molestation from Unionists bushwhackers in Washington County. She described how these men would travel in large parties of ten or more often attacking homes at night and burning or carrying away both valuables and necessities. They hid in the mountains to avoid conscription and military intervention. The mountains also offered them a vantage point where

---

<sup>7</sup> Joseph M. Beilein Jr, *Bushwhackers: Guerrilla Warfare, Manhood, and the Household in Civil War Missouri*, ebook (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2016), 22-24, 25, Barnes and Noble Nook; Christopher Phillips, “The Hard-Line War: The Ideological Basis of Irregular Warfare in the Western Border States,” in Joseph M. Beilein Jr and Matthew C. Hulbert, eds., *The Civil War Guerrilla: Unfolding the Black Flag in History, Memory, and Myth* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2015), 13-15; Daniel E. Sutherland, *American Civil War Guerrillas: Changing the Rules of Warfare* ebook (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2013), 23-25, Barnes and Noble Nook; and *A Savage Conflict: The Decisive Role of Guerrillas in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), xi-xii; David C. Hsiung, ed., *A Mountaineer in Motion: The Memoir of Dr. Abraham Jobe, 1817-1906* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2009), 83.

they were able to detect the presence of Confederate soldiers. Deaderick claimed that the Unionists took pot shots at Confederate soldiers returning home, including her son, who made a “narrow escape” when the ball missed his body by inches passing “between, the horn of his saddle” and him.<sup>8</sup> Deaderick believed these men to be “savage[s], who preferred to plunder, and steal to fighting at all,” but in reality they too were most likely protecting their communities and political ideology.<sup>9</sup>

Unionists also rode in and around Knoxville, targeting Confederates, and stealing and destroying their private property. Slaves, mules, and horses were among the items they stole. In addition, they torched stored crops.<sup>10</sup> It was not unusual for livestock to go missing; advertisements became commonplace in local media detailing such occurrences. In January alone, such notices regarding stolen horses occurred at least weekly. A Sequatchie County man, for example, placed an ad in the *Chattanooga Daily Rebel* in hopes of locating his stolen mare.<sup>11</sup> One Chattanooga man did not care who stole his stallion or what their motivation, but simply asked for it to be returned with “no questions asked.”<sup>12</sup> Another man had his horse taken from his barn and similarly offered a reward for its return.<sup>13</sup> While instances of stolen horses peppered the local newspapers throughout 1863, they rarely alluded to who committed the crime or if it had a political or retaliatory motive, but the notices were placed in the local Confederate newspaper indicating these men shared the same allegiance.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 54.

<sup>9</sup> “Anna Mary Moon, “Civil War Diaries of Mrs. Adeline Deaderick,” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 7, no. 1 (March, 1948), 53.

<sup>10</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 14 July 1863, John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 77-78.

<sup>11</sup> “Taken Up,” *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 6 January 1863.

<sup>12</sup> “Stolen,” *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 16 January 1863.

<sup>13</sup> “Lost,” *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 18 January 1863.

<sup>14</sup> A.B. Jackson, “Stolen,” *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 12 February 1863; “Estray Horse” and “\$50 Reward,” *Athens Post*, 6 February 1863.

Women did not just witness or fall victim to extralegal activity. They participated. Some hid and cared for Unionist men or deserters. While Unionists often fled the region to avoid conscription, the Confederate military continued trying to build up their ranks. They arrested white men of conscription age found without proof of exemption, substitution, government employment, or discharge. Military commanders and railroad personnel had the authority to arrest any offending parties. Men who violated the conscription act would be summarily tried for desertion. The Adjunct General of the District of Tennessee, Maj. Joseph B. Cumming of Georgia, worried that Chattanooga offered soldiers the perfect environment to desert. The major railroad hub had large numbers of soldiers traveling in and out daily. There deserted soldiers could remain under the guise of awaiting transportation. Cumming ordered that any enlisted soldiers “found in Chattanooga without proper authority [would] be arrested and sent under guard to the Headquarters of the army.”<sup>15</sup> J.P. Jones, likewise admonished families for hiding deserters and reminded them that the crime could be punished by “death.” He added that “the strictest efforts will be made to detect those who incite soldiers to desert, or who may harbor those who have deserted, and summary punishment applied in every instance.”<sup>16</sup> One Confederate soldier believed East Tennessee suffered from an epidemic of desertion and begged women to discourage their men from absconding from duty. The terrain and sympathetic family members hid these men. Instead, he called for women “to take the matter into hand” and “drive these miserable ‘shirks’... from their homes and from your presence, scorn them as you would a coward, hiss, and denounce them.” Condemnation equated to patriotism.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> Office Commandant of Conscription, “Notice to all Subject to Conscription,” by E.D. Blake, Knoxville, 10 January 1863 and Headquarters District of Tennessee, General Orders No. 4, by Joseph B. Cumming, Chattanooga, 23 January 1863 in *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 30 and 29 January 1863.

<sup>16</sup>Inspector General’s Office, by Department No. 2, Tullahoma, 11 February 1863 in *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 25 February 1863.

<sup>17</sup>“Deserters,” *Athens Post*, 27 February 1863.

Women impacted the war front from their homes in other ways. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain recognized the influence she had on her husband's commitment. Colonel Richard G. Fain of the Sixty-third Regiment of Tennessee Volunteers asked her if he should resign. He had suffered from gastrointestinal issues for years and believed the army exasperated his condition. His wife desperately wanted her husband home, but instead encouraged him to remain. She stated, "I feel it is important for everyone to stand firm and unshaken at his post."<sup>18</sup> Nineteenth-century gender norms, as noted previously, depicted women as the moral compass of their family and society. Women were expected to place their needs second. The Confederacy utilized these preconceived and ingrained gender assumptions and demanded that women sacrifice their husbands, fathers, and sons to the war. Many women did so without prompting.

The war nonetheless brought death at an unprecedented level to women. Knoxville's Ellen Renshaw House realized that each battle fought had a high human cost. She anxiously awaited news of the Battle of Stone's River, wondering which of her friends had fallen and admiring their sacrifice.<sup>19</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain lamented all death, but the loss of a young life affected her more. She made martyrs of "our noble brave sons [who] have given their lives on their country altar in this deadly conflict."<sup>20</sup> One Confederate soldier encountered four young Chattanooga women paying homage to fallen Confederates at a local cemetery. He commended these "fair daughters of the sunny south" for celebrating the lives of men they did not personally know, and described them as almost saint like, the epitome of morality. Yet perhaps showing their admiration for the fallen offered a coping mechanism for the overwhelming deaths while simultaneously providing a visible manifestation of their patriotism. The Chattanooga women

---

<sup>18</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 23 January 1863, John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 64.

<sup>19</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 1 January 1863, Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 3.

<sup>20</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 23 January 1863, John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 64.

could demonstrate their loyalty to the cause by not only honoring the fallen but also the place which they lay.<sup>21</sup>

The war also destabilized the region's social relationships and led to a further increase in violence and crime. Women found themselves in a contentious environment that differed greatly from even the secessionist period. As society changed, so too did women's roles within it. No longer were women expected to remain in the domestic sphere. Instead they were encouraged to maintain their households and participate in the political and economic realms.

For the first time without her husband, for example, Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain had to make decisions regarding her household. She had adhered to the notion of female subservience and felt uncomfortable with her new role. Gender historians of course have long demonstrated that women actively participated in the Civil War economy. Northern women especially worked in a variety of wage positions, volunteer relief work, and as nurses.<sup>22</sup> Drew Gilpin Faust, in contrast, argues that the war forced elite Confederate women as well to undertake new roles which conflicted with their identity of privileged white women.<sup>23</sup> That is reflective of Fain's experience during the war. She assumed her new role with hesitation and fear. Yet while Fain believed in theory that men should make the family's economic decisions, she refused to allow her brother-in-law to take advantage of her when they argued over the cultivation of a portion of

---

<sup>21</sup> "A Solider," "Touching Incident," *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 5 March 1863.

<sup>22</sup> Nina Silber, *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War* (Cambridge: University of Harvard Press, 2005), 7-12. For example, Jessica Ziparo recently has shown how northern women worked as civil servants, although she does argue that the women had to acknowledge male superiority and accept lower wages because of their sex. She finds "these women helped to begin to break down some of the cultural and economic restrictions that constrained nineteenth-century middle class women." See Jessica Ziparo, *This Grand Experiment: When Women Entered the Federal Workforce in Civil War Era Washington, D.C.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 1, 3, 5 and "Northern Women, the State, and Wartime Mobilization," in Judith Giesberg and Randall M. Miller, eds., *Women and the American Civil War: North-South Counterpoints* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2018), 62.

<sup>23</sup> Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 4-8.

his land in the spring of 1863. She wanted to provide the labor for sewing and maintaining the crop in exchange for splitting the profits. Conversely, her brother-in-law thought that Fain should supply manpower and the livestock needed and that his donation of land entitled him to half of the profits. She refused, calling him greedy. A woman who frequently wrote of female subservience thus flouted a male family member's direction. This subversion of authority proved only temporary, for Fain's husband instructed her to take the deal, yet when left alone Fain did not allow her ideals of female inferiority to affect her financial decisions. Her husband's authority proved ultimate, but not all men's.<sup>24</sup>

Other women had to adjust to hard economic realities and their changing roles. Feeding their families despite inflation, a standing army, a tightening blockade, and a fragmented Confederacy became a significant economic concern for the women on the East Tennessee homefront. Myra Inman bemoaned the cost of subsistence items as early as February 1863. Corn prior to the war had cost ten cents a bushel but in 1863 cost \$3.00.<sup>25</sup> Soldiers' constant foraging meanwhile annoyed Morristown's Margaret Lewis McCalla. With her husband away serving in the Confederate Engineering Corps, she alone managed the farm. She complained that "soldiers set out as though they intended to eat us out." To compound the problem, she had to worry how to keep her pigs healthy after they contracted cholera and five died.<sup>26</sup> Upon hearing this news, her husband instructed McCalla to collect payment from the military. He also reinforced the idea that she needed to make her own decisions regarding the management of the family, and wrote, "you must be governed by your own discretion in everything." Even

---

<sup>24</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 28 April 1863, John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 68-69.

<sup>25</sup> Myra Inman, 11 February 1863 in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman: A Diary of the Civil War in East Tennessee* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2000), 186.

<sup>26</sup> Margaret McCalla, Morristown, to Richard C. McCalla, Knoxville, 12 August 1863, Accession RG -703, Speake-McCalla Civil War Correspondence, 1863-1865, The Special Collections and Archives Department at Auburn University Libraries, Auburn.

though McCalla still received advice from her husband, the correspondence was slow and she often had to make decisions independent of her husband.<sup>27</sup>

Women likewise exerted more independence when performing charitable deeds. Benevolent activities provided Confederate women with an avenue to participate in the public sphere. Twenty-five-year-old Charlotte Barton Ramsey traveled to North Georgia to care for her ill older brother and realized that Confederate hospitals and camps desperately needed basic medical supplies. Upon her return to Knoxville, she began collecting the needed items from sympathetic neighbors. While traveling throughout the region on this errand Ramsey contracted typhus fever and died.<sup>28</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain similarly believed that women could ease the hospitals' burden by caring for friends and families. Patient deaths, she concluded, would drop "if permitted to come home and receive the kind of nursing and attention of home." Fain exercised this theory multiple times by nursing her sons and husband back to health. A Virginia Confederate soldier suffering from dysentery and unable to continue also stopped at Fain's neighbor's home. Recognizing that he needed assistance, she provided him with medicine, bathed him, and even helped him to the privy and when he was too weak to make the trip offered him the use of a bed pan.<sup>29</sup> Such acts were hardly universal, to be sure. Young Myra Inman did not feel inclined to engage in benevolent work, and instead became irked when her friends' generosity impeded her ability to socialize.<sup>30</sup>

As 1863 progressed, the future overall remained uncertain for East Tennessee's Confederate women. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain wrote that "I often feel so cast down, my family

---

<sup>27</sup>Richard C. McCalla, Knoxville, to Margaret McCalla, 17 August 1863, Speake-McCalla Civil War Correspondence.

<sup>28</sup> William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 164-165.

<sup>29</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain 14 February and 7 September 1863, John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 65 and 82-85. Quote p. 65.

<sup>30</sup> George S. Blackie, 26 March 1863, "To the Ladies," in *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, 1 April 1863.

large, my anxiety for their worldly comfort often causes me to feel so depressed.” She constantly prayed to ease her fears.<sup>31</sup> Myra Inman likewise lamented the transience of life, lamenting “how many hundred of ‘castles in the air’ have I built, and they all vanish... her buildings are swept away by the first rude hand of adversity.” Prior to 1863, Inman’s diary entries largely discussed only the frivolities associated with youth, but as the war continued she realized that it had significantly altered her life. Now her future remained uncertain. After learning of the Confederacy’s loss of the Mississippi River at Port Hudson and Vicksburg in July 1863, she wrote, “Oh! This life! I sometimes feel as if I would willingly die... it is so intermingled with grief and sadness.”<sup>32</sup> Historian Giselle Roberts, examining young elite Confederate women like Inman in Mississippi and Louisiana, writes that they too found themselves in a new environment in which they were ill-equipped to emotionally navigate. Prior to the war, young elite women would have used this period of their life to make advantageous matches. Now they were expected to take on domestic and economic tasks previously thought below their class. The war challenged their conceptions of race and gender.<sup>33</sup>

\*\*\*

Pleas for East Tennessee’s liberation, directed to President Lincoln, had become commonplace by 1863. In July, for example, “The loyal men of East Tennessee” wrote to Lincoln and described Unionists as “a suffering down-trodden, despised and subjugated people.” They demanded protection from Confederate oppressors who had impressed their food and

---

<sup>31</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 27 May and 28 June 1863, John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 72 and 75. Quote p. 72.

<sup>32</sup> Myra Inman, 4 February, 1 and 15 July 1863, William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 245 and 273. Vicksburg pained Fain as well. She concluded “Days are... very dark.” See Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 15 July 1863, John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 78. See also Steven E. Woodworth, *Decision in the Heartland*, 67.

<sup>33</sup> Giselle Roberts, *The Confederate Belle* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003), 1-10.

property and forced Unionist women and children to either starve or flee from the “merciless foe.” They also bemoaned Governor Isham Harris’ order which conscripted all men from the ages of 45 to 55 into Confederate service, and wrote that “under this call there are no exemptions, but men... are forced to choose between fighting for a cause they hate, and against a Government they have never loved and adored... or to flee from their homes, like felons.” Women and children of East Tennessee were “driven from their homes to wander through the mountains without shelter, by bands of heartless... blood-thirsty soldiers; and for no crime but that they loved their country too well to raise against it the sacrilegious hand of treason.” One Unionist, they argued, had aided what he thought were Federal soldiers, but who in fact were disguised Confederates who in “cold blood murdered” him.<sup>34</sup>

The liberation of Unionist East Tennessee, of course, had been on Lincoln’s mind since the outbreak of the war. In March 1863 he requested suggestions from Congressmen Horace Maynard and George W. Bridges on how to accomplish it. They demanded a Federal invasion through the Cumberland Gap. Once liberated, they added, Lincoln could utilize Central Kentucky troops and loyalists to maintain the department.<sup>35</sup> A frustrated Lincoln nonetheless continued to wrestle through the summer with his desire to rescue the region’s long-suffering Unionists and his inability to get his army into the region. He wrote, “I do as much for East Tennessee as I would or could, if my own home and family were in Knoxville,” he wrote in August. Yet, it would not be easy. The recent burnings by the Carter brothers demonstrated that a smaller contingent of men could not hold the region. A large force was necessary to reclaim the territory, but that in turn meant maintaining a difficult supply line. Even with these

---

<sup>34</sup> East Tennessee Citizens, to President Abraham Lincoln, Washington D.C., July 1863, Abraham Lincoln Papers.

<sup>35</sup> Horace A. Maynard and George W. Bridges, Washington D.C. to President Abraham Lincoln, Washington D.C., 6 March 1863, *Ibid.*

obstacles, he reassured the beleaguered East Tennesseans, “Gen. Halleck, Gen. Burnside and Gen. Rosecrans are all engaged now in an effort to relieve you.”<sup>36</sup>

That was true. During the Tullahoma Campaign in late June and early July, Union forces under Rosecrans maneuvered General Braxton Bragg’s army out of Middle Tennessee and drove him back to Chattanooga.<sup>37</sup> In the late summer, Union forces converged on Bragg, with Rosecrans’s Army of the Cumberland moving toward Chattanooga and General Ambrose Burnside’s new Army of the Ohio moving south from Kentucky through the Cumberland Gap. Rosecrans’ troops approached Chattanooga at the end of August, funneling men between Missionary Ridge, Lookout Mountain, and Sand Mountain.

The Confederacy understood the value of Chattanooga’s railroad junction. Steven E. Woodworth argues that “after Richmond and perhaps Atlanta, Chattanooga was the most important rail junction remaining.”<sup>38</sup> Earl Hess argues that Richmond was willing to sacrifice the rest of East Tennessee to hold the town. Bragg thus ordered General Simon B. Buckner, whose troops occupied Knoxville, to Chattanooga. Buckner abandoned the city on 2 September, just as Burnside approached from the north. For the last week, Burnside had been traveling from Kentucky through the Cumberland Gap and entered Knoxville unopposed.<sup>39</sup> Union soldier Private John Watkins of the Nineteenth Ohio Infantry observed that “Knoxville must have been quite a place before the war...but it looks now as though it was the oldest place in the world and been allowed to run down.”<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> President Abraham Lincoln, Washington D.C., to Robert Morrow and John M. Fleming, 9 August 1863, Abraham Lincoln Papers.

<sup>37</sup> Steven E. Woodworth, *Decision in the Heartland*, 69-70.

<sup>38</sup> Steven E. Woodworth, *Six Armies in Tennessee*, 12, 56, 61-67, 78-101, 120-128.

<sup>39</sup> Earl Hess, *The Knoxville Campaign*, 10-11.

<sup>40</sup> John Watkins, Knoxville, to Sarah Probert, Pittsfield, Ohio, 18 September 1863, The John Watkins Papers, 1863, Accession Number 1161, Special Collections, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Ira Harris of the 5<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry wrote to his father, a Senator from New York, that as they traveled through rural parts of East Tennessee they “were greeted everywhere with shouts for the Union, cheers for the old flag, and the most unmistakably signs of loyalty...at every house the entire family would appear, often with buckets of fresh water and fruit...and some of the people would scarcely ask for pay for the forage we had seized to feed our animals.” When they made it to Knoxville, he added, the townspeople were overwhelmed with joy. He concluded “the old flag has been hidden in mattresses and under carpet [and] now floats to the breeze at every staff in East Tennessee.” Some women wore the American flag and even carried it waving it at the soldiers.<sup>41</sup> The Federals offered safety in what had been a tumultuous environment and the chance for Unionist women to publicly profess their allegiance; no longer, having to just demonstrate their loyalty through covert actions like caring for refugees or guerrillas. In addition, their public celebration of the Union troops symbolized their defiance and displeasure with their Confederate brethren; their bold choices clearly indicated they were with the invaders. Actions such as these were not just the frivolous pursuits of the domestic sphere, but indicated women were active participants in the war.

Conversely, the Confederates abandonment of Knoxville outraged women such as Ellen Renshaw House, who stated, “I think it is outrageous...the Yankees are here ...[they] walked in without the least resistance on our part.” Her only consolation was that Buckner destroyed the supplies and railroad bridges not wanting the resources to fall in Union hands.<sup>42</sup> Elisa Bolli Buffat, a devoted Confederate, actually began a diary on 2 September 1863, “the day when we

---

<sup>41</sup>Ira Harris, Knoxville, to Ira Harris, New York, 6 September 1863, in *Harper's Weekly*, 24 October 1863.

<sup>42</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 1 September 1863, Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 4-5.

beheld for the first time our most dreaded foes, the Yankees!”<sup>43</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain wrote, “We of the South are passing through deep waters and fiery trials.”<sup>44</sup>

Once he secured Knoxville, Burnside sent troops throughout the surrounding area to solidify his control. Within a week he held the Cumberland Gap.<sup>45</sup> Unionist recruits flooded into Burnside’s ranks. He wrote to Lincoln that “he armed some 2,500 guards and have recruited nearly 3,000 men for 3 years of service.” He noted that the men mustered into service lacked appropriate clothing and that many suffered from malnutrition. He concluded that “a large majority of them are in a very destitute condition but they are armed and fed and seem to be anxious to make any sacrifice required of them.”<sup>46</sup>

Buckner meanwhile joined Bragg at Chattanooga. With Burnside in Knoxville and Rosecrans moving towards Chattanooga, Bragg decided to abandon the city before Rosecrans trapped him. He moved his troops just south of the Tennessee-Georgia state line. Rosecrans had divided his force to pass through the mountains surrounding Chattanooga, and Bragg hoped to attack the Federal army while it was separated. He had multiple opportunities to strike Rosecrans’ fragmented army but infighting, the incompetence of his subordinates, and his own refusal to act prevented such an occurrence. Rosecrans re-soon consolidated his strung-out army along Chickamauga Creek. Bragg meanwhile received timely reinforcements from both Mississippi and the Army of Northern Virginia, including Lieutenant General James Longstreet and two divisions. The armies collided in this densely forested area on 19 September along the

---

<sup>43</sup> Elisa Bolli Buffat, 2, 7, 10, 11 September 1863 in Elisa Bolli Buffet, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffet and Mrs. Elisa Bolli Buffat*, 103.

<sup>44</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 6 September 1863 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 81.

<sup>45</sup> Earl Hess, *The Knoxville Campaign: Burnside and Longstreet in East Tennessee* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2012), 14-17.

<sup>46</sup> General Ambrose E. Burnside, Knoxville, to President Abraham Lincoln, Washington D.C., 20 October 1863, telegram, Abraham Lincoln Papers.

main road north to Chattanooga. What ensued was a chaotic battle in which neither side could clearly identify their enemy and battle lines constantly shifted. Despite vicious fighting, neither army gained an advantage. Bragg hoped to push Federal troops south away from Chattanooga on the battle's second day, 20 September, but the problems of terrain and blurry lines continued. Union troops then suffered a devastating blow when Rosecrans inadvertently created a gap in his lines, which Longstreet struck in force. Troops under Union General George H. Thomas, soon to become "the Rock of Chickamauga," held Snodgrass Hill on the northern side of the battlefield and allowed the rest of Rosecrans' army to safely retreat to Chattanooga that night. While the Confederacy claimed the Battle of Chickamauga a victory, Bragg subsequently failed to push or starve Federal forces out from Chattanooga. Major James Austin Connolly of the 123<sup>rd</sup> Illinois Infantry retreated to Chattanooga with the Army of the Cumberland and believed that "Chattanooga is the great point of interest now...the Potomac is 'played out'... Vicksburg 'went up'... Charleston is condemned to 'Greek Fire,' and everybody is coming to Chattanooga."<sup>47</sup>

The incomplete Confederate siege that followed largely prevented Federal troops from maintaining effective supply lines. Rosecrans' men suffered as a result. The Army of Cumberland had to subsist on reduced rations that grew tighter over time.<sup>48</sup> The Federal Army was thus forced to forage off the locals. Despondent over his paltry meals, Major Connolly described how the forage scouts at one point could only obtain one turkey and some potatoes. That would not even feed the officers of his regiment. To be successful, he believed that the foragers "will probably have to go 60 or 70 miles up the valley before they can find a chicken or

---

<sup>47</sup> Steven E. Woodworth, *Decision in the Heartland*, 73-81; John D. Fowler, *Mountaineers in Gray*, 100-106; Earl Hess, *The Knoxville Campaign*, 7-18; and Steven E. Woodworth, *Six Armies in Tennessee*, 130-131, 133-136.

<sup>48</sup> Steven E. Woodworth, *Six Armies in Tennessee*, 143-144; Steven E. Woodworth *Decision in the Heartland*, 73-81; James A. Connolly, 21 October, 5 November, 15 November 1863, *Three Years in the Army of the Cumberland*, Paul M. Angle, ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959), 132, 137.

potato.” Several weeks later Connolly wrote to his wife, “you can’t imagine what a luxury a cup of...coffee, with... cream and white sugar with a piece of bread and butter would be down here just now.” He continued “when I get home I shall appreciate plain bread and butter more than I ever did before I was ‘brass mounted.’”<sup>49</sup>

President Lincoln and Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton meanwhile worried that Rosecrans would lose the rest of East Tennessee. They created the Military Division of the Mississippi, which would combine the departments of the Cumberland, the Ohio, and the Tennessee into one “super department” headed by Ulysses S. Grant. Once in control, Grant replaced Rosecrans with Thomas and headed to Chattanooga himself. He arrived in the rain on 23 October 1863 and immediately went to work with Army of the Cumberland’s chief engineer and Thomas to secure needed supplies via Bridgeport, Alabama. The plan involved crafting a pontoon bridge across Moccasin Bend, a double curve in the Tennessee River at the foot of Lookout Mountain, and then utilizing a wagon road which stretched westward from Moccasin Bend to Brown’s Ferry. That, however, meant seizing Brown’s Ferry from the Confederates, which Union troops accomplished on 27 October. General Joseph Hooker, commanding two Union corps that Washington had rushed to Tennessee from Virginia, entered Lookout Valley the next day, quickly defeated a small Confederate force at Wauhatchie, and secured the road to Bridgeport. By 29 October the Union Army had secured their “Cracker Line.” Grant did not believe that the supply line to Bridgeport could adequately resupply the troops, however, and ordered General William T. Sherman and 20,000 men from the Army of the Tennessee to march eastward from Mississippi, repairing the Nashville and Decatur Railroad and the Memphis and

---

<sup>49</sup> James A. Connolly, 22 November 1863, Paul M. Angle, ed., *Three Years in the Army of the Cumberland*, 145-148.

Charleston Railroad as they went.<sup>50</sup> Once Sherman arrived in mid-November, Grant decided to strike the Confederate force massed on Missionary Ridge, just east of Chattanooga. Sherman's men would move from Bridgeport to Missionary Ridge and attack from the north while Thomas' men approached Missionary Ridge from the west. If successful, the Union Army would gain control of the ET&GA as well as the Western and Atlantic Railroad.

Occupied with Grant in Chattanooga, Bragg still worried that Burnside in Knoxville posed a threat. He also fought a cancerous rear-guard action against many of his own generals, who wanted him fired and replaced by someone such as Joseph Johnston, Robert E. Lee, or Longstreet. President Davis had to travel west to partially defuse the situation by supporting Bragg. Once Davis left, Bragg began to rid himself of his major critics. Most crucially he sent Longstreet with 17,000 men north to challenge Burnside and retake Knoxville. Longstreet's men hoped that Sweetwater would offer resources to feed them, but the men quickly depleted what was left. From there Longstreet planned his march. Brigadier General Micah Jenkins would move through Loudon, Major General Lafayette McLaws would approach Knoxville from the northeast in hopes of distracting the Federal Army, and Major General Joseph Wheeler's cavalry would strike from the south.<sup>51</sup> Burnside initially wanted to engage Longstreet's men at Loudon, but he feared that if he defeated the Confederates there, Longstreet would fall back to Chattanooga, hindering Grant's plans. Burnside instead fell back from Loudon toward his base, through Lenoir Station into Knoxville. Jenkins' division followed. Longstreet ordered McLaws' men to pursue Burnside from the southwest, trapping them north of Campbell's Station. Union

---

<sup>50</sup>Steven E. Woodworth, *Six Armies in Tennessee*, 148, 150-168 and 170; Steven E. Woodworth, *Decision in the Heartland*, 85-87.

<sup>51</sup> Earl Hess, *The Knoxville Campaign*, Steven E. Woodworth, *Six Armies in Tennessee*, 172-186; Steven E. Woodworth, *Decision in the Heartland*, 87-89.

troops made it to Campbell's Station thirty minutes ahead of McLaws and ensured their retreat. During this time, Burnside sent word to Capt. Orlando Poe to engineer a defensive line around Knoxville. Longstreet did not pursue the Federals into the city, but instead had his men dig their own entrenchments. He sought to starve out Burnside despite his own poor supply lines and limited numbers. While Longstreet believed at first that his troops had successfully cut off the Union's supply line, Unionists from Jefferson and Sevier Counties sent food down the French Broad River and into the area south of Knoxville. Union soldiers were by no stretch of the imagination eating well, as they mostly subsisted on beef; some troops were on quarter rations. Federal soldiers also suffered from lack of clothing, as they had left Kentucky that summer and did not have the appropriate attire for the coming winter.<sup>52</sup>

Back in Chattanooga, Bragg now only had about 42,000 men to Grant's 60,000. On 23 November Thomas moved his sizeable force to Orchard's Knob, a small hill between Missionary Ridge and Chattanooga. Simultaneously, Sherman moved into position north of Missionary Ridge. By the middle of the afternoon, Union troops had secured the north end of the ridge, learning only then that the ridge was not continuous. Bragg then sent General Patrick R. Cleburne to Tunnel Hill, the highest point on the north end of Missionary Ridge opposite Sherman's columns.<sup>53</sup> Hooker convinced Grant to allow him to seize Lookout Mountain on 24 November, Union soldiers drove away Confederates on the mountain and broke that part of Bragg's line in the so-called "Battle Above the Clods."<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup>Robert Tracy McKenzie, *Lincolnton and Rebels: A Divided Town in the American Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 158-172 and Hess, *The Knoxville Campaign*, 80-123.

<sup>53</sup>Steven E. Woodworth, *Six Armies in Tennessee*, 172-186; Steven E. Woodworth, *Decision in the Heartland*, 87-89.

<sup>54</sup>Woodworth, *Six Armies in Tennessee*, 185-187; *Decision in the Heartland*, 88-89.

The next morning, Union troops attacked Missionary Ridge. North of the ridge Sherman's men launched unsuccessful assaults on Confederate breastworks. Grant ordered Hooker off Lookout Mountain to Rossville Gap to assist the effort, but the Confederates had burned the bridge across the Chattanooga Creek, hampering Hooker's progress. With Sherman and Hooker stuck, Grant decided to send Thomas and 23,000 men from Orchard Knob to the base of Missionary Ridge at the center of the Confederate line, hoping to draw fire away from Sherman. On their own, Thomas's men surged up the ridge and drove its defenders away. The geographical nature of the ridge offered numerous advantages for the Cumberland soldiers, including shelter from enemy gun fire and the steep slope which prohibited effective Confederate fire from above.<sup>55</sup> James Connolly wrote that the Confederates "couldn't depress their guns to reach [us], but had to blaze away far over our heads."<sup>56</sup> The Confederate line broke almost simultaneously at several points, causing Confederate troops to either surrender or flee into Georgia.<sup>57</sup>

Following the battle, Grant sent Sherman and most of his men to Knoxville to assist Burnside. Longstreet had decided to attack Fort Sanders, the weakest port in the Union lines. Yet while in the theory Fort Sanders's salient offered an advantageous point of attack and significant cover for any offensive action, the Federals were well prepared. Union forces had created a twelve-foot wide ditch that also was as deep as eight feet in some places at the base of the fort. On the other side of the ditch stood a twelve-foot-high earthen wall with cotton bales perched above. Soldiers poured water down the wall that promptly froze into ice in cold

---

<sup>55</sup> Woodworth, *Six Armies in Tennessee*, 191-200, Woodworth, *Decision in the Heartland*, 89-93.

<sup>56</sup> James A. Connolly, *Three Years in the Army of the Cumberland*, 150.

<sup>57</sup> Woodworth, *Six Armies in Tennessee*, 191-200. Woodworth argues that the Confederates' defense at Missionary Ridge is an example of the military theory defense in depth where defenders stagger their forces to prevent forward movement on their troops. Woodworth believes that this system did not work at Chattanooga or any other field during the Civil War because of poor execution by Civil War generals.

conditions. On the morning of 28 November, Longstreet attacked. The expansive ditch hampered their progress, as did effective Union fire. What ensued was a slaughter; the Confederates suffered a total of 813 casualties to the Union's mere thirteen.<sup>58</sup> Fearing that the Union Army still could lose Knoxville, William G. Brownlow pleaded to Lincoln on 30 November "not to let East Tennessee be abandoned by our troops...several of us here hope to return in a few days."<sup>59</sup> He need not have worried. Unsure of what to do next at first, Longstreet on 5 December determined to push farther into East Tennessee toward the Virginia line when he learned that Sherman was on the way. Knoxville was safe.<sup>60</sup>

\*\*\*

The siege of Knoxville quite literally brought the conventional war to women's doorsteps. Many prominent Unionists, such as Brownlow, Horace Maynard, and Oliver P. Temple, had returned home with Burnside only to flee again for fear that the town would once again fall into Confederate hands. Conversely, Confederate women rejoiced in hopes that Longstreet would drive the invaders out. Soldiers ransacked homes and destroyed the streets. In addition, Longstreet's artillery frightened citizens and destroyed property.<sup>61</sup> Confederate sympathizers paid an added price. Elizabeth Baker Crozier described "Minnie balls falling on the table and the back porch." She feared for her children's safety and took them to stay with a relative, Elizabeth Deaderick. When she returned home, she found "little damage done," but her kitchen door was open, evidence that Union soldiers "had been cooking." Fearful of remaining alone in her home she returned to the Deadericks. When Crozier returned to her home a second time, she found her

---

<sup>58</sup> Tracey McKenzie, *Lincolmites and Rebels*, 166-172; Earl Hess, *The Knoxville Campaign*, 135-174.

<sup>59</sup> William G. Brownlow, Cincinnati, to President Abraham Lincoln, Washington D.C., 30 November 1863, Abraham Lincoln Papers; Steven E. Woodworth, *Six Armies in Tennessee*, 206-207.

<sup>60</sup> Tracey McKenzie, *Lincolmites and Rebels*, 166-172; Earl Hess, *The Knoxville Campaign*, 135-174.

<sup>61</sup> Earl Hess, *The Knoxville Campaign*, 107-109.

house ransacked: “every lock in the house was broken open, the contents of every wardrobe, bureau, closet and side board, the front of which had been broken out, were scattered over every room.” She also found “my wine all drunk, my hams, bacon, butter and sugar all gone, and my faithful dog stretched upon the garments groaning most pitifully.” Crozier gathered some food and essential supplies and took her children down to the cellar to wait until the fighting was over. Later that evening she “went into my once happy family room and found it filled with a miserable set of soldiers and one covered up in my nice white bed with a large marseilles quilt and linen pillowcases and no doubt... he felt comfortable.” The soldier, noticing her anger, offered to move “into the dining room with the promise that he would watch over my things.” He also paid her a silver half dollar for the provisions that he had used and needed. The next day a Federal officer came to the Deaderick residence to escort Crozier to her home to get more of her things. When she got there, she found “Yanks...cooking in every room.” Later that afternoon the fighting got dangerously close to the Deaderick home and the Croziers and hosts once again fled.<sup>62</sup>

Crozier wrote that the constant barrage of cannon and gun fire caused her great levels of anxiety and she and her children “slept in [their] clothes for more than a week.” At night flames peppered Knoxville’s sky from the burning homes. She found “as the darkness of night came on, the light of many of our dear homes illuminated the city with one grand light.” She also described the plight of a local judge’s two daughters who were forced to evacuate their home by Federal soldiers. Crozier stated the two young women “only had on their sunbonnets and calico

---

<sup>62</sup> Elizabeth Baker Crozier, 15, 17, 18, and 19 November 1863, Accession Number MS – 1048, Elizabeth Baker Crozier Diary 1863-1864, Special Collections in University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

dresses” and were ordered to vacate the property without even allowing the women to get anything before they torched it. The same day her own home went up in flames.<sup>63</sup>

As Federal troops funneled into East Tennessee after the siege failed, the women’s world once again upended. Unionist women hoped that they could reside safely in their homes without the fear of being targeted for their political ideology. Conversely, Confederate women lamented their arrival and feared they would be treated as traitors, subject to condemnation from both soldiers and Unionists. Along with a change in regime the Federal Army continued to bring with it a myriad of issues, including the dangers of the conventional war, a shortage of food, and another round of political retribution. Women were forced to navigate new terrain, again often taking on new roles they had not imagined prior to the war.

For two-and-a half years Unionists had suffered under the heel of the Confederates. People who had once been oppressed suddenly found themselves supported by a large and powerful army.<sup>64</sup> Many of the region’s Confederate women hated the sudden jubilation Unionists felt at the Federal Army’s arrival. Elisa Buffat Bolli angrily wrote in her diary that thirteen-year-old Unionist neighbor, Melinda Murray, “was radiant with happiness” over the Union presence in Knoxville. The young girl bragged that “there will soon be a store in town with goods from the North, nice ladies shoes and calicoes, and we should be obliged to put aside our home-spun dresses, else [Yankees] would laugh at us.” Bolli responded to Murray that she

---

<sup>63</sup>Elizabeth Baker Crozier, 23 and 24 November 1863, Elizabeth Baker Crozier Diary. In the latter half of the diary, Crozier did not record dates when recording her experiences.

<sup>64</sup> John Watkins, Knoxville, to Sarah Probert, Pittsfield, Ohio, 18 September 1863, John Watkins Papers.

“didn’t care, that I would wear mine and be proud of it... Hurrah! For the homespun dresses that Southern ladies wear!”<sup>65</sup>

Morristown’s Margaret McCalla worried about more serious issues. She wondered if she should vacate her home before she became a victim of Federal hostility. She wrote to her husband, “I feel a great deal of anxiety just now about our situation here and if I could leave without too great a sacrifice I would feel tempted to do it”<sup>66</sup> She planned to “hire out the negros” to meet her financial needs and then “rent a little house somewhere.”<sup>67</sup> Her husband disapproved of her decision and wrote “you remain at home, move nothing, be ready to run... in case of a raid.” He continued, “I do not think East Tenn. will be given up... I... think it will not be prudent to leave or move anything.”<sup>68</sup> McCalla disregarded these instructions and left in September for South Carolina. She refused to let her husband dictate her decisions, believing her children’s safety paramount to remaining subservient. Her husband later regretted giving McCalla that advice and wrote to her, “I had been laboring under the painful misgivings that you had not been able to get out of E. Tenn. and that you and our[s] were under the iron heel of that tyrant who desecrates the seat of Washington and even perhaps subject to the insults, indignities and enormities practiced by his renegade followers in that region or country.”<sup>69</sup> In this instance, the war had created an environment in which nineteenth-century gender norms were no longer applicable under certain circumstances.

---

<sup>65</sup> Elisa Bolli Buffat, 4 September 1863, in Elisa Bolli Buffet, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli Buffat*, 157.

<sup>66</sup> Margaret McCalla, Morristown, to Richard C. McCalla, 24 August 1863, Margaret McCalla, Chester, S.C., to Richard C. McCalla, 20 September 1863, Speake-McCalla Civil War Correspondence

<sup>67</sup> Richard C. McCalla, Loudon, to Margaret McCalla, Morristown, 26 August 1863, Speake-McCalla Civil War Correspondence.

<sup>68</sup> Margaret McCalla, Chester, S.C., to Richard C. McCalla, 20 September 1863, Speake-McCalla Civil War Correspondence.

<sup>69</sup> Richard C. McCalla to Margaret McCalla, Chester, S.C., 4 October 1863, Speake-McCalla Civil War Correspondence.

The McCallas were not unique. She claimed an “estimated... three thousand persons came out of East Tennessee the same week I did.”<sup>70</sup> Elizabeth Baker Crozier meanwhile found herself alone with her two youngest children and one slave when her husband, surgeon Carrick W. Crozier, and her two eldest children left Knoxville with the Confederate Army. Elizabeth Baker Crozier remained, hoping to protect her property from the Yankee invaders.<sup>71</sup> Afraid that the newly arrived Federal soldiers would punish prominent Confederate families, Mary Kain also threatened to leave Knoxville. She had heard rumors that Union soldiers were confiscating “Rebel Officers” property and “she would thank them to put her across the lines, as she did not choose to live here if they left her nothing to live on.”<sup>72</sup>

While some Confederate women fled from Union troops, others saw the advantage of assisting them. Sometimes the region’s Confederate women provided assistance willingly, but at other times, fear of the enemy motivated their kind deeds. “Hunger, harassment, and disorder” determined how women responded to their invaders.<sup>73</sup> Soldiers visited Knox County’s Elisa Buffat Bolli’s house in search of “bread, meat, water, etc... [and] Mother gave them what we had.” The Bolli matriarch believed better to appease the soldiers than generate their hostility. The soldiers politely thanked the family, which further surprised Bolli.<sup>74</sup>

Ellen Renshaw House, who despised Yankees, also commented on how respectful the soldiers were while searching for food in Knoxville. She too acted in a kindly surface manner,

---

<sup>70</sup> Margaret McCalla, Woodland Cottage, S.C., to Richard C. McCalla, 10 October 1863, Speake-McCalla Civil War Correspondence.

<sup>71</sup> Elizabeth Baker Crozier, 15 November 1863, Elizabeth Baker Crozier Diary 1863-1864; William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 160.

<sup>72</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 4 September 1863; Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 5-6.

<sup>73</sup> Steven V. Ash, *When the Yankees Came*, 202.

<sup>74</sup> Elisa Bolli Buffat, 2, September 1863 in Elisa Bolli Buffet, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli-Buffat*, 156-157.

believing such behavior would benefit her family. Elisa Buffat Bolli recalled one frightening evening when a Federal soldier came looking for a place to sleep and her mother, fearful of declining, “gave him a mattress on the porch.” She commented on her mother’s bravery for engaging with the enemy at night. Bolli wrote of another interaction where three Union soldiers purchased weapons from her mother--even though she did not want to part with her son’s new rifle--she did so to maintain a good relationship. In another incident the Bolli family allowed four Federal soldiers to eat dinner with the family in exchange for 50 cents. The soldiers enjoyed the dinner, surprised to find that a “Secesh” family “seemed to be very decent people.” Her mother offended at the insinuation stated, “we always treat all... kindly, without making any distinction.”<sup>75</sup>

Women independently decided how they wanted to interact with the newly arrived Union soldiers. As soldiers moved through Rogersville, a small contingent of Unionist Tennesseans took up residence in Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain’s fields. She feared that they would destroy her farm and confiscate her livestock and food stuffs, so she secured a letter of protection from the commander, Col. Robert Clay Crawford of the 1<sup>st</sup> Tennessee Light Artillery. His men did not molest her property and indeed paid her for whatever items they took. Fain wrote one evening with “the campfires blazing all around... I knew my rails that enclosed my fields which brought forth the sustenance of my family afforded the fuel of which the fires were made.” Yet, Fain was wrong; her farm remained intact. She eventually befriended the commanding officer and offered him food and company. She wrote, “I thanked my Father that he had still left my family in our

---

<sup>75</sup> Elisa Bolli Buffat, 7, 10, 11 September 1863, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli-Buffat*, 103-104.

comfortable home, that I still had something left to sustain life... I have not experienced such a feeling of deep gratitude to God in my life.”<sup>76</sup> .

While some soldiers requested and paid for goods and services, however, others took what they desired. Despite the better-behaved Federal soldiers at her home, Elisa Buffat Bolli detested the Federal Army’s occupation of Knoxville and asserted that “the troops are already pressing all the forage they can find, even green corn, and where shall the poor people find something to eat?”<sup>77</sup> Union troops chose Henrietta Rutledge Lenoir’s home to forage in September. Lenoir, wife of Dr. B. B. Lenoir and daughter of Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey, had lived a privileged life and now suffered under Union rule. Ramsey witnessed the incident and found that “the enemy came and took whatever of supplies they chose to... they exhausted the smokehouse and cellar of all the necessaries of life, cut down the forests as they pleased, and erected in their fertile fields villas of cabins for their soldiers.” In addition, multiple Union officers used her husband’s office for their headquarters.<sup>78</sup> During the Chattanooga campaign soldiers likewise frequented Myra Inman’s home and took their corn, chicken, and hogs. Ann Jarnagin Inman, the family matriarch, feared that she would not have enough corn to sustain them through the winter and tried to hide it in the small front room. Unfortunately, the mice got to the corn first and destroyed the floorboards along with the food. A few weeks later the family harvested their crops, supplementing their stores of corn, pumpkin, potatoes, and tallow, but still feared the soldiers would confiscate it. The raids grew steadily worse after the Chattanooga

---

<sup>76</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 10 October 1863, John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 96-100.

<sup>77</sup> Elisa Bolli Buffat, 14 September 1863, in Elisa Bolli Buffat, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli Buffat*, 159.

<sup>78</sup> William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 158-159.

campaign ended. Sherman's men camped on the Inman property and took their chickens leaving only two.<sup>79</sup>

Regardless of political affiliation, other East Tennesseans suffered depleted resources. The Confederate Armies had already foraged and confiscated food, valuables, livestock, and even property and the Union Army continued the trend. One Federal soldier wrote, "I think that a much greater curse could not happen to any section of the country than to have an army pass through it... for they strip everything on their route, orchards, potatoes... cornfields and eat people out of house and home."<sup>80</sup> Ellen Renshaw House constantly complained that Union soldiers approached her home looking for food to purchase or at the very least a meal. Eventually, House's mother tried to trick the soldiers by saying that dinner was not yet ready. The delay gave the family a chance to eat without having to share. Even her neighbor complained that the Union troops came to her house each morning looking for breakfast.<sup>81</sup>

When Greenville Unionist Emeline Ragan realized that her husband, a Federal soldier in the Eight Tennessee Infantry, was stationed in the region, she asked him to send the basic supplies their family so desperately needed.<sup>82</sup> Her husband could not get the things she requested, but sent fifty cents, hoping the money could buy something. For this generosity Ragan sent back butter and cheese that she had made at home. A few weeks later Ragan received coffee and sugar from her husband, commodities that she could not purchase.<sup>83</sup>

---

<sup>79</sup> Myra Inman, 13 and 26 October and 25, 26, and 29 November 1863, William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 223, 225, and 230-231.

<sup>80</sup> John Watkins, Knoxville, to Sarah Probert, Pittsfield, Ohio, 20 September 1863, The John Watkins Papers.

<sup>81</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 1-5 September 1863, Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 4-7.

<sup>82</sup> Robert A. Ragan, Jonesborough, to Emeline Ragan, Greenville, 20 October 1863, Accession Number MS.0743, Robert A. Ragan Letters, Special Collections Online at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

<sup>83</sup> Robert A. Ragan, near Greenville, to Emeline Ragan, Greenville, 29 October 1863 and Robert A. Ragan, Lick Creek, to Emeline Ragan, Greenville, 12 November 1863, Robert A. Ragan Letters.

While foraging soldiers' devastated East Tennessee's food stores, other factors also led to a lack of subsistence items. Not only did Fannie Fain have to worry about Federal troops taking what little she had, she also lacked the labor in which to sow or harvest her crops. Fain had to hire laborers with no farming experience to sow wheat. Without animals to aid the process, she planted substantially less. In addition, her livestock escaped when bushwhackers and Union troops burned her fencing for fuel. She lamented that "the war has thrown everything out of a fix."<sup>84</sup>

\*\*\*

In many ways, Confederate East Tennesseans feared their neighbors more than the Union Army. For over two years East Tennessee's Confederates had the luxury of a friendly standing army, which they believed offered a degree of safety from the war. Now in the fall of 1863 they realized that the Unionists, a previously subjugated people, had the protection of the Federal Army. Elisa Buffat Bolli believed that "these Union people feel protected by the presence of the Yankees and think they can do as they please, we [Confederates] are completely in their power." She continued, "they kept quiet while our men were here, but they now thirst for revenge." Imprisonment for prominent Confederates remained a constant worry for Bolli. She wrote that her uncle feared that he would soon be arrested, and she prayed, "the hour of trial has come... in God have I put my trust, I will not be afraid what man can do unto me." Several days later Bolli's fears came to fruition when Union soldiers arrested her uncle and took him to a Federal camp for questioning. He was released, but "warned...that he would be obliged to take the Oath of Allegiance... or be put in jail." Bolli's cousin Mary refused to wait for news

---

<sup>84</sup> Fannie Anderson Rhea Fain, 13, 19-20 November 1863, in Accession 133, Fannie A. Fain, Archives of Appalachia, Johnson City.

regarding her father and went to the camp “to see and hear everything.” Bolli worried for her family’s fate knowing “that he has many enemies, on account of his strong Southern feelings,” and prayed that “may God spare him and his dear ones at home.” The next day her uncle “refused to take the oath” but consented to abide by Federal laws. Bolli’s uncle was provided a “pass or safe-guard” and sent home.<sup>85</sup>

Union soldiers arrested Henrietta Rutledge Lenoir’s husband, Dr. B.B. Lenoir, in September of 1863 and sent him to prison in Knoxville. While in jail two of Lenoir’s three children fell dangerously ill. Henrietta Rutledge Lenoir’s friend, a Mrs. Breck, asked Union General Samuel P. Carter to allow Lenoir to be discharged. Upon returning home the children died of complications from diphtheria and pneumonia on the same night.<sup>86</sup>

The army targeted prominent Confederate families. Margaret Barton Crozier Ramsey’s life turned upside down when Burnside arrived in Knoxville. The Ramsey family had been one of Knoxville’s wealthiest and socially prominent families. As previously noted, her husband was J. G.M. Ramsey, a Confederate treasury agent and field surgeon. The family resided at Mecklenburg, a stately home situated at the junction of the French Broad and Holston Rivers where they raised eleven children. When Dr. Ramsey escaped with Buckner, his wife remained in Knoxville with their young children. Dr. Ramsey advised his wife to leave, fearing Unionists would target her. For a short time, she rented a home in Knoxville, but Union cavalry harassed the family until she went to live with her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Baker Crozier. Ramsey constantly feared for the safety of sixteen-year-old-son, Arthur, and found that the soldiers “tried

---

<sup>85</sup> Elisa Bolli Buffat, 3, 4, 10, and 11 September 1863, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli-Buffat*, 157-158; Elizabeth Baker Crozier, no date, Elizabeth Baker Crozier Diary.

<sup>86</sup> William B. Hesseltine, eds., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 159-160.

to seduce him from his southern convictions and sympathies.<sup>87</sup> While away from Mecklenburg a Union soldier ransacked and burned the home. The soldiers further sought to harm the family by torching the Lenoir home where Margaret Barton Crozier Ramsey stored her most prized possessions.<sup>88</sup>

Union soldiers then murdered Elizabeth Baker Crozier's brother, Dr. Henry Baker. A Federal raiding party, which Crozier numbered about fifteen hundred, approached the Baker residence after it had been fired upon by a nearby Confederate scouting party. Baker stood armed in his yard with his mounted horse when the Federal soldiers came to investigate. Crozier argued that her brother heard the shots and fearing retribution armed himself and saddled his horse in hopes of reaching Knoxville. Not believing his story, Union soldiers fired upon Baker. He narrowly escaped to the refuge of his home. Soldiers ordered Baker and any other men present to come out. Crozier stated that her "brother went to the window and told them that he was the only man there [and] that his wife and little children were with him and that he would surrender if they would cease to fire upon him." In addition, his wife "went to the window and begged for mercy for her husband, but [Federal soldiers] only drove her away with threats." They proceeded to murder Crozier's brother under the assumption that he attacked them.<sup>89</sup>

As Federal troops moved into East Tennessee in 1863, vigilantes took advantage of the chaos and also attacked many of the region's wealthy Confederates. Rogersville's Sallie McDowell Moffett described East Tennessee as "full of Bushwhackers" and feared for the small Confederate brigade that traveled throughout the region in early December 1863. A few weeks

---

<sup>87</sup> Margaret B. Crozier Ramsey, unknown date, Margaret Barton Crozier Diary.

<sup>88</sup> William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 160-161, 55-56, 171-174.

<sup>89</sup> Elizabeth Baker Crozier, An undated addendum to her 1863 Diary, Elizabeth Baker Crozier Diary.

later she warned her husband, Thomas Moffett, not travel to Greenville via “the country tree way” for “it is filled with Bushwhackers [and] only last Friday a soldier was killed coming across.”<sup>90</sup>

Early one morning Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain heard muffled noises in the back of her home. Thinking it was one of her slaves, she went to investigate. Fain found several men in her dining room. Upon questioning, the men revealed they were “hunting rebels,” to which Fain replied that only slaves and children resided in the home. The men left, but not before they had taken bread, chickens, beef, and butter. The vandals did not just attack the Fain household, but also traveled around to her neighbors confiscating food and destroying property. She commented how the vandals had went to a neighbor’s house where they broke her jams and smeared them on the floors and bedsheets.<sup>91</sup>

Richard McCalla wrote to his wife that both Union troops and bushwhackers destroyed Rebel property in Morristown. McCalla wrote “I learn they are searching all the houses and taking literally everything from the southern people.” Regarding their home McCalla received word from a neighbor that the Federal Army “had taken everything that we left... I regret the loss of my library and your piano.” He once again commended her decision to leave stating, “had you remained we should have lost everything... you would have been grossly insulted by the miserable beasts of Lincoln and reduced to the most desperate straits for mere substance.”

---

<sup>90</sup> Elisa Bolli Buffat, 4 September 1863, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli-Buffat*, 157; Sallie McDowell, Rogersville, to John Thomas Moffett, 10 December 1863 and 22 December 1863, CS08-05, Sallie McDowell Papers, Calvin McClung Collection, Knoxville.

<sup>91</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 20 October 1863, John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 102-104.

He estimated his losses at “between and 8 and 10,000 dollars to say nothing of damages that may be done to the farm in the way of fence burning [and] destruction of [the] young orchard.”<sup>92</sup>

As Union soldiers arrested prominent Confederate men and took supplies in and around Knoxville, Confederate women sought to alleviate their suffering by bringing food and other needed items to the jails. Ellen Renshaw House spent her days visiting Confederates in the local jail, bringing them food, blankets, and clothes that she acquired for other sympathizers.<sup>93</sup>

Elizabeth Baker Crozier also wrote of how other Confederate women went to Union prisons to provide aid to the prisoners.<sup>94</sup> Elisa Buffat Bolli wrote that when Confederate soldiers were released from prison, “the soldiers say they have so many friends that they hardly know where to take their meals, the invitations being so numerous.”<sup>95</sup> By going into local jails, these women publicly demonstrated their allegiance to the Confederacy in the face of Federal occupation.

Some women took it even a step further and publicly condemned Union soldiers and Unionists in the streets of Knoxville. Ellen Renshaw House and her friends refused to accept their romantic attention. She thought it amusing “to think that the Yankee Officers are so mad with the Rebel girls here because they don’t take any notice of them whatever.” It particularly irked Union prison guards that women would shower the prisoners with attention while ignoring them. Fain even refused to talk to John Brownlow, William G. Brownlow’s son, and stated “I had not spoken to him for months before he went north, when we were in power here... I most certainly shall not now when he is.” She finished “it would look entirely too much like

---

<sup>92</sup> Richard C. McCalla, to Margaret McCalla, Chester, S.C., 9 November 1863, Speake-McCalla Civil War Correspondence.

<sup>93</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 20, 22, 24, and 28 October 1863, Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 26-30.

<sup>94</sup> Elizabeth Baker Crozier, 24 November 1863, Elizabeth Baker Crozier Diary.

<sup>95</sup> Elisa Bolli Buffat, 4 September 1863, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli-Buffat*, 157.

cowardice.”<sup>96</sup> Brownlow called women such as House “She Rebels” and condemned their actions.<sup>97</sup>

But not all were She Rebels. Occupation hampered some women’s commitment to the Confederate cause. Sallie McDowell Moffett had encouraged her husband’s military career and supported the Confederacy, but by the winter of 1863 her husband had just finished recovering from a wound at the Confederate hospital in Bristol. Now she forcefully dissuaded him from returning to the army as a private soldier. She also feared for his travel through East Tennessee, arguing that bushwhackers roamed the country and attacked those affiliated with the Confederacy. She stated, “only last Friday a soldier was killed.”<sup>98</sup>

\*\*\*

As December waned the region’s Confederate women looked back on year full of change and lamented what they had lost. Myra Inman wrote on Christmas Eve “oh, so sad is our life at this time... but it does no good to record sad thoughts and gloomy scenes.”<sup>99</sup> Ellen Renshaw House pondered on the “last day of 1863... how differently the year has ended [and]... how differently from the last.” She continued “Then all was life and gaiety...now a leaden cloud hangs over our spirit.”<sup>100</sup> Confederate Elizabeth Baker Crozier later described her feelings, writing, “there was a king Father in Heaven watching over us through all our trials that He had been pleased to bring upon us for what good we know not now.”<sup>101</sup> Fannie Fain summed up the

---

<sup>96</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 20 September 1863, Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 17-18.

<sup>97</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 18 October 1863, Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 24-25.

<sup>98</sup> Sallie McDowell, Rogersville, to John Thomas Moffett, 10 and 22 December 1863, Sallie McDowell Papers.

<sup>99</sup> Myra Inman, 24 December 1863, William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 235-236.

<sup>100</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 31 December 1863, Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 75-76.

<sup>101</sup> Elizabeth Baker Crozier, Date Unknown, Elizabeth Baker Crozier Diary.

trials and tribulations that she endured in 1863 “this year has... brought upon us ruin and destruction...we have seen our old homes, the spots of all our childish hopes and pleasures burnt to the ground, the place of all earth the sweetest, for we were born, nursed and raised, and there lived for many years, a large happy and cheerful family.”<sup>102</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain simply wrote “the morning sun of the last day of 63 has risen, but not brightly... and the aspects of our political horizon is still dark and gloomy.”<sup>103</sup>

---

<sup>102</sup> Fannie Fain, 3 January 1864, Fannie A. Fain Papers.

<sup>103</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 31 December 1863, John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 136.

## 6. Liberation or Occupation in the Mountains?: 1864

The last months of 1863 brought war to East Tennessee women's doorsteps, yet political affiliation still determined what type of war the Federal Army brought. Life had turned upside down, as Unionist women now had the protection of the soldiers, and Confederate women had to reconcile their political ideals as an occupied people. Occupation further inflamed social relationships and positively or negatively altered their experiences with the war. Further, a new retributive environment developed. Individuals such as William G. Brownlow lauded the return of the Federal Government while simultaneously calling for revenge against the Confederates who had cruelly harassed, expelled, and even inflicted bodily harm on loyal men and women. To him the return of the Union Army provided an opportunity to retaliate for previous injustices. Coexistence seemed impossible to Brownlow.<sup>1</sup>

On the other side, Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain recognized that the Union Army's presence brought with it further deprivation and violence. She wrote that "murder, theft, falsehood, and a black catalogue of crimes stalk unburdened... through the land."<sup>2</sup> As Union soldiers and local Unionists battled with Confederates for control over the region, individuals had to cope with the political and social ramifications of occupation regardless of affiliation. War weariness became a common thread among all white women. The war pervaded every aspect of their lives as they fought to maintain their families and their lives in a chaotic environment.

---

<sup>1</sup>"Shall Not Stay Here," 9 January 1864, *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*.

<sup>2</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 10 January 1864 in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 143.

Women's experiences of occupation in 1864 did not just differ according to political allegiance either, but also by location. Proximity to Federal soldiers influenced what kind of war women experienced. Historian Stephen Ash divides the occupied South into three areas: garrison towns constantly populated by a standing army, the Confederate frontier that Union Armies occasionally entered but did not retain control, and a "no-man's land" that lay between. These three divisions were fluid as armies and guerrilla bands moved across the land.<sup>3</sup> All of them existed in East Tennessee during 1864.

\*\*\*

As the Federal Army moved throughout the region, Unionist women overwhelmingly welcomed them. Many had suffered physical, economic, and mental hardships for both their husbands' and their loyalties. Captain Robert A. Ragan of the 8<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Regiment noted that Unionist women's sex had not protected them, and he found that in "some parts of East Tennessee [Unionist women] suffered themselves to be whipped, and everything taken from them." Even amid these dangers, many hid their Unionist male relatives and refused to divulge their hiding places, even at great personal and economic sacrifice. When the Federal Army arrived, they offered these women respite from their hardships.<sup>4</sup>

Viewed as their liberators or "deliverer[s]," Union soldiers offered protection. Oliver P. Temple described women lining the streets of Knoxville as the soldiers passed, "shouting and rejoicing... waving of bonnets and handkerchiefs, weeping and sobbing, and [giving]

---

<sup>3</sup> Stephen Ash, *When the Yankees Came*, x and 76-77.

<sup>4</sup> Robert A. Ragan, *Escape from East Tennessee to the Federal Lines: The History Given as Nearly as Possible* (Washington D.C.: James H. Dony, 1910), 26.

enthusiastic praise to God for the great deliverance.”<sup>5</sup> Notable Unionist pilot Daniel Ellis also observed similar behavior and believed that their joyful demonstrations were warranted for “they had so long [been] crushed down under the heel of despotism.”<sup>6</sup> Along with the soldiers, exiled men and women flooded back into the region, returning to their homes. Cries of joy emanated from households when husbands and sons unexpectedly appeared. Their arrivals evaporated “the long gloom, doubt, almost despair, which had filled their minds.” Protected by their troops and returning men, Unionist women began to once again publicly profess their allegiance to the Union. Many flew the Stars and Stripes to denote that their home was loyal.<sup>7</sup> These women could proudly celebrate their commitment to the Union believing that the soldiers would protect them from their hostile neighbors. Battle-hardened by the atrocities they had witnessed or endured, the women could at once proudly display their loyalties. While confined to the homefront the war had pervaded their lives and they too suffered. They did not see themselves detached from the war but active participants whom could celebrate the Union’s victories.

Native East Tennessee Union soldiers showed great appreciation in return for loyal women. Nineteenth-century gender ideals generally attributed the role of protectors to men, yet many women had proved that they too could assume that role. They had fed, sheltered, and offered physical and emotional comfort to hunted Unionist men. Ragan celebrated these sacrifices, saying, “what brave, loving mothers, wives, and sisters...who faced the tempests of hatred and persecution...whose willing hands were always ready to minister to the suffering and distressed; who carried food to the hunted and perishing Union men.”<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War*, 477, 472-473, 476, 480.

<sup>6</sup> Daniel Ellis, *The Thrilling Adventures of Daniel Ellis*, 154-155.

<sup>7</sup> Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil*, 477, 472-473, 476, 480.

<sup>8</sup> Robert A. Ragan, *Escape from East Tennessee to the Federal Lines*, 48.

Angry at the previous mistreatment, Unionists also called for revenge. Extralegal warfare abounded, particularly outside of the garrison towns in no-man's land. Few women escaped the repercussions of bushwhacking, either as actual victims or as people living in fear of a potential attack. Brownlow, one of most vocal and well-known Unionists within the region, justified the violence to rid the region of Confederate sympathizers. He described Confederates as loathsome traitors who had created Unionist orphans and widows, destroyed property, stole subsistence items, and "filled the land with mourning."<sup>9</sup> To him, their previous treatment justified the violent retaliation. Unionists seemingly agreed. Ragan wrote in his autobiography that once he arrived in Bulls Gap, he requested permission to return to his home in Parrottsville, Cocke County to "find out if any rebels were lurking around." Once there he arrested Henry Kilgore, the man who conscripted him back in 1861, and two other well-known Confederates. While transporting the men to Knoxville, another Cocke County Union officer took the opportunity to punish them for their depredations. Kilgore once had raided one of these men's family's farm and took "all of his beehives, wheat, corn, and bacon." Still angry over this injustice, Ragan and his men decided to purchase a pound of honey and forced Kilgore to place it in his hat. They humiliated Kilgore as the honey poured down his face for the rest of the journey. Ragan felt "the rebel now had an opportunity to taste the 'sweets of adversity.'"<sup>10</sup>

Confederate women noted the increase of attacks in the spring of 1864. In Maryville in March, Unionists cruelly intimated to a woman that they had hanged her husband after they had kidnapped him. They then threatened to shoot the wife and stole a substantial amount property. Such men threatened Confederate women just as Unionist women had been imperiled before the

---

<sup>9</sup>"Shall not Stay Here," 9 January 1864, *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*.

<sup>10</sup>Robert A. Ragan, *Escape from East Tennessee*, 39-40 (quotation 40).

occupation. After hearing of persistent violence around Knoxville, Ellen Renshaw House believed that “no Southern man’s life is safe... if he has any old personal enemies among the Union men or Renegades.”<sup>11</sup> One April evening while asleep, Fain heard gunshots and feared that “bushwhackers” were plundering nearby. She stayed awake throughout the night, wondering if her home would be next. The following morning, she found out that four Union men had attacked her neighbors’ home looking for two Confederate soldiers that resided on the premises. One of the soldiers escaped but the other was captured and beaten over the head with a pistol. Even though Rogersville remained on the fringe of the Confederate frontier for the moment, Fain refused to allow her sons and husband to stay home, for fear that they too would be taken. “O what a terrible state of things” she wrote, “... man is becoming so bloodthirsty.”<sup>12</sup> While female hands largely failed to record the motivations for these violent acts, guerrillas most likely acted in retaliation.

In Bradley County’s Georgetown, angry Unionists in April meanwhile attacked and killed several notorious Confederates.<sup>13</sup> That same month Ragan once again targeted Confederates in and around Bulls Gap and vowed to “have all of them scoundrels.”<sup>14</sup> Unionist bushwhackers went after Jesse Courtney, a member of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Tennessee Infantry, late in June. Mary Courtney had sent her husband to retrieve his tools out in the yard when a man confronted him demanding his surrender. Without waiting the assailant allegedly shot Jesse in the chest. He stumbled into their home before he fell from his wounds. A day after the funeral Fain wrote,

---

<sup>11</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 6 March 1864, in Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 111.

<sup>12</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 29 April, 3 May, 10 May, 30 July 1864, in *Sanctified Trial*, 175-76, 177, 179, 203.

<sup>13</sup> “Killing Rebel Citizens,” 9 April 1864, *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*; Myra Inman, 27 July 1864, in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 275.

<sup>14</sup> Robert A. Ragan, Bulls Gap, to Emeline Ragan, Greenville, 11 April 1864, MS.0743, Robert A. Ragan Letters, University of Tennessee’s Special Collection, Knoxville.

“Truly these are days of sadness and distress when quiet peaceable citizens are killed in their own houses.”<sup>15</sup> Ellen Renshaw House reported an instance outside of Knoxville in July where bushwhackers killed a young Confederate outside of his home while his wife and days-old infant watched. Days later another bushwhacker dragged a man from his sick bed, set his home ablaze, and shot at his two sons. House could not understand how the Federal Army could “take no notice of it at all” and allow such violence to continue unabated.<sup>16</sup>

While the war had significantly changed Adeline Deaderick’s life--six of her sons had joined the Confederate Army and her daughter and daughters-in-law resided in the Deaderick home--it was the rise of bushwhackers that frightened her most. She stated that “for nearly two years we only heard, of this war, afterwards we felt it.” Deaderick described several frightening moments involving the so-called Heatherly Gang of Unionists. One evening her granddaughter took ill, and both she and her daughter-in-law feared the child might die. Her son quickly came to his child’s side. The day after he returned, a bushwhacker broke into the Deaderick home and demanded to see the Confederate soldier residing there. Deaderick described a chaotic scene in which the men demanded that her son surrender while her daughter-in-law screamed for them to leave and let the parents grieve for their dying child. When her son surrendered, the bushwhackers instead asked for weapons and once they received them they vacated the property. Deaderick concluded her description of the event stating, “this [incident] struck terror to my heart...never to be forgotten while life lasts.”<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 27-27 28 June 1864, in Sutherland, ed, *A Very Violent Rebel*, 193-95 (quotation 195); “U.S., Confederate Soldiers Compiled Service Records, 1861-1865 – J.R. Courtney,” Ancestry.com, <https://search.ancestry.com>.

<sup>16</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 21 February 1864, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 104.

<sup>17</sup> Anna Mary Moon, “Civil War Diaries of Mrs. Adeline Deaderick,” 54-56.

The terror had not ended. Deaderick wrote that the men next moved to the Hayes' farm. The gang entered the home searching for weapons and attacked Mr. Hayes threatening to kill him. His wife confronted the bushwhackers, "threw her arms around [Mr. Hayes] and told them 'if they killed him it would be over her.'" In reply one of the men remarked "'they had nothing against her [and] they'd settle him another time.'" Another incident occurred at the Westly Harris' place, less than a mile from the Deaderick home, where the gang broke a window and front door. They found a Confederate soldier and his four sisters. The bushwhackers entered Mrs. Harris' bedroom while she slept and demanded that her husband and son surrender. Amid the scuffle her son ran from the home leaving his weapons. The gang later apprehended him and "with demoniacal yells" dragged "him half clad, throughout his mother's room" where she begged for leniency.<sup>18</sup>

Deeper inside the Confederate frontier, however, Unionists remained the targets. Federal soldiers feared venturing outside of garrison towns, and as early as January William H. Dennis stationed in Knoxville noted that "the rebels are still around" north of the town.<sup>19</sup> In February, Major James Connolly knew that his time in Chattanooga would soon come to an end, but still hated to leave the safety of the town. He believed that the "armed rebels" outside were a danger and described them as "such unfriendly creatures to us gentlemen in blue."<sup>20</sup>

Pilot Daniel Ellis had long been shepherding Unionists to Union territory, yet even with the arrival of Unionist troops Ellis still had to protect Unionists in northeast Tennessee. Women, he believed, suffered the most, as Confederates often targeted them for their political affiliation

---

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 54-56.

<sup>19</sup>William H. Dennis, Knoxville, to David Dennis, 25 January 1864, MS.3711, Knoxville Civil War Correspondence Collection, 1862-1864, Special Collections University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

<sup>20</sup>James A. Connolly, Chattanooga, to Mary Dunn Connolly, Mount Gilead, Ohio, 16 February 1864, in Paul M. Angle, ed., *Three Years in the Army of the Cumberland*, 170.

while their men left them to meet hazards alone. As Ellis moved throughout the Confederate frontier in early 1864, he constantly noted how Confederates stole Unionist women's resources, physically assaulted or murdered their men, and simply terrorized all of them. Ellis most likely sensationalized his stories, publishing them some years later, but he nonetheless cited numerous instances of Confederate depredations. For example, he wrote that Confederate guerrillas allegedly murdered and defiled the body of a Unionist man in his yard all while his wife watched in agony. The men then entered her home, stealing needed supplies and leaving her a widow with four children. This story was not unique in his memoirs, Ellis continually presented women as victims at the hands of barbaric Confederates. The frequency of such accounts, whether sensationalized or not, indicates that women lived in a violent and retaliatory environment in which they were forced to cope with the loss of loved ones, theft, and simply harassment.<sup>21</sup>

A supporter of the Confederacy, Fain agreed. She wrote how in March a Rogersville Unionist man fell victim to local Confederate partisans when he alerted Federal troops to their whereabouts. The Confederates severely beat the man, killed his horse, and tied him to a tree. She coolly condoned such barbarity, noting "the necessities of war make it necessary that a foe... must be punished severely to intimidate the rest." She accepted such violence even when it violated her beliefs based in Christianity.<sup>22</sup> By late spring Unionist women still had no relief from Union troops.

Deprivation as well as violence plagued Unionist women in the Confederate frontier. For months Ellis had been smuggling money and supplies to women there from fathers, sons, and brothers enlisted in the Union Army. As word spread that Ellis had been in the territory,

---

<sup>21</sup> Daniel Ellis, *The Thrilling Adventures of Daniel Ellis*, 164-167. 164 [quote].

<sup>22</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 2 March 1864 in Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 158.

Confederate guerrillas visited these Unionist women and ransacked their homes, stealing what he had brought.<sup>23</sup> Ellis stated, “I thought that surely I would never hear the last of these sorrowful and lamentable tales of distress.”

It was not just money Confederates stole, but also needed resources. With food already scarce, Unionist women were left with little to feed themselves and their children. Even Ellis had difficulty acquiring food from them. One refused to give him anything, believing that he only posed as a Unionist. She most likely had been fooled before and refused to once again be the victim.<sup>24</sup> In April, William G. Brownlow announced that hunger and a lack of subsistence items plagued all of Unionist East Tennessee. He stated, “we have seen families thinly clad, and children without shoes.”<sup>25</sup> Brownlow pleaded for the Union Army to intervene and send the perpetrators “South that they may be forced into the company they act with.”<sup>26</sup> Two other Union men meanwhile wrote Governor Andrew Johnson the next month demanding that he immediately send troops to expel the Confederate Army entirely from the region. Confederate soldiers, they reported, “are ravaging the country at pleasure, committing daily robberies, and occasional murders.” Some Rebels even pastured their livestock in wheat fields that “people in a great measure depend on their harvest for the means of living.”<sup>27</sup> The army was willing. After a month of commanding a brigade of troops in Loudon, a Union officer wrote to Johnson in July to demand that more men be raised to guard Unionists against “guerrilla bands of bushwhackers, marauders, robbers, and plunders.” His small force could not offer the protection needed, and

---

<sup>23</sup> Daniel Ellis, *The Thrilling Adventures of Daniel Ellis*, 194.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 166 and 175-176 (quotation 166).

<sup>25</sup> “Who Ought to be Fed?,” 16 April 1864, *Brownlow’s Weekly Whig and Rebel Ventilator*.

<sup>26</sup> “Increased Rebel Severity,” 23 April 1864, *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*.

<sup>27</sup> William Frand and J. Netherland, Knoxville, to Governor Andrew Johnson, 26 May 1864, Andrew Johnson Papers, 1846-1875, Microfilm, Tennessee State Library Archives, Nashville.

that the “desperadoes must be put down.” He assured Johnson that the region’s Unionists would be able to fill the ranks and quickly put down the extralegal activity.<sup>28</sup>

Yet Confederates in the frontier also suffered. As a mother of twelve, Eliza Fain constantly feared for her children. Since 1861 she had had visions of her sons falling victim to illness, injury, or an invading army, but now she worried for her daughters too. When she failed to acquire shoes for her seven-year-old, for example, Fain worried that the lack of clothing would affect her socially. Later, Fain wrote that “I look at my family their wants are so numerous... the means we have of supplying their wants so limited.”<sup>29</sup> Margaret Barton Crozier Ramsey sought refuge with friends in Jefferson City and found that the war had drastically altered their financial circumstances.<sup>30</sup> Ramsey noted that her friends had no provisions to provide, as “everything almost had been taken from him, his servants all gone.”<sup>31</sup>

Fear and deprivation inevitably affected loyalties to the Confederacy. Recent historiography linked Confederate women’s diminished morale to increased desertion. Mark A. Weitz argues that by late 1863, Georgia’s Confederate soldiers maintained a “higher duty” to home and were willing to neglect their military obligations for their families.<sup>32</sup> A man’s sense of honor in regards to his military service also reflected the ideals “held by the women in his life.” When women turned against the Confederacy, so did many of the men. Confederate soldiers, he believes, were not nationalists, and instead retained local ties to their communities

---

<sup>28</sup> M.L. Patterson, Loudon, to Governor Andrew Johnson, Nashville, 8 July 1864, Andrew Johnson Papers.

<sup>29</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 14, 22 January 1864 in Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 145, 148 (quotation 148).

<sup>30</sup> William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 161.

<sup>31</sup> Margaret B. Crozier Ramsey, no date, *Diary of Margaret B. Crozier Ramsey*.

<sup>32</sup> Mark A. Weitz, *A Higher Duty: Desertion among Georgia Troops during the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 7-8.

and homes.<sup>33</sup> Aaron Sheehan-Dean finds much more Confederate nationalism present in Virginia, yet likewise concludes that families were one of the primary factors that encouraged both participation and desertion in the war for soldiers. He writes, “the pressures of military service encouraged men to identify their families’ immediate and future well-being as the most important reason to participate in the war.”<sup>34</sup> Joseph Glatthaar, in his statistical analysis of General Robert E. Lee’s army, noted that almost all married deserters had children. He argued that “in the eyes of many Confederates, their premier duty rested with family.”<sup>35</sup> Discontent at home spurned desertion.

Yet while diminished morale characterized many of the region’s Confederate women, there is no evidence that any of the women studied for this dissertation encouraged desertion. This is not to say that it did not occur. As early as January the Confederate Acting Assistant Adjutant-General demanded that his men arrest the deserters circulating throughout the Bristol region.<sup>36</sup> That same month reports circulated of them flooding into Chattanooga. One Unionist stated thirty men had come into the town in one day, “fearfully ragged, their dilapidation extending from the crowns of their heads to the soles of their feet.”<sup>37</sup> Major Connelly in February also noted the presence of deserters in Chattanooga and appreciated the information that these men provided about troop movement.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup>Mark A. Weitz, *More Damning the Slaughter: Desertion in the Confederate Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), xvii-xix.

<sup>34</sup> Aaron Sheehan-Dean, *Why Confederates Fought: Family and Nation in Civil War Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 2-8 and 10.

<sup>35</sup>Joseph T. Glatthaar, *General Lee’s Army: From Victory to Collapse* (New York: Free Press, 2008), 538-542 and 543.

<sup>36</sup> Thomas Pinckney, Richmond, VA, to Major J.C. Johnston, Bristol, 16 January 1864 in US Congress, House, 1900, *The War of the Rebellion*.

<sup>37</sup> East Tennessean, Chattanooga, 24 January 1864, in *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*.

<sup>38</sup> James A. Connolly, Chattanooga, to Mary Dunn Connolly, Mount Gilead, Ohio, 14 February 1864 in Angle, ed. *Three Years in the Army of the Cumberland*, 168-169.

Yet Confederate women professed to hate desertion. Myra Inman noted the presence of Confederate deserters in town and viewed them as “disgraceful.”<sup>39</sup> Ellen Renshaw House had no tolerance for them either and even refused to provide provisions to a suspected imprisoned Confederate deserter.<sup>40</sup> As Confederate troops moved north through Rogersville to Virginia in spring of 1864, one of Fain’s neighbors sought her assistance in dealing with four local Confederate soldiers who planned to desert before they were forced to march. The very idea angered Fain so much that she sent one of her sons to arrest the men.<sup>41</sup>

Historian Jacqueline Glass Campbell finds that the proximity with Federal soldiers in South Carolina influenced Confederate women’s loyalty there. The harassment and deprivation some Confederate women encountered while enduring a standing army strengthened their loyalty even though they were weary of the war. Many of the East Tennessee women in this study, such as House and Inman, resided in garrison towns and also encountered Union soldiers with regularity. Perhaps their unwilling familiarity with the soldiers likewise engendered a deep distrust of the Union, their continued commitment to the Confederacy to punish the invaders, and their hatred of men who shirked the Confederate cause.<sup>42</sup>

\*\*\*

The presence of Federal soldiers had another consequence, as large numbers of slaves took their freedom or demanded autonomy. Rebecca Capobianco argues that as the Confederacy

---

<sup>39</sup> Myra Inman, 4 January 1864 in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 239.

<sup>40</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 23 February 1864, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 106.

<sup>41</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 28 March 1864 in Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 163.

<sup>42</sup> Jacqueline Glass Campbell, “Women and Families on the Southern Homefront,” in Judith Giesberg and Randall M. Miller, eds., *Women and the American Civil War*, 182.

deteriorated, “so too did the power whites had wielded.”<sup>43</sup> As the Union Army moved throughout the South, many slaves fled their masters. Occupation hastened the end of slavery in areas the Federal army controlled; whereas the institution remained stronger in areas that the Confederacy still held. Expounding on this idea, John Cimprich examined the deterioration of slavery in occupied Tennessee and argues that slaves there emancipated themselves and simultaneously destroyed slaveowners’ hegemony.<sup>44</sup> Andrew F. Lang finds that the Federal Government then called upon the army to enforce “black freedom.”<sup>45</sup>

Just as in other occupied areas, Union soldiers reported East Tennessee slaves following the Union Army. Oscar James Owen of the 36<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry reported refugees following the army as they moved from Chattanooga into North Georgia.<sup>46</sup> Even Confederate civilians commented on the loss of slave labor in 1864. Still, these statements often did not attribute the increased number of runaways to the arrival of the Union Army. Generally, women complained that the loss of slaves meant increased work for them, diminished wealth, or the upsetting of the social hierarchy. Ellen Renshaw House, for example, complained in January that “free Negroes” had been claiming abandoned Confederate homes in Knoxville. House’s family had contemplated renting a home and refused to move in after learning that freedmen had briefly

---

<sup>43</sup>Rebecca Capobianco, “Southern Women and Emancipation during the Civil War,” in Giesberg and Miller, eds., *Women and the American Civil War*, 82.

<sup>44</sup> John Cimprich, *Slavery’s End in Tennessee: 1861-1865* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1985), 4-5 and 15-18.

<sup>45</sup>Andrew F. Lang, *In the Wake of War: Military Occupation, Emancipation, and Civil War America* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2017), 133.

<sup>46</sup>Oscar James Owen, 19 January 1865, Oscar James Owen Diary, Civil War Diaries Collection, Auburn University Digital Library, <http://content.lib.auburn.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/civil/id/18746/rec/24>, accessed 3 March 2020.

occupied it.<sup>47</sup> The loss of slaves due to the arrival of soldiers also plagued Morristown; Richard Calvin McCalla wrote to his wife in March that all the slaves had been stolen.<sup>48</sup>

Other accounts are murkier. The Inman women felt overwhelmed while running their boarding house in May 1864. Myra Inman wrote, “We do our own work...it fatigues us a great deal as we are not accustomed to it.”<sup>49</sup> Why were they working so? At the start of the war the Inman matriarch, Ann Jarnagin Inman, held eight slaves, ranging in age from 6 to 61.<sup>50</sup> Months before Myra Inman’s complaint the Inman’s cook, Phoebe, died suddenly; she is the only slave that Inman discusses losing. She also spends time complaining of the increased workload in 1864, but she does not reference losing slaves or the occupying army’s role. But others clearly did so. In July, Margaret Barton Crozier was surprised to find a Greenville friend without “servants” to attend the household.<sup>51</sup> Not all slaves escaped to Federal lines, as some chose to stay and exact autonomy without physically separating from their masters. Enslaved women, both Capobianco and Laura Edwards argue, subtly manipulated their masters by feigning illness, changing the work pace, and many other methods that allowed them to have more control in how much and when they chose to work.<sup>52</sup>

Unlike most of her contemporaries, however, Fain discussed slavery regularly. Owning nine slaves, the Fain household had a relatively large holding for East Tennessee. Unlike some of her Confederate peers, she also retained her slaves throughout 1864, as she resided within the

---

<sup>47</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 12 January 1864 in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 87.

<sup>48</sup>Richard Calvin McCalla, Carter’s Depot to Margaret McCalla, Woodland, S.C., 16 March 1864, Speake-McCalla Civil War Correspondence.

<sup>49</sup>Myra Inman, 7 May 1864 in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 263.

<sup>50</sup> “1860 US Federal Census – Slave Schedules for Ann J. Inman,” Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>

<sup>51</sup> Margaret B. Crozier Ramsey, no date, *Diary of Margaret B. Crozier Ramsey*, 1.

<sup>52</sup>Capobianco, “Southern Women and Emancipation during the Civil War,” in Giesberg and Miller, eds., 91-92 and Laura F. Edwards, *Scarlett Doesn’t Live Here Anymore: Southern Women in the Civil War Era* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 58-60.

Confederate frontier. Fain thus did not fear losing them immediately, but she had difficulty comprehending a world in which the institution did not exist. She believed that slaves thrived in bondage and that slave owners offered love and protection. Further, the institution descended from the curse of Cain and that the abolition of slavery contradicted the Bible. Fain also contemplated the presence of biracial slaves and determined that God punished the Confederacy for what she perceived as a sin. Her preoccupation with miscegenation most likely derives from the presence of two biracial slave children in her own household. The parentage of these slaves is not known; they could have been fathered by either her husband or her sons. Fain nonetheless believed that slaves needed their masters and without them would be devoid of both physical and emotional comforts. Her constant discussion of the fate of slavery coincided with the arrival of the Union Army and the repeated Confederate losses in the Western theater. She made casual references to the increased number of runaways, but that phenomenon remained secondary to her notions of the eventual fate of the institution.<sup>53</sup>

Women also rarely discussed how the Federal Army's presence affected slavery in the region, and such remarks that exist were usually made in passing without further discussion. Instead, women focused more on the constant extralegal warfare and diminished supplies than the collapse of slavery which the Union Army heralded. For instance, Myra Inman briefly mentioned an argument that she had with five Union soldiers regarding slavery, yet she did not provide any context or details of the argument. Perhaps it centered on the relationship between the Union Army and the slaves during occupation, but Inman did not think the details merited an explanation.<sup>54</sup> At the end of the year Federal soldiers entered Blountville, where Fannie Fain

---

<sup>53</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 13 March (quote), 8 and 17 April, 15 and 19 May, 2 October, and 13 November 1864 in Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 162, 170, 175, 180, 183, 242, and 258.

<sup>54</sup>Myra Inman, 12 February 1864 in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 247.

wrote in detail about the experience in her diary. Preoccupied with the foodstuffs and property that the soldiers had confiscated and destroyed; Fain too did not discuss how the arrival affected the slave population. She made a vague reference to the Federals “taking every man...they could find,” but Fain did not clarify if those men were just Confederates or if they were slaves that fled to the army.<sup>55</sup>

\*\*\*

With the arrival of the Union Army, East Tennessee’s ruling class no longer treated Unionist women as the Others in the garrison towns. This was evident in the case of General Ulysses S. Grant’s treatment of Oliver P. Temple’s wife, Scotia Caledonia Hume Temple, as well as Brownlow’s wife, Eliza. As Grant traveled through Knoxville in early 1864 he stopped at the Temple’s and Brownlow’s homes to visit with the region’s “prominent Union lad[ies].” Confederate authorities had driven these women from their homes, but now their political affiliations and sacrifices were celebrated.<sup>56</sup>

Unionist women still drew the ire of Confederate women, however, even with the luxury of a friendly standing army. The Union Army requisitioned Ellen Renshaw House’s home in March, and as a result they were forced to share lodgings with several Union officers. House noted that “tory women” still did not enter her home even though Union soldiers resided there, most likely afraid of both her and her reputation. House liked that, writing, “I will most certainly insult them if they do.” When one Unionist woman planned a concert in the Episcopal Church

---

<sup>55</sup> Fannie Fain, 18 December 1864, AppMS-133, Fannie A. Fain Diaries, Archives of Appalachia, Johnson City.

<sup>56</sup> Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee in the Civil War*, 517.

and wanted to adorn it with American flags Confederate women such as House vehemently opposed it. House believed that the church's use as a Union hospital had already "desecrated" it.<sup>57</sup>

Some women indeed continued to publicly support the Confederacy in garrison towns, knowing their proclamations would have consequences. Leeann Whites and Alecia P. Long argue that women such as these believed Union occupation so "illegitimate" that they could not support the government. Many Confederate women further refused to submit to the Union Army, and their resistance confounded their occupiers and the soldiers' gendered ideas of the subservient and domestically centered woman. The question for other Union occupation forces was whether such Confederate women were innocent civilians, separate from the wider war, or enemies? Until recently historians have largely failed to provide occupied women with agency and instead made them simple victims of the war.<sup>58</sup> Current gender historiography, on the other hand, has moved beyond the victimization of occupied women. Stephanie McCurry argues that women's defiant actions demonstrated that women and innocence were no longer synonymous.<sup>59</sup> Andrew F. Lang similarly finds that Federal soldiers experienced very public and "passionate" resistance from Confederate women, leaving the occupiers to conclude that "women...were no longer women; they were combatants, hostile enemies...who threatened occupying troops... and defied US authority."<sup>60</sup>

Ellen Renshaw House was one of those "hostile enemies." She remained an ardent Confederate and described living in Knoxville with a large Union force as "dreadful." House

---

<sup>57</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 16-17 March 1864, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 116, 117.

<sup>58</sup> Leeann Whites and Alecia P. Long, eds., *Occupied Women*, 3 and 8-9.

<sup>59</sup> Stephanie McCurry, *Women's War*, 6.

<sup>60</sup> Andrew F. Lang, *In the Wake of War*, 66-67.

found solace in offering subsistence and comfort items to jailed Confederate soldiers and civilians. Assisting the imprisoned allowed her to passively retaliate against the occupational government. Other Confederate women visited Knoxville's jails, offering blankets and foods when allowed. Prisoners "reported to the guards if it had not been for the Southern ladies of Knoxville they would have frozen stiff."<sup>61</sup> Knoxville's Mrs. D.A. Plant remembered visiting imprisoned civilians and especially her family's benefactor, wealthy manufacturer Sam T. Atkins.<sup>62</sup> After Federal troops burned the Plant home, the family sought refuge with Atkins. They were still residing there when Union authorities arrested him. Plant, along with Atkins' six-year-old daughter, visited him. Starving prisoners dropped notes from the window asking for supplies.<sup>63</sup>

Fraternization with Federal soldiers nonetheless was inevitable in garrison towns. Sometimes Confederate women used social interactions as opportunities to dismiss or mock men in blue. In February, Myra Inman entertained soldiers with music or conversation at her family's boarding house, believing the Union soldiers had "softened their hearts toward 'us Rebels.'" While many had indeed grown fond of Inman, she still often demeaned them and hardly admitted to sharing their affections. A month later, Inman wrote that "there is something repulsive in a Yankee's look... not like the bold candor, handsome and brave heart of Southern heroes." She discouraged the unwanted advances of a Federal officer all that spring. Inman believed the man loved her, but she "dislike[d]" him because he continually reminded her of the Confederacy's

---

<sup>61</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 4, 10 January 1864 in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 80, 85.

<sup>62</sup>"U.S. 1860 Federal Census Record – Record for Lizzie Atkins," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>. Sam T. Atkins, the family's patriarch, remained firmly entrenched in the town's professional class as a manufacturer with over \$30,000 in real estate and \$12,000 in personal wealth.

<sup>63</sup>Mrs. D.A. Plant, "Recollections of War as a Child, 1861-65," *Confederate Veteran* 36 (1928): 129-130, Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/confederateveter3619conf/page/128>, Accessed 4 January 2020. Plant does not give her first name or that of her father resulting in an inability to find her in the 1860 U.S. Census.

weaknesses and their impending destruction.<sup>64</sup> Loudon's Mary Jane Johnston Reynolds and other local women, however, quickly developed a friendly and even economically advantageous relationship with Union soldiers stationed near her family's home. Reynolds found the soldiers "to be very nice men" and sold them biscuits when they were short on rations.<sup>65</sup>

But other women continued to denounce the Federal Army and refused to submit. Ellen Renshaw House constantly disparaged Federal soldiers, publicly and privately. House angered many Union soldiers that she encountered when she refused to maintain a submissive or meek manner. She would often degrade their intellect and character without regard to repercussions. In turn, the Union soldiers reproached her and held her in disdain. One soldier in March complimented House's father as a "good Union man," her mother as a "very proper person," but their daughter was "an outrageous rebel." House, one of only two daughters knew that the title belonged to her. She claimed, "I can't contain myself... and say everything impudent that comes into my head."<sup>66</sup>

House publicly disparaged the Union and occupation while simultaneously offering support to the Confederate cause. She did not limit her words or actions simply because such as actions were deemed unladylike. Instead, it seems as if she felt empowered to express her opinions despite her sex. It provided her protection against death or imprisonment, as House knew her words would likely only result in exile. She acknowledged her poor behavior but believed "people are not responsible for what they do while living among such creatures." House's actions and condemnation did soon draw the ire of General Samuel P. Carter, who

---

<sup>64</sup> Myra Inman, 8 February, 3 March, 5 March, 20 April, 2 May 1864 in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 246, 252, 259, 261.

<sup>65</sup> Mary Jane Johnston Reynolds to Simeon D. Reynolds, 6 January 1864, MS-246, Mary Jane Johnston Reynolds Letters, University of Tennessee Special Collections, Knoxville.

<sup>66</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 9, 19 March 1864, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 113.

believed her “a very violent rebel, one who would sell her soul and body for the benefit of the Confederates.” She responded to this derogatory statement that her life came secondary to the Confederacy and she held no shame for her actions and would gladly repeat them.<sup>67</sup>

House’s actions were not an anomaly, as other instances of Confederate women protesting Union occupation became commonplace. While impertinent Confederate females evaded arrests, Federal authorities followed suit and deported them from their homes. Late in June, Myra Inman noted that Union authorities had arrested several notable Athens Confederates and sent them to Nashville for trial. She believed that her family would soon fall victim as well. Her fears came to fruition a few weeks later when during a tea at their boarding house, a Union sergeant read an order to the Inman ladies that “all Rebel sympathizers had to report at Chattanooga” in two days. A Federal soldier that the family had befriended ensured their safety, but she nonetheless felt saddened that while “we are permitted to stay our friends will go, and we cannot even bid them farewell or else we will be accused of sympathizing with them and plotting against the government.” Inman realized that she had to tread carefully with the new occupying government and publicly relinquish her Confederate ties if she wanted to stay at home. Union soldiers did force their uncle, Caswell Lea, to go to Chattanooga in July, along with eight women who accompanied Lea on the train.<sup>68</sup>

Ellen Renshaw House’s public condemnation of the occupational government eventually placed her at the center of a Federal investigation. In January 1864, House, her sister, and other female neighbors had publicly protested the arrests of Confederate prisoners on the streets of occupied Knoxville. House defended her actions stating that she had simply directed the other

---

<sup>67</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 9, 11, 20 March 1864, in *Ibid*, 112-14, 119 (quotation 113-14, 119).

<sup>68</sup>Myra Inman, 25 June, 9 July, 14 July 1864, in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 270, 272-73.

women to wave their handkerchiefs and gloves to symbolize their commitment to the Confederacy. After the event she and others began to visit the prisoners, offering whatever assistance they could, in another public display of their commitment. Union officers soon visited House's friends seeking information about who had been involved in the protest. They reported that House had "made some very imprudent demonstration when the prisoners were passing." A few days later, Federal authorities forced two women into exile in Confederate territory. House observed, "I wish to Heaven they would send me... they could not possibly please me better." Those who did not take the oath lost basic civil rights; one of House's friends found that she could not even purchase her child a cloak in preparation for what she believed to be imminent deportation. House's father feared similar reprisals against his daughters and went to General Davis Tillson to defend them. He told Tillson that his daughters only meant to wave to their imprisoned friends as they passed. His attempt to save her only angered his daughter, who felt that it was "none of his business." House did not believe her actions warranted any explanations.<sup>69</sup>

But while some women such as House supported the Confederacy through thoughts and actions, others saw little benefit in defiance. Many of the region's Confederate men and women decided instead to take the Union oath of allegiance. They pledged to uphold the United States constitution and all the "laws and proclamations" that had been exacted since the war began.<sup>70</sup> In Knoxville, more and more people took the oath as late winter passed. House reported that several of the town's doctors had taken the oath just so that they could practice.<sup>71</sup> Some

---

<sup>69</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 11, 13, 28 January 1864, in in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 85--88 (quotations 86, 87).

<sup>70</sup>Oath of Allegiance to the Union, 6 November 1865, Digital Collections, East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina, <http://digital.lib.ecu.edu/37256>.

<sup>71</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 14 January 1864, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 88.

Unionists condemned those Confederates who with the change of the regime renounced their previous allegiances. In a letter to the editor a Unionist questioned the sincerity of the oaths and asked if Union authorities should allow these previous Confederates who inspired a rebellion, enflamed the already contentious social climate, and profited from the war to remain unaccountable for their actions.<sup>72</sup>

More diehard Confederates condemned the oath-takers as well. Forced to vacate their home, House's father took the oath with support from her mother and sister. This infuriated Ellen, who fumed, "I have been as mad as a hornet all day.... I would have done anything rather than have had him do it." Some of her friends relented and took the oath as well, although others refused and paid the cost. House's friend Mary Hazen then heard rumors that Confederate authorities planned to exile her, and she feared that her father would force her to take the loyalty oath in order to stay. Hazen found solace in her possible exile, believing that House surely would have to accompany her for she had been much more vocal than Hazen. She was right; in April, General Carter informed House that she would be sent to the Confederacy. Her allegiance cost her home and family.<sup>73</sup>

In March, Myra Inman's mother swore her allegiance to the United States. This further depressed Myra, who wrote, "If I could only express the deep gloom that envelops my heart, but alas, it is too deep for utterance." Yet her own loyalty was wavering. She then spoke with local judge and Unionist John Gaut and his wife regarding the demise of the Confederacy. Both Gauts believed that fear of military retribution kept men in the Confederate Army and that "a few

---

<sup>72</sup> "Oath of Allegiance," 27 February 1864 and "Is it Right?," 23 January 1864, *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*.

<sup>73</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 8 April 1864, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 89, 94-96, 127-128 (quotation 89).

fanatic demagogues” kept the war going. The Confederacy had lost, and they needed to accept their fate.<sup>74</sup>

Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain remained a diehard. She believed that taking the oath marred a family’s reputation, and she sympathized with a Rogersville neighbor, Kitty Merrimon, whose husband had taken the loyalty oath. Fain found Merrimon was “degraded by the conduct of her husband.”<sup>75</sup> Refusing to take the oath of allegiance ultimately provided another avenue through which Confederate women could resist, but the large numbers who did take the oath demonstrated the region’s waning commitment to the war.

\*\*\*

In addition to exile, Union soldiers destroyed or sequestered personal property belonging to Confederate women. Sometimes military necessity was involved; House wrote that Union soldiers in January intended to destroy several homes on Knoxville’s Summit Hill to place guns. But more often, punishment was involved. House wrote of her neighbor, a Mrs. Kains, and how Federal soldiers had inventoried her property and placed it for sale. Only citizens who had taken the loyalty oath could purchase it. House similarly lost her home after her public display of support for the Confederate prisoners. Eviction came as a surprise to the family when a female neighbor came to let them know that General Tillson intended to use the House’s home as headquarters. Soon after, a member of Tillson’s staff came to alert House’s father. He went to

---

<sup>74</sup>Myra Inman, 10, 11 March 1864 in in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 253, 254.

<sup>75</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 14 July 1864, in Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 187.

speak with the general, and another officer told him that they needed to immediately vacate the premises. House thought “this turning us out is perfectly outrageous.”<sup>76</sup>

Confederates lost more than homes. The Chattanooga and Knoxville Campaigns and the occupation that followed had brought an influx of Federal soldiers who decimated local food and livestock. Federal troops constantly foraged, putting a further strain on local resources. Soldiers approached homes seeking food. The daily interruptions annoyed Myra Inman.<sup>77</sup> But it was not just Federal soldiers who put a strain on local resources. Confederate troops north of Knoxville in James Longstreet’s hungry command also continued to supplement their meager rations by living off the land. They plagued Fain’s household. One April evening scouts came looking for the “surplus.” They took three of her four calves without payment, amid her children’s and her loud objections. The only comfort she found in the situation was that the Confederate soldiers, not Union men, had taken the livestock. Another Rogersville woman, Nancy McCarty, saw her property confiscated by Confederate soldiers that month. Bushwhackers seized limited resources as well. Unionist bushwhackers raided four of Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain’s female neighbors’ homes stealing their supplies. Attempting to assist those in need, other women banded together in June, filled a wagon with subsistence items, and delivered it to the needy neighbors. Fain was astonished by the act of female solidarity.<sup>78</sup>

Unionists suffered similarly. In February, Brownlow and others wrote Lincoln describing how the Confederates had devastated the region’s food supply and “drained and exhausted the whole of East Tennessee.” They claimed that the Confederates took sixty

---

<sup>76</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 12 January 1864, in in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 79, 82, 86-87 (quotation 85-86).

<sup>77</sup> Myra Inman, 4 January 1864 in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 239.

<sup>78</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 1 and 13 April, 17 June 1864, in Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 167-68, 174, 191.

thousand hogs during the rebellion. “The products of our farms were seized,” they continued, “...the stock to which we looked for future...was destroyed.” They further pointed to the blockade that “deprived us of most of the comforts and necessities of life to which we had been accustomed,” and explained that the region’s mountainous terrain prevented the Union Army from maintaining an adequate supply train, forcing them to forage. The region’s farmers did not have the manpower, livestock, or even seed to sow the crops for the following harvest. The battles and constant presence of troops caused much of the farmland to be trampled and damaged. They concluded that “hundreds of families... have been reduced to almost absolute beggary, because of privations imposed by the army...many of these families are without money with which to replace the supplies and had they the money the supplies could not found.”<sup>79</sup>

Late in April, a group of loyal Chattanoogaans again petitioned Lincoln lamenting the region’s lack of food. They stated that the Army of the Cumberland’s sequestering had greatly reduced the availability of subsistence items. The authors wrote of how “wives and daughters... to sustain life, were compelled to procure...subsistence by tilling the ground with their own hands.” They used the nineteenth-century gender ideal that men alone should labor in the fields to compel President Lincoln to action. Lower class women in the region had long labored by men to serve their families’ needs, but the Civil War had created conditions in which the region’s professional class and elite families had to violate their gender ideals in order to feed and protect their families. The petitioners hoped that Lincoln would allow the Army to supply loyal East Tennesseans “provisions to sustain us till [*sic*] industry could produce a supply from the soil.” The petitioners also hoped Lincoln would revoke General Orders No. 8, which effectively

---

<sup>79</sup> Thomas Humes, William G. Brownlow, William Heiskell, et al., Knoxville, to President Abraham Lincoln, Washington D.C., 9 February 1864, Abraham Lincoln Papers.

prohibited the Army from gifting or selling supplies to private citizens. The letters had some effect. On 28 April, Lincoln addressed Congress asking for relief to be given to the “loyal” people of East Tennessee.<sup>80</sup>

Women of both political allegiances nonetheless suffered from a want of food that spring, as help was slow in coming. Confederate partisans regaled Fain one evening with tales of their adventures in and around Cleveland and Knoxville. While traveling throughout the area searching for Unionist bushwhackers, they had stopped at a Confederate woman’s home for food. A Unionist neighbor informed local Federal troops who came to investigate. The irregulars narrowly escaped and retaliated by confiscating much of the neighbor’s food supplies.<sup>81</sup>

Yet Fain’s own food stocks dwindled throughout spring. In May she complained that “the meat which I had provided for my family must give out.” Realizing that she had to feed her children and slaves, Fain sought food from her friend, receiving a ham and other pork. Even prosperous families had difficulty procuring food. Fain tried to purchase some from her Rogersville neighbors but could not find anyone with a surplus. Finally, a female friend offered wheat and oats.<sup>82</sup>

Fain also complained about how Confederate forces had stripped her and other local farms of produce, livestock, and labor. She believed that such acquisitions were “bad conduct,” and that as a consequence her family had been “reduced to great want for provisions.” The

---

<sup>80</sup> President Abraham Lincoln, “Resolution Concerning East Tennessee to Congress,” 28 April 1864, Abraham Lincoln Papers.

<sup>81</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 2 March 1864 in Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 158.

<sup>82</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 16, 19 May 1864, in *Ibid*, 181, 183-185 (quotation 181).

present and the future “look[ed] so dark and gloomy.”<sup>83</sup> Six months later, a neighbor of Myra Inman’s described how the Confederates had requisitioned the majority of her remaining stored crops and other resources, leaving her barely enough to feed her family. The Federal Army then took over \$5,000 dollars of goods, including all her livestock, bed clothes, subsistence items, and even clothing. When she refused to let them confiscate her shawl, a soldier struck her in retaliation.<sup>84</sup>

Meanwhile, Confederate officer Richard Calvin McCalla wrote to his wife in February that a wealthy Greenville friend who “used to keep one of the best tables in the whole county” failed to have even “lard... to put in his bread...no milk, no butter.” McCalla continued that “the country is literally eaten up...I cannot see how this army is to be fed much longer, especially on meat nor how the horses are to be foraged.” A month later, conditions had continued to deteriorate. McCalla told his wife, “you have read of the horrors of war... everything has been taken from the wealthiest citizen by the vandal foe.” He continued, “what formerly presented a paradise on earth is now a heap of desolation.” McCalla listed all of the items that Union soldiers, bushwhackers, and common criminals had taken from local families: “negroes...horses, cows, sheep, hogs, wagons, carriages, household furniture, fencing all burned, timber all cut down and burned”<sup>85</sup>

Similar lamentations occurred in the Confederate frontier, but not as frequently. While in Virginia, Rebecca Rutledge King’s sister offered to send her a portion of her bountiful vegetable harvest. She boasted that “I have beets, potatoes, and corn, cucumbers, tomatoes, cantaloupes,

---

<sup>83</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 3 April 1864 in *Ibid*, 169.

<sup>84</sup> Myra Inman, 31 October 1864, in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 289-290.

<sup>85</sup> Richard Calvin McCalla, Lick Creek, to Margaret McCalla, South Carolina, 2 February 1864, and Richard Calvin McCalla, Carter’s Depot, to Margaret McCalla, South Carolina, 16 March 1864, Speake-McCalla Papers.

muskmelons, watermelons and so on.” She encouraged her sister’s family to return to Blountville soon so that they may have access to their resources. Even their mother “made a good deal [sic] of money” on her apple harvest sending wagon loads of apples to Bristol to be sold.<sup>86</sup>

Some Unionist women’s conditions, however, actually bettered with the arrival of Union soldiers, many of them native to the region. Daniel Ellis traveled extensively throughout the Confederate frontier in 1864 bringing Unionist women supplies and piloting their men to garrison towns to enlist. While in the garrison towns Ellis received packages from soldiers which contained desperately needed items, cash, and luxuries. Calico, other dress goods, and coffee proved very popular amid the women. The war had made getting many of these goods very difficult. Ellis noted that if “rebel women could have secured the possession of a pound of coffee, a spool of thread, or a paper of pins...she would have thought herself remarkable well off.” Coffee was considered “equally delightful as the nectar of ambrosia.”<sup>87</sup>

\*\*\*

As Confederate women’s morale diminished with their food, the Federal Army’s constant presence and vocalization that the war was lost created doubt in their minds. Uncertainty increasingly colored their writings. Myra Inman could not fathom what life would look like after the war. By February she believed that the war was lost, and she found “Our sentence has gone forth... I tremble for our future... [and] God can alone protect us and soften the hearts of our

---

<sup>86</sup> Sarah “Sallie” B Rutledge, Blountville, to Katherine Rebecca Rutledge, Virginia, 23 August 1864, Accession No. 2014-020, Oliver Caswell King and Katherine Rebecca Rutledge King Papers, 1856-1893, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, <https://teva.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15138coll2/id/328/rec/3>.

<sup>87</sup>Daniel Ellis, *The Thrilling True Adventures of Daniel Ellis*, 213.

foes.”<sup>88</sup> In Knoxville the constant arrests of Confederates regardless of gender continued to frighten many women into taking the loyalty oath. House had once boasted that she only had to ask for subsistence items for the jailed Confederate soldiers’ and civilians’ needs, but by February 1864 House could only rely upon herself.<sup>89</sup>

The constant stream of deaths further frightened and depressed many women. Fain fixated on the astounding number of deaths, and feared that her husband, children, or neighbors would be next. Writing one April morning in her diary, “she thought of the desolated sorrowful hearts, which are to be found in every part of our land, whose sorrowful wail so often rises from the lonely hearthstones of what was once called land of the free and home of the brave.” She asked herself “how many helpless widows and orphans this morning are sending forth to the hearer of prayer this sad complaint that war, cruel relentless war has bereft them of all that was so dear on earth.”<sup>90</sup>

In August, she encountered a wounded Confederate soldier and a young woman carrying a baby on the road to church one morning. At first assuming that they were a family, she soon discovered that the soldier was only escorting the woman home after her husband’s death. Grief consumed this mother of three, who compared her life to a “great trial which she was called to bear,” and used adjectives such as “dark” and “dreary.” Fain found trouble finding any words of comfort to give, knowing that this widow would indeed have difficulty feeding and caring for her children. She could only pray that “God would sustain her in her deep affliction.” Fain

---

<sup>88</sup> Myra Inman, 5 February 1864 in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 245.

<sup>89</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 17 February 1864, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 101.

<sup>90</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 10 April 1864 in *Ibid*, 173.

recognized that the woman was not alone either, as the war had created countless women like her.<sup>91</sup>

As the time dragged on, women continued to absorb the side effects of warfare. Oliver Caswell King sustained a significant gunshot wound to his left thigh at the Battle of Piedmont on 5 June 1864. He wrote to his family and friends detailing his injury and reassuring them that the doctors were doing their best to save his leg, but that he had been taken prisoner. He believed that he was spared death only because a Federal and fellow Mason rescued him and got him the necessary medical treatment. Shortly after, he wrote to his father again and implored him to come to Virginia with his wife.<sup>92</sup> He worried that the persistent infection in his leg would claim his life. The only consolation that King could offer his wife was that “our Son... is in God’s hands – to Him let all pray that he may be taken off his bed of pain and restored to us again in health.” She eventually went to Virginia to be by his bedside.<sup>93</sup>

Occupation fundamentally altered women’s lives in numerous other ways. Fannie Fain’s husband John had hired a substitute back in the fall of 1862 when the Confederacy increased the age of conscription to 45. In January 1864, the Confederate government, increasingly desperate for manpower, eliminated the use of substitutes and dictated that those who had hired them had to report for duty.<sup>94</sup> John Fain decided to flee rather than report. His wife believed that his

---

<sup>91</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 7 August 1864, in *Ibid*, 207.

<sup>92</sup> Oliver Caswell, Mount Meridian, VA, to “Friends,” 10 June 1864, Oliver Caswell King, transcribed by H.E. Dunham, Augusta County, VA, to Leander M. King, Bristol, VA, 10 June 1864, and Oliver Caswell King, Augusta County, VA to Leander M. King, Bristol, TN, 15 June 1864, Oliver Caswell King and Katherine Rebecca Rutledge King Papers.

<sup>93</sup> Leander Montgomery King, Meridian Augusta Co., VA, to Penelope Louisa Massengill King, Blountville, TN, 13 July 1864, and Rosa Rutledge and Sarah Caswell Cobb Rutledge, Blountville, TN, to Katherine Rebecca Rutledge King, Augusta County, VA, 14 September 1864, Oliver Caswell King and Katherine Rebecca Rutledge King Papers.

<sup>94</sup> Bureau of Conscription, General Orders No. 3, Circular No. 1, 13 January 1864, Documenting the American South, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

absence “was the hardest trial ever yet to befall” her. She feared for his safety as he would not write to her and they lost contact for weeks. Fannie could only hope that “he may be spared, his life and health and soon be brought back to us in great mercy.” Fain added, “for the past two or three days I felt somewhat depressed...I cannot hear anything...sometimes I fear he may be sick or dead...if I could only hear he was alive and well what a relief it would be to me.” John eventually wrote his wife, but it pained her that “he was denied from those he loved... his home and its comforts, by this wicked, sinful and most unholy war.”<sup>95</sup>

The war ravaged Martha Barton Crozier Ramsey’s family and life. Her husband, Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey, had fled to Georgia prior to the Union invasion, her son Alex was in a Union prison, son Arthur had been injured in battle, daughter Henrietta Lenoir died shortly after childbirth, and her remaining daughters had escaped Knoxville’s contentious climate.<sup>96</sup> Alone and frightened in occupied Knoxville in July 1864 she decided to flee too. She believed “we should never return” to “our native home.”<sup>97</sup> Not alone in her travels, Ramsey boarded “the flag of truce car” with several other prominent and wealthy Confederate women. The women were shocked at the crude box car, believing it should only be used to transport coal and lumber. Even her husband questioned how Union authorities could force ladies to endure such hardships without regard to their sex and class.<sup>98</sup> But before Ramsey could board, Union soldiers repeatedly searched her belongings and paid Unionist women to perform bodily searches. In her journal, Ramsey also claimed the soldiers had employed prostitutes just to embarrass the southern ladies.<sup>99</sup> Years later, however, her husband instead stated that the Unionist women only

---

<sup>95</sup>Fannie Fain, 31 January, 17 April, and 11 and 25 December 1864, Fannie A. Fain Papers.

<sup>96</sup>William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 194.

<sup>97</sup>Margaret B. Crozier Ramsey, no date, *Diary of Margaret B. Crozier Ramsey*.

<sup>98</sup>William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 199.

<sup>99</sup>Margaret B. Crozier Ramsey, no date, *Diary of Margaret B. Crozier Ramsey*.

performed the acts to aid their government. He reported an interaction between them and his wife in which the Unionists asked the Confederate women would they have not performed such duties if called upon by the Confederacy.<sup>100</sup> These two differing accounts demonstrate the hostility felt between the Unionist and Confederate women. Angered over the loss of her home, financial security, and protection Ramsey lashed out. She felt they were socially and economically beneath her. By intimating that they were prostitutes, she offered no greater insult.

Ramsey's difficulties continued. Soon after she left, a Union officer informed her that she could no longer ride the train. Upset at what she perceived as an injustice she had to travel on an "ambulance baggage wagon." Already distressed, Ramsey then received news that her nineteen-year old son had died. Devastated, she wrote, "I... threw myself on the bed and cried out in agony – O that is too hard – too much – more than I can bear." It "was such a shock I wish for death." Ramsey eventually made her way to North Carolina.<sup>101</sup>

The war and the Confederate draft fragmented Fannie Fain's Blountville family too. Her husband had escaped trying to avoid conscription, although she had four brothers in the Confederate Army. In June Fain described the war as "desperate" and "awful in the extreme." She added, "I hope and pray that the end is not far off... God grant it soon may come." She hoped that news of her brother James's death in Virginia was "false" and that instead he only had been gravely wounded. Fain wanted her brother to die at home surrounded by those who loved him, but, "I fear this would be expecting too much." Another brother had "left home...lively, cheerful, and in fine health...he left that morning without telling me goodbye...I felt somewhat distressed thinking probably I might never see him again." Fain worried for her brothers and

---

<sup>100</sup> William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 201.

<sup>101</sup> Margaret B. Crozier Ramsey, no date, *Diary of Margaret B. Crozier Ramsey*.

wondered if “they could get home again.” A few days after receiving the news that her younger brother had perished she learned instead he had only been wounded, an act of what she perceived as divine mercy. She hoped to “live to the see the time...when we shall be reunited a happy family” amid these “dark and gloomy and uneasy days.”<sup>102</sup>

Myra Inman shared the melancholy. After the fall of Atlanta in September 1864, even the sound of military movement irritated Inman and her sister. She stated, “how happy I would feel if we could never hear the drum beat anymore calling the soldiers to their tasks.” She wondered “How long, our God, will this war continue, until we are all destroyed?” To her this uncertain and violent future proved to be “torture.”<sup>103</sup> A few weeks later news that Atlanta had indeed fallen caused Inman to “indulge...in a very quiet cry over our country and absent friends.”<sup>104</sup>

Inman also constantly worried that Union authorities would order her family out of Cleveland. Her anxiety climaxed in the very early hours one August morning when the Inman women heard her neighbor’s alarm that Confederate soldiers were close. Inman feared fighting and prepared to vacate her home. She wrote, “we all dressed, put on our bonnets and ate a little cold breakfast and were ready to start to the country when the first gun was fired.” They did not evacuate immediately, but the next afternoon’s cannon fire sent them into to the surrounding countryside. Inman added that “hundreds of people joined us (with bundles) in our march.” That night, she shared lodging with more than forty persons including slaves. Yet, while Inman feared for the safety of her family members and home, she hoped that this would be the instance

---

<sup>102</sup>Fannie A. Fain, 6 and 8 June 1864, 7 August, and 4 September 1864, Fannie A. Fain Papers; “1850 U.S. Federal Census – Record for Fannie A. Rhea,” Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>;

<sup>103</sup>Myra Inman, 5 August 1864, in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 277.

<sup>104</sup>Myra Inman, 2 September 1864, in *Ibid*, 283.

when the Confederate Army regained East Tennessee. Instead, Confederate bushwhackers merely “tore up the railroad.”<sup>105</sup>

As Union troops continued to enter the region, Unionist women in those ever-diminishing areas of the Confederate frontier consequently suffered. Daniel Ellis argued that the violence inflicted upon Unionist families in Carter and Johnson Counties escalated in the late summer and early fall. The Confederate home guard targeted the homes of Union soldiers. Women, children, and elderly men suffered. Ellis claimed that in a few short months over a hundred homes burned. He gave numerous accounts of atrocities in these counties; including one in which a seventy-year-old man who had four sons in the Union Army was taken from his breakfast table and hung. His daughter fearing for her father’s life followed the chaotic scene and found her father dead, hanging from a tree. With no one to help but children, the woman cut the body down and buried him. Far away from the protection of Union soldiers, experiences such as these became frequent. Fatigued from the retributive environment many Unionist women fled from these counties. Ellis found “that many of these poor women... had been rendered perfectly destitute by the destruction of their houses and all their household property.” Those who chose to stay continued to suffer until the leader of the home guard was murdered and Federal troops arrived in northeast Tennessee to rid the Unionists of “the dreadful yoke of rebel tyranny” in September 1864.<sup>106</sup>

\*\*\*

---

<sup>105</sup>Myra Inman, 16, 17 August 1864, in *Ibid*, 279-280.

<sup>106</sup>Daniel Ellis, *The Thrilling Adventures of Daniel Ellis*, 224, 229, and 232-234 (quotation 229).

Even amid all the chaos, women remained integral to the soldier experience. One Rogersville Confederate woman, nicknamed “Bug,” hid her husband and his comrades in her cellar. A Union officer entered her home searching for Confederate soldiers, and she ordered them to leave which they complied. Fain recounted, “Bug who is not afraid of any of [the Federals] stamped her foot and told him to dry up right off as they could not talk that way in her presence.”<sup>107</sup>

As elsewhere, women sustained irregular soldiers too. Leeann Whites and Alecia P. Long argue that “without [women] there could have been no effective guerrilla resistance.”<sup>108</sup> Similarly, Joseph Beilein Jr. finds that “it was from the guerrilla household that the entire war in Missouri emanated.”<sup>109</sup> That was true as well in East Tennessee. Confederate guerrilla leader Bill Owens frequently traveled throughout Rogersville, and he depended on Fain to feed and shelter his men. In early October her daughter surprised her by saying that ten to twelve Rebels were hiding in their stable. She found that Owens had stopped in search of Unionist bushwhackers, and she quickly gave them bread, apple butter, and milk. She wrote, “I asked no questions as to where or what was their business feeling it is best for women to know but little unless they can be of service.”<sup>110</sup>

At the end of 1864, other Rogersville women gave provisions to paroled Confederate soldiers that were traveling through the area. Braving rainy and muddy conditions, they brought

---

<sup>107</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 22 August 1864, in Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 212-213.

<sup>108</sup> Whites and Long, eds., *Occupied Women*, 7.

<sup>109</sup> Joseph M. Beilein Jr., *Bushwhackers: Guerrilla Warfare, Manhood, and the Household in Civil War Missouri* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2016), 29.

<sup>110</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 1 October 1864, in Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 241.

baskets filled with food to ease the men's journey. Fain received a letter from her nephew Sam Gammon, who along with her son Nicholas was imprisoned on Johnson's Island. He requested "flour, bacon, and fruit." Fain lamented that she had nothing in which to send to them.<sup>111</sup>

Women also relied upon one another to help ease the hardships associated with the war. Rogersville women often sought aid from Fain, once one of the wealthiest women in the county. Now she felt defeated unable to meet the demands of her "large family" and those of her neighbors too. Her friends expected to be compensated for the goods they gave out, yet others believed that she should give generously and without receiving payment. Such stresses left her feeling "oppressed with the cares of life."<sup>112</sup>

Throughout 1864, Fain at least had largely remained unmolested by Union forces. Then came Christmas Day. Fain had several Confederate soldiers at her home when a Union force approached. A chase ensued and the Union men captured the houseguests. Just as the soldiers had left with the prisoners, another Confederate approached the Fain home and fired upon the Federals. He escaped, but his actions led the Union soldiers to return to Fain's home, where they interrogated her over the identity of the shooter. After the major threatened to burn down her house, she revealed the perpetrator's name and where he lived. Still, soldiers entered Fain's home searching for other hiding Confederates. A short while later another set of Federal soldiers approached the home and demanded to be fed. Fain gave them bread and meat, but one man demanded raw meat and a ham. She lied that she had lost her smokehouse key and hoped that they would not break up the smokehouse instead. While she searched for the key, soldiers tried to steal her flour, her coffee pot, and other cooking utensils. Fain managed to protect most of her

---

<sup>111</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 18, 21 December 1864, in Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 269-271 (quotation 270-71).

<sup>112</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 7 September 1864, in *Ibid*, 225-226.

stored food and kitchen instruments through arguing with the men. Throughout the evening more soldiers stopped by her home looking for food, but they believed her word that she had none to give. After they left Fain traveled to neighboring farms and discovered that she had been lucky, as some of the women had their cellars and smokehouses cleared out. That evening the family had their paltry Christmas dinner of chicken.<sup>113</sup>

In Blountville, Fannie Fain wrote that Union soldiers had been there foraging from locals and that someone had told her not to return to her farm with her horses or the soldiers “would have them that night.” The Federals finally entered Blountville and Sullivan County in December. Fain heard noises in her mother’s cellar and discovered they had “carried off all her milk and milk vessels, salt, [and] some pork out of the smokehouse.” She also noted that soldiers confiscated two of her neighbors’ horses. She penned her feelings concerning the Union Army “Oh, what destruction and depredations they have committed... O was deceived in them, never thought they [would] treat us so.” Soon after, Union soldiers brought in two hundred Confederate prisoners, including Fain’s older brother Brainerd. Union officials confiscated his possessions including: “horse, saddlebags, watch, and knapsack.” Fannie Fain wrote that the soldiers cried for something to eat, but she had little to give for the war’s constant confiscations from soldiers and vigilantes had decimated their supplies. Her mother and Fain gathered what they could and brought it to Brainerd and others.<sup>114</sup>

\*\*\*

---

<sup>113</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 25 December 1864, in Fain, ed., 271-276.

<sup>114</sup>Fannie Fain, 26 June 1864, 11 and 18 December 1864, Fannie A. Fain Papers.

In 1864 East Tennessee's Confederate women became an occupied people, and by December the Federal Army's presence stretched throughout the region. Women who had previously resided in the Confederate frontier, far from the roving Union soldiers, by the end of the year experienced raids which depleted their resources. Those who had only heard stories of Federal soldiers now experienced the acquisitions and the rise of guerrilla warfare that accompanied the troops as they moved away from the garrison towns. The consequences of occupation wore down the women's morale. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain summed up this feeling when she wrote, "When will this cruel war be over?"<sup>115</sup> War had pervaded every aspect of their lives. The region's women responded in a variety of ways: some endured the hardships making the best of the situation, others fled to safety, and some Confederate women refused to submit. While war weary, they were not helpless victims of the war, but active participants in shaping it.

1864 proved to be a very different kind of year for Unionist women too. Like Confederate women, they shaped the war through their actions. They celebrated the arrival of Federal troops and for those residing in garrison towns were rewarded with protection. By the close of 1864 the Federal Army occupied even northern East Tennessee, and local Unionists were no longer an oppressed population. Unionist women offered support to Unionist men and managed families in a retributive environment where they were all too often targeted. The Federal Army's occupation of East Tennessee brought a new type of war to all white women, but the narrative was not singular, as political affiliation and location denoted multiple occupation experiences.

---

<sup>115</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 6 April 1864 in Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 169.

## 7. “The Devil Seems to be Walking At Large in East Tenn.”: Devastation, Retaliation, and the End of the War, 1865

By 1865 the war in East Tennessee had turned women’s social, political, and economic worlds upside down, and tomorrow increasingly seemed more uncertain than ever. Women wondered, when would it be over? Would they ever be able to return to what they perceived as normality? How could they live in an environment plagued by social discontent and violence? Rogersville’s Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain spent the first few weeks of 1865 in shock. Union soldiers had ransacked her home days before, and the seclusion and protection she felt residing in the Confederate frontier had evaporated. Incredulously, she realized that her farm now resided within “Federal lines” and that knowledge made her “shudder with horror.”<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, twenty-two-year-old Elisa Bolli’s inability to look ahead caused her great anxiety; it seemed she could only “see the future... through a veil.”<sup>2</sup> Commitment to the Confederacy waned with mounting losses, financial hardship, and uncertainty, yet some Confederate women continued forward. The preservation of their families remained their chief priority. At the same time Unionist women still suffered from the economic and social effects of widespread political retribution, but with a standing army and the Union’s victories, their future at least seemed brighter.

---

<sup>1</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 1, 8 and 15 January 1865, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 284-285 [quotation 8 January 1865].

<sup>2</sup> Elisa Bolli-Buffat, 31 January 1865, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli-Buffat*, 179.

The ability to find economic stability remained a chief concern that evaded many women. Three meals a day now seemed a luxury to Myra Inman, one that she had not enjoyed in quite some time.<sup>3</sup> In the early years of the war, Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain had generously donated food and other items to needy neighbors, but by 1865 she could no longer meet even her family's needs. Constant raiding had left her with little to share. In late January, Confederate guerrillas approached her home and after taking breakfast commandeered several work horses. Their actions astonished Fain, who had believed that only her "enemies" would commit such sins, not Southern soldiers.<sup>4</sup>

Confederate morale continued to decline as the region's women grappled with the war's consequences. Exiles felt a special pain. As another year began, Ellen Renshaw House found herself exiled, isolated, and melancholy in Putnam, Georgia. She experienced acute "homesickness." The Confederacy's prospects seemed "rather gloomy" as well, and she no longer believed her actions had been worth the punishment of exile. Her defiance had been a mistake, she concluded, and "as things are now I fear I did very wrong to leave [my family], but I could not foresee the future." Her violent temperament had led her astray, she believed, and she wished she had exercised self-restraint.<sup>5</sup>

Cleveland's Myra Inman was still in Tennessee, living in Hamilton County's Ooltewah, but she too dreamed of the day that she could be reunited with her immediate and extended family. Inman wrote that "my happiness would be complete if we will all be together again." The war had robbed her of security and taught her that she might never obtain that elusive

---

<sup>3</sup>Myra Inman, 13 March 1865, in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 304.

<sup>4</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 30 January 1865, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 292.

<sup>5</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 1 January and 9 and 24 February 1865, in Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 139, 146, and 148 [quotation 146].

happiness. She “wish[ed] this war was over” when she learned that two of her family’s tenants had to flee their homes, families, and friends because of repeated guerrilla attacks.<sup>6</sup> Knoxville’s Ramsey family were in exile as well, having fled their home in 1864, and temporarily had found refuge in Bristol. The town held what Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey called a large “transient population” where “men and women suffering from similar inflictions – all came in to mingle their griefs, their tears, their sorrows, and their consolations.”<sup>7</sup>

Confederate women saw other worrisome signs of the Richmond government’s decay. Confederate deserters swamped garrison towns. The Bolli family, for example, offered their Knoxville home to an itinerant deserter one January evening. The deserter frightened young Elisa Bolli and she felt unsafe worried that he might commit depredations against her family or her.<sup>8</sup> Yet women such as Bolli rarely condemned deserters with the same ferocity that they had in 1864. Seemingly their commitment to the Confederacy had diminished enough that they sympathized with their plight. At the very least, they had grown more concerned with their families’ safety and stability than soldiers’ commitment to the Confederacy.

Some Confederate women even began to empathize with the Unionists they had recently only demonized. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain wrote about her experience in church with an ex-Confederate chaplain, a Mr. Alexander, who denounced the “fanatics and abolitionists” of the North and blamed them for all the countless lives lost during the war. He went on to argue that such men wanted to break the will of the South by purposely attacking women and children. He also warned the congregation that Union authorities had dismissed Confederate pastors such as

---

<sup>6</sup>Myra Inman, 14 January 1865, in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 298.

<sup>7</sup>William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 210.

<sup>8</sup>Elisa Bolli-Buffer, 24 January 1865, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffer and Mrs. Elisa Bolli-Buffer*, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffer and Mrs. Elisa Bolli-Buffer*, 180.

him and replaced them with northern sympathizers. Pastor Alexander's vitriol frightened and angered Fain, who could not believe that a fellow clergyman could denounce his peers. Indeed, she believed that "our best preachers and teachers in the South hailed from the North," and it angered Fain that "nothing too bad or too unchristian can be said of them....this vile, wicked war, what a division it has made, what wickedness and unkindness it has brought about... enough of this kind of preaching for me."<sup>9</sup>

Moments such as these soon passed. Fain's feelings towards ecclesiastical Unionists soon cooled, while retaliation became a more prominent theme among Unionists. The perceived injustices of the past boiled over and in 1865 many demanded revenge. Outspoken Unionists such as William G. Brownlow could not envision a future in which the two groups coexisted. He argued that the harm caused during the war was irreparable and Unionists simply could not live amid men who had exiled, imprisoned, harassed, and impoverished them.<sup>10</sup>

The injustices that Brownlow spoke of were not just elements of the past either. Unionists in the remote counties of Carter and Johnson continued to experience extralegal attacks from roving bands of Confederates. During the winter Daniel Ellis wrote of a local gang that targeted Unionist households, stealing food, supplies, and clothing. Women felt particularly affronted by the loss of clothing and began to conceal the articles in tree stumps or logs. Yet the loss of subsistence items remained secondary to the loss of male relatives. As the gang and others moved through, they often physically assaulted and sometimes murdered Unionist men. Women were not safe either; Ellis recounted an instance where a contingent of men attacked a woman, stealing her clothes and money, until she escaped with her three children in tow. Luckily, a neighboring

---

<sup>9</sup> Fannie A. Fain, 19 February 1865, Accession 133, Fannie A. Fain Papers.

<sup>10</sup> "Personal," *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 11 January 1865.

Unionist woman provided the small family shelter and food. While traveling throughout the northeastern counties in February, Daniel Ellis also encountered a group of ragged Unionist women searching for food. Some complained of having their homes burned by Confederate guerrillas. Without husbands the women had to provide food and security for their families. Yet they traveled as a group; they had learned to rely upon one another. Women were not disassociated from the war, protected by their sex or domestic capacities, they were active participants and treated accordingly by guerrillas. They viewed women not as victims but a threat. Ellis acknowledged that he was a “bushwhacker” himself, much like those he criticized for attacking the Unionists, but he wanted to offer protection to his own. Sometimes he failed; Ellis could not protect one woman who guerrillas attacked after learning her son was a Federal soldier. He eventually gathered Federal soldiers to help police the region and protect vulnerable Unionist families.<sup>11</sup>

Guerrillas did not just plague Unionists in northeast Tennessee, however. Maryville’s Mary L.T. Wallace, plagued by debt, did not have a husband with whom she could weather the chaotic environment. Confederate guerrillas had destroyed her home months previously, and the few items she had retrieved after were later confiscated by roving bands. The North now seemed the only viable alternative to the instability that plagued the region. Even with the Federal troops stationed in East Tennessee, Wallace felt it safer to move. In January, Wallace wrote attorney Oliver P. Temple in hopes that he would advise her on how to secure the funds to move and even perhaps obtain “justice” for the attacks she sustained.<sup>12</sup> Weeks later, Bradley County guerrillas

---

<sup>11</sup> Daniel Ellis, *The Thrilling Adventures of Daniel Ellis, 1861-1865*, 244-248, 277-278, 281-284, and 297-298 [quotation 284].

<sup>12</sup>Mary L.T. Wallace, Maryville, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, 23 January 1865, Oliver P. Temple Papers.

raided Unionist families, stole their horses and other property, violently attacked Unionist men, and cut telegraph lines. Brownlow worried that such actions could lead “Rebels to capture Cleveland,” and reclaim any other territory.<sup>13</sup>

Unionist women not surprisingly aided the Federal Army when they could. Soldiers and irregular Unionist bands were a stabilizing force, and women offered help in hopes of expelling the danger Confederates represented. Melvina Stephens scouted one January evening for Union soldiers who were trying to surprise and capture Confederate guerrillas in Carter County. She rode ahead of the group, making sure that their movements did not alert Confederate pickets. In March, Ellis reported that more traditional Unionist women had helped to supply his irregular unit with food, a behavior that was repeated across the Civil War home front.<sup>14</sup> Women did so knowing fully the profound consequences that could befall them if they were discovered. Time had proven that guerrillas and vigilantes did not discriminate based on gender when seeking to dispense what they called justice. In addition, the guerrillas relied upon these women; their contributions were not just to the individual men but the war effort.

Unfortunately, Union soldiers did not always offer the protection that loyal men and women desired. Sometimes they were even the perpetrators. Instances of Union soldiers stealing goods and livestock under the pretense of foraging occurred frequently. Brownlow encouraged citizens to report Union misdeeds to the civil authorities and his newspaper as well so that he could publish their names and regiments. He believed that “a Federal soldier...is expected to act the gentleman, and prove himself a patriot, in all his acts.”<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> “Rebels in Bradley County,” *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 8 February 1865.

<sup>14</sup> Daniel Ellis, *The Thrilling True Adventures of Daniel Ellis*, 270-271 and 286.

<sup>15</sup> “Bad Conduct of Soldiers,” *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 29 March 1865.

Not all Unionists suffered, however. Occupied Knoxville offered a different story than the rural frontier. Knoxville's Catherine Hill did not want for foodstuffs, and even had enough wheat, butter, and sugar to make a cake for her wedding in January. The Hill family's good fortune continued, and in March Hill's stepson commented on the abundance of food and lavish dinners that included steaks, roasts, and smoked ham. One memorable dinner included steaks with sweet potatoes that weighed "nearly a pound."<sup>16</sup>

Other Unionists in garrison towns or at least within the reach of Federal soldiers sought reparations for the mistreatment they had endured. Brownlow encouraged this, demanding that civil courts allow "Union men who have been imprisoned for their devotion to country, whose families have been robbed and abused, sue the parties for heavy damages, and in this way let them be remunerated for losses." He wanted the Confederates who started and sustained the war to "be impoverished... made bankrupt" and to "be made beggars, going from door to door for their bread." Ultimately, they needed to "feel the consequences of their wicked and rebellious conduct." Brownlow himself sued several prominent Knoxville Confederates for ejecting his family from their home and seizing their property. After quickly receiving \$25,000 in a judgment, he believed that he had undervalued the claim and should have requested more.<sup>17</sup>

Many others followed suit and demanded compensation. A Blount County man demanded \$25,000, claiming that Confederates had stolen "his horses, mules, bacon, tobacco, grain, and hay." Their misdeeds did not end there, he added, as the accused had shot him in the leg and forced him into a nearby creek. The jury quickly ruled in his favor, demonstrating once

---

<sup>16</sup>John Willard Hill, 10 and 26 January and March 1 and 2 1865, MS. 0874, Dr. John Willard Hill Collection, University of Tennessee Special Collections, Knoxville.

<sup>17</sup>"Suits for Damages," and "\$25,000 in Damages," *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 1 March 1865.

again the transfer of power.<sup>18</sup> One Morgan County Unionist meanwhile sued his neighbors for encouraging and aiding Confederate forces in confiscating vital food stores, livestock, and domestic goods. He requested \$1,205 for lost goods.<sup>19</sup> By 1 March, 241 cases of seized Confederate property had occurred in the District of East Tennessee.<sup>20</sup> Weeks later, Brownlow learned that \$15,000-20,000 worth of abandoned Confederate property was being sold in Chattanooga for unpaid taxes. He believed that Unionists had missed an opportunity, as surely those Confederates had committed misdeeds. He even named a prominent Chattanooga selling his property and urged someone to take advantage. The new loyalty oath did not absolve Confederates from their previous crimes and Brownlow encouraged Unionists to seek their financial remuneration. Selling off abandoned property and even evictions became more common as Unionists increasingly demanded economic retribution.<sup>21</sup>

Hardships increased for secessionists, especially for those in the non-loyal professional class. Confederate dissenters were unable to run or patronize businesses without taking the loyalty oath. In March, East Tennessee's Provost Marshall proclaimed that "no persons are allowed to purchase foods who are not loyal to the United States Government." Further, he made it the merchant's responsibility to validate the customer's loyalty. General Orders No. 5 also penalized proprietors who violated the order by dismissing their permit, confiscating the goods, and rendering "such other punishment as the case may require." Merchants complained loudly, arguing that such restrictions would destroy their businesses. Brownlow, in contrast, noted that "Rebels" indeed were obtaining these goods and dictated obedience of the new order.

---

<sup>18</sup> "More Damages," *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 1 March 1865.

<sup>19</sup> Joseph Holloway vs. William Lewallen and John Lewallen, 23 February 1865, morg032, Morgan County, Tennessee State Library and Archives, teva.contentdm.oclc.org. Accessed 20 May 2020.

<sup>20</sup> *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 1 March 1865.

<sup>21</sup> "Rebel Property for Sale," and "Amnesty Swearing," *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 15 March 1865.

He called upon all loyal families to “aid in carrying it out.”<sup>22</sup> Brownlow and other government authorities ultimately wanted to root out Confederate sympathies by their roots, and used economic punishments to obtain and reward loyalty, and to solidify their political control over the region.

\*\*\*

As spring approached, Confederate women’s moral continued to plummet. The long war seemed to drag on for Ellen Renshaw House, who could not see the end in sight. The loss of friends, family and familiarity now seemed too high a price to pay. Late in February, she longed “to have mother press a kiss upon my brow and hear father once more call me his darling daughter.” The question of whether House would “ever have that happiness again” plagued her.<sup>23</sup> Tired of the continued fighting, both on the traditional battlefield and on the home front, Myra Inman believed a happy future impossible. Gloom and despair marred her diary, and early in March she wrote, “everything looks so dark.”<sup>24</sup>

Even staunch Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain could no longer believe a Confederate victory likely. Instead she only hoped for peace after four years as “horrible carnage” with “our land laid waste, our dear friends slaughtered and disabled for life, the crises of widows and orphans” emanate. While she remained at her home surrounded by most of her family, unlike the exiles, she found little joy in the current atmosphere. When she heard that her sons and other

---

<sup>22</sup>“General Orders,” and “A Late General Order,” *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 15 March 1865.

<sup>23</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 25 February 1865, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 145.

<sup>24</sup>Myra Inman, 3 March 1865, in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 303.

neighboring young women held small dances during the evenings she chastised them that “I feel now is no time to dance.” The world was uncertain; Fain feared her enemies and wondered when she would her family members would be together again.<sup>25</sup>

One symbol of collapsing Confederate morale involved relationships between Confederate women and Union soldiers, which began to blossom in garrison towns. While exiled in Georgia, Ellen Renshaw House received a letter from Knoxville detailing the marriage of twenty-year-old Elizabeth T. “Lizzie” Bearden to Federal major Louis Gratz, a Jewish German who had immigrated to New York in 1861. The news infuriated House, who could not believe a “Southern girl” from a prominent Confederate family could “marry a Yankee.” Interestingly enough, House never mentioned Gratz’s Jewish heritage; the fact that he was Federal soldier was enough to render him an unsuitable candidate. Worse, Bearden had lost both a suitor and a brother to the war and had three more brothers enlisted in the Confederate Army, yet her cousin Marcus D. Bearden served in the Union Army. House savagely disparaged the husband, calling him “a little fat Dutchman and a coward who had remained in Knoxville because he was afraid to fight.” House could only conclude that Bearden married him for financial security. While the motivations for the marriage are unknown, Bearden’s marriage to Gratz did eventually solidify the continuation of her social and economic position in Knoxville’s professional class. In 1865 Gratz did not any wealth of which to speak of, but he went on to become a successful lawyer and served four terms as mayor of North Knoxville.<sup>26</sup> Much to her

---

<sup>25</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 7 February, 21 March 1865, in Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 294, 303.

<sup>26</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 4 February 1865, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 145. Wendy Lowe Besmann, *A Separate Circle: Jewish Life in Knoxville, Tennessee* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001), 11; Jacob R. Marcus, “From Peddler to Regimental Commander in Two Years: The Civil War Career of Major Louis A. Gratz,” *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 38 (September 1948): 22-44. Gratz, born in Polish Germany, was also Jewish and a former peddler. Hardly a coward, he was a hero of the Battle of Chickamauga.

displeasure, House continued to hear of female friends and acquaintances marrying Federal soldiers. The thought of having any social interactions with soldiers sickened her, much less marriage. “I hate and despise them more every day I live,” she wrote.<sup>27</sup>

And there was still more for diehard Confederates to lament. As the Confederacy collapsed, so did the peculiar institution that had characterized the South. John Cimprich argues that slavery in East Tennessee effectively crumbled when the Federal Army entered in 1863.<sup>28</sup> In October 1864 Tennessee’s Military Governor Andrew Johnson officially proclaimed “freedom to every man in Tennessee.”<sup>29</sup> Yet slave owners in the Confederate frontier had held on. One January evening Knoxville’s Elisa Bolli and her friends stayed up late discussing the Confederacy’s bleak condition, including a rumor that President Jefferson Davis would enlist slaves in the army in exchange for their freedom. Bolli does not discuss what the women thought about the current state of slavery, or how liberating slaves would affect the institution, but only that such an action might save the Confederacy.<sup>30</sup>

Shortly after, the state abolished slavery on 22 February when Unionists voted to accept Johnson’s order in a constitutional referendum.<sup>31</sup> Exiled East Tennessee Unionist M.C. Butler noticed the institution’s decline and hoped that even without slavery the South could “be more prosperous and richer than ever before.”<sup>32</sup> There was no immunity for such Unionists. In February, the Unionist Hill family lost their domestic slave, Molly, who took her meager

---

<sup>27</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 24 September 1865, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 187.

<sup>28</sup> John Cimprich, “Slavery’s End in East Tennessee,” in John C. Inscoe, ed., *Appalachians and Race: The Mountain South from Slavery to Segregation* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 189.

<sup>29</sup> *Nashville Times and True Union*, 9 November 1864.

<sup>30</sup> Elisa Bolli-Buffat, 5 January 1865, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli-Buffat*, 174.

<sup>31</sup> John Cimprich, “Slave Behavior during the Federal Occupation of Tennessee, 1862-1865,” *The Historian* 45 (1982): 345-346.

<sup>32</sup> M.C. Butler, Poland, OH, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, 27 February 1865, Oliver P. Temple Papers.

belongings plus \$55 of the Hill family money and “ran off.” Twelve-year-old John Willard Hill was “glad” that she had taken her freedom, but also noted that the loss of labor would mean more “kitchen” work for his stepmother. One day later, an African-American man brought the money back to the Hill family and confirmed that Molly had indeed stolen the money.<sup>33</sup>

Continued violence affected women’s morale. A few miles outside of Knoxville, Unionists attacked a Confederate man in his yard demanding money. Elisa Bolli reported that the man’s young daughter tried to intervene and was shot and killed. The constant reports of women being harassed terrorized Bolli and she concluded “no one is safe, not even in their own homes.”<sup>34</sup> Equally tired of the violence, Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain decided that she preferred solitude to the company of her young sons, some of whom were enlisted in the military and homeguard, fearing their safety if they returned. Fain had heard reports that the “bushmen” had committed “atrocious deeds” and prayed for her children’s “deliverance.” Yet she also came to fear her sons. Coming home at the end of March, they reported that they had taken two Unionist men prisoner, including a man Fain deeply respected. Concerned for his safety, she tried to intervene and begged her sons not to murder him. At this point Fain not only believed depravity characterized both sides of the conflict, but that it had affected even her own boys. She could not reconcile that such an “honest” man could be put to death. For the first time, she condemned her own guerrillas.<sup>35</sup>

Still, Fain largely focused her ire on Unionists, often with obvious dissonance. Weeks before the war ended, she confronted a Unionist woman and her daughter. The woman’s

---

<sup>33</sup> John Willard Hill, 11 and 12 February 1865, Dr. John Willard Hill Collection.

<sup>34</sup> Elisa Bolli-Buffat, 16 March 1865, *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli-Buffat*, 181.

<sup>35</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 29 January, 26 March 1865, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 291, 305-306. Perhaps, she had grown tired of the violence, but she never disclosed why this individual deserved her intervention.

husband had recently been brutally murdered by Confederate guerrillas and she angrily recounted the story to Fain. Instead of sympathizing with the widow, Fain believed that the woman had sensationalized the account, and justified the Confederates' actions. She also believed such behavior unladylike and could not fathom why the woman used such "profane language." Confederate women, she insisted despite the evidence, had instead prevented irregular Confederate men from attacking Unionist women, although she claimed that the Federal government condoned and even encouraged looting and violence. Only Unionists could stop the attacks and "suppress the robbing, plundering, and murdering." Her fears proved valid enough when two days later Unionist guerrillas arrived at her home, threatening to loot and burn it. The men proceeded to destroy the house and confiscate her silver, all her meat and canned fruits, and her horse. What they did not carry off they ruined, including her diary. Fain could not even make breakfast after they left.<sup>36</sup>

\*\*\*

Weak, exhausted, and demoralized, General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia met its fateful end at the McClean home in Appomattox, Virginia on 9 April. General Ulysses S. Grant agreed to parole Lee's Confederate soldiers in exchange for an oath that they would not once again take up arms. The men could immediately return home and take their personal belongings, except for their weapons; only officers could keep their sidearms. Shortly after, Lee released his General Orders No. 9, where he infamously claimed that the North's "overwhelming numbers and resources" were responsible for the Army of Northern Virginia's defeat. The loss

---

<sup>36</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 31 March, 1, 3, and 5 April 1865, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 307, 308-310.

of Lee and his army further demoralized the Confederacy. According to Joseph Glatthaar, Confederates had believed that “as long as Lee’s army existed, the rebellion survived.” When over 26,000 men surrendered in April, it unofficially signaled the end of the Confederacy. That does not suggest that Confederate defeat was purely external, however. As Glatthaar adds, “Southern culture, industry, agriculture, slavery, motivations, manpower shortages, [and] discontent at home” had collectively demoralized the nation and brought down the Confederacy.<sup>37</sup> Kenneth Noe similarly argues that “lacking sufficient manpower both in terms of quality and quantity, the thin gray line of later enlistees proved insufficient, and the Confederacy yielded at last.”<sup>38</sup>

Unionists rejoiced with Lee’s surrender, believing that peace “was not far off.” The garrison at Knoxville discharged cannons to celebrate the news. Unionists showed their support by taking to the streets and placing candles in their homes’ windows. Knoxville’s streets were ablaze, a visible symbol of the “wildest excitement and enthusiasm.” Surprised, Brownlow noted that even several Confederate homes glowed in response to the surrender. He hoped that “their blazing candles prove... the relighting of true patriotism in their breasts.”<sup>39</sup> A Union soldier stationed in Knoxville meanwhile commented how the soldiers celebrated by firing every cannon throughout the region.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Joseph T. Glatthaar, *General Lee’s Army: From Victory to Collapse* (New York: Free Press, 2008), 607-618 [quotations, 610, 615].

<sup>38</sup> Kenneth W. Noe, *Reluctant Rebels: The Confederates Who Joined the Army After 1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2010), 226-227 [quotation 227].

<sup>39</sup> *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 12 April 1865. Did Confederate families light their candles in solidarity, or were these just public professions of loyalty that allowed them to reintegrate within society without being representative of their political ideas? In reality, the burning candles probably reflected both of these sentiments.

<sup>40</sup> Henry Cherry, Knoxville, to Amos Gould, Owosso, MI, 11 April 1865, Henry Cherry Letters, 1865, American Civil War Collection, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

In the waning days of the Confederacy, some secessionist women did seem to accept that the Confederacy had lost the war. The day after Appomattox, Confederate Margaret Stakely of Madisonville jubilantly wrote to her aunt, Martha Hall, that Lee surrendered. Once proud of her Confederate affiliations, she celebrated that the war ended and commented on how the town's people happily fired guns "in honor of the glorious news."<sup>41</sup> Fannie Fain, another former Confederate, also found joy in the end of the war despite the loss of the Confederacy. She wrote that the news of surrender "produced utter confusion and despair upon the Rebels," yet, she happily saw the war end knowing "the boys will soon all be at home." With downfall of the Confederacy she believed that her exiled husband would return. She stated, "I am thankful to my Heavenly Father [that] this war has wound up."<sup>42</sup> Even prominent Knoxville doctor and high ranking Confederate official J. G. M. Ramsey welcomed the conclusion of the war "with real pleasure and genuine satisfaction."<sup>43</sup>

But others suffered. When Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain heard the news, however, she refused to believe it. "If General Lee is the man I think he is," she wrote, "he will share the fate of the brave and noble who have stood shoulder to shoulder in defence of the right." Days later an article from a Chattanooga newspaper confirmed the surrender, yet Fain continued to deny the facts.<sup>44</sup> Ellen Renshaw House too had difficulty accepting the news. For over a week, House heard conflicting reports regarding the event. In her mind, capitulation was an impossibility. When a friend tried to reason with her, and argued that the Confederates were "whipped," House argued "we are not whipped, and never will be if the people of the South are true to

---

<sup>41</sup> Margaret Stakely, Madisonville, to Martha Hall, Knoxville, 10 April 1865, Hall-Stakely Papers.

<sup>42</sup> Fannie Fain, 23 May 1865, Accession 133, Diary of Fannie A. Fain, Archives of Appalachia, Johnson City.

<sup>43</sup> William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 247.

<sup>44</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 10 and 13 April 1865, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 314 and 316. Quote on 314.

themselves.”<sup>45</sup> The next day House finally accepted that Lee had indeed surrendered, but only because his soldiers were starving and could not continue to fight. House turned to religion, both to explain Lee’s surrender and the Confederate Army’s dire circumstances. God still would deliver victory to the Confederacy through other means than Lee, she asserted. Yet discouraging news continued to plague House, and within a week she had learned that the Confederate states would return to the Union and that General Joseph E. Johnston had surrendered his army in North Carolina. The war and the Confederacy truly were lost now. House concluded that “the people of the South are slaves – to the vilest race that ever disgraced humanity,” that race being the North. The North had humiliated the South, and House could not reconcile the “sacrifices” and “bloodshed” with the loss of the nation.<sup>46</sup>

Soon the news of Lincoln’s assassination reached the mountains. On 14 April, Good Friday, Lincoln and his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, attended *Our American Cousin* at Ford’s Theater. Numerous individuals tried to dissuade Lincoln from attending the performance, believing it dangerous after Lee’s surrender. The Lincolns appeared to be enjoying the play when actor John Wilkes Booth entered the presidential box and shot Lincoln in the head. He never regained consciousness and died the next morning at 7:00 A.M.<sup>47</sup> The Federal Army in East Tennessee observed the mournful day, firing cannons every half hour in Chattanooga. Confederates expressed more missed feelings. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain believed the act to be the “hand of God.” What did worry Fain was the uncertainty of what would come next and how the South would be treated.<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 22 April 1865, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 161.

<sup>46</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 23 April 1865, 2 May 1865, and 25 May 1865, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 165. Quote on 163.

<sup>47</sup>David Herbert Donald, *Lincoln* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995), 594-599.

<sup>48</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 18 April 1865, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 319.

More dispassionate about Lincoln's assassination, Myra Inman simply recorded the event, not bothering to even discuss her feelings. It took her almost a month to process the news that Lee had surrendered, that President Lincoln had been assassinated, and that the South was reabsorbed back into the Union. Inman felt "subjugated," and could only hope that God would provide for his people and that their sacrifices would not be in vain. She simply could not believe that God had "forsaken" them until the beaten soldiers returned home. Inman then realized that the Confederacy had simply been "air castles." She claimed, "a wild infatuation possessed the minds of the people of the Southland and rendered their reasoning facilities dormant." To her the Confederacy served as an example of "what might have been."<sup>49</sup> When Andrew Johnson assumed the presidency East Tennessee Confederates feared the future. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain detested the seventeenth president for he had "succeeded to [the presidency] by being a traitor to his own native section."<sup>50</sup>

Unionists, in great contrast, rejoiced. Adaline Davis celebrated the end of the war and could not wait for her husband to return from the army. She compared the war to a deluge of "storms and winters" and found that "now it is a beautiful calm." The feelings of injustice continued amid the Unionist populace once the war ended. Davis warned that "Rebels" continued to trickle back and reclaim their property and did not relish living amid the enemies.<sup>51</sup> As extralegal warfare started to diminish, Unionists continued to use the courts to gain back some of what was taken from them. Soon after the war, for example, a Monroe County Unionist tried to claim the abandoned property of the enrolling officer who had pressed him into

---

<sup>49</sup>Myra Inman, 16 April, 27 April 1865 and 8 May 1865, in in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 307, 308-310 [quotations, 307, 309-310].

<sup>50</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 28 April 1865, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 325.

<sup>51</sup> Adaline Davis, Cleveland, to Joseph N.B. Lusk, 4 June 1865, chat096, Tennessee Virtual Archive, [teva.contenttdm.org](http://teva.contenttdm.org). Accessed 20 May 2020.

Confederate service. He claimed the officer threatened to hang him and kept him in service for three months until he escaped and joined the Union Army. This man further had abused him, and so he sought his property in repayment.<sup>52</sup>

Others acted more directly. At the onslaught of the war Sevierville's Unionist Moon family had loaned \$300 in state money to two Confederate men; the men repaid the loan in Confederate money which the family refused. Angered the men intimidated the Moon family patriarch and forced him into exile, where he eventually joined the Federal Army. In the summer of 1865 his widowed wife, Evaline Moon, sought to secure the loan payment from the Confederate men and asked her uncle to make inquiries regarding that possibility. The men not only had repaid the loan in money now worthless, but also prematurely took her husband.<sup>53</sup>

As Unionists rejoiced the end of what they perceived a tyrannical government, many Confederates looked at them with disdain. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain believed that Unionists had pulled African Americans out of slavery, a race in which "all nations feel to be an inferior race of beings." She reveled in the notion that Unionists and African Americans now shared the same place in society and vowed never to trust or socialize with a populace who had brought such tragedy on her and the South.<sup>54</sup>

Confederates also were worried. As Union soldiers returned home to their friends and loved ones, some ex-Confederate soldiers feared the dangers and reprisals of a largely Unionist East Tennessee. Kate Dahlstrand argues that a "concern for personal safety" prohibited

---

<sup>52</sup> James M. Hickman, Monroe County, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, 24 April 1865, MS-0021, Oliver P. Temple Papers, University of Tennessee Special Collections and University Archives, Knoxville.

<sup>53</sup> William M. Barnett, Sevierville, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, 10 June 1865, Oliver P. Temple Papers.

<sup>54</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 25 and 27 April 1865, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 323.

Confederate veterans from returning.<sup>55</sup> Their families worried that the reasons might be more personal. Sallie McDowell Moffett awaited the return of her husband, John, a prisoner of war at Illinois' Camp Douglas. While awaiting exchange John T. Moffett was sent briefly to Fort McHenry and later to Point Lookout, Maryland. Once released, he decided to stay in Maryland rather than return to his wife and young child in New Market. Despondent that John had survived the war only to abandon family, she begged him to return. The distance created a "feeling of loneliness and desolation" and she alluded to "circumstances" in which she desperately needed a "husband's care."<sup>56</sup>

John T. Moffett worked and sent his wife money from Maryland. Still unhappy with their living arrangement Sallie wrote that she preferred poverty to separation. In September 1865, she sent him an ultimatum that he must return by winter if at all. "Yankee bayonets and prison...kept me away last winter," she wrote, "but they do not force me here now." Ultimately, John did not heed Sallie's warnings and come home. Left alone to care for their child and navigate a hostile environment, the war was not quite over for Sallie McDowell Moffett.<sup>57</sup>

Most Confederate veterans did return, but often had to take jobs that they previously would have considered unacceptable. Readjusting to such a new life was often difficult for men, and the women in their lives. Ellen Renshaw House's Confederate soldier-brother had to take a position as a private secretary for a Union quartermaster. House believed it was "a bitter pill for

---

<sup>55</sup>Kate Dahlstrand, "Outsiders of Battlefield Experience: The Journey Home for the Civil War Soldier" (paper presented at the third conference on Veterans in Society, Roanoke, VA, 12-14 November 2015), [https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/bitstream/handle/10919/72925/Dahlstrand\\_Outsiders\\_of\\_Battlefield\\_Experience.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/bitstream/handle/10919/72925/Dahlstrand_Outsiders_of_Battlefield_Experience.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y) Accessed 20 May 2020.

<sup>56</sup>John T. Moffett to Sallie McDowell Moffett, 20 June 1865, and Sallie McDowell Moffett, Greenville, to John T. McDowell, 29 August 1865, Sallie McDowell Papers.

<sup>57</sup> Sallie McDowell Moffett, Greenville, to John T. Moffett, 8 September 1865, Sallie McDowell Papers.

him to swallow” and thought his family should support this difficult decision.<sup>58</sup> At least he had a job. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain’s sons returned home after the war but soon left again because their status as ex-Confederates prevented their ability to secure sustainable employment.<sup>59</sup>

As Confederate soldiers returned, so too did the many exiled Unionists families who hoped to reclaim their homes. Lawlessness and the retributive environment of Carter County had forced Dr. Abraham Jobe to leave his home and practice in 1864. Almost immediately after the war ended he came home.<sup>60</sup> In just a few days in the late summer, nine additional Unionists sought transportation into the region via the railroad and riverboats from Federal authorities.<sup>61</sup> In September, Unionist Gains Brooks entered Chattanooga and requested permission from the town’s Federal occupation force to utilize the railroad and travel home to Jefferson County. Confederate soldiers had captured Brooks in 1862 and shortly imprisoned him before he traveled west. His wife and two daughters met him there. After the Union victory Gains felt it safe for his family to return home.<sup>62</sup>

As men filtered back into the region, women on both sides took notice of those who were no longer with them. The loss of Confederate life was a double-edged sword for women; along with the inherent grief many believed Confederate soldiers had died in vain. Their sadness compounded when some women found themselves unwelcome in their homes. Shortly after the war ended, Ellen Renshaw House and her sister returned to Knoxville. The joy she experienced

---

<sup>58</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 7 August 1865, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 178.

<sup>59</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 6 September 1865, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 350.

<sup>60</sup> David C. Hsiung, ed., *A Mountaineer in Motion: The Memoir of Dr. Abraham Jobe, 1817-1906* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2009), 84.

<sup>61</sup> “Semi-weekly Report on Transportation Orders,” 26 August 1865, THS 729, United States Assistant Quartermaster Records, 1861-1870, Tennessee Virtual Archive, [tev.contentdm.oclc.org](http://tev.contentdm.oclc.org). Accessed 25 May 2020.

<sup>62</sup> “Individual Transportation Order for G. Brooks, Wife, and 2 Daughters,” 27 September 1865, United States Assistant Quartermaster Records, TH 729, Tennessee Virtual Archive, <https://teva.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15138coll9/id/416/rec/4>, Accessed 20 May 2020.

when reunited with her family quickly diminished as she realized that many of her earlier friends had not returned from the battlefield.<sup>63</sup>

Not all Confederate women accepted defeat, and while they did not resort to violence, they made their dissatisfaction known in gender acceptable ways. In May, Rogersville women still avoided walking under the Stars and Stripes when they came to town. If the flag hung from a residence or business, they crossed the street. Union soldiers and Unionists harangued them for their choice, often publicly demanding they respect and walk under the flag.<sup>64</sup> In July, Federal soldiers in Cleveland came to Myra Inman's cousin's residence and harassed the family. Angered over their intrusion, the cousin purposely burned a soldier by dropping a hot lid on his hand. By burning him, she could feign ignorance, but also seek revenge.<sup>65</sup> After the Confederate war women continued to make political statements, either overtly or subtly.

Unionists stood on the winning side, but they were no less anguished. Carter County's Dr. Abraham Jobe believed that the war had left no one unscathed and stated, "we found everything changed by the ravages of a four-year-war." He believed that his side actually had felt the war's consequences more keenly because their homes and farms had been "robbed repeatedly," yet, he acknowledged that "the country was overrun and devastated by both armies, and the citizens of every political opinion had to pay tribute to Caesar, willing or unwilling."<sup>66</sup>

\*\*\*

---

<sup>63</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 21 June 1865, Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 172-173.

<sup>64</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 11 May 1865, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 333.

<sup>65</sup> Myra Inman, 1 July 1865, in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 315-316.

<sup>66</sup> David C. Hsiung, ed., *A Mountaineer in Motion*, 84.

The war had effectively destroyed slavery even before the Thirteenth Amendment. As slaves left the homes to which they had been tethered, many made their way to the region's towns seeking employment. Knoxville's and Chattanooga's African American population grew.<sup>67</sup> Some white women mourned the loss of the institution. In the spring Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain noted how slaves continued to leave their masters. Their desire for autonomy surprised Fain, who had viewed slavery as a benevolent, paternalistic institution that protected almost childlike people from the harsh economic realities of the world. Evidence taught a different lesson. For weeks prior to the war's end, Fain had noticed that the behavior of an enslaved woman she had rented had changed; she was uninterested in her work. Days after Lee surrendered, Fain came down to her kitchen one morning to find the woman gone with all of her belongings. Fain could not fathom why the woman would leave a home where her material needs were met for a world of such great uncertainty. She refused to acknowledge or accept that the institution was bondage and only beneficial to the masters.<sup>68</sup> Almost a month later, Myra Inman wondered if the preservation and perpetuation of slavery had been worth the "sacrifice" of the "noblest blood of the South."<sup>69</sup> Not for the Inmans, who were only small slaveholders. Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey worried that emancipation would destroy white social and political hierarchy, and that the free and formerly enslaved would hold power over him and other disenfranchised Confederates. As additional evidence, Ramsey complained that his "faithful carriage driver" now "... had a controlling voice in the politics of Tennessee and the Union."<sup>70</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup> John Cimprich, "Slavery's End in Tennessee," in John C. Inscoc, *Appalachians and Race*, 190-191.

<sup>68</sup> Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 11 April 1865, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 314-316.

<sup>69</sup> Myra Inman, 8 May 1865, in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 309.

<sup>70</sup> William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 247.

Like the carriage driver, the South's newly freed African Americans actively sought autonomy in all realms of their lives during Reconstruction. As many historians note, race and gender limited their gains. Laura F. Edwards argues that while freed women demanded the same privileges as other white women, the South's endemic racism and patriarchy forced them to remain subordinate.<sup>71</sup> Tera W. Hunter's case study of Atlanta's black female service workers demonstrates that while freedwomen were subjugated and forced into perpetual poverty, they still came to define how and when they would work. They asserted their independence by refusing to work, acquiring subsistence items, participating in African American social institutions, and educating their children.<sup>72</sup> Resistance also characterized their transition to free labor. Leslie A. Schwalm finds that freedwomen took the lead in redefining South Carolina's labor system and shaped how the black family would function post-slavery.<sup>73</sup> Similarly, John C. Rodrigue argues that Louisiana's labor-intensive sugar cane industry provided freedpeople with the leverage in which to create a more palatable free-labor system.<sup>74</sup>

One can find all of these manifestations of freedom in East Tennessee. One of the most common ways in which freedmen and freedwomen gained autonomy was by leaving former masters' homes. Unionist Dr. Abraham Jobe returned to his home shortly after Lincoln's assassination to find discontent. A man he enslaved, Isaac, soon left to work in a bakery; another, Tilda, decided to continue working for the Jobe family. Isaac's departure did not surprise Jobe, as freedmen and freedwomen throughout the region had left the confines of their bondage.<sup>75</sup> The

---

<sup>71</sup> Laura F. Edwards, *Gendered Strife and Confusion*, 1-20.

<sup>72</sup> Tera W. Hunter, *To Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors After the Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 24-42.

<sup>73</sup> Leslie A. Schwalm, *Women's Transition from Slavery to Freedom in South Carolina* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 1-15.

<sup>74</sup> John C. Rodrigue, *Reconstruction in the Cane Fields: From Slavery to Free Labor in Louisiana's Sugar Parishes, 1862-1880* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 1-8.

<sup>75</sup> David C. Hsiung, ed., *A Mountaineer in Motion*, 84-85.

war meanwhile had deprived the Inman family of their slaves, and their workload substantially increased. The women now had to divide up domestic tasks such as cooking, cleaning, laundry, and home maintenance that the enslaved had performed earlier. Astonished, Myra Inman noted that she could not recall when they had no servants to work.<sup>76</sup>

While many whites lamented emancipation, others found some solace in employing freed people as free labor while no longer caring for others. Elizabeth Caswell and her daughter, Eliza Branner, for example, hired servants, and Caswell believed free labor to be more economically advantageous. She wrote in a letter to her son, “I believe there is more to be made on a farm to hire the necessary number of hands... than to support the old and young negroes as we have had to do heretofore for the sake of a few work hands.” She nonetheless complained about free African American’s work ethic as inferior and found “we have two women hired but they do very little work, but we can’t do without some assistance.” Caswell began hoping to hire “some foreign servants, German or Irish girls.”<sup>77</sup>

While African Americans began exerting their authority, instances of mistreatment surfaced. A private in the 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Colored Artillery wrote to his former master, asking if his pregnant wife could continue to reside on the property. The soldier even offered compensation in return, but also warned against the mistreatment of ex-slaves, noting that a Freedmen Bureau’s court would remedy any exploitation. He understood that ex-masters abused and took advantage

---

<sup>76</sup>Myra Inman, 18 August 1865, in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 321.

<sup>77</sup>Elizabeth Caswell, Knoxville, to William Caswell, Princeton, New Jersey, 19 June 1865, Elizabeth Caswell, Knoxville, to William Caswell, Princeton, New Jersey, 25 June 1865, William Richard Caswell Papers.

of their former chattel, including refusing payment for services rendered, and wanted to ensure the safety of his wife.<sup>78</sup>

Civilians mistreated African American soldiers stationed in garrison towns, through both verbal and physical threats. Many East Tennesseans believed that arming African Americans had upset the social and racial hierarchy that characterized the South. The region's women disparaged African American soldiers in their writings and detailed the abuse they received from locals. Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain could not fathom that ex-Confederate soldiers, like her sons and husband, would have to endure a standing army comprised of black men.<sup>79</sup> When one African American soldier killed a drunken ex-Confederate soldier from the 8<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry Regiment, Ellen Renshaw House heard rumors that "the 8<sup>th</sup> of Tenn vow they will kill every negro soldier in the street tonight."<sup>80</sup>

Women did more than just watch racial violence unfold in East Tennessee. In May, Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain's neighbor, a Mrs. Neil, recounted a confrontation with a woman she enslaved named Ellen. Fain complained about Ellen's impertinent language. When Neil tried to exert her authority, Ellen "knocked her fists together...telling [Neil] she would do as she pleased." The argument ended when Ellen shoved Neil to the ground and fled to her orphaned niece in Knoxville. Whether or not the incident occurred as Fain depicted, she clearly worried that all the former slaves would demand autonomy and respect. Freedpeople challenged the authority of their previous masters. Like Dr. Ramsey, Fain feared that a new southern social and racial order had begun. Months later two more of Fain's former slaves left, preferring to find

---

<sup>78</sup> William R. Story, to John J. King, Greenville, 16 August 1865, MS.1136, William R. Story Letter, 1865, University of Tennessee at Knoxville Special Collections, Knoxville.

<sup>79</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 10 May 1865, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 334.

<sup>80</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 27 August 1865, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 183.

employment than continuing to work for the family that had enslaved them. Fain noted with surprise that “they seem to feel little affection now for any of us.” That puzzled Fain, who had convinced herself that they shared a strong emotional connection with her, having grown up in her household. Emancipation was proving otherwise.<sup>81</sup>

\*\*\*

Predominately hailing from the lower-class, Unionist women suffered great losses during the war to confiscations, theft, and acts of retribution. Some now had trouble even meeting their family’s basic needs. The East Tennessee Relief Association (ETRA), created and funded by Northerners in 1864, donated over \$250,000 worth of food and other necessities, mostly to Unionist families that had been victimized by Confederates and were unable to maintain a household.<sup>82</sup> Items such as bacon and flour were transferred to the region via government trains into Chattanooga and then distributed from there. The organization also donated money to Confederates who took the loyalty oath. Some funds went to war-widowed Confederate women and old men who required assistance but had not taken to oath, but the ETRA did not give any funds to the region’s black population. ETRA representatives, mostly women, gave clothing and food to families or sold them at reduced price.<sup>83</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup>Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain, 8 and 14 May and 6 August 1865, in John N. Fain, ed., *Sanctified Trial*, 330-331, 335-336, and 348-349 [quotation 331 and 348-349].

<sup>82</sup>“East Tennessee Relief Association,” *Union Flag*, Jonesborough, 3 November 1865.

<sup>83</sup>William A. Strasser, “A Terrible Calamity Has Befallen Us,” 58-62.

The war's economic toll on Confederate women was staggering. Ellen Renshaw House complained that "so many who were wealthy before the war are now reduced to poverty, and all for nothing, for worse than nothing, to be made the slaves of Northern despotism."<sup>84</sup> Financial circumstances both upset her and once again demonstrated the cost of her political allegiances. The House family had already lost their home and she desperately desired another, stating "the dearest wish of my heart at present is to get a house." House complained how little money she had to spend at the market.<sup>85</sup> Her father could not find employment, however, which forced her brother, a clerk, to support their large family. Her brother, however, was one of the few remaining Confederate men who stayed in Knoxville after the war. Many others had fled the town worried over their safety amidst near constant fights between Unionists and Confederates. She felt for him, as, "it must be a trial and a sore one at that to stay here, almost the only southern boy in the place, all his friends gone, nothing to interest, nothing to amuse him."<sup>86</sup>

After the death of her husband, Elizabeth Caswell of Danridge moved in with her daughter, Eliza Branner, and her small grandchildren in Knoxville. The family had lost their entire savings, which had taken twenty years to accrue, yet she wanted to send her son to Princeton. Branner thus needed extra income "to keep out debt" and decided to open her home to boarders. The two women and children all resided in the nursery while they housed eight regular boarders and often two or more temporary renters. In June, Caswell wrote to her son, "I have been so busy lately...I have a great deal to do, indeed I work harder than I ever did in my

---

<sup>84</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 1 November 1865, in Daniel Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 190.

<sup>85</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 5 August 1865, in *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>86</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 24 September 1865, in *Ibid.*, 188.

life before.” She detailed how drastically her life had changed, including the length of her workday, which spanned from 4:30 A.M. until she went to sleep around 8:30 P.M.<sup>87</sup>

The war left Knoxville’s once-wealthy Ramsey family destitute. Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey was stuck in Charlotte, North Carolina and watched his fortune evaporate. All of his property had been confiscated or destroyed, his wife had fled, and their sons and daughters were without funds or prospects of gaining such after the war. Ramsey, in his late sixties, claimed that he only had forty-two dollars in which “to start in the world again.”<sup>88</sup>

Then there was the continuing violence. Former Confederates faced retribution as well as poverty. While attending a wedding in July, Ellen Renshaw House complained that two Union soldiers rudely interrupted the festivities inquiring why so many were congregated in one place.<sup>89</sup> Confrontations continued through the summer of 1865, and some became violent. New Market’s county court day exploded in September when Union veterans attacked a young Confederate who came into town to get his family’s photograph taken. The soldiers dragged the man from the studio and, as Sallie McDowell recounted, “gave him a sound thrashing.” Fearing for his life the man left and sent for his family, most likely feeling that their safety too was in jeopardy. This event impacted Moffett and she wrote to her husband that “I would not have you come here for a kingdom.”<sup>90</sup> The constant targeting of Confederates incensed Ellen Renshaw House, who believed “we certainly live in horrible times...scarcely a day passes [when] someone is not killed.”<sup>91</sup> That same month Myra Inman recounted how many of Cleveland’s

---

<sup>87</sup> Elizabeth Caswell, Knoxville, to William Caswell, Princeton, New Jersey, 19 June 1865 and 26 June 1865, Accession M-149, William Richard Caswell Papers.

<sup>88</sup> William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey*, 232.

<sup>89</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 25 July 1865, in Daniel Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 175.

<sup>90</sup> Sallie McDowell Moffett, John T. Moffett, 8 September 1865, Sallie McDowell Moffett Papers.

<sup>91</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 8 September 1865, in Daniel Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 186.

Confederates had tired of the violence and decided to move deeper south to Texas and Alabama.<sup>92</sup>

The postwar government formalized retribution. Governor William G. Brownlow sought to exclude ex-Confederates from the government. He issued a proclamation in late summer 1864 that asked local governments to make sure that all citizens who voted in elections, or who held positions with the local government or the judicial system, had taken the oath of allegiance. A simple proclamation of allegiance did not prove enough to satisfy Brownlow, who wanted to prohibit all Confederates who participated in the rebellion from government and voting. He sought to reassure the “loyal citizens” of the state “no clamor of disenfranchised rebels, however loud and no combination of apostate Union men, however respectable or talented, will prevent the execution of said law.”<sup>93</sup>

In addition to political consequences Unionists continued to identify and target those that had engaged or assisted in guerrilla warfare. Bristol’s *Union Flag* called for the publication of “rebel sympathizers” names. Such men had sworn an oath to the Union, but according to the editor still protected individuals that had or were still committing atrocities on Unionists. Such actions were duplicitous and needed correction.<sup>94</sup> Union authorities imprisoned other Confederate guerrillas and sympathizers, leaving women to face the physical and emotional consequences. After leaving East Tennessee, Margaret Barton Crozier Ramsey received news that Union soldiers had arrested her beloved Confederate nephew, Crozier, and many other young men she knew. She wrote that the men “were treated very badly,” some “put in irons and

---

<sup>92</sup> Myra Inman, 11 September and 28 November 1865, in William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 326 and 330.

<sup>93</sup> Governor William G. Brownlow, “Proclamation of the Governor,” 11 August 1865, Nashville, Governor William G. Brownlow Papers, 1865-1869, Tennessee State Library Archives, Nashville.

<sup>94</sup> “Guerrillas --- Guerrilla Harborers and Rebel Sympathizers,” *Union Flag*, Bristol, 25 August 1865.

marched through the streets.” Forced to share quarters with “Yankee deserters and horse thieves” as well, Ramsey feared for their safety. Never did she acknowledge how Unionists had been similarly abused during Confederate rule.<sup>95</sup>

Eventually, men died. In Knoxville, a Unionist mob killed twenty-two-year-old Confederate veteran, Abner Baker. Baker’s father, Dr. Henry Baker, had been one of the first Confederate civilians killed by Union soldiers in the summer of 1863. Abner Baker returned to Knoxville in September 1865 and got into an altercation with a Union veteran, Adjutant William Hall of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tennessee Cavalry, who also served as a county clerk. Brownlow’s *Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator* reported an “old grudge” caused the fight. In 1863 a fight had occurred between Hall and another “rebel” in which Baker had intervened and drew a pistol. Allegedly still angry over the prior incident, Hall once again believed Baker to have drawn a pistol and responded by caning Baker. A “scuffle” ensued and “while Hall was endeavoring to get away, Baker shot him in the back of the head.” Baker’s twin sister, Margaret, wrote to her aunt “if you could only have seen him as I did it would cause you to feel so badly... he did not recognize any one of us, could not speak to us.” After the incident, authorities arrested Baker. Almost immediately Unionists protested what they perceived to be the murder of an unarmed Union veteran and began to discuss lynching him. Will Hall’s father spoke to the crowds, discouraging them and asking them to allow the due process of law, but to no avail. At eight o’clock the East Knoxville fire bell rang to signal that the Unionist mob had taken Baker from

---

<sup>95</sup> Margaret B. Crozier Ramsey, u.d., *Diary of Margaret B. Crozier Ramsey*, Special Collections University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

the jail and hanged him from a nearby tree.<sup>96</sup> Margaret Hall lamented, “I feel I never will enjoy life again.”<sup>97</sup>

Friends of Baker mourned the loss of the young life as well. Ellen Renshaw House believed that he had acted in self-defense, and that both the authorities and mob had treated him unjustly, including the cruel handling of his body after the lynching. She alleged that they had brought Baker home through town without “even a sheet” to cover him. Union soldiers showed up at his funeral as well, which enraged House when they praised the loss of another Rebel at Unionists’ hands.<sup>98</sup> Knoxville Unionist Laura Maynard likewise dismissed Baker as a murderer and praised the Unionists as saviors who gained justice for Will Hall. She added that the vigilante justice was effective enough to frighten the Confederates, and several young Confederates fled quickly after.<sup>99</sup> The prevalence of references to the deaths of Hall and Baker in numerous women’s writings demonstrates their cognizance of the increased violence, its degenerative effect of society, and their continuing divisions.

Ellen Renshaw House wrote of another incident on the streets of Knoxville in which a Unionist confronted and attacked an ex-Confederate soldier on Gay Street. What caused the altercation is unknown, but each sustained substantial wounds. Military authorities sent the ex-Confederate to Chattanooga to ensure his safety. The following day, House recorded yet another attack on a former Confederate in a local store. While shopping, a Unionist approached the man and shot him four times. The continued violence frightened House, who believed that society

---

<sup>96</sup> “Shooting of Young Hall and Hanging of Young Baker,” *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 6 September 1865.

<sup>97</sup> Mattie (Margaret) Hall, Knoxville, to Martha Hall, Knoxville, 20 September 1865, Hall-Stakely Papers.

<sup>98</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 5 September 1865, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 184-185.

<sup>99</sup> Laura and Horace Maynard, Knoxville, to Washburn Maynard, 26 September 1865, American Civil War Collection, University of Tennessee Special Collections, Knoxville.

had descended into a “dreadful state of things” and that “no man’s life is safe.”<sup>100</sup> Margaret Barton Crozier meanwhile found that “we were robbed of everything – houses burned, ladies insulted.”<sup>101</sup>

Confederates were not the only victims of vigilante justice during the late summer. In two separate instances, former Confederate guerrillas attacked the homes of recently returned Union soldiers in Washington County. In one instance, the ex-rebels set a home ablaze while the family was sleeping. Luckily, the family escaped, including the two men who had recently “mustered out of the Tennessee cavalry.” Another family had their home burned and were unable to save any of their valuables.<sup>102</sup> On 1 September 1865 Brownlow received notice that Confederate sympathizers had beaten Sullivan County’s Justice of the Peace, J.H. Barker. Brownlow asked, “cannot a force be sent to protect these Union men...such outrages are very detrimental to the good character of Tennessee.”<sup>103</sup> The *Jonesboro Union Flag* echoed these sentiments calling for both civil and military officials to root out the criminals and prosecute them “to the full extent of the law;” otherwise, the restoration of law and order remained fruitless.<sup>104</sup>

Brownlow had already recognized that the region was descending into lawlessness, and he tried to an extent to quell the chaos while distancing himself from some violent Unionist bands. In August, he wrote President Andrew Johnson that “when lawless acts of violence occur, it is the sworn duty of Grand Jury to indict the parties; and it is alike the sworn duty of the

---

<sup>100</sup> Ellen Renshaw House, 14, 15, and 16 August 1865, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 180-181. Quote 181.

<sup>101</sup> Margaret Barton Crozier Ramsey, undated, Margaret Barton Crozier Ramsey Diary.

<sup>102</sup> “Guerrilla Outrages,” *Jonesboro Union Flag*, Jonesboro, 4 August 1865.

<sup>103</sup> “Rebels Rampant Still,” *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 6 September 1865.

<sup>104</sup> “Guerrilla Outrages,” *Jonesboro Union Flag*, Jonesboro, 4 August 1865.

Judges and Attorney General to have them tried and punished for their acts of violence, without any regard to parties.”<sup>105</sup> Brownlow also sought to restore the land that Confederates had confiscated from the Unionists in both East Tennessee and West Tennessee. He requested some type of restitution for the injured parties and acknowledged that the “thieves” who stole the property had long fled the region.<sup>106</sup>

The next month, he published an article entitled “Fair Warning,” which sought to prevent thieves from robbing Confederate families under the guise of perceived injustices during the war. Brownlow stated, “those few reckless men in different counties, claiming to be Union men, and banding together to whip inoffensive persons and rob private families for gain” will be “punished to the extent of the law.” Brownlow added, “they are professional thieves, actuated by no promptings of patriotism or sense of wrongs done to them.”<sup>107</sup> Unionist Laura Maynard just wanted “quiet, happy times, again.”<sup>108</sup>

Brownlow, however, still largely applauded what he believed just vengeance. He gave examples such as how “old men were tied up in their own yards...and whipped upon their bare backs until they fainted, and in many instances thereafter pierced through with Bullets!” He continued, “young men were hunted down like wild beasts... old women and young girls were tied up at home... forc[ed]... to tell the conscript officer where their sons and brothers were!” In addition, “Union mothers and children were driven out of their houses, and they and their

---

<sup>105</sup> “The Mob Spirit – Stop It,” *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 13 September 1865.

<sup>106</sup> William G. Brownlow, Nashville, to President Andrew Johnson, Washington DC, 7 August 1865, Nashville, Governor William G. Brownlow Papers.

<sup>107</sup> “Fair Warning,” *Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 6 September 1865.

<sup>108</sup> Laura and Horace Maynard, Knoxville, to Washburn Maynard, 26 September 1865, American Civil War Collection.

contents burned to the ground, because their husbands and sons had crossed Cumberland Mountains into Kentucky.”<sup>109</sup>

Such sentiments hardly encouraged peace. Elizabeth Caswell wrote to her son in Princeton, New Jersey, confirming the frequency of Unionist retaliation. The violence frightened her, and she concluded that a “great many southern men had been severely used by the soldiers.... Bob West [had] his skull broken... Epps was beaten almost to death...[and] a man by the name of Beard was severely beaten.” She believed that many Confederates were unjustly targeted, and concluded that if she were a Confederate man, “I would not had come back here on any account at least for some years....a great many of the Knoxville boys have come back but they all feel it is absolutely necessary for them to be quiet.” Caswell thanked God that her son was at Princeton and she did not have to worry about him.<sup>110</sup>

Other Unionists refused to forget the injustices of the past. In October, a Jonesborough Unionist could not understand how some Unionist men socialized and even protected noted ex-Confederates. Unionists should not easily forget the past, or the identity of the true “traitors.”<sup>111</sup> A week later, another Jonesborough resident defended the extralegal activity of Unionists who were “stigmatized as lawless scoundrels.” The author reminded individuals that the Confederate criminality of the first two years was the impetus of the current behavior, and the men deserved the right to exact revenge for the wrongs done to them. “Let it be remembered,” the author continued, “that no people in the country were so terribly outraged and exasperated by the rebels as were the East Tennessee Unionists...every insult and wrong conceivable was heaped upon

---

<sup>109</sup>*Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, 13 September 1865.

<sup>110</sup> Elizabeth Caswell, Knoxville, to William Caswell, Princeton, New Jersey, 19 June 1865, William Richard Caswell Papers.

<sup>111</sup> “Rebel Sympathizers,” *Union Flag*, Jonesborough, 6 October 1865.

them.”<sup>112</sup> Another Unionist complained that former Rebels claimed loyalty to gain political clout and target Unionists. A Kingsport constable, “a pretended Union man,” had arrested a former Union soldier at the bequest of other Confederates. Outraged he believed that these men had committed crimes throughout the war, including targeting Unionist women.<sup>113</sup>

\*\*\*

Many women too had difficulty reconciling the world they lived in with the experiences that had created it. Ellen Renshaw House resented the Union and the soldiers stationed on the streets of Knoxville. Escalating violence both frightened and saddened her, and she described the situation as “a sad thing...the Devil seems to be walking at large in East Tenn.”<sup>114</sup> The year 1865 closed with the murder of her younger brother. Grief consumed House. While she remained angry that Unionists and Federal soldiers controlled her home, those worries were secondary to the loss of her brother. Reflecting upon the year she lamented, “I used to think this world so bright and beautiful and that everyone was as happy as they seemed...now I know differently.” House’s entire world had fallen apart over the last four years and the death of her younger brother heightened that grief. House wondered whether she should even continue her diary, as she had kept it to update her brother. Without him she had “no reason.”<sup>115</sup>

In December, Myra Inman looked back on the last four years of warfare and struggle and barely recognized her life. Once preoccupied with dances and the trivial pursuits of Cleveland’s

---

<sup>112</sup>“Retribution in East Tennessee – Laurel Creek Massacre,” *Union Flag*, Jonesborough, 13 October 1865.

<sup>113</sup> M.L. Helton, 25 November 1865, letter to the editor, *Union Flag*, Jonesborough, 1 December 1865.

<sup>114</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 10 December 1865, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 195.

<sup>115</sup>Ellen Renshaw House, 3 and 31 December 1865, in Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 192-194 and 199-200. Quote 199-200.

youth, she now worried how her mother would support the family. Ann Jarnagin Lee Inman contemplated selling the family boarding house, as the income did not meet the family's needs. Myra Inman lamented the uncertainty that clouded her future and longed for the days that her only worry would be whether she could have her music classes. She had to learn to balance their current poverty with her pride.<sup>116</sup>

Consequences such as exile, confiscation of property, exclusion from politics and society, loss of slaves, and at times violence took their toll on the women. They were horrified by the region's retributive environment, and now simply wanted security for their family. They had to work in ways they previously would have thought below their socioeconomic class, take the oath of allegiance, or relocate. Unionist women also sought to preserve their families, but they also demanded retaliation for past injustices. They imagined a community in which Confederates were pushed to the margins of society. Regardless of political affiliation, the war had profoundly changed their lives and they were weary of the uncertainty and anxiety that had characterized it. They wanted to return to what they deemed normality, but it would take time to ease the tensions and hatred that developed in the last five chaotic years.

---

<sup>116</sup>Myra Inman, 21 December 1865, in Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 332.

## Epilogue: The Price of War

It is no wonder that historians have long depicted Appalachian women as victims to the male players. East Tennessee women, in particular, constantly endured standing armies that lived off the land and populace, military campaigns that physically destroyed the landscape, and a bitter political divide that created a long and bloody guerrilla conflict defined by retribution. In addition, like most all white southern women, they suffered from diminished food stuffs and subsistence items; the loss of fathers, brothers, and husbands; and the general social, political, and economic upheaval. Dr. Abraham Jobe believed that “We felt the war more severely in East Tennessee than any part of the South.”<sup>1</sup>

Yet, women were not just victims of circumstance. Instead, they navigated the aforementioned challenges while asserting what control they could over the situation and always working to ensure their families’ security. This dissertation has sought to give women autonomy and demonstrate that they too shaped the war independent of men. How could they not? Throughout the war East Tennessee’s home front merged with both the regular and irregular battlefields and women found themselves working to maintain stability in the chaos along with aiding their cause. Simply, they were present and active, and their voices deserve to be heard.

The story of East Tennessee women, and more broadly Appalachian women, is not singular either. Political affiliation, class, time, and location defined experiences. Similar themes of uncertainty, deprivation, disenfranchisement, and fear characterized both populations during the war, but their experiences were not universal and were contingent upon other factors. Financial repercussions reverberated throughout all classes, but, the lower classes did not have

---

<sup>1</sup> David C. Hsiung, ed., *A Mountaineer in Motion*, 81.

the means in which to weather the crisis as effectively. Uniquely, at every moment a standing army occupied East Tennessee throughout the war, but the occupier changed halfway through the conflict, and women's fortunes altered with the army. Proximity to garrison towns and forces further influenced the women's notions of safety.

Confederate women overwhelmingly came from the professional class, and while they still retained notions of the prominent nineteenth-century gender conceptions, such as the cult of domesticity and female subordination, in practice they often ran their families' households, farms, and businesses in the absence of their male family members. Early during the war many sought to profess their loyalty to the Confederacy by making or acquiring company flags, clothing, and other subsistence items for soldiers, collecting and donating medical supplies, and holding ceremonies to praise soldiers. Later during occupation, they publicly denounced, shamed, and even disparaged Federal soldiers and Unionists publicly violating those same gender ideals that had come to characterize their thinking. Union authorities viewed these "she-devils" as menaces and deported many of them to rid society of their influence. Others quietly resisted by offering assistance and shelter to irregular Confederate troops and guerrillas, helping to drive the region's irregular warfare. As it became more apparent that the Confederacy was lost, however, women abandoned the cause and wanted peace and order to return to their lives. Uncertainty and a fear of the unknown dominated their writings and they longed for a return to what they perceived as normality. Gender historians studying southern elites have largely argued that the Civil War created a temporary environment in which women were forced to take on roles that violated the gender conceptions characteristic of their class, and perhaps East Tennessee Confederates longing for normality demonstrates their desire to revert back to their life before the war.

After the war ended many Confederate women found themselves in vastly different circumstances than at its inception. Some had been forced to leave their homes either under duress or compulsion and had to create a new home with limited resources. For most it took years to recover a semblance of normality. Yet, recover, they did and soon they regained their place in the professional class.

Financial difficulties plagued the Inmans after the war ended, for example. Ann Jarnagin Lea Inman feared that she would lose the boarding house which served as their primary source of income. After the war she was able to keep her boarding house open by housing northerners, those same individuals that Myra Inman had once despised. The war did not destroy the Inman's livelihood and by 1870 they claimed over \$6,000 in personal and real estate wealth. In 1876 Myra Inman married her brother-in-law, John G. Carter, two years after her sister Darthula's death. Carter, once a traveling salesman, purchased a farm and carved out a moderate income in which he helped to support the larger Inman family along with his own.<sup>2</sup>

Elizabeth Key's world turned upside down after the Chattanooga campaign in the fall of 1863; fearing that her husband Lieutenant Colonel David McKendree Key's Confederate service would make her family a target she decided to flee her Chattanooga home. She, along with her four small children, settled in Fort Defiance in Western North Carolina. Poverty characterized their new life; whereas, Key's law practice in Chattanooga had earned the family a comfortable existence. The Keys finally returned to Chattanooga in the Fall of 1865. Elizabeth Key did not resume the life she had left two years prior, for her husband could not even purchase a home. In 1867 Key bought their "new farm" and acknowledged that it needed "hard work and economy

---

<sup>2</sup> William R. Snell, ed., *Myra Inman*, 339-340; "U.S. 1870 Federal Census Record – Record for Myra Inman and John G. Carter," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>.

to... furnish our house [and]...make some repairs.” He reiterated to his wife that they still needed to purchase farming equipment and livestock before it would be operational but “it will be our home; we will fix it together, we and our little ones.” While Key briefly struggled, he quickly regained his economic stability after taking the loyalty oath; he had a long record of public service, as a senator, a judge, and even Postmaster General under President Rutherford B. Hayes.<sup>3</sup>

Ellen Renshaw House never got past the murder of her brother, Johnnie House, and the Confederacy’s defeat. After the war her family had to rely upon her brother’s wages and like her peers, life looked drastically different. The war destroyed her dreams and soon after she could not reconcile her life with that of the reality. She found solace in her relationship with merchant James Washington Fletcher, whom she married in November 1867. The marriage re-solidified Ellen Renshaw House Fletcher’s status as a member of the professional class.<sup>4</sup>

While many exiled Confederates returned and prospered, however, others felt threatened by Unionists and fled after the war. During the war Unionists harassed Washington County’s Deaderick family multiple times, often taking supplies and threatening to harm the male family members; yet they remained. In 1866 the harassment reached a crescendo when Adeline Deaderick’s husband received an ultimatum that he either vacate the property within ten days or be murdered for his defiance. The Deadericks refused to cower to the intimidation and

---

<sup>3</sup>“1870 U.S. Federal Census – Record for David McKendree Key,” Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>; “For Gilmore’s Cyclopedia of American Biography,” in David McKendree Key Papers, 4; R.L. Lessoin, Fort Defiance, North Carolina, to David McKendree Key, Chattanooga, 11 February 1866; David McKendree Key, Chattanooga, to Elizabeth Key, 14 February 1866, David McKendree Key, Chattanooga, to Elizabeth (Lizzie) Key, 5 May 1867, David McKendree Key Papers. Key’s correspondence does not indicate when his wife left Chattanooga, but she most likely left in late 1863 or early 1864 when Union forces occupied the region.

<sup>4</sup> Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., *A Very Violent Rebel*, 201-203; “U.S. 1870 Federal Census Record – Record for Ellen R. Fletcher,” Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>.

remained. Days later, when her young sons left for a political rally, forty Union men approached the home and pulled her husband outside pointing a pistol at him until they agreed to leave. Deaderick found the incident particularly unsettling, for she had heard the stories of old men being physically harmed or murdered for their insolence. They quickly left for Bristol, a county that had a large Confederate population, and eventually made their way to Knoxville, exiled from the home and the life they had loved so much.<sup>5</sup>

The majority of East Tennessee's population had quite a different experience, Unionists started out enemies living in an occupied land. The Confederate government briefly issued a conciliatory policy allowing them to publicly adhere to their political notions without consequences if they abided by the law. That initial rosewater policy lasted until the bridge burnings when the Confederate government began viewing them as insurrectionists and sought to silence and even expel them. Prominent Unionists, often members of the professional class, were driven out of East Tennessee. Those that remained were unable to publicly support the Union. Confederate soldiers, irregulars, and guerrillas targeted them for foodstuffs, supplies, and money; further, many sought to punish their husbands, fathers, and brothers for their political affiliation. Unionists who resided outside of garrison towns, particularly those in the Confederate frontier, experienced retaliation at higher levels.

Yet, women were not just victims. They were integral in preserving the lives of male Unionists and their children. Women hid and supplied Unionists in the mountains and aided the pilots in their journeys. They depended upon women to protect them from violence and hunger. After the fall of 1863, the abuses that Unionists had endured manifested in an overwhelming

---

<sup>5</sup>Adeline Deaderick, Bristol, to Eliza Rosa Deaderick Anderson, Knoxville, 25 October 1866 in "Civil War Memoirs of Mrs. Adeline Deaderick," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* Vol. 7, No. 1 (March, 1948), 68-69.

desire to retaliate. Many that had once been exiled returned and sought to regain their losses. Retaliation took on a number of forms including, violence and economic penalties. Standing armies emboldened Unionists to seek retribution, but those women who remained on the periphery still experienced attack from Confederates and they already suffered from reduced resources. Unionists women, perhaps from their socioeconomic class, suffered far greater than their Confederate peers; however, through all their adversity the safety and the well-being of their families remained a constant motivating factor for them. They continually worked inside and outside of the home and the notion of separate spheres had never really been applicable.

During the post-war period, Unionists women continued to suffer from the war's economic devastation, their recovery, if they had one, remained much slower than that of their Confederate counterparts. Union widow pension records reveal that many women continued to suffer for decades after the war. Hamilton County's Eliza Adams' husband came home from the war with diminished vision and an injury to his left arm that severely impaired its usage. She claimed that the damages had reduced his capacity to work and that eventually he was "not able to labor at all."<sup>6</sup> When Hawkins County's Manerva Bare's husband returned from the war she continued to work their small farm. While she most likely had done this type of work prior to the war, injuries sustained to her husband's hip during the war increased her workload. The special investigator working on Bare's case noted that Manerva had to plow their fields. He acknowledged that this phenomenon occurred frequently "up in the mountains" where they derive from "the lazy, no account class." The solicitor referenced the penchant from lower class Appalachian women to participate in the farm's manual labor and failed to understand that their

---

<sup>6</sup> Eliza Adams, Hixson, to Bureau of Pensions, Washington D.C., 6 October 1899, Union Widow Pension Records, National Archives, Washington D.C.

labor was vital to the family. Many continued to work and gain income well into their senior years, sometimes being the only source of income for their household like Knox County's Margaret Boyd who desperately needed her husband's pension for she had "no property real or personal from which she could devise a support." Likewise, Campbell County's Mary Agee relied upon her labor for income and sought the pension in which to supplement her meager existence for her "age and infirmity" kept "her from gaining a comfortable support by her own labor."<sup>7</sup>

Poverty plagued the region following the war and some women relied upon community, state, and federal benevolence. The East Tennessee Relief Association continued to offer aid to Unionists and other impoverished women until 1867, when Northern contributors no longer funded the organization. Even the Freedmen's Bureau offered aid to the destitute refugees.<sup>8</sup> Orphanages and children's homes were set up throughout the country to care for the children of deceased Union soldiers. Not all children were orphaned. Some mothers could not financially provide for their children could find a refuge in the orphanages Thirty-one-year-old Unionist Nancy Brown was a widow unable to care for her children in Knox County. Prior to the war the Browns had three young children without any land holdings and only \$360 in personal wealth. During the war Brown added two more children to her brood but lost her husband to the explosion on the *Sultana* in April 1865.<sup>9</sup> With little, Brown relied upon her father-in-law's

---

<sup>7</sup> E.W. Paschal, to John C. Black, Washington D.C., 1899, Sylvester Cooper, La Folleth, TN, to Bureau of Pensions, Washington D.C., 25 January 1900, Charles King, Knoxville, to Bureau of Pensions, Washington D.C., 21 December 1892, Union Widow Pension Records, National Archives, Washington D.C.

<sup>8</sup> William Strasser, "Our women Played Well Their Parts:" East Tennessee Women in the Civil War Era, 1860-1870" (master's thesis, University of Tennessee, 1999), 58-59, [https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4111&context=utk\\_gradthes](https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4111&context=utk_gradthes).

<sup>9</sup> "U.S. 1860 Federal Census Record – Record for William L. Brown," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>; "All Soldier, Veteran & Prisoner Rolls & Lists – For William L. Brown,.; Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>.

generosity, but even that assistance was limited as he too maintained a meager lifestyle with nine dependents.<sup>10</sup> Unable to support her children she decided in 1866 to send them to the National Soldiers and Sailors Orphans Home in Washington D.C., just one of the many orphanages that the federal, state, and local governments had created to educate and care for Union soldiers' families.<sup>11</sup> Unable to be separated from her children, Brown accompanied them and secured a position at the home. For four years Brown's father-in-law repeatedly demanded that she return home; yet, she defied him and made the decisions she felt served her children's interests. By 1870 Brown's two daughters had contracted tuberculosis, however, and she returned to Knoxville, leaving her three boys. The separation weighed heavy on her, and she constantly wrote to the matron checking on their welfare. The price of war to Nancy Brown was the loss of her children, and it was a dear price to pay. Brown's story is not unique; many Unionist widows sent their children to reside in these types of orphanages. Throughout Brown's letters there are at least four references to other local children at the home, with the loss of a father, most likely the family's primary income, the region's Unionist widows had few options.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> "U.S. 1860 Federal Census Record – Record for John Brown," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>; "U.S. 1870 Federal Census Record – Record for John Brow," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>.

<sup>11</sup> James Marten, *Civil War America: Voices from the Home Front* (Santa Barbara: ABC CLIO, 2003), 280 and 281.

<sup>12</sup> "U.S. 1870 Federal Census Record – Nancy C. Brown," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>; Mrs. Scarborough, Washington D.C., to Nancy and Martha Brown, Knoxville, undated, John Brown, Knoxville, TN, to Nancy Brown, Washington D.C., 27 February 1867, John Brown, Knoxville, TN, to Nancy Brown, Washington D.C., 18 March 1870, Mrs. Scarborough, Washington D.C., to Nancy Brown, Knoxville, no date, John Judson Brown, Washington D.C., to Nancy Brown, Knoxville, 1 August 1873, John Judson Brown, Washington D.C., to Nancy Brown, Knoxville, 1 August 1873, Mrs. Scarborough, Washington D.C. to Nancy Brown, Knoxville, 28 Charles King, Knoxville, to Bureau of Pensions, Washington D.C., 21 December 1892, rles King, Knoxville, to Bureau of Pensions, Washington D.C., 21 December 1892, December 1871, M.R. Thorp, Washington D.C., to Nancy Brown, Knoxville, 5 April 1871, M.R. Thorp, Washington D.C., to Nancy Brown, Knoxville, 11 August 1871, John Judson Brown, Washington D.C., to Nancy Brown, Knoxville, 1 August 1873, and John Judson Brown, Washington D.C., to Nancy Brown, Knoxville, 9 September 1873, William Brown and A.R. Brown Papers, Accession 786, Archives of Appalachia, Johnson City.

Unionist women's economic contributions remained more important than ever after the war and they continued to labor at much higher rates than their Confederate counterparts. The idea that the Civil War created an aberration in which women violated gender norms as a necessity and then reverted to their previous identities which largely supported a patriarchal environment are false when it applies to the lower class. Large numbers of women were critical to maintaining their families' livelihoods and that role continued if not increased during and after the war. The notion of the "cult of domesticity" did not pertain to the lower class.

Both prior to and during the war, racial issues rarely appeared in the women's writings, but by 1865 women began focusing on how emancipation disrupted the South's social hierarchy. Suddenly race became an issue that women felt worthy of discussion. Lamenting her life prior to the war, Adeline Deaderick in 1867 feared that white hegemony was a thing of the past and that newly liberated African Americans now held more economic, political, and social power than ex-Confederates. She believed that the war and its aftermath had economically ruined Confederates while African Americans sat in Congress. Freedpeople intermingled with whites, and she believed that the southern social hierarchy had been completely overturned. While Deaderick exaggerated their gains and the imbalance of power, still their autonomy baffled her.<sup>13</sup>

In reality, freedmen and freedwomen found many difficulties in life after bondage, notably poverty with few economic prospects. Many of the newly liberated fled to the region's towns, but they had little to offer. The Freedmen's Bureau reported that the civil authorities in Chattanooga and Knoxville "have done little or nothing for the care of the sick or destitute." Instances of African American women needing assistance abounded. Carmae, a widowed

---

<sup>13</sup> Adeline Deaderick, Bristol, to Eliza Rosa Deaderick Anderson, Knoxville, 23 September 1867 in Adeline Deaderick, "Civil War Memoirs of Mrs. Adeline Deaderick," 70.

Hawkins County freedwomen, found herself alone trying to care for her eleven children in a hostile environment. Carmae depended upon the Freedmen's Bureau and others to feed and shelter her family. Inadequate wages made it difficult for men and women "to support themselves" even as they worked in numerous industries both in and outside towns.<sup>14</sup>

Instances of racially motivated attacks were substantially fewer than in middle and west Tennessee, however, and "Complaints" occurred far less frequently than the other two regions. Yet, that did not mean that notions of racial equality characterized the region. In fact, racism thrived. In November 1866 the East Tennessee Freedmen's Bureau Commissioner reported an issue of racial intimidation in Hawkins County. The county's large property holders intimidated blacks who refused to vote as directed. Whites attacked any Africans Americans that they felt threatened them. A Hamilton County man shot a freedman whom he accused of stealing his pig in the winter of 1868. By the spring the Freedmen's Bureau was reporting activity from the Ku Klux Klan and noted that they had threatened prominent Unionists and started recruiting within the region. Studies abound regarding freedwomen during Reconstruction throughout the South, yet East Tennessee remains an area with little investigation. More studies need to be conducted regarding the populace's transition into freedom. Obviously, this is a story distinct from the other two regions. East Tennessee's economy, class structure, and small freed population creates a different scenario.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> J.R. Lewis, Nashville, to O.O. Howard, 8 October 1866, J.R. Lewis, Nashville, to O.O. Howard, 8 October 1866, and W. Martin, Nashville, to O.O. Howard, Washington D.C., 14 April 1868, Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Tennessee, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, Washington D.C.

<sup>15</sup> W. Martin, Nashville, to O.O. Howard, Washington D.C., 17 March 1868, W. Martin, Nashville, to O.O. Howard, Washington D.C., 14 April 1868, and W. Martin, Nashville, to O.O. Howard, Washington D.C., 9 October 1867, Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Tennessee, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, Washington D.C.

Did this long bloody war that infiltrated every aspect of East Tennessee's women's lives exact long-lasting change? Prior to the war women had participated in politics, the economy, and the public sphere, but the idea of the cult of domesticity remained entrenched with the professional class' culture. The war brought profound changes and women adapted as necessary to protect their families. Yet echoes of these popular gender conceptions remained in their thoughts even as their actions betrayed them. Conversely, the cult of domesticity never proved applicable to Unionist women, the large majority of whom had to labor both before and after the war to maintain their family's economic security.

Throughout the war, uncertainty clouded women's writings. They were unable to comprehend what their world would look like at its conclusion. When fathers, husbands, and brothers returned they no longer had to independently worry about their families' safety and financial situation. Many married and had children or grandchildren and looked back at those four years as an incredibly difficult time in which they were forced to assume roles that had been previously unheard of or experience social discontent. Yet, what they did understand was that this was a unique period in their lives and thus many of them sought to record it. Even if unaware, those women knew that they were shaping history in East Tennessee, whether that be political, economic, or social. They were proud of how they faced adversity and in their old age sometimes added to their diaries in hopes that their ancestors would recognize their role in such a pivotal piece of the United States' history. When one thinks of the Civil War it is often of soldiers on battlefield or politicians at the state's helm, but East Tennessee women were significant actors who labored to feed, clothe, and protect their families and causes. They had to make concessions that they never contemplated prior to the war, and did so to shield the people

and causes they loved. As long as women are left out or marginalized in East Tennessee's or indeed Appalachia's history, that story cannot be adequately understood.

## Works Cited

### **Unpublished Primary Sources**

ARCHIVES OF APPALACHIA, EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY,  
JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE

Fannie A. Fain Papers, November 26, 1863-March 6, 1898, AppMs 114

Frederick S. Heiskell Papers, 1789-1882, Accession AppMS 22

Maude McGaha Collection, 1865-1930

AUBURN UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES, AUBURN, ALABAMA

Oscar James Owen Diary, Auburn University Digital Library,

<http://content.lib.auburn.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/civil/id/18746/rec/24>.

Speake-McCalla Civil War Correspondence, 1863-1865, Accession, RG-703

CHATTANOOGA BICENTENNIAL LIBRARY, CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE

David McKendree Key Papers, Accession 64

James Perry Fyffe Papers, Accession 220

Dr. James W. and Sarah H. Redfield Papers, Accession 277

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY, GREENVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

Oath of Allegiance to the Union, Digital Collections, <http://digital.lib.ecu.edu/37256>

EMORY UNIVERSITY MANUSCRIPT, ARCHIVES, AND RARE BOOK LIBRARY,  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Lockmiller Family Papers, 1862-1863, 1881-1927, Accession 815

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Abraham Lincoln Papers, Series 1, General Correspondence, 1833-1916, <https://www.loc.gov>

MCCLUNG HISTORICAL COLLECTION, KNOX COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
SYSTEM, KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

Hall-Stakely Papers 1861-1866, Accession MSC-17

Sallie McDowell Moffett Papers, 1832-1916, Accession CS08-05

Watterson Papers, 1780-1876, Accession CS-0709

William Richard Caswell Papers, 1805-1900, Accession M-149

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT KNOXVILLE,  
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

Advocate and Family Guardian Newspapers, 1865, Accession MS 3111

Diary of Margaret B. Crozier, 1864-1865, Accession MS-322

East Tennessee Claim Books, Accession MS-0662

Elizabeth Baker Crozier Journal, Accession MS-1048

Hannah W. Swan Grant of Pardon and Amnesty, 1865, Accession MS 0056

Henry Cherry Letters, 1865, American Civil War Collection

Mary Jane Johnston Reynolds Letters, 1864, Accession MS 0246

John Watkins Papers, 1862, Accession 1161

Joseph Linn King Letter, 1865, American Civil War Collection

Dr. John Willard Hill Collection, MS. 0874

Knoxville Civil War Correspondence Collection, 1862-1864, MS.3711

Phoebe Cross Letter, 1862, Accession MS 2863

Oliver P. Temple Papers, Accession MS-0021

Robert A. Ragan Letters, Accession MS .0743

William R. Story Letter, 1865, Accession MS.1136

TENNESSEE STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Clift Family Papers, ca 1829-1968, Accession Number 1968383

Governor William G. Brownlow Papers, 1865-1869, GP 21

Letter from Adaline Davis to Joseph N.B. Lusk, chat096

Andrew Johnson Papers, 1846-1875. Microfilm

Morgan County, [teva.contentdm.oclc.org](http://teva.contentdm.oclc.org)

Oliver Caswell King and Katherine Rebecca Rutledge King Papers, 1856-1893

“Semi-weekly Report on Transportation Orders,” THS 729

VIRGINIA TECH SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA

Thomas S. Boccock to William M. Cocke, Accession Number HE2791L993 R5

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME’S RARE BOOKS AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS,  
SOUTH BEND, INDIANA

Meek Family Correspondence

### **Newspapers**

*Athens Post* (Athens)

*Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig* (Knoxville).

*Brownlow’s Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator* (Knoxville).

*Brownlow’s Weekly Whig*, (Knoxville).

*Charleston Mercury* (Charleston).

*Chattanooga Daily Rebel* (Chattanooga).

*Daily Picayune*, (New Orleans).

*Harper’s Weekly* (New York).

*Jonesboro Union Flag* (Jonesboro).

*Knoxville Daily Register* (Knoxville).

*Loudon Free Press* (Loudon).

*Nashville Times and True Union* (Nashville).

*Nashville Union and American* (Nashville).

*New York Times* (New York).

*Tri-Weekly Whig* (Knoxville).

*Union Flag* (Bristol).

### **Published, Online, and Microfilmed Primary Sources**

Abbott, Martin, ed. "A Mountain School in Tennessee: Some Reconstruction Letters," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, 17 (1958).

Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com>.

Angle, Paul M., ed. *Three Years in the Army of the Cumberland*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959.

Bolli-Buffat, Elisa. *Reminiscences of Alfred Buffat and Mrs. Elisa Bolli Buffat*. Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1916.

Borkum, Hermann. *The Testimony of a Refugee from East Tennessee*. Philadelphia: n.p., 1863.

Brownlow, William G. *Sketches of the Rise, Progress, and Decline of Secession: With a Narrative of Personal Adventures Among the Rebels*. Cincinnati, PUBLISHER, 1862.

Dunn, Durwood. *An Abolitionist in the Appalachian South: Ezekiel Birdseye on Slavery, Capitalism, and Separate Statehood in East Tennessee, 1841-1846*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997.

Ellis, Daniel. *The Thrilling True Adventures of Daniel Ellis: 1861-1865, The Great Union Guide of East Tennessee*. 1867. Lexington: Big Byte Books, 2014.

- Everett, Edward. *Account of the Fund for the Relief of East Tennessee*. Boston: Little, Brown,, 1864.
- Fain, John N., ed. *The Sanctified Trial: The Diary of Eliza Rhea Anderson Fain a Confederate Woman in East Tennessee*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2004.
- Graf, LeRoy P. and Ralph W. Haskins, eds., *Papers of Andrew Johnson*. Volume 5. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1967.
- Hesseltine, William B., ed. *Dr. J.G.M. Ramsey: Autobiography and Letters*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2002.
- Hopkins, Anne H. and William Lyons. *Studies in Tennessee Politics: Tennessee Votes: 1799-1976*. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1978.
- Hsiung, David C., ed. *A Mountaineer in Motion: The Memoir of Dr. Abraham Jobe, 1817-1906*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2009.
- Humes, Thomas W. *The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee*. Knoxville: PUBLISHER, 1880.
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Report of the East Tennessee Relief Association at Knoxville*. Knoxville: PUBLISHER, 1865.
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Second Report of the East Tennessee Relief Association at Knoxville*. Knoxville: PUBLISHER, 1866.
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Third and Fourth Reports of the East Tennessee Relief Association of Knoxville*. Knoxville: PUBLISHER, 1868.
- Hurlburt, J.S. *History of the Rebellion in Bradley Country, East Tennessee*. Cincinnati: PUBLISHER, 1899.
- Jones, James B. Jr., ed., *Tennessee Civil War Source Book*, Tennessee Historical Commission. <http://tennesseecivilwarsourcebook.com>. Accessed November 2019.

Moon, Anna Mary, ed. "Civil War Memoirs of Mrs. Adeline Deaderick," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, 7, 1948.

Olmsted, Frederick Law. *A Journey in the Back Country*. New York: Mason Brothers, 1860.

Plant, D.A. "Recollections of War as a Child, 1861-65," in *Confederate Veteran*, 36, 1928, *Internet Archive*, <https://archive.org/details/confederateveter3619conf/page/128>.

Ragan, Robert A. *Escape from East Tennessee to the Federal Lines: The History Given as Nearly as Possible*. Washington D.C.: James H. Dony, 1910.

Reynolds, Donald E. and Max H. Kele, eds. "Stray Thoughts: The Civil War Diary of Ethie M. Foute Eagleton," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, No. 40, 1968.

Snell, William R., editor. *Myra Inman: A Diary of the Civil War in East Tennessee*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2000.

*Statistics of the United States, (Including Morality, Property, &c.,) in 1860; the Eighth Census*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864. Reprint, New York: Norman Ross, 1990.

Sullins, David. *Recollections of an Old Man, Seventy Years in Dixie, 1827-1897*. Bristol: PUBLISHER: 1910.

Sutherland, Daniel E., ed. *A Very Violent Rebel: The Civil War Diary of Ellen Renshaw House*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1996.

Temple, Oliver P. *East Tennessee and the Civil War*. Cincinnati: PUBLISHER, 1899.

\_\_\_\_\_ *Notable Men of Tennessee, From 1833-1875*. New York: PUBLISHER, 1912.

Wakelyn, John L., ed. *Southern Unionist Pamphlets and the Civil War*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999.

*War the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*.

Vol. 52, Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1866.

Worsham, William J. *The Old Nineteenth Tennessee Regiment, C.S.A.* 23 June 1861. Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville. [\\_](#) Accessed November 2019.

## Secondary Works

Alexander, Thomas B. "Neither Peace nor War: Conditions in Tennessee in 1865." *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*. 21 1949.

Ash, Stephen V. *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South, 1861-1865*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1995.

Atkins, Jonathan M. *Parties, Politics, and the Sectional Conflict in Tennessee: 1832-1861*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997.

Ayers, Edward L. *In the Presence of Mine Enemies: War in the Heart of America, 1859-1863*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2003.

Beaver, Patricia D. "Women in Appalachia and the South: Gender, Race, Region, and Agency." *NWSA Journal* 11 (Autumn 1999): ix-xxix.

Beilein, Joseph M., Jr., *Bushwhackers: Guerrilla Warfare, Manhood, and the Household in Civil War Missouri*, ebook. Kent: Kent State University Press, 2016. Barnes and Noble Nook.

Beilein, Joseph M., Jr. and Matthew C. Hulbert, eds. *The Civil War Guerrilla: Unfolding the Black Flag in History, Memory, and Myth*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2015.

Besmann, Wendy Lowe. *A Separate Circle: Jewish Life in Knoxville, Tennessee*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 2001.

- Blair, William. *Virginia's Private War: Feeding Body and Soul in the Confederacy, 1861-1865*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Bocian, Meredith A. "Fiery Trials." Paper presented at the annual meeting for the Society of Appalachian Historians, Jonesborough, TN, May 23, 2011.
- Boydston, Jeanne. *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Brown, Campbell H. "Carter's East Tennessee Raid: The Sailor on Horseback who Raided his own Back Yard." *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 22 (March 1963): 66-82.
- Bryan, Charles Faulkner. "The Civil War in East Tennessee: A Social, Political, and Economic Study." Ph.D. diss., University of Tennessee at Knoxville, 1978.
- Bynum, Victoria E., *Shadow of the Civil War: Southern Dissent and its Legacies*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010.
- Campbell, Jacqueline Glass. *When Sherman Marched North from the Sea: Resistance on the Confederate Home Front*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Campbell, Mary Emily Robertson. *The Attitude of Tennesseans toward the Union: 1847-1861*. New York: Vantage, 1961.
- Cimprich, John. "Slave Behavior during the Federal Occupation of Tennessee, 1862-1865." *The Historian* 44 (1982): 335-346.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Slavery's End in Tennessee, 1861-1865*. Birmingham: University of Alabama Press, 1985.
- Clinton, Catherine, ed., *Divided Houses: Gender during the Civil War*, 1992. PUB DATA?
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Other Civil War: American Women in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1984.

- \_\_\_\_\_ ed. *Southern Families at War: Loyalty and Conflict in the Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Clinton, Catherine and Nina Silber, eds. *Battle Scars: Gender and Sexuality in the American Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Connelly, Thomas Lawrence. *Army of the Heartland: The Army of Tennessee, 1861-1863*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967.
- Cox, Karen L. *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of the Confederate Culture*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003.
- Cozzens, Peter. *No Better Place to Die: The Battle of Stones River*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990.
- Crawford, Martin. *Ashe County's Civil War: Community and Society in the Appalachian South*. 2001.
- Crofts, Daniel W. *Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989.
- Culpepper, Marilyn Mayer. *Trials and Triumphs: Women of the American Civil War*. Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1991.
- Dahlstrand, Kate. "Outsiders of Battlefield Experience: The Journey Home for the Civil War Solider." Paper presented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual conference of Veterans in Society, Roanoke, VA, 12-14 November 2015.
- [https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/bitstream/handle/10919/72925/Dahlstrand\\_Outsiders\\_of\\_Battlefield\\_Experience.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/bitstream/handle/10919/72925/Dahlstrand_Outsiders_of_Battlefield_Experience.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).
- Daniel, Larry J. and Lynn N. Bock, *Island No. 10: Struggle for the Mississippi Valley*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996.

- Delfino, Susanna and Michele Gillespie, eds. *Neither Lady nor Slave: Working Women of the Old South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.
- Donald, David Herbert. *Lincoln*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1995.
- Dunaway, Wilma A. *Women, Work, and Family in the Antebellum South*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Durrill, Wayne K. *War of Another Kind: A Southern Community in the Great Rebellion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Edwards, Laura F. *Gendered Strife and Confusion: The Political Culture of Reconstruction*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Scarlett Doesn't Live Here Anymore: Southern Women in the Civil War Era*. Champaign: The University of Illinois Press, 2006.
- Engle, Stephen D. *Don Carlos Buell: The Most Promising of All*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Faust, Drew Gilpin. *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
- Fellman, Michael, Lesley J. Gordon, and Daniel E. Sutherland. *This Terrible War: The Civil War and its Aftermath*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. London: Pearson, 2007.
- Fink, Harold S. "The East Tennessee Campaign and the Battle of Knoxville in 1863." *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*. 29 1957.
- Fisher, Noel. *War at Every Door: Partisan Politics & Guerrilla Violence in East Tennessee, 1860-1869*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
- Folmsbee, Stanley J. "The Beginnings of the Railroad Movement in East Tennessee." *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*. 5 1933.

Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1939.

Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.

Frazier, Charles. *Cold Mountain*. New York: Atlantic Monthly, 1997.

Giesberg, Judith and Randall M. Miller. *Women and the American Civil War: North-South Counterpoints*. Kent: Kent State University Press, 2018.

Glatthaar, Joseph T. *General Lee's Army from Victory to Collapse*. New York: Free Press, 2008.

Glymph, Thavolia. *Out of the House of Bondage: The Transformation of the Plantation Household*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Gordon, Lesley J. and John C. Inscoe, eds. *Inside the Confederate Nation: Essays in Honor of Emory M. Thomas*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005.

Govan, Gilbert E. and James W. Livingood, "Chattanooga Under Military Occupation, 1863-1865," *Journal of Southern History*, 17XVII, 1951: 23-47.

Graebner, Norman A., ed. *Politics and the Crisis of 1860*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961.

Grant, Meredith A. "Internal Dissent: East Tennessee's Civil War, 1849-1865." M.A. Thesis, East Tennessee State University, 2008.

Green, Michael S. *Lincoln and the Election of 1860*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2011.

Groce, W. Todd. *Mountain Rebels: East Tennessee Confederates and the Civil War, 1860-1870*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999.

- Harris, William C. "East Tennessee's Civil War Refugees and the Impact of the War on Civilians." *Journal of East Tennessee History* 64 (1992): 3-19.
- Harrison, Kimberly. *The Rhetoric of Rebel Women: Civil War Diaries and Confederate Persuasion*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2013.
- Henry, J. Milton. "The Revolution in Tennessee, February 1861, to June 1861," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, 18XVIII 1959: 99-119.
- Hess, Earl. *The Knoxville Campaign: Burnside and Longstreet in East Tennessee*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2012.
- Hunter, Tera W. *To Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors After the Civil War*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Hsiung, David C. *Two Worlds in the Tennessee Mountains: Exploring the Origins of Appalachian Stereotypes*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997.
- Inscoe, John C., ed. *Appalachians and Race: The Mountain South from Slavery to Segregation*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001.
- Inscoe, John C. and Gordon B. McKinney. *The Heart of Confederate Appalachia: Western North Carolina in the Civil War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.
- Inscoe, John C. and Robert Kenzer, eds. *Enemies of the Country*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001.
- Jamieson, Perry D. *Spring 1865: The Closing Campaigns of the Civil War*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015.
- Janney, Caroline E. *Burying the Dead but Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008.
- Jones-Rogers, Stephanie E. *They Were Here Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the*

- American South*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019.
- Kelly, Dorothy. "The Bridge Burnings and Union Uprising of 1861." *Tennessee Ancestors* 21 no. 2 (August, 2005): 123-129.
- Kerber, Linda K. "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Women's Place: The Rhetoric Women's History." *Journal of American History*, 75 (June, 1988): 9-39.
- Lang, Andrew F. *In the Wake of War: Military Occupation, Emancipation, and Civil War American*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2017.
- Leavitt, Judith Walzer and Ronald L. Numbers, eds. *Sickness & Health in America: Readings in the History of Medicine and Public Health*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978.
- Lebsock, Suzanne. *The Free Women of Petersburg: Status and Culture in a Southern Town, 1784-1860*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1985.
- Marcus, Jacob R. "From Peddler to Regimental Commander in Two Years: The Civil War Career of Major Louis A. Gratz." *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 38 (September 1948): 22-44.
- Marten, James. *Children for the Union: The War Spirit on the Northern Home Front*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Civil War America: Voices from the Home Front*. Santa Barbara: ABC CLIO, 2003.
- Massey, Mary E. "Southern Refugee Life During the Civil War, *North Carolina Historical Review*, 20XX 1943: 1-21.
- McCaslin, Richard. *Tainted Breeze: The Great Hanging at Gainesville, Texas, 1862*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997.

McCurry, Stephanie. *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South*.  
Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010.

\_\_\_\_\_ *Women's War: Fighting and Surviving the American Civil War*.  
Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019.

McKenzie, Robert Tracy. *Lincolmites and Rebels: A Divided Town in the American Civil War*.  
New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

McKnight, Brian D. *Contested Borderlands: The Civil War in Appalachian Kentucky and  
Virginia*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2006.

Noe, Kenneth W. *Reluctant Rebels: The Confederates Who Joined the Army After 1861*. Chapel  
Hill: University of North Carolina, 2010.

\_\_\_\_\_ *Southwest Virginia's Railroads: Modernization and the Sectional Crisis in  
Civil War Era*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994; reprint, Tuscaloosa: University  
of Alabama, 2003.

Noe, Kenneth W. and Shannon H. Wilson, eds. *The Civil War in Appalachia: Collected Essays*.  
Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1997.

O'Brien, Sean Michael. *Mountain Partisans: Guerrilla Warfare in the Southern Appalachians*,

Owsley, Frank L. and Harriet C. "The Economic Structure of Rural Tennessee, 1850-1860." *The  
Journal of Southern History* 8VIII 1942: 161-182.

Paludan, Phillip Shaw. *Victims: A True Story of the Civil War*. Knoxville: University of  
Tennessee Press, 1981.

Partin, Robert. "Wartime Experiences of Margaret McCalla: Confederate Refugee from East  
Tennessee." *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 24 (Spring 1965): 39-53.

Patterson, Caleb Perry. *The Negro in Tennessee, 1790-1865*. Austin: University of Texas, 1922.

- Piston, William Garrett. *Carter's Raid: An Episode of the Civil War in East Tennessee*. Johnson City: The Overmountain Press, 1989.
- Potter, David M. *The Impending Crisis: 1848-1861*. New York: Harper and Row, 1963.
- Pudup, Mary Beth, Dwight B. Billings, and Altina L. Waller, eds. *Appalachia in the Making: The Mountain South in the Nineteenth Century*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995.
- Rable, George C. *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism*. Champlain: University of Illinois Press, 1989.
- \_\_\_\_\_ "Anatomy of a Unionist: Andrew Johnson in the Secession Crisis." *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (Winter, 1973): 332-354.
- Richard, Patricia L. *Busy Hands: Images of the Family in the Northern Civil War Effort*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2003.
- Roberts, Giselle. *The Confederate Belle*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003.
- Rodrigue, John C. *Reconstruction in the Cane Fields: From Slavery to Free Labor in Louisiana's Sugar Parishes, 1862-1880*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001.
- Rubin, Anne. *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005.
- Sarris, Jonathan Dean Sarris. *A Separate Civil War: Communities in Conflict in the Mountain South*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006.
- Schwalm, Leslie A. *A Hard Fight for We: Women's Transition from Slavery to Freedom in South Carolina*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997.

- Scott, Anne Firor. *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970.
- Seymour, Digby Gordon. *Divided Loyalties: Fort Sanders and the Civil War in East Tennessee*. Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1982.
- Sheehan-Dean, Aaron. *Why Confederates Fought: Family and Nation in the Civil War Virginia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
- Silber, Nina. *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight in the Civil War*. Cambridge: University of Harvard Press, 2005.
- Sizer, Lyde Cullen. *The Political Work of Northern Women Writers and the Civil War, 1850-1872*. Chapel Hill; University of North Carolina Press, 2000.
- Sklar, Kathryn. *Catherine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity*. New York: Norton, 1973.
- Steward, Rodney. *David Schenck and the Contours of Confederate Identity*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2012.
- Strasser, William A. "A Terrible Calamity Has Befallen Us:' Unionist Women in Civil War East Tennessee." *Journal of East Tennessee History* 71 (1999): 66-88.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "'Our Women Played Well Their Parts:' Confederate Women in Civil War East Tennessee." *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 59, no. 2 (2000): 89-107.
- Storey, Margaret. *Loyalty and Loss: Alabama's Unionists in Civil War and Reconstruction*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004.
- Stowe, Steven M. *Keep the Days: Reading the Civil War Diaries of Southern Women*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018.
- Sutherland, Daniel E. *A Savage Conflict: The Decisive Role of Guerrillas in the American Civil War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009.

- \_\_\_\_\_ *American Civil War Guerrillas: Changing the Rules of Warfare*, ebook.  
Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2013.
- Tomblin, Barbara Brooks. *The Civil War on the Mississippi: Union Sailors, Gunboat Captains, and the Campaign to Control the River*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2016.
- Trefousse, Hans L. *Ben Butler: The South Called Him Beast!* New York: Twayne, 1957.
- Varon, Elizabeth. *We Mean to be Counted: White Women and Politics in Antebellum Virginia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- Venet, Wendy Hamand. *Neither Ballots nor Bullets: Women Abolitionists and the Civil War*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1991.
- Weitz, Mark A. *A Higher Duty: Desertion among Georgia Troops during the Civil War*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_ *More Damning the Slaughter: Desertion in the Confederate Army*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005.
- Werlich, Robert. *"Beast" Butler: The Incredible Career of Major General Benjamin Franklin Butler*. Washington D.C.: Quaker Press, 1962.
- Whites, Lee Ann. *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender: Augusta, Georgia, 1860-1890*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_ and Alecia P. Long, eds. *Occupied Women: Gender Military Occupation and the American Civil War*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009.
- W. Williams, David, Teresa Williams, and David Carlson, *Plain Folk in a Rich Man's war: Class and Dissent in Confederate GA*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002.
- Woodworth, Steven E. *Decision in the Heartland: The Civil War in the West*. Westport, CT.:

Praeger, 2008. Reprint, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011.

---

*Six Armies in Tennessee: The Chickamauga and Chattanooga*

*Campaigns*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998.

Ziparo, Jessica. *This Grand Experiment: When Women Entered the Federal Workforce in Civil*

*War-Era Washington, D.C.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017.