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REBUILDING A COMMUNITY:  
PROSPERITY AND PEACE IN POST-CIVIL WAR KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE,  
1865-1870

A Thesis  
Presented for the  
Master of Arts  
Degree  
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Gregory Scott Hicks  
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## Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my wife Jennifer and to our daughter Eva Marie. I would especially like to thank Dr. Stephen Ash for his patient guidance and Jeannine Cole who, in addition to being a dear friend, donated an infinite amount of her time to help me complete this project. In addition to Dr. Ash, I would like to thank Dr. Daniel Feller and Dr. Lorri Glover for agreeing to be part of my committee and for their invaluable contributions to my intellectual growth. All of those mentioned above have positively influenced my life. I owe them my deepest gratitude.

## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine how healing occurred in postwar Knoxville. The central idea is that no single facet, whether economic, political, or social, was responsible for the successful attainment and maintenance of peace in the city. That being said, the importance of economics to the peace process cannot be overstated. Knoxville was evenly divided between Northern and Southern sympathizers just before and during the war. In the immediate postwar period the prevalence and proximity of former enemies led to an eruption of violence on the city's streets. By 1866, however, peace reigned over the city as businesses boomed and people went to work. This thesis focuses on how this transition from violence to peace took place and flourished in Knoxville during the five years following the end of the American Civil War.

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## Introduction

“The Devil seems to be walking at large in East Tennessee,” declared Ellen Renshaw House in her diary entry for December 10, 1865. House was responding to the bloody violence taking place in the streets of Knoxville as former combatants and political enemies returned home after the Confederate surrender in the spring of that year. Throughout the bloody summer and autumn of 1865, the violence made anxious Knoxvilleans question if peace would ever return to their town. On May 24, ex-Union soldier Shadrick Harris attacked Confederate veteran William Beard in downtown Knoxville as retribution for the near murderous abuse that he had experienced as a prisoner of war under Beard. Two days later Unionist D. Foster killed former rebel W. M. Cox in a downtown store. Violence continued throughout the summer, culminating with the September 5 lynching of Abner Baker by Union troops for the killing of Unionist William Hall. Baker’s hanging led House to lament, “We certainly live in horrible times. Scarcely a day passes someone is not killed.”<sup>1</sup>

Despite this violence in the immediate postwar months, however, Knoxvilleans soon resumed their lives in peace. This thesis will provide some understanding of how the men and women in Knoxville worked to reestablish peace between 1865 and 1870. I contend that Knoxville’s postwar economic opportunities, especially during the two years following the war, led to prosperity, which created relatively stable political and social conditions that also played important roles in the peace process. My goal is to show how those economic, political, and social factors allowed peace to return to the town.

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., A Very Violent Rebel: The Civil War Diary of Ellen Renshaw House (Knoxville, 1996), 180-86, 195; Ben H. Severance, Tennessee’s Radical Army: The State Guard and Its Role in Reconstruction (Knoxville, 2005), 40-41.

Between late 1865 and 1868, Knoxville experienced an astounding economic recovery. Businesses and industries rose from the ashes of war in a flurry of enterprise and improvement. In many ways, Knoxville's postwar development resembled an industrial version of historian Jack Greene's developmental model, in which the pursuit of individual economic gain created a boom economy in many regions of America during the colonial period. Advertisements for immigrants and depictions of natural resources ripe for exploitation, published in newspapers and pamphlets sent north and to Europe, portrayed Knoxville and East Tennessee as lands waiting to be colonized. One such example is an advertisement by Henry C. Whitney & Co. real estate brokers, in the 10 January 1866 issue of the Whig, offering to buy "mineral lands and large tracts of cheap lands . . . for colonists." Newspaperman, politician, and former Methodist minister William G. "Parson" Brownlow and attorney O. P. Temple focused on attracting capital and immigrants with a goal of industrializing the town, and it seems that they never lost an opportunity to make a few dollars for themselves in the process. Brownlow's name appears at the bottom of the Whitney & Co. ad directing interested parties to inquire with him about available lands. Before the war, Temple and Brownlow had ambitious plans for the little town that the Parson liked to call the "metropolis of East Tennessee." After the war they pursued their goals. However, while the economy almost immediately took off, social and political developments lagged behind as Knoxvillians tried to achieve what Greene terms "social cohesion" by rebuilding churches, schools, informal social organizations, and, most importantly, relationships destroyed by the war.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Jack Greene, Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture (Chapel Hill, 1988); Knoxville Whig,

Politics would play an equally important role in the peace process but only after former enemies found common ground there as well. Brownlow tends to dominate many historians' accounts of postwar Knoxville politics. In reality, he and his allies, including T. H. Pearne, a Northern Methodist preacher turned Knoxville Whig editor, and Horace Maynard, a United States senator, represented what was only a small contingent of truly radical Republicans in postwar Knoxville. After Governor Brownlow left for Nashville in 1865, radicalism in Knoxville apparently lost much of its popular appeal. According to historian Tracy McKenzie, antebellum Knoxville was a staunch Whig stronghold with a small but significant Democratic minority. After the demise of the Whig party in the mid-1850s, Knoxville's Whigs migrated first to the Know-Nothing party and later to the Constitutional Union party. In 1860 former Whigs across the state voted for John Bell for president. Abraham Lincoln was not even on the ballot in Tennessee. Even by the late 1860s, there was no overwhelming Republican domination of Knoxville, for many of the town's inhabitants were increasingly disgusted by radicalism and especially the Republicans' embrace of black voters. There was a moderately conservative tradition in the town, and by 1867 conservatives led by John Fleming, T. A. R. Nelson, and others were rising. That year, the conservative Knoxville Daily Herald began publication with resounding political attacks on Brownlow.

Knoxville would not, however, become as conservative as most other parts of the former Confederacy, and while Knoxville's conservative movement included many former Confederates, conservative terrorist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan never

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10 January 1866; Robert Tracy McKenzie, Lincolmites and Rebels: A Divided Town in the American Civil War (Oxford, 2006), 13, 19-20.

gained a foothold in the town. Extremists on both ends of the political spectrum who refused to accept peace were unwelcome in Knoxville by the late 1860s, including Brownlow. During the late 1860s, the political center shifted to the right, and many former Confederates such as staunch rebel J. G. M. Ramsey were eventually welcomed back to the town. When T. A. R. Nelson criticized Lincoln in the wake of the Emancipation Proclamation, he foreshadowed the conservative political direction that the town would take after the war ended.

Postwar violence in Knoxville can in many respects be attributed to the close proximity of former enemies who were provoked to violence by the rhetoric of Brownlow in the Whig. The violence was short lived, however. In his book on East Tennessee during the Civil War, O. P. Temple states, “Often the Union soldier and the Confederate soldier settled side by side. Both were brave; both were faithful to their cause. . . . When they returned they respected each other, and met as old friends.” While Temple’s words, which were written in 1899, reek of romanticism, they also convey much truth. Most Knoxvilleians simply wanted to put down their weapons and start rebuilding their shattered lives, families, and community. Anyone who chose to disrupt this process became an outsider. By 1869, Brownlow was repudiated as a relatively conservative postwar political atmosphere emerged in Knoxville, which closely resembled the town’s conservative prewar politics. Once he became, or at least was portrayed as, a radical after the war, Brownlow became an outsider. The relatively quick return to conservative politics, combined with business leaders’ desire for a stable

economic environment and Brownlow's exit from the governorship in 1869, brought political stability to Knoxville.<sup>3</sup>

Historian Tracy McKenzie argues that Knoxvilleians only reluctantly chose sides when secession and war forcefully divided the community. Knoxvilleians hesitated to take sides even in the aftermath of the East Tennessee bridge burnings of 1861, when five suspected Unionist guerillas were hanged and many other Unionists suffered retribution from Confederate officials, one of whom was J. G. M.'s son Crozier Ramsey. Given their lack of enthusiasm for warring against one another even when provoked, the majority of citizens in postwar Knoxville, as indicated by Temple, quickly turned to healing the schism. As the economy rapidly improved, Knoxvilleians first began rebuilding their homes and businesses, then their neighborhoods, churches, schools, and ultimately their society as a whole.

Women, operating within their nineteenth-century social sphere, played key public and private roles in community healing. They engaged in church activities such as dinners and fairs that raised money for repairs and expansion of their buildings and drew former Union and Confederate sympathizers together. By 1870, many of Knoxville's churches were rebuilt and contributing to the healing process. Women also formed the Ladies' Monument Association in 1868 to raise funds for the upkeep of Bethel Cemetery, where over 1,600 Confederate soldiers were buried. They likewise played an important part in Decoration Day proceedings, which originated that same year.

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<sup>3</sup> Address of Honorable Thomas A. R. Nelson, 3 October 1862, T. A. R. Nelson Papers, McClung Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee; McKenzie, Lincolnites and Rebels, 120; Oliver P. Temple, East Tennessee and the Civil War (Johnson City, 1899), 530.

With the exception of an aborted attempt to establish public education in 1868, Knoxville had no public school system until the early 1870s. However, private schools such as Hampton-Sydney Academy and the Knoxville Female Academy offered at least some children educational opportunities. In addition, East Tennessee University, which would later become the University of Tennessee, opened a preparatory school for a limited number of young men in 1866. It was in this endeavor that education's role in reunification was most evident. Several former enemies worked together on the Board of Trustees and in the community to get the University up and running so soon after the war ended. Knoxville's leaders and citizens invested greatly in education because they believed it vital to economic improvement. In addition to schools, literary groups, lectures, and a philharmonic symphony helped young people improve their intellect and culture.

It is important to understand that Knoxville's reconstructed society was built on the premise of white racial supremacy. As the town returned to its conservative roots during the immediate postwar years, black citizens were in many respects pushed to the side. Even so, blacks in Knoxville did not experience the same brutality endured by their brethren in other parts of the former Confederacy. There is no evidence of organized violence against blacks in the town. However, the increasing popularity of conservative newspapers reflected an intensifying prejudice after 1867 as conservatives used skin color as a political unifier.

Knoxville's postwar experience offers a unique perspective on the healing process in the South following the Civil War. Given that the town was almost exactly 50 percent Unionist and 50 percent Confederate during the war, it is remarkable that peace prevailed

so soon after the war's end. While much has been written about the Civil War in East Tennessee and Knoxville, very little has been written about the immediate postwar experience in the region or town. Studying postwar Knoxville should help us to better understand why Americans chose to stop fighting each other after the war. This is surely as important as understanding why they began warring in the first place. Much work in this area still needs to be done.

Historians of Civil War Knoxville often stumble when addressing the Reconstruction-era town. The problem may be that they assume that the town and the East Tennessee region it is a part of had similar experiences. While there is no denying that Knoxville had its share of outrages in the immediate aftermath of war, violence quickly subsided there while it continued unabated in many surrounding areas of East Tennessee and western North Carolina. In addition, some historians focus on Brownlow and lose sight of the fact that the Parson quickly lost influence in Knoxville after he left for Nashville in 1865. Peace and consensus, rather than strife and uncompromising partisanship, characterized Knoxville politics in the late 1860s.

Some historians, including W. Todd Groce, argue that radicals seeking to permanently alter Knoxville's economic and political direction forced many prominent former Confederates into exile. In Mountain Rebels: East Tennessee Confederates and the Civil War, 1860-1870, Groce contends that Knoxville was a hotbed of radical retribution guided by Governor Brownlow until 1869, when he left for Washington to serve as senator. Groce is correct in saying that many secessionist leaders left the town and never returned, but he ignores those who remained and has little to say about those who exiled themselves but later returned. Among the latter was J. G. M. Ramsey,

perhaps the town's most ardent rebel before, during, and after the war, who returned home in 1871 to a warm welcome. Others included Charles and Frank McClung, who after their return established what became one of the largest and most lucrative wholesale businesses in Tennessee. Other prominent ex-Confederates in postwar Knoxville included J. A. Mabry and C. W. Charlton, who, ironically enough, headed a group of investors who bought Brownlow's interest in the Knoxville Whig when he sold out in 1869. Mabry became the wealthiest man in the town. By focusing on the political extremes, Groce misses the key fact that the majority of Knoxvilleians quickly reconciled in the postwar years.<sup>4</sup>

In Lincolmites and Rebels: A Divided Town in the American Civil War, Robert Tracy McKenzie grasps the political realities of postwar Knoxville better than any other historian to date. For one thing, he offers a thorough evaluation of the legal actions taken by Brownlow and his radical followers against their rebel enemies, showing that such vindictiveness was thwarted in Knoxville when some of the Parson's erstwhile allies, including lawyer O. P. Temple and minister Thomas Humes, came to the defense of the persecuted. Another who did so was Connally Trigg, Brownlow's handpicked federal judge in postwar East Tennessee, who blocked the attempted confiscation of secessionists' property initiated by Brownlow as U. S. Treasury agent late in the war. McKenzie comments: "What disgusted the Parson most was that prominent Unionists

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<sup>4</sup> W. Todd Groce, Mountain Rebels: East Tennessee Confederates and the Civil War, 1860-1870 (Knoxville, 1999), 147-51; William B. Hesseltine, ed., Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey Autobiography and Letters (Nashville, 1954), 252; McKenzie, Lincolmites and Rebels, 118; Knoxville Daily Press and Herald, 10 January 1868 (the Daily Press and Herald resulted from a merger between the Knoxville Daily Press and Daily Herald on 7 January 1868).

seemed to be lining up to help Confederates escape justice.” Brownlow’s vengeance met with increasing resistance even from those who, like Temple and Trigg, are often portrayed as radicals. McKenzie shows how not only supposed radicals but also conservative Unionists were active in the defense of rebels, many of whom would become their political allies. Merchant John Williams, attorney John Baxter, farmer Frederick Heiskell (who called Brownlow an “unmitigated humbug”), and future Daily Herald editor John Fleming were among them. But McKenzie exaggerates, at least implicitly, the strength of Brownlowism in the town after 1865. Moreover, like Groce, McKenzie notes the many secessionists who exited Knoxville in the face of Brownlow’s wrath, but his examples include C. W. Charlton, Charles and Frank McClung, Henry Ault, and others who returned to Knoxville a relatively short time after their departure. A few reappear later in McKenzie’s study, but most do not even though Charlton and the McClungs were among several former Confederates thriving in the town by 1869. McKenzie’s final chapter, “Retribution and Reconciliation,” accurately notes that violence in Knoxville had largely ended by early 1866 and theorizes that prewar social and family ties played a key role in the quick resumption of peace. But he does not pursue that idea far enough. He also offers a sound argument that racism pushed white Knoxvillians towards political conservatism, but he does not sufficiently consider the roles of economics and social institutions.<sup>5</sup>

The most comprehensive account of East Tennessee during the postbellum years is found in Charles Faulkner Bryan’s unpublished 1978 doctoral dissertation, “The Civil War in East Tennessee: A Social, Political, and Economic Study.” While Bryan’s work

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<sup>5</sup> McKenzie, Lincolmites and Rebels, 202-03, 211.

is largely about the experience of the region as a whole, it does offer a few insights on the experience of Knoxville in particular. He notes, for instance, that Knoxville's postwar economic prosperity contrasted with the destitution prevalent in most of East Tennessee. One factor behind this, he says, was that Knoxville received a disproportionate amount of aid from the East Tennessee Relief Association, a benevolent organization founded late in the war. According to Bryan, this aid resulted in faster economic recovery for the town when compared to its hinterlands. Bryan also describes battles between Union League members and Ku Klux Klansmen in parts of East Tennessee outside of Knoxville. Unfortunately, he does not explain why these events did not plague Knoxville. He also observes that violence ended in Knoxville long before it did in rural areas of East Tennessee, but he fails to connect this phenomenon with the town's economic recovery.<sup>6</sup>

According to McKenzie, during the 1850s Knoxville became the commercial hub of a region that included East Tennessee, southwestern Virginia, western North Carolina, northern Alabama, and northern Georgia. In addition to river and overland connections to important southeastern locations, railroads linked Knoxville to both Virginia and Georgia by 1860. The East Tennessee & Georgia Railroad had 110 miles of track running southwestward from Knoxville, while the East Tennessee & Virginia ran northeastward for 130 miles. The importance of railroads to the economic development of both prewar and postwar Knoxville cannot be overstated. They offered the mountain town an opportunity to expand its economic reach beyond its geographic limitations.

McKenzie argues that the 1850s were years of economic, social, and political change for

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<sup>6</sup> Charles Faulkner Bryan, Jr., "The Civil War in East Tennessee: A Social, Political, and Economic Study" (Ph. D. diss., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1978), 161-62, 230, 186, 226, 238.

Knoxville. He illustrates how the railroads changed Knoxville's demographics and economics by connecting the town to larger markets and increasing access to the town for immigrants looking for a better life. He insists that these changes, especially the railroads, destabilized the population by bringing large numbers of lower-class people to Knoxville looking for work. In addition, the railroads brought new leaders to the town in the late 1850s, including O. P. Temple and T. A. R. Nelson. It seems that the town's traditional leaders, such as the Ramseys, were increasingly threatened by these economic and social changes. If McKenzie is correct, and there is little reason to believe that he is not, his evaluation of prewar Knoxville seems to correlate well with postwar conditions. After the war, Northern immigrants eager to capitalize on economic opportunities helped keep the population unsettled. They built factories and opened mercantile establishments, which created a nascent working class as people came looking for work.<sup>7</sup>

Knoxville may have been the "metropolis" of an extensive region, but in 1860 Knoxville and Knox County lagged behind Middle and West Tennessee cities and counties in terms of wealth. While leading East Tennessee in terms of total wealth (real and personal) at \$12,981,304, Knox County ranked only nineteenth in the state and fell far behind Davidson County's total of \$84,898,053. After the war, Temple and other leaders saw the chance to enhance Knoxville's state, regional, and national stature. Furthermore, they understood that East Tennessee was in economic, political, and social turmoil. Railroads and industry might offer Knoxville the opportunity to become the New South's "city on the hill." Knoxville's business leaders saw the opportunity to

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<sup>7</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census, Statistics of the United States, (Including Mortality, Property, & c.,) in 1860 (Washington, 1866), 329; McKenzie, Lincolmites and Rebels, 23.

make a hefty profit from their situation, but they also sought to lead the region to peace by serving as a model for others in the area who desired an end to the bushwhacking and other violence raging in the region.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census, Statistics of the United States, 312; Greene, Pursuits of Happiness, 102-13. Davidson County included Nashville.

## Part I: Postbellum Knoxville Economics, “Prosperity and Peace”

“Let us be duly thankful that Knoxville thus far has been blessed with unusual prosperity in business.” By January 1868, when editor John Fleming published this remark in the Daily Herald, Knoxville’s economy was booming. Economics played a critical role in the achievement of peace after 1865. The fact that business was flourishing in 1868 and peace reigned in Knoxville reflected the willingness of Brownlowites such as William Rule and conservatives such as T. A. R. Nelson, John Williams, and Frederick Heiskell to put aside their differences when it came to Knoxville’s economic well being. Both sides promoted business development in the town throughout the late 1860s. The 10 January 1866 issue of the Whig called for sawmills in Knoxville to furnish lumber at reasonable prices for the rebuilding of the town, stating that this could be done “if men of industry and enterprise will take hold of the trade.” The same issue touted the opening of former Union army captain and recent immigrant W. W. Woodruff’s store as “the largest and most complete hardware establishment in East Tennessee.” Brownlow, Temple, and other leaders sought an influx of Northern entrepreneurs, immigrants, and capital in an effort to improve economic conditions in postwar Knoxville and to recoup personal fortunes lost during the conflict. Copies of the Whig were apparently sent around the country to help achieve this end. Isaac M. Prince of Leavenworth, Kansas wrote Temple in March 1865 seeking prices on available lands in Knox County and East Tennessee after he “received a no. of Brownlow’s paper in which I see thy name,” which suggests that Temple, a driving force behind Knoxville’s postwar economic boom, may also have been involved in deals for lands confiscated from former rebels. That Temple defended some rebels while profiting

from the losses of others underscores the complexity of postwar economic and social conditions in Knoxville.<sup>9</sup>

For many Knoxville businessmen, economic gain trumped political ideology. Joseph Mabry was a political chameleon who supported the Confederacy only when it was financially prudent to do so. Once Union general Ambrose Burnside and his troops occupied Knoxville in 1863, Mabry became a Unionist. In 1860 he had been a thirty-five-year-old cattle raiser worth \$91,000. Between 1860 and 1870 his wealth increased almost four-fold to \$320,000. The most noticeable improvement occurred in the value of his real estate, which increased from \$30,000 to \$250,000 during that period. Some possibly underhanded real estate transactions during the war may help explain his remarkable financial success. A letter from a Colonel Pryor's wife to T. A. R. Nelson in 1868 stated, "Col. Pryor wished me to write you again relative to his land that Mr. Joseph Mabry unjustly holds in his possession." Pryor had been held prisoner in Knoxville by federal troops during the war and had feared he would have his land confiscated. According to Mrs. Pryor, the colonel believed he could trust Mabry so he signed over the deed to his property for "safekeeping . . . as Mr. Mabry was acting the Union man." Once the war was over, however, Mabry refused to relinquish the land.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Knoxville Daily Herald, 5 January 1868; Knoxville Whig, 6 June, 10 January 1866; Issac Prince to O. P. Temple, 18 March 1865, O. P. Temple Papers, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

<sup>10</sup> Eighth Census of the United States, Manuscript Population Schedules 1860, Knox County, Tennessee, National Archives, Washington, p. 23, hereafter cited as Eighth Census of the United States, 1860; Ninth Census of the United States, Manuscript Population Schedules 1870, Knox County, Tennessee, p. 13, National Archives, Washington, hereafter cited as Ninth Census of the United States, 1870; Mrs. Col. Pryor to T. A. R. Nelson, 3 March 1868, Nelson Papers.

In January 1864 Mabry took the loyalty oath accepting the amnesty offered to former Confederates by President Lincoln. Thereafter, this newly minted Union man moved rapidly to capitalize on the business opportunities that presented themselves. A February 1866 advertisement in the Whig indicates that Mabry had formed a real estate company along with former Union army officers James T. Abernathy, George Simmons, and H. A. Kelly. Appended to this ad for Mabry, Abernathy & Co. were the names of conservative Unionists Nelson and Williams, former Confederate Charles M. McGhee, the Parson's son John B. Brownlow, and Unionist Judge Trigg. Whether these men were actively involved in the venture or were merely references, their endorsement of Mabry's venture shows how economics served as a common ground for men of all political views. That the Yankee captain Woodruff and the former rebels Charles and Frank McClung could coexist and prosper on Gay Street in 1866 likewise speaks to the motivational power of profit to sustain peace in postwar Knoxville.<sup>11</sup>

Not all Knoxville rebels took part in the town's postwar renaissance, however. W. B. Reese, W. W. Wallace, W. C. Kain, J. G. M. Ramsey, and others were deemed pariahs and were unwelcome in the town, at least in the immediate postwar years. Why some former Confederates, such as the McClung family, were quickly welcomed back, while Reese and others never returned or returned only years later is a question not easily answered. Reese, an attorney worth \$100,000 in 1860, was a former judge and one of the town's most prominent citizens before the war. He served as president of the East Tennessee Historical and Antiquarian Society and as a trustee of East Tennessee

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<sup>11</sup> Knoxville Whig, 14 February 1866; Mary U. Rothrock, ed., The French Broad Holston Country: A History of Knox County, Tennessee (Knoxville, 1946), 448.

University. In addition, he helped bring two railroads to East Tennessee and served as director of the East Tennessee & Georgia. In December 1865, Reese, then an exile living in Middle Tennessee, wrote to Temple asking his opinion of Knoxville's current situation and economic prospects. Noting that they had always been good friends, Reese asked Temple to be his agent and sell his Knoxville real estate, which was worth \$25,000 in 1860. Temple accomplished this task, and Reese never returned. W. W. Wallace, a lawyer and prewar neighbor of prominent Unionist minister Thomas Humes, had been president of the Knoxville and Charleston Railroad before the war. Fearing for his safety, Wallace left Knoxville during the bloody summer of 1865, stating that he would not allow himself to be "shot down like a dog as Cox was by parties I have never wronged or even provoked." W. C. Kain was also a lawyer in prewar Knoxville. He was C. W. Charlton's next-door neighbor, and lived just two houses down from Brownlow. In 1860, Kain was worth \$66,000, which put him among Knoxville's wealthiest citizens. Like Hugh McClung, Kain formed and commanded a Confederate artillery battery that bore his name. Unlike McClung, Kain was charged with treason after the war and had not returned to the town by 1870. J. G. M. Ramsey was perhaps Knoxville's most prominent citizen before the war. He was an accomplished physician and historian worth \$45,000 in 1860. During the war he served as a Confederate treasury officer and paymaster. He lost a son in combat and two daughters to disease. After the war, while Ramsey was in exile in North Carolina, his son Crozier died of mysterious causes in Knoxville. Ramsey blamed Brownlow for Crozier's death, calling him the devil incarnate. (As a Confederate official, Crozier Ramsey had persecuted Brownlow; the Parson returned the favor once Unionists took control of Knoxville.) By 1870, J. G. M. Ramsey's net worth had dropped

to only \$5,180. He had lost nearly everything during the war. Unlike Reese, Kain, and Wallace, Ramsey and his wife would return to Knoxville for good, but not until 1871.<sup>12</sup>

Special circumstances may explain why these rebels felt unwelcome in Knoxville in the immediate postwar years. All of them had either been directly involved in the Confederate government or had fought against the Union army in Knoxville or had earned Brownlow's personal enmity, or were closely related to someone in those categories. Kain's artillery battery was involved in the defense of Knoxville during Union cavalry commander William Sanders's June 1863 raid on the town. Wallace also fought in that engagement, while Reese's son, W. B. Reese, Jr., served as a paymaster for the Confederate government. Ramsey had also worked as a Confederate official as had his son; moreover, the Ramsey family had a long-running feud with Brownlow that survived the war. According to court clerk and reluctant Confederate David Deaderick, rebels who had fought in Knoxville "were maltreated, especially those who had, while rebels had control here, made themselves busy and forward as rebels." Kain, Wallace, Ramsey, Reese, and others like them apparently passed beyond the threshold of

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<sup>12</sup> Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, p. 30; Rothrock, French Broad-Holston Country, 473-74; W. B. Reese to O. P. Temple, 12 December 1865, Temple Papers; Rothrock, French Broad-Holston Country, 110; Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, pp. 95, 91; W. W. Wallace to T. A. R. Nelson, 6 August 1865, Nelson Papers; Robert Tracy McKenzie, "Knoxville Master List" (unpublished worksheet on the loyalties of Knoxville families in possession of the author, who was given permission to use on this project by McKenzie), 17; McKenzie, Lincolmites and Rebels, 202-03; Hesseltine, Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey Autobiography and Letters, 102-03, 186, 198, 249; Ninth Census of the United States, Rowan County, North Carolina, 1870, p. 28.

community acceptance in their wartime activities, which discouraged them from returning to Knoxville.<sup>13</sup>

As noted earlier, Temple and other business leaders sought Northern investments and immigrants. For this objective to be obtained, investors had to feel safe investing their money and immigrants needed to feel secure about moving to Knoxville. While it seemed prudent to cull a few rabid rebel leaders from the ranks of Knoxville's elites, it would also become expedient to rid the town of radicalism of the Brownlow stripe. Both extremes were bad for business. While I will discuss the specific political battles below, it is important to understand here that Knoxville's prosperity was tied to politics.

Temple's plans for Knoxville were plainly laid out in his 1869 booklet, An Address Delivered Before the Knoxville Industrial Association. In it he states, "The people of East Tennessee are at peace. The outrages of which strangers may read are in Middle and West Tennessee. There are no Ku Klux outrages here. During the late civil war a very large majority . . . sympathized with the National Government. Those who took the opposite side . . . are to-day law-abiding and peaceable citizens, quietly engaged in legitimate business." He further insisted that a large majority of former Confederates "sincerely desire to see immigrants from the North settle with us and join in developing our wonderful resources," and he assured potential immigrants that they "will be as safe here as in New York or Pennsylvania. This is certainly [more] true of East Tennessee

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<sup>13</sup> McKenzie, Lincolmites and Rebels, 117, 146-47; McKenzie, "Knoxville Master List," 30, 36; Knoxville Whig, 18, 11 November 1863; Rothrock, French Broad-Holston Country, 474; David Anderson Deaderick Journal, 1825-1872, McClung Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee, 57; Hesseltine, Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey Autobiography and Letters, 107, 253.

than of any other part of this state or of the South.” Although clearly propaganda, Temple’s claims were based on fact.<sup>14</sup>

It is not hard to see why Mabry and certain other former rebels were welcome to stay in Knoxville and prospered despite their past. They renounced political extremism and embraced anyone who would do likewise and who would invest money to rebuild the town and the fortunes of its inhabitants. Ideologues like Brownlow and the Confederate-sympathizing Catholic priest Abram Ryan had no place in the town’s future; both seemed fixated on the town’s past. In September 1866 Ryan declared that “Knoxville is increasing right rapidly—foundries, machine shops, & etc. are being erected and everybody seems to be doing well. . . . But this county is plenty deluged with Yankees. . . . They are as bad as the plague of locusts in olden times. You see that my feelings towards those people have undergone no change. I can’t bear them—tis no use trying.” In the 20 June 1866 edition of the Whig, Brownlow railed against “traitors seeking the overthrow of the Government,” noting how few announcements he had found in Southern papers for July 4th celebrations. Neither Ryan nor Brownlow seems to have fully understood that Knoxville was changing rapidly, or at least they could not put aside their political extremism long enough to acknowledge the transformation. Temple and other moderate postwar leaders were in control and were whitewashing the town and its past to make it more appealing to those with money to invest. Whether those people were Yankees, rebels, radicals, or conservatives was of no concern so long as they had not

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<sup>14</sup> O. P. Temple, An Address Delivered Before the Knoxville Industrial Association (Knoxville, 1869), 12; Knoxville Whig, 29 July 1868.

crossed certain boundaries during the war and they shared the progressive vision set forth by Temple.<sup>15</sup>

Sam House offers perhaps the best example of how economic opportunities allowed former enemies to prosper together after the war. While historians often cite the rabid rebel Ellen Renshaw House in discussing postwar Knoxville, they should, in fact, look to her brother Sam as a more representative figure. In April 1861, Sam enlisted in the First Tennessee Heavy Artillery, in which he would rise to the rank of sergeant. In August 1861 he wrote his parents, “I have no mercy with the Yankee or their sympathizers. I have seen too much of their Hellish work . . . to ever give quarter.” He became a prisoner of war upon the surrender of Vicksburg in 1863 and suffered in prison camps until the end of the war. In August 1865, having returned to Knoxville, he took a job in the Union army quartermaster’s office as a clerk for future Knoxville industrialist Hiram Chamberlain. Ellen commented that “it was a bitter pill for him to swallow, and I think that he deserves so much credit for taking this place. He has to have a beginning, and this may do for one.” By Christmas Day 1865 Sam’s sworn hatred had apparently given way to friendship, for he invited several federal officers to dinner at his home, including another future Knoxville businessman, W. W. Woodruff.<sup>16</sup>

From 1867 to 1869 Sam worked as a bookkeeper for Cowan, McClung & Co. and lived downtown with his widowed mother, whom he most likely supported. In late 1867,

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<sup>15</sup> Father Abram Ryan to Mr. and Mrs. Curry, 16 September 1866, Father Abram Ryan Correspondence, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee; Knoxville Whig, 20 June 1866.

<sup>16</sup> State of Tennessee, Tennesseans in the Civil War: A Military History of Confederate and Union Units with Available Rosters of Personnel, Vol. 2 (Nashville, 1865), 212; Sutherland, Very Violent Rebel, xix, 178, 255, 197.

a correspondent of the New York Sunday Mercury wrote a light-hearted story titled “The Bachelors of Knoxville: Who They Are and What They Do.” According to the Mercury, Sam, then twenty seven, was “a medium sized fellow rather good looking bookkeeper in a wholesale house—a tip-top fellow and a good businessman; takes his bitters frequently and is very fond of his pipe. Is not much in ladies’ company. A good catch; income ample for two.” The article nowhere mentions that he was a former Confederate. By 1870 Sam was no longer a bachelor. He lived downtown with his wife Fannie, his sister Fannie, and their cook, a black girl. His wealth totaled \$1,500, which placed him in the middle class. He belonged to the Masonic Master Lodge No. 244, which he joined probably because his father had been a member and because the lodge offered networking opportunities. Apparently he made good business contacts, for by 1876 he was the cashier at the Mechanics National Bank, a fairly prestigious position. Former Confederate Sam House became successful because he adapted well to Knoxville’s postwar political and economic environment. The town’s growing industrial and wholesale business economy required the accounting skills that he provided. He established important contacts with men such as Chamberlain and Woodruff in order to build a future for himself and his family. Political ideologues who rejected the ethic of cooperation and moderation exemplified by Sam House found themselves ideologically—and in many cases physically—exiled.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Helm’s 1869 Knoxville Town Directory from microfilm Town Directories of United States Segment II, 1861-1881 (Woodbridge [CT], Research Publications, n.d.), 84; Knoxville Press and Herald, 6 December 1867; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, p. 389; John Willard Hill Diaries: 1865-1866, 24 June 1866, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville; Goodspeed’s History of Tennessee Illustrated (Nashville, 1887), 867, hereafter cited as Goodspeed.

Progressive and ambitious town leaders such as Temple sought to build an industrialized economy in postwar Knoxville based on the Northern model. The few manufacturing facilities in prewar Knoxville had been mostly damaged or destroyed during the war, but the town's postwar industrial recovery was remarkable. Capital investment in Knoxville manufacturing totaled \$348,580 in 1860 but crashed precipitously to less than \$20,000 during the war. By 1870 it had rebounded to \$343,100, nearly equaling the prewar level. In 1880, it totaled \$886,700, and by 1887 had nearly tripled to \$2,500,000. Temple and other leaders such as Tennessee State Immigration Secretary Hermann Bokum saw industrialization as Knoxville and East Tennessee's economic Holy Grail. They found allies among Northern officers and soldiers stationed in Knoxville during and after the Civil War, including Hiram Chamberlain. Even before the war was over, the Whig touted the mineral wealth available to those willing to extract it, including four hundred square miles of mineral lands on the Cumberland Plateau and marble in Knox County. However, to extract those resources East Tennesseans first had to rebuild railroads destroyed during the war. Once the railroads were repaired, Temple, Chamberlain, Bokum, and other leaders aggressively sought "educated labor" in the form of immigrants from the North and Europe "to develop the vast resources" of East Tennessee. In addition, they sought Northern capital to build the manufacturing facilities that would push East Tennessee into the Industrial Age.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> United States Census Office, Manufactures of the United States in 1860 (Washington, 1865), 567-68, hereafter cited as Manufactures of the United States in 1860; United States Census Office, The Statistics of the Wealth and Industry of the United States (New York, 1874), 733, hereafter cited as Statistics of the United States in 1870; United States Census Office, Report on the Manufactures of the United States at the Tenth

An entire volume could be written on the problems and controversies surrounding the rebuilding of East Tennessee's railroads during this period. This thesis will address the subject only as it relates to industrialization and general economic improvement. Beginning in May 1865, the Whig began a series of editorials demanding that attention be paid to the railroads. The 17 May 1865 issue declared that the East Tennessee & Georgia line would be reopened in thirty days. In September the Whig served notice to Cincinnati and Louisville that Knoxville was on the way to becoming a hub of commerce between New York and the Deep South. Little seems to have occurred that fall and early winter, however; on 3 January the Whig bemoaned the fact that "bad railroad management" had delayed repairs on damaged roads, resulting in "loss of freights which could not be shipped on the inadequate Virginia road."<sup>19</sup>

The lack of reliable transportation delayed industrialization in Knoxville as nascent manufacturing facilities in need of coal and raw materials struggled to grow. Before 1867, coal and other materials were transported to Knoxville via wagon road or water. Wagon transport was very expensive, and both it and river transport were wholly dependent on nature. A flood, drought, or snowstorm might at any time interrupt supply. In 1867, the Knoxville & Ohio railroad opened as far as Coal Creek, roughly thirty miles north of Knoxville. The town would eventually receive five hundred tons of coal daily from mines there. This development allowed Knoxville Iron Works, under the direction of Hiram Chamberlain, to open a foundry and rolling mill. It also allowed other industries, such as Clark, Quaife, & Co. and the Knoxville Foundry and Machine Shops,

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Census (June 1, 1880) (Washington, 1883), 357, hereafter cited as Manufactures of the United States in 1880; Goodspeed, 849-50; Knoxville Whig, 5 April 1865, 6 June 1866.

<sup>19</sup> Knoxville Whig, 17 May, 13 September, 1865, 3 January 1866.

to either begin or expand operations. By 1868 Knoxville's recently completed depot served four railroads: the East Tennessee & Georgia, East Tennessee & Virginia, Knoxville & Kentucky, and Knoxville & Charleston.<sup>20</sup>

Former Confederate army colonel Charles McClung McGhee played a key role in the rebuilding of the railroads. As president of the Knoxville & Ohio, he worked with Chamberlain to establish the rail link to Coal Creek. He later served as president of the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia Railroad after the consolidation of the East Tennessee & Georgia and the East Tennessee & Virginia in 1869. Joseph Mabry eventually succeeded McGhee as president of the Knoxville & Ohio, which resulted from an expansion of the Knoxville & Kentucky in the early 1870s. The viability of the expanding postwar economic middle ground is evidenced in that two prominent Confederates were able to play such pivotal roles in rebuilding postwar Knoxville's railroads.<sup>21</sup>

During a tour of the Northeast designed to attract immigrants to Tennessee in June 1868, Hermann Bokum, Tennessee's Immigration Commissioner and native East Tennessean, gave a speech in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, designed to attract capital and immigrants. A comparison of the contents of Bokum's speech with Temple's 1869 booklet suggests that he and Temple were working together to develop a comprehensive plan to change East Tennessee's economy. Bokum insisted that antebellum Tennesseans were tied to the slave economy both as producers of cotton and as suppliers of food to the

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<sup>20</sup> Goodspeed, 857-58; Knoxville Herald, 31 October, 2 November 1867; Rothrock, French Broad-Holston Country, 227-29; Knoxville Press and Messenger, 28 July 1869.

<sup>21</sup> Rothrock, French Broad-Holston Country, 447-48, 233-34; Knoxville Whig, 25 March 1868.

Deep South, which put them at the mercy of both the Southern planters and English textile manufacturers. Bokum was careful not to implicate Northern manufacturers or financiers in the prewar exploitation of the South, for he now sought their help in rebuilding and redirecting Tennessee's economy. He stated: "The rebellion and its suppression have brought about a revolution in the industry of America, and Tennessee largely feels the powerful influence of this revolution." He cited the need for diverse employment and, to accomplish this goal, he sought Northerners who would exploit the state's mineral wealth and waterpower to establish manufacturing facilities to develop the home market for both farmers, who would feed the growing population of industrial workers, and manufacturers, who would produce items for local consumption. Tennessee needed capital and intelligent labor, said Bokum, and he and Temple invited Northerners and Europeans to invest and settle there.<sup>22</sup>

In March 1868, Temple addressed the Tennessee legislature on the state's economic condition and future. "In Tennessee we have entered upon a new era," he proclaimed. "When the war ended all was still or gone, equipment, fences, all." He then outlined a plan for recovery. Education for the masses was critically important, he said. He also insisted that Tennessee needed "men, labor, and muscle" from outside. These immigrants would create larger cities and towns, which would serve as a market for the products manufactured in the state. He declared that Knoxville could and should become a market on par with Nashville, Memphis, and Saint Louis. Like Bokum, he based his plan on three key points: encouraging the immigration of labor, fostering enterprise, and

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<sup>22</sup> Knoxville Whig, 22 April, 10 June 1868; Robert E. Corlew, Tennessee: A Short History (Knoxville, 1981), 370-71; Temple, Address to the Knoxville Industrial Association, 13-20.

inviting capital investment. To attract investment, Temple believed, usury laws should be abolished: “In new countries the field of enterprise is open, everything is to be built up and money is in demand.” It is important to note that Temple expressed no concerns about establishing peace between former sectional enemies. No doubt his personal experiences in Knoxville since 1865 had taught him that the common pursuit of prosperity would encourage Northerners and Southerners to work peacefully side by side.<sup>23</sup>

About the time Temple delivered his speech the Whig published an article titled “Knoxville Iron Company.” It announced that the company had formally organized on February 28 with Hiram S. Chamberlain as president. A native Ohioan and veteran of the Union army, Chamberlain exemplified the type of immigrant that Temple desired, one who not only brought industrial expertise but also knew how to attract capital investment. In the immediate postwar years, Chamberlain quickly emerged as a business and community leader in Knoxville. In 1866 he partnered with W. J. Richards and T. D. Lewis, natives of Wales, to form Chamberlain, Richards & Co., a predecessor of the Knoxville Iron Works. When the railroads finally provided a steady supply of coal in 1868, the iron works flourished. The plant would eventually cover more than three acres and include mills that manufactured nails, bars, and components for railroads cars. In July of that year the newly constructed nail mill turned out its first nail. Chamberlain estimated the cost for this mill alone at nearly \$1,000,000. Chamberlain’s net worth in 1870 was \$60,000, making him Knoxville’s tenth wealthiest person. It is thus evident that Temple’s plan for attracting Northern capital and immigrants was successful, at least

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<sup>23</sup> Knoxville Whig, 4 March 1868.

to some extent. Knoxville Iron Works would eventually become the town's largest employer.<sup>24</sup>

Chamberlain became not only a rich man but also a prominent community leader. He headed the delegation that represented Knoxville at the 1868 Tennessee River Improvement Convention, and later that year he rode at the head of the town's first Decoration Day procession. For reasons that will be addressed below, a manufacturing facility on a par with the giants of the North never materialized in Knoxville. However, Chamberlain's leadership and financial success helped expand manufacturing in Knoxville and gave hope to Temple and other progressives seeking increased investment and immigration from the North. The Knoxville Foundry and Machine Shops, the Southern Car Company, Clark, Quaife & Co., the Knoxville Brass and Iron Foundry, and Dempster & Co. all benefited from Chamberlain's success.<sup>25</sup>

Between 1860 and 1870 industry in Knox County underwent dramatic changes. (I examine Knox County as a whole here because industrial data for the town cannot be easily separated out, but most of the county's industry was centered near the railroad depot in town.) As noted earlier, the war devastated Knoxville industry, but by 1870 it had almost completely recovered. In 1860, 92 manufacturing establishments with a total of \$348,580 in capital investment employed 139 men who earned \$87,435 in wages and made products that totaled \$586,537 in annual sales. Most of these establishments were very small outfits producing items such as flour, footwear, carriages, and furniture. The

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.; Goodspeed, 857; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, pp. 17, 25, 15; Martha Hall to Brother, 21 July 1868, Hall-Stakely Papers, McClung Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee.

<sup>25</sup> Knoxville Whig, 25 March, 3 June 1868; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, p. 15; Goodspeed, 857-59.

largest in terms of employment and sales were flourmills, which employed a total of 24 hands and generated \$263,500. These numbers represented 17 percent and 45 percent of the respective totals. In 1870, 24 manufacturers with a total of \$343,100 of capital investment employed 319 hands whose annual wages totaled \$138,820 and who produced items worth a total of \$587,248 annually. Iron manufacturing plants, which accounted for 47 percent of the total annual sales and 52 percent of industrial employees, now replaced flourmills as the leading industry. By 1880, the numbers were even more striking. That year, 82 manufacturers with \$886,700 of capital investment employed 654 men, 4 females over the age of fifteen, and 162 children. Those workers earned \$285,413 in wages and produced items worth \$1,488,351. Flourmills, although employing relatively few workers, accounted for 30 percent of the value of products. Three foundries and machine shops and one iron and steel establishment accounted for 38 percent of the total employees, including 110 of the 162 children. Those factories also accounted for 30 percent of the total annual sales and 38 percent of wages. Three sash, door, and blind factories and three brick and tile manufacturers that employed 92 people earning 23.2 percent of the wages produced 15 percent of annual sales.<sup>26</sup>

These statistics reveal some important facts. They indicate, first of all, that the movement towards modern industrialization had early success but leveled off as Knoxville's economy diversified. Annual sales for industries involved in the manufacture of iron increased by only \$108,464 between 1870 and 1880. In addition, the numbers show that Knoxville's industry centered on three main areas: food production,

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<sup>26</sup> Manufactures of the United States in 1860, 567-68; Statistics of the United States in 1870, 733; Manufactures of the United States in 1880, 357.

metal manufacturing for the railroads, and the manufacture of building materials.

Consumer items other than flour and a few housing supplies were conspicuously absent.

In his 1869 address to the Knoxville Industrial Association, Temple bemoaned the fact that antebellum East Tennessee had been dependent on the North for manufactured consumer items. He now sought local manufacturers to produce for the home market. Temple's plan failed in this aspect. The retail businesses on Gay Street continued to stock their shelves with goods produced primarily by outsiders.<sup>27</sup>

Despite this failure, Temple's overall goal of a diversified economy did succeed. As large numbers of people moved to Knoxville to work in the town's factories, a housing shortage resulted, leading to a boom in the manufacture of lumber, doors, sashes, blinds, brick, and other building materials. The number of construction contractors and their employees also increased rapidly. Well over two hundred contractors were plying their trade by 1869, and an even larger number of men declared themselves laborers. Included among these were carpenters, brick masons and layers, and plasterers. As a result of this demand, contractor A. C. Bruce, brick mason L. M. Holder, and lumber dealer John Coker earned enough to be ranked among Knoxville's wealthiest citizens in 1870. Population growth also raised the value of real estate and brought in more people to shop in the town's retail establishments.<sup>28</sup>

In January 1869, apparently at the urging of John Fleming, the conservative editor of the Press and Herald, Chamberlain, Temple, and other leading Knoxville businessmen

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<sup>27</sup> Temple, Address to the Knoxville Industrial Association, 17-19; Knoxville Herald, 31 October 1867; Goodspeed, 857; Knoxville Press and Messenger, 4 August, 29 December 1869.

<sup>28</sup> Knoxville Herald, 10 November 1867; Helm's 1869 Knoxville Town Directory; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, pp. 4-5.

met to form the East Tennessee Industrial Association (ETIA). This organization included one member from each county in East Tennessee. Its purpose was “First, to obtain and disseminate information upon all industrial pursuits. Second, to increase the number and variety of our manufacture[s], third, to promote development of our mines and quarries, and fourth, to improve agriculture.” At the first official meeting on February 3, merchant John Caldwell called for “unity and concord in the enterprise and that selfishness should be forgotten in the desire to build up the country.” In addition, he called on former enemies to “forget the past and look only to the future.” The group had already established ties with a similar group in Pennsylvania, and A. J. Ricks, an attorney from Ohio, offered his ideas for the manufacture of agricultural implements based on his knowledge of a similar facility in Massillon, Ohio. Temple laid out a list of manufactured goods best suited to East Tennessee, including agricultural implements, stoves and hollow wares, shoes and boots, cheap clothing, woolen manufactures, cotton cloth, rails and sheet iron, glass, fireproof brick, horseshoes, nails, horse collars, brooms, lime, fruit, and nursery-grown shade trees. The 3 March 1869 edition of the Press and Messenger insisted that if East Tennesseans would “combine together locally, pull together locally, plan together locally . . . we can surely grow rich together and rapidly.” The statistics indicate that such optimism concerning the overall economy was warranted. Unfortunately, Temple’s plan was flawed with respect to heavy industry and consumer products, resulting in the economic leveling off evident by 1880.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Knoxville Press and Messenger, 20 January, 3 February, 3 March 1869; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, 9, 21.

When the ETIA met in September 1869, frustration from the lack of progress began to show. Attorney John Baxter called for a half million dollars to be invested in a manufacturing facility to make items for sale on Gay Street. He believed that if one person built such a facility others would soon follow. Attorney and former Confederate colonel John H. Crozier called for the construction of a large flouring mill. Temple and Baxter both commented that many of Knoxville's citizens were apathetic about industrialization. Hiram Chamberlain put it more succinctly: "Talk never made any project succeed. Capital is a good thing to have, but capital is notoriously timid. It always follows success, but never initiated any enterprise." He asked why Temple and others invested their money in real estate while begging for Northern capital for industry. Chamberlain then answered his own question by stating that Temple got rich by doing it. He called for "cheap money," loans whose interest would be capped at 2 percent: "Make money cheap and manufacturing will come." Chamberlain laid bare a foundational flaw in Temple's plan. Temple's insistence that usury laws be eliminated so that moneylenders would be attracted would primarily benefit bankers involved in real estate. Property value in Knox County at the time averaged \$11.91 an acre, by far the highest value in East Tennessee. Knox was one of only five counties in the region to show an increase in property values between 1861 and 1869. Despite their disagreements and economic failures, however, the interaction of Chamberlain, Baxter, Temple, Mabry, and Crozier was important to the peace and prosperity evident in postwar Knoxville. That men of such varied political backgrounds came together for a common purpose offers

further evidence of the flourishing economic middle ground present in Knoxville by 1869.<sup>30</sup>

Temple and Bokum's plan for attracting immigrants to Knoxville seems to have been only moderately successful. In 1867 the Knoxville Herald claimed that few immigrants were coming to Tennessee; most, the newspaper said, headed for the Midwest where market conditions favored the buyer. At the same time, the housing shortage in Knoxville indicates that many people were coming to work in the factories. In November 1867, the Knoxville Herald pointed out the need for houses for the "surging population moving to Knoxville to work in manufactories." Editor John Fleming called for Knoxville businesses to build co-op houses to accommodate the incoming laborers. Many of these newcomers were undoubtedly from Knoxville's hinterland.<sup>31</sup>

An influx of Northerners was also evident to those living in Knoxville at that time and to those familiar with the town's past, although in what precise numbers it is hard to say. Father Ryan was not the only former Confederate upset with the in-migration of Yankees in postwar Knoxville. Whatever their origin, newly arrived people were much in evidence by the late 1860s. In 1869, J. G. M. Ramsey returned to Knoxville for the first time since the war's end to attend to his recently deceased son's business. While attending services just outside of town at Lebanon in the Fork Presbyterian Church, which his father had founded in 1793, Ramsey noticed "a new set of elders and deacons had been formed in my absence—not to the manor born. . . . The congregation exceedingly small, irreverent, vulgar looking—anything but Presbyterian people as of

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<sup>30</sup> Knoxville Press and Messenger, 29 September, 1 December 1869.

<sup>31</sup> Knoxville Herald, 10, 23 November 1867.

old.” During his visit, Ramsey also took a walk along Gay Street and noticed “a great change at Knoxville. Its commerce, its manufactures, its business had increased with its increasing population. Also a great change in its society which I had known intimately. . . Its unity was gone. Its people were less homogenous . . . more heterogeneous . . . more of the sordid love of money.” Martha Hall, wife of Unionist Judge E. T. Hall and daughter of prominent Monroe County Confederates, likewise noted the influx of newcomers, but unlike Ramsey she applauded it: the “population which these foundries, rolling mills, [and] machine shops [attract] is quite an addition to our town. They are industrious, hardworking, and seem to possess intelligence and refinement. They attend church regularly . . . go to Sunday school, [and are] always well dressed. . . . I think the tone of society here has very much improved in the last year or two.” She further commented: “There is much more a disposition among the people to work, instead of to ape the aristocracy, as it was a few years ago.” The influx of outsiders was insufficient, however, to meet the demands of the town’s factories. As a result, Chamberlain and other manufacturers employed many local white women and children and blacks. According to historian Mary Rothrock, the Knoxville Iron Works employed mostly African American men. Even so, labor shortages continued to plague Knoxville’s manufacturers and no doubt played an important role in restricting industrial development.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Hesseltine, Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey Autobiography and Letters, 252-53; E. T. Hall to Martha Hall, 22 September 1865, Martha Hall to Brother, 21 July 1868, Martha Hall to Sister, 30 March 1870, Hall-Stakely Papers; Rothrock, French-Broad Holston Country, 313; Knoxville Herald, 12, 13 November 1867; Knoxville Whig, 23 September 1868; Hill Diaries, 6 March 1866.

While large-scale industrialization faltered in postwar Knoxville, the town's wholesale and retail businesses thrived. In 1867, the Whig declared that Cowan, McClung & Company were doing "the largest mercantile business ever done in East Tennessee." An 1869 advertisement for W. W. Woodruff's hardware store reveals what many Knoxvilleans and others in East Tennessee came to Gay Street to buy. Housebuilder's hardware, including locks, hinges and nails, carpenter and blacksmith's tools, Buckeye mowers and reapers from Ohio, a variety of plows, and railroad supplies were among the myriad items Woodruff offered to consumers. Comparing postwar holiday articles in Knoxville's newspapers from 1865 and 1869 illustrates how far Knoxvilleans had come economically and socially since the end of the war. In 1865 the Whig noted how "A Quiet Christmas" was something to be thankful for. However, by 1869 the Press and Messenger told Knoxvilleans "Where to Go and What to Buy" for a festive holiday season. George H. Smith and Hope & Miller were the places to buy gold and silver watches, diamonds, and pearls. W. W. Woodruff's was where one could purchase hardware and cutlery. Rayl & Boyd offered fancy goods for ladies including handkerchiefs, scarves, and bows. Santa Claus had "one of his sub-depositories" at E. E. McCroskey & Co. Peter Kern offered a "candy fairyland" where "Kris Kringle left a very large supply of candies, nuts, and fruits" in the shape of birds and other wildlife. Mrs. McConnell & Daughter offered Grover & Baker sewing machines, while S. T. Atkin sold building supplies and operated a new hotel and restaurant. R. H. Richardson bookstore, Cowan, McClung & Company, and other businesses on Gay Street offered such items as woodstoves, drugs, furniture, china, knitting machines, wines and liquors,

boots and shoes, and photographs. Knoxville's postwar prosperity was on display in the shops frequented by the town's growing population.<sup>33</sup>

The variety of businesses and business owners on Gay Street in 1869 is further evidence of how the economy helped foster peace in postwar Knoxville. W. W. Woodruff was a former Union army officer from Kentucky. James H. Cowan was a moderate Unionist who partnered with former Confederates Charles and Frank McClung to form one of the most lucrative wholesale houses in the South. Peter Kern, the founder of Kern's Bakery, was a Confederate supporter as was S. T. Atkin. In 1871, former Confederate Peter Staub, a Swiss immigrant who had been violently attacked by Unionists in 1864, opened an opera house on Gay Street across Cumberland Avenue from the Bijou Theater. The first performance at Staub's was William Tell, and the star was Cora Rule, the daughter of radical Republican and Whig editor William Rule. Staub would succeed Rule as mayor of Knoxville in 1874, becoming the first Democrat and former Confederate supporter to hold that office since the war.<sup>34</sup>

Peace in postwar Knoxville largely resulted from economic prosperity as neighbors pursued wealth but also rebuilt relationships between old friends and family members and established strong relationships with newcomers such as the one between Sam House, Hiram Chamberlain, and W. W. Woodruff. By 1867, while many in East Tennessee remained hungry and still suffered from the ravages of war, Knoxville's town

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<sup>33</sup> Knoxville Whig, 6 March 1867, 3 January 1866; Knoxville Press and Messenger, 4 August, 29 December 1869.

<sup>34</sup> Rothrock, French-Broad Holston Country, 507, 489, 478-79, 537; McKenzie, "Knoxville Master List," 13, 1, 31; Sutherland, A Very Violent Rebel, 94; "Memoirs of Margaret Oswald Klein," McClung Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee (unpaginated transcript).

government recorded a \$4,300 budget surplus, which exceeded any such prewar amount. In 1868, while bushwackers continued their vengeful outrages in many parts of East Tennessee, former enemies went to work in Knoxville in factories, wholesale houses, and banks. Perhaps they discussed their prior differences at Kern's ice cream saloon on Market Square before attending a concert given by the newly formed Philharmonic Society at the recently rebuilt Methodist Church. Meanwhile, probably using bricks manufactured by the new steam-powered brick factory operated by former rebel Joseph Mabry, contractors and laborers completed Sam Atkin's new hotel, which was located close to the recently completed railroad depot on the north side of town.<sup>35</sup>

In many ways, Tracy McKenzie's assessment of 1850s Knoxville as an unstable community could also apply to the town in the immediate postwar period. With political violence, a precipitous decline in citizens' personal wealth, and the exodus of many traditional leaders, Knoxville seemed to be heading toward an even more unstable future. However, by 1867, the town was peaceful and prosperous, and there can be little doubt that the economy was the key. Churches were still being rebuilt in 1867, public schools remained in the planning stages, and the town's political situation was still somewhat unsettled. But the economy was strong, and thus peace reigned.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Bryan, "Civil War in East Tennessee," 163; Knoxville Whig, 13, 27 May, 22, 1 April, 6 May 1868, 26 May 1869; McKenzie, Lincolmites and Rebels, 23.

<sup>36</sup> Using the 1860 and 1870 Knoxville and Knox County census records, I judged Knoxville and Knox County's wealthiest citizens by narrowing their qualifications to a minimum of \$10,000 in real estate and \$1,000 in personal wealth. In 1860 I found that 258 men and women out of 22,813 met this requirement. In 1870, however, only 182 of 28,990 qualified. This represents a 56 percent decline, most of which was in personal wealth.

## Part II: Postbellum Knoxville Politics, “Conservatives Rising”

“The retirement of Gov. Brownlow from all pretensions to the gubernatorial chair will mark a postbellum epoch in the history of Tennessee,” declared the conservative Knoxville Press and Messenger in February 1869. “The abdication of no hated monarch ever called forth a more heartfelt thanksgiving from the hearts of a long-suffering people, than will swell from the soul of Tennessee.” By 1869, Brownlow had had enough of the governorship, and he left Tennessee for a seat in the United States Senate. He had by then worn out his welcome in Knoxville especially, and when he exited the state he sold the Whig. Brownlow apparently overestimated his influence and standing among Knoxvilleians after the war, especially among the town’s elite class.<sup>37</sup>

According to Tracy McKenzie, Knoxville’s antebellum politics were largely conservative. By 1860, the Whig party had given way to the Constitutional Union party, which supported John Bell for president. Abraham Lincoln was not held in the highest regard among former Whigs in East Tennessee, including Brownlow. In fact, Lincoln never received a vote in a Tennessee election. He was not on the ballot in 1860, and in 1864 Tennessee was still out of the Union and not allowed to participate in the election. Before the war, slaveholding Knoxville Unionists like Brownlow, Nelson, Temple, and Horace Maynard supported slavery while opposing secession. Brownlow famously defended slavery against abolitionist minister Abraham Pryne in public debate in Pennsylvania in 1858. Yet by 1865 Brownlow called himself a radical. He had suffered during the war because he held firm to his anti-secession beliefs. He was jailed in Knoxville and then exiled to the North while the town was under Confederate occupation.

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<sup>37</sup> Knoxville Press and Messenger, 24 February 1869.

After the war, he urged Unionists to seek revenge against former Confederates.

Embittered and resentful, he failed to accept that most Knoxvilleians were willing to forgive and forget or at least set grievances aside. This resistance to peace would prove fatal to his political career in Knoxville even as he built it up throughout the state as a whole. Historian E. Merton Coulter argues that Brownlow “built his [political] structure on [the] sand” of vengeance and radicalism “instead of on the proverbial rock” of conciliation and traditional conservatism. Brownlow’s attacks on conservatives in postwar Knoxville reflected not political strength but weakness. In that town, at least, he was fighting for his political life.<sup>38</sup>

As early as May 1865, John B. Brownlow, the Parson’s son and an editor of the Whig, cautioned those “claiming to be Union men” not to aid former Confederates who were returning to Knoxville. The newly elected governor and his supporters encouraged the violence that marked Knoxville throughout that summer. John Brownlow gleefully commented that former Confederate Robert C. West, a moderately successful merchant in prewar Knoxville, died after receiving “several blows to the head . . . and a cracked skull” on his return to the town. The amnesty offered by President Johnson to former Confederates was particularly repugnant to the Brownlows. They believed that it had been offered too freely to their enemies. In addition, John Brownlow warned former

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<sup>38</sup> McKenzie, Lincolmites and Rebels, 27, 205-14; Steve Humphrey, That D----d Brownlow: Being a Saucy and Malicious Description of Fighting Parson William Gannaway Brownlow (Boone, 1978), 264, 276; E. Merton Coulter, William G. Brownlow: Fighting Parson of the Southern Highlands (Knoxville, 1937), 97, 399; Groce, Mountain Rebels, 147-51.

rebels who chose to go armed that they would “be treated as a public enemy . . . and killed like a mad dog.”<sup>39</sup>

Such rhetoric provoked Frederick Heiskell, T. A. R. Nelson, John Fleming and other prominent Democrats throughout Knoxville and East Tennessee to urge conservatives, including Unionists and former Confederates, to unify against Brownlowism. In a letter to the editor of the Knoxville Commercial, Heiskell, a wealthy farmer and founder of the Knoxville Register, denounced Brownlow as a greedy imposter whose professed high-minded Unionist principles were a pretense; what Brownlow really wanted, said Heiskell, was to enrich himself, especially by seizing the properties of former Confederates like the Ramseys. Heiskell called on conservatives to “fight the devil with fire.” Brownlow was a provocateur, he furthermore claimed: “But for him East Tennessee would this day be freed from all disturbances.” In June 1865 Bird Manard, a former Confederate cavalryman and schoolteacher from Morristown, praised Nelson and blamed Brownlow for using the Whig to “stir up the rabble” who were responsible for the violence ravaging East Tennessee. Nelson, whose son had fought for the Confederacy, also received offers to give speeches and guidance to anti-radical groups across the region and state.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Knoxville Whig, 17, 10, 3 May, 5 July, 25 January 1865. West was worth \$10,000 in 1860; Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, p. 42.

<sup>40</sup> Rothrock, French Broad-Holston Country, 423-24; undated memorandum and undated draft of a letter to the editor of the Knoxville Commercial, Frederick S. Heiskell Papers, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville; Tenth Census of the United States, Manuscript Population Schedules 1880, Claiborne County, Tennessee, p. 46; Bird Manard to T. A. R. Nelson, 28 June 1865, M. W. Legg et. al. to T. A. R. Nelson, 12 July 1867, Edmund Cope to T. A. R. Nelson, 27 August 1866, Nelson Papers; Groce, Mountain Rebels, 98; State of Tennessee, Tennesseans in the Civil War, 258, 302.

In a January 1866 response to the rising conservative movement in Knoxville titled “All Union or All Rebel,” Brownlow claimed that some of the political interest groups forming in the town were merely covers for unreconstructed rebels, allowing “men to escape just censure by assuming false names.” Either Brownlow did not completely understand what was happening in Knoxville, or he was deluding himself into believing that he had the power to stop it; or, perhaps, a little of both. The reality that power was escaping his grasp spawned a desperation that pervaded his editorials from 1866 onward. Despite the disastrous effects on his career, Brownlow would not let go of the past. He declared: “There can be but two parties—a Union party and a Disunion party—we are all either Union men . . . or we are Rebels.” In an editorial John Brownlow stated, “Some of our Knoxville neighbors seem to believe that the course Gov. Brownlow is pursuing will doom him to political death and consign him to a minority party.” To this he offered his father’s response: “If the Union party triumphs he will be on the winning side. If it does not he don’t desire to be with the majority party.”<sup>41</sup>

Brownlow could probably have maintained his leadership role as well as strong public support in Knoxville and East Tennessee if he had been more open to compromise. In May 1865, a group of mostly conservative East Tennesseans, including Nelson, Heiskell, wealthy merchant John Williams, and Thomas Humes, a staunch Brownlow ally, signed a petition asking Governor Brownlow to stop promoting the brutality experienced by returning Confederates. Instead of leading Knoxvilleans towards reconciliation, however, Brownlow called for enemies to resolve their disagreements in civil court, but then he sarcastically pointed out that Judge Trigg had dismissed a

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<sup>41</sup> Knoxville Whig, 10 January, 14, 21 March, 4 July 1866.

majority of the lawsuits filed against former rebels by Unionists. As a result, he insisted, Unionists were justified in their violent retribution, and he advised former Confederates to leave the state. Brownlow numbered his days in Knoxville when he took this divisive approach. That same month, while making real estate deals with potential immigrants from the North and suing Southern debtors on behalf of Northern business interests, O. P. Temple began taking as clients former rebels who asked him to represent them in their civil court cases. Instead of refusing his former adversaries, Temple chose to preserve his political and social standing in Knoxville by helping these men regain their properties. He probably foresaw that Knoxville would never be a radical stronghold. It is not clear if Temple actually sought to undermine Brownlow, but at the very least he rejected the governor's policy of vengeance and took a stand beside the governor's enemies.<sup>42</sup>

In June 1867, John Fleming, a Democrat, former law student of conservative John Baxter, and Lincoln appointee as federal district attorney for East Tennessee during the war, began publishing The Press, a conservative newspaper. In October, William J. Ramage began printing the Knoxville Herald. In early 1868 the two papers merged to become the Knoxville Daily Press and Herald, edited by Fleming. In its prospectus, the Herald declared that it was not tied to any political group and that its platform was simply the United States Constitution. In truth, the paper's purpose was to bring down Brownlow. Fleming made clear in particular his disgust with black enfranchisement, one

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<sup>42</sup> McKenzie, Lincolmites and Rebels, 217; George Wadsworth to O. P. Temple, 29 June 1865, James H. Broyles to O. P. Temple, 19 April 1865, John Keeble to O. P. Temple, 15 August 1865, Felix A. Reeve to O. P. Temple, 28 August 1865, Temple Papers.

of Brownlow's primary achievements as governor: "The Herald [believes] that the country [would] be better governed by white men than Negroes."<sup>43</sup>

While Nelson may not have been involved with the Press or Herald, he was at least somewhat active with one of their predecessors, the Commercial, about which there is little available information. In a poem dated 1 January 1867 and titled "Carrier's Address to the Patrons of the Knoxville Commercial," Nelson offered a clear picture of how conservatives viewed race in political terms. One stanza declares:

And, as the mighty strife grew bigger,  
The Radicals whitewashed the nigger;  
Denied their suffrages to whites,  
Clothed Freedmen warm with Civil Rights;  
Fantastic Bureaus swiftly made,  
The nation's sable wards to aid;  
Taught Cuff and Sambo to despise,  
Industrious habits as unwise;  
To throw away their hoes and axes,  
And live upon the white man's taxes.

Race would play a key role in dethroning Brownlow. In December 1867, the Herald sarcastically reported that a Negro brass band and two hundred Brownlow supporters

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<sup>43</sup> Rothrock, French Broad-Holston Country, 417-18; Knoxville Herald, 31 October 1867.

marched through Knoxville to the “sweet and appropriate music of ‘Listen to the Mockingbird.’”<sup>44</sup>

Governor Brownlow attempted to use his political power to battle conservative opposition in Knoxville. Writing anonymously in the Nashville Press and Times, he accusingly stated that rebels and other conservatives comprised a majority of the newly reappointed East Tennessee University Board of Trustees. To this the Herald responded that thirteen of nineteen trustees were staunch Unionists during the war. Perhaps Brownlow’s definition of a Unionist was so narrow that he saw men like Nelson and Fleming, who supported the Union during the war, as postwar traitors. Regardless, conservatives answered Brownlow’s polemical attacks. The public battle began in earnest in November 1867, when conservatives, through the Herald, finally countered the Whig’s attacks on them. By early 1868, both sides were fully engaged in a political war of words. In an editorial titled “Education for the People,” Fleming railed against the “assertion made by every demagogue who rises to address a crowd of Negroes, that the Rebel-Democratic-Conservative party (by which enduring terms they characterize all who do not believe it thunders when Thaddeus Stevens blows his nose) is opposed to popular education and progress in any direction.”<sup>45</sup>

Despite the growing strength of conservatism among Knoxville’s elite, radicals won the January 1868 town elections. Conservatives credited the landslide victory to fraudulent electioneering by radicals who, they claimed, brought in hundreds of black voters from Knox and surrounding counties to vote illegally. Fleming declared the day

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<sup>44</sup> “Carrier’s Address to the Patrons of the Knoxville Commercial,” 1 January 1867, Nelson Papers (see appendix A for entire poem); Knoxville Herald, 11 December 1867.

<sup>45</sup> Knoxville Herald, 8 December, 20 November 1867, 4 January 1868.

after the election that “The effects of the NEW ORDER of things were plainly visible yesterday.” The following day John Baxter filed a federal lawsuit over the election in Judge Trigg’s court, naming Brownlow as a conspirator. A little over a week later, in an article titled “The Rebellion,” Fleming argued that radicals were fomenting an uprising which would use blacks to overthrow the Constitution and seize absolute power. In the same edition Fleming mocked the meeting of “white and black Negro” members of the Loyal League. In this article a fictitious “embedded reporter” writes of a pledge to Brownlow and Company that ended in song: “Billy forever, draw sword and cock trigger, Down with a white man and up with a nigger.” It is important to note, however, that despite bitter political strife, Knoxvilleians did not resort to political violence, which would have undermined the ongoing rebuilding process.<sup>46</sup>

Throughout 1868, the attacks and counterattacks intensified. Brownlow rammed through a bill in the General Assembly declaring null and void all legal notices in the Press and Herald. During the summer, he tried to recruit Joseph Mabry to his cause, urging him to run for congress as a radical; Mabry wisely declined the offer. The rhetorical assaults on Brownlow ranged from comical to brutal. In a June issue of his newspaper, Fleming claimed to have heard of a pest called the “Brownlow Bug” that devoured “everything sweet and beautiful.” In July he declared with some degree of truth that Brownlow and Brownlowism were played out in Tennessee. By September the Parson was finished politically in Knoxville. The 6 January 1869 issue of the Whig announced the sale of the paper to Mabry and Charlton and Brownlow’s imminent

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 5, 7 January 1868; Knoxville Press and Herald, 8, 16 January 1868; Coulter, William G. Brownlow, 338-48; Knoxville Whig, 30 June 1867, 6 January 1869.

departure from Tennessee. In his farewell address, Brownlow declared that he had no regrets; if he had it to do all over again he would follow the same path, “only more so.” Knoxville conservatives were exultant. Throughout the latter years of Brownlow’s gubernatorial reign, the Press and Messenger ran a series titled “Ally Gator.” This fictitious character was a thinly veiled caricature of Brownlow. January 13, 1869, found Ally Gator “despondent” and in the process of exiling himself to Washington, bemoaning the fact that “Tennessee is not as it used to was.”<sup>47</sup>

In contrast to Brownlow’s little-regretted exit, J. G. M. Ramsey received a warm reception on the streets of Knoxville during an 1869 visit. He noted that everyone he met, regardless of political affiliation, religious belief, or social status, welcomed him back home. From his “exiles retreat” in North Carolina, Ramsey had written several articles for the Press and Herald on aspects of Tennessee history, titled “Recollections of a Septuagenarian.” Following Crozier’s death in 1868, C. W. Charlton, the new part owner of the Whig, wrote J. G. M. expressing his deepest sorrow. In the letter Charlton states: “I am in charge of a paper which has done the Rebels more injustice than any paper on this continent. Hereafter it will defend them.” In July 1869, Fleming declared that the “Dutch have taken Holland,” meaning that conservatives were back in their rightful positions of power in Knoxville. He argued that they should vote for gubernatorial candidate Dewitt Senter in the upcoming 1869 election because he supported immediate re-enfranchisement of former Confederates, whereas his opponent, William B. Stokes, wanted a gradual process. Senter outpolled Stokes in Knoxville 2,197

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<sup>47</sup> Knoxville Whig, 6 May, 29 July 1868, 6 January, 30 June 1869; Knoxville Press and Herald, 25 June, 9 July 1868; Knoxville Press and Messenger, 13 January 1869.

to 2,143, which indicates how closely divided the town remained. However, it should be noted that 700 black men were eligible to vote in that election, and it is likely that most of them opposed the Senter ticket, which included conservatives like John Fleming. Fleming ran for and won a seat in the Tennessee House of Representatives and took his seat alongside other conservatives, who now dominated both houses.<sup>48</sup>

If, as Tracy McKenzie posits, Knoxville was a town of insiders and outsiders connected by intimate family and business ties, Brownlow came to the town as an outsider in the late 1840s and left as an outsider in 1869. In between he worked his way into the town's elite circles. During the war, he represented resistance to politically zealous Confederates. After the war, however, he offered extreme partisanship and strife to the citizenry, most of whom wanted peace. The McClungs, Whites, Ramseys, Humeses, Deadericks, Mabrys, and many of the town's other prominent families were bound by blood ties or business ties or both. This thesis will not offer a full genealogy of the town's leading families. However, it is important to understand this concept of insiders and outsiders because it was crucial to the peace process and to Brownlow's political demise. When he attacked the Ramseys, Brownlow was also attacking the McClung and Mabry families, for the three were related. Thomas Humes, J. G. M. Ramsey, and James H. Cowan were actually stepbrothers. Humes's mother, Margaret

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<sup>48</sup> Hesseltine, Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey Autobiography and Letters, 252-53; J. G. M. Ramsey to Crozier Ramsey, 3 April 1868, C. W. Charlton to J. G. M. Ramsey, 2 November 1869, Ramsey Family Papers, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville; Knoxville Press and Messenger, 28 July, 8 August 1869; Hope and Hudiburg Population Survey, Knoxville Whig, 6 May 1868; Corlew, Tennessee: A Short History, 343-44.

Russell Cowan Humes Ramsey, was at one time or another married to each of their fathers.<sup>49</sup>

This interconnectedness meant that if J. G. M. blamed Brownlow for Crozier Ramsey's death, the Parson would undoubtedly have drawn the ire of more than just the Ramsey family. Humes's signing of the 1865 petition to Brownlow calling for his help to quell violence in East Tennessee was likely prompted in part by his blood ties to more than one Confederate family. Humes's sister Elizabeth married into Knoxville's founding family, the Whites, who supported the Confederacy. Her daughter and Humes's niece Ellen was also Frank McClung's cousin as the Whites and McClungs were closely related. Radical judge E. T. Hall's wife, Margaret Stakely-Hall, came from a Confederate family that went into exile in Alabama after the war. Will Hall, who was killed by Abner Baker, was E. T. Hall's nephew. Economic and family ties overrode Brownlow's political influence in postwar Knoxville as he went from insider to outsider among the town's leading families, who had seen enough violence and simply wanted to recover their lost fortunes in peace after the war.<sup>50</sup>

Whatever their political differences, Brownlow and Fleming both promoted Knoxville's postwar economic growth in their newspapers. While self-interest surely played a role, they seem to have fully embraced the economic renaissance taking place in the town. Their promotion of new industries and businesses and those responsible for

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<sup>49</sup> McKenzie, Lincolmites and Rebels, 220-21; Rothrock, French Broad-Holston Country, 401-02, 470-71,

<sup>50</sup> Ellen White Diary: 1842-1889, 17, 25 March 1861, McClung Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee; Rothrock, French Broad-Holston Country, 402; Margaret Hall to Carrie Stakely, 8 August 1865, Mattie Hall to Aunt Martha (Margaret) Hall, 20 September 1865, Hall-Stakely Papers.

bringing them to Knoxville, whether Northern or Confederate, exemplified how, in many ways, business trumped politics in postwar Knoxville as former adversaries built on common economic ground.

### Part III: Postbellum Knoxville Society, “Churches, Women, and Education: Social Cohesion Returns”

As the economy boomed and the political climate calmed, Knoxvilleians sought to rebuild their society. In the late 1860s, the social cohesion among whites necessary to complete the rebuilding of the community returned. Churches, women, and the growing consensus among the town’s leaders necessary to build schools helped form the bedrock of the rebuilding movement, which welcomed contributions from radicals and conservatives as well as Northerners and other newcomers.

Churches, women, and recent immigrants contributed to the expanding postwar peace in many ways. Before the war Knoxville had a number of churches of varying denominations. The most prominent were St. John’s Protestant Episcopal, First Baptist, First Presbyterian, Second Presbyterian, and the Methodist Episcopal Church on Church Street, which would split into two after the war when Northern Methodists moved to a new church building on Clinch Avenue. When General Ambrose Burnside occupied Knoxville in 1863, however, the only church that he authorized to hold services was St. John’s Episcopal. Burnside decided on St. John’s because Thomas Humes, who was its pastor until forced to resign in 1861, was the only remaining Knoxville pastor who was loyal to the Union during the war. Many unrepentant rebels were either banned or chose not to attend the church. Ellen Renshaw House lamented in October 1865: “Living week after week, and month after month without entering the house of God is dreadful, particularly when there is no telling how long it may last.” Union army chaplain Henry

Cherry, who was stationed in Knoxville during the war, wrote to a friend in Michigan about “the destructed state of the churches divided and impoverished by the war.”<sup>51</sup>

After the war, the dormant churches stirred to life. In late May 1865, officials of the First Presbyterian Church requested that federal authorities return their building, which, along with the Second Presbyterian, First Baptist, and Church Street Methodist churches, had been used as barracks and hospitals during the war and were currently being “desecrated” as schools for black children. However, General George Stoneman, the Union commander in East Tennessee, replied that disloyal citizens had desecrated the building before the war. In contrast to the town’s businesses, it took some time to sort out these problems and rebuild Knoxville’s churches; but by the late 1860s the task had largely been accomplished. Baptists and Catholics had by 1869 one church each, Episcopalians and Methodists had two, and Presbyterians had three. In addition, there were three black churches of various denominations.<sup>52</sup>

The experience of First Baptist Church between 1867 and 1870 offers an example of how Knoxville’s churches revived. After the largely Confederate congregation suspended meetings in 1863, the church building was used alternately as a hospital and a billet for federal troops. Later, a school for black children was established in the basement under the direction of R. J. Creswell, who apparently operated a similar school in the First Presbyterian Church. In 1867, First Baptist began reforming as church

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<sup>51</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census, Statistics of the United States, 1860, 466; Rothrock, French Broad-Holston Country, 283-300; Helm’s 1869 Knoxville Town Directory, 55; Ellen White Diary, 4 August 1861; Sutherland, Very Violent Rebel, 189; Henry Cherry to Amos Gould, 21 April 1865, Henry Cherry Letters, 1864, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

<sup>52</sup> Knoxville Whig, 24 May 1865; Helm’s 1869 Knoxville Town Directory, 55.

leaders set out to reassemble the congregation and find money for repairs to their badly damaged building. Apparently the church had split over a dispute of some sort, perhaps arising from the war. In September 1867, church leaders received \$1,200 from the United States government for damages and repaid several outstanding debts. The church seems to have struggled until June 1868, when former Union army captain and prominent businessman W. W. Woodruff and his mother joined it. Within twenty days, Woodruff was serving as the church's clerk, and by August he and former Confederate sympathizer John L. Moses and Unionist Henry Davis formed a committee to deal with repairs. Not only did Woodruff show the congregation that he could work with a former foe; he also poured money into the church. Northern immigrants such as Woodruff and their funds were just as important to First Baptist's renaissance as they were to Knoxville's economic recovery. In April 1870, Woodruff resigned as clerk after being elected deacon, a position that he held until his death fifty-six years later. In June, the congregation accepted Woodruff's offer to contribute money for the building of two stone offices on the church grounds, the first of many such contributions Woodruff would make to church building projects.<sup>53</sup>

Financial prosperity alone could not resolve the religious crises fostered by the war. After rebuilding their church, First Baptist leaders offered a resolution of

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<sup>53</sup> First Baptist Church, Knoxville – Church Records, 1843-1952, December (no day given) 1863, 25 September 1867, 7, 21 June, 1868, 28 August 1868, 25 April, 6 June 1870, Reel 1 MF 195, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee; Rothrock, French Broad-Holston Country, 142, 286; Helm's 1869 Knoxville Town Directory, 55; Sutherland, Very Violent Rebel, 40, 221; McKenzie, "Knoxville Master List," 25; D. F. Baker, "Woodruff's Inc., Knoxville Tennessee, Sketch, 1965" (unpublished bound sketch of W. W. Woodruff, Inc.), 3, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

reconciliation and reunification to Second Baptist Church in March 1870. Members of First Baptist urged that both congregations should “mutually forgive and forget any injuries, real or supposed, which we have sustained in consequence of anything said or done by the members of either church towards those of the other, and that it is our duty to dwell together in unity.” Methodist members would not follow the Baptists’ lead, however. Congregations of both the Northern and Southern branches of the Methodist Church completed new buildings in 1867 to house their separate members. Like the split between Methodists in the rest of the nation, this division would not be resolved in Knoxville until the twentieth century. Over all, however, the town’s churches became places of reconciliation in the postwar years. In early November 1867, the Whig noted, “All our principal churches were crowded to their utmost capacity on Sunday. There seems to be a growing interest in religious matters throughout our community.” Later that month, denominationally varied pastors presided over multi-denominational Thanksgiving services at Second Presbyterian Church.<sup>54</sup>

Church activities and home social gatherings, such as Christmas parties and fundraisers, allowed Knoxville’s women to aid in the postwar healing process. While a dearth of sources concerning poorer women in postwar Knoxville prohibits discussing their contributions in this thesis, middle-class women certainly capitalized on this sliver of opportunity and expanded their activities into public places. It seems these women participated in what various historians have labeled the “cult of domesticity” that evolved in antebellum America when men increasingly made their living outside of the home in

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<sup>54</sup> First Baptist Church, Knoxville – Church Records, 1843-1952, 20 March 1870; Knoxville Whig, 1, 5, 26 November 1867.

factories and offices. During this time, the family became less an economic unit and more a place where women were responsible for nurturance and love. Rigid patriarchy eroded in urban areas, and women became empowered to a degree. Such conditions freed women to take their roles as nurturers outside of the home but only in limited social spaces; they had the most leeway in education, religion, and reform. This gender-based model aptly describes women's roles in Knoxville's postwar rebuilding process.<sup>55</sup>

Drew Gilpin Faust argues that because of the war, "Southern women had come to a new understanding of themselves and their interests as women." Faust is primarily describing women in the Deep South, where slaveholding white secession sympathizers dominated society. According to Faust, these Southern ladies' main job after the war was to physically and mentally rehabilitate their men who suffered from the ravages of war. They were overwhelmingly conservative, and often hostile to Northerners in their midst. But while Knoxville's women would develop new identities after the war, most were quite different from the ones described by Faust, Ellen House and the like excepted. They seem to have been more willing to reunite with their native enemies and to readily incorporate Northern newcomers into the community in an attempt to rebuild the town. Unlike the Deep South, Knoxville was evenly divided between Confederate and Union supporters before and during the war. In postwar years, this division surely complicated the healing process for women. Marilyn Mayer Culpepper contends that many Southern women used forgiveness to cope with the war. One thing this thesis hopes to show is that

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<sup>55</sup> Catherine Clinton, The Plantation Mistress: Woman's World in the Old South (New York, 1982), 160-62.

most Knoxville women found forgiveness useful in bringing some sort of normality back to their lives.<sup>56</sup>

Surviving evidence suggests that most women in Knoxville viewed the war differently than men. As a result, they did not face as many obstacles to peace after the war, although there were exceptions such as Ellen House. While Ellen White embraced secession and the Southern cause, she did not translate that sentiment into a hatred for women or men who supported the Union, as House did. When Horace Maynard's wife Laura learned that her family would be forced to flee Knoxville in 1862, she wept because her prized piano would have to be left behind; but Ellen White offered to keep the piano safe until Maynard returned. In her diary, White noted that Mrs. Maynard had "a great deal of sympathy expressed for her even among the most violent secessionists." Such bipartisan compassion seems to have been fairly common among female residents of Knoxville during the war and helped bring postwar peace and social cohesion to the town.<sup>57</sup>

In 1869, Mary Morrow, the daughter of prominent Knoxville banker and former Union soldier Samuel Morrow, received a poem written by Blanch McClung, the daughter of Hugh McClung, that contained the following lines: "Since we first met in childish glee, How many changes each has known; And yet as friends unchanged are we." Morrow was a neighbor of both Ellen House and Laura Maynard. Fortunately for Knoxville's postwar peace, the unconciliatory House represented but a small minority of

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<sup>56</sup> Drew Gilpin Faust, Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War (Chapel Hill, 1996), 253; Marilyn Mayer Culpepper, All Things Altered: Women in the Wake of Civil War and Reconstruction (Jefferson, North Carolina, 2002), 190.

<sup>57</sup> Ellen White Diary, 21 April 1862; McKenzie, "Knoxville Master List," 25.

women after the war. The majority, at least among the middle class, worked to achieve social cohesion. It appears that most women in postwar Knoxville did not have as many political and social divides to cross as men in the quest for reconciliation. Morrow, White, McClung, and other women played important parts in the peace process by forgetting past divisions and using their roles as nurturers.<sup>58</sup>

On Christmas Day, 1866, John Willard Hill attended a party hosted by former Confederate Frank McClung's wife Eliza. Hill's Unionist father, Otis Freeman Hill, was a native Ohioan and prominent Knoxville physician as well as part owner of Richardson & Sanford sawmill and E. J. Sanford & Co. drug store, which would later become Albers Drug Company. In the years immediately following the war such events seem to have played an important, almost ritualistic, role in the healing process. While O. F. Hill and Frank McClung may have had a personal relationship as the result of the proximity of their businesses in downtown Knoxville, bipartisan parties such as the one hosted by McClung's wife allowed former enemies to mingle, court, make small talk, and find common ground socially. Many of these networking opportunities resulted from the efforts of women, and their success depended on hostesses' efforts.<sup>59</sup>

Women did not content themselves with simply hosting parties. When W. W. Woodruff announced his offer to build two buildings for First Baptist Church in June 1870, he did so just after expressing his deep appreciation to "the ladies" who had already raised \$465.00 at a festival, presumably for church building improvements. In March

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<sup>58</sup> Mary E. Morrow Autograph Album, "Album of Love," 1859-1869 (microfilm copy), McClung Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee; Sutherland, Very Violent Rebel, 50, 224.

<sup>59</sup> John Willard Hill Diaries, 25 December 1866.

1868, other ladies had held a fair to raise funds for enlarging the Catholic Church. John Willard Hill described a typical fair in his diary which included children eating ice cream, pulling candy, playing games like “skin the cat,” and putting on plays.<sup>60</sup>

Many parties and fairs took place in churches. Women played a key role not only in arranging these events but also in rehabilitating the dilapidated church buildings after the war. For example, Hill’s stepmother and several other women put down carpet at St. John’s Church. In his diary, John compared the generous and reconciling spirit of Mrs. Hill with the reluctance of her husband to attend the funeral of “old Mr. House,” the father of Ellen House: “Father had to go as he is a freemason.” Perhaps this contrast offers an example of how women had fewer divides to cross than men, who, at least in the immediate postwar years, seem to have viewed the function of social organizations differently, and perhaps more pragmatically, than did their wives. While freemasonry likely offered opportunities to rebuild economic and some social ties, judging by John’s interpretation of his father’s feelings about Mr. House, it did not necessarily reconcile former enemies.<sup>61</sup>

Some parties and social gatherings likely reflected the attempts of older generations to foster fellowship among the young in an effort to forget the awful past. For example, in 1865, Unionist B. F. Buddin held a dance to which he invited young people regardless of which side their families were on during the war. Ellen House did not approve of this event: “What the young men and girls can be thinking of to go there at such a time I cannot imagine.” Other social events and institutions likewise brought

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 22, 23 May, 2 November, 4 April 1866; First Baptist Church, Knoxville – Church Records, 1843-1952, 6 June 1870; Knoxville Press and Herald, 21 March 1868.

<sup>61</sup> John Willard Hill Diaries, 22 September, 24 June 1866.

together young people whose families had taken opposing sides in the war. In 1867 Margaret Oswald Klein, whose family had been Confederate, attended Knoxville Female Academy with the children of former enemies including Callie and Fanny Brownlow, Lucy McClung, and Katie Staub. She also attended Sunday school at St. John's with John Willard Hill in a class taught by Lizzie Crozier, the daughter of Col. John Crozier. Margaret's brother John worked for O. F. Hill at Sanford & Hill Drug Store, and probably played with John Willard Hill when he visited the store. They likely all attended Eliza McClung's Christmas party, which became an annual event in Knoxville for middle-class whites of all ages and political affiliations.<sup>62</sup>

Despite their numerous contributions to the peace process, women in Knoxville still endured social limitations. In a Press and Herald editorial titled "Street Manners," John Fleming dismissed women's complaints that "men congregate on street corners and gawk at women making crude comments." According to Fleming, it was only natural for admiring young men to treat pretty women in such a way if they were out on the streets. While sometimes thus discouraged from frequenting public spaces, women were not altogether deterred. Martha Hall, for example, helped establish a mission in Shieldstown, "The most wicked part of Knoxville."<sup>63</sup>

In May 1868, Hall took part in a women's meeting at her church, Second Presbyterian, which had been called to "do something about the graves of the Confederate dead." A week later, the women met again and decided to hold a festival to

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<sup>62</sup> Margaret Stakely to Carrie Stakely, 8 August 1865, Hall-Stakely Papers; Sutherland, Very Violent Rebel, 163; "Memoirs of Margaret Oswald Klein."

<sup>63</sup> Knoxville Press and Herald, 2 April 1868; Martha Hall to Sister Maggie, 25 January 1868, 1 February 1869, Hall-Stakely Papers.

raise funds for the effort. In April, the Press and Herald had announced that the tenth of May was to be the first Decoration Day for Tennessee's fallen Confederate soldiers. Apparently this announcement spurred Knoxville's women to action, for Fleming scolded them for "the neglected conditions of the graves of the Confederate soldiers." According to the Whig, later that month many of the same women, "without regard to past differences," took an active part in the decoration of federal graves. They "stripped gardens and yards of flowers" in their effort to bring about a harmonious event with all parties "heartily participating and rendering every assistance in performing the ceremonies."<sup>64</sup>

These women worked for reconciliation despite the burden of war-engendered grief that many continued to bear. While J. G. M. Ramsey's wife Margaret had not yet returned to Knoxville in 1868, a poem on the cover of her diary illuminates the pain felt by women who had lost children in the war or its violent aftermath:

Oh! Dark is the gloom o'er my young spirit

Oh why do I linger when others are gay?

The smile that I wear is but worn for concealing mind

This heart that is wasting in sadness away.

In an 1865 letter to her aunt Martha, Mattie Hall expressed the heartrending grief that she was experiencing after the killing of her twin brother Will by Abner Baker. In 1933, Margaret Oswald Klein still mourned the killing of her grandfather by Union troops who looted and burned his home while she watched. Despite these aching wounds, the

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<sup>64</sup> Martha Hall to Sister Maggie, 23 May 1868, Hall-Stakely Papers; Knoxville Press and Herald, 25 April 1868; Knoxville Whig, 3 June 1868.

majority of Knoxville women seemed able to honor all the military dead, regardless of which side they had fought on.<sup>65</sup>

In September 1868, a “harmonious meeting” of Knoxville citizens convened and determined to raise funds to care for the graves of troops on both sides. An association of men was organized as an auxiliary to the recently formed Ladies Memorial Association of Knoxville to help acquire land and move the bodies of Confederates to a new location on Bethel Avenue. This auxiliary committee consisted of an interesting mix of former foes, including sheriff and former Union soldier M. D. Bearden, Hugh McClung, and John B. Brownlow. They determined to hold a “grand tournament and coronation party” on September 29. The committee formed to organize this event included many former enemies and current political foes, including G. M. Branner, Gideon Hazen, John Fleming, W. W. Woodruff, Sam Atkin, T. A. R. Nelson, Leonidas Houk, and Horace Maynard.<sup>66</sup>

The ritualistic honoring of Knoxville’s war dead encouraged the healing of wartime divisions. On federal Decoration Day 1869, T. A. R. Nelson stated that “while we honor our own dead, we ought also to respect the dead who fell fighting in the ranks opposed to us.” By 1892, McClungs, Caldwells, and Whites mingled with Brownlows and Humeses on a committee responsible for bringing a Confederate monument to Bethel Cemetery, where 1,600 Confederates lay buried.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Margaret B. Crozier Diary, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville; Mattie Hall to Martha Hall, 20 September 1865, Hall-Stakely Papers; “Memoirs of Margaret Oswald Klein.”

<sup>66</sup> Knoxville Press and Messenger, 10 September 1868

<sup>67</sup> Knoxville Whig, 2 June 1969; S. B. Newman, Our Confederate Dead: An Oration by Maj. Gen’l Wm. B. Bate, U. S. Senator, on Occasion of Unveiling Confederate

The quest to create a public school system and to educate the children of Knoxville offered additional opportunities for reconciliation among former enemies. While free public schools would not exist in Knoxville until the early 1870s, many Knoxvilleians who had fought on opposing sides during the war found common ground by working together to educate their children. In November 1867, John Fleming bemoaned the fact that, despite rapid economic progress, the state lacked enough young men with proper education and know-how to capitalize on increasing economic opportunities. Knoxville, like the rest of Tennessee, had no comprehensive public education system before the war. The few private schools that existed in antebellum Knoxville were mostly either damaged or destroyed during the conflict. In 1866 many private schools in Knoxville reopened, including the Knoxville Female Academy, Hampton-Sydney Academy, and East Tennessee University. In March 1867 the state passed a law requiring free education for all children, including black students. Unfortunately, the free schools operated for only a short while then shut down in early 1868 because of state budget woes.<sup>68</sup>

The most successful educational venture in Knoxville during the immediate postwar period was the reopening of East Tennessee University in fall 1866. The school served primarily as a preparatory academy throughout the late 1860s. Of 120 students in 1869 there were only ten sophomores and twenty freshmen, while ninety young men

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Monument at Knoxville, Tennessee, May 19, 1892, Together with History of Ladies' Memorial Association and Other Orations and Ceremonies Incident to the Erection of the Monument (Knoxville, 1892), 3-18; Knoxville Press and Messenger, 3 June 1869.

<sup>68</sup> East Tennessee University, East Tennessee University and State Industrial College Catalogue: 1869-70 (Knoxville, 1870); John Willard Hill Diaries, 19 September, 4 October 1866.

were in the preparatory department. The faculty, which came from many parts of the nation, mirrored the town's increasingly diversified population as well as its willingness to accept outsiders in the name of progress. The instructors included four Southerners, three Yale graduates, and three alumni of East Tennessee College. Students were offered three areas of study: Agricultural, Scientific—which taught mechanical arts—and Classical. The school briefly changed its name in the late 1860s to East Tennessee University and State Industrial College, which indicated the involvement of Temple and Bokum as well as the economic focus of many of those promoting education in the town. Improving education was important to leaders seeking to ensure that Knoxville's booming economy, which was vital to peace in the town, would continue in the future. They were shrewd and successful in their bid to have the agricultural college located in Knoxville. With the exception of T. A. R. Nelson, radicals dominated the committee assigned this task in late 1867, which likely helped convince Governor Brownlow to use his influence to help bring the campus to Knoxville.<sup>69</sup>

Unlike that committee, the board of directors, or the "Corporation" as it is called in the catalog, included a diverse mix of officers and trustees, several of whom had served in a similar capacity in 1858. Trustees elected in 1869 reflected both continuity and change in Knoxville's political leadership. Eleven members of the thirty-six-member board had served before the war. Unionists who served on both boards included O. P.

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<sup>69</sup> Knoxville Herald, 26 November, 6, 27 December 1867; Rothrock, French Broad-Holston Country, 257-61; Knoxville Press and Messenger, 10, 12 March 1869; Martha Hall to Sister, 12 September 1868, 11 February 1869, Hall-Stakely Papers; Martha Hall to Sister, 7 July 1869; Knoxville Press and Herald, 1 December 1867; East Tennessee University and State Industrial College Catalogue, 2; East Tennessee University, Catalogue of the Officers and Students of East Tennessee University for the Collegiate Year 1858-59 (Knoxville, 1859), 2.

Temple, James Cowan, Thomas Humes, and Frederick Heiskell. Confederates included David Deaderick, William Kennedy, Hugh McClung, George White, William Eckle, and J. A. Mabry. Political moderate Thomas Humes was president in 1869, while radical William Rule was secretary, and former Confederate Charles McGhee served as treasurer. Brownlow remarked that former rebels held far too many positions on the board for his liking. Of the thirty-six members, nine were Confederate sympathizers during the war, while fifteen were Union supporters. Insofar as their postwar politics were concerned, staunch conservatives and radicals had about the same number of representatives, four and five respectively. However, both were far outnumbered by moderates, although most of those, like Mabry and Hugh McClung, leaned more to the conservative side. The fact that such a politically diverse group of members worked together to reestablish East Tennessee University speaks to the importance they placed on improving the educational lot of the town's young men. It also reflected the expanding economic middle ground, as the importance they placed on education was directly tied to their economic goals.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> East Tennessee University and State Industrial College Catalogue, 2; Catalogue of the Officers and Students of East Tennessee University for the Collegiate Year 1858-59, 2; McKenzie, "Knoxville Master List," 1-37.

## Conclusion

A good many historians have overreacted to the colorful persona of William G. Brownlow, declaring him the driving political force in Knoxville after the war. In reality, Brownlow was increasingly marginalized as former foes bound by family and economic ties built a moderately conservative political coalition, which ruled the town by 1870 and largely excluded the Parson and other extremists. Economic and political stability allowed for increased social cohesion, fostering the rebuilding of crucial institutions such as churches and schools. Women played a prominent role in the process as they increasingly found acceptance and influence in public affairs. Northern immigrants such as Woodruff and Chamberlain also played important parts in affairs other than economics. After the war, Knoxville's social landscape, after years of tumult, settled down into something similar but not quite the same as that of the prewar town.

By studying communities such as Knoxville, historians can get a better idea of how Northern and Southern supporters reconciled after the Civil War, at least in the Upper South. One would be hard pressed to find a more evenly divided place during the war, but in the succeeding years economics, familial relations, tradition, and old friendships overcame partisanship, at least among the white middle class. By 1867, former enemies attended baseball games and went hunting together "after different game." They attended concerts featuring the works of Mozart and Beethoven performed by the Knoxville Philharmonic Society at the new downtown music hall that held more than 1,200 people. By 1869, the murder of Will Hall and the lynching of Abner Baker were largely forgotten as young folks, regardless of their fathers' past differences, congregated at Christmas parties hosted by increasingly influential women. Those

women exchanged photographs and created albums full of new memories, while publicly memorializing their dead men. Laura Maynard played her treasured piano. Some citizens went to see the circus when it was in town. Others viewed a two-legged pig on display at the Franklin House and cockfighting at the “gin mills” on Gay Street. Unlike summer 1865, however, there were no shootings on Gay Street. Except for Decoration Day parades, festivals, and shopping on Market Square, all was quiet in Knoxville.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Knoxville Press and Messenger, 31 October, 8, 19 November 1867; M. F. Richardson to Evelyn Mabry, 23 October 1871, 1 June 1873, Mabry-Charlton Papers, McClung Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee; Knoxville Press and Herald, 12, 10 February 1868; Knoxville Herald, 20 December 1869.

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## Appendix

“Carrier’s Address to the Patrons of the Knoxville Commercial, 1 January 1867”

While Presidents to Congress make  
An annual message, and survey  
Great topics, for the nations sake—

The Carrier’s time is come, to day;  
And having traveled up and down  
He thus addresses all the town.

The new born year we gladly greet.  
The past is in its winding sheet;  
While Pestilence has wildly swept  
O’er other hearths, few here have wept;  
Great is the debt of gratitude  
We owe to Him, the Source of Good,  
That, in this hour of mirth and gladness,  
There is so little cause for sadness;  
And joy should wipe away the tear  
That falls upon the buried year—

Despite War’s fierce, relentless blows,  
Our “so-called” town thrives and grows,  
And cheerful Hope would hear no more  
The musket’s crack, the cannon’s roar,  
Nor mark the boldest spirits quake  
As hills around and ‘neath us shake;  
No longer death and famine reign  
But peace and plenty smile again.

The practiced eye, improvement meets,  
In houses, fencing, sidewalks, streets;  
The shops and stores, with rich display,  
Attract alike the grave and gay;  
Our schools and colleges rejoice  
In youth’s elastic step and voice;  
And churches now resound with praise  
Where [illegible] echoed ruder days,  
Or bleeding soldiers groaned in pain,  
And sighed for home’s kind friends in vain.  
Mechanics, lawyers, laboring men  
Resume their old pursuits again,  
Nor stand aghast with dread and awe  
When sternly ruled by martial law;  
No more the weary captives fret,

All guarded by the bayonet;  
No more furrowed pavement reels  
Beneath the broad and lumbering wheels;  
But Clashing steel and bugle blast,  
Are memories of the bitter past;  
The measured tread of sentinel  
To lighten the footsteps yields as well,  
While rustling silks and ribbons gay  
And eyes of beauty light the way.  
No poet's pen nor prophets glance  
Need tell of Knoxville's swift advance.  
For now with bounding hearts we hail  
New openings made for steam and sail,  
And distant cities gazing stand  
Ready to take us by the hand.

The Carrier briefly next reviews  
All he has borne us last year's news.  
First came a wide and ghastly rent  
'Twixt Congress and the President,  
And, as the mighty strife grew bigger,  
The Radicals whitewashed the nigger;  
Denied their suffrages to whites,  
Clothed Freedmen warm with Civil Rights;  
Fantastic Bureaus swiftly made  
The nation's sable wards to aid;  
Taught Cuff and Sambo to despise  
Industrious habits as unwise;  
To throw away their hoes and axes,  
And live upon the white man's taxes;  
Changed ground amid their long debates,  
And [illegible] the Rebel states;  
Abandoned clean the common thought  
That brave men for the Union fought,  
And owned they all had bled in vain  
To re-unite its broken chain—

You've seen in our Commercial paper,  
How Europe cut a mammoth caper.  
Dismantled Austria of her lands,  
And then in fellowship shook hands;  
How Maximillian finds a crown  
Not quite so soft as silk or down;  
How men undaunted firm and able,  
In ocean's bed deep fixed the cable,

And how New York with London talks  
Like misses in their evening walks.  
We told you of the Tycoon's death,  
Of wise Napoleon's failing breath;  
Of little wars in Mexico,  
Where rulers swiftly come and go;  
Proclaimed that dull, benighted Spain,  
Is galvanized to life again.  
And seeks in Southern Continent,  
To rule o'er states by faction rent.  
Our readers pointed to the sky,  
Have learned how meteors flash and fly,  
And grandly, every thirty years,  
Illuminate Earth and light the spheres.  
Nor have we dealt alone in great  
Affairs that move both church and state;  
Our columns, as you all have found,  
In striking paragraphs abound;  
They tell of accidents and fires,  
Of murders foul and fierce desires,  
Of thieves and robbers, floods and storms,  
And all that chills the heart or warms;  
They teach from Learning's fount to quaff,  
With wit provoke the merry laugh;  
While childhood, youth and sober age  
May swell with rapture on our page,  
And matrons grow and maidens fair  
May read of love and marriage there;  
From all the Earth we bring the news,  
Delight, instruct and oft amuse.

Kind patron if in hours of ease,  
Our varied columns came to please;  
Or, when oppressed with woe and care,  
They brought relief against despair;  
If sad or sick, you whiled away  
The weary moments, night or day,  
And found your pain or grief assuaged  
In poring o'er the welcome page—  
Remember that the Carrier came  
Alike unknown wealth or fame,  
But punctual to his stated hour,  
Through snow and heat and dashing shower;  
Then gracefully your pursed lift,  
And pay his well-earned New Year's Gift.

Vita

Gregory Scott Hicks was born in Maryville, Tennessee, on June 18, 1969. He was raised in Maryville where he went to Alnwick Elementary School and William Blount High School. He later attended the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where he graduated summa cum laude in 1995. During his undergraduate career, Gregory was awarded the prestigious Bernadotte Schmitt scholarship for academic excellence in history. He also achieved membership in Phi Alpha Theta, Phi Kappa Phi, and Phi Beta Kappa honor societies. Gregory then built a successful career in business before entering graduate school in 2006. He successfully completed his M. A. in history at the University of Tennessee in spring 2008.

Gregory currently lives in Maryville with his wife Jennifer and their young daughter.