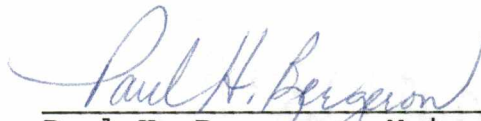
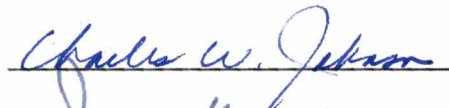


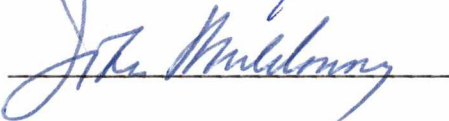
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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Joseph Wade Needham entitled "Oliver Perry Temple: Entrepreneur, Agrarian, and Politician." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in History.


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OLIVER PERRY TEMPLE:
ENTREPRENEUR, AGRARIAN, AND POLITICIAN

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Joseph Wade Needham

December 1990

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To Sybil and Robert

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Writing this dissertation was made possible only by the assistance of many persons. Not everyone can be mentioned but a few individuals deserve special acknowledgment. The helpful insight and patience of Dr. Paul H. Bergeron cannot be exaggerated. Periodic encouragement from Dr. Allison Ensor, Dr. John R. Finger, Dr. Charles W. Johnson, and Dr. John Muldowny, helped me more than they realize. I owe much to Dr. James C. Cobb whose course in Southern history stimulated me to study the region.

The kind and uplifting words of Mickey Nies, particularly when all seemed for naught strengthened my resolve to continue. My parents whose financial support and moral encouragement during the bleakest hours of graduate school provided an immense boost.

Finally, I thank my beloved wife and precious son. Sybil's unswerving support and assistance make this dissertation as much hers as mine.

ABSTRACT

Oliver Perry Temple, a native East Tennessean, lived from 1820 to 1907. During his long life he maintained a keen interest in politics and pursued numerous business opportunities. Although this study is essentially a biography it also discusses the agricultural, and economic development of East Tennessee during much of the nineteenth century. Chapter one discusses Temple's participation in politics from the early 1840s through the Civil War. His involvement in the 1860 presidential canvass and the subsequent campaign against secession is discussed at length.

The next chapter concentrates on Temple's post-war political activities. Of particular interest is his role as a Radical, a judge, and close associate of Leonidas C. Houk. The chapter concludes in the early 1890s when Temple's interest shifted away from politics. Chapter three depicts Temple as a writer who authored several books and essays which give his interpretation of the late antebellum era and the Civil War.

Temple's agricultural interests are examined in chapter four. He is portrayed as a man who wanted to upgrade the economic status of East Tennessee farmers by urging them to diversify crops, grow less grain, and produce fruits

and vegetables. Temple also encouraged husbandmen to improve their livestock herds through selective breeding.

In chapter five several of Temple's business pursuits are studied. Of primary interest is his career as a lawyer and jurist. But also addressed are his cattle and land investments and his association with the Knoxville Chronicle. Although he earned considerable money through his land speculation and legal career, Temple is portrayed as an average businessman.

Temple's interest in industry is examined in chapter six. Included is his work with railroad and mining companies. Also discussed are his endeavors with the Rugby colony and his unsuccessful effort to secure Tennessee's participation in the 1893 World's Fair. Finally Temple's work as a trustee at the East Tennessee University later the University of Tennessee, is examined. He is pictured as a leader in the drive to transform the school into an agricultural-mechanical institution.

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INTRODUCTION

Tennessee is partitioned into three Grand Divisions. Geography initially separated the sections but as the state progressed, political loyalties and economic developments contributed to the distinctiveness of the regions. East Tennessee is perhaps the unique section of the three. Its opposition to secession and the Confederacy and its support of the Republican party after the Civil War are examples of the region's peculiarities--as compared to the rest of the state.

East Tennessee is exemplary of what Carl Degler has described as "the other South." He demonstrated that the South is not and never has been a monolith. There have always been various individuals, groups and regions which have not reflected the mainstream of Southern thinking and action. Oliver Perry Temple is an East Tennessean who seems to have opposed the major tenets of Southern society.¹

During the nineteenth century several native and non-native East Tennesseans achieved regional, state and national prominence. A list of such dignitaries includes

¹Carl Degler, The Other South: Southern Dissenters in the Nineteenth Century (New York, 1974), 2-3.

Andrew Johnson, William G. Brownlow, Charles McClung McGhee, Thomas A. R. Nelson, Horace Maynard, and Leonidas C. Houk. Temple deserves to be counted among these men.

In a letter to Mary Temple shortly after her father's death, William B. Lenoir eulogized Temple as ". . . the just Judge, the upright citizen, the graceful speaker and polished southern gentleman." Temple may have exemplified the first three elements of Lenoir's description but certainly not the "polished southern gentleman" assessment. He rejected the most common attributes of a typical southern gentleman: secession and the Confederacy, and after the war, the Democratic party.²

One scholarly work has been written on Temple, but it focuses primarily upon his work with Tennessee's postbellum agricultural and industrial growth and development. In his thesis, "Oliver Perry Temple: New South Agrarian," Fred Arthur Bailey portrays Temple as a promoter of both scientific agriculture and industry. He implies that Temple played only a minor role in other facets of Tennessee history. Bailey also describes Temple as an altruist, in that in his various endeavors he was

²William B. Lenoir to Mary B. Temple, November 10, 1907, Mary B. Temple MSS, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville.

more concerned with his region, his state, and other people than with his own personal welfare.³

Before re-examining Temple two major questions must be addressed. First, why has there been only one study of Temple's career, particularly in light of the fact that a large collection of his papers is readily accessible for researchers? A major reason is that he never attained much fame beyond Knoxville. He entered several entrepreneurial enterprises but success evaded him. For example, he invested both in cattle and railroads but never realized significant profit. He could have benefited from cattle speculation had he remained in the business beyond his one livestock purchase in 1871. Railroad investments promised the potential for a financial windfall, but he sold his stock shortly after the war. In his political endeavors, Temple associated with several important office holders, but he never advanced beyond the chancellorship and postmastership.

³Fred Arthur Bailey, "Oliver Perry Temple: New South Agrarian" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1972). See also Fred Arthur Bailey, "Legalities, Agriculture, and Immigration: The Role of Oliver Perry Temple in the Rugby Experiment," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications 44 (1972): 90-103; and Fred Arthur Bailey, "Oliver Perry Temple and the Struggle for Tennessee's Agricultural College," Tennessee Historical Quarterly 36 (1977): 44-61.

Temple did, in fact, achieve noted success in two facets of his life: agrarianism and authorship. He had earlier begun his promotion of scientific farming through the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention and the Eastern Division Fair. But by the mid-1880s he started manipulating the Board of Trustees of the University of Tennessee to transfer control of the institution from liberal arts-classical academicians to agrarian-minded individuals.

A second successful endeavor of Temple was his authorship of several books. Most of his works reflect his political orientation. During the late nineteenth century the strife between ex-Confederates and ex-Unionists in Knoxville and East Tennessee demonstrated to Temple the need to defend the former Unionists. After he died, Temple's daughter Mary continued to support her father's efforts to justify Unionism. For example, she wrote a biographical sketch of her father and included it when she had his book Notable Men published in 1912.

Temple seemed to fear success. He stood on its brink several times, but never capitalized on his opportunities. He had the potential to make a major impact upon his region yet he refused, thus he has remained somewhat neglected. He seemed to be content playing a fairly prominent role in Knoxville society but apparently had no desire to achieve

greatness outside of his immediate environment. As a result, his contributions were largely local and he deserves little recognition beyond that.

The second major question remains: if he produced so few tangible contributions to society and achieved such minimal success, then why re-examine Temple? A large collection of accessible information is an open invitation to study a person's life, but that in and of itself is insufficient. The fact that Temple was involved in so many enterprises inspires some curiosity, but the fact that he did not achieve noted success in any of them makes him more intriguing. In a sense, he is representative of many Knoxville-ians or East Tennesseans who opposed secession, sided with the Union, and afterwards sought some measure of fame and fortune. Therefore his life and career offer instructive insight.

The aim of this study is to re-evaluate Temple. My findings demonstrate that Temple actively participated in many aspects of the state's history in addition to its agricultural and industrial growth. Moreover, it is my contention that Temple may not be accurately described as altruistic.

A major portion of this dissertation details Temple's association with the Volunteer State's political develop-

ment. From his earliest political experiences he held tenaciously to the tenets of the Whigs, a party that favored an economy based upon both industry and agriculture. Internal transportation facilitated the balance between the diverse foundations.⁴

Tennessee Whigs promoted a strong economy along with an improved transportation system and from the mid-1830s through the mid-1850s they were a powerful party in the state. But they failed to temper enthusiasm for the expansion of slavery, to minimize violence and to prevent secession. When the Whigs disintegrated in the mid-1850s, many of their supporters in Tennessee, including Temple, united with the American and Opposition parties. By the mid-1860s many ex-Whigs became Republicans but after Reconstruction they abandoned the party. C. Vann Woodward has argued in his book, Origins of the New South: 1877-1913, that most antebellum Whigs became Democrats in the early postbellum decades.⁵

⁴Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 125; Oliver Perry Temple, Notable Men of Tennessee from 1833-1875: Their Times and Their Contemporaries (New York, 1912), 12-17; Temple, East Tennessee and the Civil War (Cincinnati, 1899), 535-43.

⁵Daniel Walker Howe, The Political Culture of the American Whigs (Chicago, 1979), 302-03; C. Vann Woodward,

Temple is an exception to this phenomenon. He refused to join the Democrats and remained an ardent Republican. Some of his Whig associates such as Horace Maynard, Leonidas C. Houk, and William G. Brownlow also supported the Grand Old Party. But other antebellum allies such as Thomas A. R. Nelson, William Sneed, and John Baxter did in fact become Democrats.

The defeat in war and the humiliation of Reconstruction provided an atmosphere for the growth of two images of the South. The antebellum South was dominated by a beneficent plantation tradition, but it was attacked and defeated by Northern aggressors. As a result, Southerners developed an intense regional pride. By the 1880s the mythic view of the South's past had become firmly entrenched, thanks to its perpetuation by the cult of the Lost Cause.⁶

These myths were accepted by most Southerners, but not Temple. He, like Andrew Johnson, hated the planter aristocracy which, in his opinion, had led the South to secession and Civil War. In that conflict Temple proclaimed Unionism and after Tennessee seceded, he briefly fled the

Origins of the New South, 1877-1913 (Baton Rouge, 1951), 1-4.

⁶Paul M. Gaston, The New South Creed, A Study in Southern Mythmaking (New York, 1970), 4-7.

South (and his family). Upon his return, Temple, like many East Tennessee Unionists, took an oath of loyalty to the Confederacy. He hoped this would permit him to live a normal life and to continue with his law practice. After the war Temple unswervingly supported the Republican party.⁷

In 1866 Governor Brownlow appointed Temple as chancellor, an office he held for a dozen years. While on the bench, Temple was frequently urged to make a bid for Congress, but he never opted to run. Three years following his 1878 retirement as chancellor, Temple received an appointment as postmaster of Knoxville, thanks to Congressman Houk.

When Temple retired as postmaster in the mid-1880s he began writing books and essays, a not uncommon avocation particularly during Temple's era. In his pieces, Temple defended his own attitudes and actions. Interestingly, all of his writings deal with some facet of Tennessee politics or Temple's heritage. His first work, The Covenanter, the Cavalier and the Puritan, is essentially a history of the Scotch-Irish in America. His book

⁷Thomas B. Alexander, Thomas A. R. Nelson of East Tennessee (Nashville, 1955), 54-55.

pre-dated the historiographic debate on the role of these mountaineers. Horace Kephart's Our Southern Highlanders appeared some two decades after Temple's work and gave a more critical assessment.⁸

Temple's East Tennessee and the Civil War was one of the original works on that conflict. Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee by Thomas Humes, along with Temple's book, were two of the earliest and most significant pieces on the war in East Tennessee. Temple's work is still cited in most treatments of that conflict, particularly in relation to East Tennessee. His discussion of the Knoxville and Greeneville Conventions is especially helpful. Temple also authored Notable Men of Tennessee, along with a sketch of John Sevier. Mary had both works published following her father's death.⁹

Temple resided in East Tennessee's leading city; but he remained an agrarian-minded citizen. He understood

⁸Durwood Dunn, Cades Cove: The Life and Death of a Southern Appalachian Community, 1818-1937 (Knoxville, 1988), xiii-xvi.

⁹See, for example, Daniel Crofts, Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis (Chapel Hill, 1989); Hans L. Trefousse, Andrew Johnson: A Biography (New York, 1989); Thomas L. Connelly, Army of the Heartland: The Army of Tennessee, 1861-1862 (Baton Rouge, 1967); and Connelly, Autumn of Glory: The Army of Tennessee, 1862-1865 (Baton Rouge, 1971).

the importance of agriculture and his work helped upgrade the region's husbandmen. He knew that most East Tennesseans relied on agriculture for their sustenance, hence he promoted scientific farming and urged the region's husbandmen to improve their agricultural techniques. Temple achieved this goal primarily by establishing and working closely with the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention. He successfully helped to establish the University of Tennessee as a land grant institution and to upgrade the school's agriculture department. Why Temple wedded himself to agrarianism so much defies succinct analysis. He may have desired to have contented farmers who would maintain a strong agrarian foundation in East Tennessee. Temple was an ardent Republican and perhaps he believed that East Tennessee's husbandmen would follow his example and advice regarding agrarianism. He may have hoped that their economic condition would improve, so that they would not be inclined to support the Democratic party or national farmers organizations.¹⁰

¹⁰ See, for example, James R. Montgomery, Stanley J. Folmsbee, and Lee Greene, To Foster Knowledge: A History of the University of Tennessee, 1794-1970 (Knoxville, 1984), 65-133; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 44-74; Bailey, "Temple and the Struggle," 44-61; Stanley J. Folmsbee, East Tennessee University 1840-1879, Predecessor of The University of Tennessee (Knoxville, 1959), 43-114; Folmsbee,

Temple was a product of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the "Gilded Age." During this era of rampant capitalism, a broad range of investment schemes was available to the wealthy. Temple earned considerable affluence with his lucrative law practice. Unfortunately little substantive information on his legal career is available. His primary claim to success is that he allegedly earned a fortune in his practice. He invested much of his money in real estate which resulted in considerable profit, but his purchase of Texas cattle in 1871 proved to be a losing venture. Just over a decade later, Temple's contemporary, Charles McGhee entered the cattle business with his son-in-law, George White Baxter. McGhee invested in the American Cattle Trust and controlled its successor, the Western Union Beef Company. McGhee did not reap large profits from the cattle business, but he demonstrated that money could be earned in the cattle trade. Temple along with several associates bought the Knoxville Chronicle in the early 1880s, but the paper failed. His entrepreneurial endeavors reveal that Temple

Tennessee Establishes a State University, First Years of the University of Tennessee (Knoxville, 1961); and Montgomery, The Volunteer State Forges Its University The University of Tennessee, 1887-1919 (Knoxville, 1966), 1-116.

was a poor businessman who dabbled in various schemes; except for real estate and law, he refused to stick with a specific enterprise long enough to succeed.¹¹

During the antebellum era as well as after the Civil War, Temple urged his native East Tennesseans to improve internal transportation. But his tangible contributions were minimal. Although briefly associated with the Knoxville and Kentucky Railroad, he abandoned it just after the Civil War when the company began to flounder. During the 1860s Temple dabbled with the mining industry but his association with the enterprise was also short-lived. He helped form the Coal Creek Coal Mining Company and presided over it for a few years. The business became a primary fuel supplier for the Knoxville Iron Company; but Temple sold his interest because the company faced financial difficulties. Other men, such as John T. Wilder, Hiram S. Chamberlain and McGhee made major contributions to the region's industrial development. For example, Wilder and Chamberlain became leaders in iron production and McGhee capitalized on railroad growth. But Temple refused to concentrate on

¹¹William J. MacArthur, Jr., "Charles McClung McGhee, Southern Financier" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Tennessee, 1975), 162-94.

a specific enterprise and never achieved much success or influence.¹²

Following his eightieth birthday Temple ended most of his social commitments and devoted himself primarily to writing. As he aged, his health began declining and in June 1905 he fractured his hip in a fall. Although incapacitated, Temple continued to work periodically on the manuscript for Union Leaders. Unfortunately that work remained unfinished when Temple died at his Knoxville home on November 2, 1907.

That afternoon the Knoxville Sentinel published an obituary stating that, "Tennessee has every reason to feel pride in the [life of Temple]. In his old age Temple's life was full of good works, wisdom, culture, and fine living." The Knoxville Journal editorialized the following day that "his long life merited and maintained the goodwill and confidence of generations."¹³

In 1911 the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention decided to construct an assembly hall on the state agricultural

¹²Ibid., 65-162; Constantine Belissary, "The Rise of the Industrial Spirit in Tennessee, 1865-1885" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1949), 81-126.

¹³Knoxville Sentinel, November 2, 1907; Knoxville Journal, November 3, 1907.

farm and name it "The Oliver Perry Temple Hall." Twelve years later Andrew M. Soule, a former secretary of the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention said, among other things, that Temple's devotion to the cause of agriculture was little short of an obsession.¹⁴

Temple's life demonstrated that he was anything but the "polished southern gentleman" as claimed by William Lenoir. The varied eulogies accurately described Temple as a man with a myriad of interests, although he failed to make many lasting contributions.

¹⁴John T. Moore, Tennessee: The Volunteer State 1769-1923, (2 vols.; Chicago, 1923), 2: 64-66.

CHAPTER 1

WHIG, KNOW NOTHING, AND UNIONIST

During the first six decades of the nineteenth century Tennessee developed from its status as a newly created state to a position of political significance in both the South and the nation. Initially, the state's political framework revolved around two men, William Blount, and John Sevier and their respective followers. Since Blount died in 1800, his associates were more influential than he was during the early nineteenth century; and following Sevier's death in 1815 his cohorts failed to retain a cohesive organization.¹ These initial cliques contained an element of regional strife since Sevier's political foundation centered in East Tennessee, while Blount's support came from Middle Tennessee.

By 1820, these two original cliques had in some respects formed the foundation for many internal struggles within the Volunteer State. In time parties developed and the political framework grew more sophisticated. East Tennessee felt isolated politically, geographically, and economically from Middle Tennessee and throughout much of the antebellum era united with West Tennessee to offset

¹Paul H. Bergeron, Paths of the Past: Tennessee, 1770-1970 (Knoxville, 1979), 1-2.

the growing influence of the middle section. When secession dominated the state's political struggles, East Tennessee refused to support the movement. Throughout the forty years prior to the Civil War and during the conflict itself numerous political leaders emerged in Tennessee who played a major role in directing the state. Andrew Jackson, Andrew Johnson, James K. Polk, and John Bell, are but four men who rose to national prominence from the Volunteer State, yet scores of others who contributed to the state and the region have been neglected. One of those individuals is Oliver Perry Temple. In this chapter as his formative years are discussed, Temple is depicted as an opportunist as well as an ardent Unionist.

Temple, born in 1820 on his family farm near Greeneville, Tennessee, was named in honor of the famed Admiral Oliver Hazard Perry. Two years after Temple's birth his father died; therefore his mother reared her family alone. Because of her strong influence, Temple determined to overcome whatever obstacles he faced in life to achieve personal success.²

²Oliver Perry Temple, Notable Men of Tennessee From 1833-1875: Their Times and Their Contemporaries (New York, 1912), 10-12; Fred Arthur Bailey, "Oliver Perry Temple: New South Agrarian" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1972), 4-5.

While he lived on the family farm, he attended small rural schools. In the late 1830s he entered Washington College, where Alexander Doak exhorted his students to consider seriously their civic responsibility. Temple never forgot this challenge and soon joined the Whig party. He apparently favored its philosophy of a strong legislature and a weak chief executive.³

During the 1820 to 1844 period Tennessee's political system matured to the point where there were two strong parties, in contrast to the earlier structure which had centered around rival factions. The original Blount group turned to John Eaton, John Overton, and William Lewis for leadership, and their primary goal for the 1820s was to propel Andrew Jackson to the presidency. There was an opposition group which included Andrew Erwin, William Carroll, and others. These two factions centered primarily on personal loyalties, and dominated the state's political arena throughout the 1820s. By the later part of the decade the Blount organization itself had split, forming three major cliques in the state.⁴

³ Temple, Notable Men, 11-13.

⁴ Paul H. Bergeron, Antebellum Politics in Tennessee (Lexington, 1982), 3-4.

As the 1830s progressed, party politics emerged in the Volunteer State. Several occurrences, particularly the struggle over extending the Bank of the United States and Jackson's selection of Martin Van Buren as his successor contributed to this development. Some of the President's foes such as John Bell and Newton Cannon opposed Jackson's hostility toward the Bank, but their real irritation toward "Old Hickory" centered on his grooming of Van Buren for the Presidency. He had chosen the "Little Magician" as Vice President in 1832, hoping that Van Buren would be elected president in 1836. But many of those who were lukewarm toward the President pushed another Tennessean, Hugh Lawson White, for president in the 1836 election. In the meantime, Jackson's foes successfully ran Newton Cannon for Tennessee governor in 1835. In the 1836 election, the state rejected Jackson's hand-picked successor (though Van Buren won the presidency) and voted for White.⁵

The Whigs, as these anti-Jacksonians came to be known, emerged as a strong opposition party to the Democrats (as followers of the former President were known). The Whigs

⁵Thomas P. Abernethy, From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee: A Study in Frontier Democracy (Chapel Hill, 1932), 297-99.

carried the state in the 1840 presidential race, and also in the 1841 governor's contest.

After graduating from college Temple entered the alluring field of politics. He, along with Jonesboro Whig editor, William G. Brownlow, campaigned throughout East Tennessee in support of Henry Clay's 1844 bid for the presidency. Brownlow's career as a flamboyant Methodist preacher and as a journalistic demagogue made him one of the better known Whigs of East Tennessee. Therefore Temple canvassed with the Parson not only to assist with Clay's presidential bid but also to obtain political experience with a prominent Whig. Clay's opponent, former Tennessee Governor James K. Polk, lost his home state by a scant 300 votes, but he won the presidency. Though Polk's national victory undoubtedly discouraged Temple, he could sense a partial triumph since the Whigs defeated Polk in his Volunteer State.⁶

During the 1840s the two-party system became firmly entrenched in Tennessee. The Whigs dominated the state during the first half of the decade but their fortune

⁶Samuel M. Arnell, Jr., "The Southern Unionist" Bound typescript, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville, 103-04; E. Merton Coulter, William G. Brownlow: Fighting Parson of the Southern Highlands (Knoxville, 1971 [1937]), 114-17.

changed in 1845 when the Democrats won the gubernatorial contest as well as most legislative races. In the 1847 election the Whigs regained the governorship only to lose it in 1849. While neither party controlled Tennessee's governorship, the Whigs carried the state in each presidential race from 1836 through 1852. Hence, no party dominated Tennessee during the second half of the 1840s. It was in this highly competitive environment that Temple entered the political arena.⁷

Temple still looked toward a possible career in politics, though he realized he first needed another profession. Through Brownlow's and Doak's influence, he was permitted to study law under noted Greeneville jurist and Whig, Robert J. McKinney. His association with the distinguished judge afforded Temple credentials for which other law students yearned. McKinney's tutelage of Temple ended in 1846, when he entered into his first partnership with another Greeneville Whig, F. T. Compton.

In the meantime, Temple pondered a race for Tennessee's first Congressional District seat which Democrat Andrew Johnson held. A contest against the incumbent posed a mammoth task, because the district had a Democratic majority

⁷Bergeron, Antebellum Politics, 77-85.

of some 1500 votes. Though this campaign promised to be difficult, Temple agreed to run. Even if he lost the race, he could probably obtain a later political appointment for challenging the incumbent. Temple realized that in 1845 the Whigs had lost both the governorship and the legislature and they wished to regain those important prizes. Since the Whigs were placing such an emphasis on the 1847 political races, Temple hoped to receive some benefits such as a higher Whig voter participation than normal.⁸

Temple believed Johnson was particularly vulnerable, since he had criticized fellow Tennessee Democrat, President Polk, specifically the President's proposal to levy a tax on tea and coffee to help fund the Mexican War. Temple accused Johnson of opposing Polk's attempt to increase the pay for soldiers and also of criticizing General Zachary Taylor for his role in the war. Temple tried to rally supporters of the Whigs without alarming the Democratic voters. He also tried to get a second Democrat to join the race and split the opposition, a tactic which if

⁸Robert L. Taylor, Jr., "An Inquiry Into the Background and Personalities of Governors Alf and Bob Taylor 1848-1886" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1964), 5; Bergeron, Antebellum Politics, 77.

successful, would have undoubtedly given Temple the victory.⁹

From July 10 to August 4, 1847 Temple and Johnson traversed the First Congressional District trying to garner support. The two candidates usually made joint appearances. At these political rallies Temple often took the offensive by criticizing Johnson's record in Congress while the incumbent frequently resorted to expounding his support for the Mexican War and refuting Temple's accusations. In the closest race of his congressional career Johnson narrowly defeated Temple.¹⁰

Though Temple lost the race to Johnson by a mere 314 votes, the 1847 elections were good for Tennessee Whigs. Gubernatorial candidate Neill Brown defeated Democrat Aaron Brown and the Whigs regained control of the legislature. Temple's friend John Bell was elected to the U. S. Senate by that assembly. Temple's loss, then, was not as serious

⁹ Temple, Notable Men, 219; "Speech on Tea and Coffee Tax," February 2, 1847, in LeRoy P. Graf, Ralph W. Haskins, and Paul H. Bergeron, eds., The Papers of Andrew Johnson (8 vols. to date; Knoxville, 1967-), 1: 373-86; Oliver P. Temple to William G. Brownlow, July 18, 1847, Temple MSS, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville.

¹⁰ Temple, Notable Men, 218-30; Francis M. Fulkerson to Andrew Johnson, December 21, 1850, in Graf et al., Papers of Johnson, 1: 593-94.

as it could have been. He knew his success had not been expected; but with the Whig dominance in the state, he could anticipate a political appointment. In a post-election analysis the Jonesborough Whig reported that members of Johnson's ". . . own party here, say that if Temple had come out two months sooner, he would have beaten him." Brownlow's paper added, "The ability displayed on the stump has won for him an enviable standing among the whigs, and the respect of his political opponents."¹¹

Following his defeat in the Congressional race, the state legislature considered Temple for the position of Attorney General of the First Judicial Circuit. The General Assembly voted thirteen times before any one of the several candidates garnered a majority. Unfortunately for Temple the legislature selected Hawkins County Whig, Absalom A. Kyle.¹²

¹¹ Bergeron, Antebellum Politics, 70-72, 81-83. The vote totals for the race were as follows: Johnson 5658 votes or 51.43 percent; Temple 5344 votes or 48.57 percent; Jonesborough Whig, August 11, 1847; Robert H. White, ed., Messages of the Governors of Tennessee (8 vols.; Nashville, 1952-1972), 4: 189-93.

¹² Tennessee House Journal 1847, 190; Tennessee Senate Journal 1847, 130-37; Bergeron, Antebellum Politics, 72. Kyle's triumph may be partially attributed to Netherland's loss to Bell in the Senate race. The legislature opted to soothe Netherland's East Tennessee supporters by presenting the attorney generalship to Kyle, a Netherland associate.

After his unsuccessful canvass and his defeat in the legislature, Temple moved to Knoxville, where opportunities for pursuing law flourished. The young attorney soon formed his second business partnership with William H. Sneed, a leading Whig attorney who had practiced with McKinney in Greeneville while Temple studied law. The Temple-Sneed partnership lasted until 1857.

Shortly after Zachary Taylor became president, Temple's friend Senator John Bell and Congressman Meredith P. Gentry urged the Chief Executive to appoint Temple as U. S. District Attorney for East Tennessee. The Whigs were impressed by Temple and they wanted to keep him in their ranks. Though the President's associates assured Bell and Gentry of Temple's appointment, the prize went to Samuel Rodgers instead. Temple expressed astonishment at this turn of events and informed his friend and confidant Brownlow that he would investigate the matter to determine why Rodgers received the appointment. This incident increased Brownlow's and Temple's antagonism toward the "Hawkins County Clique," a group of Whigs led by John Netherland who supported Johnson and detested Brownlow and anyone associated with him. Though he later admitted to applying for the office reluctantly, Temple's resentment toward

Rodgers' appointment reflected a much greater interest in the job than he ever admitted.¹³

Since Senator Bell feared that Brownlow would issue a vicious attack on his failure to procure the appointment for Temple, he immediately began to search for another prize for Temple. Fortunately for Bell, an opportunity arose when President Millard Fillmore (who took office in July 1850 following Taylor's death) announced that he would appoint a special commission to meet with the Indians who lived in Texas and in the territory America had acquired from the Mexican War. Bell strongly urged the selection of Temple, because he realized not only that the Knoxville attorney deserved the reward but also that a possible split among East Tennessee Whigs might occur unless a Brownlow associate received the position. The President appointed Temple but his action precipitated harsh criticism for Bell from the rival Whig paper, the Knoxville Register.¹⁴

Temple traveled to Washington to receive his commission and while there he witnessed the intense debate over the Compromise of 1850. His exposure to the polemical

¹³Knoxville Whig, July 28, 1849; Hans L. Trefousse, Andrew Johnson: A Biography (New York, 1989), 68; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 6-7.

¹⁴Bergeron, Antebellum Politics, 109.

discussions on the expansion of slavery convinced him that the moderate course provided by the proposed compromise was best for the nation. The primary purpose for Temple's visit to the capital was to meet with the President and to join with his fellow Indian Commissioners.¹⁵

Fillmore appointed Temple to serve on an Indian Commission along with Charles S. Todd and Robert B. Campbell. The Commissioner of Indian affairs, Luke Lea, instructed the trio to perform several tasks. He directed them to determine the number and locations of Indian tribes in New Mexico as well as their relations toward each other and the United States. Lea also told the men to learn as much about the Indian culture as possible, including their manners, customs, habits, mode of living, and religious ceremonies. Finally he instructed the group to determine what mineral resources were available and produce an accurate description of the topography of the border between the United States and Mexico in the New Mexico territory. The men received their instructions in October 1850 and soon departed for New Mexico.¹⁶

¹⁵ Temple, Notable Men, 263-69.

¹⁶ Senate Executive Documents, 31 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 1, pp. 153-55 (Ser. 587).

The group stopped in New Orleans to obtain weapons for the trip west. Campbell remained in the city for further instructions while Todd and Temple journeyed to San Antonio, where they spent the winter of 1850-51. In order to utilize their time Temple went to Fort Martin Scott to meet with some Indians, but due to a scheduling fluke the Indians arrived a week before Temple. Consequently they had already departed by the time Temple reached that site.¹⁷

In the meantime Congress had reconvened and reorganized the method by which the government dealt with Indians. All treaties were to be negotiated only by officers and agents of the Indian Bureau, rather than by special commissioners. Because of this change, Indian Commissioner Luke Lea informed Temple, Campbell, and Todd that a continuation of their work would be pointless.¹⁸

The trio spent the rest of the spring and summer in the region around San Antonio and in the fall of 1851 prepared a list of recommendations. They suggested that Congress create an office of Superintendent of Indian

¹⁷ House Executive Documents, 32 Cong., 1 Sess., No. 2, pp. 302-03 (Ser. 636). The trio received a total appropriation of \$30,000 to fund their endeavor.

¹⁸ Ibid., 301-02.

Affairs which would control all the sub-agencies dealing with the Indians. The men felt that this change would make the government's contacts with the Indians more efficient as well as give more credibility to those people working with the Indians. They further believed that such an office would give the Indians more respect for the government and they would be more peaceful and perhaps even adopt a more agrarian lifestyle. The men strongly recommended that the government construct a railroad to California along the Gila River. This rail link to the west needed to be located within America's borders. After writing the report, the Commission disbanded.¹⁹

Following his service on the Indian Commission, Temple returned to Knoxville and renewed his association with Sneed. In 1851 he married Scotia Caledonia Humes, the daughter of David and Eliza Sanderson Humes, who was apparently unrelated to the noted Knoxvillean, Rev. Thomas Humes; and in 1856 their only child, Mary, was born. During those years Temple devoted himself more to his family and to his law practice than politics; even so he kept abreast of governmental developments on both the state and national level.

¹⁹Ibid., 304-06.

Throughout the 1850s Tennessee experienced major changes in its political framework, the Whigs ceased to be a strong and vibrant force on the state (as well as national) level, and new parties developed. Gustavus Henry, in 1853 was the last Whig to seek Tennessee's governorship though the party still dominated the legislature. In 1854 the Kansas-Nebraska Bill created chasms within the Whig Party. The two U. S. Senators (both Whigs) split on the issue, while two of the six Whig Congressmen favored the bill. The party could not tolerate these deep divisions and stood on the brink of collapse, while the Democrats became strongly united behind the legislation.²⁰

The Know Nothing party had been developing for several years; and as the Whigs began to disintegrate, the Know Nothings helped fill the political vacuum. This party formed in the Northeast as an association designed to bar non-native-born Americans and Catholics from political office, limit land ownership rights of foreigners and require a twenty-one year waiting period for immigrants to be naturalized. The primary supporters of Know Nothingism were workers who viewed immigrants as competitors for jobs. Since most of these newcomers to America became

²⁰Bergeron, Antebellum Politics, 103-07, 126-31.

Democrats, other political parties saw Know Nothingism as a base for a national party. When the Whigs realized that their party no longer remained a viable national force, many of them joined the Know Nothing or American Party. In order to keep from being split on the slavery issue they favored the preservation of existing laws on the peculiar institution and its expansion. Temple, who owned several bondsmen, joined the Know Nothing Party since he felt no other party could maintain the Union and slavery.²¹

Temple played a major role in the 1855 elections, because his partner, William Sneed, ran for Congress as a Know Nothing. Sneed entered the race primarily because of Temple's and Brownlow's advice and support. In that year Democrat Andrew Johnson retained the governorship over Temple's friend, Meredith Gentry, while the Know Nothings elected six of their ten Congressional candidates (including Sneed) and they gained control of the legislature.²²

An opening on Tennessee's Supreme Court occurred in 1855, when Judge Archibald W. O. Totten resigned; but Temple

²¹ Clement Eaton, A History of the Old South: The Emergence of a Reluctant Nation (3rd ed.; New York, 1975), 477; Murry Bryant Measamer, "A History of the Know Nothing Party in Tennessee" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1931), 13-14.

²² Bergeron, Antebellum Politics, 126-27.

declined to seek an appointment to the court. Sneed expressed surprise when Temple announced his refusal. The specific reason for Temple's action is unclear, but probably not unrelated is the fact that a judgeship would restrict his political activity and limit his lucrative law practice. Thus joining the court would have dramatically confined his political and financial opportunities.²³

As the presidential election of 1856 neared, Temple hoped, of course, that the Know Nothing candidates Millard Fillmore and Andrew Jackson Donelson would win. Donelson, a nephew of Andrew Jackson, had strong ties to Democratic supporters of the former President, so the Know Nothings became optimistic about the election. However, Donelson had been a Democrat and supported Franklin Pierce in 1852; hence his ties to Know Nothingism were tenuous and in reality his newly-formed party did not strongly unite in favor of Donelson.²⁴

Governor Andrew Johnson had been cool toward James Buchanan's presidential candidacy. In fact, Buchanan was

²³ Benjamin A. Massey to Andrew Johnson, August 13, 1855, in Graf et al., Papers of Johnson, 1: 318; William H. Sneed to Oliver P. Temple, December 14, 1855, Temple MSS; Temple, Notable Men, 16-17.

²⁴ Bergeron, Antebellum Politics, 142-44.

the governor's least favorite contender for the Democratic nomination. But since the Know Nothings were in a weakened condition and the prospect for a Democratic victory in the state appeared to be greater than in nearly a quarter century, Johnson backed Buchanan. The governor also had his eye on a seat in the United States Senate and supporting his party's presidential nominee would certainly improve Johnson's chance for victory.²⁵

Largely because of a divided Know Nothing party and Johnson's intervention in the race, Buchanan carried Tennessee. In the following year Sneed retired from Congress and a struggle erupted to select his successor. H. P. Shannon wrote Temple that since Sneed had declined to become a candidate for re-election, the Whigs need a new nominee. "I have spent my time and money, in the service of my party freely, without fee or reward," declared Shannon, "and now an opportunity presents itself, why should I not be rewarded?" But after Horace Maynard won the nomination, Shannon asserted, "If our party will unite . . . we can elect Maynard." Also in 1857 the Know Nothings nominated Robert Hatton for governor. R. Stevens of Elizabethton predicted his defeat and asked Temple

²⁵Ibid., 138-39.

". . . cannot you and Brownlow and the other leaders about Knoxville in some way get Mr Hatton to decline the canvass and let Haskell [sic] have the tract by consent of all?"

No evidence indicates that Temple opposed Hatton's nomination; in fact Temple supported his party in the campaign.²⁶

During the fall he invited former Governor Neill S. Brown to address a Knoxville gathering of the American (Know Nothing) party. Though Brown could not attend, he warned Temple that the American party's strength in East Tennessee could not insure statewide victory. The former Governor's admonition proved to be an understatement and in the election Democratic gubernatorial candidate, Isham G. Harris, trounced his Know Nothing opponent, Robert Hatton, by an impressive majority. The Know Nothings also lost several seats in the legislature, so they controlled neither the house nor the senate. This election destroyed the credibility of the Know Nothing party as a potent force in statewide elections.²⁷ Refusing to unite with the

²⁶H. P. Shannon to Oliver P. Temple, May 8, June 8, 1857, R. Stevens to Oliver P. Temple, May 9, 1857, Temple MSS.

²⁷Bergeron, Antebellum Politics, 130; Mary E. R. Campbell, The Attitude of Tennesseans Toward the Union, 1847-1861 (New York, 1961), 89-94; Gladys Inez Williams,

Democrats, they along with some former Whigs, formed a party known as the Opposition.

Temple supported the new party and worked for a victory in the upcoming statewide election of 1859. The party leadership worked hard for its candidates and kept internal strife to a minimum. During that campaign, Opposition leaders such as gubernatorial candidate John Netherland, Senator John Bell, Congressman Horace Maynard, Thomas A. R. Nelson, as well as Temple argued that their party offered the best chance for preserving slavery as well as the Union. The party platform supported the maintenance of slavery and the Union and wanted to end the agitation over the slavery question. The party also wanted to lengthen the time for foreigners to be naturalized as well as a highly regulated banking system. Though the Opposition ran a strong campaign, Democrat Harris was re-elected governor and the Democrats maintained control of the legislature.²⁸

Temple realized that the national political scene had grown as fragmented as Tennessee's and the party alignments and realignments promised to make the 1860

"The Life of Horace Maynard" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1931), 16.

²⁸Campbell, Attitude of Tennesseans, 93-95; Temple, Notable Men, 159-60; Bergeron, Antebellum Politics, 131.

presidential race very crucial. This election would not only lay the groundwork for future parties but also determine the status of the Union and slavery. He believed that the Constitution prohibited secession and protected the peculiar institution so Temple supported the candidate whom he thought had similar convictions. As a result he was an early and consistent supporter of a presidential bid by Senator John Bell.

In February 1860 remnants of the Whig, Know Nothing, and Opposition parties met in Nashville to form the Grand National Party, which pledged to support the Constitution and Union and oppose the continuing agitation of the slavery issue. The new party met in May in Baltimore, where the delegates created the Constitutional Union Party. It supported the Constitution of the country, union of the States and execution of the laws. They believed that the Constitution protected the peculiar institution, so enforcing the law would restrict the strife surrounding slavery. Tennessee's delegation to the convention which formally nominated John Bell for president and Edward Everett (a Massachusetts Whig) for vice president included Brownlow, Trigg, Nelson, Maynard, Temple and thirty-one others. Selecting a northern candidate to run with Bell added to his party's claim to "nationality." Since most

Constitutional Unionists believed that Congress would decide the election, a ticket which represented the nation's two major sections would strengthen Bell's position.²⁹

Because of his prestige and excellent oratorical skills, Temple became a Bell elector for the Second Congressional District, a position which provided many opportunities to speak at political rallies. Throughout the campaign, Temple often debated Breckinridge's elector, James D. Thomas. Temple's rhetorical abilities and use of logical arguments destroyed his opponent. J. C. Gallaher of Montgomery reported: "Col. Temple is making a fine impression exceeding the expectations of his most sanguine friends. . . ." ³⁰

As the canvass progressed, Oliver Temple's reputation as a Union man spread throughout the region. He stated that the best direction for the nation was to select the moderate candidate for president and vice president, Bell and Everett. Temple along with John Baxter, Horace Maynard

²⁹Williams, "Maynard," 18; Oliver P. Temple, East Tennessee and the Civil War (Cincinnati, 1899), 122-24; Campbell, Attitude of Tennesseans, 237; Daniel W. Crofts, Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis (Chapel Hill, 1989), 74-79.

³⁰J. C. Gallaher to William G. Brownlow, August 11, 1860, Temple MSS.

and others invited T. H. Watts of Tuskegee, Alabama to speak at the mass meeting of the Constitutional Union Party at Knoxville. Watts declined the request, but declared that ". . . the only hope of defeating Lincoln and his cohorts is by a Union heart and hand, of all lovers of the Country in the support of Bell & Everett." Constitutional Unionists argued that if Southerners and moderate Northerners supported their party Lincoln could be defeated, otherwise a Republican victory was virtually assured.³¹

The four major presidential candidates in 1860 included: Constitutional Unionist John Bell, Southern Democrat John C. Breckinridge, Northern Democrat Stephen A. Douglas, and Republican Abraham Lincoln. Though Bell won the electoral votes of Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee, Breckinridge carried the rest of the slave states except Missouri, where Douglas triumphed. Lincoln garnered a majority of the nation's electoral votes, however, and the presidency. Shortly after the "Railsplitter's" victory several Southern states began to consider seriously the creation of a Southern Confederacy. Fearing that perhaps

³¹Knoxville Whig, August 20, 1860; T. H. Watts to John Baxter, Horace Maynard, Oliver P. Temple, James C. Luttrell, and William G. Brownlow, September 18, 1860, Temple MSS.

even Tennessee might leave the Union, Temple began working to prevent the state from seceding. He addressed the residents of Sevier County, warning them of the dangers of disunion and pleading that the Constitution must hold the country together. Temple believed that the best way to preserve slavery was to remain in the Union and that secession would probably result in economic disaster for the South. He worried that Lincoln's election would provoke Southerners to oppose the national government and justify secession. Temple's friend A. A. Doak opined, "It seems to me all loyalty to our government is gone and that the last thread that held the states together has been worn away in the late canvass." Thomas H. Wiley was not quite as bleak when he stated that ". . . though defeated we should not be dismayed--but continue to dispute every inch of ground with the C atalines of our day and cling to the Union as the Palladium of our safety."³²

A group of heavily Whig counties surrounding Knoxville provided a strong antisecession nucleus which influenced the attitudes of East Tennesseans for Unionism.

³²Eaton, The Old South, 489-90; A. A. Doak to Oliver P. Temple, November 16, 1860, T. H. Wiley to Oliver P. Temple, November 27, 1860, Temple MSS; Temple, East Tennessee, 132-38.

Nevertheless, Knoxville secessionists met on November 26, 1860 to consider the nation's state of affairs and to adopt resolutions which supported secession. Several Unionists tried to determine how the disunionists could be defeated; but because the secessionists dominated the assembly, the Unionists schemed to have the meeting adjourned before it voted on the resolutions. John M. Fleming accomplished that feat with some skillful parliamentary procedures. When the meeting reconvened Unionists dominated and defeated the proposals.³³

Lincoln's victory forced the South to grapple with secession, especially after South Carolina left the Union. Governor Isham G. Harris, an ardent secessionist, requested a special legislative session to begin the process for holding a convention to determine Tennessee's action on disunion. The legislature set an election for February 9, 1861 to vote for or against a convention as well as to select delegates, thereby preventing the necessity for a second election if the convention was approved. Horace Maynard declared to Temple, "I read with great pleasure

³³ Crofts, Reluctant Confederates, 24-25, 131; Temple, East Tennessee, 152-61; Charles F. Bryan, Jr., "The Civil War in East Tennessee: A Social, Political and Economic Study" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Tennessee, 1978), 35.

your letter as published in the Whig . . . I . . . incur the opinion that our part of the state is still loyal to the Union." Nevertheless he soon told Temple, "Hope you will take the field actively & persistently, let . . . Knox & Sevier give such a vote as will be a quieter [?] to Disunion for a time at least."³⁴

Unionists such as Temple and Brownlow traversed East Tennessee denouncing the proposed convention and asked voters to select possible delegates who were devoted to the nation's preservation. Simultaneously, secessionists worked diligently to push Tennessee out of the Union. In the February plebiscite, Tennessee rejected the proposed convention by nearly 69,000 (55 percent) to 58,000 (45 percent). Subsequent to the election Brownlow's Whig gloated, "The county of Knox has covered herself all over with glory, by her vindication of the Union, her devotion to the Constitution and her crushing repudiation of the Hell born monster secession." Though the state had soundly

³⁴Crofts, Reluctant Confederates, 144, 147; Bryan, "Civil War in East Tennessee," 36; Horace Maynard to Oliver P. Temple, January 8, 19, 1861, Temple MSS.

rejected the secessionists' first attempt to join the Confederacy, the matter had not been permanently settled.³⁵

Lincoln became president on March 4, 1861, and Tennesseans closely observed his response to secession which he claimed was illegal. After he requested 75,000 volunteers to smash the rebellion, precipitated by the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter, secessionists tried for the second time to push Tennessee into the Confederacy. Harris revamped the strategy for disunion and instead of proposing that the state join the Confederacy he wanted Tennessee to be independent from both the Union and Confederacy. When the populace saw the state would be in danger of a Northern invasion, he calculated, they would favor uniting with the Confederates.³⁶ The legislature, as expected, adopted a "Declaration of Independence,"

³⁵James W. Patton, Unionism and Reconstruction in Tennessee, 1860-1869 (Chapel Hill, 1939), 11; Bryan, "Civil War in East Tennessee," 36-37; Thomas L. Connelly, Army of the Heartland: The Army of Tennessee, 1861-1862 (Baton Rouge, 1967), 26; Knoxville Whig, February 16, 1861. The voting for Knox county delegates resulted as follows: the three Union candidates, Temple 3281, Connally F. Trigg 3268, John Baxter 3252; their respective secessionist challengers, James Paxton 226, William Walker 266, William Sneed 237. Temple, East Tennessee, 178.

³⁶Connelly, Army of the Heartland, 26; Bryan, "Civil War in East Tennessee," 37-38.

though it permitted the state's electorate to vote on the action June 8.

Temple and his Unionist friends again went to the people urging them to rescind the legislature's brash action, but their task was much greater than in the first secession vote. Thomas N. Frazier, of Pikeville, who described Temple as a true and faithful friend to the country, asked the Knoxvilleian how he would direct the Union party in East Tennessee. Frazier related that ". . . all the leaders of the Union party in Middle and West Tennessee seem to have given up and do not know how to act." As a result, the secessionists were pulling the state closer to the Confederacy.³⁷

As Tennessee's secession struggle continued, several attempts were made for a national compromise. Kentucky Senator John J. Crittenden proposed an extension of the Missouri Compromise line west to California, but it was defeated. Maynard told Temple, "There is no doubt in the world that three fourths of the northern vote would be for the Crittenden proposition. Petitions, public meetings,

³⁷Thomas N. Frazier to Oliver P. Temple, May 18, 1861, Temple MSS.

private letters . . . all concur in that feeling." He added, "But they say & say truly we must have time to act. This the Secessionists do not mean to give them." Moderates held a Washington Peace Conference, at Virginia's request, to prevent the nation from dissolving, but its delegates rejected all proposals for compromise. Temple strongly supported some agreement to preserve national unity, such as a Constitutional amendment protecting slavery where it existed. But in his opinion the hope of peace was destroyed by the haste of the secession leaders.³⁸

As national leaders attempted to conciliate the North and South, Tennesseans looked to their June referendum which would direct the state's action on secession. In mid-May several prominent Unionists including Temple, Brownlow, Baxter and Trigg decided that a convention of East Tennessee Unionists was needed in order to demonstrate a strong and unified front against secession. Both Brownlow's Whig and word of mouth spread the news of the upcoming gathering which would be held in Knoxville on May 30. The five hundred convention delegates heard

³⁸James M. McPherson, Ordeal By Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction (New York, 1982), 134-35; Eaton, The Old South, 496; Temple, East Tennessee, 297-98; Horace Maynard to Oliver P. Temple, January 19, 1861, Temple MSS.

speeches strongly denouncing secession but the resolutions adopted by the assembly merely protested the action of the state government yet proposed no means to resist. The assembly also denounced the secession leaders as well as the state's leadership which pulled Tennessee toward disunion. It blamed Governor Harris and his associates rather than the people for the state's predicament. The convention agreed that the June referendum was illegal and that the state legislature did not have the power to push the state into the military league with the Confederacy.³⁹

In his final speech before the referendum, Temple declared there was no justifiable cause for secession, that facts showed the movement could not succeed, and that slavery was safest in the Union. Though the East Tennessee Unionists worked hard to prevent the voters from ratifying the legislative action, few doubted the final statewide outcome.⁴⁰

Between the time Lincoln became president and the attack on Fort Sumter, Tennessee's public sentiment remained

³⁹Bryan, "Civil War in East Tennessee," 39-40, 50; Temple, East Tennessee, 342.

⁴⁰Campbell, Attitude of Tennesseans, 190-93, 201.

essentially unchanged. Even the fort's collapse did not significantly alter the people's support for the Union. But Lincoln's proclamation calling for 75,000 volunteers to quash the rebellion sealed the fate of Tennessee Unionists. Lincoln's troop request confirmed secessionists' fears of a Union attempt to subjugate the South. Leading Unionists were chagrined at the President's proclamation. An embittered Horace Maynard maintained that Lincoln's proclamation did more to promote disunion than any other cause. Though a majority of East Tennesseans still opposed secession, the public sentiment in the state's two other regions strongly favored secession. In the June 8th vote nearly seven out of ten voters opted for secession.⁴¹

Most East Tennesseans, however, refused to accept the voters' decision and immediately began to plan their action in the crisis. By mid-June many Unionists who met earlier in Knoxville moved their convention to Greeneville, because of Confederate troops stationed in Knoxville.

⁴¹ Horace Maynard to Edward Bates, April 18[?], 1861, in Crofts, Reluctant Confederates, 313-34, 341-45; Bergeron, Paths of the Past, 57. The state's divisions voted as follows: East Tennessee, 32,923 (68 percent) to 14,780 (32 percent) against secession; Middle Tennessee, 58,265 (88 percent) to 8,198 (12 percent) for disunion; West Tennessee, 29,127 (83 percent) to 6,117 (17 percent) for secession. Bryan, "Civil War in East Tennessee," 53.

The convention chair, Thomas A. R. Nelson, proposed that East Tennessee and any Middle Tennessee county which desired to cooperate would be Tennessee's legal government as long as the revolution (secession) endured. When first introduced, the convention enthusiastically received Nelson's plan, but certain delegates including Horace Maynard, John Baxter, and Temple opposed the chairman's proposal. These men then offered several more moderate resolutions. The divided convention continued to debate but the next day its cautious business committee recommended the adoption of the milder proposals. Debate again raged until Maynard pleaded for moderation. His speech quelled the discussions and the convention adopted the more temperate resolutions.⁴²

The proposals expressed an "earnest desire" that East Tennessee not become involved in civil war; condemned the legislative action proclaiming the state's independence and joining the military league; and created a three-man commission to request permission from the General Assembly to form a separate state for the eastern counties. Perhaps as a gesture to the Nelson faction the resolutions also provided for a convention to meet at Kingston should

⁴²Bryan, "Civil War in East Tennessee," 58-61.

its president deem necessary a meeting to consider future action. In compliance with the third resolution the convention appointed Oliver Temple, John Netherland, and James McDonald to prepare a memorial asking the legislature that East Tennessee and any Middle Tennessee counties who so desired be permitted to form a new state.⁴³

Most Middle and West Tennesseans were displeased by the spirit expressed by the convention, and feared the group would bring the horrors of civil strife to the state. They saw the convention as bitter men who sought revenge by tearing the state apart, though they generally favored a conciliatory policy toward the East Tennesseans. Governor Harris expressed a similar attitude, because he wanted to win the support of East Tennessee voters. Harris planned to seek re-election in the August 1 vote; and he feared he might lose to the Unionist candidate William Polk, because the Unionists had campaigned hard for Polk. Moreover, many of Harris's supporters were in the army and could not vote. He felt he needed as much support in East Tennessee as possible since that region posed the biggest threat to his victory. Harris feared that if he lost the governorship, Polk might try to take the state

⁴³Ibid., 59-60.

back into the Union and he wanted to prevent that from occurring.⁴⁴

As the debate on the convention raged, Temple, Netherland, and McDonald earnestly drew up a memorial for the legislature which included the following resolutions: East Tennesseans desired to stay out of a civil war; they refused to accept the "Declaration of Independence;" and they desired to form a state consisting of East Tennessee and any Middle Tennessee counties that wanted to cooperate.⁴⁵

The legislature received a copy of the Unionists' memorial and, as expected, denied the proposal, but the struggle against secession continued in East Tennessee. The strife in East Tennessee grew so intense that Confederate Secretary of War Leroy P. Walker in July 1861 urged Harris to send two regiments to the region to stop the rebellion. The Governor, however, favored the use of his state's troops in East Tennessee to demonstrate that the Confederates were there to protect rather than

⁴⁴ Ibid., 60; Temple, East Tennessee, 568-69.

⁴⁵ James W. Fertig, The Secession and Reconstruction of Tennessee (Chicago, 1898), 29; Temple, East Tennessee, 348-53, 569-71; Bryan, "Civil War in East Tennessee," 60-65; Campbell, Attitude of Tennesseans, 208.

to intimidate the people. Therefore since May he stationed only fifteen companies of state troops in the region.⁴⁶

Since the Confederates occupied East Tennessee, the region's Unionists determined to make a strong showing in the statewide August 1 election. The Unionists hoped that by garnering a large vote for their gubernatorial candidate as well as winning several Congressional seats, the state and Confederate governments would treat the area with lenient policies. Unfortunately for the Unionists, Democrat Isham Harris triumphed in a landslide, though East Tennesseans supported William H. Polk. Thomas A. R. Nelson, Horace Maynard and George W. Bridges were elected to the U. S. Congress over their Confederate opponents, but of the three Congressional victors, only Maynard arrived in Washington without being incarcerated. The Confederates captured Nelson in Virginia, while Bridges remained in Athens under house arrest for over a year. Subsequent to the statewide vote the Knoxville Register boasted, "The last tie that has bound us is now severed, as evrey [sic] loyal citizen will, know and feel that his is now a citizen of the Confederate States."⁴⁷

⁴⁶Connelly, Army of the Heartland, 41-43.

⁴⁷Bryan, "Civil War in East Tennessee," 68; Connelly,

The Unionists' vote prompted Harris to abandon an early policy of conciliation and to restrict East Tennessee's Union activities. On August 8 Governor Harris ordered General Felix Zollicoffer, an old Whig friend of Temple's, to assume command of the district. Harris also sent several thousand soldiers into the region. The influx of Confederate troops provoked Unionists to fight back and East Tennessee became victimized by a civil war within itself. Some Unionist leaders sought refuge in the North, though most hoped their absence from the Volunteer State would be brief.⁴⁸

Oliver P. Temple joined the exodus when he fled the state with his young law student Felix A. Reeve. He left behind his wife and five-year-old daughter, claiming the trip was too dangerous for them. The purpose of his venture was to discover for himself what was going on in the North and to determine the prospects of suppressing the rebellion, though he told his associates he intended to see his western land holdings and pay the taxes. Temple's desire to know first hand about the situation in the North seems

Army of the Heartland, 41; Knoxville Register August 3, 1861.

⁴⁸Bryan, "Civil War in East Tennessee," 72.

reasonable; yet the peculiar timing of the trip, the day after East Tennessee defied the state by selecting representatives to the U. S. Congress and in the midst of other Union leaders departing the area, prompts the assumption that he probably fled for his own protection. Perhaps he felt that taking his family would decrease the chances for a safe trip out of the Confederacy, but leaving them in Rebel-occupied Knoxville was unconscionable.⁴⁹

Temple traveled first to Nashville, where he was nearly arrested by the Confederate's Vigilance Committee for his pro-Union opinions. He then fled to Louisville, Kentucky, where Associate Supreme Court Justice John M. Harlan asked Temple to speak at a Unionist gathering. But fearing that the Confederates might seek revenge on his family or on himself when he returned to Tennessee, he declined the invitation.⁵⁰

The next stop on Temple's journey was St. Louis. He felt quite unsafe about being there, however, because of the strong Confederate influence. Temple therefore returned to Louisville, thinking that he would continue

⁴⁹ Oliver P. Temple, "Trip to Washington in 1861," handwritten essay, undated, Temple MSS.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

back to Knoxville. But while in the Kentucky city, he met East Tennessee Unionists Perez Dickinson and John Williams, who were traveling to Washington. Temple then decided to accompany his two friends on their journey.⁵¹

Shortly after their arrival in the capital, they were escorted by Senator Andrew Johnson to the White House for a brief conference with President Lincoln. The group spent several days in the capital region, during which time they visited General Robert Anderson and discussed Federal strategies for capturing Tennessee. Temple, Dickinson, and Williams then traveled to New York City, where the trio sensed a strong sympathy for Copperheads. Temple believed these "Peace Democrats" were disloyal to the country and he blamed the Democratic Party for New York's alleged pro-Confederate stance.⁵²

In the meantime, General Felix Zollicoffer, the Confederate leader in Knoxville, promised to avoid any unnecessary conflict in East Tennessee and urged Unionists (such as Temple) who had fled the region to return. He requested simply that the Unionists submit peacefully to Confederate authority and control. Temple then returned

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

to Knoxville and took an oath of allegiance to the Confederacy, in order that he might live a fairly normal life. The Confederates maintained martial law over East Tennessee through 1862, though the Federals gained control of the state government in February.⁵³

In early March, Lincoln appointed Senator Johnson as Military Governor of Tennessee. Lincoln expected Johnson to form a provisional government, call a state convention to depose Governor Harris, and form a new permanent government. Johnson received no specific instructions detailing the method to accomplish the feat, but he was authorized to draw on a fund to assist in the organization of a home guard to facilitate his task.⁵⁴

He attempted to win the people's confidence and support by issuing to the people of Tennessee an appeal which promised leniency to those Confederates who agreed to support the Union. Johnson's speech did not convince many Tennesseans to return to the Union, since most hoped for a return of the Confederate army; and they continued their opposition to the Federal government. However, after the

⁵³Bryan, "Civil War in East Tennessee," 76, 78; Fertig, Secession and Reconstruction, 33.

⁵⁴Trefousse, Andrew Johnson, 154.

battle of Shiloh many Tennesseans felt abandoned by the Confederate military forces and the state experienced a resurging Unionist spirit. Although Unionist sentiment was growing in Tennessee many Unionists, such as Emerson Etheridge and Oliver Temple, criticized the Governor for not organizing a civil government sooner than he did. These leaders tried unsuccessfully to propel William B. Campbell to the governorship in 1863.⁵⁵

The Confederates controlled most of East Tennessee until General Burnside entered Knoxville in September 1863. Temple's reputation as a Unionist prompted Burnside to inform Secretary of War Edwin Stanton that, "He is a gentle man in whom I have the utmost confidence as to integrity of character & purpose. . . ." The Federal general added that Temple may ". . . be able to give you much valuable information as to the condition of this people their loyalty--the raising of troops &c." In November, however, Temple, along with several other prominent Unionists, fled the city for a few days when the Confederates threatened to recapture it. The Confederates needed Knoxville to

⁵⁵"Appeal to the People of Tennessee," March 18, 1862, in Graf et al., Papers of Johnson, 5: 209-12; Fertig, Secession and Reconstruction, 38-39; Robert W. Winston, Andrew Johnson: Plebeian and Patriot (New York, 1928), 240.

maintain the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad, a vital link between the Upper and Lower South. Knoxville was also strategic to the Rebels, because holding it would help secure southwestern Virginia. After the Confederate victory at Chickamauga, the Rebels under Longstreet moved toward Knoxville. The ensuing battle resulted in a Confederate defeat and the Unionists who had fled the city returned.⁵⁶

By early 1864 many Unionists began preparations for the presidential election. The Republicans (who were also known as Unionists) nominated Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson for president and vice-president. The Democrats selected George B. McClellan and George Pendleton. Many Tennessee Unionists favored the Democrats; so in order to insure a Lincoln-Johnson victory in Tennessee, Governor Johnson (with the approval of men such as Temple and Brownlow) adopted for the state a test oath which disfranchised the pro-peace Unionists. Though the Unionist/Republican party carried the state, Congress refused to accept Tennessee's vote since it was still

⁵⁶Digby Gordon Seymour, Divided Loyalties: Fort Sanders and the Civil War in East Tennessee (Knoxville, 1963), 117-19; Lucile Deadrick, ed., Heart of the Valley: A History of Knoxville, Tennessee (Knoxville, 1976), 24-26; A. E. Burnside to E. M. Stanton, October 8, 1863, Temple MSS.

separated from the Union. Subsequent to that election Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator remarked, "It is now time for Tennesseans to think seriously of re-organizing their state government. . . ." The paper argued that the only open and practicable way to accomplish that feat ". . . is to hold a State Constitutional Convention, to adapt the Constitution to the demands of the age and to the new circumstances by which we are, as a people, surrounded." Two weeks later the Whig reported, "In pursuant of the notice heretofore given, a large and enthusiastic Union Convention convened in Knoxville on Monday the 5th. . . ." The delegates, which included Temple, adopted resolutions that approved the election of Lincoln and Johnson and supported William G. Brownlow to be the governor. By mid-December many Unionists felt that a new civil government could be established and they planned to meet in Nashville to begin the process of forming a loyal civilian state government. Because of poor weather conditions and an impending attack on the state capital by Confederate General Hood, the convention did not meet until January of 1865. By the time the convention assembled, Temple had earned the reputation as a strong

political leader and in the decades following the Civil War he played a major role in Tennessee's Republican Party.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ McPherson, Ordeal by Fire, 440-41; Thomas B. Alexander, Political Reconstruction in Tennessee (Nashville, 1950), 15-16; Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator, November 23, December 7, 1864.

CHAPTER 2

RADICAL AND REPUBLICAN

Temple played a significant role in Tennessee politics during his first forty-five years, but he made most of his important contributions after the Civil War. The political alliances and friendships he had forged during his work with the Whigs, the Americans, and the Unionists catapulted Temple to a leading role in East Tennessee's postbellum Republican party. Temple also became respected more as an individual in his own right, rather than merely as a close associate of William G. Brownlow.

Temple's independence stemmed partially from Brownlow's absence from Knoxville while he served as governor, 1865-1869, and then as U. S. Senator, 1869-1875. Adding to his autonomy was the fact that Temple had become a very wealthy man. In 1867 he earned more money than any other Knox County resident.¹ But perhaps the chief reason for Temple's prominence was the fame he had earned as an ardent Unionist. His association with the Knoxville and Greeneville Conventions, for example, as well as his anti-Confederate activities during the war, gave him a

¹ Lucile Deadrick, ed., Heart of the Valley: A History of Knoxville, Tennessee (Knoxville, 1976), 34.

statewide reputation as a fervent Unionist. Following that conflict he capitalized on his fame.

Soon after the war ended Governor Brownlow appointed him chancellor, a position he held for twelve years. He also received countless urgings to run for national office, but Temple always refused these suggestions and remained in Knoxville. He preferred the role as a confidant to several leading politicians, such as Brownlow, Leonidas C. Houk and Thomas A. R. Nelson. Following his tenure as chancellor, Temple was appointed by President Chester Alan Arthur as Knoxville postmaster, replacing fellow Republican William Rule. Later, after his retirement from the postal service, Temple began authoring books about his native East Tennessee. In something of an autobiography Temple described significant Tennessee politicians as well as a history of East Tennessee, emphasizing that region's role in the Civil War. Temple's Notable Men of Tennessee provides a mini-biography of numerous significant Tennesseans who lived between 1830 and 1875. His works essentially justify what Temple did as well as magnify or condemn the men with whom he had been associated. Whether or not he wrote books to vindicate himself and his associates, Temple's political interests during his later years turned from his present to his past. Because

Temple's career as a writer extends beyond the scope of his activities in the Republican Party, it will be treated in a succeeding chapter.

When the fighting finally ended in the Volunteer State, Tennessee Unionists began forming a new civilian state government. Their initial convention met in January 1865 and consisted of some five hundred delegates. Colonel Samuel Rodgers of East Tennessee chaired the assembly. He declared that the meeting's purpose was to nominate delegates for a state constitutional convention which would reorganize state government. But because of some parliamentary procedures and strong support from Governor and Vice President-elect Andrew Johnson, the convention itself formed a new government. Members of this assembly did not represent a cross-section of the state. A significant number of delegates were either self-appointed or selected by questionable means. Although the Knoxville Whig claimed that, "The Convention sat six days and was composed of a body of able, patriotic and truly loyal men," Temple wrote that "the plan adopted to get the state back into 'practical relations' with the general Government, was the most irregular that could have been chosen." He continued that if the Military Governor, instead of calling a mass meeting had ordered an election of delegates to

a convention in a regular way, and if that assembly had proceeded in a dignified manner to revise the Constitution, the document and government it formed would have been more credible.²

Temple commended Leonidas C. Houk for being one of the few persons at the meeting ". . . who had the courage to oppose the alteration of the Constitution in that irregular and illegal manner." Many delegates soon left the meeting since they opposed the assembly's becoming an actual constitutional convention or because they became frustrated by the numerous delays. The remaining representatives set an election for February 22 when the voters would decide the fate of a constitutional amendment banning slavery. The electorate which consisted only of

²James W. Fertig, The Secession and Reconstruction of Tennessee (Chicago, 1898), 55-58; Thomas B. Alexander, Political Reconstruction in Tennessee (Nashville, 1950), 15-16, 19-27; Oliver P. Temple, Notable Men of Tennessee From 1833-1875: Their Times and Their Contemporaries (New York, 1912), 410-11; Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator January 25, 1865. Samuel R. Rodgers should not be confused with Samuel A. Rodgers, a business partner with Temple. For a sketch of the Speaker's life see Robert M. McBride and Daniel M. Robison, eds., Biographical Directory of the Tennessee General Assembly (2 vols.; Nashville, 1975-79), 1: 633-34.

unconditional Unionists who had taken an oath required of all voters in the 1864 presidential race, also was asked to approve a schedule that included the following: nullify disunion, repudiate the state's actions under the Confederate constitution, and approve specific provisions for future political action. The voters subsequently adopted the constitutional amendment and other proposals by a margin of 25,293 to 10. The small and lopsided vote may be primarily attributed to the limited electorate as well as a boycott by many anti-Brownlow or Conservative Unionists. Brownlow's Whig exaggerated the total when it reported, "The vote for Ratification carried on the 22d ult. by something near 60,000 votes, a majority of all the voters in the State at that time."³

Since this vote met the requirements of President Lincoln's "10 percent plan," Governor Johnson authorized the organization of civil government. The state held elections on March 4 which selected a General Assembly and governor. As expected, William Brownlow was elected governor, there being no other candidate. The pro-Radical

³ Temple, Notable Men, 131, 411; Richard O. Curry, ed., Radicalism, Racism, and Party Realignment: The Border States During Reconstruction (Baltimore, 1969), 45-47; Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator, March 8, 1865.

Whig compared the February and March elections when it declared, "The ticket for Governor and members of the General Assembly, it is believed, has carried by a still larger vote, and is of course elected." The legislature which convened on April 3 became known as the Brownlow Assembly. Nearly half of its members had been delegates to the January convention. The governor-elect assumed office on April 5. Brownlow and Speaker of the State Senate Samuel R. Rodgers corresponded frequently with their friend and confidant Oliver P. Temple. These men led the faction in state politics known as "Radicals" and favored a strict Reconstruction which prohibited former Rebels from assuming leadership while their opposition, "Conservatives," had a more lenient attitude. Subsequent to Brownlow's victory the Whig reprinted from the Cincinnati Times, "In Tennessee the work of re-organization is going forward with complete success."⁴

Following Lincoln's death in April 1865, Johnson became President and the Tennessee Conservatives favored most of his Reconstruction policies. Temple did not always

⁴E. Merton Coulter, William G. Brownlow: Fighting Parson of the Southern Highlands (Knoxville, 1971 [1937]), 261; Curry, Radicalism, 50; Paul H. Bergeron, Paths of the Past: Tennessee 1770-1970 (Knoxville, 1979), 65; Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator, March 8, April 12, 1865.

agree with some of the extremism espoused by his friends, yet he supported their Radical position much more frequently than he did the Conservatives' plan.⁵

The foundation of Radical Reconstruction in Tennessee was the franchise bill which limited the influence of ex-Rebels in the state's government. Before the legislature adopted the bill, Rodgers informed Temple that "I do not apprehend any difficulty in the Senate, but I fear the result in the House. . . ." He added that as he understood the situation, ". . . should we fail or neglect to disfranchise rebels, the state of Ten will at once be put under a Millitary [sic] Governor, and our members of Congress will not be admitted. . . ." Rodgers added that if that should occur, ". . . we of East Tennessee will set up for ourselves, and at once form a constitution and ask for admittance into the Government of the U. S." The General Assembly approved the measure by which the mass of former Confederates lost voting rights for five years while the Rebel leaders could not vote for fifteen years.⁶ Radicals such as Rodgers hoped that Congress would see

⁵Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 113-21.

⁶Samuel R. Rodgers to Oliver P. Temple, May 13, 1865, Temple MSS, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville.

the legislation favorably and quickly re-admit the state to the Union.⁶

The legislature then selected two U. S. Senators, one from East and one from Middle Tennessee. Judge David T. Patterson, Andrew Johnson's son-in-law, defeated Radical Horace Maynard, while Joseph Fowler was selected over William Wisener from Middle Tennessee. Because Temple and Maynard were allies and Patterson was a strong supporter of Johnson, Temple was disappointed at Maynard's defeat for the Senate. Temple also had favored Wisener over Fowler.⁷

The first statewide election after Brownlow took office was held in August 1865. Temple's friend Maynard, a Radical, triumphed in the Knoxville area district but Conservatives won several of the Congressional races. The campaign demonstrated that Temple's philosophy of radicalism prevailed in the Knoxville region but did not dominate in other areas of Tennessee. In fact, of the eight Congressmen elected, only three were Radicals; Brownlow, however discounted several county returns and thereby enabled Radicals to take four seats in Congress.⁸

⁷Curry, Radicalism, 51; Temple, Notable Men, 141.

⁸Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 78-79, 96-97.

Brownlow presented the state assembly with a variety of issues which he felt needed legislative action. The most serious order of business was the need for a revised franchise bill. Brownlow and his Radicals wanted tighter control over the electorate, because the results of the August elections demonstrated that Conservatives enjoyed considerable support. Temple endorsed Brownlow's efforts, since he felt that the Radicals needed greater voter backing because of the ruthless vindictiveness of Brownlow's political antagonists. The assembly adopted little significant legislation that fall, but in January 1866 it started debating the franchise measure.⁹

Prior to the legislative debate Maynard lamented, "I am sorry to see such a disposition to exhibit a hostility to the Government, & under the pretext of fighting 'radicals' to play into the hands of the rebels." He asserted, "It merely prolongs the misery of the southern people by constantly irritating the wound which left to itself would soon heal." In the meantime Temple prepared to travel to Washington D. C. to testify before the Congressional Committee on Reconstruction. He invited Brownlow to accompany him but the governor declined, saying:

⁹ Temple, Notable Men, 319-20.

". . . I will not be able to go with you North, and I very much regret it." Brownlow had to remain in Tennessee because "The engraving of the Bonds will not be completed nearly; and when they are ready, the Comptroller, Secty of State and I will all have to . . . sign the Bonds, and apply the Seal of the State." Brownlow also asserted that "This Legislature will not adjourn until in March, and there are, in the House, about 19 malignant rebels and copperheads, and in the Senate about 5, who would take advantage of my absence, and seek to stab me." Hence, he remarked, "They must be watched." Brownlow continued to inform Temple that "They have called a State Rebel Mass Meeting . . . at which all rebeldom will be out, declaring for Johnson and against Radicals."¹⁰

That Temple supported the Radicals is not questioned, but he was generally less emphatic than the headstrong Brownlow. At Washington, Temple answered numerous inquiries from the Reconstruction Committee regarding various facets of Tennessee. When asked about the present condition of affairs in the Volunteer State Temple responded, "During the last three or four months a large portion of East

¹⁰Horace Maynard to Oliver P. Temple, December 12, 1865, William G. Brownlow to Oliver P. Temple, January 25, 1866, Temple MSS.

Tennessee has been very quiet, considering the condition of the country previous to that time." He reported that the disorder was restricted to ". . . such acts of personal lawlessness as always grow out of the demoralization resulting from some years of war."¹¹

When questioned if a disunion party still existed in Tennessee, Temple responded that in East Tennessee, ". . . the Union party was very largely in the ascendancy [sic] during the war and up to the present time. The rebels were very hostile, very bitter and very proscriptive until the surrender of General Lee and General Johnston." But, Temple argued, since the war most East Tennessee rebels ". . . have expressed a determination to submit to the laws and government of the United States. . . ." Temple admitted that he knew ". . . some original secessionists who still would desire the overthrow of the government of the United States if they had it in their power. . . ." But he thought that most of them ". . . are so overwhelmed by . . . the disasters that have befallen their cause, that they utterly despair of accomplishing anything of the kind."¹²

¹¹House Executive Documents, 39 Cong., 1 Sess; No. 1, pp. 122-25 (Ser. 1273).

¹²Ibid., 123-24.

The committee quizzed Temple on the possibility of secessionists and their sympathizers securing control of the state if all whites were granted the franchise. He feared that they would dominate the government but it ". . . would depend somewhat upon the policy adopted by our party at the North." For example, "If a very ultra and extreme policy is adopted at the north it will in all probability . . . have a tendency to increase their numbers. If a milder policy is adopted, it will have a tendency to strengthen the Union element."¹³

When questioned about what would happen to the freedmen if all whites could vote, Temple thought that there would probably be a considerable number of instances ". . . where the freedmen would be very badly treated. . . ." But he believed that ". . . a majority of the people of the state would be disposed to respect their rights even if all restraints were removed." He also said, "I myself think that a majority of the southern people entertain a feeling of kindness for those who were formerly their slaves." Temple also testified that ". . . I have never in my life been an ultra man upon the subject of slavery, and have always preferred my government to the institution

¹³Ibid., 124.

of slavery. . . ." Temple went so far as to brag that ". . . I was perfectly willing to give up the institution of slavery." He included in his testimony on the peculiar institution that "I do not think that there is the same enmity towards the blacks upon the part of the southern people . . . as is commonly supposed in the north."¹⁴

The interrogators sought Temple's opinion ". . . as to the effect of admitting the present delegation of representatives now elected from the State of Tennessee." He responded that ". . . to admit the representatives would unquestionably strengthen the loyal men there very much, and to reject them would unquestionably strengthen the disloyal element."¹⁵

While describing the secessionists near the end of his testimony Temple informed the committee, "I think their hearts are just where they were four years ago; but a great many of them are acquiescing in the present condition of things. . . ." The Committee asked if these individuals were generally men of capacity and influence and consideration. Temple responded in the affirmative. He added that, "I have had conversation with a great many

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid., 125.

of them, and they are men generally of standing and respectability, or were so before the war." Temple also testified that, "I have not come in contact with many of the common refugees, and I know very little about their sentiments."¹⁶

The Knoxvilleian then returned home where he encountered considerable dispute between ex-Confederates and Unionists. As Horace Maynard noted, "Why cannot our rebels & the anti-radical folks generally understand that all their peculiar movements [?] only tend to make things worse." The Congressman fumed, "That convention of the 22nd attended as it was by the action of their friends in the Legislature has done no little mischief, in casting doubt upon our state, whether we are still in rebellion or not." Temple's remarks to the Committee particularly as they related to the status of secessionists, prompted considerable debate. Maynard commented in April that "I am surprised at the importance attempted to be attached to your testimony, with the consternation attempted to be put upon it." He added, "Nothing it seems to me could stimulate it, but a determination to search out a case against a union man."¹⁷

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Horace Maynard to Oliver P. Temple, March 21, April 10, 1866, Temple MSS. The convention Maynard referred to was a Union State Convention held in Nashville to support

The struggle between Radicals and Conservatives continued in the Volunteer State and in the March elections for county officials Conservatives were quite successful, particularly in Middle and West Tennessee. In his typical dogmatic style Brownlow lamented, "In Middle and West Tennessee the rebels have made a clean sweep in the county elections, turning out all Union men appointed by Johnson and myself." This added to Brownlow's concern for his political survival and confirmed the urgency for new legislation limiting suffrage.¹⁸

In the meantime Conservatives filibustered against the franchise legislation and many of them resigned, so the House could not obtain a quorum. Special elections brought more Radicals to power. The new House reconvened, promptly expelled several Conservatives, and approved Brownlow's franchise bill. Conservatives tried to block the measure in the Senate; but when Radicals proposed separate statehood for East Tennessee, the Senate adopted the legislation to quell the separation development. Temple

Johnson's Reconstruction policies. Coulter, William G. Brownlow, 309.

¹⁸ Gordon B. McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 1865-1900: Politics and the Appalachian Community (Chapel Hill, 1978), 34; William G. Brownlow to Oliver P. Temple, March 8, 1866, Temple MSS.

had been a chief architect of the movement for separate statehood.¹⁹

The new franchise law negated all previous registrations and empowered commissioners, whom the governor appointed, to control future registrations. All former Confederates were disfranchised, so essentially only those persons approved by the commissioners could vote. Behind this legislation was Brownlow's desire not only to remain in power but also to demonstrate to Congress an anti-Confederate attitude. He hoped the national legislature would be more willing to admit Tennessee's Congressional delegation. The U. S. Representatives and Senators elected in 1865 had not yet been accepted by Congress. Brownlow wrote to Temple that the franchise bill had ". . . some rough places in it." Even so, Radicals hoped that the legislation would convince Congress to open its doors to Tennessee's delegation.²⁰

In May 1866, the legislature adjourned until November, but Congressional Radicals refused to re-admit any seceded

¹⁹Curry, Radicalism, 55; Oliver P. Temple, "Separation for East Tennessee," handwritten essay, undated, Temple MSS. Content indicates its origins shortly after the Civil War.

²⁰Curry, Radicalism, 55; William G. Brownlow to Oliver P. Temple, March 8, 1866, Temple MSS.

state until its legislature ratified the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. Brownlow therefore called the legislature into special session in July to approve the proposal. The Assembly achieved a quorum only by arresting and transporting several Conservative members to the statehouse. The legislature then adopted the amendment and Congress admitted Tennessee's delegation.²¹

In July 1866, Governor Brownlow rewarded Temple for his Unionism and expertise in law by appointing him to an eight-year term as chancellor of the 8th Chancery district. The vacancy occurred when Chancellor S. K. Rodgers died. In response to Temple's acceptance of the office, the Chronicle remarked, "In doing so he makes a great pecuniary sacrifice, but he is so circumstanced to be able to do this." The article continued, "Judge Temple is well known to the people of East Tennessee as one of our most successful practitioners of the Bar." He remained as chancellor for a dozen years while he also expanded his law practice. His lucrative career elevated Temple's financial status to the point that in 1867 he earned nearly fifteen thousand dollars, the highest income of any Knox County resident and nearly twice that of fellow Knoxville

²¹ Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 110-11.

Robert J. McKinney, under whom Temple had studied law years earlier.²²

During the summer and fall of 1866 Conservatives held several meetings in Tennessee to demonstrate their support for President Johnson. Even so, Brownlow dominated the state. The elections held that fall to fill a few vacancies in the legislature were won by the Radicals which gave them stronger control of the General Assembly.²³

The legislature that convened in late 1866 concentrated on the controversial issue of black suffrage. Brownlow requested that the General Assembly adopt legislation to enfranchise all loyal male citizens. This change in Brownlow's position (he earlier had opposed black suffrage) occurred, because he became convinced that blacks would support the Radicals. With the upcoming August election,

²²Knoxville Chronicle, July 25, 1866; John T. Moore and Austin P. Foster, Tennessee: The Volunteer State (4 vols.; Nashville, 1923), 4: 63. Mary Temple bragged that each of her father's law partners became a judge or entered Congress. Brownlow (who appointed Temple as chancellor) offered him a seat on Tennessee's Supreme Court, but he declined the opportunity. Mary Temple, "Introduction," Temple, Notable Men, 19-20; William J. MacArthur, Jr., Knoxville: Crossroads of the New South (Knoxville, 1982), 62.

²³Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 123.

Brownlow wanted to insure the continued domination of the Radicals and his own re-election.²⁴

The newly-franchised blacks voted for the first time in the August 1867 elections. Both parties, the Radicals or Republican Unionists and Conservatives or Conservative Unionists, vied for the black vote. In order to insure his re-election Brownlow pushed two bills through the Radical-dominated legislature. The first act appointed the governor commander-in-chief of the Tennessee state guard which the state formed to prevent outrages against loyal men which had become numerous. The second gave Brownlow the authority to set aside registrations in any county. The election's outcome was a foregone conclusion. Brownlow won re-election, all Radical Congressional nominees succeeded and nearly all the Radical legislative candidates triumphed. Though Temple was not personally involved in this Radical victory he generally supported the move. For example Temple wrote of the gubernatorial contest that the Conservative candidate "Mr. Etheridge took the stump and made made a very bitter and a very powerful canvass." He remarked that "Governor Brownlow was unable to take the stump on account

²⁴A. A. Taylor, The Negro in Tennessee, 1865-1880 (Washington, 1941), 23; Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 129-30.

of the failure of his voice, but he was triumphantly re-elected, running ahead of his party." Temple favored the Radicals who he felt were the true Unionists, because he, like Brownlow, tended to equate the Conservatives with secessionism.²⁵

Since the Radicals had insured their domination of the state by controlling the elections, a number of ex-Confederates and Conservatives turned to a secret organization which opposed Brownlow and his political policies. The Ku Klux Klan was formed in late 1865; two years later the group reorganized under General Nathan Bedford Forrest, and began to harass blacks and Union League members. The Union League in Tennessee was an organization of ardent Unionists who worked to facilitate black voting. Temple described the Klan as an organization of men who committed startling and cold-blooded outrages on loyal men. The Klan was not mobilized enough to play a significant role in the 1867 elections, but by the end of that year and early 1868 accounts of Klansmen intimidating blacks and Unionists were not uncommon. In

²⁵ Though they had the right to vote, blacks were not yet permitted to hold office or serve on a jury. McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 35; Coulter, William G. Brownlow, 331-33; Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 133-60; Temple, Notable Men, 334-35.

East Tennessee the Klan was weaker than in the state's other divisions.²⁶

The Klan's activities forced Brownlow to call the legislature into special session, because he knew the Radicals depended on strong black and Unionist voter participation. He wanted the assembly to adopt measures restricting the organization's actions. Some Conservatives who were, for the most part, supported by the Klan, interpreted the Governor's proposals as a declaration of war. Several prominent ex-Confederate generals who supported the Klan asked the Governor and legislature to practice "moderation." The General Assembly adopted two measures: one re-established the state militia and gave the governor the power to declare martial law in counties where the law could not be enforced. The second, the Ku Klux Klan Act, prohibited persons from associating with the Klan. Temple supported Brownlow and the legislature in these efforts.²⁷

²⁶James W. Patton, Unionism and Reconstruction in Tennessee, 1860-1869 (Chapel Hill, 1939), 140-41, 174-75; Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 142-44, 180-84, 187; Temple, Notable Men, 319-20; Taylor, Negro in Tennessee, 141-43.

²⁷Patton, Unionism and Reconstruction, 192; Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 187-88; Temple, Notable Men, 320.

In the meantime, preparations for the fall 1868 elections had begun. (By this time the Congressional elections had been changed from odd to even years and a presidential election was also held.) In that election the Radicals triumphed in most of the Congressional races and Republican presidential candidate Ulysses S. Grant trounced Democrat Horatio Seymour in the state. Interestingly, the Conservative vote increased, while the Radical total decreased between the 1867 and 1868 elections. Also fewer blacks participated in the latter campaign. The decline of the black and Unionist electorate occurred partly because of Conservative and disfranchised ex-Confederate pressure.²⁸

Temple favored General Grant over the Democratic opponent in the 1868 campaign. Part of Temple's admiration for Grant stemmed from an incident in early 1864. While stationed in Knoxville, the General met with Temple to discuss military strategy. The two men also held similar political opinions, particularly on the course of Reconstruction.²⁹

²⁸Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 189-92.

²⁹Digby Gordon Seymour, Divided Loyalties: Fort Sanders and the Civil War in East Tennessee (Knoxville, 1963), 221; Temple, East Tennessee, 517-18.

In early 1869 Tennessee's state government experienced a major change, because Brownlow resigned the governorship to take a seat in the U. S. Senate. The legislature had elected Brownlow for his new position in late 1867, but he did not take office until March of 1869. The Speaker of the State Senate, DeWitt C. Senter, a Brownlow ally, became governor. Two months later the Radicals split when they tried to select a gubernatorial candidate for the fall canvass. Senter decided to seek election to the office that fall and William Stokes also chose to run. Prior to their convention several other Radicals including Temple were mentioned as possible candidates. But when the party met, the fight for the nomination centered upon Senter and Stokes. Both men sought Brownlow's endorsement; he supported Senter. Stokes campaigned for Radical policies which Brownlow had espoused while he was governor; but Senter, in order to insure his election, replaced registrars with his own appointees and instructed them to permit all men to register. Consequently, Senter won by a resounding majority and the Conservatives gained control of the legislature.³⁰ Thus Tennessee experienced the end of total domination by

³⁰Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 152; J. A. Sharp, "The Downfall of the Radicals in Tennessee," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications 5 (1933):

Radicals. Senter simply used the tools against the Radicals which Brownlow had implemented against Conservatives.

After the former governor died Temple wrote that Senter's administration was "not a source of pride" for Tennesseans. Perhaps his biggest offense, in Temple's opinion, was Senter's removal of Brownlow-appointed voting registrars which led to the defeat of the Radicals. Several of the Tennessee Radicals such as Congressmen Horace Maynard, R. R. Butler, and William Stokes urged Grant to use Federal troops to prevent the Conservatives from taking power; but Grant refused and Radical rule was not resurrected.³¹

The Conservative state assembly soon repealed much of the legislation which the Radicals had enacted and then authorized a state constitutional convention to meet in 1870 to destroy any remnants of Radical rule. Among other things the new constitution (which the voters ratified) gerrymandered the state's chancery districts in order to

109; Coulter, William G. Brownlow, 392; Curry, Radicalism, 72; Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 199.

³¹ Temple, Notable Men, 182-84; McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 38-39.

defeat Radical judges if and when they sought re-election. The first election under this new constitution was held August 4, 1870. This vote was of particular interest to Temple because his district had been altered to include more Conservatives (or Democrats as they were known by 1870).³²

Felix Reeve, Temple's former student, wrote to Temple during the spring and summer of 1870 to discuss the new judicial districts. Reeve, a Radical, described the redrawing of chancery divisions as a nefarious measure, an example of politics ". . . in this brazen age of party rancor and office-seeking." Because Temple's jurisdiction had been re-drawn and his prospect for victory somewhat doubtful, several people urged him to seek a seat in Congress instead. Robert Burton told Temple that he was the only Radical chancellor in East Tennessee who was qualified for the office, but "Now, you are to be beaten by having your district changed, Just because you are a Radical." A month later Burton opined that "if you are defeated, it would tend to make you more prominent for Congress." J. H. Gant of Cleveland assured Temple,

³²Curry, Radicalism, 76; Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 233.

"If the contemplated scheme is carried out, and they defeat our plans, I shall certainly aid you in election for Congress."³³

Knoxville's newspapers published several editorials on the race. The Herald predicted that ". . . Judge Temple will certainly be elected. The radical organ has obtained the services of L. C. Houk to 'write down Hon. George Brown.'" The Daily Chronicle defended the incumbent. It stated that "The people . . . laugh at the contemptible effort made by the enemies of Judge Temple to bring him into disrepute, by attempting to show that he has no regard for the 'common people.'" The Chronicle contended that "Judge Temple has effected a lodgement [sic] in the confidence, and esteem of the honest people which can never be shaken by the clandestine or open attacks from 'cliques' of small men who aspire to control our judicial affairs."³⁴

In late July the Herald told its readers that "No event could possibly be of greater moment to our people than the election of a competent and independent judiciary."

³³Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 234; Felix A. Reeve to Oliver P. Temple, May 5, 13, 1870, Robert Burton to Oliver P. Temple, May 14, June 14, 1870, J. H. Gant to Oliver P. Temple May 14, 1870, Temple MSS.

³⁴Knoxville Daily Press and Herald, July 21, 1870; Knoxville Daily Chronicle, July 24, 1870.

The paper charged that, "For some years past they have been compelled to submit to the most arbitrary and unwarranted rulings, and to the most incompetent bench that ever disgraced the records of this or any other State." The editorial urged the voters to ". . . elect not only our state ticket, but also Brown as chancellor. . . ." ³⁵

During the campaign a circular supporting the challenger stated that Brown ". . . is a Baptist and a leading Church member. While some of his enemies with their traditional hatred of the Baptist Faith are using the fact against him." S. C. Ramage, Chairman of the Knox County Democratic Executive Committee and a publisher of the Press and Herald, signed the bulletin. The Chronicle described this circular as Brown's meanest trick. The next day the Chronicle blamed George Brown and Ramage for being ". . . the only candidates that have dragged the judicial ermine into the dirty pool of partisan politics." ³⁶

On election day Temple defeated Brown by a vote of 2070 to 1410. Other Republican judges across the state were not as fortunate and the Democrats dominated the

³⁵ Knoxville Daily Press and Herald, July 26, 1870.

³⁶ Knoxville Daily Chronicle, July 29, 30, 1870.

state's judicial structure by winning most of the judgeships in Middle and West Tennessee.³⁷

In 1870, the state held its general election. In this contest, Democrat John C. Brown was elected governor over William H. Wisener. The Democrats also won control of both legislative houses and elected six of eight congressmen.³⁸

Because Republicans had been relegated to a minority status in Tennessee, many of them devised a strategy to attract support. They concentrated on their similarities with the Democrats. Republican gubernatorial candidate A. A. Freeman, for example, campaigned in 1872 for support among Conservatives who had been driven to the Democrats by the excessive policies of the Republican party. Freeman and his supporters, such as John Baxter, Thomas A. R. Nelson and Joseph Fowler, became leaders of the Liberal Republicans in Tennessee. Their party nominated Horace Greeley for president in 1872. Some Republicans such as Horace Maynard, William Stokes, and Temple opposed the Liberal Republican

³⁷Ibid., August 5, 1870.

³⁸Alexander, Political Reconstruction, 234.

strategy; and though they had no gubernatorial candidate, they strongly supported President Grant's re-election.³⁹

The legislature held a special session in 1872 to re-draw the state's congressional districts as required by the 1870 census. The Democrats used this opportunity to gerrymander the Republicans out of office. Since Maynard ran for the at-large seat, second district Republicans turned to Jacob Thornburgh, an ally of both Maynard and Temple. Much to the Republicans' delight, Thornburgh easily defeated his Democratic opponent Colonel A. Blizzard. In other 1872 contests Democrat and Liberal Republican Horace Greeley outpolled President Grant in the Volunteer State although the challenger failed in his bid for the White House. A. A. Freeman lost a relatively close race to Democrat incumbent governor Brown, and Horace Maynard won the newly created at-large seat in Congress, because the Democrats split their votes between Andrew Johnson and Benjamin Cheatham.⁴⁰

³⁹McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 29, 38; Temple, Notable Men, 178-79.

⁴⁰Gladys Inez Williams, "The Life of Horace Maynard" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1931), 57-59, 61; Roger L. Hart, Redeemers, Bourbons and Populists: Tennessee, 1870-1896 (Baton Rouge, 1975), 14-17.

The Republican tactic of moderating its position and seeking Democratic votes came to an abrupt end in the 1874 election. Congress considered legislation which would guarantee civil rights for blacks. Democratic gubernatorial candidate James D. Porter accused his Republican counterpart, Horace Maynard, of favoring the legislation though Maynard denied the charge. The contest resulted in a victory for the Democrats who retained the governorship and dominated Tennessee's congressional delegation and General Assembly as well. Temple did not challenge U. S. Representative Thornburgh in 1874 although Brownlow wanted Temple in the national legislature. The Senator wrote to Temple, "I hope to see you in Congress or Judge of the U. S. Dis. Court of Tennessee." He continued "I believe Congress will make another district out of Tennessee. When it does I hope to see you appointed to the place." Perhaps an additional point to consider in Temple's refusal to run is the fact that his term as chancellor did not expire until 1878 and he would possibly have been required to resign his judgeship in order to run for Congress. Also in early 1874 President Grant appointed Temple to a voluntary and honorary position on the Board of Visitors to West Point Military Academy.

Brownlow informed Temple, "There is no emolument in the appointment . . . but I have been gratified at it because it will enable you to become personally acquainted with Grant under favorable auspices."⁴¹

As the 1876 election approached, Thornburgh's Republican adversaries hoped Temple would enter the race. For example in February, J. R. Robinson assured Temple that ". . . you are the first choise [sic] of the Republicans of Loudon County." He also related, "The Republicans of this county would regret . . . to loose [sic] your place on the Bench, but at the same time perfer [sic] you in Congress." W. R. Murphy of Ebenezer penned that "I have been testing the public feeling in different parts of the county in regard to . . . the coming Congressional Contest" and "I find everywhere a desire for you to run." Abijah Fowler urged Temple to become a candidate for Congress because ". . . you are the strongest man in the District in which you live. I should love to hear of your name

⁴¹Robert B. Jones, Tennessee at the Crossroads: The State Debt Controversy, 1870-1883 (Knoxville, 1977), 38; McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 39-40; William G. Brownlow to Oliver P. Temple, February 23, 1874, Temple MSS; Knoxville Chronicle, February 13, 1874. The Chronicle in an obscure article noted that the President named Temple along with six other individuals from across the country to this position.

being announced as a candidate." Fortunately for Thornburgh, Temple opted to remain as chancellor and the U. S. Representative won his third and final term.⁴²

A decision by the state party caused strife among Temple's associates. The Republicans refused to select a gubernatorial candidate which led a disgusted Horace Maynard, the U. S. Ambassador to Turkey, to note, "I see our State convention decided to make no nomination for Governor." He fumed, ". . . that idea has been a favorite one with certain of our friends . . . who seem to think that the chief end of politics & political action is to elect somebody to an office that a political party not able to elect its candidates is useless." Leonidas C. Houk took a more practical approach to the matter and praised the party's move, partly because of the minute chance for success. He also noted his opposition to mass disfranchisement as the Radicals had carried out. The elections resulted in the Democrats maintaining control of state government by dominating the legislative races and by re-electing Porter as governor. The Democratic

⁴²J. R. Robinson to Oliver P. Temple, February 14, 1876, W. R. Murphy to Oliver P. Temple, April 25, 1876, Abijah Fowler to Oliver P. Temple, June 27, 1876, Temple MSS.

presidential candidate, Samuel J. Tilden, also carried the state.⁴³

A dispute over the votes of Florida, South Carolina, and Louisiana prevented Tilden or his Republican counterpart Rutherford B. Hayes from winning an electoral majority. Following several months of negotiations the disputed votes were awarded to Hayes. After his inauguration Hayes withdrew all remaining Federal troops from the South, supported numerous appropriations for the South and appointed several cabinet members who were interested in reform and reconciliation. Tennessee Senator David M. Key became Postmaster General and Key soon named many Southern moderates to positions in his department.⁴⁴

In early 1878 Temple pondered a bid for re-election as chancellor. He asked several men from various counties in his jurisdiction what they considered to be his prospect for success. Many of his supporters believed he could easily win a race for the position. S. A. Rodgers, Temple's

⁴³Horace Maynard to Oliver P. Temple, September 19, 1876, Temple MSS; McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 81-82; Amos Leo Gentry, "The Public Career of Leonidas Campbell Houk" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1939), 46.

⁴⁴James M. McPherson, Ordeal By Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction (New York, 1982), 597-604.

former law associate, said "I should most sincerely regret any thing which should take you from the bench. . . ." Apparently Temple expressed concern about his popularity in Loudon County since Rodgers related ". . . I am stuck with particular surprise at the idea of Staleys beating you before a convention in Loudon County[.]" Temple's friend investigated and reported, "There is now [sic] doubt of Loudon in a convention for you against any one for your present position or for Congress."⁴⁵

W. B. Staley of Kingston, who wanted the chancellorship, declared to Temple, "If I knew you would not be a candidate I would announce at once." But he wrote, ". . . I don't want you for an opponent." E. Goddard of Maryville confided to Temple that ". . . you can carry this county any way either in convention or before the people. I am satisfied you can count Blount against any man hoping you will be a candidate for re-election." W. T. Parham also of Maryville remarked, ". . . you was very poplour [sic] in this county if possable [sic] more so than in your own. . . ." But he suggested that Temple not delay his decision for re-election. E. M. Wynn

⁴⁵S. A. Rodgers to Oliver P. Temple, February 6, 15, 1878, Temple MSS.

penned ". . . you will carry Sevier County in a convention over all most anyone."⁴⁶

Temple received from J. W. Branson the assurance that ". . . I am strongly impressed with the belief that you would carry Union County by a good majority either for Chancellor or anything else you might ask for." J. S. Lindsay of Jacksboro related to Temple ". . . that you can carry this county in the coming election for Chancellor." W. H. Witson of Clinton investigated the probability of Temple's success and reported that ". . . your chances are very good to get the vote of this county in convention." But he warned Temple, "The only cause of trouble in the minds of those spoken to on the subject is the probable candidacy of Mr Staley." Whitson added that "I hope you will conclude to make the race, for re-election is certain to be the result if Mr. Staley should not be a candidate and I think you would succeed in the event he does become a candidate."⁴⁷

⁴⁶W. B. Staley to Oliver P. Temple, February 14, 1878, E. Goddard to Oliver P. Temple, February 25, 1878, W. T. Parnham to Oliver P. Temple, February 23, 1878, E. M. Wynn to Oliver P. Temple, February 23, 1878, Temple MSS.

⁴⁷J. W. Branson to Oliver P. Temple, February 23, 1878, J. S. Lindsay to Oliver P. Temple, February 23, 1878, W. H. Whitson to Oliver P. Temple, February 25, 1878, Temple MSS.

Though most of his contacts urged Temple to seek re-election, he refused. He also opted not to enter the Congressional race and instead supported his friend Leonidas C. Houk. When Houk entered Congress in early 1879, he was one of only four Southern Republicans. The Democrats continued their control of state government, since Albert S. Marks was elected governor and his party dominated the legislature.⁴⁸

As Temple neared the end of his time as chancellor, he learned of an anticipated opening for the position of Chief Justice of Washington Territory. Judge D. P. Jenkins of Seattle wrote Temple that he anticipated one or more vacancies within the next 60 or 90 days on the Washington Territory Supreme Court. He urged Temple to apply soon, because ". . . the vacancy may happen at almost any time--and is most likely to be the chief Justice." Two years later Houk wrote to Temple regarding a possible Territorial Judgeship. He promised that if a good place opened he would press Temple's claims for the position. The Congressman believed that "Washington is the best territory for you and possibly Dakota the next best." Apparently Temple

⁴⁸McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 82; Gentry, "Houk," 54.

declined to seek either of these opportunities. He instead decided to leave the bench and entertained no desire to continue in a similar position elsewhere. After he retired as chancellor, Temple spent much time building up his law practice, and he anticipated the election of 1880.⁴⁹

When George Andrews resigned his position as U. S. District Attorney for East Tennessee in February 1879, Houk wanted Temple to have the job. But the office did not interest Temple. Perhaps Temple thought the position would place too many restrictions on his income. Felix Reeve supported Temple's action when he wrote, ". . . you will find the practice of the law more congenial, if not more profitable. . . ." Major Temple told his brother, "I am glad you are not anxious for the office of Dist Attorney. in two years the office will not pay." Houk related, "Your declension of the District Attorney's office is satisfactorily explained. But I confess I was vexed at the time." Because Temple did not seek the office Congressman Houk endorsed Xenophon Wheeler, who landed the position. Houk complained to Temple that Felix Reeve,

⁴⁹D. P. Jenkins to Oliver P. Temple, October 16, 1877, L. C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, December 6, 1879, Temple MSS.

who also wanted the job, ". . . seems to have taken it to heart that I did not 'pitch in' for him." Reeve charged that Houk's ". . . blundering not only aided Thornburgh, but by his duplicity has lost the confidence of R. L. Taylor."⁵⁰

During the decade of the 1870s a large state debt plagued Tennessee and became a chief political issue. In the late 1840s and early 1850s the state used public funds to support internal improvements in general and railroads in particular. By 1860 the state's debt totaled \$20,898,606, not an unmanageable amount.⁵¹

During the following decade, however, the debt increased dramatically, while the state's financial resources decreased significantly. The Brownlow government provided much assistance for internal improvements, especially railroads and turnpikes so that by October, 1869 the debt totaled \$39,212,244. Temple believed that perhaps the Brownlow government did issue too many bonds but defended the action as being a necessary, sound, and

⁵⁰L. C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, March 24, 1879, Felix A. Reeve to Oliver P. Temple, March 3, April 3, 1879, Major S. Temple to Oliver P. Temple, March 3, 1879, Temple MSS.

⁵¹Jones, Crossroads, 3-6.

patriotic policy. The Conservative-dominated legislature elected in 1869, determined to eradicate much Reconstruction legislation and to reduce the state's debt; and during the next dozen years many of Tennessee's political struggles centered on solving the "debt problem."⁵²

Generally the Democrats were divided into two major factions: low-tax Democrats or Repudiators who opposed funding of the debt and state-credit Democrats who proposed that the state pay at least the bulk of the debt. Republicans typically supported financing the debt. Part of the argument against payment was that many bonds were fraudulent. Temple admitted that some notes were improper but most were legitimate; thus he supported funding by the state.⁵³

Throughout the 1870s the Democrats demonstrated their inability to solve the debt crisis and consequently in 1880 Republican Alvin Hawkins was elected governor. His victory was attributed to support from state-credit Democrats; and many Republicans hoped this political alliance would make their party dominant in the state.

⁵²Ibid., 11-13; Temple, Notable Men, 321.

⁵³Temple, Notable Men, 322-24; Jones, Crossroads, 18-94; Hart, Redeemers, 32-40.

In 1881 the state legislature elected a U. S. Senator. The two major candidates were Democrat Howell Jackson and Republican Horace Maynard. Maynard had been a Congressman during Reconstruction from Tennessee's Second district. Temple abandoned his former ally in this Senate race and supported the victorious Jackson.⁵⁴

The break between Temple and Maynard stemmed from a dispute among Second district Republicans. During the late 1860s and early 1870s two factions emerged within the party. One group centered around Maynard while the second favored Houk. Maynard allies held the Second Congressional seat until Thornburgh opted to retire in 1878. That year Houk, who had made several unsuccessful bids for the seat, opposed Rule the candidate of Maynard's clique. (Maynard was then the U. S. Ambassador to Turkey.) Temple supported Houk in his successful race, thus Temple joined the anti-Maynard faction and the two men split politically.⁵⁵

In July 1880 President Hayes appointed Maynard Postmaster General. Perhaps as a gesture against Houk,

⁵⁴Temple, Notable Men, 149; Williams, "Maynard," 73-74.

⁵⁵Gentry, "Houk," 47-49; McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 79-85.

Maynard secured Rule's appointment as Knoxville's postmaster. Since Temple disliked Maynard's actions, he opposed him and favored Jackson instead in the Senate contest. State Representative R. R. Butler subsequently informed Temple: ". . . I am glad to know that you approved my course in the Senatorial election. . . ." Butler explained, "when I became satisfied that we could not elect a Republican I thought it wise and best to elect a good sensible Democrat a high State credit man. . . ." In the meantime Houk, who was building a strong political machine, viewed Rule as an enemy and wanted him removed as postmaster. By mid-April 1881, Houk had garnered over nineteen hundred signatures of persons who opposed Rule. He then buried Rule's nomination in committee and later that year obtained Temple's appointment as postmaster.⁵⁶

In his new position, Temple sought advice from his friends about the distribution of jobs. Houk suggested it would be a good political move for the Republicans and Civil Service to distribute letter carrier appointments among all classes and nationalities. Temple therefore

⁵⁶Williams, "Maynard," 72; Hart, Redeemers, 51, 84; R. R. Butler to Oliver P. Temple, January 31, 1881, Temple MSS. Jackson was later appointed by President Cleveland to succeed sixth Circuit Judge John Baxter.

found positions for Germans, Irishmen, and blacks. These appointments were designed primarily to increase Houk's political fortunes.⁵⁷

In the meantime Temple looked toward the 1882 election, but he feared that the Republican-state credit Democrat alliance which brought Hawkins to power would not endure. In February 1882 he wrote to Houk, "I am not quite su[re that a ?] majority of the State credit Democrats will unite with the Republicans to save the honor of the State." Temple described the Republican strategy as follows, ". . . fight on under our old State credit flag, as the Republican party, inviting all who will to help us." He predicted, "I think we can triumph but am not certain. All depends on which side the State credit Democrats join. I take it for granted they will not nominate a candidate for governor."⁵⁸

Unfortunately Knox County Republicans were themselves divided over their party's standard bearer. Temple thought that perhaps Maynard or Rule contemplated a gubernatorial quest. Temple wrote Houk that he had heard Rule say that

⁵⁷McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 84-85.

⁵⁸Oliver P. Temple to L. C. Houk, February 21, 1882, Houk MSS, McClung Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville.

". . . he was not much for Hawkins. . . ." Temple predicted that ". . . Maynard might be very strong in the convention." In response to a possible Maynard candidacy Temple replied, "Do not suppose I am for him. He and his family are doing all they can to make themselves popular. It means something."⁵⁹

Subsequent to Hawkins' securing the 1882 Republican nomination Temple stated, "I am now satisfied that the great body of the State credit Democrats will unite with the repudiators, possibly on a compromise platform, with some moderate go between man as their candidate." He lamented, "The more I study the well known principles of the party, the better I am satisfied that but few of them will join the Republicans." He concluded, "Let us not be deceived. They will desert us." Temple's gloomy prediction in 1882 proved accurate because in the election Democrat William Bate triumphed over Republican Hawkins. The legislature in 1883 enacted a measure which funded most of the debt at 50 cents on the dollar while a small portion was paid at face value.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid.; Jones, Crossroads, 127; Bergeron, Paths of the Past, 70.

Temple was also quite interested in Houk's 1882 bid for re-election. The General Assembly re-drew the state's congressional districts before the 1882 election as required by the 1880 census. Houk feared that the Democratically-controlled legislature would use the opportunity to eliminate the Republican majority in his district by removing two or three counties. Hence he emphasized, "We must not lose Scott, Morgan, or Roane." He urged Temple, J. M. Melton, Henry Gibson, and others to ". . . have business in Nashville right away, and aid in shaping this matter. . . ." Believing that the intense rivalry within the Republican party would defeat Houk, the legislature did not alter the district.⁶¹

Temple did not seem as concerned about the possible legislative action as he was with the intra-party rivalry. In March he warned Houk of an attempt by Rule to win the Congressional nomination, "Now, you and all your friends must go to work in time for the congressional convention." He suggested to Houk: "I think it might be well for you to run home some week, and see for yourself what is going on. You can do more than all your friends." Temple assured

⁶¹L. C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, April 8, 1882, Temple MSS.

the Congressman, "We are not discouraged at all about your renomination, but we want it to be crushing and overwhelming."⁶²

In an effort to end Houk's Congressional career a vengeful rival candidate, Rule, published anti-Houk editorials in his Daily Chronicle. "Congressman Houk boasts of his devotion to the Republican party, but it is known that he said many bitter things against the administration of President Garfield." The paper added, "For some of his utterances in his behalf the voters of this district will hold him accountable." Ten days later the Chronicle charged: "It is pretty generally known . . . that during the . . . last session of the Forty-sixth Congress that Congressman Houk, who was pretending to represent this district, was absent from his seat and recorded as not voting more than six-sevenths of the time."⁶³

The race continued to be heated and both Houk and Rule claimed to be the legitimate Republican nominee, although the National Republican Congressional Committee

⁶²Oliver P. Temple to L. C. Houk, March 1, 1882, Houk MSS.

⁶³L. C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, April 8, 1882, Temple MSS; Oliver P. Temple to L. C. Houk, March 1, 1882, Houk MSS; Knoxville Daily Chronicle, June 3, 13, 1882.

recognized Houk as the party's official candidate. Temple told the incumbent, "You need a daily paper. Cant a daily be issued by the Republican office during the canvass?" He reported that "There never was such excitement in this district in a congressional race. It will grow greater and greater. Something must be done." Meanwhile Houk's opponents frequently charged the Congressman with excessive drinking. Hence, in a letter to his brother Oliver, Major Temple reported, "I occasionally see the 'Chronicle' it says some hard things about our friend Houk, what an Amazing pittty [sic] it is, he does not quit using spirits all together." After he lost this bitter campaign, Rule acknowledged Houk's domination and he sold the paper to Houk and several associates, including Temple.⁶⁴

In the 1884 election many Southern Republicans favored the nomination of Chester Arthur. He used federal patronage and worked closely with local Republican leaders to encourage Southern whites to join the Grand Old Party. Though Arthur lost the nomination to James G. Blaine, Temple still supported the party. Both the state and national

⁶⁴L. C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, April 8, 1882, Major S. Temple to Oliver P. Temple, August 15, 1882, Temple MSS; Oliver P. Temple to L. C. Houk, July 4, 1882, Houk MSS; Gentry, "Houk," 60, 63, 65; McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 85-86.

Republican party organizations requested financial assistance from Temple. John C. Houk, a son of the Congressman and member of the state's Republican Executive Committee, informed Temple of several expenses after which he noted, "All that you can contribute to the fund will be thankfully received." Church Howe of the National Republican Committee wrote that the possibility of Blaine's victory ". . . ought to inspire every true Republican with a determination to leave no stone unturned to wheel Tennessee into the Republican column." He continued, "The only effective help must come from active work and liberal support of and contributions to local committees and campaign organizations. . . ." In the election, Democrat Grover Cleveland defeated Blaine for President, however, and Democratic incumbent governor Bate defeated his Republican opponent Judge Frank T. Reid. Shortly after the election, Temple retired from the postal service.⁶⁵

By the 1886 election Tennessee Democrats became concerned about their lack of unity and therefore sensed the importance of party cohesion rather than factional success. As a result, Democrats needed a candidate who

⁶⁵McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 77, 80; John C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, October 21, 1884, Church Howe to Oliver P. Temple, October 21, 1884, Temple MSS.

could unite their party's elements, and they selected Robert L. (Bob) Taylor, who had been primarily allied with the plain folk segment. He also was attractive to the younger elements of the party, since he himself had no direct ties to the Civil War. Moreover, his East Tennessee roots, it was thought, would help draw voters from the Republican stronghold in the state.⁶⁶

Hoping to capitalize on the Democrats' disunity, the Republicans nominated Bob Taylor's brother Alf. The Alf Taylor nomination has been attributed to the efforts of L. C. Houk, but his friend Temple apparently did not participate in the scheme. The ensuing campaign became known as Tennessee's "War of the Roses." The election resulted in a Democratic victory with Bob winning the governorship and his party doing well in the legislative and congressional contests.⁶⁷

In the 1888 election Temple played a minor role. The state's voters re-elected Bob Taylor over Samuel

⁶⁶Hart, Redeemers, 89-90; Daniel M. Robison, Bob Taylor and The Agrarian Revolt in Tennessee (Chapel Hill, 1935), 36.

⁶⁷Robert L. Taylor, Jr., "An Inquiry Into the Background and Personalities of Governors Alf and Bob Taylor, 1848-1886" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1964), 42-46, 63; Hart, Redeemers, 96.

Hawkins, but the Republicans recaptured the White House with Benjamin Harrison's defeat of Cleveland. Though Temple was less active in the electoral process than he had been, politicians still called on him for advice and assistance. For example, Houk wanted Harrison to appoint former U. S. Senator William Mahone of Virginia as U. S. Postmaster General. The Congressman suggested that Temple ". . . as a representative republican of your State, to write General Harrison your views. . . ." Houk added that "I would take it as a favor if you will furnish me a list of names of persons to whom I may write on the subject." Because Harrison refused to appoint a Southerner to his cabinet, a coolness developed between Tennessee Republicans and President Harrison.⁶⁸

Though Temple remained interested in politics, he was by this time primarily interested in authoring books and concentrating on his past accomplishments. By the end of the 1880s Temple's focus turned away from the present and future political struggles to his past experiences, though he was still urged to run for Congress. On May 25, 1891 Congressman Houk died suddenly from accidental poisoning.

⁶⁸Gentry, "Houk," 75-76; L. C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, January 7, 1889, Temple MSS.

Temple was an honorary pallbearer at the funeral. About a week later Felix Reeve asked Temple, "Why not assert your claims for the vacancy in your congressional district?" He added that he would like to see Temple ". . . the representative of the Knoxville district in Congress."⁶⁹ Temple did not run but chose instead to remain devoted to his books.

Yet Temple did not abandon his interest in politics altogether. For example, when his friend, H. Clay Evans, ran for governor in 1894, Temple introduced the candidate at a Knoxville rally. On that occasion Temple alluded to the nationalizing effects of the Civil War and the importance of East Tennessee's pro-Union stance. He declared that ". . . thirty-four years ago every person living north of the Ohio River was an alien . . . and today we are brothers of the same country." He maintained that during the war East Tennesseans had ". . . no distinction between loyal Northern men and loyal Southern men." Temple reminded the crowd that ". . . Mr. Evans came here during the war and ". . . I introduce him today not as a citizen

⁶⁹Felix A. Reeve to Oliver P. Temple, June 3, 1891, Temple MSS; Knoxville Daily Tribune, May 26, 1891.

of Pennsylvania, Ohio, or Tennessee but as a citizen of this great country. His citizenship is national."⁷⁰

Temple enjoyed the prestige which came from being one of the original Tennessee Republicans and he remained a strong supporter of the Republican party and its policies until his death. He never regretted that he ran for Congress only one time. Temple used that race to make a name for himself and later he also capitalized on the secession movement to establish a political base. In the postbellum years he utilized the fame he had gained as a staunch Unionist. He used his party and his influence for his own political, financial, and social well-being. Through politics, Temple pursued his policy of opportunism, though not to obtain an elected political office. He spent most of his last two decades justifying what he had done during his earlier years by writing books.

⁷⁰J. Eugene Lewis, "The Tennessee Gubernatorial Campaign and Election of 1894," Tennessee Historical Quarterly 13 (1954): 241; Chattanooga Times, September 21, 1894.

CHAPTER 3

THE GENTLEMAN SCHOLAR

As Oliver Temple entered his twilight years, he reminisced about his earlier political endeavors and wondered how they would be recorded for future generations. Temple knew that if he did not prepare an account of his political activities, particularly his association with the Whigs, Americans, and Unionists, someone else would. Because Temple had many antagonists, even within his own political party, he feared that any historical work composed by another person would probably reflect a negative appraisal of his career.¹ Hence he felt compelled to author the first major book on East Tennessee's role in the Civil War and the notables who lived in the region. In those works Temple analyzed the events surrounding secession and the Civil War and he justified his actions during that era.

Temple authored several books including: East Tennessee and the Civil War, Notable Men of Tennessee, as well as The Covenanter, The Cavalier, and the Puritan. He also wrote a sketch of Tennessee's first Governor, John Sevier. The Sevier piece, along with Notable Men of Tennessee, were published posthumously. Temple also

¹ Knoxville Daily Tribune, October 25, 1881.

worked on a book titled, Union Leaders, but died before completing the manuscript. Though these works were primarily designed to exonerate Temple and his associates, they still have literary and historical value. Temple also penned many of his thoughts and ideas on topics such as slavery and slaveowners, postbellum blacks, religion, secession, East Tennessee statehood, and the 1892 Coal Miners' insurrection. These writings serve as windows into Temple's mind and attitudes.

Temple's book The Covenanter, The Cavalier, and the Puritan, published by the Robert Clarke Company of Cincinnati in 1897, dealt with the Scotch-Irish, from whom Temple had descended. The Scotch-Irish strongly influenced East Tennessee and helped develop the region's political, social, and economic distinctiveness. Consequently, in accordance with Temple's desire to defend himself, his life, and his heritage, he wrote a book to honor his ancestry. Temple admitted in the book's introduction that he worked with the Scotch-Irish Society of America to rescue from oblivion the history of the Covenanter People.² Whether his book accomplished this lofty goal is debatable,

²Oliver P. Temple, The Covenanter, the Cavalier, and the Puritan (Cincinnati, 1897), iii.

but he certainly portrayed his forefathers in glowing terms.

Temple argued that historians separated Americans into two primary divisions: Puritans, who represented Northern thought and civilization; and Cavaliers, their Southern counterparts. According to Temple, a third group had been overlooked, the Covenanters, who were, in many regions, more numerous and influential than Puritans or Cavaliers. Covenanters moved from Pennsylvania to the South, especially East Tennessee and West Virginia. Upon their arrival, the Covenanters cleared forests, built cabins and farmed the land. They worked hard to earn a living. Yet their economic status remained relatively stable in the middle to lower levels. The second element of southern white society was Cavaliers. These people, who controlled the tidewater region, lived easy lives of indolence and luxury while their slaves did most of the work.³

Temple connected the Cavaliers with the planter aristocracy which in time led the South into secession and the Civil War. As the name implies, Cavaliers descended

³ Clement Eaton, A History of the Old South: The Emergence of a Reluctant Nation (3rd ed.; New York, 1987), 53-58; Temple, The Covenanter, 81-143; Oliver P. Temple, East Tennessee and the Civil War (Cincinnati, 1899), 54-55.

from the Royalist supporters in England's Puritan Revolution. The Cavaliers came to America with a high social position and here they retained their social level and dominated Southern society. Covenanters came to America from a more humble background, and they became the South's small farmers. Their descendants detested secession, and remained loyal to the Union throughout the Civil War. Though they approved of slavery, Covenanters accepted emancipation and diligently labored to rebuild the South after the Cavaliers' descendants led it down a path of war and destruction.⁴

When Temple authored this book, the myth of Cavaliers and Covenanters was widely accepted. Shortly after the work was published, however, researchers began challenging the concept of a Cavalier-dominated South. Historians have demonstrated that although some white Southerners descended from English royalist officers, most immigrants came from England's middle and lower classes. The majority of southern aristocrats made their money after settling in America.⁵

⁴Temple, East Tennessee, 60, 118, 365, 530-34, 555.

⁵Eaton, Old South, 52-53.

Though his book undoubtedly contains some truth, such as information on Covenanters in Scotland and Ireland as well as some of the details in regard to the early Presbyterian church in America, it is shrouded with Temple's desire to honor his ancestors. In 1899, shortly after the publication of his distorted work, Temple was named as president of the Scotch-Irish Society of America. The book's primary significance, then, is that it earned Temple this honor.⁶

After he justified his Scotch-Irish or Covenanter heritage, Temple next sought to defend his own life with the book, East Tennessee and the Civil War. Temple unashamedly confesses in the introduction to this second work that his two main objectives were: to rescue from oblivion certain historical facts fast fading from memory; and to vindicate the course of East Tennessee Unionists in separating from their Southern kindred and adhering to the national government. The fact that Temple witnessed much of what he wrote makes his work somewhat of a personal memoir.⁷ But his determination to defend

⁶Oliver P. Temple, Notable Men of Tennessee 1833-1875: Their Times and Their Contemporaries (New York, 1912), 24-25.

⁷Temple, East Tennessee, vii.

the actions of East Tennessee Unionists damages his objectivity.

Temple's work begins with a brief review of the Covenanter influence on the development of East Tennessee. Then he delves into the growing issue of slavery. He focuses on the 1860 election, secession, and the Civil War. Unfortunately Temple's work gives the impression that slavery was the major issue which dominated American politics from the 1830s through secession. Though slavery was a major point of dispute between the sections, other issues contributed to the disunion.

In the book Temple argued that Covenanters were among the first to move into East Tennessee and usually farmed the best land, laid out the towns, and formed local governments which provided for democracy. Unfortunately, according to Temple, many of their descendants who lived in the mountains were stereotyped by Mary Noailles Murfree (Charles Egbert Craddock) and her imitator, the Rev. Dr. William Barton of Boston, as uneducated, immoral, and uncivilized. Temple called this misrepresentation slanderous and argued that East Tennesseans were religious, educated, moral and highly civilized. He wrote that the Covenanters' support for education and love for freedom contributed to the development of East Tennessee. These two viewpoints are

part of a debate in American historiography. Until recently the descriptions and discussions on southern mountaineers have centered on stereotypes created by Murfree, Temple, Horace Kephart and others. Modern historians such as Gordon McKinney, Henry Shapiro and Ronald Eller have elevated the debate to a more scholarly level.⁸

In a lengthy essay, Temple discussed the peculiar institution. Temple believed that slavery burgeoned into such a volatile topic, primarily because the abolitionists tried to make it a political rather than a moral issue. Temple argued that the Constitution guaranteed the right to own property, including bondsmen. He claimed that slave ownership was nothing more than a mark of pride and independence for the master. Possessing slaves, in effect, gave an individual a badge of superiority. Though gradual emancipation was discussed, Temple conceded that it probably would never have worked, because slaveholders were unwilling to sacrifice their financial investment and they were apprehensive about freed slaves living in the South.⁹ Besides, owning bondsmen

⁸ Ibid., 63-65, 75-76; Durwood Dunn, Cades Cove: The Life and Death of a Southern Appalachian Community, 1818-1937 (Knoxville, 1988), xii-xiv.

⁹ Temple, East Tennessee, 84.

was a status symbol which few masters were willing to surrender.

Temple always prided himself for his work in the 1860 presidential campaign, but in retrospect he wrote of his reluctance to be a Bell elector in that race. He feared it would take too much time from his lucrative law practice. He and other associates argued erroneously that in the contest Bell was the only national candidate. The other major presidential contenders were, in Temple's view, regional because of their exclusively sectional support. The election results demonstrated, however, that all of the presidential contenders enjoyed regional endorsements. Though Temple worked hard for Bell, he later admitted that the Tennessean lacked the strong and decisive leadership necessary to be a successful president. Temple bragged that the Knoxville secession convention influenced the public against disunion. The Unionists' strategic moves in the meeting prevented the secessionists from adopting proposals to remove Tennessee from the Union. Nevertheless the state did join the Confederacy less than a year after the convention.¹⁰

¹⁰ Ibid., 128-30, 160-61; Daniel W. Crofts, Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis (Chapel Hill, 1989), 19-22.

Temple wrote about how the East Tennesseans attempted to disrupt the vital rail link through the region by destroying bridges. This brought untold calamity and suffering upon the Unionists but caused little damage to the Confederates. Yet Temple felt the "bridge burners" asked for what they received, because East Tennessee Unionists had no right to defy the laws of the Confederacy. This is quite a statement for Temple, since he had worked so hard to undermine the Confederacy and had earlier argued the illegality of secession.¹¹

East Tennessee and the Civil War is essentially Temple's opinion on the secession movement as well as the actions which precipitated Tennessee's break from the Union. He had little sympathy for those who favored secession and presented Unionists as primarily altruistic.

In his Notable Men of Tennessee Temple included a concise survey of the secession movement in his native state and listed East Tennessee's Union leaders. The bulk of the book consists of no fewer than thirty brief biographies of men who, according to Temple, played a major role in Tennessee politics during the mid-19th century.

¹¹ Temple, East Tennessee, 366-411.

He also provided a lengthy discourse on his 1847 race for Congress in which he described himself as the underdog who was robbed of victory, because some fellow Whigs refused to support him. He wrote that he left the Greeneville area to avoid politics; yet that seems foolish, unless he really did not want a Congressional seat. It appears that if Temple truly desired the position he would have run again in 1849. Temple used the 1847 race to build a name for himself and then studied law under Judge Robert McKinney.¹²

The two men who received the most extensive treatment in the book are William G. Brownlow and Andrew Johnson. Temple gives a lengthy sketch of each man's life, along with the opinions of numerous contemporaries. Brownlow is described in glowing terms, while Johnson is not portrayed in such a favorable light. Brownlow and Temple became friends during the 1844 presidential race when both campaigned for Henry Clay and they remained political allies until Brownlow died. Temple and Johnson, however, did not enjoy such an amicable partnership; by necessity they were allies in Tennessee's secession crisis, but were political foes for most of the rest of their lives.

¹² Temple, Notable Men, 214-31.

In this work Temple gives his opinion of many fellow Tennesseans, both friend and foe. By reading the work one can easily discern Temple's adamant determination that the events and significant people of the era should be remembered the way Temple saw them. This book is, primarily, a self-serving endeavor.

Temple's posthumously published sketch of John Sevier provides a brief glimpse of the early settlement of Tennessee and the role Sevier played. He portrays the state's first governor in a positive light and shows how Sevier's Covenanter heritage affected the state, particularly East Tennessee. Since the Covenanters' influence did not filter into the state's other divisions, East Tennessee became unique. This distinctiveness continued throughout the antebellum era. Temple used Sevier's career to justify his position on secession and Unionism.¹³

Temple wrote several essays which remain unpublished and in those articles he expressed his opinions and ideas on a variety of topics. Though he discussed some of these issues in his books, he sheds added light in these pieces.

¹³Oliver P. Temple, "John Sevier" published pamphlet, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The thread which weaves through the essays is Temple's self justification as well as his non-conformist attitude.

In his "Thoughts on the Negro Problem," Temple discussed the status of Tennessee blacks following the demise of the peculiar institution. The essay focused on how blacks did not assimilate into Southern white society. Because the two races did not intermingle, Temple argued that the true solution to the "Negro problem" was to transfer blacks to Liberia, Mexico, or South America. In America, blacks were regarded by most as an inferior race, and the feeling would undoubtedly continue indefinitely. Since racial equality would never exist, the blacks should be removed.¹⁴

Temple's attitude toward blacks in the late 19th century was not uncommon among whites. His proposal for black removal had existed for decades before the Civil War. Perhaps the most notable attempt at this endeavor was undertaken by the American Colonization Society early in

¹⁴Oliver P. Temple, "Thoughts on the Negro Problem," handwritten essay, undated, Temple MSS, Special Collections, University of Tennessee.

the 19th century.¹⁵ But by the 1830s this organization had essentially disbanded.

After Brownlow became governor of the Volunteer State, the issue of removing blacks was reintroduced. Hence Temple's idea was not new, nor without support among Tennesseans. In 1875 a state Emigration Convention met in Nashville and addressed several grievances the blacks had about their treatment. This group then promoted black migration to the West, particularly Kansas, since land there was inexpensive and the opportunities for blacks, so it was believed, were greater than in Tennessee. A few thousand blacks from Tennessee migrated to the Midwest and West, but the vast majority remained in the state.¹⁶

Temple discussed several facets of postbellum black society including political rights, education, and living conditions. He reluctantly supported black suffrage when Brownlow urged it. However, Temple thought that blacks would never achieve political equality in America. As the 19th century drew to a close Temple grew apprehensive

¹⁵Lester C. Lamon, Blacks in Tennessee, 1791-1970 (Knoxville, 1981), 12-13.

¹⁶A. A. Taylor, The Negro in Tennessee, 1865-1880 (Washington, 1941), 109-19.

about black voting rights, particularly since he thought blacks had become pawns in the hands of self-serving politicians. For example, in Tennessee's Second District where the Republicans dominated, both the Houk and Rule elements vied for black votes. Since blacks held the balance of power between the competing factions, some men, such as Temple, became anxious about black suffrage. Nevertheless, many Republicans strongly opposed the voting restrictions which were enacted in 1889-90. These measures eliminated many black voters and undermined most of the Republicans' strength outside of East Tennessee.¹⁷

Temple believed that education standards were a major contribution to the black's poor economic condition. According to Temple, black education trained professionals such as teachers, lawyers, doctors, and pastors when blacks needed to be taught more rudimentary pursuits, such as manual labor skills. Several Northern missionary organizations founded schools to train black professionals, but few blacks had the educational background necessary for the advanced training. As a result most black colleges were little more than high schools. But a few colleges trained black doctors, lawyers, dentists, and teachers. Most blacks

¹⁷ Temple, Notable Men, 133; Lamon, Blacks, 59-60.

remained uneducated or learned a trade which consisted mainly of manual labor.¹⁸

Temple wrote that he could accept a black professional but argued that society would not approve of blacks in such an esteemed vocation. He thought black men along with lower or working class white men should be taught farming methods, gardening, fruit raising, and principles of mechanics, while black women needed to be trained in housekeeping duties. According to Temple, blacks were well suited to a job involving manual labor because of the long time they had spent as slaves. Temple displayed his prejudiced attitude in his comments on black education.¹⁹

Temple explained in his essay, "A Southern Slaveholder," that the portrayal of the peculiar institution by extremists such as abolitionists as well as slavery apologists was notoriously inaccurate. John Hope Franklin agreed when he wrote that both slave owners and antislavery forces overstated their case, either for or against slavery.²⁰

¹⁸Lamon, Blacks, 41-42, 46; Temple, "Thoughts on Negro," Temple MSS.

¹⁹Temple, "Thoughts on Negro," Temple MSS.

²⁰John Hope Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans, (5th ed.; New York, 1980),

Evidence can be presented to support nearly any generalization which favors or opposes the peculiar institution. At times, slaves owned by kind masters received harsh treatment. Fanny Kemble wrote of shocking conditions in the infirmary of her wealthy husband's plantation. However, Frederick Law Olmsted, a strong opponent of slavery, wrote that slaves lived in conditions equal to most mill or mine workers anywhere and were perhaps the best fed workers. Bondsmen also on average worked less than free laborers; although at certain times of the year, particularly harvest, they worked eighteen to twenty hours per day. It was impossible to describe slavery properly, because the nature of the institution was nearly entirely dependent upon the individual masters. That slaves were used for economic gain is not debated, nor is the fact that slave owners and overseers used whatever means necessary to increase the bondsmen's efficiency. Obviously, some masters were harsher than others and earned the reputation of being cruel which increased the tension surrounding the peculiar institution.²¹

149; Oliver P. Temple, "A Southern Slaveholder," handwritten essay, undated, Temple MSS.

²¹ Francis B. Simkins and Charles P. Roland, A History of the South, (4th ed.; New York, 1972), 124-25; Franklin,

According to Temple, one of slavery's worst attributes was the power the master held over the slaves. He wrote that any institution which provided complete authority and power over another person is evil, and it had no justification. Temple, however, shared in the blame for the peculiar institution since he owned several slaves. During the years after emancipation his opinion changed and he later admitted slavery was founded upon, upheld by, and depended upon wrong ideas. During his life, then, Temple had several opinions on the peculiar institution. During the antebellum years he strongly defended slavery on the grounds that bondsmen were property which the Constitution protected. Shortly after the war he saw blacks as lazy and undeserving of freedom, but by the end of his life he saw blacks as victims of a terrible institution.²²

In an essay which focused on a contemporary issue, Temple discussed the East Tennessee coal miners' strike. In order to minimize expenditures, Tennessee leased state prisoners to corporations such as the Tennessee Coal and

Slavery to Freedom, 138, 150; Temple, "A Southern Slaveholder," Temple MSS.

²² Temple, "A Southern Slaveholder," Temple MSS.

Iron Company. In April 1891 that business closed, allegedly for repairs, but when it reopened two months later its miners were forced to sign contracts prohibiting their right to strike. When the employees balked at the measure a group of company-hired prisoners destroyed several homes of the free workers and constructed a stockade for an anticipated influx of more convict laborers. The miners then herded the convicts on to a train which transported them to Knoxville. Governor John Buchanan sent the prisoners along with three companies of militia back to the Anderson County mines. The free workers were incensed that the state government refused to address their grievances satisfactorily. Therefore in the fall of 1891 the workers released some five hundred convicts. The prisoners were given civilian clothing and admonished to "get lost" and many were never apprehended. In the fall of 1892 the state agreed to phase out the convict lease system, and it was abolished in 1895.²³

Temple maintained that this uprising was unjustified and its leaders were deserving of incarceration or even

²³Edward L. Ayers, Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th Century American South (New York, 1984), 215-16; Katherine B. Hoskins, Anderson County (Memphis, 1979), 47-48; A. C. Hutson, Jr., "The Coal Miners' Insurrections, 1891-1892" (M.A. thesis, University of

execution. Insurrections destroyed law and order and the ensuing anarchy was not tolerable. The government was responsible for crushing any labor uprising or strike. This position demonstrates Temple's change in attitude toward the labor class. Early in his career and in his race for Congress, Temple had portrayed himself as a man with values similar to those of the working class. After he became a successful lawyer and entered the upper echelons of society, however, he lost his earlier compassion toward those less fortunate than he.²⁴

Temple also dealt with religion which in his opinion benefited humanity, because it taught that people should treat each other well. Religion, then, in Temple's mind was important more for the restraints it put on humanity than for any specific doctrine. In this discourse Temple cleared his conscience for his lack of participation in a specific church. Religion is significant only because it teaches people to live good and decent lives; so if one is

Tennessee, 1933), preface; Pete Daniel, "The Tennessee Convict War," Tennessee Historical Quarterly 34 (1975): 274-80; Oliver P. Temple, "Coal Miners' Strike," handwritten essay, undated, Temple MSS.

²⁴Temple, "Coal Miners' Strike," Temple MSS; Temple, Notable Men, "Introduction," 11-12.

"good and decent" there is no reason to become actively involved in any particular church. He did, however, maintain membership in Knoxville's Second Presbyterian Church. But membership with this congregation was as much a social and Republican endeavor as it was a spiritual one, since the church listed among its members men such as Horace Maynard, Perez Dickinson and R. J. McKinney.²⁵

Temple strongly believed that East Tennessee should be permitted to separate from the rest of the state. He authored the essay, "Separation for East Tennessee," which explained why the state should divide. He prepared a petition for the legislature for an independent state of East Tennessee in which he argued that the climate, geography, economy, and political sentiments reflected the differences between East Tennessee and the rest of the state and justified the split. Many persons argued that East Tennessee did not have the economic strength

²⁵ Oliver P. Temple, "Notes on Religion," handwritten essay enclosed in Oliver P. Temple to Samuel A. Rodgers, March 26, 1882, Temple MSS; W. Russell Briscoe and Katherine Boies Buehler, Her Walls Before Thee Stand: A History of the Second Presbyterian Church 1818-1968 (Knoxville, 1969), 16-29; Temple's church was established in 1818 when the First Presbyterian Church split. During the antebellum and war years the original congregation sympathized with secession and the South. Unionists, like Temple, tended to join the Second Presbyterian Church.

to survive as a state, but Temple bragged that his native region could manage well. Its unlimited water power, mineral resources, and spirit of enterprise could create in East Tennessee an industrial base not dissimilar to Massachusetts or Pennsylvania.²⁶

The concept of a separate state of East Tennessee was not proposed only in the Civil War era. In the mid-1830s when Tennessee contemplated the construction of turnpikes the issue arose. The proposed roads would fan out from Nashville into surrounding areas, so the primary beneficiary was Middle Tennessee, a possibility which irritated the other two thirds of the state. East Tennessee yearned for earlier days when it dominated the state's political framework. These sectional differences continued to flare and led to a separate statehood movement in East Tennessee. Andrew Johnson in 1841 introduced legislation to create the state of Frankland in East Tennessee. He believed that the struggle over turnpikes as well as the relatively limited use of slave labor in East Tennessee justified the formation of a new state.²⁷

²⁶Oliver P. Temple, "Separation for East Tennessee," handwritten essay, undated, Temple MSS.

²⁷Paul H. Bergeron, Antebellum Politics in Tennessee (Lexington, 1982), 41-42; Robert W. Winston, Andrew Johnson,

Separate statehood for East Tennessee became a major issue just as the Civil War came upon America. Temple and other leading Unionists wanted their region to form a new state in order to remain loyal to the Union, since the rest of the state had voted to secede; but a petition for separation was ignored by the legislature. As the war drew to a close Temple and other Unionists unsuccessfully worked for separation from the rest of the state.

"Secession" was Temple's final essay. In this piece he argued that he fought disunion with an intensity that he had demonstrated on no other cause. Temple hated secession and believed it was a foolish action; because he maintained that had the South not seceded, slavery and the Union could have been maintained. He based his idealistic opinion on the 1860 Republican platform pledge not to alter slavery in the states where it existed. However, Republicans seldom referred to slavery in the presidential contest. Congress refused to prohibit slavery where it was legal and some congressional leaders proposed a constitutional amendment to preserve the peculiar institution where it existed. Temple also felt that the Supreme Court was pro-South since

Plebeian and Patriot (New York, 1928), 35; Thomas P. Abernethy, From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee: A Study in Frontier Democracy (Chapel Hill, 1932), 310.

it was dominated by Southerners. Temple thus believed that the institution of slavery could have been maintained, had the Union not been dissolved.²⁸

In the essay, "Secession," Temple argued that he had been right in opposing disunion, while the majority of Southerners had held the wrong position. Though he demonstrated to his satisfaction that each branch of the federal government promised to protect slavery, he ignored the growing Northern public antagonism toward that institution. Even had the South not seceded, tempers were flaring and a conflict of some nature seemed inevitable.²⁹

The essays and books which Temple authored were, in general, his way of justifying what he considered to be the most significant aspects of his life. They comprise, in some sense, an autobiography along with a history of his beloved East Tennessee. Not surprisingly, his works portray himself, his friends, and his ideas in a very positive light, while his foes are not treated as kindly.

²⁸ Simkins and Roland, History of the South, 204; Temple, East Tennessee, 295, 297; James P. McPherson, Ordeal By Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction (New York, 1982), 123, 132, 136; Oliver P. Temple, "Secession," handwritten essay, undated, Temple MSS.

²⁹ Temple, "Secession," Temple MSS.

Temple may not be noted for his exhaustive research and writing skills, but he invested several years of his life preparing the various manuscripts. The fact that he spent such a considerable amount of time writing demonstrates the importance Temple gave to the project.

CHAPTER 4

THE AGRARIAN

In addition to Oliver Temple's participation in East Tennessee's nineteenth century political developments, he also made significant contributions to the state's agricultural growth. In fact, Temple is perhaps best known for his work with Tennessee's agrarian development. The best single source on Temple and his role as a promoter of husbandry is Fred Bailey's thesis, "Oliver Perry Temple: New South Agrarian." Temple is portrayed as a man whose activities augmented his goal toward advancing the farmers' well-being. He advised agrarians to diversify and rotate their crops, and raise livestock. Temple used his farm as a model for husbandmen to emulate. Temple helped lead farm organizations, especially the Eastern Division Fair and the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention. As a trustee of East Tennessee University, later the University of Tennessee, Temple translated many of his ideas into the school's agriculture department. His role at that institution is discussed in a subsequent chapter.¹

¹Fred Arthur Bailey, "Oliver Perry Temple: New South Agrarian" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1972), 19-23, 126-28.

Most of Temple's contributions to agriculture occurred after the Civil War, but his interest in agrarian conditions originated during his rearing on the family farm. He maintained an interest in agriculture throughout his entire life and after the war made a diligent effort to help East Tennessee farmers produce more and better crops, to help them financially, and to preserve the soil for future generations. He promoted scientific farming methods through newspapers, magazines, and most significantly the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention.

Temple wanted to teach husbandmen that through their own consolidated efforts, the region's farmers could modernize their practices, improve the quality and quantity of Tennessee's agricultural production, and thereby elevate their own economic and social status. In short, Temple wanted husbandmen to solve their economic problems themselves rather than turning to agricultural movements such as the Grange, Agricultural Wheel, and Farmers' Alliance. Since those organizations tended to blame external circumstances for agrarian difficulties, they often turned to the Democratic party for solutions.²

²Ibid., 31-38; Robert B. Jones, Tennessee at the Crossroads: The State Debt Controversy, 1870-1883 (Knoxville, 1977), 96-97; Roger L. Hart, Redeemers,

Many of the post-war agrarian reforms that Temple advocated had been promoted during the antebellum era; so though his ideas influenced postbellum Tennessee agriculture, they were not original. The agricultural pattern of antebellum Tennessee encouraged the production of grains for cattle and hogs. East Tennessee's farmers raised crops, particularly corn, which they fed to livestock. Drovers then herded the marketable animals to the cotton-producing regions of the deep South, particularly Alabama and Georgia. Though this interregional trade also included some crops, it primarily involved livestock such as cattle and hogs. This pattern encouraged farmers to produce much corn which removed the soil's nutrients.³

Fortunately a few Tennesseans realized that this agricultural system depleted soil fertility, and in order to prevent further damage these individuals initiated an

Bourbons and Populists: Tennessee 1870-1896 (Baton Rouge, 1975), 166-67; Amos Leo Gentry, "Public Career of Leonidas Campbell Houk" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1939), 77-78; Joseph A. Sharp, "The Farmers' Alliance and Tennessee Politics, 1890-1892" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1931), 43-96.

³Blanche Henry Clark, The Tennessee Yeomen, 1840-1860 (Nashville, 1942), xvii, 111-12; Sam B. Hilliard, Hog Meat and Hoecake: Food Supply in the Old South, 1840-1860 (Carbondale, 1972), 186-201.

"agricultural awakening." This movement urged the development of local and state agricultural societies and boards, the publication of farm magazines, and the establishment of schools to promote scientific farming.⁴

The state legislature in 1854 followed Governor Andrew Johnson's urgings and created a state board of agriculture. This governmental agency helped coordinate existing farmers' organizations and supported some new ones. In October of the same year former Governor Aaron V. Brown praised the work of East Tennessee's agricultural societies which had operated in the region since the 1820s. Brown commended these groups for attracting farmers to fairs and exhibitions where husbandmen could learn of new agricultural methods and procedures.⁵

These developments may be partially attributed to the "agricultural awakening," but many of the movement's recommendations were never permanently enacted. Fewer than one-half of Tennessee's counties established agrarian societies, and publications such as the Tennessee Farmer

⁴Clark, Tennessee Yeomen, 113.

⁵Paul H. Bergeron, Paths of the Past: Tennessee, 1770-1970 (Knoxville, 1979), 48; Clark, Tennessee Yeomen, 82-83.

floundered soon after their appearance. Agricultural schools were at best temporary and cash crops which exhausted soil productivity dominated the state's agrarian economy. Nevertheless much of the foundation on which Temple later worked was established during the antebellum era.⁶

Following the Civil War, East Tennesseans returned to the cultivation of the same crops produced in the pre-war years: corn, wheat, oats and rye. During the early 1870s farmers began raising grass crops, particularly clover. When baled, it was profitably marketed in the deep South and it had the additional quality of replenishing soil nutrients. Although fruits such as strawberries and grapes, as well as vegetables, were grown in East Tennessee before the war, their production expanded during the postbellum years. Also the number of fruit trees produced in the region increased.⁷

It was during these postwar years that Temple made most of his significant contributions to the state's agricultural development. Temple wanted East Tennessee's

⁶Clark, Tennessee Yeomen, 139.

⁷Mary U. Rothrock, ed., The French Broad-Holston Country: A History of Knox County, Tennessee (Knoxville, 1946), 190-92.

agrarians to advance beyond essentially subsistence farming, so he resisted their reverting to antebellum methods. Because of Temple's close association with Knoxville and East Tennessee, he understood the plight these residents faced at the end of the Civil War. He also knew that since most farmers utilized similar procedures and had raised the same crops for so many generations, it would take a major effort to improve agricultural methods.

According to Temple, East Tennessee's best hope centered on cultivating crops more adaptable to the region's geography and climate, such as strawberries, grapes, and cabbage. Farmers also needed to grow grass crops and raise stock, particularly dairy cattle. Temple believed that farmers should stop producing large quantities of wheat and corn, not only because such crops depleted the soil of its nutrients but also because other areas of the country could grow grain more efficiently. He also argued that those crops had not brought prosperity to East Tennessee. Temple summarized his opinion when he wrote in the Chronicle, ". . . the words 'too much corn and too many hogs' express in the plainest terms the curse of East Tennessee farming." In order to modernize the production of grass crops Temple encouraged manufacturers to market reapers and other modern equipment in East Tennessee.

Hiram Holt had lived in Knoxville but moved to Maine where he manufactured scythes. He provided Temple with a hay and feed knife. Holt claimed, "It is used as a feed cutter in cutting fine feed from baler or new--and cutting corn fodder." Temple argued that if agriculturalists were to adopt scientific farming procedures, they must be exposed to the most sophisticated implements available. Farmers sometimes asked Temple for advice on equipment. For example, James P. Phillips of Clarksville wrote, "I've concluded to make a few inquiries of you in reference to the various Reapers in use in your section." He was displeased with his implement, and he stated, "I thought your friends had tried [sic] several machines. I wish to Purchase a Reaper and Mower . . . I thought of writing to Genl Mabry, but concluded to trouble you."⁸

By the early 1860s Tennessee farmers began to produce beef cattle in large numbers but the Civil War limited the state's livestock production. Because the conflict destroyed much of the farm animal population, postbellum livestock producers traveled to surrounding regions to

⁸Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 17-23; Hiram Holt to Oliver P. Temple, July 21, 1875, James P. Phillips to Oliver P. Temple, February 18, 1880, Temple MSS, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville; Knoxville Chronicle, March 16, 1884.

bring better stock, particularly hogs and cattle. Temple agreed that improved breeds were essential to replenish the farm animal population. Joseph Killebrew concurred and argued that the general husbandmen in the East Tennessee uplands should raise Devon cattle for their excellent beef. Dairy farmers turned to the Jersey and Ayrshire, because their milk produced the best butter and cheese, respectively. Temple searched throughout the region and the East coast for various breeds to bring into East Tennessee. He hoped that the variety of commodities these animals produced could be marketed locally in order to elevate the farmer's economic condition.⁹

Temple in 1866 purchased an estate near Knoxville on which he put into practice many of his ideas. He used his farm to produce a myriad of crops which had been cultivated infrequently by East Tennessee farmers. He experimented with tuberous plants such as potatoes and yams not only to determine the feasibility of growing the vegetables on a commercial basis but also as a means to test various fertilizers. Robert J. Lowry of Atlanta shipped Temple some eight bushels of potatoes and he noted

⁹Joseph B. Killebrew, Introduction to the Resources of Tennessee (Knoxville, 1874), 129-30, 132, 139; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 23-25.

that ". . . We sent yours with a few white Spanish Mixed with them." Temple soon ordered additional potatoes but there was ". . . not one to be found in the city. . . ." Temple had already received an undisclosed amount of yams from Lowry.¹⁰

William Lenoir of Tennessee shipped to Temple four barrels of "dissolved bone which had been provided by Mr. Geo W. Grafflin of Baltimore." Lenoir commented that Grafflin ". . . is extremely anxious for us to try it on the different crops especially 'root crops.'" Unfortunately, the results of Temple's investigation of the effect of dissolved bone on root crops could not be located.¹¹

He also experimented with grapes. He produced several types of the fruit but concentrated on the Concord variety. Temple ordered some vines from George Hussman of Missouri who wrote Temple that Tennessee contained ". . . some of the finest grape lands in this Country." He assured Temple that his vines would produce the first season even if they were not planted until early June. When Temple began

¹⁰Robert J. Lowry to Oliver P. Temple, April 11, 18, 1866, Temple MSS.

¹¹William Lenoir and Brothers to Oliver P. Temple, April 30, 1872, Temple MSS.

growing the vine crop, he envisioned that some would be sold locally but he also planned to export much of the fruit. In order to ship the grapes Temple ordered some crates from J. B. Smith of Connecticut. But Smith informed Temple that ". . . we have been obliged to give up the manufacture of them here on account of Scarcity of the right kind of wood to make them. . . ." He went on to relate that ". . . if you have the timber to make them in Tenn will sell you State or Territory [sic] right so you can do well to make them right at home." Apparently Temple did not accept this offer because most of his grapes were marketed in the Knoxville region, although he tried to sell his product outside the area. A year after planting his vineyard Temple pursued the possibility of marketing wine in New York. But Merrick Price and Company responded to Temple's inquiry, ". . . the wines you allude to would sell much better in your country than in this city. . . ." The company also noted, "We have to [sic] large a Stock to make you an offer. We should advise you to have the goods shipped to Knoxville. . . ." ¹² Though Temple's

¹²Killebrew, Resources of Tennessee, 18, 165; George Hussman to Oliver P. Temple, March 28, 1867, J. B. Smith to Oliver P. Temple, July 8, 1872, Merrick Price and Company to Oliver P. Temple, July 21, 1868, Temple MSS.

vineyard remained relatively small, one acre, it was by the early 1870s one of the more productive in the state.

The Chronicle in August 1872 described Temple's estate in glowing terms: "We wish that all of the old fogies could witness the success that has attended the efforts of Chancellor O. P. Temple, on his farm, near the city. . . ." The paper reported, "The cultivation of grapes has been very successfully prosecuted and the vineyards have yielded largely this season." For example, "In the midst of the season the daily yield was eight barrels, and as the city could not consume the entire product, Judge Temple had two tons made into wine." Mentioned in the report were other crops produced on the farm. "Judge Temple has paid a great deal of attention to fruits and has almost every variety adapted to this lattiitude. . . ." Fruit which Temple raised included ". . . peaches, quinces, apples, and pears also small fruits strawberries raspberries cherries. . . ." ¹³

Temple also began growing trees not only for the crop they yielded, but also for landscaping purposes. James Stewart of Elmwood Nursery in Memphis wrote that he was trying to procure several cottonwood trees which Temple had ordered. Stewart noted, ". . . I with pleasure send

¹³Knoxville Chronicle, August 29, 1872.

you magnolia trees for your Fair Grounds." By the end of the 1870s Temple's success with the production of trees and shrubbery gave him a reputation as an authority on them. Charles P. Kemp of Jacksboro requested from Temple ". . . the list of fruit trees that you found to be successful with you at Knoxville." He flattered Temple by writing, ". . . your own love of horticulture and success in the past gave you the right to speak 'from the chair' and with authority."¹⁴

Although Temple's agricultural interest included crop diversification and growth, his primary desire involved the process of improving East Tennessee's livestock production, particularly cattle and hogs. He worked to enhance the stock and invested considerable time and effort buying and selling animals to improve the region's stock. He often traveled to the East, particularly New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania searching for Jerseys, Ayrshires, and other types. The animals were then shipped to his estate and in turn sold to East Tennessee farmers. Hartmann Kuhn wrote Temple from Pennsylvania that "your three animals were placed safely . . . in a very comfortable car at the

¹⁴James Stewart to Oliver P. Temple, February 24, 1872, Charles P. Kemp to Oliver P. Temple, March 6, 1882, Temple MSS.

Camden Depot yesterday. . . ." Kuhn concluded his letter, "I beg of you when they reach their home & you have more leisure to criticise [sic] their points you will candidly let me have your opinion."¹⁵

In some cases, Temple purchased cattle for other East Tennesseans. For example, Kuhn's son indicated that his father had "sent to Mr. Waring the certificate of Transfer in the name of Judge S. A. Rodgers[.]" He added that his father ". . . trusts the animals you purchased of him have proved worthy of their breed." J. H. Morgan of Ogdensburg, New York, from whom Temple purchased some cattle, related, ". . . I have a large herd of Ayrshires only one Larger in America & none better I have imported nothing but the very best in Scotland." Moreover he promised: "I will sell you yearling Bulls from \$100 to \$125 & Heifers same age, same price Calves from \$75 to \$125 Cows from \$200 to 400." Ed Stanton Delany of Cleveland wrote that he had heard Temple ". . . had now on hand some Herdbook Jerseys, having obtained some pure stock from Pennsylvania within the last two years." He asked Temple, "If this is correct, at what figure will you

¹⁵ Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 23; Hartman Kuhn to Oliver P. Temple, October 8, 1872, Temple MSS.

sell a Bull Calf six mos. old or under. . . ." Temple obliged and DeLany purchased a calf named "Cherokee." Three years later DeLany reported "I still have the Bull I bot [sic] of you."¹⁶

Temple also bought stock within the Volunteer State. For example he investigated purchasing a young bull from Campbell Brown of Spring Hill. Brown priced the animal at \$500 but told Temple, "I have already three buyers after him--one, from Canada, one from Ohio, one from Indiana." M. M. Gardner of Nashville wrote that he knew of a few bulls ranging in price from \$150 to \$250 which Temple might be interested in buying. Temple dealt with his friend S. A. Rodgers, who confirmed that "I will have the calf properly cared for and you will like him."¹⁷

Temple's main interest with improving livestock centered on dairy cattle, but he also helped upgrade the region's swine. He made several trips to surrounding areas, particularly Kentucky, to purchase boars. G. H. Clay and

¹⁶C. Hartmann Kuhn to Oliver P. Temple, September 26, 1878, J. H. Morgan to Oliver P. Temple, April 26, 1872, Ed S. DeLany to Oliver P. Temple, January 29, 1875, May 2, 1878, Temple MSS.

¹⁷M. M. Gardner to Oliver P. Temple, July 20, 1886, Campbell Brown to Oliver P. Temple, March 10, 1886, S. A. Rodgers to Oliver P. Temple, September 5, 1886, Temple MSS.

J. A. Howerton of Bourbon County, Kentucky wrote Temple:

"We have a fine lot of pigs on hand & can furnish you a fine show pig 4 mos old for \$25. . . ." They promised:

"Should you favor us with an order we will take especial pains in selecting for you & try & send you one or a pair that will take premiums. . . ." A. G. Herr of St. Matthews, Kentucky offered to sell Temple a five-month-old Berkshire boar for \$50. Temple then had the hogs transported to East Tennessee and he sold them to area farmers. Joseph King of Blount County remarked, "The stock bought of you arrived safely yesterday, and fulfills in every respect all your representations, and meets my entire satisfactions. . . ." King reported, "The Bull fills my eye exactly, and as to the Boar, I am unable to see where his form could be improved." He named the boar "Temple."¹⁸

Temple's extensive work in developing better livestock breeds made him a relative expert on the topic. Tennessee's Commissioner of Agriculture, Joseph B. Killebrew, wrote Temple on behalf of the stock breeders association, "We should like very much to have you prepare an address

¹⁸A. G. Herr to Oliver P. Temple, July 27, 1872, G. H. Clay and J. A. Howerton to Oliver P. Temple, July 26, 1872, Joseph L. King to Oliver P. Temple, January 9, 1873, Temple MSS.

on the Capabilities of East Tennessee for stock raising." Unfortunately Temple's pressing legal business prevented him from accepting.¹⁹

Temple used his estate "Melrose" as a test plot for scientific farming, but he realized that other methods must be used to expose agriculturalists to the most modern developments. Since the antebellum years, a variety of methods had been implemented to teach new techniques to the area's husbandmen. The state instituted the Board of Agriculture during the 1850s which in turn sponsored the divisional fairs. These agrarian expositions demonstrated modern and scientific farming procedures to farmers. Several counties also established farmers' clubs. The Knox County Farmers' Club was organized in 1871 and discussed, among other things, the importance of raising grass and using land for pasture. William Rule, one of the club's more noted members, encouraged area farmers to grow hay. Not only could it be sold, but it also could help improve deteriorating soil fertility.²⁰

¹⁹J. B. Killebrew to Oliver P. Temple, February 3, 1881, Temple MSS; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 25-26.

²⁰Rothrock, French Broad, 189-90.

Various leaders of the Knox County Farmers' Club also participated in the Grange or Patrons of Husbandry, a national agrarian organization which entered the Volunteer State in 1870. Several leading East Tennessee Democrats, including Thomas A. R. Nelson and John Baxter, joined the group. In Temple's opinion the Grange movement did have some positive characteristics such as promoting the state's industry, and taking no position on Tennessee's state debt controversy (although some members were low-tax Democrats). Nevertheless he strongly opposed the Patrons of Husbandry.²¹

Though the Grange had minimal impact on Tennessee politics, its leadership perpetuated the concept that non-agrarian factors caused the farmers' economic plight. Temple argued that the Grange redirected the farmers from the real problem toward regulating railroads. The major culprit in the agrarians' economic plight was the continual use of poor farming procedures which could best be altered by teaching husbandmen new scientific agricultural techniques.²²

²¹Hart, Redeemers, 13; Jones, Crossroads, 73.

²²Hart, Redeemers, 111; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 30-36.

In the early postbellum era economic depression plagued East Tennessee's agrarians. Much of the livestock had been killed in the war and poor farming practices depleted the land of essential nutrients.

The Patrons of Husbandry began attracting the troubled Tennessee agrarians during the early 1870s. Simultaneously, Temple became convinced that East Tennessee's farmers needed a forum where they could meet to discuss their agricultural problems and observe new farming techniques. Hence, Temple in 1872 helped organize the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention as well as the Eastern Division Fair. Temple believed these organizations would help husbandmen recognize the true cause of their plight so they would alter their farming habits and thereby alleviate their predicament. Though the county-wide farmers' clubs provided a necessary resource for the region's agrarians, the larger well-organized convention and fair would exercise more influence and reduce the Grange's effectiveness.²³

J. A. Turley wrote to Temple, "I am greatly pleased with your prospects for E. D. Fair and Farmers Convention and especially the latter for out of its labors I anticipate greater benefit than from all other sources combined."

²³Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 26.

He believed, "If we could get them there one time we would have no trouble in getting them there again." He also insisted that Temple should lead the movement, because commercial and professional men promoted and directed scientific farming. Temple asked newspapers to advertise the fair throughout the region in order to attract many farmers. For example, when C. Wheeler and M. S. Mahoney, the publishers of the Herald and Tribune, first heard of Temple's fair their weekly was being printed. But they noted, "We have 'stopped the press' and give your Fair a small local notice. We will take occasion to notice it frequently from this time on."²⁴

In a speech prepared for the 1872 East Tennessee Farmers' Convention, Temple argued for agricultural reform. Many people blamed tariffs, taxes, and merchants for the agrarians' economic problems. Temple maintained, however, that bad farming was the primary culprit. Poor cultivation practices decreased soil fertility; and unless husbandmen altered their agricultural procedures, East Tennessee farmers would remain impoverished. Unfortunately agrarians were uninformed as to the best methods of farming, because

²⁴J. A. Turley to Oliver P. Temple, August 6, 1872, C. Wheeler and M. S. Mahoney to Oliver P. Temple, August 22, 1872, Temple MSS.

they refused to utilize available teaching resources such as journals and books. But Temple insisted that husbandmen could learn of the most modern farming techniques through an agricultural paper as well as free quality schools. Farmers' clubs and societies on the local, county and regional levels could also expose farmers to the best implements and stock.²⁵

In a letter to East Tennessee farmers, Temple described the astonishing success of the convention of 1872. It helped spark the formation of farmers' clubs and the participants consented to increase their pasture land as well as to use manure as fertilizer. Farmers also agreed upon the need for improved breeds of stock particularly cattle, hogs, and sheep. Therefore, Temple proposed the creation of a stock association to improve the breeds, especially Durham and Jersey cattle. The fifty dollar membership would secure enough funds for a large purchase of pure blooded stock to be sold at the fall divisional fair.²⁶

²⁵Oliver P. Temple, "Address to the 1872 East Tennessee Farmers' Convention," handwritten essay, Temple MSS.

²⁶Oliver P. Temple to East Tennessee Farmers, June 5, 1872, Temple MSS.

Six years later the Chronicle reported on a meeting of East Tennessee agrarians. "Chancellor Temple," it noted, "offered the following resolutions: Resolved that it is the sense of this Convention that farming in East Tennessee should be encouraged and developed in the direction of grass growing and stock raising rather than in the direction of grain growing." In January 1879 the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention asked Temple to join a committee to lobby the General Assembly for legislation to close the region's open range. Many farmers opposed enclosure, but the successful implementation of selective breeding, as well as sheep production, necessitated the end of an open range. Temple, however, remained leery of seeking legislative assistance, since it demonstrated to farmers that they could seek a political solution to their problems. S. J. Howard, who organized the committee, acknowledged to Temple that "I am informed you object to acting owing to your being a Republican & Democratic Legislature[.]" But, Howard argued, "This is not a party measure nor do we wish it so but to the contrary & as there are Republicans in the Legislature so should there be in our committee." He reiterated that the issue

boils "down to the proposition no sheep no grass & no grass no country[.]"²⁷

Two years after the initial assembly, Turley wrote to Temple that the Farmers' Convention would help destroy the Grangers. The convention had lost some of its members to the Grange, but Turley assured Temple, "I am for meeting and continuing the old convention upon its original designs and principles." Fortunately for Temple and Turley the Patrons of Husbandry attracted relatively few East Tennessee farmers and by the late 1870s the Grange had ceased to be a force in the Volunteer State. Its membership plummeted from a peak of 20,000 Tennessee families in 1875 to less than 1,500 only two years later. The bulk of the Grange's membership left because the organization failed to alleviate farmers' distress.²⁸

Though Democrat Charles Charleton helped Temple form the Farmers' Convention, he supported a union between the Convention and the Grange. In fact, he edited the Grange Outlook, the official paper of the Patrons of Husbandry

²⁷S. J. Howard to Oliver P. Temple, January 30, 1879, Temple MSS; Knoxville Chronicle, October 11, 1878.

²⁸J. A. Turley to Oliver P. Temple, May 16, 1874, Temple MSS; Hart, Redeemers, 111; Lawrence Goodwyn, The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America (New York, 1978), 32.

in East Tennessee. The Grange's failure disappointed Charleton, who stated that group's membership left like "rats escaping a burning barn" when they realized it was not solving the agrarians' distress.²⁹

As the Patrons of Husbandry faded, another farmers' movement, the Greenbackers, emerged. The politically-oriented Greenbackers first ran candidates in Tennessee in the 1874 election; they generally sided with the "low tax" Democrats on the state debt issue but had essentially died out by 1880. The Greenbackers wanted to solve agrarian distress by promoting inflationary policies.³⁰

Following the Greenbackers' demise two more farmers' organizations entered the Volunteer State. In 1884 the Agricultural Wheel appeared in West Tennessee, having originated two years previously in Arkansas. Three years later a virtually indistinguishable organization, the Southern Farmers' Alliance, emerged in the state. These two agrarian controlled groups deliberately disassociated themselves from urban interests. These organizations tended to operate on the premise that since husbandmen did not

²⁹Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 35-37.

³⁰Hart, Redeemers, 46; Daniel M. Robison, Bob Taylor and the Agrarian Revolt in Tennessee (Chapel Hill, 1935), 135-36.

create the poor agricultural economy, other facets of society needed to alleviate the situation. Temple opposed this premise because of his conviction that agrarians could solve most of their problems themselves. He urged farmers to shy away from government and to help one another.³¹

Because the Wheel and Southern Farmers' Alliance had virtually identical goals and membership requirements, they joined together on the state level in 1889. Alliance Vice President for Tennessee, J. H. McDowell, was the chief architect behind unification. The new organization, known as the Farmers' and Laborers' Union or more commonly as the Alliance, selected Democrat John P. Buchanan as its president. He won his party's gubernatorial nomination in 1890 and carried the Democrats to victory in the fall election. Several other Alliance leaders had been politicians before associating with the agrarians, thus the movement became highly political in nature.³²

While the politically-oriented Alliance enjoyed its strongest support in Middle and West Tennessee, the eastern section's farmers were more supportive of agricultural

³¹Robison, Agrarian Revolt, 136; Hart, Redeemers, 113-14, 121; Goodwyn, Populist Moment, vii-xiii; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 30.

³²Be:geron, Paths of the Past, 79.

societies and farmers' conventions. The East Tennessee Farmers' Convention, concerned itself primarily with exposing agrarians to scientific farming. This group attempted to remain separated from partisan politics, although an important exception occurred in 1883 when it advocated the adoption of a railroad commission law. The convention continued to meet throughout the 1880s and Temple strongly influenced the organization. In most sessions he offered helpful suggestions on agrarian development. He typically held a significant position and the convention elected him vice president in 1893. The following year they granted him that post for life.³³

Though the convention usually met in Knoxville, in 1889 and 1890 it assembled in Chattanooga. To assure good attendance for the second meeting, its organizers urged Temple to arrange for extra trains to transport visitors from Knoxville. D. F. Kefauver of Madisonville explained to Temple that the "Trains run so inconveniently to get to Chatt. the first day, cannot you all at Knoxville get the E. Tenn. R. R. to run a special train down each morning or Tuesday morning anyhow." Kefauver predicted the

³³Hart, Redeemers, 108; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 38.

additional runs ". . . would materially increase the attendance upon the convention & pay the road handsomely." Temple was unwilling to assist in this plan, because he feared the convention would remain permanently in Chattanooga. But Kefauver cautioned Temple, "I think you are very much mistaken about the convention being permanently located in Chattanooga," for "There seemed to be a general understanding last year that it was to be held once more in Chattanooga & then should go back home to Knoxville." He assured Temple, "I think there is no doubt about its going to Knoxville next year if she sends down a decent (in number) representation & invites it back." Temple was apparently not convinced by Kefauver's arguments, and the fair's attendance decreased that year.³⁴

Temple helped create the Farmers' Convention in the early 1870s primarily to improve the conditions of East Tennessee husbandmen. Though it cannot be proven conclusively he may simply have wanted a contented rural population. Though the Grange was essentially non-political, its emphasis upon railroad regulation led the Patrons of Husbandry into a quasi-political

³⁴D. F. Kefauver to Oliver P. Temple, May 2, 6, 1890, Temple MSS; Hart, Redeemers, 108.

organization. Temple remained convinced that the farmers needed to have a non-political organization to which they could turn. The East Tennessee Convention instilled within agrarians the concept that they could improve their economic position by altering their farming methods. Temple also believed that by setting an example he could best maintain his integrity and the support of convention members. As long as he could, Temple worked with the convention to help reform and improve East Tennessee's husbandmen and their economic plight.

CHAPTER 5

LAWYER, JUDGE, JOURNALIST AND SPECULATOR

Throughout Temple's long and distinguished life he became involved in a myriad of business pursuits. He expended much energy and used people whose expertise could enhance his financial status. Some of Temple's enterprises succeeded while others cost him dearly. In this chapter three areas of Temple business involvement will be examined: his legal career, his newspaper venture, and his investments in land and in cattle. Temple's association with the newspaper and cattle resulted in financial reverses but his legal career and land investments proved to be profitable. An investigation of these endeavors reveals a mediocre businessman who was determined to amass a fortune.

Because Temple's legal career spanned the majority of his life, it attracted most of his attention. Following his admittance to the bar in 1846, Temple practiced law in Greeneville with F. W. Compton. Two years later he moved to Knoxville and formed a partnership with William H. Sneed. This association dissolved in 1857 upon Temple's request. While corresponding with his associate, Sneed

mentioned that "Your wish to close up our business on your return merits my full approbation."¹

Temple had by then joined with Connally F. Trigg, who had relocated to Knoxville from Abingdon, Virginia, following an unsuccessful 1853 race for Congress. The Temple-Trigg partnership handled all types of cases, including large lawsuits and murder trials.²

In August 1858 a perplexed Trigg responded to a letter from his partner, "Your suggestion about proposing a dissolution on my return has taken me rather by surprise and occasioned me a good deal of concern." He added, "of course if you think your best interest would be promoted by it, I can interpose no objection." Although their business association ended, Temple and Trigg remained friends; and when Tennessee became engulfed in the secession crisis, they campaigned against the movement. Because of his association with Unionists, Trigg was appointed

¹William H. Sneed to Oliver P. Temple, March 27, 1857, Temple MSS, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville. Mary Temple apparently erred when she wrote that the partnership ended in 1855 when Sneed entered Congress. Oliver P. Temple, Notable Men of Tennessee 1833-1875: Their Times and Their Contemporaries (New York, 1912), 17.

²Ibid., 208-09; John T. Moore and A. P. Foster, Tennessee: The Volunteer State (4 vols.; Nashville, 1923), 4: 62.

by President Lincoln in July 1862 as United States District Judge.³

After Trigg left the firm, Temple proposed a partnership with A. J. Fletcher. In response Fletcher claimed, "If made sooner, I think I should have accepted it, but my die is cast. If I succeed in getting a practice at Greeneville I am settled for life. But I despise the political atmosphere of that county." In a bizarre development Temple found himself as Fletcher's attorney in 1860. Because of Fletcher's performance as counsel in an earlier lawsuit, a disgruntled Greeneville citizen, Robert Mason, assaulted Fletcher, who then killed the attacker. Temple believed Fletcher acted in self-defense and since the court dismissed the case after remaining on the docket a few terms, the prosecuting attorney apparently concurred.⁴

Temple's Unionist sympathies made him a popular lawyer among persons in trouble with the Confederate government. On the night of November 8, 1861 some East Tennessee

³Andrew Johnson to Abraham Lincoln, May 18, 1862, in LeRoy P. Graf, Ralph W. Haskins, and Paul H. Bergeron, eds., The Papers of Andrew Johnson (8 vols. to date; Knoxville, 1967-), 5: 403.

⁴Connally F. Trigg to Oliver P. Temple, August 19, 1858, A. J. Fletcher to Oliver P. Temple, March 10, 1859, Temple MSS; Temple, Notable Men, 124.

Unionists burned several railroad bridges in an attempt to disrupt the Confederate's transportation system through the region. This action infuriated Confederates who responded by executing several bridge burners and incarcerating many Unionists for little reason. Although Temple opposed these bridge burners, he felt that the capital punishment several of them received was unjustified.⁵

A second group of Unionists in serious legal trouble were commonly known as "Andrews' Raiders." Twenty-five Northern soldiers led by James J. Andrews commandeered the Confederate locomotive "The General." The pursuers later captured the raiders near Ringgold, Georgia, just south of Chattanooga. The prisoners were incarcerated in the Tennessee city, where Andrews and seven of his associates were tried, condemned, and executed. General Kirby Smith ordered that the remaining spies be transferred to Knoxville, because it had a stronger jail and the Federals were nearing Chattanooga. Upon their arrival in Knoxville, the prisoners were permitted by local judge

⁵ Oliver P. Temple, East Tennessee and the Civil War (Cincinnati, 1899), 408-11; E. Merton Coulter, William G. Brownlow: Fighting Parson of the Southern Highlands (Knoxville, 1971 [1937]), 170-71.

advocate Leander V. Crook to obtain any lawyer who would defend them and Temple agreed to the challenge. John Baxter, who had unsuccessfully pleaded with the Confederate government for mercy toward the bridge burners, assisted Temple in this endeavor. The court scheduled the spies to be tried individually before Colonel Joseph Bibb of the 23rd Alabama Infantry. Though Temple and Baxter understood more of civil law and judicial proceedings than did the court personnel, their expertise did not encompass military law. Hence the raider, Private George D. Wilson, was found guilty and executed. Fortunately for the other defendants impending Union raids led to the disbanding of the court.⁶

Temple was not associated with other significant cases involving Unionists until after the hostilities ended. By 1864 Temple had formed a partnership with his good friend Samuel A. Rodgers. One of the more common legal matters they worked with was the reclaiming of property confiscated during the war and other damages incurred during the struggle. A. E. Jackson, an ex-Confederate, was indicted for treason following the Civil War. He wrote to Temple,

⁶Digby Gordon Seymour, Divided Loyalties: Fort Sanders and the Civil War in East Tennessee (Knoxville, 1963), 65-66.

"I seek to dodge no responsibility for my voluntary participation in the rebellion. . . ." He later stated that at the "Last Court I was only required to produce my pardon & the evidence of its acceptance. . . ." Jackson complained that Crawford W. Hall, the Federal District Attorney for East Tennessee, was now requiring him to attend the next court session, an expensive demand since he now lived in Abingdon, Virginia. Hiram Boyle, an ex-Rebel informed Temple that although "The Treason case against me settled at a cost of \$400," he still had to be tried for damages exceeding \$5,000. Boyle sought Temple's intervention, since he felt "that . . . it would be to the interest of all party's [sic] to arrange these matters without Litigation." William Gammon of Wytheville, Virginia asked assistance with his indictment for treason.⁷

Thomas E. Kercheval of Nashville asked for information on Thomas J. Huskey of Cocke County, who as in the state prison. "He was indicted for stealing bacon . . . some time in the fall or winter of 1864, or being in the company with others who did the stealing." Kercheval,

⁷General A. E. Jackson to Oliver P. Temple, June 16, 28, 1866, Hiram Boyle to Oliver P. Temple, August 26, 1866, William G. Gammon to Oliver P. Temple, September 10, 1866, Temple MSS.

an attorney who was seeking a pardon for Huskey, asserted that ". . . some bacon was taken, but that it was taken in a foraging expedition, while he was a soldier, by orders from Genl Burnside." Temple was Huskey's counsel at the trial so Kercheval asked him for more facts in the case. In 1864, W. A. Walker, of Maryville the treasurer of Porter Academy sought Temple's legal advice regarding notes held ". . . against divers persons who have gone South." Temple responded on the letter, "Ans'd in full." Apparently Temple's assistance pleased Walker, because after Temple became Chancellor, Walker asked him to "continue in your present position."⁸

Shortly after the war Temple defended Moses Gamble, who had been accused of treason. The defendant had been appointed as an agent by Governor Isham Harris to seize weapons and surrender them to Confederate authorities. Temple maintained that Gamble accepted the position only to prevent any harm to himself or his family from his Confederate neighbors and that he seized few arms.⁹ This

⁸Thomas A. Kercheval to Oliver P. Temple, September 8, 1866, W. A. Walker to Oliver P. Temple, January 13, 1864, November 14, 1866, Temple MSS.

⁹Temple, Notable Men, 212.

case was tried in the court of Judge Trigg, Temple's former partner, and the jury acquitted Gamble.

During the summer of 1865 Charles E. Soule of Ionia, Michigan asked about joining Temple's firm. Soule reminded Temple that he had served "as the Judge Advocate of the Military Commission in your city nearly all last year.

. . ." For references Soule suggested Thomas A. R. Nelson or John Netherland, who ". . . conducted the defence [sic] in most cases in the Military Commission of which I was Judge Advocate. . . ." Soule never joined the firm and Temple continued the search for a partner. John C. Gant informed Temple, "I am grateful to you for your kind offer & suggestions. If I intended returning to East Tennessee, I would be pleased to settle in Knoxville, and would like to be associated with you in the practice of law. But I have no intention to leave Nashville."¹⁰

Two other men, George Andrews and James W. Deadrick, began practicing law with Temple and Rodgers. Andrews, who recently moved to Knoxville from Michigan, joined the firm in 1866. Two years later, Brownlow appointed Andrews to the state Supreme Court. Temple also invited Deadrick

¹⁰Ibid., 19; John C. Gant to Oliver P. Temple, December 4, 1865, Charles E. Soule to Oliver P. Temple, July 23, 1865, Temple MSS.

to join the law firm. Like Temple, Deadrick had been an Indian Commissioner, although he had worked in Iowa. Deadrick later returned to Tennessee and relocated in Knoxville in 1867, after which he joined with Temple's firm. In the meantime, Rodgers moved to Loudon and in 1866 left the partnership. Rodgers requested that Temple deal with his remaining interest "as may best suit the firm and the business. . . ." Temple, though, wanted more specific instructions, so Rodgers replied, "If I were to sell on the same terms I did to Mr Andrews I think my interest would make me something over three thousand dollars. . . ." ¹¹

In 1866 after being appointed as Chancellor of the Eighth Chancery District, Temple focused much of his attention upon his judicial responsibilities. This district had been formed in the spring of 1865. Samuel R. Rodgers, the Speaker of the Senate, informed Temple in mid-May, "I introduced & got passed a bill to establish the 8th Chancery District composed of Sevier, Blount, Knox, Monroe, Roane, Anderson & Union." While chancellor, Temple presided over countless trials, one of which concerned his associate

¹¹ S. A. Rodgers to Oliver P. Temple, May 25, 1866, Temple MSS.

John Baxter and Joseph A. Mabry, president of the Knoxville and Kentucky Railroad, 1858-64 and 1868-69. In 1869 Baxter accused Mabry of selling one hundred tons of the company's rails to Confederate authorities and pocketing the funds. Temple had been a founder of the company, but he had sold his stock and resigned from the board of directors in 1866. Because Baxter could not adequately document his charge, the court exonerated the defendant. In June 1870 Baxter admitted that Mabry was not involved in any fraud with the enterprise.¹²

In September 1870 the company's board of directors replaced Mabry with Knoxville financier Charles M. McGhee. The ousted president sought an injunction from Temple to prevent McGhee from taking the position. During the following month Temple ruled against Mabry which permitted McGhee to assume control of the railroad.¹³

The state constitution of 1870 redrew the chancery divisions. Consequently Temple was transferred from the

¹²Samuel R. Rodgers to Oliver P. Temple May 13, 1865, Temple MSS; Jerome G. Taylor, Jr., "The Extraordinary Life and Death of Joseph A. Mabry," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications 44 (1972): 57-60.

¹³William Joseph MacArthur, Jr., "Charles McClung McGhee, Southern Financier" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Tennessee, 1975), 33-53.

eighth to the second district. Temple and George Brown vied for the office in a rather bitter campaign. The Democratic Daily Press and Herald supported Brown and the Daily Chronicle favored Temple. The Herald asserted that Temple had no association with the common man and knew nothing of their opinion, but he may ". . . condescend to converse a little with the common people. But we have no idea the experiment will suit his refined taste. . . ." The paper predicted that after the election Temple ". . . will become thoroughly disgusted with the business and withdraw again to the elegant and refined association of the rich and great folks." The Chronicle praised Temple as ". . . one of the common people and foremost in every enterprise for the public good." It accused Brown of making the race ". . . a mere personal controversy between him and his opponent."¹⁴

Much of the anti-Temple material that the Herald published was based on the chancellor's testimony before the Congressional Reconstruction Committee in February 1866. In a letter to the editor he asked the paper to ". . . print the testimony published by the Reconstruction

¹⁴ Knoxville Daily Press and Herald, July 15, 1870; Knoxville Daily Chronicle, July 24, 1870. For more editorials on this race see chapter 2.

Committee. . . ." Temple claimed, ". . . I urged the . . . Chronicle not to indulge in any personalities against my competitor, but to place the canvass on grounds befitting the high office we seek." He concluded his letter by asserting, ". . . if personal or political matters are introduced; degrading the canvass, it is not my fault. Neither I nor my friends have cast the first stone." Temple won his election bid in his new jurisdiction.¹⁵

In October 1873 Temple heard a lawsuit which attracted more than a little attention. In the case of Swepson and Webb vs. Knoxville Gas Company, George M. Branner, et al., the plaintiffs sued for the estate of William A. Branner, who had died intestate in March 1865. In 1867 George M. and John R. Branner resurrected the Knoxville Gas Light Company (which had been abandoned in September 1863 when Federal troops neared Knoxville). The plaintiffs accused the defendants of conspiring to defraud the company's stockholders by issuing worthless stock. Swepson and Webb, requested the court to appoint a receiver so the

¹⁵Knoxville Daily Press and Herald, July 19, 1870.

company could reorganize. Temple ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and the state Supreme Court concurred.¹⁶

Chancellor Temple's support of Unionism created a base of political support which contributed to his popularity. During his tenure on the bench Temple held court in various towns throughout the Eighth and Second Chancery District and hence met countless people. Because of his reputation, numerous Republicans urged Temple to seek political office, but he declined.¹⁷

After a dozen years as chancellor he decided to leave the bench and return to the practice of law. Shortly before Temple retired as chancellor, M. B. Templeton of Ooltewah, who was a friend of S. A. Rodgers, sought a partnership with Temple. As he confided to Rodgers, ". . . the very enviable reputation which Chancellor Temple has, as a gentleman and a lawyer makes it very desirable upon my part to be associated with him in the practice of law. The advantages of such a connection would be very great to me." Rodgers transmitted the letter to Temple and added, "If I can do anything further in the matter of securing

¹⁶Lucile Deadrick, ed., Heart of the Valley: A History of Knoxville, Tennessee (Knoxville, 1976), 146-48; Knoxville Daily Press and Herald, October 15, 1873.

¹⁷Temple, Notable Men, 193-94.

you a good man or as aid to you in any way--I am ready[.]" Apparently Temple refused Templeton's overtures. During the 1870s Knoxville had no shortage of attorneys, some thirty-eight practiced in the city. In 1879 the position of Assistant District Attorney of East Tennessee opened; Temple, however, refused to seek an appointment to the office. Major Temple told his brother, "I am glad you are not anxious for the office of Dist Attorney. . . ." By this time he was less concerned with his legal career and was focusing on other interests.¹⁸

Much of Temple's legal work during the late 1870s revolved around the founding of Tennessee's noted Rugby Colony. Franklin W. Smith of Boston, secretary of the Board of Aid to Ownership, consulted Temple in August 1878 on a myriad of topics. Their discussion included issues such as the political situation in East Tennessee, the potential threat of yellow fever, as well as the condition of the state's agriculture. Unfortunately how and why Smith contacted Temple is unclear. Temple's experience with land investments, familiarity with the legal aspects

¹⁸Deadrick, Heart of the Valley, 17; M. B. Templeton to S. A. Rodgers, June 21, 1878, S. A. Rodgers to Oliver P. Temple, June 22, 1878, Major S. Temple to Oliver P. Temple, March 3, 1879, Temple MSS.

of securing titles, along with his endorsement of immigration into the state and expertise in Tennessee agriculture could possibly have influenced Smith.¹⁹

Temple became quite interested in Rugby and became the Board of Aid to Ownership's chief legal advisor. His primary responsibility involved the obtaining of clear title to the land where the enterprise would be located. Initially the colony's promoters intended to accumulate four hundred thousand acres, but when Rugby opened in 1880 merely one-tenth of that amount had been secured.²⁰

In 1880 Temple turned sixty years of age. He had by then earned enough money to live comfortably the rest of his life, so he began to ease out of his legal career. Temple retired from the bar in 1881 following his appointment as Knoxville's postmaster. His partner, Jerome Templeton, who was apparently unrelated to M. B. Templeton, then assumed Temple's legal work for Rugby.²¹

¹⁹Fred Arthur Bailey, "Oliver Perry Temple: New South Agrarian" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1972), 108-10.

²⁰Fred Arthur Bailey, "Legalities, Agriculture, and Immigration: The Role of Oliver Perry Temple in the Rugby Experiment," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications 44 (1972): 90-103.

²¹Temple, Notable Men, 19.

While postmaster, Temple became closely associated with Knoxville's newspaper business. Knoxville was the center for publishing in East Tennessee. The Whig, which had been founded in 1829, became the Knoxville Register and Whig nearly three decades later. By 1875 it became the Daily Chronicle and Weekly Whig. In 1870 William Rule, a former employee of Brownlow's Knoxville Whig, began publishing a rival publication, the Knoxville Chronicle. He used the paper to support his political allies, such as Horace Maynard, as well as to denounce his foes, such as Temple's friend Leonidas C. Houk.²²

Late in the Hayes administration, U. S. Postmaster General Maynard obtained Knoxville's postmastership for Rule. Since Congressman Houk regarded Rule as an enemy, he successfully worked to remove Rule from that post after Maynard's tenure in the cabinet ended. Rule then used his position as editor of the Knoxville Chronicle to attempt to destroy Houk's chances for re-election in 1882.²³

²²In 1863 the paper was known as Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator with Republican Chronicle; Deadrick, Heart of the Valley, 281, 661.

²³Gordon B. McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 1865-1900: Politics and the Appalachian Community (Chapel Hill, 1978), 84-85.

But after Houk won the race, Rule sold his business ". . . to a stock company for sixteen thousand dollars. . . ." The purchasers included James Monroe Meek, Henry R. Gibson, Temple, Houk, Isham Young, J. M. Melton, Fred De Tavernier, Rev. George W. LeVere and others. These men organized the company ". . . to start a new paper but there was hardly a field or room for two Republican dailies. . . ." Houk then combined the Chronicle with his paper, the weekly Republican. Temple chaired the executive committee of the paper's board of directors, which appointed Gibson, Houk's former law partner, as editor. This newspaper enterprise was designed as the means by which Houk could consolidate his grip on Tennessee's Second Congressional District. Therefore Gibson used it as a tool to improve the Congressman's position with his constituency. Initially Houk supported the editor's work, declaring that "Gibson is making the Chronicle the best paper ever published in Knoxville, in many respects, but you know a very small blunder will counteract and even discount much of value."²⁴

²⁴Amos Leo Gentry, "The Public Career of Leonidas Campbell Houk" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1939), 65; Knoxville Daily Chronicle, December 6, 1882; L. C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, April 11, 1883, Temple MSS.

The newspaper associates experienced a major strain over the paper's editorial position regarding prohibition, which by the 1880s became a political issue in the state. Gibson authored several essays supporting temperance, while Houk opposed the movement. Houk declared to Temple in October 1883 that "I presume you have noticed that 'our paper' of this morning not only commits itself but aspires to commit the Republican party generally to the mistakes and follies of the Ohio, and Iowa Republicans on the liquor question." The Chronicle had editorialized, ". . . for our part, we would far rather see the Republican party lose fighting the battles of temperance and morality than win fighting the battles of intemperance and immorality." Though Temple and Houk were allies, Temple backed Gibson on the prohibition issue.²⁵

Soon after the temperance squabble surfaced, the paper became embroiled in another controversy. Houk and others accused Gibson of trying to gain control of the company. A furious Houk complained, "While I was fully aware that Col Gibson was in some degree presumptuous I did not believe

²⁵McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 144, 147; L. C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, October 11, 1883, Temple MSS; Knoxville Daily Chronicle, October 11, 1883. Houk did support prohibition in the 1887 state referendum, but primarily because of political expediency.

him capable of such a high handed proceeding as to issue the extra stock to himself. . . ." Gibson's deed seemed particularly disturbing since ". . . it was distinctly and explicitly understood that this surplus was to be apportioned among the stockholders." Four days later Houk charged, "He has as you know greatly injured and retarded the business of the Company. . . ." Gibson also allegedly pocketed some of the money which had been designated for operating expenses. Colonel Fred De Taverneir described Gibson's actions to Temple, "He had told us all the time we were paying expenses--as they ought to have done--now he comes with the astonishing news that we were three thousand short?" Much of the dispute between Gibson and the board stemmed from the fact that the editor, who had worked as Houk's campaign manager, considered a run for the seat. In order to remove this alleged threat, Houk ordered Gibson's dismissal. As chairman of the company's executive committee, Temple relieved Gibson of his duties as editor. Colonel De Tavernier praised Temple, "you cannot be too highly commended for the firmness & decisiveness you used in the matter." But he feared that Gibson ". . . will strain every nerve . . ." to take control of the Chronicle. De Tavernier added, "And our experience proves that he hesitates at nothing. But give

a man of his perseverance [sic] & energy all the money he wants and you have a very dangerous force to contend with."²⁶

Houk feared that the paper's editorial upheaval might precipitate a lack of confidence and support among its readers. He thought that the Democrats or possibly rival Republicans might capitalize on the situation. Therefore he directed Temple to do whatever was necessary to appease the public. Houk concurred with Temple that "It is impossible to run a newspaper without making it acceptable to its readers, and I agree with you that we ought to make it thus acceptable almost regardless of expense." Houk informed Temple that "I wrote Judge Meek that I thought you ought to be given control of the Agriculture Department of the weekly."²⁷

Thus with Houk's approval, Temple formed the farming section for the paper. He believed this would be an effective way to teach new agricultural techniques to East

²⁶L. C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, December 13, 17, 1883, Fred De Tavernier to Oliver P. Temple, December 17, 20, 1883, Temple MSS; Gentry, "Houk," 65; McKinney, Southern Mountain Republicans, 142, 147-48.

²⁷L. C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, January 8, 26, 1884, Temple MSS.

Tennessee farmers. Temple hoped that this emphasis toward agrarianism would maintain popular support for the paper. He soon began to search for a journalist to enhance the Chronicle's agriculture department. He asked J. B. Stokely of Newport, who declined the request. Since he was a major promoter of the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention, Stokely commented, ". . . I think it best for the Convention that I should not become a correspondent for any E. Tenn. paper. . . ." Stokely reminded Temple, "You know something of the jealousy existing between some of our papers. I hope to give none of them occasion for criticism adverse to the interests of our Convention." As agriculture editor, Temple wrote several articles on farming methods for the Chronicle. Houk praised Temple's work noting, "I have read your articles on 'Old and New Methods of farming.' They are not only good but like the work of creation, 'very good'--the best of any I have seen on the subject." Temple later asked J. W. P. Massey, a graduate of Wesleyan University, to write for the paper. Massey agreed and in May 1884 he took "charge of the local department" for the paper.²⁸

²⁸L. C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, January 8, 26, March 5, 1884, J. B. Stokely to Oliver P. Temple, January

During the early 1880s Tennessee's political framework experienced a major upheaval. A compromise settled the state debt controversy which had split the Democratic party. Hence the Republicans who experienced a moment of victory with the election of 1880 returned to their status as Tennessee's minority party. Temple, though, wanted his party to remain strong. He and his associates used the Chronicle to espouse and promote Republicanism for East Tennesseans. Houk announced in March 1884, "I am glad to know the Chronicle is booming. It will continue to 'boom'. . . ." Unfortunately, Houk erred in his prediction and the paper soon encountered financial difficulties.²⁹

The Chronicle adopted several improvements along with maintaining its strong agricultural and local departments. For example, Temple told B. M. Branner, the Chronicle's business manager, "It is ordered that the first edition of the Chronicle Shall be brought out at night in time for the Eastern train, and the second edition in time for the 4:15 morning train. . . ." Temple added, ". . . the

29, 1884, J. W. P. Massey to Oliver P. Temple, April 22, 1884, Temple MSS.

²⁹Robert B. Jones, Tennessee at the Crossroads: The State Debt Controversy, 1870-1883 (Knoxville, 1977), 127; L. C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, March 5, 1884, Temple MSS.

papers for circulation in the city shall go to press not later than 4 o'clock a.m." In January 1884 the paper's executive committee promoted Mike Murphy to the position of head of the reportorial staff. Houk opposed this change because, as he informed Temple, "It is charged that he is a great liar and dishonest." Whether Houk's assessment of Murphy was accurate cannot be determined. Unfortunately, these changes did not rescue the Chronicle and it was forced into receivership in 1886.³⁰

During Temple's life he participated in several investment schemes. The most noteworthy of his enterprises included real estate and cattle. Temple's speculation in land had begun with his earlier appointment as Indian Commissioner and continued during the 1850s. While in Texas he told his friend William Lenoir, ". . . partly from curiosity and partly from interest, I have been making inquiries as to the resources, and prospects of Texas, and as to the propriety of making an investment of land here." By the late 1850s Temple had begun his speculation. Mr. D. M. Lord of San Antonio wrote to Temple that "Our County is rapidly firing up. Lands are on the rise."

³⁰ Oliver P. Temple to B. M. Branner, March 31, 1884, L. C. Houk to Oliver P. Temple, January 18, 1884, Temple MSS; Gentry, "Houk," 65.

Lord served as an agent for Temple and obtained some lands for him. Since Lord believed that railroad development would significantly increase land prices, he requested that Temple send ". . . a copy of the Law by your state Legislature issuing the Bonds of the State to facilitate the Rail Road enterprise."³¹

Temple worked with several individuals in Texas and other states. His fellow Indian Commissioner Charles S. Todd, wrote to Temple in 1857 that "I learned that our lots on this side of the River were very valuable." He told Temple that, based on the price he was told his land would bring, Temple's ". . . must be worth \$500." Fourteen years later Todd stated, "our lot on this side of the San Antonio River must be valuable. My agent sold mine the other day for 400\$ [sic] per acre[.]"³²

During the 1850s much of Iowa was surveyed and opened up for speculation. By late in the decade Temple had amassed large land holdings in that state. Investors considered land in western Iowa a good purchase, because

³¹D. M. Lord to Oliver P. Temple, August 20, 1857, Temple MSS; Oliver P. Temple to William B. Lenoir, February 18, 1851, Lenoir Family Papers, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville.

³²Charles S. Todd to Oliver P. Temple, November 7, 1857, March 2, 1871, Temple MSS.

river traffic on the upper Missouri River as well as the settlement of the Dakota region would undoubtedly lead to railroads, population growth, and real estate price increases. However, land values remained relatively low.³³

In August 1857 John Turleton, a land agent in Plattsburg Missouri, acknowledged to Temple, "I have just received a check in your favor for three hundred & sixty three dollars & fifty cts from S. T. Davis of Sioux City." He added that, "I have received no instructions what to do with it but take it as granted you want it invested in Land in south west M." W. W. Wilson, an Iowa land agent, admitted three weeks later that "I am not able to say who owns the remaining interest in that tract of land of which I sold you 20 acres." He also confessed that I ". . . can't tell whether it is laid off in town lots or not but think not as there is not so much demand for lots. . . ." In January 1859 S. T. Davis, who had earlier sold some of Temple's holdings, asserted, "We are in the midst of the excitement of R R from C. Bluffs here & the discussing the ways & means is now agitating the community." The following September, Wilson reported from Council Bluffs,

³³Roscoe L. Lokken, Iowa Public Land Disposal (New York, 1972 [1946]), 97-153.

"In regard to matters out here they are gloomy enough--no real estate selling at all consequently you can imagine the state of things." In regard to land ownership in the Council Bluffs region he advised, ". . . at present time it is poor property it is no account [sic] as a person cant sell and hence is nothing but an incumbrance." Wilson predicted however, that "Sioux City is bound to be a good point." He believed that ". . . two or three R Roads are bound to be built to that place and its location upon the River is sufficient to make it a place of importance at some future time[.]"³⁴

Although Temple held on to his Iowa real estate for a few years, by the mid-1860s Temple began selling the holdings, so he could concentrate on his property in other areas. At that time he owned some 3,500 acres in the Hawkeye State. Jessee Glaze of Greencastle, Iowa noticed in the Knoxville Whig that Temple had "3,500 acres of land for sale in this stat [sic] . . . for cash or to Swap for

³⁴John Turleton to Oliver P. Temple, August 1, 1857, W. W. Wilson to Oliver P. Temple, August 23, 1857, September 23, 1859, S. T. Davis to Oliver P. Temple, January 7, 1859, Temple MSS.

land in Tennessee." Apparently Glaze read the advertisement which ran in the November 23, 1864 edition of the paper.³⁵

S. W. Burnam of Indiana told Temple, "I will trade for your Iowa lands but prefer your Kansas or your north western Missouri lands. I have land in an adjoining county to yours in Clay Co Iowa[.]" He asked for the price of Temple's twenty acres near Sioux City. Temple wrote in the margin that "I would take 50¢ per acre for land at Sioux City and \$1.25 for all or any part of Iowa lands. . . ." J. H. Price of Henry County, Illinois asked Temple for ". . . the price of each track [sic] of your land in iowa. . . ." Temple marked in the margin that he would take \$1.50 per acre for Iowa lands.³⁶

Temple also owned considerable territory in Kansas. Part of his land proved difficult to sell; but some of it appreciated in value because a railroad was built on the property. In July 1871 H. E. Norton, a land agent in Emporia, Kansas, informed Temple that ". . . there is no demand whatever for lands in Lyon Co. . . ." But Norton

³⁵Jessee Glaze to Oliver P. Temple, January 26, 1865, Temple MSS; Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator, November 24, 1864.

³⁶S. W. Burnam to Oliver P. Temple, January 24, 1865, J. H. Price to Oliver P. Temple, March 22, 1865, Temple MSS.

added, ". . . I now [sic] of no better investment than to hold your land & wait for it to come, & come it will." Temple answered in the margin, "wrote to sell at \$4.00 per acre unless the prospect was good for better prices. If he can't get that, what he can get--that I am tired of waiting for the rise of land which never comes." Norton responded by saying that most immigrants to Kansas are looking for homesteads, "But the day is not far distant, when the Govt lands will all be taken up, and as Kansas is bound to be settled up, immigrants will be compelled to buy their lands." He said, "I should like to sell your land for you at a good price but it is difficult to sell an article unless you have a customer for it."³⁷

Temple also owned land near Washington, Kansas. The Hallowell and Morgan Real Estate office penned that ". . . your land is in a good location and is valuable. They remarked that ". . . the R R runs across one corner of the land. . . ." The agents informed Temple, ". . . you will notice that there is some considerable bluff on your land." Hallowell and Morgan predicted that they "might--possibly sell it for \$8 per acre. . . ." The best land sold for

³⁷H. E. Norton to Oliver P. Temple, July 8, September 30, 1871, Temple MSS.

\$52 per acre. Temple considered investing in land near Duluth, Minnesota in the early 1870s, when that city was proposed as the terminus on the Great Northern Railway. Temple sent his brother Major to investigate that possibility. Major wrote back, "I have seen nothing any where that looks better for proffit [sic] than some of those Superior street Lots in Duluth but the price may be too high. . . ."38

Temple also speculated in cattle. After the Civil War, Texas had a large supply of marketable livestock along with a depressed meat market; meanwhile the North and East promised relatively high prices for beef. Thus, many Texas cattle raisers drove their livestock north to the railroad lines which then shipped the animals to market. The first cattle drive which occurred in 1866 resulted, for many ranchers, in financial disaster because of heavy losses on the trail. Cattlemen herded some beeves north in 1867, but not until 1869 were large numbers (350,000) driven from Texas.³⁹

³⁸Hallowell and Morgan Real Estate Company to Oliver P. Temple, August 29, 1871, Major S. Temple to Oliver P. Temple, September 1, 1871, Temple MSS.

³⁹Edward Everett Dale, The Range Cattle Industry: Ranching on the Great Plains from 1865 to 1929 (Norman, 1960), 36, 72; J. Frank Dobie, Historical and Biographical

The high price of beef in the Northern markets prompted many investors to purchase cattle and drive them north. In 1871 Temple and several associates entered the Texas cattle business. Temple, his brother Major, nephew John Temple, along with former law partner Samuel Rodgers, and Colonel J. W. Rudd all joined in the venture. On March 6 Major wrote to his brother that he had sent a telegram ". . . to Mr. Rudd and John to go to New Orleans." He instructed the men to wait there ". . . for further information from you, Mr. Rodgers, and myself."⁴⁰

In early 1871 Rodgers traveled to Austin, Texas, the center of the Texas cattle-raising region. He notified Temple, "I am doing all I can to collect accurate information about the cattle trade here. . . ." Pursuant to that task Rodgers reported, "You will see that, 800 head would cost \$11,200 and there should be sent with the cattle say 1 dollar per head & money at the Kansas end of the line to pay off hands, expenses, etc." In the meantime, John Temple and Rudd made preparations in New Orleans for the enterprise. Major stayed in Washington

Record of the Cattle Industry and the Cattlemen of Texas and Adjacent Territory (2 vols.; New York, 1959), 1: 87.

⁴⁰Dale, Range Cattle Industry, 37; Major S. Temple to Oliver P. Temple, March 6, 1871, Temple MSS.

working on other business endeavors. During this entire venture Temple remained in Knoxville, since his duties as chancellor kept him in the city. Major instructed Oliver to send Rodgers sufficient funds to purchase 1,000 head of choice cattle. On March 30 Rodgers announced, "Our friends Temple & Rudd came in last night, having been a great while on the road. We expect to go to the country west of us at an early day & make purchases." By that time the men were running low on funds, and Rodgers confessed, "I have been a little annoyed because you and I did not talk definitely about the amount of money you would send forward."⁴¹

In their search for cattle in the Texas frontier, the trio of Rodgers, Temple and Rudd met Oliver's friend, Thomas Shurgart. Rodgers asserted that Shurgart ". . .has agreed to inform us all that is in the trade in that region." In the meantime, Major, who remained in Washington, expressed the prediction that if the partners will ". . . confine themselves to my views of buying none but the best quality of cattle we will be safe in any event at the prices they name." But Major did not realize that

⁴¹Major S. Temple to Oliver P. Temple, March 6, 10, 1871, S. A. Rodgers to Oliver P. Temple, March 20, 24, 30, 1871, Temple MSS.

the men had already purchased some cattle. Rodgers announced to Oliver from San Antonio, "We have bought a lot of steers 30 miles from this place, to range from 600 to 800 in number and from 4 years old upward. . . ."

Perhaps as a gesture to appease Major, Rodgers added that the cattle were ". . . to be good, 'smooth marketable steers, throwing out all lame, disabled, "scalawag" and defective steers.'" Apparently more beeves were culled from the herd than Rodgers had anticipated, because he informed Temple in late April, "It is all turning out right excepting as to number & time--There will not be more than about 500 and they will not reach this point as soon by a week as they should have done by our contract. . . ." ⁴²

Because the cattle were more expensive than the men had anticipated, Rodgers asked Temple to send \$5000. He explained, "I am forward of the hurd [sic] for the purpose of trying to gather up some 200 or 300 more beeves--I am satisfied I shall get some more but how many must be told after I try. . . ." Rodgers mentioned that Major had written ". . . that prises [sic] in the 'western markets' must range as high as from 3 to 4¢--At 3 there

⁴²Major S. Temple to Oliver P. Temple, April 19, 1871, Samuel A. Rodgers to Oliver P. Temple, April 7, 14, 26, 1871, Temple MSS.

is a fair profit & at four a splendid thing." In early May, Rodgers predicted that "I shall succeed in getting up here what will amount, I think, in the agrigate [sic], to 200 and maybe more & they will be fine--I have been offered others, but refused to buy because I did not like the beeves." He reported that ". . . our hurd [sic] will not be a (large) one, it will be a nice one. . . ." Rodgers boasted, ". . . there may be & probably are some better ones . . . but I have not seen any better--If beeves are in demand in Kansas ours will sell[.]" Rodgers concluded that the cattle also were gentle, so they could be driven easily. He described the herd, "It numbers 668, besides 8 work steers, 13 horses belonging to us & 8 to others[.]"⁴³

In early May the men began their northern trip. Rodgers declared that "Our beeves are crossing the River today and will be entirely ready for the road tomorrow[.]" The investors (except for the absent Oliver and Major) along with several hired men drove the cattle. Rodgers complained to Temple that even before the drive, I have "been doing some considerable riding--am tired and sun

⁴³ Samuel A. Rodgers to Oliver P. Temple, April 26, May 3, 7, 1871, Temple MSS.

burned." He reported that on the first day of the drive "Our stock started & moved a very short distance today to reach better grass and water. Tomorrow it [the herd] will move off regularly on the road north of this[.]" About a week after the drive began Rodgers notified Temple that "We have had some bad weather and as is common some little trouble with our stock[.]" In particular ". . . two have broken down & a few have escaped thro' the extreme darkness of some of the nights, during rain & storm[.]" He later noted that the herd will move ". . . up the east side of the Brazos River until again reaching the Fort Graham trail (the Chisolm [sic] trail)[.]"⁴⁴

Unfortunately for the investors, in 1871 herders drove nearly 600,000 cattle northward. This figure was almost double the number of any year previous and the huge supply caused the price to drop. By mid-June Major left Washington and travelled to St. Louis to check on the cattle trade. He related encouraging news to his brother: "I find the trade more solid than I had supposed--the best informed men say bottom has been touched. . . ." Major continued ". . . I shall go direct for the Cattle Trail due west

⁴⁴Samuel A. Rodgers to Oliver P. Temple, April 26, May 6, 7, 15, 1871, Temple MSS.

to find the Boys. . . ." By early July, Major met the herd at the Red Fork of the Arkansas River in Indian Territory. He declared to his brother, "The Cattle are fully up to Mr. Rodgers representations." He also reported that ". . . they have lost about 10 heads in various ways on the way. . . ." In late July, Major declared from Ellsworth, Kansas, "We arrived in Camp on the Bank of the Smoky Hill Riv yesterday at noon have a good Riv front for water & I think plenty of long & short grass for our Cattle. . . ." He estimated that ". . . there are allready [sic] here about 35,000 head. . . ."45

Major stated that ". . . my present impression is we will not find ready sale for our class of stock until October when the Packing season opens." In order to cut expenses he told his brother, "I have & will reduce our hand force to as small a number as will be prudent." Major hoped to do some cattle trading and hinted to his brother if ". . . I had here say \$2000, I should trade in some full fat wintered Cattle to pay our expenses while the cattle are fattening. . . ."46

⁴⁵Major S. Temple to Oliver P. Temple, June 17, July 2, 26, 1871, Temple MSS.

⁴⁶Major S. Temple to Oliver P. Temple, July 26, 27, 1871, Temple MSS.

Unfortunately the price of cattle continued to drop. Major confessed to his brother that ". . . I find that Since I passed through St. Louis say 15 June up to the present, instead of Cattle having reached Bottom as was supposed by the best informed . . . Cattle have declined from 7 to 12 Dollars per head. . . ." Major warned that ". . . this is a vary [sic] serious decline. . . ." But, he assured Oliver, "I have sent the best man we have to get up lost cattle. I wrote you John had got up ten head. . . . I have paid off & dismissed all the high priced men & got cheaper ones. . . ." ⁴⁷

In a desperate attempt to sell the cattle, Major shipped forty head to St. Louis. He admitted that "I sold for the small price of 2 cents per pound after coming with them day & night & feeding & watering myself." He predicted, ". . . it now looks vary [sic] much like first cost for the Cattle is about all they will bring to say nothing of Discount interest & expenses. . . ." He added that "this has been an unusual dry fall all over the West . . . farmers have been compelled for want of water & grass to throw thousands of their young Cattle on the market.

⁴⁷Major S. Temple to Oliver P. Temple, August 5, 1871, Temple MSS.

. . ." Consequently Major explained, ". . . I did the best I could by selling 400. head of the youngest & fatest [sic] steers at 15. Dollars per head. . . ." Major's youngest son consented to stay with the balance of the herd ". . . to give them Winter attention & hire a cheap hand to stay with him. . . ." Major also reported that his son John would ". . . remain here to arrang [sic] further details for the Winter & sell if any chance to do so. . . ."48

The cattle investment resulted in a major financial loss for Temple. But he was not alone, because for many cattlemen, 1871 was a disaster. Though the market later rebounded, Temple never again invested in the cattle trade.

Temple's entrepreneurial experiences demonstrated that he was relatively conservative in his financial policies. He relied on his basically secure and lucrative legal practice to provide an income. Although he engaged in minor real estate speculation during the late 1850s, not until later did Temple make significant investment risks. His cattle speculation resulted in a major financial

⁴⁸Major S. Temple to Oliver P. Temple, September 21, 22, October 7, 1871, Temple MSS.

loss, and he refused to make additional large risky investments.

Temple did help purchase the Chronicle as a business endeavor and though he never received the anticipated profits, his association with it did help him achieve his agricultural goals. His business ventures demonstrate that Temple was a dabbling businessman who utilized many opportunities but except for law did not attain the financial windfall so frequently associated with business leaders and investors of the late nineteenth century.

CHAPTER 6

QUASI-INDUSTRIALIST AND AGRARIAN MINDED TRUSTEE

During the course of Temple's life, East Tennessee experienced an economic revolution. The region matured from an agrarian-dominated society to become industrially-oriented and more sophisticated. Numerous individuals and a myriad of factors contributed to this development. Throughout most of the nineteenth century Temple remained a consistent supporter of East Tennessee's industrialization.

While economic diversification brought significant financial growth to Tennessee, Temple encountered numerous difficulties promoting it. He made contributions in several facets of industrialization. First, Temple urged the development of a transportation system for East Tennessee in order to facilitate the movement of ores, other manufactured items, as well as agricultural products. Second, he helped to develop the region's iron and coal mining industry, since those items were essential for industrialization. Third, the successful expansion of industry required large sums of investment capital as well as a labor force. Temple therefore promoted immigration to the Volunteer State. He worked to get Tennessee represented at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. Finally he supported educational changes which would

enable colleges (particularly East Tennessee University) to train students for a vocation rather than simply to provide the typical classical education. By boosting the state's transportation system as well as the mining and iron industry, immigration, the World's Fair and the educational structure, Temple promoted Tennessee's industrial growth. His work benefitted the state, yet Temple's endeavors may not be accurately described as altruistic. Except for his work as a trustee for East Tennessee University/the University of Tennessee, Temple had a minor impact upon Tennessee's industrial expansion.

During the mid-antebellum era considerable support materialized for improving transportation within East Tennessee and for connecting the region with outside areas. Since the 1830s railroad advocates such as Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey promoted the construction of a line connecting the Atlantic coast with the Ohio River valley, via East Tennessee. But the economic depression following the Panic of 1837 dashed most of the plans to join East Tennessee with surrounding locations. Hence the region remained one of the nation's most isolated areas.¹

¹ Stanley J. Folmsbee, Sectionalism and Internal Improvements in Tennessee, 1796-1845 (Knoxville, 1939), 84-87, 114-18; Stanley J. Folmsbee, "The Beginnings of

Temple's initial interest with railroad construction appeared in the mid-1840s. While he studied law with Robert McKinney, his teacher attended the Greeneville Railroad Convention. This meeting promoted the development of railroad and water transportation within East Tennessee. Although Temple did not participate in the conference, it nonetheless demonstrated to him the potential benefits of rail connections within East Tennessee.²

By the early 1850s Temple began his endeavor to link Knoxville and East Tennessee with outside regions, particularly the growing industrial area along the Ohio River. The Lexington and Knoxville Railroad was originally chartered in 1852 and again the following year as the Knoxville and Kentucky.³ This proposed line would not

the Railroad Movement in East Tennessee," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications 5 (1933): 92-93; James W. Holland, "The East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications 3 (1931): 95; Lucile Deadrick, ed., Heart of the Valley: A History of Knoxville, Tennessee (Knoxville, 1976), 194-95; Thomas P. Abernethy, From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee: A Study in Frontier Democracy (Chapel Hill, 1932), 300.

²George Chester Nichols, "Tennessee, Tennesseans and Railroad Conventions 1845-1852" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1963), 94-100.

³Ruth Osborne Turner, "The Public Career of William Montgomery Churchwell" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1954), 41-42.

only join Knoxville with the outside areas but it would also connect the city with rich coal deposits to the north.

In February 1855 several prominent leaders including Temple, Horace Maynard, Thomas Calloway, Thomas Humes, Campbell Wallace, and William Churchwell met to discuss the organization of the railroad. Temple hoped that the line would increase the value of real estate as well as the marketable products of his native region because of the influx of capital the link would attract.⁴

Later that year its organizers formed the Knoxville and Kentucky Railroad Company. The directors elected John Crozier as president and Temple as secretary. The line was intended to branch from the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad at Knoxville and join at the Kentucky border with a line being constructed south from either Cincinnati or Louisville. The Knoxville and Kentucky received considerable financial assistance from both state and local governments but the Panic of 1857 halted construction; and when the Civil War erupted, the company had only nine miles of track.⁵

⁴Ibid., 43-44.

⁵Mary U. Rothrock, ed., The French Broad-Holston Country: A History of Knox County, Tennessee (Knoxville, 1946), 111.

In December 1861, President Lincoln urged Congress to allocate funds to complete construction of the railroad. He believed the track would assist East Tennessee Unionists. Unfortunately the war, and hostile Confederate forces, prevented the Federals from building the line. By the time Union troops occupied Knoxville, the military purpose for the rail connection had dissipated. D. Richardson, a lobbyist for the Knoxville and Kentucky Railroad, reported from Washington, ". . . I witnessed the final defeat of our R. Rd Bill in the Senate, and it is with no ordinary feelings of regret that I saw its final failure. . . ." The lobbyist had expected success since ". . . Stanton had been heard to advocate the building of this same Road within the last five weeks." Richardson fumed, "Without this opposition its passage through the Senate was certain." Several weeks later a headstrong Richardson announced, "I am still unwilling to give up on our R Rd. Enterprise and my determination is to see if an influence cannot be brot to bear to secure its passage through the Senate at the oping [sic] of the next term." Congress, however refused to fund the railroad.⁶

⁶Deadrick, Heart of the Valley, 197; First Annual Message of President Lincoln, December 3, 1861, in James

As the war drew to a close William G. Brownlow editorialized, "The good sense and forecast of President Lincoln exhibited itself in his recommending to Congress three years ago the construction of a railroad from this city to connect with Kentucky and Ohio, for military purposes." He continued to proclaim, "Had that road been constructed as it should have been, we should not now be at the mercy of Hood's army and be liable to have our supplies stopped." In late January 1865 the persistent Richardson still hoped for federal funding of the road, but by now more for economic than military reasons. He told Temple, "Large sums of money have already been invested in the valley of the Cumberland, by capitalists from Pennsylvania, and if we can secure the building of this Road heavy investments will be made along the line, and in East Tenn." Finally in March, Richardson accepted defeat when he wrote, "It is with profound regret that

D. Richardson, ed., A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the President 1789-1907 (10 vols.; Washington, 1908), 6: 44-58; D. Richardson to Oliver P. Temple, July 4, August 19, 1864, Temple MSS, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville; Fred Arthur Bailey, "Oliver Perry Temple: New South Agrarian" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1972), 82-83.

I announce to you the failure of our Rail Road Bill in the Senate."⁷

Perhaps the government's lack of cooperation soured Temple with the railroad, because he soon became preoccupied with other interests, sold his stock, and in 1866 resigned from the board of directors. The following year the Knoxville and Kentucky experienced financial reverses and the company fell into receivership by 1868. Three years later it was reorganized as the Knoxville and Ohio.⁸

Since the original design of connecting East Tennessee with the Ohio River valley had yet to be attained, several Knoxville railroad promoters attempted to attract outside companies to the region. Temple along with William Brownlow, Charles McGhee, Leonidas C. Houk, and others tried to convince the Cincinnati Railway to direct its southern line to Knoxville. Nevertheless the Ohio-based company selected Chattanooga as its terminus because of

⁷D. Richardson to Oliver P. Temple, January 27, March 3, 1865, Temple MSS; Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator, January 11, 1865.

⁸Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 83; Deadrick, Heart of the Valley, 198; Oliver Perry Temple, Notable Men of Tennessee: Their Times and Their Contemporaries (New York, 1912), 23.

the better connections it offered. A disheartened Temple continued to promote the construction of an improved transportation system and in 1883 Knoxville was finally joined by a railroad with the Ohio Valley.⁹

A second facet of Temple's support for industrialization involved the development of mining. By the mid-nineteenth century several small factories operated in East Tennessee, but the region had achieved only a limited degree of industrial growth at the outbreak of the Civil War. During that conflict several men established the Knoxville Iron Company and its incorporation followed in 1867.¹⁰

Temple did not associate directly with the company, but he helped develop the mines in Anderson County which provided its fuel. The Knoxville and Kentucky line linked the East Tennessee city with the rich coal fields to the north, thus assuring a fuel supply for Knoxville's residents and industries. Investor and former employee John Frater wrote to Temple in early 1875, "Yours of the 24th ult.

⁹R. O. Biggs, "The Cincinnati Southern Railway: A Municipal Enterprise," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications 7 (1935): 89-91; Deadrick, Heart of the Valley, 198; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 84.

¹⁰Rothrock, The French Broad, 220-22.

came duly to hand, am verry [sic] sorry to hear such gloomy reports of dull times at Coal Creek. . . ." Later in the correspondence Frater suggested, ". . . something must be done another year--to sell more coal,--your plan of being made joint manager . . . is about the best that can be done. . . ." ¹¹

Temple as president of the Coal Creek Coal Mining Company worked to insure the company's success, and when the business faced financial problems he sought to cut expenses. For example, Frater responded to Temple, "You speak of giving up your salry [sic] as President--& Col Camp--giving up One Hundred Dollars--of his salry [sic] . . . what good is this going to do now?" Some six weeks later he asserted, "You get the Coal put on the Cars verry [sic] reasonable. & if you could get orders for even a reasonable am't of coal, there is still money in the business--if even you have Convicts to compete with." Nevertheless the company did not prosper, Frater commented some two years later, "I am sorry you are in such a snarl at Coal Creek--it is too bad.--there has been trouble there from the first,--& it seems as though it was going to end

¹¹ John Frater to Oliver P. Temple, February 8, 1875, Temple MSS; Deadrick, Heart of the Valley, 197-98.

in trouble." He continued, ". . . it looks as though the Coal business at C. C. is ruin'd." Temple soon abandoned the coal mining industry and aimed his "industrial spirit" in other directions.¹²

In the years following the Civil War, Temple fostered industrial growth by supporting immigration into the Volunteer State. Most promoters of industrial growth argued that immigrants from Europe or the North would furnish the capital and labor necessary to strengthen the state's economy. Governor Brownlow's administration created a state bureau of immigration to encourage the influx of new settlers. Temple assisted the state's first Commissioner of Immigration, Hermann Bokum, by helping to organize the East Tennessee Association (an immigration society) at Knoxville and by contributing to Bokum's Tennessee Handbook and Immigrant's Guide. This book portrayed the Volunteer State in a positive light to attract new settlers.¹³

¹²John Frater to Oliver P. Temple November 13, December 25, 1877, March 17, 1880, Temple MSS.

¹³Constantine G. Belissary, "The Rise of the Industrial Spirit in Tennessee, 1865-1885" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1949), 161; Hermann Bokum, Tennessee Handbook (Nashville, 1868), 125, 157-61.

Temple also helped form the Knoxville Industrial Association in 1869, an organization which promoted immigration. In addition, Temple authored the pamphlet, An Address on the Agricultural, Mining, and Manufacturing Resources of East Tennessee, so settlers would be drawn into his region. Nevertheless, his work in behalf of immigration achieved no tangible results for several years. When he became associated with the Rugby Colony, he saw an opportunity for success; Temple's desire for factory workers motivated his work for immigration, yet the settlers at Rugby were interested in agrarian pursuits.¹⁴

Thomas Hughes, an Englishman who wanted to re-settle members of the English upper middle class, founded Rugby. Hughes had been a member of Parliament where he advocated numerous reforms, particularly the cooperative movement within Christian Socialism. Cooperation contrasted the highly competitive, laissez-faire free enterprise capitalism by encouraging voluntary public ownership of nonprofit economic enterprises for the benefit of the stockholding members of the collective. This alternative economic system

¹⁴Fred Arthur Bailey, "Legalities, Agriculture and Immigration: The Role of Oliver Perry Temple in the Rugby Experiment," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications 44 (1972): 90-92.

was designed to elevate the working classes, the common people, and limit the inequities of elitism and class privilege. Hughes wanted to provide the widest possible latitude and opportunity to all people.¹⁵

During America's postbellum years Hughes desired to establish a colony so he could put his Christian Socialism into practice as well as accomplish several other lofty goals. Franklin W. Smith of Boston, whom Hughes had known, contacted the Englishman regarding the possibility of establishing a Utopian community on Tennessee's Cumberland Plateau. The Massachusetts capitalist had several options on three-hundred-fifty thousand acres in the Volunteer State. Soon after his correspondence with Smith, Hughes persuaded fellow wealthy Englishmen, Henry Kimber and John Boyle, to join with the venture. The four men then formed the Board of Aid to Land Ownership.¹⁶

How the Board of Aid to Land Ownership came to be associated with Temple is unclear, but the fact that the Eighth Chancery district over which he presided included Morgan County is probably not unrelated. In the summer

¹⁵ John Egerton, Visions of Utopia: Nashoba, Rugby, Ruskin, and the "New Communities" in Tennessee's Past (Knoxville, 1977), 44-45.

¹⁶ Ibid., 46.

of 1878 the Board of Aid secretary, Franklin Smith, contacted Temple who soon became the Board's chief legal advisor. These men conferred together in person during the summer of 1878. The Knoxville Chronicle announced that "Franklin W. Smith, Geo. Stuart Smith, and W. A. Williams, capitalists and practical gentlemen from Boston, Mass., arrived in the city day before yesterday. . . ." The paper added, "They are on a prospecting tour, with a view of locating and purchasing in some desirable spot and establishing something of a colony there."¹⁷

Upon returning to Boston, Smith requested of Temple, "Will you kindly send me at once, some of those statements you made in conversation showing the extraordinary Republican sentiment of E. Tenn." He also asked Temple if the yellow fever which had plagued Chattanooga had reached Knoxville. In February 1879 Smith commented, "Since I had the pleasure of a conference with you I have by no means been idle: but all my energies have been given to the organization above named and the furtherance of its plans for colonization in Tenn." Smith also expressed concern about the financial status of the state and feared that the state credit problem would discourage

¹⁷Knoxville Chronicle, August 1, 1878.

investment in Tennessee including Rugby. He opined, "It must be an immense injury to the State. Can you do anything to parry or remedy it?" The Board of Aid solicited funds from prospective investors and Charles P. Kemp of Jacksboro predicted, "If the conference of Mr. Boyle, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Clarke with capitalists in New York and Boston, is attended with the same measure of success as their efforts in Tennessee, the future of plateau seems assured and success only a matter of time."¹⁸

During his association with Rugby, Temple spent much of his time seeking clear title for the colony's land. But by the time Hughes visited America in the fall of 1880 to open his settlement, Temple had secured only 40,000 acres, roughly one-tenth of what the Board of Aid had wanted.¹⁹

Following Rugby's establishment, its founders promoted agricultural possibilities of the new colony. Thomas Hughes had asked Mr. Smith to communicate with Killebrew about writing a booklet. Temple also suggested that Killebrew prepare a brochure. Soon after, Hughes concurred: "I

¹⁸F. W. Smith to Oliver P. Temple, August 28, 1878, February 20, 1879, Charles P. Kemp to Oliver P. Temple, March 6, 1880, Temple MSS.

¹⁹Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 108-12.

cordially agree to your suggestion as to a pamphlet on the soil of Rugby, its' [sic] capabilities & the best method of handling it, by Colonel Killebrew." But Hughes added, "I prefer much however that the matter should be in your hands & shall be greatly obliged if you will undertake the negociation [sic] with the colonel. . . ." J. B. Killebrew, who was in the process of preparing the document proposed, "If you will write a rough draft of the lands of Rugby their capabilities &c; I will add whatever information I may have collected relating the [sic] the adaptability of the soils for the various crops, and what manuring will do." Largely because of Temple's suggestions, Rugby agrarians produced potatoes, beans and cabbage, as well as a variety of fruits. Industrialists urged manufacturing such as vegetable canning and furniture making at the colony, but it never succeeded.²⁰

In late 1881, Rugby experienced a typhoid fever epidemic which left several people dead. Simultaneously other problems faced the colony which threatened to destroy the settlement. In August 1881 A. B. Bright informed

²⁰ Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 111-16; Ernest I. Miller, Some Tennessee Utopias (Knoxville, 1942), 34-44; Thomas Hughes to Oliver P. Temple, November 29, 1880, J. B. Killebrew to Oliver P. Temple, December 22, 1880, Temple MSS.

Temple, "I was at was at Rugby yesterday. and in candid answer to your inquiry: I must say with regret that the place is 'on its last legs.'" Bright also reported, "The fever is abating, and the patients, leaving as fast as they recover. The settlers are all leaving--15 or 20 at a time." He concluded that "Some one must 'come to the Rescue' or Rugby, will soon be regarded as a thing of the past." Hughes pumped in more funds and changed the management, and the colony briefly rejuvenated; but during the 1880s the colony failed, and in 1891 the property was sold.²¹

Temple's work with the venture had ceased in the early 1880s. Following his appointment as Knoxville's postmaster, Temple phased out his legal career; and by mid-1882 Temple's law partner, Jerome Templeton, had assumed responsibility for virtually all of Rugby's legal proceedings. In December 1881 John Boyle wrote from Rugby that Mr. Templeton stopped to ask what he should do regarding a lawsuit involving the colony. Six months subsequent Boyle told Temple, ". . . it will be needful, please to have yr judgement on the man & on Mr. Templetons step in entering this

²¹A. B. Bright to Oliver P. Temple, August 31, 1881, Temple MSS; Egerton, Visions of Utopia, 54-59, 75; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 121.

partnership in reference to questions multifarious, affecting the fortunes of this Co." In terms of attracting permanent residents to the Volunteer State, the colony failed, yet throughout the 1880s Temple continued to expound to Tennesseans the benefits of attracting immigrants. But his efforts resulted in little tangible results.²²

His promotion of immigration was largely unsuccessful, yet Temple continued his efforts to develop Tennessee's industry. In the early 1890s he urged Tennessee to participate in the upcoming Chicago World's Fair. The General Assembly in September 1891 formed a fifteen-member commission to promote the state's involvement in the exposition. Later that year Governor John P. Buchanan informed Temple, "I have this day directed a commission to be sent to you as member of the Board of World's Fair Managers of Tennessee." In November the commissioners met and "Judge Temple was made president." He was then authorized to appoint a committee of six members who with the president and executive secretary would constitute the Executive Committee.²³

²²John Boyle to Oliver P. Temple, December 3, 1881, June 9, 1882, Temple MSS; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 121-24; Temple, Notable Men, 19-20.

²³John P. Buchanan to Oliver P. Temple, October 22, 1891, Temple MSS; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 91-94.

The legislature wanted the state represented at the Exposition, but it refused to grant funds for a building at the fair. Tennessee (as well as most Southern states) refused to allocate money for the international exposition until Congress repealed the "Lodge Force Bill." Because the legislature thought that Congress would not rescind that unpopular legislation, it delegated authority to the county courts to make money available as they deemed appropriate. Consequently, the commissioners had to raise the funds to erect a structure. Temple wanted the Volunteer State to exhibit its leading agricultural products, live-stock, as well as its mineral and industrial potential.²⁴

He journeyed to Chicago in late 1891 to formulate plans for an acceptable display at the Fair. Chattanooga Lewis Parnham remarked, "Although I have not met you since December, when we were in Chicago, I have constantly hoped we would have yourself, or some one of the commissioners here . . . to help us get an appropriation--which, I fear,

²⁴Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 92-93; Daniel M. Robison, Bob Taylor and the Agrarian Revolt in Tennessee (Chapel Hill, 1935), 148-50. The Lodge Force bill was designed to protect black voting rights and provided for federal observation of voter registration and elections where requested by a citizen's petition. Roger L. Hart, Redeemers, Bourbons and Populists: Tennessee, 1870-1896 (Baton Rouge, 1975), 153.

is going to be a failure; although there is a great deal of work being done for it now." Greeneville resident A. F. Naff hoped Tennesseans would attend the fair and therefore offered: "If I could be satisfactorily situated here I would bring my family to Chicago and open a first class boarding house for Tennessee visitors."²⁵

The commissioners hoped to receive \$20,000 each from Shelby, Davidson, Knox, and Hamilton, while the other counties would provide the remaining funds. Lewis Baxter reported to Temple, "Mr. Armistead Secy of the Commercial Club will go to Memphis and bring Mr Butterworth McKenzie & others to Nashville to address our County Court on Jany 5/92 in the matter of a County appropriation." Baxter furthermore noted that "The committee of 15 citizens heretofor [sic] organized are at work on the Justices. The public press are doing what they can to mould public opinion in the right direction." Nevertheless, Executive Committee member Mrs. M. C. Goodlett, informed Temple in early January 1892 that the Fair's promoters ". . . have decided it best not to bring the matter up at this term of the court. The great depression in the money market--at

²⁵Lewis T. Parnham to Oliver P. Temple, April 1, 1892, A. F. Naff to Oliver P. Temple, March 25, 1892, Temple MSS; Knoxville Tribune, November 11, 1891.

this time, is having its influence against an appropriation for this purpose. . . ." Four days earlier Lewis Baxter and George Armistead notified Temple that "We found it would not be possible to get an appropriation from the Court at the present and that a very large majority of the Justices are opposed to it." Nevertheless Baxter and Armistead predicted, ". . . after the Justices . . . have learned what benefits will result by being properly represented at the World's Fair, that they will take a more liberal view of the matter." The men added optimistically, "Perhaps we can get an appropriation in April next."²⁶

Joseph B. Heiskell updated the work being done in Shelby County. He responded to an interview Temple had in regard to the World's Fair, "Judge Sneed commends very much your interview & says it presents the matter finely." He added, "The Appeal is publishing the cuts of the buildings at Chicago." One week later Heiskell noted, "On taking a poll of our magistrates there were 7. in favor of \$20,000, 9. in favor of 10,000 1 in favor of 5,000, one of 2000

²⁶ Lewis Baxter to Oliver P. Temple, December 21, 1891, Mrs. M. C. Goodlett to Oliver P. Temple, January 6, 1892, Lewis Baxter and George H. Armistead to Oliver P. Temple, January 2, 1892, Temple MSS.

possibly 5 and the rest of the 30 present against anything." H. Clay Evans indicated to Temple that the request for an appropriation would be presented to the Hamilton County Court in January, "but it seems now that we are about to lose all our city Justices. and you know it is hard to convince the county Justices that anything is to be gained by being represented at the Worlds Columbian Exposition." Two weeks later he wrote that he would speak on the World's Fair at an upcoming banquet and asserted, "I think I can build up a sentiment that will accomplish something at the next meeting of the County Court."²⁷

At a Knoxville Chamber of Commerce meeting in early December 1891 Temple addressed members in regard to securing a county appropriation for the World's Fair. The group unanimously adopted a motion for a \$20,000 appropriation for the World's Fair. Knox County subsequently approved an appropriation and Lewis Baxter boasted, "The County of Knox has set an excellent example which I believe will be followed by several E. Tenn counties, and I hope will influence Davdson [sic] and Shelby to do likewise." But Baxter also warned that "Quite a number of intelligent

²⁷ Joseph B. Heiskell to Oliver P. Temple, December 29, 1891, January 5, 1892, H. Clay Evans to Oliver P. Temple, December 29, 1891, January 12, 1892, Temple MSS.

men still insist that the World's Fair is nothing less than a 'Yankee Affair' & is founded on a political move to make Illinois Republican in 1892. It is childish of course, but has a certain influence." Such misconceptions evidently had a negative impact on Temple's efforts.²⁸

Meanwhile Daniel Bond congratulated Temple for his success in Knox County. He also observed, "I look for good results from Shelby and Hamilton, but am afraid of Davidson." Although Temple and his associates worked hard to secure the funds for the World's Fair, their efforts failed. Hamilton County refused to supply any money; and Shelby which had promised to provide its share, rescinded its decision a few days later. Davidson also declined to provide funds; only Knox agreed to support the commission's request for financial assistance. But since all other counties refused to grant any money, Knox also reversed its earlier pledge. The refusal of Tennessee's counties to appropriate money was caused more from a lack of funds, because of the economic depression of the early 1890s, than from a lack of commitment to the Exposition.

²⁸Knoxville Tribune, December 6, 1891; Lewis Baxter to Oliver P. Temple, January 11, 1892, Temple MSS.

But since no funds were available, Tennessee failed to participate in the 1893 World's Fair.²⁹

Though Temple's endeavors with the World's Fair and immigration did not succeed, his work with developing education in the Volunteer State did enjoy success. Temple had long believed in the importance of education. Hence he spent many years working to improve and modernize it, particularly at East Tennessee University, later the University of Tennessee. He wanted education to be practical and useful rather than merely classical.

In 1840 East Tennessee College became East Tennessee University, and six years later there occurred an unsuccessful attempt to establish a medical college. In the meantime, the institution was divided into three major sections: the collegiate, English and scientific, and preparatory. As the school inched toward modernization in the late 1840s, these areas were subdivided into departments. Temple became associated with the school in 1855 after having been named a trustee; he took the oath of office in February. He became a staunch supporter

²⁹Daniel Bond to Oliver P. Temple, January 9, 1892, Temple MSS; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 98-99; Knoxville Tribune, April 13, 1892.

of "modern" education rather than classical, because he believed education should be as practical as possible.³⁰

Temple's philosophy of education received a tremendous boost in 1862 when President Lincoln signed the Morrill Act. This legislation, sponsored by Vermont Congressman Justin Morrill, granted to each state 30,000 acres of public domain per Congressman and Senator. The money raised from selling the land was to be used to establish at least one college for teaching agricultural and mechanical arts. But since the Volunteer State adhered to the Confederacy when Congress adopted the measure, it was ineligible to receive the benefits.³¹

Following Tennessee's readmission into the Union, Congress adopted legislation which permitted the application of the Morrill Act to the Volunteer State. On February 1,

³⁰Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 45, 98-99; East Tennessee/University of Tennessee Board of Trustees Minutes, February 23, 1854, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville (hereinafter cited as Board of Trustees Minutes); James Riley Montgomery, Stanley J. Folmsbee, Lee Seifert Greene, To Foster Knowledge: A History of the University of Tennessee, 1794-1970 (Knoxville, 1984), 42.

³¹James M. McPherson, Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction (New York, 1982), 374-75; Stanley J. Folmsbee, Tennessee Establishes a State University: First Years of the University of Tennessee, 1879-1887 (Knoxville, 1961), 56.

1868 the General Assembly formally accepted the grant. East Tennessee University, along with Union University, then became the two leading contenders for the endowment.³²

Temple and other leaders of East Tennessee University immediately began their campaign to secure the grants. The trustees named General L. S. Trowbridge, Colonel J. B. Brownlow and Temple as a committee to lobby the legislature to award Morrill funds to East Tennessee University. From late 1868 through early 1869 the General Assembly considered proposals which would place the state's agricultural school in Knoxville. In January 1869 the legislature agreed to situate the new school at East Tennessee University. The Knoxville Press and Herald declared: "We are glad to be able to gratify the anxiety of our readers this morning by laying before them a certified copy of the act of the legislature locating the agricultural college at this place." In a subsequent analysis, the paper attributed the legislature's decision to the University's agent, Mr. Edward J. Sanford. Perhaps

³²Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 45; Folmsbee, Tennessee Establishes University, 57; Knoxville Press and Herald, March 9, 1868. Union University, a Baptist affiliated institution, later moved to Jackson.

the General Assembly acted as it did to reward East Tennessee for its peculiar loyalty.³³

When the legislature designated East Tennessee University, it required the school to grant free tuition to three students per county. The recipients of these awards were to be the children of deceased Federal soldiers, orphans of those who died because of their loyalty during the war, or those who excelled in public schools. The law also prohibited any racial exclusion.³⁴

Less than a month after the Knoxville institution became the state's land-grant university, the trustees appointed Temple and two others to locate suitable land for a farm to be operated by the school. During a February Board meeting the trustees authorized the purchase of the James H. Armstrong 262 acre tract of land for \$30,000. It was located about one-half mile west of the campus. The university was divided into three courses of study:

³³Montgomery et al., To Foster Knowledge, 74-75; Folmsbee, Tennessee Establishes University, 58-62; Board of Trustees Minutes, December 3, 1867; Knoxville Press and Herald, January 19, 20, 1869.

³⁴Montgomery et al., To Foster Knowledge 75-76; Stanley J. Folmsbee, East Tennessee University, 1840-1879, Predecessor of The University of Tennessee (Knoxville, 1959), 62-64.

agricultural, scientific, and classical. Because the school had long been a liberal arts institution, the classical element was strongest. The Board established a secondary preparatory school for students who were not ready for classes in the non-classical course.³⁵

Unfortunately for Temple the status of East Tennessee University as the state's agricultural college soon fell into jeopardy. After the Radicals were overthrown, the legislature repealed much of what had been accomplished under Brownlow, including the naming of East Tennessee University as a land-grant institution. The state's other divisions wanted to receive some of the benefits of the Morrill Act. Because East Tennessee legislators no longer held sway in the General Assembly, it decided to divide Morrill Act benefits among all the state's sections. Thus almost exactly two years after approving a measure naming East Tennessee University as Tennessee's land-grant institution the legislature repealed the act.³⁶ Fortunately

³⁵Montgomery et al., To Foster Knowledge, 76; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 47; Folmsbee, East Tennessee University, 64-65.

³⁶Knoxville Press and Herald, January 21, February 1, 1871; Montgomery et al., To Foster Knowledge, 78-82; Folmsbee, East Tennessee University, 79.

for Temple though, Governor Senter vetoed the measure, and the General Assembly did not override.

In the meantime, Temple had begun his campaign to modify the school's educational aims. In 1871 he presented to the Board of Trustees several proposals designed to make the teaching of agriculture and mechanical arts the school's chief function. He made these proposals ". . . in order to comply with both the letter and spirit of the acts of Congress and of our legislature along with the school's acceptance of the benefits of the acts." Some of his measures called for putting the farm into operation; purchasing pure-bred livestock including cattle, sheep, and swine; and hiring students to help run the farm, and ". . . a highly skilled gardner should be employed competent to give practical instruction to students. . . ." He also proposed a fact-finding visit to Kentucky's agricultural college. Unfortunately for Temple, his ideas received considerable opposition from classicists or obstructionists, as Temple called them.³⁷

This latter group was led by Temple's former associate and law partner, John Baxter. He had been absent from the Board meeting which had approved Temple's measures.

³⁷ Board of Trustees Minutes, July 20, 1871.

Baxter shuddered at the thought of an agrarian-dominated institution which those proposals would have insured, so he requested a session of the Board at which the classicists dominated. This meeting rescinded Temple's proposals and led to a stand-off between Temple and Baxter.³⁸

Temple ally Wilbur O. Atwater informed President Thomas Humes (whom Baxter supported) that "A classical and a scientific school first is chiefly disciplinary instruction as distinguished from professional and scientific instruction and as distinguished from classical." The ". . . application of these studies to the arts and to agriculture is one of the most pressing needs and it was in view of these facts that Congress has made the so called 'Agricultural College Grant.'"³⁹

While the trustees argued over the scope of the school's primary educational thrust, the enrollment

³⁸Board of Trustees Minutes, July 29, 1871; Folmsbee, East Tennessee University, 79-80; Montgomery, et al., To Foster Knowledge, 83-84; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian, 49-50.

³⁹W. O. Atwater to Thomas Humes, January 25, 1872, Volume 1 of the papers relating to the University of Tennessee taken from the correspondence of Oliver Perry Temple, 5 vols.; Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville, (hereinafter cited as Temple's University Correspondence).

increased. In 1872 and 1873 the institution constructed several new buildings to accommodate the students. Since a number of trustees desired to limit the role of the agricultural element, some contemplated selling part of the land to fund the building projects. Temple issued to the Board a minority report in which he argued that selling and or leasing the school's farm violated the requirements of the Morrill Act. The trustees referred the matter to the legal committee. Although Temple succeeded for the moment in his effort to block the sale, it provided only a brief respite in his struggle for agricultural domination at the school. The dispute between the agriculturalists and the obstructionists led to the resignation in 1873 of Temple's supporter Atwater, a Yale Ph.D. who successfully experimented in crop production. He had been professor of agricultural chemistry at the Knoxville institution.⁴⁰

Several months later Temple received a boost when Senator William G. Brownlow announced in a February 1874 letter to the Knoxville Chronicle that the school would receive federal assistance. The lawmaker reported, "On

⁴⁰Montgomery et al., To Foster Knowledge, 84-85; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 47, 51-52; Board of Trustees Minutes, February 1, 1872.

yesterday the Senate passed . . . the bill giving \$18,500 to the 'East Tennessee University and State Agricultural College' as a compensation for the use, occupation . . . of the college buildings during the war." He hoped, ". . . that the sum appropriated will relieve the University of its indebtedness and enable it to extend the facilities of education to the youths congregated within its walls from every county in the state." The House of Representatives and President Grant also acquiesced in the measure and in the summer of 1874 the school received the funds. The special assistance did not prevent the school from selling some of its property, however; and in the same year it sold twenty acres for \$12,000. Fortunately for Temple and his allies the trustees ordered the institution's treasurer to divert such sums as could be spared from the funds of the university to be used to defray costs of the agricultural college.⁴¹

In July 1875 Temple informed agriculture professor Hunter Nicholson that "at the last meeting of the Board of Trustees . . . A standing committee on experiments was constituted and I was appointed chairman." He informed

⁴¹ Board of Trustees Minutes, June 24, September 29, 1874; Knoxville Chronicle, February 13, 1874; Folmsbee, East Tennessee University, 51-52.

Nicholson that the committee would recommend to the Board
". . . that a series of practical and scientific experiments
shall be conducted . . . under your supervision. . . ."

He noted that "These experiments will be similar to those
in the best colleges. . . ." Therefore ". . . we will
need a greenhouse and a propagating house, a small vineyard,
some flowers, plants . . . and all such things as are needed
to conduct experiments in and illustrate the principles
of Botany, vegetable physiology. . . ."42

Temple also faced opposition from President Humes,
who objected to an agricultural and industrial orientation.
In early 1877 the legislature sent a special committee
to investigate the university to determine its progress
and compliance with the Morrill Act. The committee's
examination of the school's farm, as well as its financial
practices, revealed a poor record in regard to usage of
Morrill funds. For example, the report stated that the
appearance and condition of the farm were not above the
average farms of the country with nothing to indicate an
advanced system of agriculture or superior management.
It had never cleared expenses up to the past year. The

⁴²Oliver P. Temple to Hunter Nicholson, July 21, 1875,
Temple's University Correspondence.

money it received had been expended primarily for education in general rather than agriculture and mechanics. The committee's unfavorable report noted that most of the school's \$23,760 annual income was used merely to pay the school expenses without preferring the Agricultural and Mechanical College. Consequently it deemed the agricultural college a failure.⁴³

A faculty committee chaired by professor of agriculture Hunter Nicholson strongly protested the report. It denied all charges and condemned their assessment and accused the investigators of perverting the facts. The trustees then named Hugh L. McClung to lobby the legislature against rescinding any Morrill funds from the university. Although it withdrew no money, the General Assembly named thirteen new trustees. The new appointees were Democrats, which led William Rule and others, including the Knoxville Chronicle, to argue that this was a thinly-veiled attempt to remove Thomas Humes as president. Even the Democratic-oriented Knoxville Tribune admitted that the appointments were politically motivated. Nevertheless, the Tribune defended an attempt to remove Humes because

⁴³Montgomery et al., To Foster Knowledge, 80-90; Folmsbee, East Tennessee University, 101.

he was not, it contended, a successful leader. The paper argued that the school was decaying. Its enrollment had dwindled annually since 1873 from 317 in that year to 246 in 1877. Humes was too old and feeble to lead the school and his strong Republican proclivities were unacceptable to most Southerners.⁴⁴

Temple received a boost in 1878 with the appointment of Edward S. Joynes as professor of rhetoric and elocution. Joynes, like Temple, strongly supported practical education which trained students for employment and Joynes argued that the present curriculum was neither flexible nor expansive enough. Therefore he urged that the university be divided into departments or schools. The course of study should then be distributed into the distinct departments which in turn established its own classes with its own course of study. The university trustees in February 1879 agreed to redirect the school and encouraged the emphasis upon agricultural and mechanical arts. The trustees also accepted a report which called for graduate studies as well as a medical department. Because of these changes and upon the request of the Board of Trustees,

⁴⁴Folmsbee, East Tennessee University, 101-103; Knoxville Chronicle, March 18, 1877; Knoxville Tribune, March 15, 1877; Knoxville Tribune and Age, April 18, 1877.

the legislature in March 1879 changed the institution's name from East Tennessee University to the University of Tennessee.⁴⁵

Shortly thereafter, Temple capitalized on an opportunity to upgrade the school's agriculture department. President Humes admitted that most agricultural colleges had chairs of Natural History but at Tennessee the position was combined with agriculture. Thus he supported the formation of a Natural History chair. Temple endorsed the transfer of Nicholson from agriculture to the Natural History position; and in June 1879 the trustees named John McBryde as Professor of Agriculture and Horticulture, including Botany. This move had two benefits for Temple. He did not trust Nicholson because in a letter which he apparently did not send, Temple accused Nicholson of opposing the improvement of the agriculture department. Hence he was pleased to have Nicholson removed to the Natural History department. Second, the appointment of McBryde, an expert in scientific agriculture, enhanced the university's reputation in agricultural experimentation

⁴⁵Montgomery et al., To Foster Knowledge, 94, 95-96; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 53-54; Folmsbee, East Tennessee University, 112; Folmsbee, Tennessee Establishes University 1.

and education. He was largely responsible for establishing the institution's agricultural experimental station, much to Temple's delight.⁴⁶

Although the agricultural branch of the school advanced nicely, Temple wanted it strengthened further. Thus in 1880 he recommended a proposal to the Board that the school directly fulfill its obligations to the Morrill Act. But the Board, which classicists such as Humes and Baxter dominated, adopted a measure which intimated that the school had carefully followed the Morrill Act. This defeat became an important factor in the resignations of both McBryde and Joynes in May 1882. In the meantime James Dinwiddie applied for a position as Professor of Mathematics, saying to Temple, "I have been inclined to request your support of my candidacy for the position I seek." Temple noted on the letter that "Dinwiddie would probably receive my support but could not so far in advance pledge myself." On June 14, 1880 the Board elected Dinwiddie to the

⁴⁶Montgomery et al., To Foster Knowledge, 90-99; Folmsbee, Tennessee Establishes University, 13-14; Oliver P. Temple to Charles F. Vanderford, May 3, 1879, Temple's University Correspondence. In the margin Temple noted "never sent."

position. During the next several years he generally acted as a Temple ally.⁴⁷

In 1880 the university was challenged with the admission of blacks; the school had previously argued that no blacks had applied for admission. In 1880 the state elected four black legislators each of whom under state law had the privilege of appointing students to the school to receive tuition-free education. But, on the other hand, the state constitution required that black and white students be segregated. Hence, the admission of blacks to the University of Tennessee would require ". . . two sets of buildings apparatus, libraries and equipments and a double corps of instructors. . . ." Such an endeavor would be prohibitively expensive so Temple said that a ". . . temporary arrangement with some other school is the best thing we can now do for colored cadets. . . ."⁴⁸

Baxter opposed Temple's proposal and offered an amendment permitting the school to accept Negroes who

⁴⁷ Folmsbee, Tennessee Establishes University, 18; James Dinwiddie to Oliver P. Temple, March 18, 1880, Temple's University Correspondence.

⁴⁸ Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 58-60; Folmsbee, Tennessee Establishes University, 36, 39-40; William B. Eigelsbach, "Blacks and the Postbellum University," The Library Development Review/1988-89 (Knoxville, 1989), 15; Board of Trustees Minutes, August 16, 1881.

refused to attend college elsewhere. The Board rejected Baxter's measure but adopted Temple's. At that time the university began negotiating with Fisk University. The University of Tennessee agreed to pay \$30.00 annually to Fisk for each state cadet it enrolled. This system opened the door for several blacks to receive a tuition-free education, although not at the University of Tennessee.⁴⁹

This victory for Temple became a precursor for subsequent events of the 1880s. Temple's two major foes were about to lose their influence and his dream of an agricultural dominated institution was soon to be realized.

During the later nineteenth century Baxter's United States Circuit Judgeship prevented him from devoting much time to the university; hence Humes became Temple's leading opponent. He soon experienced some major difficulties, however, surrounding his nephew which led to his demise as president. Charles Humes, as editor-in-chief of the Chi-Delta Crescent, the paper of the Chi Delta Literary Society, responded to several attacks against the University. The Chattanooga Times and Maryville's East Tennessee News charged that the school

⁴⁹Folmsbee, Tennessee Establishes University, 39-40.

". . . is afflicted with too much 'befo' the 'wah' aristocracy." The papers also accused the school's professors of drawing large salaries while doing little work, causing the University to rot to the ground. The Younger Humes responded "of course these so called aristocrats lived 'befo' the 'wah,' or they would be as puerile as the brains of the News." He described the other charge as a lie. Charles Humes defended the faculty as being diligent and active with only one or two exceptions. He noted, "Their salaries are entirely too small. . . ." Humes added that someone should suggest to the Board of Trustees that the salaries be raised ". . . and then they would not have any inferior or lazy instructors. The science which investigates the composition of material substances . . . might be more profitably taught. . . ." His comments enraged professor of chemistry W. G. Brown and a meeting of the faculty decided to expel Charles; but he appealed to the trustees who then sent the matter to a committee chaired by Temple.⁵⁰

The committee opted to reprimand rather than expel the student, but several faculty resigned in protest.

⁵⁰ Folmsbee, Tennessee Establishes University, 75-77; Montgomery et al., To Foster Knowledge, 106-15; Chi-Delta Crescent, July, 1883, University of Tennessee Presidents

The younger Humes was later expelled. President Humes wrote to Temple regarding the resignation of three professors over the issue that ". . . it is almost beyond credence that men under the control of their reason should behave as they have done." He continued that "there is a Latin proverb, 'whom God would destroy, he first makes mad.'" The Board in August 1883, largely because of Humes' nephew's behavior, requested and received his resignation. The trustees acted as it did to ". . . best promote the interest of the university and of the public." The Board's vote was close, 12-11; Temple abstained.⁵¹

While the presidency was vacant, several men including John L. Moses, James Comfort, and Temple performed the duties it entailed. During the four-year search for a president the agrarian element worked diligently to push the university away from classicism. The East Tennessee Farmers' Convention rejoiced in the resignation of Humes and wanted the new leadership to be more willing to follow

Papers, President Humes, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

⁵¹ Thomas Humes to Oliver P. Temple, August 3, 1883, Temple's University Correspondence; Folmsbee, Tennessee Establishes University, 78-79; Knoxville Daily Chronicle, August 24, 1883.

an agrarian-dominated curriculum. The Convention adopted a series of proposals which would make the school comply with the Morrill restrictions. In March 1884 the trustees adopted the resolutions, after which the process to find a president willing to accept the university's new goals began.⁵²

The board offered the presidency to mathematics professor Samuel H. Lockett; but he refused the appointment, because it would limit the time he could spend with his lucrative practice as a consulting engineer. Lockett suggested Ebenezer Alexander for the position; but since Temple questioned Alexander's support for an agricultural school, Temple allowed the momentum in the search for a president to fade. In order to discredit Alexander as a potential candidate for the university's highest position, Temple in April 1886 issued a list of instructors who had worked diligently to enhance the school. Not surprisingly, Alexander's name was not included and shortly thereafter the professor of ancient languages and literature wrote a disparaging letter of resignation to Temple. He complained that ". . . never in all my life has anything hurt me as did your leaving me out of the list of the few

⁵²Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 60-62.

men whom you thought deserving of credit for having the interest of the University at heart and for wanting to make it what it ought to be." Soon afterward Edward Joynes penned to Temple: "I congratulate you heartily that light is breaking and that you are, as I trust, about to realize some of the fruits of your long labor and patient waiting."⁵³

When Alexander departed from the faculty in 1886, Temple began his struggle to catapult McBryde to the presidency. The former professor of agricultural chemistry was by then the president of the University of South Carolina. In December Temple became Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the following month it appointed McBryde as president. He accepted the position but later refused the appointment. Subsequently the same year the trustees again named McBryde as president, a move which East Tennessee agrarians strongly supported. Unfortunately for Temple, declining health prohibited McBryde's assumption of the office. Though McBryde recovered, he

⁵³Montgomery et al., To Foster Knowledge, 115-17; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 63-65; E. Alexander to Oliver P. Temple, April 23, 1886, Edward S. Joynes to Oliver P. Temple, May 19, 1886, Temple's University Correspondence.

remained in South Carolina and never returned to the University of Tennessee.⁵⁴

Temple was crushed as well as indignant at McBryde's behavior, but the trustees still wanted Temple to lead their search for a president. The trustees were soon attracted to Charles W. Dabney of North Carolina, the director of the state's agricultural experiment station. Because of Dabney's strong support for agricultural education, Temple endorsed Dabney for the presidency even without meeting him. In August 1887 the trustees elected Dabney president. The Knoxville Tribune stated that "We have no doubt that the selection of Dabney is a wise one. No educator in the South stands higher and no man of his age has made a more enviable reputation as a scholar and a scientist."⁵⁵

Temple's dream of an agricultural-minded administration came true with Dabney's presidency. As chairman of the university's farm committee, Temple worked closely with Dabney, but his age restricted his abilities. He resigned

⁵⁴Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 64-65; Montgomery et al., To Foster Knowledge, 122-30.

⁵⁵Montgomery et al., To Foster Knowledge, 132-133; Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 68-69; Knoxville Daily Tribune, August 2, 1887.

the chairmanship of the farm committee in 1900. Dabney later called Temple the father of Tennessee's Agricultural College. Temple's work with the University of Tennessee in its establishment of an agricultural school demonstrated his determination not only to educate farmers as to proper agricultural techniques, but also to expose non-agrarians to the plight of husbandmen.⁵⁶

Temple expended considerable effort promoting industrialization and economic diversification within the Volunteer State in general and East Tennessee in particular. His support for improved transportation within his region and to the surrounding localities encouraged the area's economic growth. But Temple's impact in the mining industry was negligible. Except for the formation of the Rugby Colony, Temple's efforts to promote immigration were not very successful. His attempt to persuade Tennessee to participate in the 1893 World's Fair resulted in failure. Only with his work to establish a school sympathetic with agrarianism did Temple attain a significant degree of success. Perhaps the most remarkable facet of Temple's promotion of an economically diverse Tennessee was the

⁵⁶Bailey, "Temple: Agrarian," 70-72.

fact that he continued his efforts when most of his work resulted in failure.

CONCLUSION

As the twentieth century began, Oliver P. Temple's health started to decline. He resigned his post as chairman of the agriculture committee of the University of Tennessee so that he could devote more of his time to his book, Union Leaders. He remained active until June 1905, when ". . . he suffered a fall while climbing over a fence and sustained a fractured hip, and had been bedridden since." Although he remained alert mentally, his health deteriorated.¹

Death came slowly to the former chancellor. The Knoxville Journal and Tribune stated the evening before he died, "Judge Oliver P. Temple is dying at his home on Cumberland Avenue. His physicians think that he will scarcely live through the night. . . ." The grim prediction proved accurate: ". . . Judge Oliver P. Temple breathed his last Saturday Morning at 6:15 o'clock, surrounded by his immediate relatives who have been at his bedside all of this past week, anticipating his death." Temple's funeral was held at his home and his minister, the Rev. R. L. Bachman, officiated. "Pallbearers [were] selected from [the] board of Trustees from the University of

¹Knoxville Journal and Tribune, November 3, 1907;
Knoxville Sentinel, November 2, 1907.

Tennessee, Scotch-Irish Society, trustees of the Second Presbyterian Church and other organizations. . . ."2

On the same afternoon of Temple's death the Chattanooga News, in a front page article, observed that "The death of Judge Temple removes from Knoxville one of her strongest men, who has always been at the front, advancing the cause of the city of Knoxville." The Chattanooga Times published a lengthy obituary which described Temple as "one of the last of the notable figures in Tennessee's antebellum history. . . . He opposed secession from the Union and when the civil war came he predicted the abolition of slavery as a result of the resort to arms."3

The Knoxville Journal and Tribune claimed of Temple, "When a man has lived in the world more than four score years and in all the years of a long life has merited and maintained the good will and confidence of the generations he deserves more than a passing notice of his final departure." The paper continued, "It can never be said

²Knoxville Journal and Tribune, November 2, 3, 1907.

³Chattanooga News, November 2, 1907; Chattanooga Times, November 3, 1907.

that Oliver Perry Temple has lived in vain; he has left his impress and it is for good."⁴

Perhaps the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention honored Temple more than did any other group with which he had been associated. During that group's 1911 convention, the Knoxville Journal and Tribune commented that "Probably the most important feature of the day was the adoption of a motion inaugurating a movement for locating a permanent home for the convention. . . ." The assembly hoped to build "a large open-air pavilion to be dedicated to the memory of the late Judge O. P. Temple." Subsequently the organization did construct its meeting place and named it, the Oliver Perry Temple Hall.⁵

In 1923 the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention met for its fiftieth annual gathering; the festivities surrounding the meeting were larger than at previous conventions. In a front page cartoon, the Knoxville Journal and Tribune noted, in reference to the farmers' group, that "Great oaks from little acorns grow." Temple's daughter Mary declared to the delegates, "It was one of the principal ambitions of the late Oliver Perry Temple

⁴Knoxville Journal and Tribune, November 3, 1907.

⁵Ibid., May 17, 1911.

to bring about [a] prosperous era in agriculture and to lift farmers to a higher plane of usefulness. . . ." She further claimed that "Judge Temple recognized the farmer as the backbone of civilization and he was quick to realize the superior points of the sturdy East Tennesseans."⁶

Several people at the meeting memorialized Temple and his role in their organization. J. K. P. Wallace of Anderson County, who had attended the 1872 convention as well as the 1923 gathering, appreciated meeting in Oliver Perry Temple Hall. Wallace commented, "Of course this had been made possible our [sic] our patron saint, Judge Temple and the local friends in charge of this feature." Capt. T. F. Peck, a former agricultural commissioner, spoke of Judge Temple ". . . as a man who was a strong force in agricultural development."⁷

Temple was remembered not only by the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention but also the University of Tennessee as well as the city of Knoxville. Streets such as Temple Avenue and Melrose Circle as well as the school's Temple Courts were apparently named for the noted Knoxvillean.

⁶Ibid., May 23, 1923.

⁷Ibid.

Temple's lengthy and productive career caused groups and individuals to honor his memory for years after his death. During his lifetime, Temple's political and economic pursuits testified to his belief in Whiggery. While a young man he allied with the party which stressed the need to develop an economy balanced between agriculture and industry and promoted by transportation improvements. After his party disintegrated in the wake of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, Temple joined the Know Nothing and later the Opposition parties. By the 1860 election he had united with the Constitutional Unionists. As a slave holder he believed that the peculiar institution could best be preserved by preventing secession and civil war, a position held by many former Whigs. After the war, Temple hoped that his native South in general, and East Tennessee in particular, would continue to develop the balanced economy he had espoused during the pre-war era. Though most antebellum Whigs flocked to the Democratic party after the Civil War, Temple refused to join the exodus and supported the Republicans instead.⁸

⁸C. Vann Woodward, Origins of the New South, 1877-1913 (Baton Rouge, 1951), 1-4; Daniel W. Crofts, Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis (Chapel Hill, 1989), 164-94.

As an industrial promoter in the Volunteer State, Temple, like many Southerners, favored industry which could make effective use of the region's relatively inexpensive unskilled labor. This included blacks, whites and immigrants. Temple's attitude regarding blacks seemed to be not too dissimilar to the one expressed by Booker T. Washington at the Atlanta Exposition in 1895. For example, Washington stated that blacks must begin at the bottom of life, and in the first years of freedom they wrongly preferred political eminence to industrial pursuits. Washington assured his audience that by offering economic and educational opportunities to blacks, they would be patient, faithful, law-abiding, and unresentful. He claimed that blacks desired only the opportunities in education and industry, not social equality.⁹

After Washington's speech, the Century Magazine declared that the South was a region of industrial development and agricultural progress. This was the South that Temple tried to create. Its economic system was to be founded upon farming but cities and industries were important as markets for agricultural products. Hence

⁹Gavin Wright, Old South, New South (New York, 1986), 162-65; Paul M. Gaston, The New South Creed, A Study in Southern Mythmaking (New York, 1970), 209-11.

he encouraged not only new and efficient agricultural techniques, but he also urged the state to bring in immigrants to work in the factories. Temple tried to accomplish the latter by helping to establish the Rugby colony. He also hoped to attract new industry to Tennessee by urging the state to fund an exhibit at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893. The fact that Democratic Governor John P. Buchanan appointed Temple to Tennessee's fifteen-member Board of Worlds' Fair Managers attests to Temple's notability. His election as chairman of that Board also demonstrates that he had earned respect from fellow Tennesseans.¹⁰

Temple was an elitist who seemed to want to perpetuate a society divided by both race and economic class. He opposed political equality for blacks. In fact, by the late nineteenth century he wrote that the state erred when it granted suffrage to the ex-slaves, contrasting his earlier support for black voting rights. After they attained freedom Temple seemed to want blacks as well as lower class whites to be trained for menial positions in either the agricultural or industrial sectors of the

¹⁰Fred Arthur Bailey, "Oliver Perry Temple: New South Agrarian" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1972), 100, 103, 131-32; Gaston, New South Creed, 211.

economy. He apparently felt that training them for employment and giving them a job would facilitate a contented lower class which would probably not rebel against the status quo. Perhaps this is why he devoted so much energy toward establishing East Tennessee University, later the University of Tennessee, as a land grant institution. It also could explain why he labored so diligently to replace the school's ruling classicists with an agrarian-minded administration. When groups rose up in opposition to the economic structure, such as in the coal miners' strike of 1891, Temple fiercely condemned the strikers and called for swift and harsh punishment.¹¹

Temple perceived the tensions which arose between the agricultural and industrial segments of the economy when in 1883 he noted that certain railroads tended to over charge farmers for transporting their goods. Hence he advocated the establishment of a state railroad commission which he hoped would reconcile both agricultural and industrial interests. Temple seemed to favor a

¹¹ Oliver Perry Temple, Notable Men of Tennessee from 1833-1875: Their Times and Their Contemporaries (New York, 1912), 133; Oliver Perry Temple, "Thoughts on the Negro Problem," handwritten essay, undated, Temple MSS, Special Collections, University of Tennessee; Oliver Perry Temple, "Coal Miners' Strike," handwritten essay, undated, Temple MSS.

partnership between industry and agriculture to bolster Tennessee's postbellum economy. This is the position he had taken during the antebellum era when he endorsed the economic position of the Whigs who called for a diversified economy. Temple maintained throughout his life membership in the political party which, in his opinion, best exemplified that position; the Whigs, Know Nothings, Opposition, and Republicans.¹² Although Temple faced much opposition throughout his life, his work was appreciated by many. Temple was, among East Tennesseans, a notable entrepreneur, agrarian, and politician.

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