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The Civil War in East Tennessee: A Social, Political, and Economic Study

Charles Faulkner Bryan Jr.
University of Tennessee - Knoxville

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Charles Faulkner Bryan Jr. entitled "The Civil War in East Tennessee: A Social, Political, and Economic Study." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in History.

Paul H. Bergeron, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

John R. Finger, LeRoy P. Graff, Ralph W. Haskins, John Muldowney, Leonard W. Breaslaw

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

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Accepted for the Council:

L. Evans Roth

Vice Chancellor
Graduate Studies and Research

THE CIVIL WAR IN EAST TENNESSEE: A SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC STUDY

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Charles Faulkner Bryan, Jr.

August 1978

ABSTRACT

By the mid-nineteenth century, East Tennessee had evolved into an unique Southern region. Divergent patterns of growth, society, politics, and economics marked the eastern counties as distinct from Tennessee's other sections, a situation greatly influenced by the region's geographic isolation. By the eve of the Civil War, the region's people perceived themselves as different from their fellow Tennesseans; and in many ways a deep-seated distrust of the rest of the state was commonplace. Therefore when Governor Isham Harris, backed by overwhelming popular support in Middle and West Tennessee, made moves to withdraw the state from the Union in the spring of 1861, Unionist leaders in East Tennessee organized a powerful movement to prevent secession. Although these leaders failed, Unionism never died in East Tennessee despite intense Confederate efforts to snuff it out. Because the majority of its people remained loyal to the Federal Government, the region had unusual war experiences. This study attempts to describe the Civil War in East Tennessee and to analyze the impact of the conflict upon the region, especially institutions such as local government, education, the church, and slavery.

Confederate and Federal authorities alternately attempted to assert and then maintain control of East Tennessee; yet neither was entirely successful. Initially the Confederates tried a conciliatory policy in hopes that the Unionists could be persuaded to join the Southern cause eventually. When this failed, harsh measures, including mass arrests, a declaration of martial law, and strict enforcement of conscription, were employed to break the grip of East Tennessee "Toryism." But these only

resulted in further alienation of the populace. Thousands either fled to the relative safety of Kentucky or else launched a campaign of sabotage and guerrilla warfare to subvert the Confederates. When United States forces occupied the region in the fall of 1863, Federal authorities were little more successful in gaining effective mastery of the eastern counties. While the Provost Marshal attempted to maintain law and order, revenge-minded Unionists, prodded by editor William G. Brownlow, sought harsh retribution from their former oppressors. At the same time, Confederate guerrillas mounted a campaign of counter-terror, and from early 1864 until the end of the war, East Tennessee was torn by a bitter struggle. Not until the closing weeks of the conflict, did the Federals finally exert effective control over the region. The struggle in East Tennessee, however, did not end with the surrender of armies elsewhere, for Unionists continued to seek revenge. Ex-Rebels were either driven from the region or were forced to live in fear of reprisals. Not until the end of the decade, did much of the violence and bitterness subside.

Because of the intensity of the struggle in East Tennessee, crucial institutions were deeply affected. Local government was forced to take on unprecedented responsibilities which further strained budgets already weakened by the disruptions of war. Ironically Unionists maintained considerable political influence on the local level during Confederate occupation and then used the state courts as one means of seeking revenge on ex-Rebels. Education on all levels was seriously disrupted by the war but recovered gradually once peace was restored. East Tennessee churches were fragmented as a result of the conflicting loyalties frequently found within congregations.

One institution, slavery, did not survive the war. Although blacks were only a small percentage of the East Tennessee population, at times all whites felt threatened by the freedom of the slaves. Initially all Unionists pledged loyalty to the Federal Government, but still maintained that slavery must be preserved. The disruptions of war and certain Federal policies such as the conscription of Negroes caused the de facto death of slavery by 1864. The slave issue, nevertheless, split the Unionist coalition, as Radicals sought the institution's end as a means of weakening the Confederacy and punishing Rebels. Because most whites had little interest in uplifting the freedmen, agencies such as the Freedmen's Bureau and Northern benevolent aid societies met with a hostile reception; and a policy of segregation was instituted soon after the war as in the rest of the South.

In the final analysis, it is evident, that with the exception of the slave experience, the Civil War in East Tennessee confirmed an uniqueness that the region had possessed for decades before the conflict and would maintain well into the twentieth century.

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INTRODUCTION

A study of the Civil War in East Tennessee should have been made long before my attempt. With the possible exception of West Virginia, no other major region of the South was such a geographic entity, political phenomenon, and military problem of the first order for both Confederate and Federal authorities. Besides being a strategically important area, East Tennessee, much like western Virginia, was the subject of wartime melodramatic stories, poems, and extensive newspaper coverage, North and South alike. The section was usually portrayed as being mountainous and overwhelmingly Unionist in sympathy; and newspapers as far away as St. Paul published glowing accounts of Tennessee's "loyal mountaineers," while the Southern press damned the people as "Tories."

Yet despite the somewhat unique features of East Tennessee during the Civil War, the region's war experiences have not been studied by historians in a comprehensive and in-depth fashion. Thomas W. Humes and Oliver P. Temple published the only accounts dealing specifically with the topic, but neither work is entirely satisfactory.[1] Besides being very dated, both books were written by men who had been active Unionists; as a result, the story of pro-Southern East Tennesseans is limited and often prejudiced. Humes and Temple concentrate heavily on the military phases of the war. The latter's account is essentially a personal memoir.

Since these publications, other historians have looked at East Tennessee and the Civil War, but have concentrated on one specific aspect

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[1]Thomas W. Humes, The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee (Knoxville, 1880); Oliver P. Temple, East Tennessee and the Civil War (Cincinnati, 1899).

of the topic, or have given relatively short and often superficial narratives of the region during the national conflict. Mary E. R. Campbell, James W. Fertig, Philip Hamer, J. Milton Henry, Eric R. Lacy, James W. Patton, John E. Tricamo, and Verton M. Queener have studied East Tennessee's actions during the secession crisis and have offered plausible explanations for the region's generally pro-Union position.[2] But, with the exception of Hamer and Patton, none has looked past the events of the summer of 1861. Hamer and Patton describe the revolt of the East Tennesseans and the plight of the region during the war, but the former was limited by space and the latter's study devoted only twenty-three pages to the topic, relying almost exclusively on the Knoxville Whig and Official Records as sources. Studies of Andrew Johnson by Clifton Hall and Robert W. Winston, of William G. Brownlow by E. Merton Coulter, and of T.A.R. Nelson by Thomas B. Alexander are important sources for understanding the region's central figures, but all are circumscribed by the very nature of their topics.[3] A profusion of articles, theses, and dissertations dealing with

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[2]Mary E. R. Campbell, The Attitude of Tennesseans toward the Union, 1847-1861 (New York, 1961); James W. Fertig, The Secession and Reconstruction of Tennessee (Chicago, 1898); Philip Hamer, Tennessee, A History (4 vols.; New York, 1933); J. Milton Henry, "The Revolution in Tennessee, February, 1861 to June, 1861," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, XVIII (1959), 99-118; Eric R. Lacy, Vanquished Volunteers, East Tennessee Sectionalism from Statehood to Secession (Johnson City, Tennessee, 1965); James W. Patton, Unionism and Reconstruction in Tennessee (Chapel Hill, 1934); John E. Tricamo, "Tennessee Politics, 1845-1861" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1965); Verton M. Queener, "East Tennessee Sentiment and the Secession Movement, November, 1860-June, 1961," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 20 (1948), 59-83.

[3]Clifton R. Hall, Andrew Johnson, Military Governor of Tennessee (Princeton, 1916); Robert W. Winston, Andrew Johnson, Plebeian and Patroit (New York, 1928); E. Merton Coulter, William G. Brownlow, Fighting Parson of the Southern Highlands (Chapel Hill, 1937); Thomas B. Alexander, Thomas A. R. Nelson of East Tennessee (Nashville, 1956).

certain aspects of the region during the Civil War has been produced; but such works generally have been narrowly focused, although they are essential aids for an understanding of the broader subject.

My study is therefore an attempt to provide a more comprehensive examination of the Civil War in East Tennessee. To accomplish this, I tapped a wealth of virtually unused research sources including letters, diaries, family records, church records, local government records, manuscript census returns, and a multitude of miscellaneous material, in addition to standard newspaper and published records. Through the use of these sources, I am able to treat and analyze the impact of a devastating war upon the people of an anomalous, yet bitterly divided, region. The central figures are the people, civilian and military alike, and their institutions. Most were Unionists, therefore making them most unusual Southerners; but enough of them followed the Stars and Bars to create a particularly violent internal Civil War--thus the title of my dissertation--"The Civil War in East Tennessee."

The first half of my study is an examination, arranged chronologically, of the internecine struggle that existed in the region and how the governing authorities attempted, in most cases unsuccessfully, to deal with it. Also germane to my inquiry and the second half of my dissertation is a look at the institutions that were essential elements of East Tennessee society, such as local government, education, churches, and slavery. Each was deeply affected by the war and either transformed or destroyed by the very nature of the conflict. Originally I had planned to observe 1865 as the final year of this study; but research concerning institutions revealed that in some instances the war continued in subtle

ways long after Robert E. Lee and Joe Johnston surrendered their armies. By looking at East Tennessee's people and institutions, I hope to provide some comprehension of a region that has been neglected in many ways and often misunderstood.

The reader should be warned that I have not written an exhaustive study. Indeed one may feel cheated, because I have given certain aspects of the war only superficial treatment. For example, I do not provide a complete investigation of the battles and military campaigns that took place in the region. I will not carry the reader up the steep slopes of Missionary Ridge or across the bloody trenches of Fort Sanders. Also, I have not devoted a separate section to economic or political history. Yet military, economic, and political factors play important roles in what I have written and are therefore interwoven throughout the text. The purpose of my study is neither to deal fully with the Civil War in East Tennessee nor necessarily to explore completely any conventional list of topics that one customarily finds in a local history. To do so would have made this dissertation a much too lengthy tome. If to deal in a definitive fashion with a subject as complex as the one I have chosen is beyond management, I can at least strive to illuminate certain crucial aspects and themes in Civil War and Southern history.

Of the many people to whom I am indebted in writing this dissertation, none has been more helpful than Professor Paul H. Bergeron, whose criticisms of both style and content have enhanced my study. The sharpness of his editorial eye never ceases to amaze me. I also wish to thank two distinguished editors, Professors LeRoy P. Graf and Ralph W. Haskins, for their close scrutiny of this manuscript and their incisive suggestions.

To Professor Leonard Brinkman, whose stimulating geography courses planted the thought of looking at East Tennessee as a unique region, I owe gratitude for teaching me how to analyze a region and also that a map can be worth a thousand words.

In carrying out such a project as this, one comes to appreciate the lofty concept that library personnel have of their mission. Thus the research I have done at various depositories has not only been productive but pleasurable as well. Mrs. Jean Waggener and her staff at the Tennessee State Library and Archives and the staff of Dr. Carolyn Wallace of the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina have been exceptionally magnanimous in their treatment of this visiting scholar. I likewise deeply appreciate Dr. William MacArthur and the staff of the McClung Historical Collection, Lawson McGhee Library in Knoxville, for their assistance and particularly for their directing me to obscure sources that have proven invaluable to this study. And to Mr. John Dobson, Shannon Mulkey, and Chris Floyd, of the Special Collections Department, University of Tennessee Library, I owe special thanks not only for aiding my research, but also for providing an environment which made research and writing an easier process than it often is.

Finally, my wife Cammy has been amazingly patient and tolerant throughout this whole process, even in the midst of raising two children. Her careful reading of my chapters often prevented me from submitting many a potentially embarrassing faux pas. To my mother, Mrs. Edith Bryan, and my "other" parents, Joe and Carolyn Martin, my thanks for understanding this ordeal of graduate school.

CHAPTER I

EAST TENNESSEE--"THE OTHER SOUTH"

Spring and early summer of 1861 found East Tennesseans in a wary position. The other two grand divisions of the state were rushing madly to join the newly formed Confederacy. In fact, state and Confederate authorities were unable to provide sufficient arms for the thousands of Middle and West Tennesseans joining the Southern army. Yet in comparison, few Confederate units were being organized in East Tennessee. Indeed, many East Tennesseans spoke of raising their own companies to offer resistance to any attempts at separation from the Union. One Hamilton County Unionist boasted in a letter to Andrew Johnson: "I have all ready a company of one hundred and fifty ready to die, rather than submit to the reign of corruption now being exercised. . . ."[1]

National events of the past several months had brought the issue of secession to crisis stage in Tennessee; and during this period, East Tennessee took the lead in voicing opposition to disruption of the Union. When given an opportunity to determine the state's future on June 8, 1861, East Tennessee alone roundly defeated a proposal for separation. The results of this referendum and the region's subsequent role in the Civil War revealed that the eastern counties were part of what historian Carl Degler describes as "the Other South." In his study of Southern dissenters in

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[1]Dr. John T. Jones to Andrew Johnson, June 15, 1861, LeRoy P. Graf and Ralph W. Haskins (eds.), The Papers of Andrew Johnson (4 vols. to date; Knoxville, 1967-), IV, 486.

the 19th century, Degler emphasizes that "the South is not and never has been a monolith." There have always been diversities and divergences within its history and among its people--individuals and groups who, for various reasons, have refused to follow the mainstream of Southern thinking and action. No other region within the Southern states more clearly exemplifies this "Other South" than the eastern counties of Tennessee during the secession crisis and Civil War. By remaining loyal to the Union during the conflict and embracing the Republican party afterward, East Tennessee was an obvious aberration from the image of a "Solid South" that emerged in the post-war years. Only West Virginia can challenge East Tennessee in portraying the "Other South"; but the former's proximity to Northern states and its corresponding remoteness from the deep South make its pro-Union stance more understandable. On the other hand, East Tennessee was almost completely surrounded by Confederate states; yet it exhibited as much devotion to the Union as West Virginia and actually contributed far more men to the Union army than the Mountaineer State.[2]

To describe East Tennessee's Unionist proclivities is a challenge in itself, but to explain the reasoning behind it is a far more difficult task. Nevertheless this chapter will attempt to analyze those factors which made the section unique--certainly those elements which made many East Tennesseans in 1861 perceive themselves as being different from the rest of the state and the rest of the South.

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[2]Carl N. Degler, The Other South, Southern Dissenters in the Nineteenth Century (New York, 1974), 2-3, 174-75.

One major factor that contributed to this perception may have been a sense of isolation the people felt because in terms of physical geography their region[3] was distinct from the rest of the state. It is bordered on the east by the Unaka chain of the Appalachian Mountains, an area of high elevation, rugged terrain, and sparse cultivation, where slaveholders were practically non-existent, and farmers produced mainly for their own subsistence. West of these mountains and paralleling them for the entire north-south breadth of the region is the Great Valley and Ridge. In reality the valley is composed of many long, narrow valleys separated by parallel ridges. Blessed with good soil, this region's settlers profited from sales of grain and livestock; and throughout most of the area, slaves could be found, with concentrations up to a hundred on some farms. While East Tennessee traditionally had the reputation of being a region of "mountaineers," actually the majority of the population dwelt in the Great Valley, living on a landscape not altogether different from that of much of Middle Tennessee. Finally the western boundary of East Tennessee is the crest of the rugged Cumberland Plateau, a sub-region of sandy, thin, porous, and generally unproductive soil. The Plateau was mainly inhabited by subsistence farmers and cattle raisers on the eve of the Civil War. The exception is the long and narrow, but rich, Sequatchie Valley which pierces the region from the north in a southwesterly direction.[4]

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[3]For the purposes of this study, East Tennessee is defined as the thirty-one contiguous counties in the 1860's which lay between the Tennessee-North Carolina border on the east and the crest of the Cumberland Plateau on the west. See Figures 1 and 2.

[4]H. C. Amick and L. H. Rollins, The Geography of Tennessee (Boston, 1937), 5, 13, 23; Temple, East Tennessee and the Civil War, 62-63; A. D. Smith (ed.), East Tennessee, Historical and Biographical (Chattanooga, 1893), 40-41; United States Census Office, Eighth Census, Population in the United States in 1860 (Washington, 1864), I, 238.

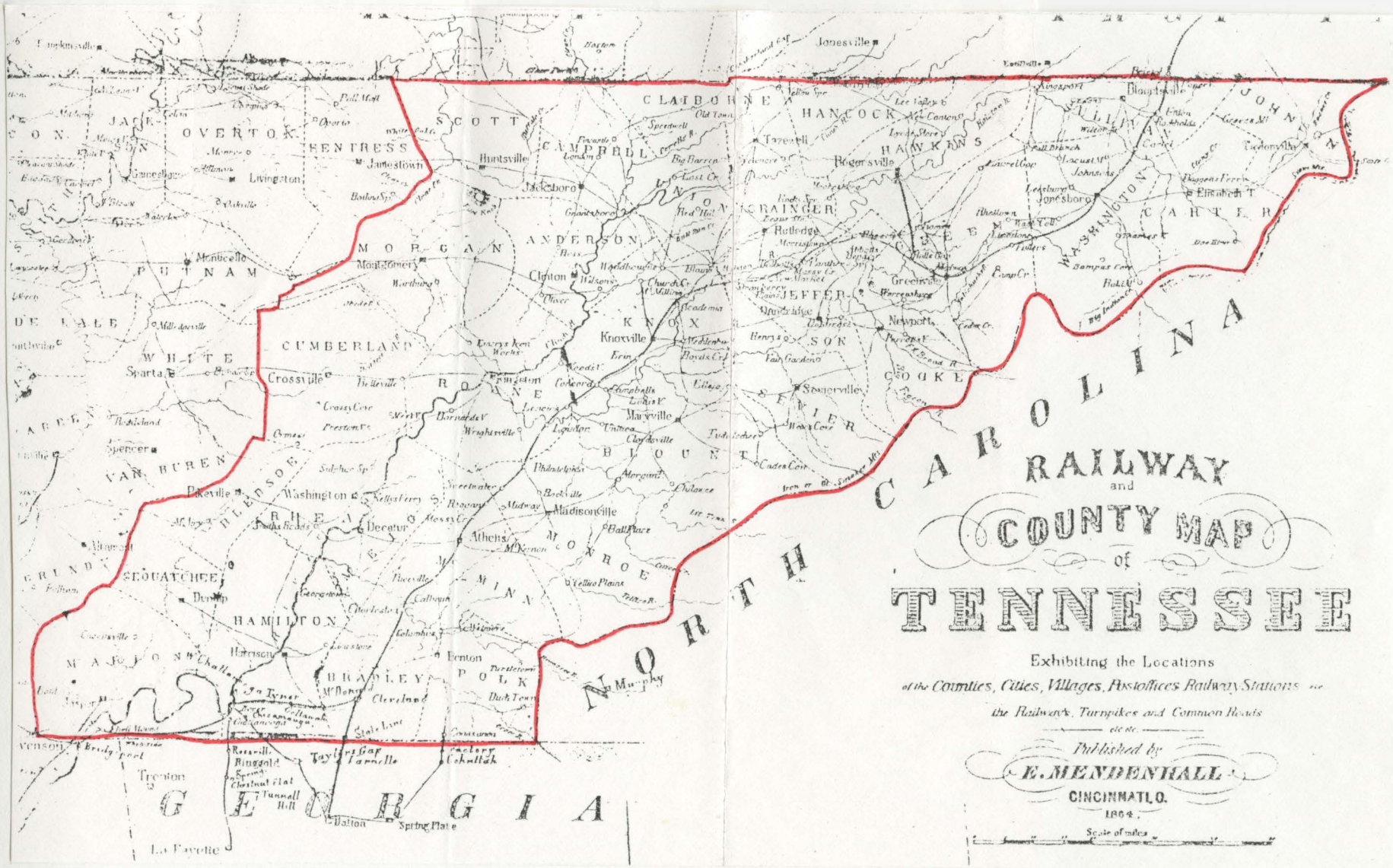

Figure 1. East Tennessee in 1864.

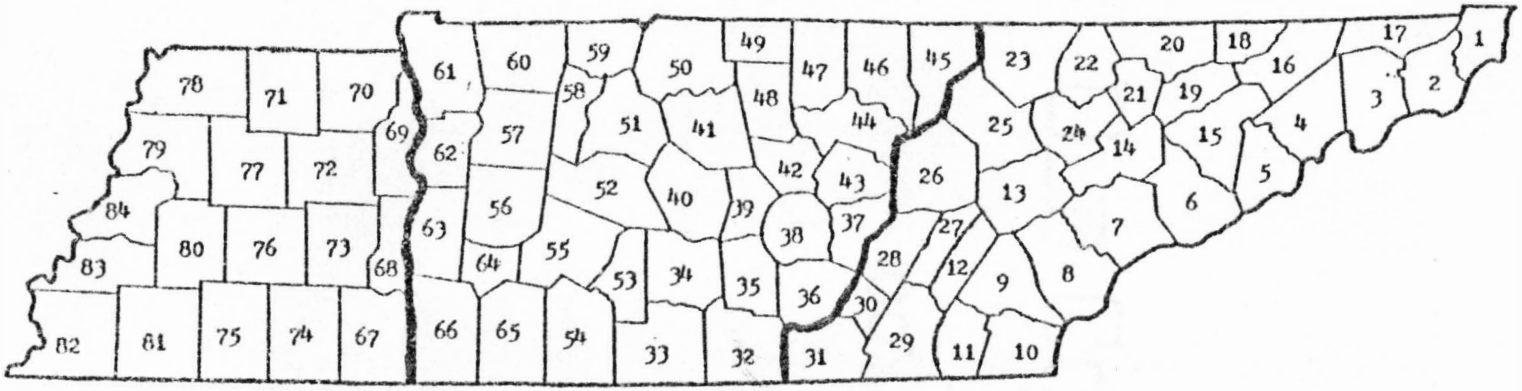

Figure 2. The counties of Tennessee in 1860.

KEY TO COUNTIES OF TENNESSEE

1. Johnson
2. Carter
3. Washington
4. Greene
5. Cocke
6. Sevier
7. Blount
8. Monroe
9. McMinn
10. Polk
11. Bradley
12. Meigs
13. Loudon
14. Knox
15. Jefferson
16. Hawkins
17. Sullivan
18. Hancock
19. Grainger
20. Claiborne
21. Union
22. Campbell
23. Scott
24. Anderson
25. Morgan
26. Cumberland
27. Rhea
28. Bledsoe
29. Hamilton
30. Sequatchie
31. Marion
32. Franklin
33. Lincoln
34. Bedford
35. Coffee
36. Grundy
37. Van Buren
38. Warren
39. Cannon
40. Rutherford
41. Wilson
42. DeKalb
43. White
44. Putnam
45. Fentress
46. Overton
47. Jackson
48. Smith
49. Macon
50. Sumner
51. Davidson
52. Williamson
53. Marshall
54. Giles
55. Maury
56. Hickman
57. Dickson
58. Cheatham
59. Robertson
60. Montgomery
61. Stewart
62. Humphreys
63. Perry
64. Lewis
65. Lawrence
66. Wayne
67. Hardin
68. Decatur
69. Benton
70. Henry
71. Weakley
72. Carroll
73. Henderson
74. McNairy
75. Hardeman
76. Madison
77. Gibson
78. Obion
79. Dyer
80. Haywood
81. Fayette
82. Shelby
83. Tipton
84. Lauderdale

The Plateau physically separates East Tennessee from the rest of the state. In the mid-19th century transportation links between the state's three divisions were few in number and quite often inadequately constructed. Although Tennessee experienced a boom in railroad expansion in the 1850's, little attempt was made to connect the divisions.[5] The railroads that were completed in East Tennessee joined the region not to the rest of the state, but to Virginia and the lower South; and extensive plans were made to construct a rail link between Knoxville, Cincinnati, and Charleston, South Carolina.[6] Possibly because of this physical separation, divergent patterns of growth, society, and politics had marked East Tennessee as different from her sister regions ever since the state's establishment in 1796.

While East Tennessee had been the dominant section in terms of size and power in the first quarter of the 19th century, by 1860 it had 298,881 inhabitants (only 26.0 percent of the state's population), slightly less than recently developed West Tennessee. Just as its relative size declined, so did its political strength. The region had controlled both the governor's chair and the General Assembly in the early years; but after 1820, only one governor (Andrew Johnson in the 1850's) came from East Tennessee. Moreover, as its representation increased, Middle Tennessee began to dominate the legislature. During the Jacksonian Era, the Whig

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[5]In 1853 the General Assembly authorized the incorporation of the Nashville and Knoxville Railroad Company, but nothing of importance was done to start the project. Hamer, Tennessee, I, 447.

[6]Ibid., 452-53; Stanley J. Folmsbee, "The Beginnings of the Railroad Movement in Tennessee, 1836-1861," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 5 (1933), 104.

party gained a strong foothold in the eastern region as early as the 1835 "revolt" against Jackson in Tennessee. Pockets of Democratic strength existed in East Tennessee, but the region as a whole gave its support to Whig or Whig-related gubernatorial and presidential tickets from 1835 to the Civil War, while Middle Tennessee established itself as the center of Democratic strength.[7]

As East Tennessee diminished proportionally in size and political power, it also varied from the rest of the state in other crucial aspects. For example, East Tennessee was the least productive in agriculture in 1860. Eighteen of the region's thirty-one counties had less than 30 percent of their farm acreage improved; and none of the eastern counties had more than 50 percent improved farm land (see Figure 3). The cash value of farms in the eastern counties, although slightly more than that of West Tennessee, was less than half that of Middle Tennessee. Although all of the counties that lay within the Tennessee Valley had aggregate farm cash values that were as much as $5,000,000, there were no concentrated areas of farm wealth, as could be found in much of Middle Tennessee and parts of West Tennessee (see Figure 4).[8]

East Tennessee produced no large quantities of specialized cash crops. If anything, its farming was more diversified, although less prosperous, than the other regions. Of the major agricultural crops produced in the state, East Tennessee had a slight edge only in wheat

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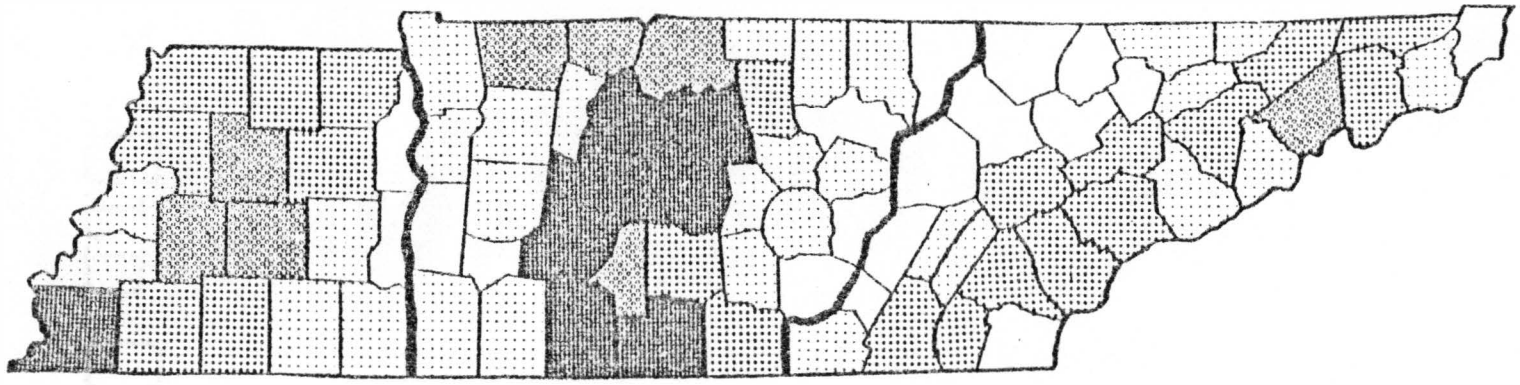
[7]Eighth Census, Population, I, 456-50; Campbell, Attitude of Tennesseans Toward the Union, 34-35.

[8]Eighth Census, Agriculture in the United States in 1860, II, 132, 136.

Figure 3. Percentage of land that was improved farm acreage.

Source: 1860 Census.



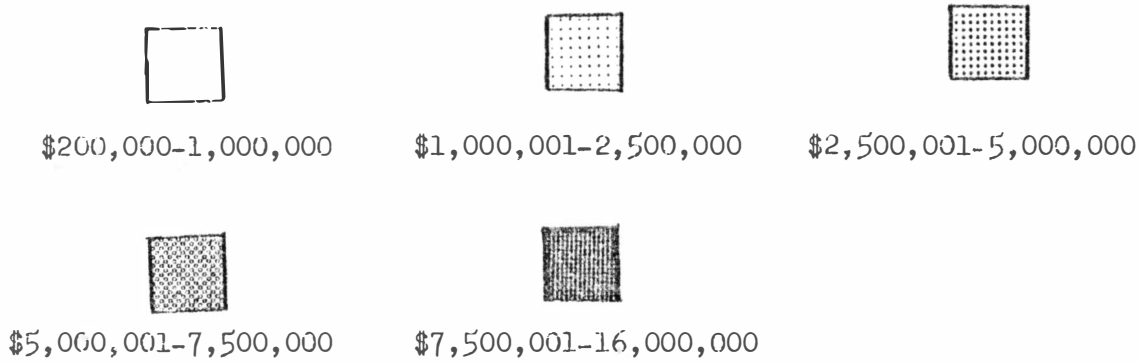


Figure 4. Cash value of farms (in dollars).

Source: 1860 Census.

production in 1860--2,400,000 bushels as compared to 2,100,000 in Middle Tennessee and 900,000 in West Tennessee. But it produced only 20 percent of the state's corn crop; and except for a few areas in the Tennessee Valley, it was hardly comparable to Middle and West Tennessee in tobacco raising. Only five of the eastern counties produced over one hundred bales of cotton in 1860, as compared to eighteen in Middle Tennessee and sixteen in West Tennessee; and the region as a whole produced less than 3 percent of the state's total cotton crop.[9] As one East Tennessean observed, "Our soil is poor in comparison with . . . Middle Tennessee or in comparison with the Western District, and we have it not within our reach, as a people to become rich. . . ." But to an Ohio soldier stationed in the region during the war, the problem was not a geographical one. The climate was good, he maintained, but the land was miserably cultivated; and agricultural methods were by no means modern. "If some Northern farmers were to settle here," he assured his father, "this would be one of the most productive sections in the U. S."[10]

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[9] Ibid., 132-37; Lewis C. Gray, History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860 (2 vols.; New York, 1941), II, 757-58, 816, 878.

[10] Samuel C. Williams (ed.), "Journal of Events (1825-1873) of David Anderson Deaderick," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 8 (1936), 130; Private Wilson S. Miller to H. J. Miller, March 20, 1865, Wilson S. Miller MSS, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville (hereinafter cited as TSLA). For comparative case studies of East Tennessee agriculture to the rest of the state, see Blanche Henry Clark, The Tennessee Yeomen, 1840-1860 (Nashville, 1942) and Frank L. and Harriet C. Owsley, "The Economic Structure of Rural Tennessee, 1850-1860," Journal of Southern History, VIII (1942), 161-82. Clark and the Owsleys conclude that the cash value of farms and overall agricultural production in East Tennessee lagged behind. Their conclusions could be questioned, because they examine statistics from counties only in upper East Tennessee; nevertheless combined statistics for all of the region's thirty-one counties still show the supremacy of West and Middle Tennessee

Only in manufacturing was East Tennessee's economy in any way on a parity with the remainder of the state. While Middle Tennessee had a capital investment of $6,329,000 (45 percent of the state's total), East Tennessee was not far behind with $5,870,000 (41 percent); and more than 39 percent of the state's industrial establishments was located in East Tennessee as opposed to 41 percent in Middle Tennessee. In many eastern counties, Hamilton, Knox, Polk, Marion, and Washington, for example, income from manufacturing was more important to the local economy than agriculture. East Tennessee led the state in flour and meal production, reflecting a close tie between local farm production and manufacturing. And large quantities of valuable minerals such as copper, iron ore, and bituminous coal were extracted from the East Tennessee mountains.[11]

Despite the significance of manufacturing to East Tennessee's economy, the region was again overshadowed by Middle Tennessee. For example, the annual value of manufactured products for Davidson and Montgomery counties alone was half that of all of East Tennessee (see Figure 5). And the industries of the eastern counties were somewhat less sophisticated than Middle Tennessee's which led the state in products such as carriages, agricultural implements, machinery and tools, fire arms, and finished leather goods.[12] But another notable factor differentiated

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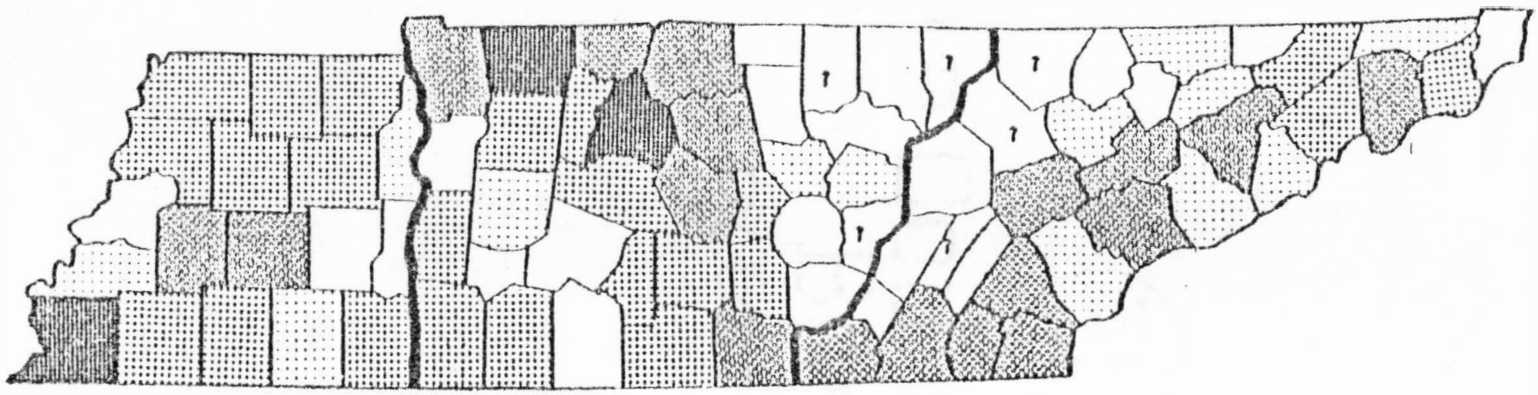
agriculture. Tied to this deficiency was a general lack of wealth in East Tennessee. The average wealth per family in 1860 was only $2,830 as compared to $5,530 for the state as a whole. In Middle Tennessee it was $6,640 and in West Tennessee it was $7,130. Eighth Census, Statistics in the United States in 1860, IV, 312, 348.

[11] Eighth Census, Manufacturing in the United States, III, 560-79.

[12] Ibid.



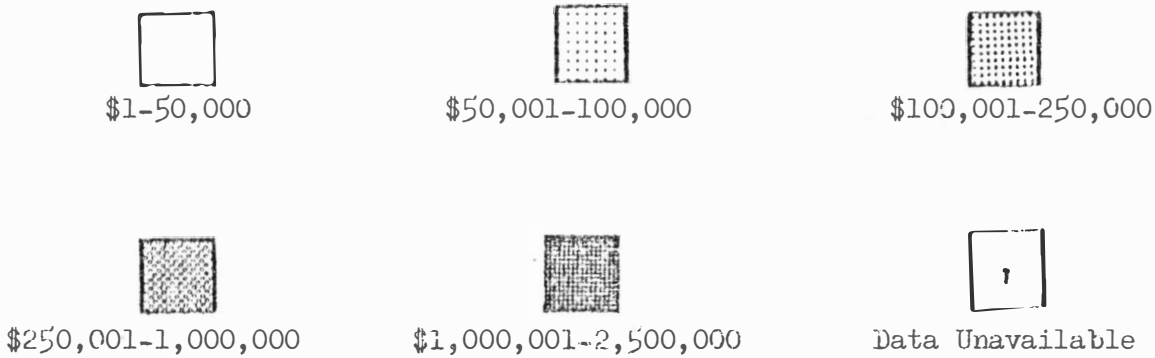


Figure 5. Annual value of manufactured products (in dollars).

Source: 1860 Census.

East Tennessee manufacturing from both Middle and West Tennessee. The leading East Tennessee products, flour and meal and raw materials, were not greatly dependent on the institution of slavery. Although slaves were used in the mining and milling process and some East Tennessee farmers used slave labor in wheat production, the region's industries were not closely tied to the peculiar institution. Yet in Middle and West Tennessee, where manufactured tobacco products, cotton goods, and sawed lumber were a significant part of the economy, slave labor played a crucial role in providing the raw materials for the manufacturer.

Indeed probably the most striking dissimilarity between East Tennessee and the other divisions was the relative importance of slavery to each. In 1860 slaves made up 29 percent of Middle Tennessee's population and nearly 33.5 percent of West Tennessee's, but only 9.2 percent of East Tennessee's population (see Figure 6). With regard to slaveholding, it should be noted that in only two of the thirty-one counties in East Tennessee, did as much as 4 percent of the white population own slaves. Of the few East Tennessee slaveholders, most owned less than five slaves; and those who owned more than twenty were few and widely dispersed when compared to the rest of the state (see Figure 7).[13]

As will be discussed more thoroughly in a later chapter, most East Tennesseans did not object to slavery *per se*, but they did not favor its growth and expansion. For the most part they made no major attempt

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[13]Eighth Census, *Population*, I, 466-67, 238-39. In 1860, East Tennessee had only 26,874 slaves out of 275,719 in the state as a whole (or slightly less than 10 percent of the total). However, Middle and West Tennessee each had approximately 45 percent of the state's slave population.

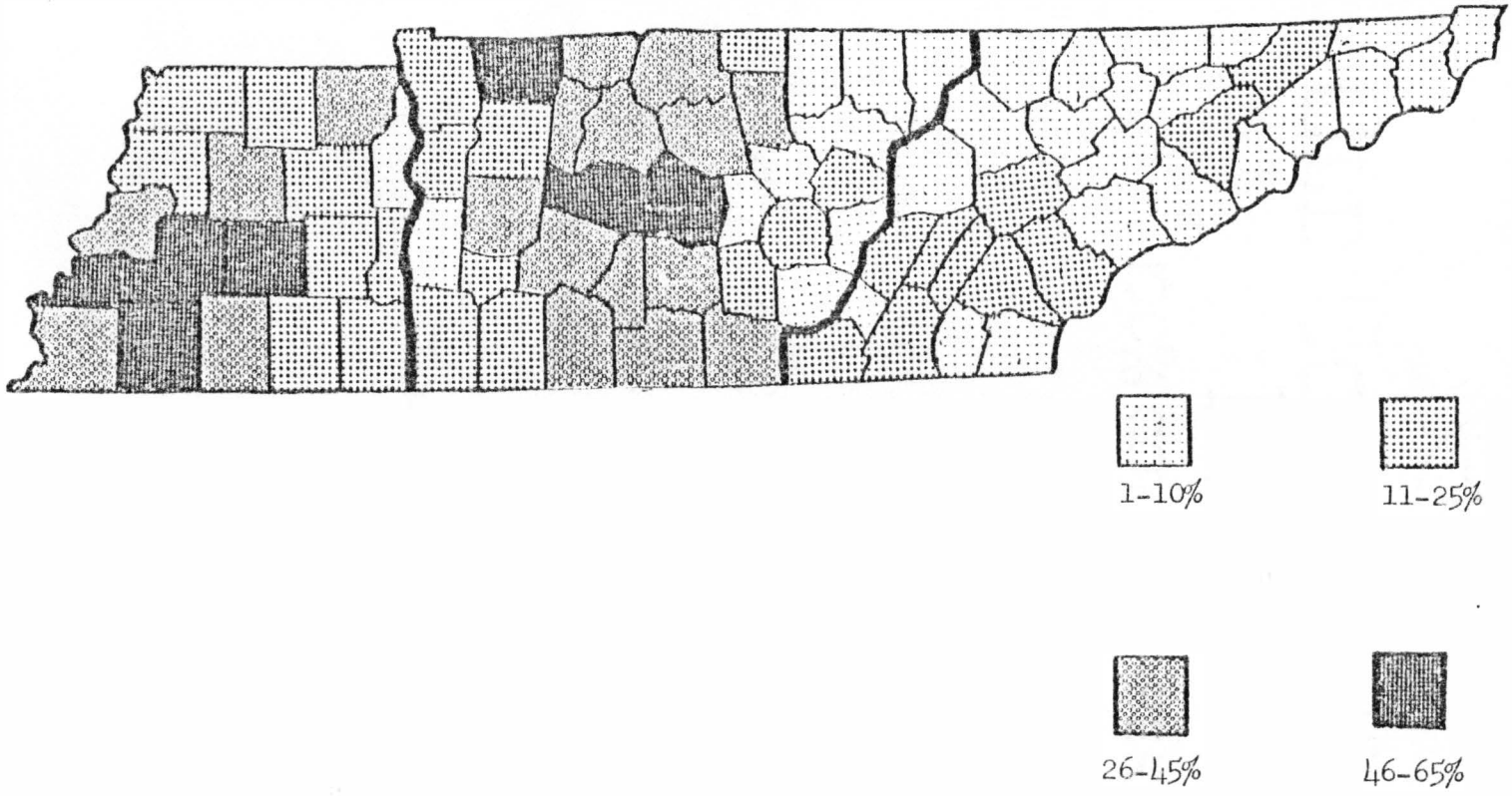
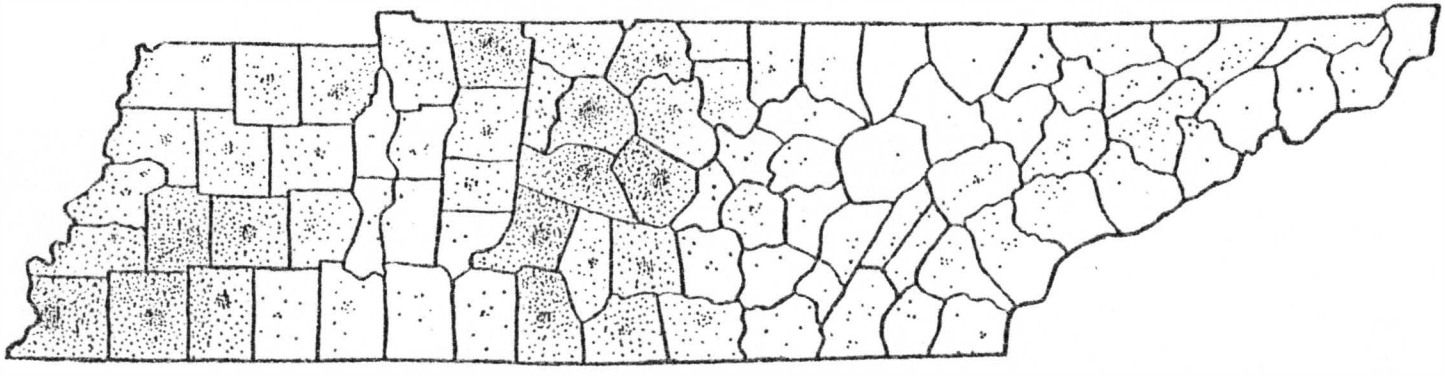


Figure 6. Slave population (percent of total population).

Source: 1860 Census.



Each Dot Represents One Slaveholder

Figure 7. Slaveholders with twenty or more slaves.

Source: 1860 Census.

to uphold an institution in which they had little vested interest. Also a fear arose that avid pro- or anti-slavery arguments would merely lead to a disruption of the republic. As Unionist Oliver P. Temple of Knoxville later observed, "The overpowering influence of slavery, the fear of falling under the condemnation of the mighty oligarchy, of slaveholders, to some extent had paralyzed the minds" of many East Tennesseans. But at the same time, there was "constantly presented . . . the dark picture of the horrible desolation to be wrought in the South by Abolition rule."[14]

Over the years, East Tennesseans had become increasingly conscious of their separateness. From the beginning of the Watauga Association in the 1770s, down through the ill-fated attempt at the separate statehood of Franklin in the 1780s, and on, the region had felt a social, economic, and geographical completeness which it never totally relinquished. During the early 1840s, editor William G. Brownlow pursued the idea of separate statehood with a vigor suggestive of a religious crusade. In 1841, he declared that the time had come to cease paying tribute to Middle Tennessee. To Brownlow, East Tennesseans had been too long in the position of "mere supplicants at the gate of the Nashville temple. . . ." Ezekiel Birdseye of Newport called for a separate state of East Tennessee without slavery and a meeting was held in Greeneville to consider forming a new state which would be increased in size by the annexation of parts of North Carolina and Virginia. The next year Andrew Johnson introduced a bill in the state senate for this purpose, but it was voted down.[15]

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[14] Oliver P. Temple, Notable Men of Tennessee from 1833 to 1875 (New York, 1912), 44-46.

[15] Jonesborough Whig, December 15, 1841, quoted in Lacy, Vanquished Volunteers, 121; Hamer, Tennessee, I, 557.

The issue of separation lay dormant for another twenty years. But after the dramatic national events of 1860 and early 1861, the belief arose that Middle Tennessee, allied with West Tennessee, was pursuing a course divergent to the interests of the eastern portion of the state. As the rest of the state increasingly leaned toward the Confederacy, ideas of resistance and separation once again emerged in the minds of many in the east. As editor Brownlow, the leading spokesman for East Tennessee Unionists, put it, the eastern section had nothing in common with the cotton states. "We are a grain-growing and stock raising people," he wrote, "and we can conduct a cheap government and live independently inhabiting the Switzerland of America."[16]

Granted the various factors that made East Tennessee distinct from the rest of the state, it would be a mistake, however, to assume that East Tennesseans were unanimous in their devotion to the Union. Indeed large pockets of Confederate sympathizers existed throughout much of the region and in many ways the 1861-65 period was a civil war within a civil war in East Tennessee because of the divided loyalties that existed there.

It is not difficult to determine the areas of pro-Confederate strength in East Tennessee. Sentiment for secession was most prevalent in the lower portion of the region where Polk, Monroe, Rhea, Meigs, and Sequatchie counties on June 8 voted for the separation of Tennessee from the Union. Also Sullivan County, alone in upper East Tennessee, gave strong support to secession and the Confederate cause (see Figure 8).

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[16]Knoxville Whig, January 26, 1861.

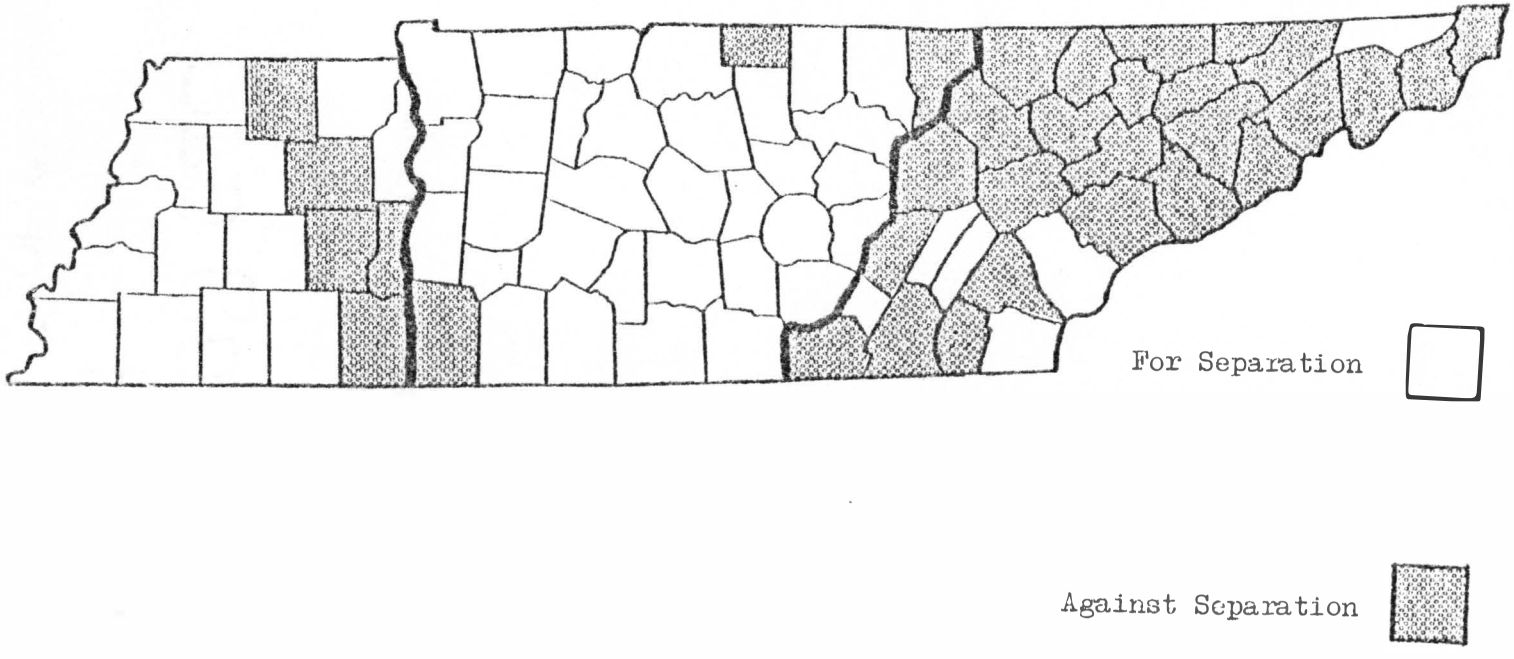

Figure 8. June 8, 1861, referendum on secession.

Soon after Fort Sumter, young men from these counties flocked to the Southern military ranks in large numbers. For example, over 80 percent of white males of fighting age (18 to 45) in Meigs and Rhea counties, respectively, joined the Confederate army. Several companies of Rebel troops were mustered in Sullivan County, but no Federal companies were raised there. Also throughout the region, sympathy for the Southern cause was very evident in urban areas, especially those located along the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad. Chattanooga, Cleveland, Athens, Knoxville, Morristown, and Greeneville were located in counties that voted against separation on June 8, yet each of these towns supported it.[17]

There are no simple answers to why certain areas or certain individuals in the region cast their lot with the Confederacy, or for that matter the Union. Nevertheless, some general conclusions based on the historical record and the census provide some clues. For one, prior to the Civil War there had been division within the region over certain social, political, and economic issues. In his study of East Tennessee during the first half of the 19th century, Eric Lacy delineates three sub-regions within East Tennessee--upper, central, and lower. Between 1839 and 1860, while the Whig party took firm control in the central part with Knoxville as its headquarters, areas of Democratic strength developed in lower and upper East Tennessee. But more often than not, upper and central East Tennessee coalesced on certain key issues regardless of

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[17] V. C. Allen, Rhea and Meigs County in the Confederate War (no place, 1908), 6; Oliver Taylor, Historic Sullivan, A History of Sullivan County, Tennessee (Bristol, 1909), 215.

party affiliation. During the 1830s and 1840s these two sub-regions urged state aid for internal improvements in clearing rivers, while the lower portion pushed for railway construction. In the early 1850s, upper and central East Tennessee strongly favored a state educational tax, while the lower portion opposed it. The lower East, which had a larger slave population, pushed for a ban on abolitionist literature in 1835 and the exemption of slaves from taxation in 1857; but the other portions had objected to these measures. During the move for East Tennessee statehood in the 1840s, the chief advocates came from central and upper East Tennessee, while the lower sub-region exhibited general opposition to the scheme. Thus it seems that the Civil War and the immediate events surrounding it were merely a continuation, albeit a more violent continuation, of discord within the region.[18]

Did pro-secession East Tennesseans support the Confederacy to defend slavery? There is a recognizable correlation between the votes on secession and the slave population. In 1860, slaves composed about 7.5 percent of the population in upper and central East Tennessee, but more than 13.2 percent in the lower sub-region. Knoxville, Greeneville, and Athens had higher percentages of blacks than their immediate surrounding areas. The correlation also continues in questionnaires of East Tennessee Civil War veterans taken nearly sixty years after the war. In these questionnaires which were sent to all living Civil War veterans in Tennessee, State Librarian John Trotwood Moore asked each man, among other things, if he owned slaves before the war and how many. Of one

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[18] Lacy, Vanquished Volunteers, 121-29, 184-89.

hundred Confederate questionnaires surveyed at random, 34 (34 percent) of the veterans answered that they had owned a total of 306 slaves, for an average of 9 slaves per slaveholder. Of fifty Union veterans, only 3 (6 percent) owned a total of 11 slaves for an average of almost 4 per slaveholder. Not surprisingly, slightly over half of the Confederate veterans surveyed listed locations in lower East Tennessee or Sullivan County as their place of residence at the time of enlistment.[19]

Several East Tennesseans saw slavery as a definite issue in determining loyalty. Temple, for example, pointed out that although many non-slaveholding East Tennesseans favored secession and although there were many slaveholders in the region who remained loyal to the Union, "the majority of slaveholders favored secession." Prior to the June 8 referendum, the Cleveland Banner urged its readers to vote for separation "so we may be independent of a government that would crush our institutions and make us the equal of the Negro."[20]

The correlation between slavery and pro-secessionism in East Tennessee does not hold up perfectly. As will be discussed in more detail in later chapters, many leading Unionists such as Horace Maynard, John Baxter, William Heiskell, and T. A. R. Nelson were slaveholders. Yet they believed that slavery would be better protected under the Union

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[19]Questionnaires of Civil War Veterans, passim, TSLA.

[20]Temple, East Tennessee, 542; Cleveland Banner, May 24, 1861. See also comments in William Davis to Mary C. Wilson, September 6, 1861, Mary C. Wilson MSS, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (hereinafter cited as SHC); and Samuel A. Lyle to J. M. Lyle, January 23, 1862, Lyle-Siler MSS, ibid.

and that secession was a much too radical step. Hawkins, Jefferson, and Bledsoe counties likewise contained higher percentages of slaves than Sullivan or any of the Confederate counties in lower East Tennessee, but each voted substantially against separation (see Figure 8, p. 24). Polk County had a 5 percent slave population and was pro-Confederate, yet adjacent McMinn County had a 14 percent slave population and remained loyal to the Union. In Meigs County, the only civil district to vote against separation on June 8 and to send most of its men into the Federal army ironically contained the largest number of slaves. Thus, although slavery was one factor in shaping the attitudes of many East Tennesseans, it was not the only one.[21]

While economic factors may have influenced East Tennessee to take a divergent stand on secession from the rest of the state, they may have also led to dissension within the region. In 1888 Thomas W. Humes maintained that most wealthy and aristocratic East Tennesseans had supported the Confederacy, while the "poorer class" had remained loyal to the Union. And a few years later, another East Tennessean stated that on the eve of the Civil War "lines were somewhat sharply drawn in social matters . . . birth and family amounted to much more than now, and they who were not fortunate in these respects naturally evinced occasional resentment." Although there were numerous exceptions, the "dominant families" were mainly for the South, while "families less favored in worldly matters" opposed them. When Brownlow returned to Knoxville in the fall of 1863 after two years of forced exile, he spared little sympathy for the upper

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[21]Stewart Lillard, Meigs County, Tennessee (Sewanee, Tennessee, 1975), 112.

classes of the region to whom he attributed much of the Unionist suffering. To him they were a class of people "whose consciousness of superiority has been sticking out, whenever a family has owned from three to ten kinky headed Negroes."[22]

Statistical evidence lends some support to the arguments of these East Tennesseans. Verton Queener pointed out an undisputed lack of wealth in East Tennessee as compared to the rest of the state, but he also demonstrated that of the six counties which voted for separation, all but Sequatchie averaged more wealth per family than that of families in the region as a whole. Moreover the various towns in East Tennessee, especially Knoxville, had larger concentrations of wealth than the surrounding rural areas. Another of my surveys of veterans questionnaires reveals that not only did East Tennessee Confederates own more slaves than their Union counterparts, 82 percent owned land that averaged 391 acres per holding, while only 64 percent of the Union veterans owned land which averaged 196 acres.[23]

As pointed out by Lacy, there is also a correlation between development of manufacturing and the Unionist vote. Sullivan County, for example, trailed far behind adjacent counties in the amount invested in manufacturing and in its annual value of manufactured products (see Figure 5, p. 18). Of the pro-secession counties, in lower East Tennessee, only Polk County with its large copper works had major investments

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[22] Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 91; A. D. Smith, East Tennessee, 470; Knoxville Whig, February 20, 1864.

[23] Queener, "East Tennessee Sentiment and the Secession Movement," 70; Questionnaires of Civil War Veterans, passim, TSLA.

in manufacturing. Temple, who would be a strong advocate of industrialization in East Tennessee after the war, maintained that several East Tennessee Whigs feared that the free trade philosophy of the Southern planters conflicted with their desire for the economic development of the region. Therefore many Unionists foresaw a Southern republic dominated by leaders and interests alien to East Tennessee. Brownlow was convinced that a confederacy of the cotton and border states would mean the economic ruin of the latter. In the spring and summer of 1861 he waged an editorial campaign warning of the burdensome taxes that would be imposed by the Confederate government. He appealed to every Union man in Tennessee "to be at the polls [on June 8] and cast his vote against a taxation that would break up the people and bankrupt the state."[24]

But just as slavery could not have been the only factor in explaining sectionalism within the region, neither could the economy. For example, some of the counties of central and upper East Tennessee had economies richer in agricultural production than industrial development; yet they voted against separation by wide margins. Temple gave another possible explanation for the general pro-secession attitude of East Tennessee urban areas. He observed that towns along the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad had a constant flow of information from the newly-created Confederacy and that people in these areas were quite often swept up in the delirious emotion of the moment when regiments from Dixie, wearing bright uniforms and waving their new Confederate banners, passed through on their way to Virginia. A Confederate officer from Alabama

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[24]Temple, Notable Men, 34-35; Knoxville Whig, June 1, 1861.

traveling through East Tennessee commented in the late summer of 1861 that "there is still considerable feeling among the people generally on the Union question, but along the railroad route there was the greatest enthusiasm shown to us."[25]

As a final factor to be considered, it should be noted that while there was a political cleavage between the eastern counties and the rest of the state--this split was also apparent within East Tennessee. Temple maintained that the "great body of Union followers were old Whigs." Although there is no way to verify his figures, he estimated that four-fifths of these Whigs and three-fifths of the 1860 Democrats supported the Union. A majority of the delegates to the East Tennessee Convention of Unionists in 1861 were probably Whig. And if one looks at the results of the June referendum on secession, there seems to be a relationship between political tradition and sectionalism. All of the eastern counties which voted to secede were traditionally Democratic except Sequatchie which was too new to be classified. This correlation breaks down when one considers that four traditionally Democratic counties in upper East Tennessee (Claiborne, Hancock, Hawkins, and Greene) voted almost four to one against secession. But Temple attributed the loyalty of these counties to the tremendous political influence of Andrew Johnson. Earlier in the year W. C. Kyle of Rogersville had commented, "The leaders of the Democratic party are generally for secession though the masses are

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[25]Temple, East Tennessee, 187-88; Alexander D. Coffee to "wife," August 22, 1861, Coffee MSS, SHC. See also Myra Inman Diary, May 3, 8, July 12, 1861, ibid.; and John B. Gordon, Reminiscences of the Civil War (New York, 1904), 27-28.

against it, but for Gov. Johnson's speech we would have had trouble in East Tenn."[26]

Some East Tennesseans saw an intimate relationship between party loyalty and national loyalty. Brownlow charged that the Southern Democrats had long plotted secession. Commenting on their nomination of John C. Breckinridge for the presidency, he declared that they had just one object in mind, "the dissolution of this Union, and the 'precipitating of the Cotton States in a revolution.'" David A. Deaderick, a former Whig from Knoxville, would eventually become pro-Confederate, but in early 1861 he blamed the impending Civil War on "the legitimate workings of Democracy." To him states rights, "an original democratic doctrine," had culminated in disunion and civil strife.[27]

Pro-secession Democrats likewise showed a distaste for their old political enemies who had remained loyal to the Federal government. One Democrat in Hawkins County lamented on the eve of the June 8 referendum that many East Tennesseans had become Tories as in the days of the Revolution. "Federalism, Whiggism of the 1836 stripe & Know-nothingism have case hardened an opposition to Democracy among a portion of our population & [it] is incorrigibly fixed in them," he concluded. And after Fort Sumter and Governor Isham G. Harris' call for Confederate

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[26]Temple, East Tennessee, 540-41; Campbell, Attitude of Tennesseans, 131; W. C. Kyle to T. A. R. Nelson, February 6, 1861, Nelson MSS, McClung Historical Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville (hereinafter cited as McClung Collection).

[27]William G. Brownlow, Sketches of the Rise, Progress, and Decline of Secession; with a Narrative of Personal Adventures among the Rebels [Parson Brownlow's Book], 191; Williams (ed.), "Journal of Events," 96.

volunteers, W. M. Stakely of Madisonville rejoiced that the "strong Union Whig party in Tennessee has given way." Thus, it seems that part but not all of East Tennessee's differences may be attributed to political tradition. In any event, by mid-summer 1861, as one student of the region stated, "East Tennessee was left a disunited section of a factional state in a country rent asunder by civil war."[28]

Even with these internal divisions, the fact remained that in 1861, East Tennessee was out of step with the rest of the South. The region's actions in the secession crisis and the leaders who would emerge only confirmed East Tennessee's position as part of "the Other South."

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[28] H. Watterson to W. H. Watterson, June 7, 1861, Watterson MSS, McClung Collection; W. M. Stakely to Carrie Stakely, April 27, 1861, Stakely-Hall MSS, ibid.; Lacy, Vanquished Volunteers, 187.

CHAPTER II

RISE OF THE TORIES: THE SECESSION CRISIS IN EAST TENNESSEE

The various social, political, economic, and geographic factors that marked East Tennessee as a unique region played a major role in determining its Union sympathies during the Civil War. These alone, however, do not provide a completely satisfactory explanation for East Tennessee's wartime stance. After all, other regions of the South--northern Georgia and Alabama, southwestern Virginia, and parts of Arkansas, for example--possessed very similar characteristics, yet they sided with the Confederacy. These other regions had pockets of strong Unionism, to be sure, but Unionism did not predominate as it did in East Tennessee. One critical factor that contributed to East Tennessee's overwhelming loyalty to the Federal government was active Unionist leadership.

Writing long after the war, Knoxville attorney Oliver P. Temple recalled that East Tennessee Unionists marshalled their forces early in the secession crisis at a time when public opinion was hesitant. This early organization solidified East Tennessee views in support of the Union. Temple's contention that these events were some of the most important in the state's history may be exaggerated, but he was correct in asserting that Unionists gained an ascendancy through aggressive leadership in the region as early as November, 1860.[1] Well into the summer of

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[1]Temple, East Tennessee, 159-60.

1861, men like Temple, Senator Andrew Johnson, Congressmen T. A. R. Nelson and Horace Maynard, editor William G. Brownlow of the powerful Knoxville Whig, and several others of lesser renown maintained an energetic and vocal stand for the Union. Well-publicized gatherings of over four-hundred Unionists in Knoxville in May and Greeneville in June demonstrated the size and boldness of Unionist leadership in the region. Although East Tennessee secessionists had active spokesmen in Landon C. Haynes, J. G. M. Ramsey, John Crozier, William G. Swan, Charles W. Charlton, and others, none could match the political talent and reputation, not to mention the numbers, of the Unionists. This chapter will, therefore, examine the secession crisis in East Tennessee, the role of the Unionist leadership in its attempts to preserve the region for the Union, and the initial efforts of Confederate authorities to dissipate Unionism.

East Tennessee's national sympathies were evident as early as November, 1860, when it gave a majority to John Bell of the Constitutional Union party, rather than to the Southern Democratic party. A few weeks after the election, mass meetings of Unionists in Knoxville denounced those who advocated secession just because of the election of Republican Abraham Lincoln. Then in early 1861 the East Tennessee Unionist commitment was put to a critical test as the states of the lower South broke all ties with the Federal government and pressure within Tennessee mounted to follow suit. In January, Governor Isham G. Harris called the General Assembly into special session; and in a message to the lawmakers, he made clear his conviction that the destiny of Tennessee stood with the South. He recommended that the legislature call for a

convention in which delegates would decide what action was necessary "for the future security of the rights and peace" of Tennesseans. The legislature agreed, but demanded that the decision for a convention should be determined by the voters of Tennessee in a referendum. Therefore, both houses passed the necessary legislation unanimously and set February 9 as the date for the convention referendum.[2]

Canvassing for and against a convention soon started throughout the state and it was evident even before the referendum which way most East Tennesseans would vote. One disgusted secessionist from Polk County admitted that East Tennessee did not favor secession; "She is abolitionized," he concluded.[3]

On the appointed day, Tennesseans rejected the convention by a statewide vote of almost 69,000 (55 percent) to 58,000 (45 percent). While West Tennessee voted for convention 65 percent to 35 percent, Middle Tennessee voted against it by the narrow margin of 2,400

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[2]Ibid., 160; Robert H. White (ed.), Messages of the Governors of Tennessee, 1857-1869 (8 vols.; Nashville, 1952-72), V, 266-71.

[3]Ben H. McClary (ed.), "The Education of a Southern Mind: Extracts from the Diary of John Coffee Williamson, 1860-1861," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 32 (1960), 104. For examples of the intensity of the canvass and the active organizational efforts of the Unionists, see Horace Maynard to Oliver P. Temple, January 29, 1861, Temple MSS, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville (hereinafter cited as UT Special Collections), and Greeneville Democrat, January 30, 1861. During the canvass, newly selected President Jefferson Davis passed through Chattanooga on his way to the inaugural in Montgomery. Unionists gave Davis an early impression of the region's sympathies when they heckled a speech he delivered at the Crutchfield House. This incident may have influenced the Confederate President later to maintain a stern policy in East Tennessee. For an account of the incident, see Thomas Crutchfield to James K. Herod, December 27, 1863, Crutchfield MSS, TSLA.

(51 percent to 49 percent), and East Tennesseans, as expected, rejected it 33,000 to less than 8,000 (or 81 percent opposed). The real issue of secession, however, had not yet been placed directly before the people--only the call for a convention to discuss the state's future. Even though William G. Brownlow gloated that East Tennessee "had done the damage to the rebels, and she can do it again," the truth was that the region had long since ceased to hold the balance of power in state affairs; and it was quite possible that Tennessee might yet take the road to disunion.[4]

After the February 9 referendum most East Tennesseans hoped in vain that the issue of secession had been settled. What optimism they may have had quickly dissolved when voices of disunion were increasingly raised in Middle and West Tennessee after Lincoln's inauguration. Then on April 12 Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter and two days later President Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 volunteers to suppress the rebellious Southern states. When the President's summons for troops reached Governor Harris, he stoutly refused, but promised to have 50,000 men ready "for the defense of our rights and those of our Southern brothers." He called the legislature into special session on April 25 and urged upon it a declaration of Tennessee's independence from the United States. Accordingly on May 6 the lawmakers drafted "A Declaration of Independence," stipulating that it should be submitted to the

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[4]Most East Tennessee counties voted heavily against convention, although Sullivan and Meigs voted for it. Nashville Union and American, March 3, 1861; Campbell, Attitude of Tennesseans toward the Union, 178-79; Knoxville Whig, March 2, 1861.

people for ratification or rejection on June 8. Acting as if the declaration had already been approved, Harris, as authorized by the General Assembly, entered Tennessee into a military league with the Confederacy in early May. He gave Confederate authorities permission to erect a battery at Memphis and encouraged volunteers to join the Southern army.[5]

The impact of these developments was dramatic in Tennessee. Unionist devotion that existed in Middle and West Tennessee was swept aside by an angry sentiment ready to resist the Lincoln government.[6] In East Tennessee, however, the issues and the future were by no means clear. Although most did not completely approve of Lincoln's moves to suppress the seceded states, they were, if anything, more appalled by the actions of Governor Harris and the legislature. A few citizens argued that Tennessee should support neither faction; it would be better to declare neutrality as neighboring Kentucky would eventually do. Others suggested

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[5]White, Messages of the Governors, V, 279-303. J. G. M. Ramsey of Knoxville wrote the governor the day before he called the legislature into special session, urging Harris to proclaim Tennessee out of the Union and then allow the citizens to vote on the action at a future date. J. G. M. Ramsey to Isham G. Harris, April 24, 1861, copy in William Rule MSS, McClung Collection.

[6]In parts of East Tennessee also, excitement over recent events mounted considerably as secessionists held rallies and organized units of Confederate troops. At Madisonville, secessionists illuminated public and private buildings when news of Fort Sumter arrived; and a recently made "secession flag" was run up the court house pole. William Stakely, town postmaster, reported that "no other flag is thrown to the breeze here." W. M. Stakely to Carrie Stakely, April 17, 1861, Stakely-Hall MSS, McClung Collection. For secessionist activities in Jonesboro, see W. Crouch to Landon C. Haynes, April 24, 1861, T. A. R. Nelson MSS, ibid.; and for Chattanooga, see Zella Armstrong, The History of Hamilton County and Chattanooga, Tennessee (2 vols.; Chattanooga, 1940), I, 125.

a union of border states.[7] But diehard East Tennessee Unionists let it be known that complete devotion to the United States was the only course of action to be followed. Every issue of Brownlow's Whig vowed unmistakably that the people of East Tennessee could not abide by the decisions of the Nashville clique. As one contemporary recalled, in the view of many East Tennesseans, a bold attempt had been made "to override the free will and real mind of the people through the usurpation of power and in defiance of State and National constitutions; and by contrivance and force to array Tennessee in line with the States armed against the United States."[8]

With the June 8 referendum a matter of weeks away, a group of about fifteen prominent Knox County Unionists, including Parson Brownlow, Oliver Temple, John Baxter, and Connally Trigg, gathered in mid-May at Temple's law office on South Gay Street in Knoxville. The consensus was that East Tennessee must demonstrate a unified front and must do so quickly. According to Temple, someone suggested a call for a convention of Union men to meet in Knoxville; whereupon Trigg drafted such a summons and all present signed the document. Signatures of other Unionists were subsequently added; and on May 18, Brownlow's Whig headed its columns with a call to the "East Tennessee Convention." Brownlow continually

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[7]A few days after the firing on Fort Sumter, A. W. Howard of Greeneville lashed out at the contending sectional factions. "The South has acted hastily and unwisely," he maintained, but "the Border States never will join hands with the Diabolical Corruptions of Black Republicanism." To Howard, the only solution was for the border states to declare themselves as the United States, because the North and South could no longer lay claim to the title. A. W. Howard to T. A. R. Nelson, April 17, 1861, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection.

[8]Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 105.

gave prominent editorial attention to the forthcoming meeting. He asserted, "We are the earnest, determined, and not to be intimidated advocates of peace, based on honorable terms and upon the idea of justice to Union men." For this sort of settlement, "we are willing to undergo any personal sacrifices. . . ." The convention would be held with an open door and determine what ought to be done "having the peace and quiet of the country in view." He went on to express hope that Unionists would be given "fair play" at the ballot box on June 8, but if not "we will offer bold, and determined resistance--let it end in what it may, aye, even in civil war and death!"[9]

As news of the convention spread by the pages of the Whig (it had a circulation of over 10,000) or by word of mouth, reaction was immediate throughout the region. For the next two weeks, Brownlow's columns carried reports of Unionist rallies held throughout East Tennessee. An investigation of these gatherings indicates the process by which the delegates to the regional convention were chosen and also sheds light on attitudinal responses. Most of the meetings were held on a county-wide basis, although some were conducted on a level as small as civil district. In most cases public notice was given a few days in advance and on the appointed day "professed Union men" gathered at the county seat. A chairman, usually a prominent local professional or political figure, was elected; he either appointed a committee to choose delegates to the convention or selected the delegates himself. Speeches were delivered

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[9]Temple, East Tennessee, 340-41; Knoxville Whig, May 18, 25, 1861.

and quite often a series of resolutions was passed instructing the delegates about their duties.

These Unionist rallies mirrored the feelings of the people in various locales. In Greeneville, with fifty American flags flying and a brass band blaring out the "Star Spangled Banner," Unionists passed resolutions condemning Governor Harris and others for their "flagrant usurpation" of power and they endorsed the upcoming Knoxville Convention. After the selection of delegates, the meeting was capped by one of Andrew Johnson's passionate Union speeches. In Cleveland, a crowd of 500 gathered after the called muster of the local regiment of Tennessee militia, chose delegates, then passed resolutions that attacked Jefferson Davis and lauded the memory of Andrew Jackson. Despite strong pro-Southern sentiment in their county, Unionists in Monroe County resolved that "we will neither be scared, hired, coaxed, nor driven into any revolutionary measure and ruinous legislation. . . ." A Knox County gathering simply declared "let every effort be made to promote the best interest of the country, and prevent anything like a conflict between citizens." A concerned citizen from Pikeville reported that Bledsoe County delegates would go to Knoxville and then decide their course of action. "We are isolated here," he said, "and have but little knowledge of the feeling in E. Tennessee, or what her leading men contemplate to do in this fearful crisis."[10]

Other meetings and men, however, were somewhat more radical in tone. Upon being chosen head of the Jefferson County delegation,

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[10]Knoxville Whig, May 25, June 1, 1861; Thomas N. Frazier to Oliver P. Temple, May 18, 1861, Temple MSS, UT Special Collections.

James P. Swan exclaimed before an excited crowd, "if our brethren of the South commit national sin, let them account for themselves, . . . if Tennesseans violate the laws of the land, let them be punished." Delegates from Union County were instructed that if expedient, they were "to go for the withdrawal of this from the other divisions of the State, for the purposes of maintaining our rights under the Constitution of the United States." The Anderson County meeting similarly advised its delegation.[11]

How accurately did these meetings reflect local opinion? This is difficult to know precisely, but some clues are afforded by comparing the reports of the rallies and the size of the delegations to the voting statistics of the June 8 referendum. Counties such as Anderson, Blount, Greene, Jefferson, and Sevier, which held elaborate and well-organized rallies, reflecting strong and active Unionist leadership, sent large delegations to the East Tennessee Convention. On June 8 each of these counties voted against separation by at least three to one margins. On the other hand, of the six East Tennessee counties which voted for separation,[12] Unionist rallies either were not held or were so small and unpretentious that no report was made of them. The only exception was the meeting held in Monroe County. Four of these counties sent relatively small delegations to Knoxville and two, Sequatchie and Rhea, did not send any delegates.

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[11] Knoxville Whig, June 1, 8, May 25, 1861.

[12] These were Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Sequatchie, and Sullivan.

One thing is certain: the groups that gathered in Knoxville by no means represented an equitable geographic distribution of East Tennesseans. Since the official call for convention had specified no limit on the size of delegations, counties sent as many representatives as they saw fit. Of the twenty-nine counties (including Fentress of Middle Tennessee) represented in the Knoxville meeting, slightly over half of the 462 delegates came from Anderson, Blount, Greene, Knox, and Roane alone, indicating that distance must have played a part in limiting the size of some delegations. When the convention met again in Greeneville in June, the largest delegations came from Greene and surrounding counties.[13]

What was the make-up of the delegations who attended the convention? They were not all "prominent Unionists" as one source has stated, nor were they all unprincipled, self-seeking politicians as a Nashville newspaper labelled them.[14] As a matter of fact, previous political experience on the state and national level apparently had little influence upon their selection to the convention. Of the nearly 500 men who convened in Knoxville, only two--T. A. R. Nelson of Washington County and Thomas D. Arnold of Greene--had served in government on the national level. One, James P. Swan, had been state attorney general; and David Patterson, son-in-law of Andrew Johnson, was state circuit judge for the second judicial district in upper East Tennessee. Only twenty-four (5 percent)

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[13]For a list of all of the delegates by county, see Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 347-55.

[14]Stanley J. Folmsbee, Robert E. Corlew, and Enoch L. Mitchell, Tennessee, A Short History (Knoxville, 1969), 325; Nashville Union and American, June 25, 1861.

of the delegates had experience in the state legislature. And of the thirty-one members of the Thirty-third General Assembly (1859-61) from the eastern section, only seven were chosen as delegates to the East Tennessee Convention. At least thirteen (3 percent) of the delegates from six counties were county officers at the time of the convention. William H. Swan and John G. Reeves were sheriffs of Knox and Greene counties, respectively; and eleven members of the convention served as justices of the peace.[15]

In terms of political affiliation, it seems that a strong majority of the delegates were former Whigs, although exact figures cannot be obtained. Certainly the chief organizers of and leading participants in the East Tennessee Convention--Connally Trigg, Parson Brownlow, T. A. R. Nelson, John Baxter, Thomas D. Arnold, Oliver Temple, Frank S. Heiskell, Horace Maynard, and several others--had long been active partisans of the Whig or Opposition party in East Tennessee. Democrats, however, were not excluded. Although he was not a delegate, Senator Andrew Johnson delivered a rousing Union speech at the Knoxville Convention; and his son and son-in-law, both Democrats, were delegates from Greene County. Despite the lack of complete evidence, it seems that the East Tennessee Convention was mainly a Whig affair.[16]

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[15] I obtained the information for legislative experience by cross-checking the delegates with Robert M. McBride (ed.), Biographical Directory of the Tennessee General Assembly (Nashville, 1975). For information concerning other state officials and local government officials, I consulted Charles A. Miller, The Official and Political Manual of the State of Tennessee (Nashville, 1890); Goodspeed Publishing Company, History of Tennessee, from the Earliest Time to the Present . . . (Chicago and Nashville, 1887); and available county records on microfilm in the Archives Section of the Tennessee State Library and Archives.

[16] Temple, East Tennessee, 542.

More concrete evidence concerning other characteristics of the delegates, however, can be gleaned from the 1860 manuscript census, thus possibly providing some clues to the motivations of these men. While the convention seemed to be predominantly Whig in its political leanings, a random sample of forty-six delegates (or 10 percent of the convention), based on the 1860 manuscript census, reveals that a solid majority (65 percent) of the men who gathered in Knoxville were involved in agriculture as an occupation. Thus the commercial-professional groups traditionally associated with the Whig party made up only 35 percent of the convention. However, the leadership was supplied mainly by men who were attorneys or were active in politics. Nelson, Trigg, Maynard, Temple, Baxter, Fleming, and others had spent more of their professional careers in the courtroom or in some kind of elective office.[17]

Most of the delegates were probably well established in their local communities and lived modestly, but comfortably. Thirty-four (73 percent) of the forty-six sampled delegates were forty years of age or older.[18] Forty-one men of the sample (89 percent) owned real property while forty-three (93 percent) held personal property. Yet most were

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[17] I chose the names of delegates randomly from each county represented except those which sent proxies. Because delegates from Anderson, Blount, Greene, Knox, and Roane counties made up slightly over half of the convention, one-half of the delegates sampled came from these counties. The list of delegates in Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, gives an indication of the occupations of some of the men by attaching professional titles to their names. Eighteen delegates (3 percent) were listed as medical doctors, and eight (1.6 percent) were ministers of the Gospel.

[18] Of those delegates sampled, the youngest was twenty two years old, while the oldest was seventy six.

by no means wealthy, especially when compared to members of the Tennessee General Assembly in 1860. While only 40 percent of the state legislators held less than $5,000 in real and personal property respectively,[19] over 60 percent of the delegates to the Knoxville Convention of my sample fell into this category. The convention, however, was not an affair of yeoman farmers. Of the delegates sampled, only one, J. M. Melton of Morgan County, was listed in the census as a farmer with a combined estate value of less than $1,000. And certainly much of the convention's leadership was provided by men who were relatively prosperous. Connally Trigg had a combined estate of nearly $15,000; Oliver Temple possessed an enviable $30,000; and John Baxter was one of the wealthiest delegates with an estate valued at $91,000. But overall the financial holdings of the delegates were reflective of their region's position--poorer than that of the sections west of the Cumberland Plateau.[20]

Further analysis reveals that nineteen (41 percent) of the sampled delegates were slaveholders, which is perhaps surprising considering the small slave population in East Tennessee. One man, W. C. Kyle of Hawkins

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[19]Ralph A. Wooster, Politicians, Planters, and Plain Folk, Courthouse and Statehouse in the Upper South, 1850-1860 (Knoxville, 1975), 158, 162.

[20]In his "Tennessee Voters During the Second Two-Party System, 1836-1860" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alabama, 1973), 162, 171, Frank M. Lowrey, III, analyzes the backgrounds of over six thousand voters by region and party affiliation. Although he finds that from 1854 to 1860 East Tennessee voters with less than $5,000 in real property were only slightly above the state average (47 percent to the state's 44 percent), personal property holdings in East Tennessee were considerably less than those of the state as a whole. Lowrey found that 57 percent of the East Tennessee voters had less than $5,000 in personal property, as compared to only 40 percent statewide.

County, was even listed in the census as a farmer and slave trader.[21] But again when compared to the 1860 Tennessee General Assembly, the number of slaveholders attending the East Tennessee Convention does not appear so inflated. For example, 66 percent of the state legislators were classified as slave owners.[22] It should be pointed out that a majority of the slaveholding delegates to the East Tennessee Convention were men with combined real and personal estate values of over $10,000; of the nineteen who owned slaves, seven held total estates worth between $10,000 and $20,000, while another seven maintained estates valued at $20,000 or more. Despite the high correlation of wealth to slaveholding, most of the slave-owning delegates were not large holders--83 percent owned fewer than ten slaves, and 61 percent less than five. On the other hand, the percentage of slaveholders with less than ten slaves in the Tennessee legislature in 1860 was only 40 percent.[23] Of the delegates sampled, only W. C. Kyle, who understandably possessed fifty-two slaves by virtue of his occupation, could be truly classified as a large slaveholder.

Apparently most of the slaveholding delegates did not feel threatened by the election of Abraham Lincoln; and they were certainly not willing to support the disruption of the Union over the question of slavery. To many of the convention's leading figures, like Oliver Temple,

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[21]Ten of these slaveholders were farmers, while four were merchants, three were attorneys, one a physician, and the other an artisan.

[22]Wooster, Politicians, Planters and Plain Folk, 167.

[23]Computation based on Table 9 of ibid., 41.

John Baxter, Connally Trigg, Horace Maynard, T. A. R. Nelson, and Andrew Johnson, all of whom owned slaves, loyalty to the Union overrode any fears that may have been aroused over the safety of the peculiar institution. It is therefore not surprising that the issue of slavery was not once mentioned in the debates or resolutions of the East Tennessee Convention.

Considering the age and background of the delegates, it is obvious that most had witnessed the gradual decline of their section in state affairs during the past two or three decades. Like Brownlow, many may have developed a distinct distrust for the government in Nashville as an institution now controlled by Middle and West Tennessee, regions they perceived as being dominated by men of wealth, large slaveholdings, and Democratic sympathies. Since most of the delegates had no experience in state politics, and thus no voice in policy in Nashville, they were outsiders who were greatly disturbed by the series of events in recent months and frustrated by their inability to prevent Tennessee's move to secession. By convening in Knoxville, these East Tennesseans no doubt hoped that their opinions could now be officially formulated and expressed. To the organizers of the convention, such expressions might hearten and strengthen the dwindling number of Unionists in Middle and West Tennessee and hopefully save the state for the Union. To some the only alternative was separate statehood for East Tennessee.

On May 29, the delegates began to arrive in large numbers. The organizers who had issued the call a mere two weeks before scarcely anticipated that the response would be so overwhelming. As many of these Unionists reached the city, they passed the fair grounds where eighteen companies of East Tennessee volunteers drilled under a

secession banner. Confederate troops from the Deep South were already passing through the Knoxville depot on their way to the Virginia front. Moreover, some Knoxvillians took a very dim view of the upcoming meeting. The secessionist Knoxville Register maintained that those "who would betray Tennessee into the power of the unholy despotism of the North, are tories, and will bear the stigma of tories."[24]

Despite these disquieting words, the meeting assembled at noon on Thursday, May 30, in a handsome grove in East Knoxville near Temperance Hall.[25] T. A. R. Nelson was selected as president, James G. Spears of Bledsoe County as vice president, and John Fleming as secretary. Nelson addressed the convention for more than an hour with an impassioned Union speech. He reviewed the revolutionary movement that was convulsing the country and attacked the actions of Governor Harris and the legislature. He concluded with an appeal to the delegates to discharge their responsibilities "with calmness and firmness, to submit to no wanton tyranny, and to acquiesce in the will of the people, if constitutionally and legally expressed."[26]

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[24]Temple, East Tennessee, 341; Knoxville Register, May 25, 29, 1861.

[25]The Whig reported that 1,000 delegates "are present and numbers are still making their way into the Hall." Knoxville Whig, June 1, 1861. However, the official proceedings of the convention and subsequent reports in the Whig listed only 462 delegates.

[26]Proceedings of the East Tennessee Convention (Knoxville, 1861), 4, 6, 9. Although twenty-thousand copies of the Proceedings were published by order of the convention, the document is now extremely rare. Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library and the McClung Historical Collection have copies in their holdings. Proceedings of the convention can also be found in the Knoxville Whig, June 8 and 29, 1861; Frank Moore (ed.), The Rebellion Record (12 vols.; New York, 1864), II, 155-58; and The War of the Rebellion . . . Official Records (70 vols.; Washington, 1880-1901), Series 1, LII, pt. 1, pp. 148-56, 168-77.

Upon a motion by Connally Trigg, Nelson appointed twenty-six men to the all-important business committee which was charged with drawing up a series of resolutions. The committee retired to Temperance Hall and deliberated well into the night and part of the following morning. In the meantime, aged General Thomas D. Arnold of Greene County harangued the convention for so long that Andrew Johnson, the next scheduled speaker, decided to wait until Friday. At eight o'clock the next morning the convention assembled and listened to Johnson's withering denunciation of the secession party. But in the midst of the speech, the business committee returned and asked permission to issue its report. Johnson assented and a series of resolutions was read to the convention. After a brief running debate and the adoption of a few amendments, the motions were finally adopted unanimously.

These resolutions were moderate in tone--they were merely a protest of actions taken by the state government and they proposed no method of resistance or rebellion. They praised the freedom of assembly guaranteed in the state constitution, deplored the violation of Federal and state constitutions, condemned the secession leaders, asserted that the people were not responsible for the peril facing them, and denounced Tennessee's leadership for pushing the state toward secession. The resolutions went on to declare the proposed plebiscite on separation an unconstitutional act of the legislature, and described the military league with the Confederacy and other specific acts of the state legislature as usurpations of power. Even though they did not approve of the forthcoming referendum, they urged defeat of the separation proposition. Finally, it was agreed that the convention should meet again after the election

to determine future action, and Nelson was empowered to set the date and place. After the adoption of the resolutions, Johnson completed his speech and the meeting adjourned.[27]

To the editors of the Knoxville Register, the men who had gathered in their city were "actuated by partizan feelings and selfish motives." To gain party advantages and promote selfish ends, these men would "stifle the voice of conscience and set upon the motto 'that the end justifies the means.'" It was the Register's understanding that although harmony had not prevailed at the meeting, there had been enough unity to offer resistance to the majority of Tennesseans. "This will be treason," it argued, "and punished as such."[28]

Despite claims to the contrary, the convention had been marked by a general unity of thought and action. One of the most remarkable aspects of the secession crisis in East Tennessee was the alliance of old political foes, such as Andrew Johnson and T. A. R. Nelson, who had been enemies for years, and editor Brownlow who had relentlessly delivered brutal attacks on Johnson. Thomas D. Arnold, the speaker on the first day of the convention, had once had a prolonged and bitter feud with Nelson and Brownlow. But at this meeting, old party lines and battle scars were at least covered up; determined opposition to disunion forced old enemies into the same camp. With the referendum fast approaching, Johnson and Nelson continued a joint East Tennessee speaking tour which they had inaugurated in early May. Almost daily they spoke from the same platform

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[27] Proceedings, 9, 10-13; Temple, East Tennessee, 342.

[28] Knoxville Register, June 5, 8, 1861.

to audiences that were frequently enthusiastic but occasionally unfriendly. In Knoxville, Brownlow filled his columns with Unionist editorials and forcefully defended his arch-enemy Johnson.[29]

Supporters of the Confederacy were by no means inactive in East Tennessee. Secessionists had no shortage of a sympathetic press. Although none could match the fury and circulation of Brownlow's Whig, papers such as the Knoxville Register, Athens Post, Cleveland Banner, and Greeneville Democrat strongly supported the Southern cause. The Banner urged a vote for separation so that Tennessee could have a voice in the prosecution of the war and in the peace settlement once Confederate victory was achieved. The Athens Post ridiculed the recent coalition of Andrew Johnson and his old political enemies. "In a word," it said, "Senator Johnson is a full grown and most perfect specimen of your Ultra, Radical Destructive Democrat; and those old Whigs, of the Henry Clay school, who now pin their faith to his coat tails, ought to, and no doubt do, feel vastly comfortable in the novel association." East Tennessee secessionists, led by Landon C. Haynes, William H. Sneed, William Cocke, William G. Swan, Joseph B. Heiskell, and others canvassed the eastern counties in an attempt to whip up support for separation.

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[29]Coulter, William G. Brownlow, 154-55; Alexander, T. A. R. Nelson, 78. One secessionist was concerned that the Johnson-Nelson tour was indeed arousing support for the Union in East Tennessee. After attending a rally in Philadelphia, he commented: "If Johnson and Nelson go around here speaking much more they will make some of our backwoods yeomanry think that the 'Southern Confederacy' is about to try to 'coerce' them, take away all their liberties and elect a King to rule over them and grind them into powder, and that their only hope of deliverance is in the bosom of Abraham and under the sheltering wing of Black Republican cohorts. . . ." Henry Key to "Lizzie," May 6, 1861, D. M. Key MSS, Local History Section, Chattanooga-Hamilton County Library.

Their efforts were bolstered by the speaking tours of such distinguished men as John Bell, Henry S. Foote, and Gustavus Henry; but as one historian concluded, these men "labored against, not with, the tide of popular opinion" in East Tennessee.[30]

On June 8, Tennesseans went to the polls to vote on an issue that in many ways had already been decided for over a month. As returns filtered in following the election, the contending forces in East Tennessee looked at them as a mixed blessing. Secessionists were pleased that their vote had nearly doubled since February; but the fact remained that the region as a whole voted 32,923 (68 percent) to 14,780 (32 percent) against separation. On the other hand, although Unionists could feel satisfaction that only six counties voted for separation and that their region rejected secession, they were disappointed that they did not secure a 25,000 vote majority as some had predicted. Worst of all were the returns that came in from the rest of the state. Middle Tennessee voted 58,265 (88 percent) to 8,198 (12 percent) for disunion, while West Tennessee followed suit with a 29,127 (83 percent) to 6,117 (17 percent) vote.[31]

To the secessionists of East Tennessee the issue had been settled--the state had voted for separation and therefore all Tennesseans should abide by the decision. Even some who had been Unionists were willing to acquiesce in the referendum's outcome. William Frazier, for example,

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[30]Cleveland Banner, May 24, 1861; Athens Post, May 10, 1861; Hamer, Tennessee, II, 550.

[31]Knoxville Whig, June 29, 1861; Athens Post, June 21, 1861.

long a Union man, now looked upon the Union as dissolved. It was his feeling that "we have no Country except the South and every consideration of patriotism calls on us to give it our individual support."[32] Some East Tennesseans were uncertain of the next step,[33] but to many, loyalty to the Union was still the only course of action. An enraged Brownlow made no effort to hide his disgust. Unlike their brave East Tennessee colleagues, he chided, the Union leaders of Middle and West Tennessee, out of cowardice and corruption, had "bowed before the storm of anarchy." To the Parson, the majority of Tennesseans "have been tricked, duped, swindled, lied to, and betrayed out of their rights and liberties. . . ." He concluded that "a despotism has now been established over the people of East Tennessee by those of the West, and the former have now quietly to submit to the outrages perpetrated at Nashville, or rise up in their majestic strength and assert and uphold their rights. . . ."[34]

After pondering reports of intimidation and fraud and studying the returns from Middle and West Tennessee, T. A. R. Nelson reached the conclusion that the referendum had been won by force and fraud. The overwhelming majority against disunion in February had seemingly melted

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[32]William Frazier to T. A. R. Nelson, June 15, 1861, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection.

[33]W. H. Dawson of Monroe County told his grandfather that the voice of reason and law and order had been silenced. He went on to write: "have the American people, so far retrograded, as to become totally incapable of self government? . . . What will be done I cannot tell. It is all a sickenen [sic] affair." W. H. Dawson to "Grandfather," June 15, 1861, in Historical Records Survey, Tennessee, Civil War Records (3 vols.; Nashville, 1939), II, 187-88.

[34]Knoxville Whig, June 15, 1861.

away.[35] Nelson now exercised his authority as president of the East Tennessee Convention and issued a call for it to reassemble on June 17 at Greeneville. Threats against his life, and against Johnson, Brownlow, and other Union leaders, as well as the great increase in Confederate troops, suggested inconvenience, if not actual danger, in meeting again in Knoxville. As a matter of fact, threats of violence became so intense soon after the election that several friends persuaded Johnson to leave for Kentucky via Cumberland Gap. He, therefore, did not attend the Greeneville meeting.[36]

Nelson was determined that the convention should take forceful action. He and several of his supporters may have received encouragement and confidence from the events engulfing western Virginia during May and June. For weeks, Brownlow's Whig had carried articles about Unionist activities there and had fully reported the proceedings of the Wheeling Unionist Convention. Ironically, on the very day the Greeneville session began, the Wheeling Convention declared western Virginia's independence from the Old Dominion. No doubt many East Tennesseans felt similar steps

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[35]In view of the intense excitement which prevailed at the time, it is highly unlikely that there was a total absence of fraud and intimidation in the June 8 election. The probability is that both sides resorted to violence and pressure in some instances. However, the Middle and West Tennesseans bitterly resented and denounced as false the charges made by East Tennesseans that the western sections had resorted to fraudulent voting and the use of force. Nashville papers suggested that if there was any intimidation in the election, the victims were not the Unionists of Middle and West Tennessee, but the secessionists of East Tennessee. See Nashville Daily Patriot, June 26, 1861; Nashville Union and American, June 9, 1861; and Nashville Republican Banner, June 16, 1861.

[36]Alexander, Nelson, 83-85; Fertig, Secession and Reconstruction of Tennessee, 29; Knoxville Whig, June 15, 29, 1861; Temple, East Tennessee, 344.

should be taken in their state. However, some of the mail that Nelson received before the convention did not convey such belligerent attitudes. One Knox County delegate warned that it was not the time for rash action. He asserted that "calm reflection should steer the bark in this terrible tempest." Chances of success would be much more likely sometime in the future when "we may be better prepared or our enemies less watchful. . . ."[37]

Whether out of fear, despair, or simply the fact that Nelson did not issue the call for the convention early enough, the number of delegates in Greeneville was almost two hundred fewer than that of the Knoxville Convention. Of the 285 men at this second meeting, only 130 had been present at the Knoxville conclave.[38] Possibly many of those who had been at Knoxville did not want to take the risk of meeting again, especially after the referendum had gone in favor of secession. Others were apparently willing to go along with the June 8 vote; even though they did not approve of its results, they saw no further need for resistance. Presumably those who gathered at Greeneville on June 17 were

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[37]B. Frazier to T. A. R. Nelson, June 15, 1861, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection. See also, William Frazier to T. A. R. Nelson, June 15, 1861, ibid.

[38]The backgrounds of the delegates to the Greeneville Convention were not markedly different from those at the Knoxville meeting. In a random sample of 28 Greeneville delegates (10 percent of the convention), I found that slightly fewer (36 percent) owned slaves, and 80 percent owned fewer than ten slaves. As at Knoxville, most of the delegates (58 percent) were farmers, 14 percent were attorneys, 8 percent were merchants, and 11 percent were artisans. In terms of real and personal property holdings, the differences between the delegates at the two conventions were small. At Greeneville, 56 percent of the delegates owned less than $5,000 in real property, while 58 percent had less than $5,000 in personal property.

not ready to give up the fight; and the proceedings of the meeting seemed to confirm this.[39]

Members of the convention assembled at the Greene County Court House. In an opening prayer, Reverend James Cummings of Sevier County urged God "to defeat those who are endeavoring to break up our inestimable government, and sustain and relieve those who are now deprived of their Constitutional privileges." Upon a motion from the floor, the business committee appointed at the Knoxville session was retained, and Nelson filled vacancies where necessary. In the only speech actually recorded, John Netherland of Hawkins County told the convention:

> Our deliberations and acts will become historic. We should act calmly. We are in a revolution and a fearful one . . . but before taking steps, let us feel the ground firm under us. Do not hurry through the convention.

Netherland's words of caution, however, were not completely heeded. Led by President Nelson, a large body of delegates urged that aggressive action be taken. During the night session of the first day, Nelson submitted a declaration of grievances and a series of resolutions that he had drawn up several days in advance. This document became the object of a spirited struggle in the business committee and on the floor.[40]

Nelson's declaration claimed that the recent election had not been a free one except in East Tennessee and that knowledge of the region's Union strength was hidden from the people of the rest of the state by suppression of the proceedings of the Knoxville session of the East

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[39] Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 347-55; Athens Post, July 5, 1861.

[40] Proceedings, 16, 20-23; Temple, East Tennessee, 354.

Tennessee Convention. It further asserted that the results of the election did not represent the will of the people--that had the canvass been as fairly conducted in Middle and West Tennessee as it had been in East Tennessee the decision would have been for the Union. The document concluded with a threat of resistance to state authorities: ". . . but, if this view is erroneous, we have the same--(and, as we think, a much better) right to remain in the Government of the United States, than the other divisions of Tennessee have to secede from it."[41]

While the declaration of grievances met with no real opposition, Nelson's six resolutions touched off the debate. In brief, they asserted that the Union counties of East Tennessee and all other Union counties in the state which wanted to cooperate, would, in the period of revolution, be the legal government of Tennessee and should proceed to exercise the powers and functions of such. Any attempts to station Confederate troops in East Tennessee would be met by "every means in our power for our common defense"; and if any member of the convention should be killed because of his Union sentiments, or arrested for treason, "we earnestly advise and recommend the most prompt and decided acts of retaliation by our people." To carry out the section's defense, military companies should be raised in every county.[42]

During the next three days several resolutions were offered by delegates, "many of them wild and visionary, and nearly all revolutionary," according to Temple; but attention focused mainly on the Nelson

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[41]Temple, East Tennessee, 347-48.

[42]Ibid., 351.

resolutions. At first the proposals were well received by a majority of the delegates who may have been carried away with the zeal and excitement of the moment. But several more cautious members of the business committee and other prominent delegates, such as Temple, John Baxter, and Horace Maynard, felt that the resolutions went too far.[43]

On the afternoon of the third day, these moderates offered a series of substitute resolutions much more temperate in tone; and the most angry debate of the entire convention consumed the rest of the day. William Clift of Chattanooga, James P. Swan, William B. Carter, and Thomas D. Arnold delivered a broadside of ridicule and sarcasm at the moderate speakers. He and his more belligerent colleagues intimated that those who proposed moderation simply acted out of fear. They gave great emphasis to the effective work which could be done with squirrel rifles and shotguns in the hands of mountain men in the event of conflict with the Confederacy. By the end of the heated debate, it was evident that opinion at the convention was still divided. Nevertheless, the substitute resolutions offered by the moderates were submitted to the committee with directions for another report the next morning.[44]

After deliberation into the night, the committee recommended the next morning that Nelson's resolutions be struck and the substitutes adopted. Robert Johnson, son of Andrew Johnson, loudly protested and the fight began anew. The debate raged back and forth through the remainder of the day. John Baxter asserted that Nelson's resolutions would

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[43] Ibid., 351-52; Proceedings, 19.

[44] Temple, East Tennessee, 353; Proceedings, 19.

precipitate a revolution; and finally Horace Maynard made a speech pleading for moderation and caution. Apparently his words turned the tide, for debate ended and, according to the Proceedings, the declaration of grievances and substitute resolutions were accepted "without division."[45]

The resolutions finally settled on were indeed a much watered-down version of Nelson's original proposals. They expressed an "earnest desire" that East Tennessee not become involved in civil war; that the legislature's act of declaring Tennessee independent and joining the state in a military league was unconstitutional; and that a three-man commission be formed to go to Nashville to seek legislative consent for the eastern counties to establish a separate state. Finally, claiming that East Tennesseans had the right to determine their own destiny regardless of whether separate statehood was granted, the proposals provided in detail for a convention to meet at Kingston at the call of Nelson to consider future action.[46]

The abandonment of the radical Nelson proposals may well have been influenced by the immediate fear of danger with which the delegates were faced. While the convention was in session, at least one regiment of Confederate troops passed every day within sight of the meeting place. On the second day many delegates thought the meeting would be disrupted when a regiment of Louisiana "Tigers" arrived in town before dawn. Released from their trains, the hungry soldiers rushed into a hotel where

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[45] Proceedings, 21.

[46] Ibid., 21-22.

many of the delegates were quartered and proceeded to consume a large breakfast that had been prepared for the conventioneers. A squad of soldiers cut down a national flag that flew near the convention and made several threats to delegates who were walking to the morning session. Fortunately the officers of the Louisianans quickly gathered up their men, put them back on trains, and departed for even more adventure at Manassas. Later that day, one delegate suggested that for safety's sake further meetings be held in secret, but the suggestion was voted down after little debate.[47]

At the end of the fourth day, Nelson declared the meeting adjourned; and no doubt, many delegates were glad to return to the relative security of their homes. At least for now they knew the next step lay with the state legislature in Nashville. Most realized that the chances of separate statehood for East Tennessee were remote, but all refused to make any moves until official word was received.[48]

As might be expected, reaction to the meeting was divided both in the region and the rest of the state. Brownlow praised the action of the convention, but doubted the success of the resolutions. "Anything going from East Tennessee to the legislature," he argued, "will not fail to receive the contempt cherished by Middle and West Tennessee for this end

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[47]Knoxville Whig, June 29, 1861; Temple, East Tennessee, 357-58.

[48]Two delegates, John Blevins and slavetrader W. C. Kyle of Hawkins County, obviously were not satisfied with the actions of the convention. Both issued an official protest in the minutes of the convention, but did not explain their reasons for dissension, although they may have felt that even the moderate resolutions finally adopted were too radical. Knoxville Register, June 27, 1861; Temple, East Tennessee, 353-54.

of the State. They have a contempt for our soil and people, and they never fail to show it when the opportunity offers." The Knoxville Register castigated the resolutions under the heading "Declaration of Falsehoods!" The Athens Post was certain that "nineteen twentieths" of the people of East Tennessee would ignore them. The Memphis Appeal called the convention "Traitors in Council" and the members "the little batch of disaffected traitors who hover around the noxious atmosphere of Andrew Johnson's house." The Nashville Republican Banner said it placed too much confidence in the patriotism of the "free mountaineers" to believe for a moment that they would lend vigorous strength to such a futile and misguided movement. The Nashville Union and American had no fear whatsoever that the people of East Tennessee would ignore the convention and not separate from their own state "for the purpose of joining the corrupt Abolition Government of Lincoln."[49]

Within a week of the Greeneville Convention's adjournment, the General Assembly met in extraordinary session. Commissioners John Netherland, James P. McDowell, and Oliver Temple traveled to Nashville to present the East Tennessee request for separate statehood. A joint committee of thirteen was appointed to consider it. Although six of the committee were East Tennesseans, there is no evidence that three of them were present; instead they were among a large number of the East Tennesseans

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[49]Knoxville Whig, July 6, 1861; Knoxville Register, July 4, 1861; Athens Post, July 5, 1861; Memphis Appeal, July 3, 1861; Nashville Republican Banner, June 28, 1861; and Nashville Union and American, June 23, 1861. To the Atlanta Confederacy, the East Tennessee Convention was a feeble attempt by a few malcontents to imitate the "Wheeling Rebellion." Atlanta Confederacy, reprinted in Knoxville Whig, June 29, 1861.

who refused to attend this session of the legislature. The committee's report was thus probably drafted primarily by Middle and West Tennesseans. On June 29 the committee responded to the petitioners by raising the question of whether the request represented the true sentiment of East Tennessee, because the members of the convention had been selected almost a month earlier, before the referendum on secession. Furthermore, the committee asserted, "our brethren of East Tennessee would acquiesce" in the results of the referendum on separation. After all, they were identified "with us by the closest ties of kindred and interest." Thus no action should be taken until the next legislature met in October. The senate adopted the report but took no action other than to discharge the committee from further consideration.[50]

News of the legislative rebuff was met with bitter resignation in much of East Tennessee. There was talk of open resistance by some of the delegates to the convention. James Henry of Blount County wrote T. A. R. Nelson that the "people of our county is [sic] for open rebellion rather than be forced into the Southern Confederacy." Dr. John Murphy from Johnson County asserted, "I am for following the footprints of the Wheeling Convention and if we wait until the next legislature acts upon that memorial . . . it will be the death of the Union Party in East Tennessee. . . ."[51] With reckless abandon Parson Brownlow continued to

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[50] Tennessee Senate Journal, 1861, 2nd Extraordinary Session, 142-44, 176-77; Tennessee House Journal, 1861, 2nd Extraordinary Session, 194; Lacy, Vanquished Volunteers, 182.

[51] James Henry to T. A. R. Nelson, June 29, 1861, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection; Dr. John Murphy to T. A. R. Nelson, July 14, 1861, ibid.

denounce the Confederacy in the pages of the Whig. The Scott County Court passed resolutions declaring that county free and independent of the state of Tennessee; a small delegation carried the resolutions to the Secretary of State in Nashville, but he summarily rejected them.[52] In the Fifth Civil District of Washington County, Unionists held a convention and resolved that if a state could secede from the Union, a civil district could separate from a county and state. They passed an ordinance of secession, declaring themselves independent of the Confederacy. They then formed themselves into "Bricker's Republic" in honor of the local Unionist justice of the peace, and elected Jacob Hull as president, with a congress to assist him. Appeals to other civil districts and counties, however, were unsuccessful.[53]

At the Greeneville Convention, secret pacts had been made by Robert K. Byrd of Roane County, Joseph Cooper of Campbell, R. E. Edwards of Bradley, S. C. Langeley of Morgan, and others to train and organize a force of 500 men surreptitiously. In early July, the Adjutant General of the United States detailed Navy Lieutenant William Nelson to security duty in Washington. He was ordered to raise a force and deliver 10,000 arms to be used in East Tennessee. Later in the summer, General George B. McClellan, with his army in Virginia, hoped to move into East Tennessee and ". . . break the backbone of secession."[54]

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[52]Soon after this incident, a Confederate force was sent to Scott County to arrest the magistrates, all of whom had fled to the mountains. No arrests were made and the Confederates left empty handed. Esther S. Sanderson, County Scott and Its Mountain Folk (Huntsville, Tennessee, 1958), 192.

[53]Paul M. Fink, Jonesborough: The First Century of Tennessee's First Town (Nashville, 1972), 143.

[54]Temple, Notable Men, 104; Official Records, Series 1, IV, 251-52; ibid., II, 201, 206; Clarence C. Buel and Robert U. Johnson (eds.), Battles

Confederate authorities were by no means ignorant of the situation. They were especially concerned over the safety of the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad, a key transportation link for troops and supplies moving to the front in Virginia. Through much of the summer of 1861 Governor Harris had left the Unionists alone, although there had been ample opportunity to crush resistance to secession. Oliver Temple was greatly surprised that the Greeneville Convention had not been broken up and the delegates arrested.[55]

There is no direct evidence to explain Harris' initial attitude of leniency; but there are two possible explanations. One was that the Confederates simply had insufficient strength and organization to suppress the Unionists.[56] This is problematical, however, because there were enough troops both stationed in and passing through the region by mid-June to disrupt Union gatherings. But the Governor sent only fifteen companies of state troops to East Tennessee in May and he declined Secretary of War LeRoy Walker's suggestion that Confederate troops be stationed there for reasons to be explained.[57]

Apparently the Governor hoped that through a policy of conciliation, or a policy in which the Confederates could appear benevolent, Union resistance would weaken and eventually die out. Anti-Union

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and Leaders of the Civil War (4 vols.; New York, 1887), I, 132.

[55]Temple, East Tennessee, 357-58.

[56]Paul A. Whelan in his "Unconventional Warfare in East Tennessee, 1861-1865" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1963), 27, suggests, among other things, that Confederate troops lacked the training and skill to resist the Unionists.

[57]Isham G. Harris to LeRoy P. Walker, May 25, 1861, Harris MSS, TSLA.

strength had apparently increased, as was revealed in the June 8 referendum; and it was hoped that this trend would continue. As a result, the most avid Union leaders were allowed to speak and publish at will. A group of citizens from Cleveland pleaded with the Governor to send troops to quell "Tory" activities, but Harris refused, stating that he doubted the propriety of ordering forces into East Tennessee unless absolutely necessary. In late June he informed General Gideon Pillow that there was an "overwhelming majority in most counties of that section" for the Union, but he maintained that "forebearance and conciliation" was the best policy to be pursued toward them.[58]

Not everyone was convinced, however, that the Governor's policy of leniency would work. After traveling through East Tennessee in late June, Samuel Tate apprised Confederate Secretary of State Robert Toombs that Unionists were drilling with the purpose of resisting if they were prevented from forming a separate state; and he was certain that they would receive aid from the Federal government. "There is truely [sic] great disaffection with the people," he asserted. To weaken the Unionists, Tate urged that their leaders be "gotten out of the way." Landon C. Haynes wrote Secretary Walker that civil war in East Tennessee was imminent. He assured Richmond that 10,000 Union men were armed and

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[58] Isham G. Harris to G. W. Rowles, July 4, 1861, ibid.; J. S. Hurlburt, History of the Rebellion in Bradley County, East Tennessee (Indianapolis, 1866), 61-62; Isham G. Harris to General Gideon Pillow, June 30, 1861, Harris MSS, TSLA. Thomas L. Connelly in his Army of the Heartland, The Army of Tennessee, 1861-1862 (Baton Rouge, 1967), 41, suggests that Harris treated East Tennessee leniently to gain its votes in the upcoming August election. But there is no direct evidence to support this.

drilled; and they had been urged by the New York Times to seize Knoxville and hold it until aid could be sent. He begged for more troops in the region, because he felt a small and inadequate force would only irritate the Unionists and invite aggression. "I am looking every moment also," Haynes warned, "to hear that the bridges have been burned and the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad torn up." After traveling to Bradley County and seeing evidence of armed strength of Unionists there, William G. Swan rejected Harris' policy. He argued that "no moral influence of any kind whatever" would remedy the dituation and that only "physical power, when exhibited in force sufficient" might prevent insurrection.[59]

Apparently the dire warnings coming from East Tennessee had an impact upon Richmond. On July 9 Secretary Walker requested that Governor Harris dispatch two Tennessee regiments to upper East Tennessee; and nine days later the secretary urged Harris to send even more troops into the eastern counties to seize guns being manufactured at Chattanooga and to reconnoiter points along the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad. Accordingly, on July 18, General Sam Anderson left Nashville with two regiments of infantry and a company of rangers headed for East Tennessee. Then another regiment from Middle Tennessee was ordered to Knoxville.[60]

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[59] Official Records, Series 1, LII, pt. 2, p. 116; ibid., IV, 364-65, 366-67, 369-70. Even the Southern troops stationed in East Tennessee were concerned for their own safety. Lieutenant D. C. Scales of the 16th Tennessee Volunteers reported that fear swept through the ranks when one man died and several others became violently ill after eating food procured in Knoxville. Although he dismissed the whole affair as an overblown rumor, Scales said that most of the men were afraid of being poisoned by the Unionists. D. C. Scales to William B. Campbell, August 10, 1861, Scales-Campbell MSS, TSLA.

[60] Official Records, Series 1, IV, 366, 369, 370.

Governor Harris, however, had not abandoned the idea of treading lightly in East Tennessee. He urged President Jefferson Davis to make certain that the majority of troops being assigned to the eastern counties were from Middle Tennessee. "It will exasperate East Tennesseans much more to have troops from other states quartered upon them than from other portions of their own state," he argued. Regardless of the Governor's hopes of appeasing East Tennesseans with troop units composed of fellow citizens, Unionists were convinced that the soldiers were being stationed in their midst to suppress them. The Athens Post vigorously denied this. "We speak by authority in declaring that they are not here to intimidate our people" but they "will protect and defend each and every citizen in his rights," it said. It further declared that force would be used only in case of "self-defense or the direst necessity."[61]

Confederate authorities made other attempts to change Unionist sympathies in East Tennessee. On July 20, General Leonidas Polk, commander of Confederate forces in Tennessee, ordered Robertson Topp, Judge John Caruthers, Dr. Jeptha Faulk, and D. M. Leatherman, all prominent Whigs from Middle and West Tennessee before the war, to Knoxville to persuade many of their old colleagues to support the Confederacy. And following a suggestion from General Polk, the War Department on July 26

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[61] Isham G. Harris to Jefferson Davis, July 13, 1861, Harris MSS, TSLA; Athens Post, July 26, 1861. General Leonidas Polk was particularly concerned about the conduct of troops stationed in East Tennessee. "It is upon every account desirable that no irritating language, or any offensive bearing should be manifested by the troops towards the citizens of East Tennessee . . . and the commanders will see that this is done," he stated. General Leonidas Polk to Robertson Topp, Judge John Caruthers, Dr. Jeptha Faulk, & D. M. Leatherman, July 29, 1861, Topp MSS, TSLA.

appointed Brigadier General Felix Zollicoffer, another noted Tennessee Whig in the 1850s, as commander of the newly created District of East Tennessee. Adjutant General Samuel Cooper instructed Zollicoffer to "Preserve peace, protect the railroad, and repel invasion." Five days later, Zollicoffer was given further instructions and reminded of the "importance of preventing organization for resistance . . . and of attracting people to support the government."[62]

In the midst of the feverish Confederate attempt to get a grip on East Tennessee, Unionists of the region sought to obtain redress through the last legal means available to them. In the regularly scheduled general election to be held August 1, they hoped that their weight would be sufficiently felt in the gubernatorial and Congressional races to bring about an assured lenient policy toward their region. By late spring, the East Tennessee Unionist leadership had set its sights upon denying Harris reelection. For a time, they toyed with the idea of nominating one of their own to run against the incumbent; but sympathy gradually, if not grudgingly, shifted to his only serious competitor, Maury Countian William H. Polk, brother of the late president. Polk urged the East Tennessee Unionists to support him because he was certain that with their help he could carry both East and West Tennessee, thus assuring his election. George Bridges of Athens felt that although Polk

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[62] Official Records, Series 1, IV, 374-75, 377; General Leonidas Polk to Robertson Topp, Judge John Caruthers, Dr. Jeptha Faulk, & D. M. Leatherman, July 29, 1861, Topp MSS, TSLA. See also, James W. McKee, Jr., "Felix K. Zollicoffer: Confederate Defender of East Tennessee," Part 1, East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 43 (1971), 43.

was by no means an ideal choice, he could beat "King Harris" and "would it not give a death blow to the secessionists in East Tennessee, and cripple them in Middle and West Tennessee?"[63]

East Tennessee Unionists had additional strategy for the August elections. Even though Governor Harris had proclaimed that citizens were to elect representatives to the Confederate Congress, the Union leaders submitted candidates for the United States Congress. In a letter to his constituents of the First District, dated July 10, T. A. R. Nelson declared "the whole process by which Tennessee" had "been annexed to the Confederate States" was "illegal and unconstitutional." He then announced himself as a candidate for Congress in Washington. Horace Maynard and George Bridges announced their candidacy in the Second and Third Districts.[64]

Hopes that a new man would move into the governor's chair were dashed when Harris carried the state by a landslide. The election revealed, however, the continued strength of Unionism in East Tennessee. Even though the Governor carried Middle and West Tennessee by substantial margins, he lost the eastern third by 27,738 (62 percent) to 15,494 (38 percent) votes. Ratification of the Confederate Constitution had been on the ballot and East Tennesseans rejected it 27,738 to 14,887. In the Congressional races, Nelson defeated Confederate candidate Joseph B. Heiskell by an overwhelming margin. Similarly Maynard defeated J. H.

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[63]William H. Polk to T. A. R. Nelson, July 13, 1861, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection; George Bridges to T. A. R. Nelson, July 16, 1861, ibid.

[64]Knoxville Whig, July 6, 13, 16, 1861.

Shields and Bridges won over A. G. Welcker.[65]

As the East Tennessee returns came in, Governor Harris saw that his policy of leniency had done little to strengthen the Southern cause in the region. As a matter of fact, results were remarkably similar to the June 8 referendum. Whether embittered over the election or now convinced out of military necessity, Harris' attitude toward East Tennessee Unionists took a marked change. "I fear we will have to adopt a decided and energetic policy with the people of that section," he wrote shortly after the election. And indeed the governor sternly clamped down on Unionist activities in the eastern counties, ordering General Zollicoffer to arrest several Union leaders and banish them if necessary. On the day he was elected to Congress, and a few days after he issued a call for the East Tennessee Convention to meet at Kingston, T. A. R. Nelson was arrested in southwest Virginia while attempting to escape Confederate lines. A few weeks later Horace Maynard escaped to Washington, while George Bridges was placed under house arrest in Athens for over a year and did not take his Congressional seat until February, 1863.[66]

Reversing his earlier policy, Harris maintained, on August 16, that more troops should be stationed in East Tennessee. "Twelve or fourteen thousand men in East Tennessee would crush out rebellion there without

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[65]Knoxville Register, August 15, 1861. Unionist Andrew J. Clement also claimed victory for the Fourth Congressional District in northeastern Middle Tennessee.

[66]Official Records, Series 1, IV, 379; Alexander, Nelson, 88; Knoxville Whig, June 29, 1861; Dorothy K. Riggs, "Horace Maynard: Some Facts and Stories Collected for His Descendants," typescript. UT Special Collections.

firing a gun," he intoned, "while a smaller force may involve us in scenes of blood that will take long years to heal." It was his feeling that the "rebellious spirit of that people" could no longer be tolerated. Ten days later a regiment of infantry under Colonel W. E. Baldwin was sent into Johnson County to purge suspected gatherings of Tories. Baldwin was instructed to make certain that his soldiers scrupulously observed the rights of persons and property of "law abiding citizens"; but he was to disperse all hostile organizations, capture their leaders, and "destroy" those who resisted.[67]

The change in policy by Governor Harris, the increasing strength of Confederate authority in the region, and a growing resistance on the part of many Unionists in the late summer of 1861 marked the beginning of a bloody civil war that would engulf East Tennessee for the next three and a half years. It seemed that Confederate attempts to appease and win support of the Unionists had for the most part failed. Indeed the effective and energetic leadership provided by several Unionists had almost completely frustrated secessionism in East Tennessee. And the well-publicized meetings of the East Tennessee Convention, which drew large numbers of delegates from throughout the region, no doubt influenced many East Tennesseans to remain loyal to the old flag or at least refuse to embrace whole-heartedly the new Southern republic. Once Governor Harris had removed the Unionist leaders, secessionists hoped to persuade those East Tennesseans who had not fully committed themselves either way to the Southern cause.

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[67] Official Records, Series 1, IV, 389, 393.

Nevertheless, over the next two years, Confederate authorities, both civil and military, would be faced with the problem of not only dealing with an unsettled and divided civilian population, but also fending off military invasion by Federal armies. For the various commanders of East Tennessee, the task would not be an easy one. And for the citizens of the region, regardless of loyalties, late summer and early fall of 1861 signalled the beginning of a way of life that would be bitterly etched in their memories. Neighbors and old friends were now frequently arrayed on opposite sides of the struggle. Violence now became an integral part of everyday life for most people of the region. Long after the war, one East Tennessean warned those who read his memoirs if they were ever caught in a rebellion of citizen against citizen "to fly from it as from a burning house. Tarry not . . . but fly and at once. Leave all you have behind if you cannot escape with it rapidly, for it is of no value."[68]

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[68] Samuel Milligan Memoirs, TSLA.

CHAPTER III

"TRAITORDOM"--EAST TENNESSEE UNDER CONFEDERATE OCCUPATION

Captain Alexander Coffee of the 15th Alabama Volunteers was pleased that his regiment had stopped in East Tennessee. The soldiers were camped near Knoxville on comfortable ground with clean water; and those who had broken out with measles were under the careful treatment of Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey, a prominent secessionist and historian of Tennessee. Much to Coffee's surprise, the land was considerably better than he had thought it would be; it was good farming country even though there seemed to be little enterprise. And despite the fact that East Tennessee was a hot-bed of "Toryism," he had made the acquaintance of several very "clever and agreeable" citizens.[1]

Coffee's description, however, belied the continuing tensions that prevailed throughout East Tennessee in late summer and early fall of 1861. Confederate units had to be dispatched to disperse Unionist organizations in Greene, Scott, and Morgan counties, and parts of lower East Tennessee. In Hamilton County, William Clift organized hundreds of Unionists into military companies; but when confronted by overwhelming state troops, disbanded his force without a fight. Possibly still hoping to appease the Unionists, the state inspector general pledged not to harass them as long as they remained peaceful.[2]

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[1]Alexander D. Coffee to "wife," August 23, 29, September 8, 1861, Coffee MSS, SHC.

[2]Hurlburt, Bradley County, 66-71; Temple, Notable Men, 95-96.

Such an agreement, however, was highly unusual because the Confederates were trying their best to snuff out Unionism in East Tennessee. One method was the application of a law passed by the Congress on August 30, 1861, which called for the "sequestration of the estates, property and effects of alien enemies." Anyone having custody of, or knowledge of, property of an "alien enemy" was to report it to Confederate authorities. Landon C. Haynes, appointed receiver for East Tennessee, explained that the act included all people who had gone, or who in the future would leave for Kentucky or other parts of the United States. In such cases, their property was to be reported to him and he would arrange to sell it at public auction. Over the next two years, Confederate court dockets were filled with sequestration cases; and legal notices of public sales were published in almost every issue of East Tennessee newspapers. Even the giant Burra Burra Copper Company in Polk County was sold at public auction on June 30, 1863, after it was determined that the principal stockholders were Northerners and therefore alien enemies.[3]

Another piece of Congressional legislation was implemented to ferret out East Tennessee Unionists. On August 8, 1861, Congress passed an act stating that "all natives, citizens, denizens, or subjects" of a hostile nation who were over fourteen years of age and within the Confederate States would be "liable to be apprehended, restrained or secured and removed as alien enemies." On August 14, Jefferson Davis applied the law to Tennessee; and in effect it declared every Unionist an enemy and

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[3] Official Records, Series 4, I, 586-93; Knoxville Register, October 17, 1861; R. E. Barclay, Ducktown Back in Raht's Time (Chapel Hill, 1946), 88-91.

labelled as spies or combatants those who had been in Federal territory and returned to East Tennessee. He then called upon all East Tennesseans to swear allegiance to the Confederacy or to be subject to arrest by October. A whole series of arrests was made on the slimmest of pretexts; known sympathy for the Union was ample justification for incarceration. But Judge West Humphreys of the Confederate court for East Tennessee soon grew weary of the large number of defendants coming before him and he rebuked "small men" for making "indiscriminate arrests" on insufficient grounds.[4] Many Unionists fled to Kentucky rather than take the oath. Writing from Camp Dick Robinson in Kentucky, Edward Maynard, son of the Congressman, reported that on one day alone nearly eight hundred East Tennesseans came into camp to enlist in the Federal army. However, there were many who wished to remain in their native region. They simply wanted to be left alone and they were willing to swear loyalty to the Confederacy, albeit with certain mental reservations. In order to remain in East Tennessee, prominent Unionists such as Oliver P. Temple, John Baxter, and T. A. R. Nelson, who had been released from arrest, took the cath and attempted to carry on normal lives. As Confederate court opened in September, a majority of the Knoxville bar swore allegiance in order to continue their practices.[5]

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[4]Official Records, Series 2, II, 1368-70; ibid., I, 850. From the fall of 1861 through July, 1863, Judge Humphreys was remarkably lenient in dealing with Unionists, much to the displeasure of ardent secessionists and Confederate authorities. Ironically, Humphreys was impeached by Congress in 1865 for his services to the Confederacy. Kermit Hall, "West H. Humphreys and the Crisis of the Union," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, XXXIV (1975), 48-69.

[5]Knoxville Whig, September 2, 21, 1861; Edward Maynard to Horace Maynard, September 1, 1861, Maynard MSS, UT Special Collections; Athens Post, September 13, 1861.

Other more subtle methods were used to weaken the Unionists. Although Brownlow was allowed to publish his paper at will and was not arrested, his powerful Union journal began to experience difficulties in the fall of 1861. In August, he was forced to publish weekly rather than tri-weekly because of diminished income. Although much of this was due to the abrupt break in Northern advertising, the fiery editor blamed it on the cutoff of subscriptions and the stealing of money from his mail. Brownlow stated that many of his subscribers complained that their newspapers were not delivered, yet some of their neighbors regularly received copies of the arch-rival Register. Another subscriber reported seeing several large bundles of the Whig being thrown from a railroad car into the Tennessee River at Loudon Bridge. Brownlow bitterly attacked rival editor J. A. Sperry of the Register as "a drunken and degraded scoundrel" and a "suitable addition to Audubon's Ornithology." He often intimated that Sperry was in collusion with local postmaster Charles W. Charlton, sometime editor of the Register and more than once implied that Charlton was behind the effort to suppress the Whig.[6]

The Post Office was also implicated in other attempts to battle the Unionists. In late August the Confederate Post Office Department announced the closing of four offices in Washington County, because they were in "disloyal neighborhoods." Brownlow complained that this was

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[6]Knoxville Whig, August 3, 24, 31, September 7, 1861. Brownlow also accused Charlton of forging a series of letters in the spring of 1861 to Amos Lawrence of Massachusetts in Andrew Johnson's name. In the letters, Johnson supposedly was asking for money for the Union cause. Lawrence lost $1,000 in the affair. See Barry A. Crouch, "The Merchant and the Senator: An Attempt to Save East Tennessee for the Union," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 46 (1974), 53-75.

"the old Democratic policy revived--proscribe all who dare oppose you at the ballot box."[7]

But as was true before the August general election, not everyone considered a harsh policy as the appropriate way of dealing with East Tennessee. Despite his endorsement of the arrest of several prominent Unionists such as Nelson and Bridges, General Zollicoffer leaned over backwards to avoid unnecessary friction in the region. In an order issued to his command, the general stated that he would not tolerate any abuse of former Unionists who were willing to submit peacefully to Confederate authority. And for those who had fled from their homes, he urged them to return and "pursue their respective avocations peacefully." A few days later, after numerous complaints from citizens, he ordered his respective unit commanders to clamp down sternly on their men for disorderly conduct "which is endangering the public peace."[8]

Zollicoffer's brigade quartermaster, A. M. Lea, persuaded Union leaders from various counties to assemble in Knoxville to issue a public statement urging their friends to return from Kentucky and submit to "the powers that be."[9] The leaders, Temple, Baxter, Fleming, and even Brownlow, declared that "we should deplore a civil war in our midst and we believe that we but reflect the feelings of the Union party in East Tennessee in

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[7]Knoxville Whig, September 28, 1861.

[8]Official Records, Series 2, I, 831; General Order #5, August 23, 1861, in Orders and Letters Sent, General Zollicoffer's Brigade, Confederate Military Records, RG 109, National Archives; McKee, "Zollicoffer," 45.

[9]Lea even received the promise of T. A. R. Nelson to support the Confederacy openly at a future date. Official Records, Series 2, I, 827.

avowing that statement." Accompanying the declaration was a conciliatory note from Zollicoffer assuring the people that no more military force would be used "than I may deem due to the peace and safety of the community. . . ." He would leave Unionists alone as long as they remained peaceful and avoided speaking or acting violently.[10]

It seems that this policy of conciliation had some effect. No doubt influenced by Zollicoffer's unblemished record as a Whig before the war, Brownlow was willing to concede that the general was a man "of great firmness of character and of true courage, and . . . our citizens will find him generous and reasonable." When the Register complained about Zollicoffer's lenient policy, implying that his ears had been "stuffed by the Lincolnites," Brownlow rushed to the general's defense. Not only had Zollicoffer defended the rights and property of East Tennesseans, Brownlow argued, he had done much "towards calming down the troubled element and reconciling the people of this end of the State."[11]

When the Tennessee legislature redistricted the state and provided for another election for Confederate congressmen and president during the first week in November, Brownlow urged East Tennesseans to participate. He admitted that the fight of the Unionists had been futile and that

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[10]Knoxville Whig, September 21, 1861.

[11]Ibid., August 17, September 7, 1861. William G. McAdoo, a Knoxville secessionist, however, was disgusted with Zollicoffer's policies. McAdoo observed that the general arrested several insignificant Unionists, "poor deluded devils," but was lenient toward the major figures such as Brownlow, Nelson, Temple, and Baxter. Zollicoffer did this, wrote McAdoo, because he wanted the support of these men in a future election. "We need a patriot in the post who will kill treason by cutting off its head, not attempt it by cutting off its fingers and toes." William G. McAdoo Diary, August 18, 1861, Floyd-McAdoo MSS, Library of Congress (microfilm).

they had received little aid and comfort from the Federal government. Therefore, he said, "if we must live under the Confederate Government, we must be represented." He then urged his readers to support "new born Secessionists" (who had been former Unionists) over "original Secessionists." To Brownlow the "new borns" would prosecute the war more vigorously, make no more illegal arrests, and inaugurate a government of the people which would advocate low taxes. Brownlow backed the candidacy of John Baxter who believed "that we have reached a point which makes it the duty of all to take sides with the South. . . ." Confederate authorities may have allowed Brownlow to publish as long as they did because of the more temperate rhetoric and quasi-support of the Southern Republic.[12]

Zollicoffer's policy of moderation, however, could not offset crucial blunders by other Confederate authorities in the region. The strict application of the confiscation act and the mass arrest of Unionists initiated by rabid secessionists in October did much to encourage a smoldering resentment among many people. Robertson Topp, one of the men sent by General Polk in the summer of 1861 to conciliate the East Tennesseans, complained to President Davis that just as the people were quieting down, the wave of arrests began--actions which poisoned the minds of the people toward the Confederacy. If the arrests were permitted much longer, Topp argued, the people would rise up in rebellion. He blamed William G. Swan, William Churchwell, attorney general John Crozier, and postmaster Charlton for maliciously promoting the arrests

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[12]Knoxville Whig, August 31, September 14, 21, 28, 1861.

simply for private revenge. Topp then urged the removal of Crozier and Charlton in hopes that their displacement might repair the situation. Even though many of the cases were eventually thrown out of the courts, further alienation of East Tennessee Unionists resulted.[13]

The green troops stationed in the region likewise contributed to the disaffection of local citizens. Brownlow urged a closing of saloons in Knoxville to put a stop to the crowds of drunken soldiers who rode horses on the sidewalks and yelled like savages. In late October members of an Alabama regiment got into a brawl with some constables and their Union friends near the Lamar House. Two soldiers were seriously hurt; and over a hundred cavalrymen were called in to break up the fray. Accusations were made on both sides as to the perpetrators of the fight; but regardless of cause, the incident made for bitter feelings in the community. A soldier from Middle Tennessee stationed in the east wrote that a thousand soldiers ready to do battle for the South had been unnecessarily dragged through the mountains of upper East Tennessee on forced marches merely to frighten harmless men. Every intelligent man in his battalion believed that it would have been far better for the peace and harmony of Tennessee "if a bayonet had never been here." And Captain Alexander Coffee later conceded that the soldiers had caused much trouble among the civilians by their depredations as they marched through the country: "we will cause a famine . . . where we stay long, so many men and horses to feed."[14]

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[13] Official Records, Series 1, IV, 476-77.

[14] Knoxville Whig, September 14, 1861; Colonel W. B. Wood, to General Felix Zollicoffer, October 28, 1861, Letterbook of Colonel W. B. Wood, Confederate Military Records, RG 109, NA; Knoxville Register,

By mid-October tensions began to mount once more in the eastern counties. Despite earlier apparent softening of attitude, editor Brownlow, whether outraged by the series of arrests or simply from a change in his mercurial personality, again launched a campaign against the Confederacy. When local Confederate units were unable to fill their quota after a call for volunteers in the fall, Brownlow sarcastically questioned why all the able-bodied Southern rights advocates who were still amongst the civilian ranks did not join up. He knew that many were willing to run for Congress, but none seemed to be willing to raise a company of volunteers. He vehemently protested the arrests being made by Confederate authorities and he continued his attacks on editor Sperry, calling him a "negro wenches beau." On October 26, the Parson published his last issue of the Whig and then was forced to shut down his press, because he was nearly ruined financially. In a farewell editorial, he warned of a revolt against the Confederacy because of its heavy-handed policies. "Citizens are cast into dungeons without charges of crime against them and without the formalities of a trial by jury; private property confiscated at the beck of those in power; the press humbled, muzzled, and suppressed or prostituted to serve the ends of tyranny."[15]

Rather than wait to be arrested, Brownlow in late October attempted an escape to Kentucky; but he was foiled because of the heavy Confederate

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October 29, 1861; Nashville Republican Banner, reprinted in Knoxville Whig, August 31, 1861; Alexander D. Coffee to "wife," November 20, 1861, Coffee MSS, SHC. The attitude of many soldiers toward the Unionists may have contributed to friction between the military and civilians. One soldier stationed near Knoxville felt that the East Tennessee "traitors" deserved "to be loathed of earth, Scorned by heaven and kissed by the serpents of Hell." Hannibal Paine to Virginia Royal, August 7, 1861, Paine MSS, TSLA.

[15]Knoxville Whig, October 12, 19, 26, 1861.

patrols guarding the mountains. After receiving warnings that his arrest was imminent, Brownlow, with the aid of Union sympathizers, slipped out of Knoxville again on November 4 and went to a remote section of the Smoky Mountains in Sevier County and then Blount County, remaining there in hiding for nearly a month, much to the dismay of Confederate authorities who regarded him as a dangerous rabble rouser.[16]

Fears of Federal invasion added greatly to the uneasiness of the Confederates. Southern forces in the region were reduced after mid-September when Zollicoffer took the majority of his troops north to Kentucky to head off a Union army under Buell which was at first thought to be headed for East Tennessee. Colonel William B. Wood was left in command at Knoxville with a depleted force consisting of the 16th Alabama and a 300-man contingent to guard the magazine. An East Tennessee brigade was charged with guarding the railroad bridges throughout the region.[17]

When Zollicoffer was repulsed in a skirmish on October 20 at Wildcat Mountain, Kentucky, a nervous Colonel Wood reported that Unionists in East Tennessee were elated and were displaying more boldness. Southern sympathizers in Knoxville flew into a near panic and were expecting a preconcerted movement among the Unionists to establish control of the region. Zollicoffer advised Wood to keep an eye on the movement of Lincolnites in the region, but he continued to advocate moderation,

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[16] Parson Brownlow's Book, 279-82; Coulter, Brownlow, 181-82.

[17] Official Records, Series 1, IV, 412.

urging Wood to restrain "our ultra friends" from acts of indiscretion. It was his feeling that some of the Knoxville secessionists became unnecessarily nervous over small matters.[18]

The November congressional elections proved to be a disappointment for those who had hoped that differences had been reconciled and that Unionists would participate in the election process. Throughout East Tennessee the voter turnout was light as Unionists stayed away from the polls en masse. In some areas such as Morgan County the polls were not even opened. Many undoubtedly had been angered by "original Secessionist" candidates who called East Tennessee Unionists "a pack of ignorant dupes, without sense, intelligence, or independence--the tools . . . and slaves of a few Union leaders." Unionists even refused to cast votes for men who had been their late leaders, simply because it would have been an oblique admission of the legitimacy of the Confederacy. Sometimes, however, Confederate military forces interfered in the election in attempts to intimidate the Unionists. In Tazewell, Confederate troops tried to run congressional candidate John Baxter out of town; but the latter, armed with a shotgun, fortified himself in his hotel room and did not leave until ready. In Knox County, it was reported that Unionists might have supported John R. Rodgers over E. F. Gardenshire, but few dared to vote because of threats by Confederate soldiers. After the election Rodgers heard rumors that he was to be arrested, but he managed to escape from East Tennessee.[19]

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[18] Ibid., 482, 490.

[19] Knoxville Whig, October 12, 1861; Alexander D. Coffee to "wife," November 20, 1861, Coffee MSS, SHC; Official Records, Series 1, IV, 529; William G. Brownlow to Robertson Topp, October 1, 1861, Topp MSS, TSLA;

Apprehension continued to grow as the Confederates sensed the degree of discontent in East Tennessee. On election day, Samuel Tate informed General Albert Sidney Johnston that "feelings of decided hostility" were "again being exhibited by the citizens."[20] Out of fear of losing the vital railroad in East Tennessee, General Johnston dispatched two infantry regiments and seven companies of cavalry to join Zollicoffer's army. Even with this welcomed addition, Landon C. Haynes, who had just been elected to the Confederate senate by the General Assembly, expressed grave apprehensions to President Davis. If a Federal army were to move into the area, defeat Zollicoffer, and seize the railroad, "flames of rebellion will flash throughout East Tennessee, the railroad will be destroyed, the bridges burned, and other calamities not necessary to mention will follow." Haynes' warnings were uncanny, for the very night that he penned his letter to Davis, a group of East Tennessee Unionists carried out a bold and dramatic enterprise.[21]

The Reverend William B. Carter, devoted Unionist from Elizabethton, had for months seriously considered a scheme to burn the various

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Beatrice L. Garrett, "The Confederate Government and the Unionists of East Tennessee" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1932), 31. Despite the light voter turnout in the Congressional elections, J. B. Heiskell was elected Congressman from the First District, W. G. Swan from the Second District, and W. H. Tibbs from the Third District. Miller, Political Manual of Tennessee (Nashville, 1890), 177.

[20] J. G. M. Ramsey anticipated an invasion by a Federal army and others felt that Zollicoffer's policy of leniency had been a mistake. One man wrote Governor Harris that there was a large "Lincoln force" of citizens within East Tennessee ready to overwhelm Zollicoffer. Official Records, Series 1, IV, 509-12.

[21] Ibid., 529-30.

bridges along the railroad in East Tennessee. In September he escaped from the region and traveled to Washington, where General McClellan endorsed the idea and sent Carter to Kentucky with $2,500 to carry out the plan. The operation called for groups of selected men to destroy simultaneously nine railroad bridges between Bristol, Virginia, and Stevenson, Alabama, thus knocking out the vital life line to Virginia. With transportation and communications blocked, a strong army of Federals under General George Thomas would march into East Tennessee and seize crucial military positions. As the army of liberation moved into the area, it was hoped that Unionists would come out of hiding and thus confront the Confederates with overwhelming odds.[22]

In mid-October Carter, with two regular officers, slipped back into East Tennessee and selected six known Unionists who lived along the railway. These men would serve as leaders in the destruction of the bridges and each in turn would choose a handful of followers to carry out the mission. But the overall scheme went awry in Kentucky. After repulsing Zollicoffer at Wildcat Mountain, Thomas marched on to London, Kentucky, in late October in preparation for his anticipated move into Tennessee. But his immediate superior General William T. Sherman ordered him to retrace his steps. Sherman had decided that the planned incursion was militarily unsound and therefore not worth the risk to Thomas' army; besides, matters seemed more pressing in the West.[23]

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[22]Temple, East Tennessee, 370-72, 375-77.

[23]Ibid.; Jesse Burt, "East Tennessee, Lincoln, and Sherman," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 34 (1962), 16-21. Sherman was probably correct in his assumption--Thomas' army was much too small to carry out the liberation of East Tennessee and his supply route would have been precarious at best. This was not the last time that East Tennessee would be considered of secondary importance.

Unfortunately for Carter and his men, they did not receive word of Thomas' reversal in plans. Thus on the night of November 8, the insurgents struck, destroying two bridges between Knoxville and Bristol, one between Knoxville and Chattanooga, two south of Chattanooga, and lesser bridges over the Hiwassee River in McMinn County and Lick Creek in Greene County. The saboteurs, however, failed to destroy bridges over the Watauga near Elizabethton and the Holston at Strawberry Plains because of heavy guard details there. The bridge burnings were a serious, but temporary, disruption of the railroad. Rail transportation was halted; the telegraph between Chattanooga and Richmond had been broken; and the movement of army supplies was held up. Almost immediately, however, Confederate troops moved into the region; and Colonel Daniel Leadbetter was ordered to take charge of the railroads in East Tennessee. He was empowered to levy the railroad owners and the adjacent communities for aid and materials in restoring service.[24]

Despite the limited success of the bridge-burning activities, the Confederates thought they saw the beginning of the long-awaited mass rebellion of East Tennesseans. Under the misconception that a Federal army would soon be in their midst to liberate them, bands of armed Unionists gathered throughout the countryside to help break the Confederate yoke. A thousand Tories, for instance, marched to Strawberry Plains and then to Underdown's Ferry on the French Broad River, where they confronted a smaller Confederate force and 100 pro-Southern citizens armed with

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[24]Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 133-35; Temple, Notable Men, 85-86; Temple, East Tennessee, 381-83.

shotguns and squirrel rifles. After exchanging shots for over a day, the insurgents retreated and then scattered to their homes. Another group of nearly a thousand Unionists who rallied together in Carter County soon dissolved when they gradually sensed that aid from the expected Union army was not coming. In Hamilton County, William Clift reorganized his troops; but when an overwhelming Confederate force was sent to crush them, the insurgents disbanded into the mountains and then fled into Kentucky.[25]

The bridge burnings and minor revolts, serious as they were in the disruption of transportation and communications, had an even more startling psychological effect. Confederate authorities from Knoxville and Richmond were now convinced that insurrection would spread throughout East Tennessee. Messages to the Confederate capital proclaimed "the country in great excitement and terror," the "whole country is now in a state of rebellion," and "Civil War has broken out at length in East Tennessee." Most Confederates were now convinced that conciliation had been a complete failure and severe measures would have to be resorted to. Three days after the bridge burnings, Colonel Wood assured Richmond that a mild policy would no longer work. He advocated that the Unionists should be punished and their leaders penalized "to the extent of the law." Wood then placed Knoxville under martial law because he felt there was too much sympathy and collusion with the enemy. At first General Zollicoffer felt that the reports of rebellion were exaggerated and that the Tories would probably circulate wild rumors merely to disconcert the Confederates. But he quickly changed his views as more facts came in and ordered

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[25] Official Records, Series 1, IV, 231, 531-32, 847-48; ibid., Series 2, I, 840, 839, 243-39; Temple, East Tennessee, 366-67; Samuel W. Scott and Samuel P. Angel, History of the 13th Regiment of Tennessee Volunteer Cavalry, U. S. A. . . . (Knoxville, 1903), 66-73; Athens Post, November 29, 1861; Hurlburt, Bradley County, 72-77.

the disarming of all known Unionists, insisting that their leaders be captured. He was disgusted because the leniency shown them had been unavailing. "They have acted with base duplicity and should no longer be trusted," he concluded. Governor Harris insisted on a stringent policy; and Albert G. Graham of Jonesboro went so far as to suggest the confiscation of land and property of known Unionists and the forced removal of their families from the country. Almost immediately anyone suspected of complicity in the bridge burnings was arrested. Others who were known Union sympathizers were imprisoned, often without charges, filling jails throughout the region to capacity. The Knox County jail soon overflowed and a temporary prison had to be set up in a house on Main and Prince (Market) Streets. Well into December as many as sixty prisoners a day were locked in the Knoxville jails.[26]

By late November, as the various small-scale rebellions were broken up, Confederate authorities felt that at least a semblance of peace and quiet had been restored. Lieutenant A. P. Wiggs led a patrol into the country and reported that he had confiscated arms and administered the oath of allegiance to many Lincolnites without much difficulty. He noted that the people had become submissive in most localities and he was convinced that "our presence in the country is having a good effect." And W. D. Ish, who had just returned from Blount County, observed that the Tories are "cooling down fast . . . there will be no more trouble with

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[26] Official Records, Series 2, I, 838-41, 842-43; ibid., Series 1, IV, 237, 239, 241-42; Mary U. Rothrock (ed.), The French Broad-Holston Country, A History of Knox County, Tennessee (Knoxville, 1946), 132; D. A. Deaderick, "Register of Events, and Facts Recorded Annually" (1825-1873), 70, Deaderick MSS, McClung Collection.

them." However, some Confederates were still wary. Colonel Leadbetter reported that he had restored tranquility in the Greeneville area, but he was certain that the masses would rise again if a "foreign force" entered the region. And J. G. M. Ramsey asserted that the rebellion in East Tennessee was nearly smothered, "but is far from being extinguished."[27]

For several weeks controversy emerged over what to do with the hundreds of prisoners who had been arrested in the wake of the bridge burnings. Many had been incarcerated simply because they were known Unionists. Still convinced that the leniency and forebearance shown earlier had prevented a mass uprising, Zollicoffer maintained that only those who had openly resisted the Confederacy should be punished. Colonel Wood, however, protested that all Unionist prisoners should be regarded as prisoners of war without benefit of trial. Madison Peoples of Knoxville urged that martial law be proclaimed throughout East Tennessee. On November 17, Brigadier General William H. Carroll succeeded Wood as commander of Knoxville; eleven days later he set up a military court to try all persons identified as having helped destroy the bridges. Judge Humphreys of the Confederate court, however, continued his general policy of leniency and issued writs of habeas corpus for several men who Carroll maintained were "beyond doubt guilty of burning the railroad bridges." Secretary of War Judah Benjamin wanted all bridge burners sent to prison at Tuscaloosa, Alabama and in an obvious exaggeration of the

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[27] Official Records, Series 2, I, 849; ibid., Series 1, VII, 721-22; Lieutenant A. P. Wiggs, to Colonel W. B. Wood, November 20, 1861, Wood Letterbook, Confederate Military Records, NA; H. J. and W. D. Ish to Captain R. F. Welcker, December 13, 1861, Welcker MSS, McClung Collection.

crime that had been committed he concluded: "Let not one of these treacherous murderers escape." Finally these attempts by civil authorities to take prisoners out of the military jurisdiction so annoyed General Carroll that on December 11 he placed Knoxville under martial law. During December three prisoners were convicted by the military tribunals and hanged at the gallows in Knoxville. Harrison Self of Knox County, also convicted for destroying railroad bridges, was spared by Jefferson Davis following receipt of a telegram from Self's daughter. In the meantime, at a drumhead court martial in Greeneville ordered by Colonel Leadbetter on November 30, three men confessed their complicity in the Lick Creek bridge burning. Following instructions from Secretary Benjamin, Leadbetter ordered two to be hanged from the limb of an oak tree near the railroad station immediately after the trial, sparing the third only because he was sixteen years old. The bodies of the two dead men were left swinging in the air for twenty-four hours. Under guard, a group of Unionists was forced to cut them down, dig their graves, and bury the bodies.[28]

Disputes between civil and military authorities arose also in the case of William G. Brownlow. Since October the Parson had remained in hiding in the Smokies. General Carroll and his temporary successor, General George Crittenden, persuaded him to return to Knoxville to surrender with the assurance that he would suffer no bodily harm. He was then instructed to report to Confederate headquarters to pick up a

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[28] Temple, East Tennessee, 393, 396-97; Hall, "West Humphreys," 60; Official Records, Series 1, IV, 250-51; ibid., Series 1, VII, 700-01, 704, 720, 726, 747; ibid., Series 2, I, 846-47, 850-57, 807, 924-25; Samuel Milligan Memoirs, TSLA.

passport which would entitle him to safe conduct into Kentucky. Before the passport could be issued, however, Brownlow was arrested by order of Confederate commissioner Robert B. Reynolds, upon the affidavit of District Attorney John C. Ramsey that the Parson was a traitor. Despite some mild protests, the military authorities made no effort to release Brownlow, although the civil courts had again intervened in military affairs. As a matter of fact, General Carroll expressed satisfaction that the "notorious Brownlow" was in jail. The Parson remained in the Knoxville prison for a few weeks but was set free upon the advice of a physician. He stayed imprisoned in his home until March, 1862, when he was released and in response to his request was turned over to Federal authorities in Nashville. His release enabled him to wage a war against the Confederacy both from the speakers stand and from the written page.[29]

In the meantime, military tribunals continued into January, 1862, as hundreds were convicted and imprisoned for conspiracy against the Confederacy. Many were given the option of incarceration in Tuscaloosa or of joining the Confederate army; several chose the latter in hopes of later deserting. General Carroll felt that the court martial was having an excellent effect in the region. On December 11 he reported that many who had previously been unfriendly to the government were coming forward and "giving every assurance of future fealty." Leadbetter, who succeeded Carroll in command of Knoxville on January 7, 1862, stated, however, that even though the country was outwardly quiet, it was filled with Unionists

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[29]General William H. Carroll to General Albert S. Johnston, December 7, 1861 (copy), Tilghman Haws Scrapbook, UT Special Collections; Parson Brownlow's Book, 369-79.

ready to revolt. He complained of the desertion of East Tennesseans and urged that a large force be kept in the region to overawe the Tories. He then abolished the court martial at Knoxville, because of its expense and because it could not keep up a fast enough pace. With 130 prisoners yet to be tried, he still did not turn them over to the civil courts which he considered to be too lenient, but did what he had done at Greeneville--he tried the prisoners himself.[30]

In retrospect it seems that the handling of the bridge burning episode by the Confederates was a mistake. Much as Zollicoffer had speculated the day after the incident, the situation was less serious than the Confederates perceived. Although insurgent forces gathered in various parts of the region, they were for the most part weak and poorly organized. There was no mass insurrection of East Tennesseans, even though there had been ample opportunity for it in the few days after the bridge burnings when the Confederates were still confused. Actually and perhaps surprisingly, there was a great deal of condemnation of the incident by East Tennessee Unionists. Certainly many may have protested to allay suspicions of their own complicity; but there was also genuine concern that their more belligerent colleagues had gone too far. The Knoxville Register reported a meeting of several citizens of "both parties" at the Sevier County courthouse. They passed resolutions condemning the destruction of the bridges and denied rumors that the people of the county did or said anything to incite the incident. A Unionist from Cleveland, Tennessee, fearing arrest even though he had had nothing to

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[30] Official Records, Series 2, I, 760, 869-70.

do with the "bridge burning rebellion," declared that "no honest man can endorse what these East Tennessee fools have done." A member of General Carroll's staff stated that the majority of East Tennesseans were entirely ignorant of the plans to burn the railroad bridges and "were utterly opposed to any such wickedness and folly." As a matter of fact, he continued, Union men were more alarmed than Southerners because they were aware that such incidents could mean the advance of a large Confederate army into their midst. Landon C. Haynes and Colonel H. R. Austin of Memphis traveled to Richmond to impress upon President Davis the idea that only a decided minority was responsible for the problems in the eastern counties. Austin went so far as to suggest that all Confederate troops except one regiment be sent elsewhere.[31]

The mass arrests of hundreds of Unionists, many on flimsy charges, and their subsequent incarceration in places as far away as the Tuscaloosa prison with little or no trial, only deepened the feelings of resentment toward the Confederacy. To many who had been reconciled to live in peace under the new regime, the stringent clamp-down revived the bitterness that they had felt during the secession crisis. To make matters even more difficult, many pro-Confederate civilians had no qualms about reporting suspected Unionists to Confederate authorities especially after the bridge burnings. As Temple stated, the feeling of a majority of the Confederate citizens in East Tennessee against the Unionists was one of "intense bitterness." In November, one young woman in

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[31]Knoxville Register, November 21, 1861; John E. Hayes to Mrs. Benjamin Stout, December 11, 1861, Civil War Records, II, 34; Official Records, Series 1, VII, 77-78; ibid., Series 2, I, 869.

Rhea County reported that "we have been having some fun in our neighood [sic] with the lincolnites." For two weeks pro-Southern men had ridden "hither and yonder" after the Tories.[32]

As a result of growing unhappiness, an increasing number of Unionists began to escape from East Tennessee to Kentucky in the winter of 1861-62. Those who got out told of the extreme persecution experienced by the Unionists. "It is impossible to put on paper," wrote Robert Johnson, "the Scenes that have taken place in East Tennessee. . . ." L. C. Houk, reporting on the numbers flocking into Kentucky, expressed the hope that he could organize some of the men to go back and harass the Rebels in the region. Many of the self-exiled East Tennesseans joined up with the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd East Tennessee Volunteer Infantry which drilled in camps in central Kentucky. Some Federal officers were so bold as to slip into the upper counties of East Tennessee to recruit volunteers for the regiments back in Kentucky. These Tennesseans anxiously awaited a full-scale Federal invasion of their homeland. In the meantime, through the winter of 1861-62 bands of East Tennessee Unionists, operating out of Kentucky, conducted raids against the Confederate troops, captured their pickets, burned their buildings, and kept them constantly on edge. Indeed by early 1862 it was apparent that any hopes of appeasing and winning over the Unionists were now irretrievably lost.[33]

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[32]Temple, East Tennessee, 412; Lillard, Meigs County, 113; M. B. Stewart to Richard Stewart, November 21, 1861, Civil War Records, II, 182.

[33]Robert Johnson to Andrew Johnson, February 13, 1862, Andrew Johnson MSS (microfilm), Library of Congress; Andrew Winter to Andrew Johnson, January 14, 1862, ibid.; E. C. Trigg to Connally F. Trigg, March 26, 1862, C. F. Trigg MSS, Library of Congress; Edward Maynard to Messrs. Bird, Fortner, and Garman, Edward Maynard MSS, TSLA; L. C. Houk to Andrew Johnson, January 17, 1862, Johnson MSS, LC; Joel Haley to E. Fair, Joel Haley MSS, TSLA.

Temple maintained that the bridge burning "did but little harm to the Confederacy, and no good whatever to the Union cause." To him the only importance was the fact that the Union people of East Tennessee suffered even more as a result of the incident.[34] In the last respect Temple is correct because until Federal occupation of East Tennessee in September, 1863, the Unionists who remained in the region would lead disrupted and unhappy lives. But at the same time, the Confederates were even more convinced that East Tennessee was an area of potential trouble and therefore deserving of constant vigilance. Even in January, 1862, after emotions had quieted significantly, Colonel Leadbetter felt that East Tennessee was not secure and that a large force should be kept there to overawe the Unionists. As a result, because of the bridge incident and subsequent events, Confederate troops vitally needed elsewhere were stationed in East Tennessee. For example, in the spring of 1862, as Albert Sidney Johnston was marshalling every available soldier to fight at Shiloh, nearly 9,000 Confederate troops were tied down in the eastern counties guarding the railroads and the mountain passes to prevent the escape of Unionists.[35]

In the meantime more trouble arose for the Confederates on January 18 when Zollicoffer's army received a crushing defeat from George Thomas

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[34]Temple, East Tennessee, 408. Garrett endorses Temple, stating that the burning of the bridges was "daring but unwise." Garrett, "Confederate Government . . . East Tennessee," 64.

[35]Official Records, Series 2, I, 859; Whelan, "Unconventional Warfare," 56-58, contends that the bridge burnings served to tie down Confederate troops in East Tennessee. He also asserts that the incident served greatly to unify resistance to the Confederacy, although he gives no direct evidence to corroborate his point.

at Mill Springs, Kentucky. When the mild-mannered Confederate commander was killed, disorganized Southern troops streamed back into Knoxville. Although the way to East Tennessee was wide open, General Don Carlos Buell held Thomas back because he wanted to concentrate most of his efforts in the western end of the state. Nevertheless, Confederate authorities in East Tennessee were frightened and in disarray. Morale in the ranks was low and confidence of Southern sympathizers was badly shaken. Landon C. Haynes pleaded with Jefferson Davis to appoint an aggressive commander "to restore tone to the army and reinspire the public confidence. . . ."[36]

To fill this need, Davis transferred the very capable Major General Edmund Kirby Smith from Manassas, Virginia, to command the Department of East Tennessee. When Kirby Smith arrived in Knoxville on March 8 and formally took charge, he found the task no easier than that of his predecessors; as a matter of fact the new commander discovered the situation to be worse than he had expected. A few days after he arrived, the Knoxville Register reported great turmoil in the counties bordering Kentucky. Union men were fleeing to that state, while Southern men moved closer to the interior of the region out of fear of the predatory bands of Lincolnites that prowled at night robbing and murdering. Not only did Kirby Smith have to deal with a disrupted population, but also his command was a "disorganized mob without head or discipline." But the general immediately applied himself to the task of getting his army into fighting shape. He spread his 8,000 men over East Tennessee guarding key points, the

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[36] Official Records, Series 1, VII, 849.

railroad, and Cumberland Gap. The general had to keep a constant and wary eye to the north where Federal forces continued to concentrate in Kentucky and the west after Middle Tennessee fell under Union control in February.[37]

The general was constantly busy and he found his command to be an unpleasant one; within a week he confided to his wife that he was overwhelmed with cares and troubles. East Tennessee was "more dangerous and difficult to operate in than the country of an acknowledged enemy." A week later he rejected her request to come visit him, because he was afraid for her safety "in this land of unionism and traitordom." Kirby Smith could not even trust his own soldiers. Those who had been recruited locally could not be depended on. Many had gone into service to avoid suspicion and they either gave information to the enemy or deserted whenever possible. On March 16, for example, a raiding party of Federal cavalry captured Jacksboro and a large number of two companies of East Tennessee soldiers without firing a shot. The general strongly urged the War Department to transfer the East Tennesseans "where they cannot prove traitors, either by purchase or from love of the Federal government. . . ."[38]

In addition to the East Tennessee Confederate soldiers, the militia was totally unreliable. An amended state militia law passed in March, 1862, required all white males between 18 and 45 years of age, not already in military service, to serve in the militia "for the duration of the war

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[37]Knoxville Register, March 13, 1862; Joseph H. Parks, General Edmund Kirby Smith, C. S. A. (Baton Rouge, 1954), 156-57.

[38]Edmund Kirby Smith to Carrie S. Smith, March 13, 15, 1862, Kirby Smith MSS, SHC; Official Records, Series 1, X, pt. 1, pp. 20-21.

against the United States." Each county court was required to appoint enrolling officers to insure execution of the law. These officers, however, had constant problems in filling their quotas and it was not unusual for some to be less than diligent in their duties. But even when militia units were officially organized, in some cases, they refused to assemble.[39]

Raids of Union partisans throughout East Tennessee continued. Pro-Southern citizens along the Cumberland Plateau constantly complained of the "Lincoln depredators" and bushwackers who came down from the Kentucky border. Most of the raiders were East Tennessee refugees who knew their way throughout the region as well as anyone. Because state authorities had taken guns from citizens for use in the army in the late summer of 1861, most people were defenseless and at the mercy of the marauding bands.[40]

Perplexed by these various problems, Kirby Smith in early April developed a plan to strengthen Confederate control. To him the East Tennesseans were "an ignorant, primitive people" easily swayed by the distortions of their leaders. He therefore ordered the arrest of the leading Union men in every county to be sent to prison in the lower South. If necessary he would draft all eligible men who resisted and send them south so that they could become "loyal and effective soldiers." He instructed Colonel Leadbetter to deal "summarily" with all partisans, seize all arms, and destroy all supplies. Then he ordered that all county officers elected in the annual March county elections should

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[39]Cleveland Banner, March 14, 1862; Athens Post, March 21, 1862.

[40]Athens Post, March 14, 21, 1862.

swear an oath to the Confederacy; those who refused were to be sent to Knoxville as prisoners. Civil governments in the hands of disloyal officials could scarcely be expected to give justice to supporters of the Confederacy. He urged that martial law be declared throughout East Tennessee to insure the success of the Confederate cause in the region.[41]

The authorities in Richmond responded quickly to Kirby Smith's recommendations. Reinforcements were sent in and many of the East Tennessee troops were transferred out of the region. Then on April 8, President Davis formally declared East Tennessee as enemy territory. He suspended civil jurisdiction except in civil litigations, suspended the writ of habeas corpus, instructed Kirby Smith to establish an efficient military police in the region, and prohibited the distillation and sale of spiritous liquors.[42]

Confederates in the region applauded the new policy immediately. To the Athens Post "It was high time, as the element of disloyalty had become so rampant as to require the strong arm of military power to keep it in subjugation." It went on to express hope that the Tories would now sit trembling in silence behind barred doors, because a "keen and sleepless eye" was watching them, and "the Strong hand is ready to grip." Editor Sperry of the Register was convinced that martial law would be "the death blow of toryism in this unhappy division of the State."[43]

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[41] Official Records, Series 1, X, pt. 2, pp. 369, 385-86.

[42] Ibid., 397, 402.

[43] Athens Post, April 18, 1862; Knoxville Register, April 11, 1862.

An East Tennessean, Colonel William M. Churchwell, was appointed Provost Marshal for the region; and deputy provost marshals were assigned to each county. It seems that martial law, however, was never fully or consistently enforced in East Tennessee. Soon after Davis' declaration, a prosecuting officer for the Confederate courts, in order to clear up confusion, assured the readers of the Knoxville Register that the proclamation of martial law was in no way intended to conflict with or supersede the functions of the criminal courts. He maintained that it was intended to give the military department supervisory powers over the execution of the laws regularly administered by the civil system. It was also to make citizens, like soldiers, "amenable to the rules and articles of War," thus enabling the government to reach cases not strictly within the jurisdiction of the civil courts. "The one is intended," he concluded, "not to dispose of, but be auxiliary to the other." Indeed criminal courts, both Confederate and state, continued to operate on a regular basis; and as will be discussed in a later chapter, county and chancery courts were not affected by the proclamation. However, in some areas, upper East Tennessee in particular, the provost marshal exercised a heavy hand. Captain Gamble Rutledge, for example, maintained strict control in Greene County. His brother boasted that Gam was a good provost marshal because he was "tremendous tight on Lincolnites."[44]

Even with the application of martial law, Kirby Smith's problems of dealing with an embittered Union population were far from solved. A

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[44]Athens Post, April 18, 1862; Knoxville Register, April 17, 1862; Robert A. Rutledge to "wife," July 26, 1862, Rutledge MSS, private collection of Dr. Guy Whitehead, Rochester, Minnesota.

steady flow of Unionists streamed over the mountains into Kentucky, leaving all of their possessions behind. In mid-April over 800 refugees from Knox and Grainger counties banded together, armed with squirrel rifles, shotguns, pitchforks, clubs, and scythes, and headed for Kentucky. On April 17, Confederate cavalry under Captain Henry Ashby intercepted and attacked the Unionists as they reached Campbell County. Ashby's men killed 30, wounded another 30, and captured nearly 400. The rest of the refugees scattered into the woods. The captives were then given the option of enlisting or going to prison in Madison, Georgia.[45]

Contributing to the near stampede of Unionists was the passage, on April 16, of the first of three Confederate conscription laws which made every white male citizen between the ages of 18 and 35 eligible for Confederate service. No other policy imposed by the Confederate government caused such an uproar in East Tennessee as this act. Conscription was unpopular throughout the South; and Confederate authorities were never entirely successful in enforcing the policy, particularly in portions of northern Alabama and Mississippi, and western North Carolina. But as one student of Confederate conscription observed, opposition to the draft was especially acute in East Tennessee. Union leaders there spread news of the conscription act as soon as it was passed and they urged all draft-age men to leave for Kentucky. Soon thousands of men tried to cross the

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[45] Official Records, Series 1, X, pt. 2, p. 424; ibid., pt. 1, p. 649; Knoxville Register, April 17, 19, May 15, 1862. Escaping Unionists could be more successful in dealing with their pursuers. In March of 1862, T. D. Edington and nearly fifty Unionist colleagues from Knox County launched an escape from East Tennessee. Before the group crossed into Kentucky, however, they routed a force of Confederate cavalry sent to track them down. "Hardships of Civil Strife, 1861-1865," typescript diary of T. D. Edington, March 2, 1862, UT Special Collections.

mountains. A special force of infantry and artillery was dispatched to Cumberland Gap to try to put a halt to the mass exodus. In the meantime, conscript officers began to comb the region, rounding up as many men as possible.[46]

Probably realizing the unprecedented fury that would be aroused by conscription, Kirby Smith issued a proclamation on April 18 to soothe raw nerves. He intoned that he was certain that most of the people who were committing acts of treason were doing so out of ignorance or "under the persuasion and misguidance of supposed friends." For those who had been misinformed or misled, the general offered amnesty if they would return within thirty days and take the Confederate oath of allegiance. For those who had fled Tennessee or those who were hiding in the mountains, the same provisions applied. All who returned could rest assured that their property and rights would be protected, the writ of habeas corpus reinstated, and the March, 1862, militia draft would be suspended so that farmers could raise crops without interruption during the year.[47]

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[46] Parks, Kirby Smith, 171; Official Records, Series 1, X, pt. 2, pp. 114, 429-30; Scott and Angel, Thirteenth Tennessee, 97-98; Albert B. Moore, Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy (New York, 1924), 148-49; Georgia Lee Tatum, Disloyalty in the Confederacy (Chapel Hill, 1934), 13-17, 150-51; Stephen E. Ambrose, "Yeoman Discontent in the Confederacy," Civil War History, VIII (1962), 264-65.

[47] Official Records, Series 2, I, 882. A few days after Kirby Smith's note of appeasement, Provost Marshal Churchwell in a public address, reiterated his commander's offer of amnesty for all men who returned within 30 days; he went on to remind them that many had families to care for in East Tennessee. Churchwell concluded that the women and children "must be taken care of by husbands and fathers either in East Tennessee or in the Lincoln Government." Ibid., 884. Two days prior to this address, Churchwell had ordered the families of Andrew Johnson, Horace Maynard, W. G. Brownlow, and William B. Carter to leave the Confederacy in hopes that this would remove potential troublemakers. Ibid., 883-89, 930-31.

After several weeks of trying to enforce the Confederate conscription law, Kirby Smith became convinced that the policy was a mistake. Estimating that almost 7,000 East Tennesseans had joined General Samuel P. Carter's Union army in Kentucky because of the act, he urged President Davis to suspend the draft in the region. Since many Confederate authorities were also uneasy over the prospect of a diminished harvest for the ensuing season, they urged a return of refugees to avoid an extreme food shortage. An "Old Southerner" from Claiborne County wrote the Register, pleading for a suspension of the draft. Since most of the young men had fled either to Kentucky or the mountains, the conscription officers were only causing needless trouble. "If matters don't return to normal soon," he warned, "starvation will soon result." Realizing how tenuous the situation was in East Tennessee, Davis granted Kirby Smith permission to suspend conscription on May 13. In his public announcement of the draft suspension, Kirby Smith hoped that all good citizens would return to "cultivate their farms and take care of their families." As long as they remained peaceful, he promised to leave them alone. A few days later the general informed his wife that he was convinced that his term as commander had been a success. "My policy whilst firm has been mild and conciliatory with these people," he stated, "who when I came were disloyal and disaffected." Since that time, he concluded, many had returned home and given allegiance to the Confederacy.[48]

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[48] Ibid., Series 1, X, pt. 2, pp. 453-54, 521; ibid., XVI, pt. 2, pp. 695-96; Knoxville Register, May 16, 1862; Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 173; Edmund Kirby Smith to Carrie S. Smith, May 25, 1862, Kirby Smith MSS, SHC. Secretary of War Randolph was willing to suspend the draft permanently in East Tennessee. Official Records, Series 1, XVI, pt. 2, p. 703.

Although Kirby Smith may have had a sense of accomplishment, in reality the granting of amnesty and the suspension of conscription had not mollified East Tennessee Unionists. As a matter of fact, a few days after writing to his wife, the general admitted to Alabama governor John G. Shorter that a majority of the population he "governed" still sympathized with the enemy and that enough had crossed the mountains to form six regiments of Federal troops. Indeed by mid-June, 1862, over five regiments of infantry and one regiment of cavalry of East Tennesseans had been formally organized into Federal service. In addition, thousands of other East Tennesseans had joined regiments from other states, especially Kentucky and Ohio.[49]

While many managed to get out on their own, bands of East Tennesseans increasingly depended on special pilots to guide them across the mountains. Whether for pay or patriotic duty, these native East Tennessee guides used their knowledge of obscure mountain passes, back roads, and hidden fords to aid thousands in their escape from the Confederacy. Pilots such as Daniel Ellis (the "Red Fox"), Richard Flynn, and Captain R. A. Ragan of Cocke County, while considered public enemies by the

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[49]Edmund Kirby Smith to Governor J. G. Shorter, May 29, 1862, Kirby Smith MSS, SHC; Tennesseans in the Civil War (2 vols.; Nashville, 1964), I, 318, 375-90. During the Civil War, Tennessee sent an estimated 31,092 white men into the Union army, most of whom were probably East Tennesseans, although exact figures are impossible to determine. In April of 1864, William G. Brownlow stated that East Tennessee "has furnished 20,000 soldiers for the Union army"; and in a note in the margin he added that this 20,000 estimate "does not include not less than 5,000 who enlisted in Kentucky and other State regiments." Frederick H. Dyer, A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion (Des Moines, 1909), 11-12; Charles C. Anderson, Fighting by Southern Federals (New York, 1912), 10-11; Knoxville Whig, April 9, 1864.

Confederacy, obtained almost legendary status among the East Tennessee Unionists.[50] Their efforts would continue without interruption until Federal occupation in 1863. Temple estimated that as many as fifteen or twenty thousand men secretly crossed into Kentucky to join the Federal army during the first two years of the war.[51] Adding to the headaches of the Confederates was the occupation of Cumberland Gap by a small Federal army under General George W. Morgan on June 18, 1862. With Federal protection close by, Unionists flocked to the Gap in such large numbers that Morgan was able to organize the 4th East Tennessee Cavalry Regiment in July.

By mid-August, the Confederates had formulated plans for an invasion of Kentucky by the armies of Kirby Smith and Braxton Bragg. But before the campaign began, Kirby Smith made one last attempt to win back the East Tennessee Unionists. On August 13 he issued a proclamation which appealed to the deceived and misguided persons in the United States army to return to their homes, take the oath of allegiance to the Confederacy, and conduct themselves as good citizens. They would be paid

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[50]Athens Post, May 16, July 18, 1862; Official Records, Series 1, XVI, pt 2, p. 716; Knoxville Register, July 5, 25, August 15, 24, 1862. These pilots also played a crucial role in the escape of Federal prisoners through the region. By 1864, reaching East Tennessee was a major goal for many Federals who had escaped from Confederate prisons. See Arnold Ritt, "The Escape of Federal Prisoners through East Tennessee, 1861-1865" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1965).

[51]Temple, East Tennessee, 428. Indeed, some areas of East Tennessee were virtually without Union men by the fall of 1862. Gamble Rutledge commented in September, 1862, that he needed only a few men to carry out his duties as provost in Greeneville because "there is not much danger from the Tories as they have nearly all gone to Kentucky." Gamble Rutledge to "Pa," September 7, 1862, Rutledge MSS, Whitehead Collection; Tennesseans in the Civil War, I, 326-27.

a "fair price" for such arms as they might bring home. On the following day, Kirby Smith marched for Kentucky.[52]

Command of the East Tennessee Department was turned over to Major General J. P. McCown, a West Pointer with a good military record but even more important, a native of Sevier County, Tennessee. McCown felt confident about his new job, for as he explained to Confederate Secretary of War George W. Randolph: "I am one of these people and I think I know them." But his tenure as commander lasted only one frustrating month. Apparently he was unsuccessful in attempting to confiscate large quantities of arms in Knox and Anderson Counties; and any hopes of appeasing his fellow East Tennesseans came to an abrupt halt in late August when he was ordered by Richmond to exile all citizens who were admitted Unionists and to enforce conscription as soon as Morgan's army evacuated Cumberland Gap. When McCown attempted to carry out General Bragg's official order dated September 5 to begin conscription, East Tennessee was thrown into a "feverish state." Large numbers of Unionists, many of whom had returned to their homes under the assumption that they would be left alone, again fled to the mountains. McCown was greatly perplexed and perturbed. Because he could not cope with the situation, he was replaced by Major General Samuel Jones on September 19.[53]

Richmond made certain that Jones understood his chief duty--the enforcement of conscription. Secretary of War Randolph, however, emphasized

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[52] Official Records, Series 1, XVI, pt. 2, p. 756. William G. McAdoo of Knoxville traveled to Clinton and reported: "I saw about one male citizen at all the houses we passed: they have fled to avoid conscription." McAdoo Diary, October 1, 1862, LC.

[53] Official Records, Series 1, XVI, pt. 2, pp. 790, 797-98, 841, 851.

that the job would require "great judgement," and he would rely on Jones' firmness and prudence to enforce the law "without exciting revolt." Jones did his utmost to create a favorable attitude among the East Tennesseans. Even though he was instructed to enforce conscription, he received permission to encourage volunteering into Confederate service. He issued stern orders to prevent his soldiers from making depredations on civilians regardless of their loyalty. Seizure of any kind of property could be done only on explicit orders from headquarters. Jones attempted to break up partisan bands and arrest hostile Union leaders without upsetting the civilian population.[54]

He also made a concerted effort to induce prominent local leaders to influence the people to stop their resistance. He persuaded T. A. R. Nelson to issue a public statement which attacked Abraham Lincoln's preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, absolved the Confederate high command of depredations on Union civilians, and finally urged all East Tennesseans to join the Confederate army. Jones had the address printed up in hand bills and distributed throughout the region. Citizens from Greene County then urged Nelson to visit their town and speak "to unite our heretofore divided people and make clear to their minds their present path." But Nelson refused this and other requests to take to the stump. A written public statement was as far as he would go. Jones urged editor Sperry of the Knoxville Register to soften his editorial barbs because his recent denunciatory articles were arousing Unionists needlessly. Accordingly, Sperry initiated a pronounced change in policy. Since there was a chance

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[54] Ibid., 866, 884-85, 890.

of conciliation in East Tennessee, he announced, he would forget all past rivalries and work for the public good.[55]

Despite Jones' honest desire to restore peace and harmony, his efforts met with little success. So much bitterness and distrust had been engendered among the Unionists over the past several months that even a mild Confederate policy was perceived as a fraud. T. A. R. Nelson's public statement was ridiculed as a joke; critics claimed that the former Union leader's new position was obtained by coercion or as the price paid for the release of his son who had been held by the Confederates. Union partisans continued to operate freely in the region and efforts to entice volunteers rather than conscripts into the army came to naught.[56]

Like his predecessors, Jones doubted the wisdom of a strict conscription policy. In a message to Secretary Randolph, he argued that conscription only caused more hatred for the Confederacy and moreover, conscripts made poor soldiers. Jones felt that these men would be much more useful to the war effort by harvesting crops or working in the mines rather than shouldering a gun. Randolph, however, disagreed, saying that suspension of the draft under Kirby Smith had done little good; furthermore, suspension would do much to discourage volunteering. In a letter to the President, Randolph insisted: "The issue must be made with those people whether they will submit to the laws or not, and I cannot see what

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[55]Athens Post, October 3, 1863; General Samuel Jones to T. A. R. Nelson, September 25, 1862, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection; Official Records, Series 1, XVI, pt. 2, pp. 907-11, 945-47; Alexander, Nelson, 100, 105.

[56]Official Records, Series 1, XVI, pt. 2, pp. 954-57.

we shall gain by further postponement." Davis concurred and formally rejected Jones' appeal for a temporary suspension of conscription stating that he needed every able bodied man available; to exempt the unwilling "would be to offer a premium to disaffection." When Kirby Smith resumed command of East Tennessee in October, 1862, after the failure of the Kentucky campaign, he was granted full authority to make certain that conscription was enforced, even if it took troops from his army to do so.[57]

Conscription officers now were authorized to enroll all free white men from the ages of 35 to 40 who had been exempt in April. Because these officers often met armed opposition, they used troops when necessary to carry out their duties to the fullest. The Confederates even pressed Major William H. Thomas' Legion of Indians and Highlanders into conscription duty in upper East Tennessee. Confederate authorities knew that these troops, containing two companies of North Carolina Cherokees and mixed-bloods, would be very effective in combing the mountains for draft dodgers. To the Unionists of East Tennessee, the use of these "half civilized savages" was the culminating event in arousing anger and indignation toward the Confederacy. As a native of Carter County recalled: "Must their [Union men] wives and children who were now alone for the most part, be horrified by the appearance at their very doors of these long-haired greasy looking savages, who could not speak a word of English, or understand a plea for mercy?"[58]

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[57] Ibid., 140-41; ibid., XX, pt. 2, pp. 405-06; ibid., Series 4, II, 246.

[58] Mattie U. Russell, "Devil in the Smokies: The White Man's Nature and the Indian's Fate," South Atlantic Quarterly, LXXIII (1974), 63-65; Scott and Angel, Thirteenth Tennessee, 98, 321.

Conscript officers had difficulty filling their quotas because of the great shortage of qualified men in the region. But even when they signed men into service, forcing them to report for duty before escaping was another problem. Many were caught and brought back; and some died in their efforts to escape. Nearly a dozen drowned in early November, 1862, in lower East Tennessee while trying to cross a ford in the rain-swollen Tennessee River. Once officially enrolled, the conscripts were marched to a special "Camp of Instruction" near Knoxville, which was especially designed to introduce them to army life. But as the Athens Post pointed out, it required two hundred regular soldiers to guard one hundred conscripts to "restrain them for breaking for the brush." Even with a heavy guard, desertion was a constant problem. A few days before Christmas, 1862, two entire companies of conscripts seized weapons and escaped to the remote mountains of North Carolina. Also in late December, 1,000 Federal cavalrymen under General Samuel P. Carter dashed in and out of upper East Tennessee destroying the important railroad bridges over the Watauga and Holston. While the raid caused considerable property damage, it also stirred guerrilla activity in upper East Tennessee.[59]

With little regret, Kirby Smith left East Tennessee in mid-January to take command of the Army of the Southwest in Texas and Louisiana. His successor, Major General Daniel Donelson, maintained a stringent policy in regard to conscription and dealing with disaffected East Tennesseans. Those he conscripted were shipped to the deep South and all prominent

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[59] Athens Post, November 7, December 5, 26, 1862; Official Records, Series 1, XX, pt. 1, pp. 89-91, 95-103, 112, 130. See also Campbell H. Brown, "Carter's East Tennessee Raid: The Sailor on Horseback Who Raided His Own Backyard," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, XXII (1963), 66-82.

leaders were imprisoned as hostages. Disloyal workers in the East Tennessee nitre works could also be exiled to distant points.[60]

Command of the East Tennessee Department changed again when in May, 1863, Major General Simon B. Buckner was given a chance at the troublesome region. Like some of his predecessors, Buckner tried a policy of conciliation. He urged, without success, that conscription be suspended so that young men could tend to their farms without interruption. He encouraged the formation of local home guards to be armed with shotguns and squirrel rifles as a defense against bushwackers who showed no loyalty to either side. When General William T. Martin of the Army of Tennessee ordered men in his cavalry division to press horses from Union citizens, Buckner successfully protested to Bragg. To him, Martin's men were thus given authority for wholesale robbery and would alienate all civilians, regardless of their loyalty. Despite his efforts, Buckner had no better success in East Tennessee. He explained to Abe Tipton, a disgruntled citizen who had been arrested, that his main goal was to pursue a course of moderation. "I have resisted all efforts to inaugurate a violent policy," he exclaimed. But in every case so-called "Unionists" had frustrated his efforts of conciliation either by force of arms or through a simple lack of cooperation. Buckner then justified his arrest of Tipton. "The government which has protected you, you defy," he concluded, "and though you have not take arms yourself, everything shows that you have constantly aided and abetted those who did and to the

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[60] Official Records, Series 1, XXIII, pt. 2, pp. 621, 631, 651-52.

moment of your arrest were engaged in fanning the embers of sedition. . . ."[61]

Armed bands roamed the region in increasing numbers, and efforts by the Confederate government to suppress them were mostly unsuccessful. Confederate troops charged with dealing with the partisans developed an intense hatred for their wily opponents. A frustrated officer from Jefferson County complained: "These pious and puritanic soldiers are composed of the ignorant Mountaineers who are too lazy to run and consequently unfit to serve Old Abe in the Regular Army." But from their knowledge of the mountains, they were able to "skulk about," murder pickets, and destroy property. Even the civilians could be dangerous. When a lieutenant attempted to enter a private home, an old woman bashed him in the head with an ax and seriously wounded him. An eyewitness reported: "our boys did not kill the old woman . . . they only knocked her in the head with a gun and left her for dead, but she was not badly hurt. . . ."[62]

By late August, 1863, it was apparent that Confederate control in East Tennessee was fast waning. Reports indicated that a 12,000-man army under Major General Ambrose Burnside was advancing on the region from Kentucky; and Buckner was ordered to move most of his troops to Bragg's

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[61]Special Orders #74, July 17, 1863, Headquarters W. T. Martin's Cavalry Division, in Letters, Orders, and Circulars of the Department of Western Virginia and East Tennessee, Confederate Military Records, RG 109, NA; General Simon B. Buckner to General W. W. MacKall, August 1, 1863, ibid.; General Simon B. Buckner to Abe Tipton, July 28, 1863, ibid.

[62]Sam H. Hynds to Ann Hyde, May 27, 1863, Civil War Records, I, 93. A similar incident occurred in Scott County when a sixteen-year-old girl killed a Rebel with an ax. In the ensuing struggle, she lost a finger and an eye. Sanderson, Scott County, 75.

army as it contested the advance of William S. Rosecrans' army in Middle Tennessee. Southern sympathizers in East Tennessee grew panicky. In Cleveland, Myra Inman reported that it was impossible to sleep at night as troops, army wagons, and frightened civilians choked the roads in retreat to Georgia. By September 8, she recorded "I am very lonesome this eve. The soldiers have all left and every thing is quiet. Locking for the Yankees in every minute." By September 10, Federal cavalry from Rosecrans' army marched proudly into a nearly deserted Cleveland. "These are sad days to we secessionists but I hope for brighter," Myra concluded.[63]

While Rosecrans' troops occupied lower East Tennessee, Burnside had already made a triumphal entry into Knoxville. From the moment his Army of the Ohio entered East Tennessee over the Cumberland Plateau, its men were greeted as the soldiers of deliverance. Private Chauncey B. Welton of the 103rd Ohio Volunteers reported that after camp was set up each night, news of the army spread through the mountains like a wildfire and crowds of spectators gathered to see a "live yanke" for the first time. Although some secessionists were seen once the army entered the Tennessee Valley, overjoyed Unionists, mostly old men, women, and children, lined the entire route. Near Knoxville, the soldiers saw a group of people wildly clapping and cheering. In the middle stood an old woman, her hands clasped above her head, "tears running down her withered cheeks in torents [sic]." At first she was speechless, but she finally burst out, "thank the lord . . . at last you have released us at last we are saved

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[63]Myra Inman Diary, August 21, September 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 1863, SHC.

. . . God bless the yankes [sic]. . . ." As the soldiers marched into Knoxville on September 3 citizens went "almost crazy with joy." Although short on flour, local people presented the army with scores of cakes, pies, and cookies. A few days later, when Welton's regiment was transferred by rail to Greeneville, people waved handkerchiefs all along the route; and at Greeneville, American flags were displayed on almost every building. When the citizens saw the regiment's old battle flag, Welton exclaimed, "it seamed [sic] as though thier [sic] cheers of enthusiasm would shake the verry [sic] ground upon which they stood."[64]

Indeed not since the early days of the war, when Confederate troops were cheered on their way to Manassas along parts of the railroad, had soldiers been so popular in East Tennessee. The wild demonstrations greeting Burnside pointed up the failure of Confederate policy over the last two years. From the beginning, Confederate authorities had hoped to gain the loyalty of East Tennessee. A good third of the population seemed to favor the Southern cause; and it was hoped that many who were neutral or who were not completely devoted to the Union could be persuaded to join the Confederacy. But the Confederates mishandled the problem from the very beginning.

For one, policy was never consistent. While Felix Zollicoffer tried to institute a moderate policy as a military commander in the fall of 1861, overly zealous Confederate civil servants enforced the sequestration and the sedition acts to the fullest extent. The alternating attempts at conciliation and suppression of the Unionists by the various commanders

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[64]Chauncey Welton to "family," September 13, 15, 1863, Welton MSS, SHC.

of the East Tennessee Department only served further to alienate the populace. It was nearly impossible for the Confederates to gain the confidence of the people when, for example, Kirby Smith suspended the draft in the spring of 1862 to entice back disaffected East Tennesseans; yet two months later his successor was forced to carry out conscription at all costs. In addition, conscription had hindered rather than helped Confederate military efforts in East Tennessee. One man, writing in January, 1863, estimated that conscription had forced 10,000 men to flee to Kentucky, while at the same time it took two soldiers from the army to guard every man drafted.[65]

Even when commanders attempted moderate policies, there was always active armed resistance by Union partisans who constantly plagued the military. In addition, Unionists did as little as possible to cooperate with Confederate authority. As will be discussed in detail below, Unionists or individuals who described themselves as neutralists retained political clout on the local level throughout much of the period of Confederate control. These men could be forced to take oaths of allegiance to the Confederacy, but extracting full loyalty and complicity in supporting the Southern Republic was quite another matter.

One final aspect of the war in East Tennessee prevented the Confederacy from swaying the people to its cause. From early in the war a struggle among the people of the region developed; and as the national conflict dragged on, the intensity of this local internal war increased. Pro-Southern citizens felt little reluctance in turning suspected

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[65] Official Records, Series 4, II, 267-71.

Unionist neighbors over to the authorities. Unionists in Carter and Johnson counties became particularly embittered when fellow citizens and neighbors fully cooperated with Thomas' Indians in rounding up draft dodgers. By the summer of 1863, General Buckner complained that one of the chief obstacles to his bringing peace to East Tennessee was the rash of "neighborhood wars" that plagued the eastern counties.[66]

As their army gradually gained control of East Tennessee, Union commanders began to face many of the same problems that had bothered their Confederate counterparts. A change in governing authority unfortunately brought no end to the violence and civil strife of a disrupted and unhappy people.

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[66]General Simon B. Buckner to Abe Tipton, July 28, 1863, Letters, Orders, and Circulars, Department of Western Virginia and East Tennessee, Confederate Military Records, RG 109, NA. A Confederate officer who came to East Tennessee with James Longstreet's Corps in the fall of 1863 observed: "In East Tennessee the people are about equally divided and there rages a real civil war, which causes great misery." Susan L. Blackford, Charles M. Blackford, Charles M. Blackford, III (eds.), Letters from Lee's Army or Memoirs of Life In and Out of the Army in Virginia During the War Between the States (New York, 1947), 226.

CHAPTER IV

"EAST TENNESSEE IS BLEEDING AT EVERY PORE": FEDERAL OCCUPATION, 1863-65

In early September, 1863, ten Federal officers filed through Cumberland Gap on their way to army headquarters in Knoxville. Blessed with clear, crisp weather, the group was intrigued by a country which seemed strange and exciting in the roughness of its terrain and in the character of its people. The men had grown accustomed to the bitter scowls and rebukes of Southern citizens in other regions, including Kentucky, but they were amazed at how warmly they were greeted along their route. They trotted into recently liberated Knoxville on September 8 and after reporting to their commander, several of them moved into the home of a wealthy Knoxvillian who had fled south. Now that the wild excitement greeting the army a few days earlier had subsided, the impact of two years of civil war became grimly evident to one of the officers. Daniel Larned, a Connecticut aristocrat and personal secretary to General Ambrose Burnside, recorded that in better days Knoxville had been a business town, but that the stern realities of war "have been felt here with greater severity than almost any other place." The people were shabbily dressed and Larned heard an endless stream of horror stories of the days of Confederate occupation. By the hundreds, wretched looking creatures poured into town after spending months holed up in the caves and mountains of the region. Down near the old Confederate conscript camp, Larned saw the wreckage of the gallows, "a regular institution

before our arrival," he said. It had been one of the first things destroyed by the citizens when Knoxville was evacuated by the Rebels.[1]

As Larned was making these observations about Knoxville, his commander was attempting to gain control of upper and central East Tennessee. General Burnside had been instructed to secure the region and then consolidate his Army of the Ohio to join General William S. Rosecrans at Chattanooga. Burnside placed much more emphasis on the first part of his orders and dispatched troops throughout East Tennessee, breaking up small detachments of Confederates. By mid-September, Burnside decided to move his force into upper East Tennessee instead of rushing to Rosecrans' army. By the end of the month, after almost constant skirmishing, he had pushed a small Rebel force under General W. E. Jones out of the state back into Virginia and had achieved domination of Cumberland Gap. For the Yankee soldiers, the marching and fighting were the roughest they had experienced in months. Private Chauncey Welton of Ohio complained that one day he marched 25 miles with nothing to eat but two crackers. Coffee and meat were not issued, so the men cleaned out what little they could from the "Secesh." As the main body of troops marched back down the valley, after defeating Jones, mobs of refugees clung to the coattails of the army begging the officers not to abandon them. They swore that they would never suffer at the hands of the Rebels again even if it meant hiding in the woods and starving. Burnside was determined to maintain control of the region for their sake. He shared the fear of many East Tennesseans--if he abandoned East Tennessee, the Confederates

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[1]Daniel Larned to Henry Larned. September 29, 1863, Larned MSS, Library of Congress.

would burn and kill without distinction. Daniel Larned was shocked at the looks of terror that overcame the people when talk came up of the Confederates recapturing the region. He was certain Burnside would not let them down because "they look upon the Genl as the Savior and worship him almost."[2]

Any question of Burnside's joining Rosecrans was eliminated on September 20 when the latter's army was defeated at Chickamauga and forced to retreat to Chattanooga. Within days Confederate troops under Braxton Bragg laid a tight siege around Chattanooga and for all practical purposes, lower East Tennessee was again under Confederate control. Burnside moved the bulk of his army back to Knoxville in anticipation of enemy advances from the south. In the meantime, he continued a highly successful recruiting campaign among the East Tennesseans. While the Confederates had rarely been able to fill recruiting quotas in the region, Federal authorities were amazed at the outpouring of volunteers in the fall of 1863. Chauncey Welton reported that three to five hundred a day were coming into Greeneville and over five hundred North Carolinians had slipped over the border _en masse_ to enlist. In Knoxville, Daniel Larned observed sixty mountaineers, most mounted bareback on mules and led by a man who looked "more than half Indian," come into town and muster into service with the U. S. Regulars. "I would not meet that band at night for any money," he remarked. By early

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[2]_Official Records_, Series 1, XXX, pt. 2, pp. 547-52; Ben P. Poore, _The Life and Public Services of Ambrose E. Burnside_ (Providence, Rhode Island, 1882), 218; Chauncey Welton to "Brother," September 29, 1863, Welton MSS, SHC; Chauncey Welton to "folks," October 7, 1863, _ibid._; Daniel Larned to Henry Larned, October 7, 1863, Larned MSS, LC

November, some estimated that up to eight thousand had joined the army since Burnside's occupation of East Tennessee. Larned understood that there were yet thousands waiting in the mountains ready to enlist if they could be armed and equipped.[3]

No doubt one of the chief factors behind the flood of East Tennesseans into the army was a desire to get even with their former oppressors. As Chauncey Welton remarked, "they are comming out of thier [sic] caves and hiding places and are now determined to aveng [sic] thier wrongs." The occupying soldiers were also caught up in the spirit of revenge. Even sophisticated Daniel Larned felt little compunction about taking books from the magnificent library in the home in which he was quartered. After hearing the stories of Confederate occupation, he asserted, "I can assure you one feels but little hesitation in appropriating the property of rebels in this vicinity." Soldiers pillaged and burned the plantation home of arch-secessionist J. G. M. Ramsey who had fled to Georgia. Ramsey's library and antiquarian museum were ransacked; and the unfinished manuscript of his second volume of the Annals of Tennessee was destroyed by fire.[4]

One of the chief advocates of revenge was none other than Parson Brownlow, who had returned to East Tennessee in late September in the

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[3]Chauncey Welton to "folks," September 15, 1863, Welton MSS, SHC; unidentified Union soldier to "Mother," October 15, 1863, copy of letter in Kay Walsh MSS, UT Special Collections; Daniel Larned to Henry Larned, September 29, 1863, Larned MSS, LC; William McLelland to James P. Brownlow, November 12, 1863, James P. Brownlow MSS, TSLA.

[4]Chauncey Welton to "folks," September 15, 1863, Welton MSS, SHC; Daniel Larned to Henry Larned, September 29, 1863, Larned MSS, LC; David L. Eubanks, "Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey of East Tennessee, A Career of Public Service" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Tennessee, 1965), 262.

wake of the Federal army. Supplied by the army with a printing press from Middle Tennessee and backed by a $1,500 government subsidy, Brownlow let it be known in the pages of the newly-named Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator that little sympathy would be shown for advocates of the Southern cause. "With high regards for our friends," he announced, "a decent respect for honorable enemies, and the lowest contempt for the leaders in the Rebellion, this Journal . . . launches upon the troubled sea of life!" He declared that such rabid secessionists as Sneed, Swan, Crozier, Sperry, and Haynes could no longer live in East Tennessee. Union people who had suffered at their hands would be "justified in shooting them down on sight, and we shall regard hundreds of them as wanting in courage and in resentment if they do not dispatch them whenever they meet their rotten carcasses."[5]

Brownlow's efforts to influence policy in East Tennessee were not limited to the pages of the Whig and Rebel Ventilator. While living in Nashville in early 1863, the Parson was appointed special agent for the United States Treasury Department, a position he would hold until March, 1865, when he was elected governor of the state. When East Tennessee reverted to Federal control, Brownlow had himself transferred to Knoxville. His duty was to regulate the sale of goods, to seize all smuggled goods, and to seize and confiscate all "loose and perishable property left by rebels who have abandoned their homes and gone with the rebel army for protection." He would, therefore, be custodian of abandoned

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[5]Coulter, Brownlow, 250-51; Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator (hereinafter cited as Whig), November 11, 1863, January 9, 1864.

Rebel farms, plantations, and other property. By the middle of November, 1863, the Parson had confiscated several thousand dollars' worth of tobacco, pianos, furniture, a dry goods store, a drug store, and a jewelry store, all abandoned Rebel property. These he offered to rent or lease to persons properly qualified and of unconditional loyalty. He issued permits to "loyal" merchants and traders to conduct business in the region; and he licensed sutlers to trade with the army. Brownlow's authority was to be backed to the limit by Provost Marshal General Samuel P. Carter; but problems arose almost immediately.[6]

Native East Tennessean Samuel Carter was appointed Provost Marshal of East Tennessee by Burnside in mid-September, 1863. While the Confederate provost had been secondary in power to the departmental commander in civil affairs, his Union counterpart possessed more power and was more responsible for maintaining law in East Tennessee than army or departmental commanders. Ironically, throughout his tenure (he would hold the position until March, 1865), Carter, much like certain Confederate departmental commanders, was frequently criticized for being too lenient with enemy sympathizers. While some East Tennesseans like Brownlow demanded quick and harsh retribution against all who had aided the rebellion in any way, Carter maintained a policy of moderation. As will be discussed in a later chapter, Brownlow also advocated immediate emancipation of East Tennessee slaves, much to the opposition of some of his more conservative Unionist colleagues.

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[6]Knoxville Whig, January 9, 16, 1864; Coulter, Brownlow, 254-55; Robert F. Futrell, "Federal Trade with the Confederate States, 1861-1865, A Study of Governmental Policy" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1950), 270-72.

Carter, however, was unwilling to carry out policies that he regarded as too radical. One of his earliest problems was that of trying to hold back revenge-minded East Tennesseans who went on a rampage against Confederate supporters as soon as Southern troops evacuated the eastern counties. Carter issued a stern order on September 18, 1863, demanding a halt to violent activities by those who had taken the law into their own hands. These people had made themselves judges and executioners for inflicting damage on property and persons. "The United States Forces are here for the purpose of restoring law and order," he proclaimed, "and for the protection of the rights of citizens." Severe punishments would therefore be meted out to those who refused to let the appropriate Federal authorities maintain peace. If a citizen had a legitimate grievance against a Confederate, he was to bring it before the Provost Marshal and not take action himself. A week later, Carter announced that any person with knowledge of murders or other outrages against Union people during the two years of Confederate control was to supply such information to the Provost office "in order that measures may be adopted to bring the guilty parties to justice."[7]

Then over the next several weeks, General Carter issued orders that would doubtless convince most Unionists that the military was doing its utmost to punish Rebels. After a series of raids by Confederate cavalry in upper East Tennessee, Carter declared that if any Unionists were arrested, prominent Rebel sympathizers would be similarly seized

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[7]Official Records, Series 1, XXX, pt. 2, p. 550; Circular nos. 2 and 4, in Knoxville Whig, January 9, 1864.

and held as hostages. If the property of Union men was confiscated or destroyed, the property of Rebel sympathizers in the same neighborhood would be taken to compensate Unionists for their losses. Reiterating Brownlow's orders as Treasury Agent, Carter stated that all movable property abandoned by Rebels was to be seized, and if not suitable for army use, sold at public auction. And grocers, merchants, and sutlers were forbidden to do business of any kind with "disloyal persons." Any citizen wanting to purchase supplies had to exhibit a "certificate of loyalty" or a copy of the oath of allegiance to the United States. In January and February, 1864, Carter deported over forty Knoxvillians to the Confederacy for their refusal to swear allegiance to the United States. He exiled the Reverends W. A. Harrison and Joseph H. Martin, of the First and Second Presbyterian churches of Knoxville, for refusing to take the oath and for preaching sedition from their pulpits. And throughout the region hostages were held until civilian prisoners arrested by the Confederates were released.[8]

Yet Carter was still charged with being too conciliatory. Dr. E. L. Stanford, superintendent of East Tennessee army hospitals, informed Military Governor Andrew Johnson that "too much lenity [sic] has been extended to vile rebels whose conduct has been such, that they have forfieted [sic] their rights to live." By the summer of 1864, Parson Brownlow tagged Carter with Copperheadism. "The truth is," he wrote Johnson,

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[8]Circulars nos. 6, 9, 13, and 14, in Knoxville Whig, January 9, 1864; ibid., January 30, February 6, 1864; F. Young to Oliver P. Temple, March 19, 1864, Temple MSS, UT Special Collections; M. S. Temple to Oliver P. Temple, April 14, 1864, ibid.

"the Rebels and those in Sympathy with them, bear sway here." He declared that members of Carter's staff and the quartermaster were boarding with "out and out Rebels," a situation which therefore influenced them to be lenient with Confederate sympathizers. As for Carter, he released too many Rebels from arrest and was under the influence of men who hated the Lincoln government and who "despise the Military Government of Tennessee."[9]

Brownlow and others had originally maintained that whereas the military had failed, proper punishment would be dealt the Rebels if Federal courts could be reestablished in East Tennessee. In his very first issue of the Ventilator in November, 1863, the Parson welcomed the prospect of the opening of a Federal court at Nashville; he was certain that no less than five hundred indictments would be issued in Knoxville. "They will find to their sorrow," he asserted, "that it is no small matter to engage in an effort to overthrow this government." Much to Brownlow's disappointment, however, there were delays in the establishment of courts. By January, 1864, Knoxville streets were filled with wagons loaded with abandoned Rebel property brought in from the country by Brownlow's instructions as Treasury Agent. But because there was no Federal court, there was no legitimate means to adjudicate the property. Dr. Stanford begged Governor Johnson to speed up the establishment of a court in the city. Because the military authorities were overly tolerant of Rebels, quite often former Confederate sympathizers who had money and

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[9]R. L. Stanford to Andrew Johnson, January 7, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC; Knoxville Whig, April 9, 1864; W. G. Brownlow to Andrew Johnson, August 18, September 7, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC.

influence were able to procure protection for themselves while "loyal" men had been in some cases stripped of all their possessions by mistake. Similarly in Chattanooga, General George H. Thomas assured the Governor that the revival of civil judicial authority would restore confidence and reinforce the Unionists there.[10]

Finally on May 17, 1864, Judge Connally F. Trigg, devout Unionist of secession crisis days, convened Federal District Court in Knoxville. A large crowd observed attorneys and jurors take the oath of allegiance to the United States Constitution. Brownlow was confident now that all who had given aid and comfort to the rebellion would suffer at the hands of this court. But within a matter of months, the Parson came to believe that the tribunal was also entirely too lenient in its dealings with the Rebels, in both property and personal rights. By November, he informed Governor Johnson, "I think I am not saying anything more than the loyal people say, when I state that [the Federal Court] is a complete farce." Particularly galling to Brownlow and others was Judge Trigg's tendency to throw cases out of court or give very light sentences, especially to those who would swear allegiance to the Union. "The worst rebels and traitors . . .," he exclaimed, "are all turned loose upon taking the amnesty oath." Even after being convicted, some people were allowed to take the oath and go free.[11]

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[10] Knoxville Whig, November 11, 1863; R. L. Stanford to Andrew Johnson, January 7, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC; Clifton R. Hall, Andrew Johnson, Military Governor of Tennessee (Princeton, 1916), 112.

[11] Knoxville Whig, May 21, 1864; W. G. Brownlow to Andrew Johnson, November 30, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC.

Similar complaints were lodged against the military authorities. In the summer of 1864, the army set up claims committees in various parts of East Tennessee to determine which citizens should be compensated for property losses incurred by actions of the Federal army. William A. Sorrells of Jasper protested that several men who had avidly supported the rebellion and who had subsequently taken a loyalty oath were now collecting damages from the board of claims in his area. "It seems to me that the loyal only should be paid for damages," he maintained, "but if it is the policy of the Government at Washington to place all, loyal and disloyal alike, upon an equality in deriving benifits [sic] from it, then I can see no good that can result from the loss of so much blood and treasure, already shed and spent." Parson Brownlow urged that a "fairer" claims board be established in Knoxville so that ex-Rebels would not be allowed compensation for losses.[12]

Indeed although several inveterate Southern sympathizers absolutely refused to swear allegiance as prescribed by Governor Johnson and were thus shipped to the Confederacy, a large number of pro-Confederate East Tennesseans signed the oath albeit with certain mental reservations and remained in the region. In late 1864, Brownlow grumbled that every town in East Tennessee was full of Rebel sympathizers "who openly rejoice when we are repulsed, and talk treason openly and notoriously." Wealthy or "first families of the country," as the Parson called them, were the most tolerated of all by Federal authorities. Long after

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[12]William A. Sorrells to Andrew Johnson, June 23, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC; W. G. Brownlow to Andrew Johnson, November 21, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC.

the war, Oliver Temple recalled that Judge Trigg was greatly affected on the bench by the "subtle influence of social recognition." Temple maintained that the judge's leniency toward ex-Rebels was largely due to the "flattering attention of the powerful and the rich."[13]

While the courts and the military may have been tolerant of ex-Rebels, Unionists could seek a more direct and violent means of revenge. The courts might do whatever they pleased, according to Brownlow, "but injured, insulted and oppressed Union men will redress their own wrongs--and for the life of us, we are not able to see that they are in error." Either Unionists or Rebels would occupy and control East Tennessee--there could be no compromise. "This may startle many of the advocates of peace, and the miserable apologists of these heartless villains," he concluded, "but let it startle them." The Parson thus tried to undermine General Carter's order to prevent citizens from taking the law into their own hands. Not surprisingly, many East Tennesseans heeded Brownlow's words,

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[13]W. G. Brownlow to Andrew Johnson, November 21, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC; Temple, Notable Men, 211. Despite complaints that the military authorities and the courts were excessively lenient, not all Unionists were willing to seek revenge against former Confederates. T. A. R. Nelson, John Baxter, John Netherland, and other leading Unionists, for example, rejected Brownlow's calls for extreme retribution. Also, after General Carter ordered the arrest of John Smith, a paroled Confederate soldier from Greeneville, several Greene County Unionists protested, urging release of the young man. Although Smith and his father were Rebels, according to one of the Unionists, "they serve a good purpose to their union neighbors sometimes, yea many times in protecting them from disorderly rebel soldiers." Petition of Union men of Greene County in favor of John Smith to General Samuel P. Carter, June 24, 1864, Temple MSS, UT Special Collections; Samuel Doak to Oliver P. Temple, July 5, 1864, ibid. For similar examples, see "General Order of Thomas Sanderson, Provost Marshal for Blount County," January 30, 1864, L. C. Houk MSS, McClung Collection; and Temple, Notable Men, 212.

hence making certain that the region would be rent by internecine warfare.[14]

Like their Confederate counterparts, Federal authorities were forced to deal with a civil war within a civil war. In addition, control of East Tennessee by opposing armies continued to fluctuate. While Federal military leaders were restoring some semblance of order to central and upper East Tennessee in the fall of 1863, their efforts were interrupted in November when a 20,000-man Confederate army under General James Longstreet headed up the Tennessee Valley to crush Burnside. Thousands of Unionists who had returned to East Tennessee now fled into Kentucky, fearful of reprisals the Confederates might attempt if they regained the region. Parson Brownlow temporarily suspended the Whig and Rebel Ventilator and sought refuge in Cincinnati. Under orders from General U. S. Grant, who now commanded Federal forces at besieged Chattanooga, Burnside cautiously moved troops south of Knoxville to delay the Confederates. Outnumbered almost two to one, the Federals stubbornly pulled back into the defenses of Knoxville. The Confederates invested the city and immediately began siege operations from the west of town. Within days, the Federals ran short on supplies; but loyal citizens from Blount and Sevier counties successfully floated large quantities of foodstuff down the French Board and Holston rivers to the city at night despite strenuous Confederate efforts to stop them. On November 29, a Confederate assault on Fort Sanders was repulsed after a brief but bitter fight. Then on December 3, after receiving word that Braxton Bragg's

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[14] Knoxville Whig, February 22, 1865, April 9, 1864.

army had been routed at Chattanooga and that a 30,000-man army under William T. Sherman was marching north to relieve Burnside, Longstreet lifted the siege of Knoxville. Rather than face the combined armies of Burnside and Sherman, the Confederate general retreated northeastward to the region between Russellville and Greeneville where he set up winter quarters.[15]

To the hearty Confederate veterans of the Virginia campaigns, the 1863-64 winter spent in East Tennessee was one of their most grueling experiences. These men had never really liked the region even from the beginning of the campaign in September. When Lieutenant Colonel Franklin Gaillard of the 2nd South Carolina Infantry asked his men if they would prefer a sixty-day furlough and return to Tennessee at its expiration or go back to Virginia without furlough, a loud "Go back to Virginia" was always the response. And whenever a regimental band struck up "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny," a thunderous yell raced through Longstreet's corps. Now in winter quarters, the desire to return to the Old Dominion mounted among the ranks. In addition to an abnormally cold winter, Union guerrillas made life almost unbearable. Longstreet's chief of artillery, E. P. Alexander, recalled that "bushwackers," who were supposed to be in Federal service, constantly raided foraging wagons

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[15] W. G. Brownlow to Andrew Johnson, December 1, 1863, Johnson MSS, LC; Knoxville Whig, January 30, 1864; Buel and Johnson, Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, III, 731-45; Harold S. Fink, "The East Tennessee Campaign and the Battle of Knoxville in 1863," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 29 (1957), 79-117; Digby G. Seymour, Divided Loyalties, Fort Sanders and the Civil War in East Tennessee (Knoxville, 1963), 138-212.

and picked off sentinels. These guerrillas seldom fought a pitched battle, "but they cut off small parties and took no prisoners."[16]

Despite the hostile environment, many of the Confederates developed friendships among the citizens, especially in Jonesboro and Greeneville. Franklin Gaillard reported that he had made some very pleasant acquaintances in Greeneville. But as Longstreet prepared to move back into Virginia in late March, 1864, the people who had fraternized with the soldiers grew somber and almost panic-stricken. "It is the best society I have met with in Tennessee," he stated, "and we all regret leaving friends we have made to the tender mercies of the Tories and Yankees." These people were more fearful of the native Tories, however, because they were more vindictive than the Yankees. The Yankees were "somewhat restrained by military discipline," while the Tories were "unbridled and merciless." But as Longstreet's men headed back to Virginia in mid-April, John Bratton reported "nobody objects to leaving this country."[17]

To Longstreet's troops Virginia seemed like the land of Canaan, compared to East Tennessee. Indeed by the end of the winter of 1863-64 the eastern counties of Tennessee were almost destitute. As J. Powell of Greeneville informed Governor Johnson, "I have not the Language to describe the deplorable State of things that at this moment exist in

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[16]Franklin Gaillard to Maria Gaillard, November 10, 1863, Gaillard MSS, SHC; Captain John Bratton to "Wife," October 23, 1863, Bratton MSS, ibid.; Buel and Johnson, Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, III, 751.

[17]Franklin Gaillard to "Sonny," March 18, 1864, Gaillard MSS, SHC; Franklin Gaillard to Maria Gaillard, March 27, 1864, ibid.; John Bratton to "Wife," April 12, 1864, ibid.

East Tennessee." Both armies had traversed nearly the whole length of the region four times, living mainly off the country. Crop harvests had been disrupted for the past two years and all forms of livestock had been greatly depleted by the demands of war. Longstreet's stay in upper East Tennessee had been particularly disastrous, for under the impression that they were in the area for the last time, the Rebels had taken as much movable property and foodstuff as they could carry. An officer serving under Longstreet reported that "East Tenn. is bleeding at every pore" and "is literally eaten up." And Robert Rutledge declared that upper East Tennessee was swept of everything; not a hog, goose, duck, turkey, chicken, cow, or sheep was left.[18]

Other areas suffered too. Conditions in the upper Cumberland Plateau were equally distressing. A Kentuckian passing through recorded, "We had thought we had seen desolating effects of war before, but through this section it is the worst we have found in our travels." Reports from lower East Tennessee were equally grim. In the fall of 1863 William Clift averred that scarcely an acre of corn was left from Chattanooga to Rhea County. "The Army is consuming everything in the shape of substanance [sic] in lower East Tenn.," he exclaimed. Two months later Lieutenant Wilson S. Miller led a Yankee foraging party through this area and was amazed at the wretched condition of the people in the countryside.[19]

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[18]Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 302-03; J. Powell to Andrew Johnson, December 6, 1863, Johnson MSS, LC; Knoxville Whig, March 5, 1864; Robert Partin, "The Civil War in East Tennessee as Reported by a Confederate Railroad Bridge Builder," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, XXII (1963), 246-47; Robert A. Rutledge to "Father," April 8, 1864, Rutledge MSS, Whitehead Collection.

[19]Another account of the extensive foraging in lower East Tennessee in the fall of 1863 is in Donald E. Reynolds and Max H. Kele (eds.),

Homes looked no better than "Northern pig pens" and everyone wore threadbare clothes. "I never before saw women dressed entirely in rags," he remarked. Near Chattanooga, a small emaciated girl wandered into the camp of the 6th South Carolina and begged for help to bury her mother. She led John Bratton and some of his men to a cave where the body lay. The family had been living there and had been without food for days. The South Carolinians kept the girl and her little sister for nearly a week and then turned them over to a family willing to take them in.[20]

Ironically, both Miller and Bratton--one an Ohioan, the other a South Carolinian--placed some of the blame for the depressed condition of East Tennessee upon the character of its people. To Miller, if Northern people had settled this rich land, splendid mansions, barns, school houses, and churches, instead of shacks, would be thickly scattered about the land "showing that the people were civilized and enlightened." And Bratton commented that he had seen desolation as bad in Virginia, but "the people there are superior to this western population, never repined at their losses, at least did it in a patriotic spirit, and I expect, the great Bestower took better care of them."[21]

"Diary of James W. Chapin, 39th Indiana Volunteers," Georgia Historical Quarterly, LIX (1975), 238-39.

[20]Moore, Rebellion Record, VIII, 69; William Clift to Elizabeth Clift, October 13, 1863, Clift MSS, TSLA; Wilson S. Miller to "Family," December 15, 1863, Miller MSS, ibid.; John Bratton to "Wife," October 23, 1864, Bratton MSS, SHC.

[21]Wilson S. Miller to "Family," December 15, 1963, Miller MSS, TSLA; John Bratton to "Wife," October 23, 1863, Bratton MSS, SHC. In many ways Daniel Larned agreed with Miller's and Bratton's assessments of East Tennessee. "You never saw such a forsaken people as they are in this country," he stated, "--they are ten years behind the age." Daniel Larned to "Sister," November 2, 1863, Larned MSS, LC. See also Blackford, et al., Letters from Lee's Army, 276.

But such understandable efforts to place blame upon the natives should not lead one away from the reality that the respective armies were the chief cause for the suffering in the region. As one report on the destitution in the eastern counties proclaimed, "the prevailing scarcity of 1863-64 was the result, not of improvidence of the people, but of the calamitous influences of war." When Longstreet's men left upper East Tennessee, the Unionists even lost shoes and blankets to the departing soldiers. In Bradley County, Minerva McKamy living with her sister-in-law's family, later recalled that Federal soldiers came to the home and shot the only milk cow for meat. "It was useless to plead with the Yankees for mercy," she claimed, "as they had no conscience and seemed to enjoy making us suffer." Bushwackers plagued both sides, stripping entire neighborhoods of foodstuff and valuables, oblivious to the pro-Union or Confederate loyalties of the people. In the fall of 1863, General Joseph Wheeler released nearly 1,600 prisoners in lower East Tennessee after they swore not to take up arms against the Confederacy until legally exchanged. Many of these parolees formed themselves into bands of bushwackers and began a campaign of terror, burning, pillaging, and robbing in the Sequatchie Valley.[22]

And by 1863, either army, Union or Confederate, became a menace to the civilian population. In early December, 1863, a Confederate foraging party raided the farm of Charles W. McGhee in Monroe County,

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[22]Thomas W. Humes, Report of the East Tennessee Relief Association at Knoxville (Knoxville, 1865). 9; Knoxville Whig. March 5, 1864; Minerva McKamy, "Recollections of the War Between the States," typescript, TSLA; J. Leonard Raulston and James W. Livingood, Sequatchie: A Story of the Southern Cumberlands (Knoxville, 1974), 155.

taking livestock and several bushels of wheat. A few days later a Federal patrol came through and confiscated corn, hay, potatoes, and other items without giving a receipt. In October, 1863, devoted Southerner Myra Inman complained that the Confederate troops in the Cleveland area were "acting very badly," taking corn, tearing down fences, and stealing livestock. Soldiers constantly begged for food; and Myra, who had been thrilled to serve the boys in gray in 1861, now confessed, "We are troubled a great deal by them asking for something to eat." Some soldiers expressed feelings of guilt for their army's actions. Private Leander Starks of the 26th Indiana Artillery admitted that although there were many stories of Confederate outrages in East Tennessee, the Union army was just as bad. The Federals had received a hearty welcome and had been treated with kindness, but Starks confessed that "we have robbed them in return for their kindness." Robert Rutledge, in Longstreet's army, reported that starvation was staring many "poor defenseless Southern women and many many poor helpless children" in the face because of his army's selfish activities. "Our army is getting to be as much dreaded as the low down thieving Yankees," he wrote.[23]

By March of 1864, Parson Brownlow pleaded with Federal authorities to help preserve the property and livestock of loyal citizens.

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[23]W. H. Dawson Diary, December 5, 1863, Civil War Records, II, 190-91; Myra Inman Diary, October 13, November 10, 1863, SHC; Leander Starks to Kate Starks, September 30, 1863, Jennie Starks McKee (ed.), Throb of Drums in Tennessee, 1862-1865 (Philadelphia, 1973), 119-20; Robert A. Rutledge to "Father," April 8, 1864, Rutledge MSS, Whitehead Collection. In December, 1863, T. A. R. Nelson stated that he was convinced that the Union army was more destructive to Unionists than the Confederate army had been. Official Records, Series 1, XXXIX, pt. 3, pp. 507-08.

Apparently some soldiers were worse than others. John B. Brownlow later observed that Union troops from the West, particularly Michigan, treated loyal people "outrageously," making no distinction between Unionists and Rebels. However, soldiers from Burnside's 9th Corps, composed mainly of men from New England and New York, "treated the loyal people with the tenderest consideration[;] they all treated them like brothers." Despite strenuous efforts by Union officers to prevent depredations against loyal Unionists, they were never fully successful.[24] In late March, the Parson complained again about the bad conduct of many Federal soldiers. Large bands of them, claiming to be on authorized foraging expeditions, robbed families of almost everything. To Brownlow, "a Federal soldier capable of this low, mean and disgraceful conduct, is meaner than the vilest rebel that ever robbed a henroost."[25]

While conditions in the rural areas of East Tennessee were deplorable, the towns and cities suffered much distress also. In the fall of 1863, both underwent sieges by Confederate forces and it would take them

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[24]General Samuel P. Carter always maintained that he was doing his utmost to put an end to the widespread pilfering by Union soldiers. Ibid., XXXI, pt. 3, pp. 372, 447-48, 506-08; ibid., XXXII, pt. 2, p. 245. John Brownlow's statement on the soldiers was one of many handwritten comments he placed in the margins of his father's newspaper now deposited at the Library of Congress and available on microfilm. Daniel Larned echoed Brownlow's sentiments. He had grown increasingly proud of the New England soldiers. In Knoxville some of them had repaired the machinery of a foundry, a machine shop, and a large flour mill which had been partially damaged by the retreating Confederates. Within days, all three concerns were operating at full speed. "The contrast between our soldiers and the western boys is remarkable," concluded Larned. Daniel Larned to "Sister," November 7, 1863, Larned MSS, LC.

[25]Knoxville Whig, March 5, 29, 1864.

several months to recover. As late as January 19, 1864, Mrs. Horace Maynard reported that "the principal thing with all, is, something to eat." Food had been short, she stated, since Longstreet's attempt to capture the city. As the war passed, Knoxville and Chattanooga increasingly became military cities. Although they had been important centers of operation for the Confederates, both proved more crucial to the Northern war effort. Hospitals, supply depots, awesome fortifications, and unnumbered army camps girdled the cities. As a result, the population of both mushroomed. In addition to the citizens and soldiers already there, swarms of adventurers and camp followers were inevitably attracted by such a large concentration of military force and activity. And because of the constant movement of troops and guerrillas and the devastation of crops in the countryside, refugees flocked into the urban communities by the thousands in the winter of 1863-64. This large immigration consisted not only of needy whites, but also many recently freed blacks.[26]

Knoxville became one of the major refugee centers in Tennessee, with immigrants arriving in town by the trainload. Vacant tenement houses were filled to capacity and rooms at East Tennessee University, not already occupied by the soldiers, were taken over by refugees. Few of them could afford to buy even the basic necessities of life because wartime inflation had hit Knoxville severely. In February, 1864, flour cost $20 a barrel; butter, $1 a pound; potatoes and corn meal, $3 a bushel. Since the beginning of the war, coffee had soared from 14¢ to

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[26]Mrs. Horace Maynard to Washington Maynard, January 19, 1864, Maynard MSS, UT Special Collections; Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 298.

$1 a pound; salt rose from 2-1/2¢ to 70¢ a pound; and brown sugar from 12-1/2¢ to 70¢ a pound. Common calico and other types of clothing had increased eightfold. Gold and silver had nearly passed out of circulation.[27]

Conditions were no better in Chattanooga. The town was so crowded with soldiers and refugees that at a distance it appeared white because of the tents set up to accommodate the mass of humanity. In March, 1864, Kate Foster, a young girl living in Chattanooga, recorded that large numbers of immigrants were arriving daily, many of whom were "barefooted and all most naked." Masses of black refugees were scattered all over town, although most lived in tents and makeshift huts concentrated along the Tennessee River.[28]

Without question Knoxville and Chattanooga were experiencing the vagaries of boom towns--a mushrooming population that constantly fluctuated. Rampant drunkeness, street crime, and prostitution plagued both cities. In January, 1864, Parson Brownlow doubted if there was "a more superlatively filthy town" than Knoxville even in all "the exhausted territory, corrupt range, [and] debauched and filthy dominions of Jeff Davis." Almost every building was cluttered with trash and dirt. Dead mules, horses, hogs, and dogs lay unburied on the streets with the result,

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[27]Mary E. Massey, "Southern Refugee Life During the Civil War," North Carolina Historical Review, XX (1943), 134; Knoxville Whig, February 13, 1864.

[28]Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 176-77; Armstrong, Hamilton County, II, 59; Kate Foster Diary, March 15, 1864, TSLA; Gilbert E. Govan and James W. Livingood, "Chattanooga Under Military Occupation, 1863-1865," Journal of Southern History, XVII (1951), 36.

not surprisingly, that disease became a major problem. Smallpox swept through Knoxville; and according to Brownlow it "has penetrated all classes of society." To make matters worse, Federal authorities handled the problem poorly. Smallpox hospitals and pest houses were established in town rather than in outlying areas. No quarantines were declared and the disease soon spread into the surrounding countryside. Brownlow urged more rigid controls by both civil and military officials to deal with the near epidemic.[29]

Even the smaller towns of East Tennessee were disturbed by problems similar to those of Knoxville and Chattanooga. Loudon, Kingston, and Madisonville, for example, were filled with refugees in the summer of 1864. In Loudon the army was forced to build two camps to accommodate the destitute; in Cleveland, the streets became so filthy that the provost marshal ordered all store and home owners to maintain strict police of their property.[30]

In the meantime, several citizens of East Tennessee, concerned over the wretched conditions, began to discuss ways to alleviate the distresses. Reverend Nathaniel G. Taylor of Carter County became a

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[29]Knoxville Whig, January 16, 20, February 6, 1864; E. T. Hall to Martha Stakely, January 16, 1864, Stakely-Hall MSS, McClung Collection; Mary Jane Reynolds to Simeon D. Reynolds, February 16, 1864, Reynolds MSS, UT Special Collections; Edington, "Hardships of Civil Strife," January 26, 1864, ibid.

[30]Mary Jane Reynolds to Simeon D. Reynolds, June 20, 1864, Reynolds MSS, UT Special Collections; Cleveland (Tennessee) Battle Flag (no date), (microfilm), McClung Collection. This newspaper was published in the spring of 1864 by Ohio troops stationed in Cleveland. It is thought that the soldiers used the press of the Cleveland Banner. Roy G. Lillard (ed.), The History of Bradley County (Cleveland, Tennessee, 1976), 220.

prime mover in seeking aid for East Tennessee.[31] While Longstreet held upper East Tennessee in late 1863, Taylor circumvented Confederate lines and headed for Cincinnati. While there, he organized a public meeting and raised several hundred dollars to buy supplies for needy persons in East Tennessee. The sum was disappointing, but much of Cincinnati's charity was already directed to thousands of Southern refugees who had migrated North. Taylor's actions apparently attracted the attention of Governor Andrew Johnson, for in January, 1864, he gave Taylor a letter of recommendation to talk with President Lincoln and then tour the North to obtain money and supplies. The East Tennessean traveled to Philadelphia, Boston, Portland, and New York City, raising nearly $150,000 in cash and large supplies of material goods. Throughout his tour, Taylor professed, "We of E. Tennessee . . . are very poor since the tide of desolation has swept over us--we have nothing but our laws and some of our humble houses left--but thank God, we are proud of our Country even in her desolation and ruin."[32]

In the meantime, with the urging of Taylor, several East Tennessee Unionists, including William Heiskell, John Baxter, Parson Brownlow,

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[31]Taylor had been arrested by the Confederates, but acquitted, as an accomplice in the bridge burnings of 1861. Threats of arrest and imprisonment continued, however, so Taylor went into hiding in the remote gorges of the mountains until Federal liberation of the region. Temple, Notable Men, 199-200.

[32]Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 310-11; N.G. Taylor to Andrew Johnson, January 16, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC; Report of the Contributors to the Pennsylvania Relief Association for East Tennessee (Philadelphia, 1864), 6-7; Edward Everett, Account of the Fund for the Relief of East Tennessee (Boston, 1864), 7-8; Knoxville Whig, March 5, 12, 1864.

O. P. Temple, and Thomas W. Humes, held a public meeting in Knoxville in early February, 1864, to establish the East Tennessee Relief Association.[33] Given the impossibility of raising funds in this war-torn region, the association concentrated on obtaining Federal government aid. The group asked for the compensation of loyal citizens for property destroyed by Federal forces during the war. They asked Washington to furnish transportation for any relief supplies that might be obtained; and with a view to the future, they urged the government to subsidize the construction of a railroad between Knoxville and Cincinnati. Plans were made for the immediate shipment of supplies to East Tennessee from the Pennsylvania Relief Association.[34]

Aid would come none too soon. Agents of the Pennsylvania association reported that before the arrival of the shipments over ten thousand army animals died in East Tennessee for lack of feed and forage. Farmers were compelled to let their livestock die for the same reason; and those horses and cattle which survived were "emaciated in the extreme." With the shortage of foodstuffs, even the thrifty Quaker communities in Blount and Jefferson counties, which had been prosperous before the war, were forced to beg the army quartermaster for rations. Then in April, General William T. Sherman, who had been appointed administrative commander of East Tennessee in early 1864, prohibited the issuance of army rations to distressed East Tennessee civilians as his troops prepared for the

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[33]Humes was elected president of the Association.

[34]Knoxville Whig, February 13, 1864; Pennsylvania Relief Association, 34-36.

Atlanta campaign. Screams of protest from East Tennesseans reached President Lincoln and he urged Sherman to do all he could to relieve the suffering of the civilians. Fortunately, when the Federal army marched into Georgia in early May, supplies had built up in sufficient amount for Sherman's order to be relaxed.[35]

Meanwhile, the East Tennessee association sent G. M. Hazen to Cincinnati in early April, where he met two agents of the Pennsylvania relief organization. There they purchased large stocks of flour, bacon, rice, molasses, sugar, salt, and soda and shipped them at Federal expense to East Tennessee via Nashville and Chattanooga.[36]

Commissioners from the Pennsylvania association came to Knoxville in mid-April in advance of the shipments and conferred with local relief officials. It was first determined that relief supplies would be sold at wholesale prices to those who were able to pay. Thus, the relief agency would be able to give maximum aid to the most needy and not deplete its treasury too quickly. Almost immediately disagreement developed over the distribution of supplies. Brownlow and a few others maintained that only "loyal destitute Union families and no others" should receive aid. According to Brownlow, contributors to the fund

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[35] Pennsylvania Relief Association, 18; Inez E. Burns, History of Blount County, Tennessee, from War Trail to Landing Strip, 1795-1955 (Nashville, 1957), 63-64; Burt, "Lincoln, Sherman and East Tennessee," part 2, pp. 71-72.

[36] Pennsylvania Relief Association, 8-11; Chattanooga Gazette, March 24, April 9, 1864. In Chattanooga, the Western Sanitary Commission, a forerunner of the modern Red Cross, had attempted to alleviate the food shortage by planting one hundred acres in vegetables near the town's borders in early spring. On the suggestion of a sanitary commission representative, $250 worth of garden seeds was turned over to the East Tennessee Relief Association to be distributed to loyal citizens in lower East Tennessee. Ibid.

never contemplated giving their money to feed and clothe disloyal persons "who gave aid and comfort to this infernal rebellion." The Pennsylvanians, however, maintained that no one should be turned away. After some wrangling, a priority system was finally agreed upon. Union families who had suffered at the hands of Rebels would be given immediate attention; next, families who had remained steadfastly loyal to the Union could apply for relief. After them came anyone who had taken a loyalty oath, regardless of past associations; finally, old men, women, and children who had immediate relatives in the Confederate army would be taken care of. But no admitted secessionist of "fighting age" would be given consideration.[37]

In addition to these prospects for relief, civilian and military authorities in the spring of 1864 made a concerted effort to stimulate farm production. Only by getting agriculture back to full production, could the region expect to be self-sufficient again. Seeds continued to be issued to farmers by the relief agencies; and to help spring planting, Major General John Schofield, Commander of the Army of Ohio, ordered all army animals unfit for military service to be lent to farmers until recalled by the quartermaster. After loud protests from Brownlow in the pages of the Whig, army officers began strict enforcement of regulations prohibiting troops from using farmers' fence rails for firewood. Brownlow also requested that military authorities stop the impressment of grain, horses, and mules. Because these items could now be easily obtained over regular transportation routes, confiscation was

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[37]Knoxville Whig, April 16, 1864; Pennsylvania Relief Association, 12.

unnecessary, he argued. Despite the Parson's harangues and some attempt by authorities to curtail the activity, farmers of East Tennessee were bothered by impressment until the end of the war.[38]

Meanwhile efforts were being made to solve some of the problems that plagued the cities. In the spring of 1864, a Lieutenant Conklin was ordered by the Provost Marshal to organize the clean up of Knoxville. Disreputable vagrants and prostitutes were driven out of town and strict controls were imposed to prevent their return. On June 18, Conklin ordered storeowners in town to clean all offal and trash from their yards, cellars, and alleys within forty-eight hours, or be subject to arrest. Moreover, anyone caught throwing trash in the streets or sidewalks would be penalized. Apparently the policeman's efforts succeeded, because by the end of July, Parson Brownlow boasted that despite the summer heat, the health and appearance of Knoxville were remarkably good. And to help solve the refugee problem, the army set up segregated tent communities outside the city limits of Chattanooga and Knoxville. Such camps served the dual purpose of not only providing refugees with a place to stay, but also preventing vagrancy and overcrowding in town. Nevertheless, refugees remained a constant headache throughout the war. In November, 1864, for example, over 3,800 vagrants were reported in Chattanooga (the pre-war city population had been only 2,500), although officials were sending them away as rapidly as possible. By the end of the year, Knoxville was still so crowded that the army constructed several houses south of the Holston River to accommodate the refugees

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[38]Knoxville Whig, March 5, April 16, 23, 1864.

who continued to pour into town.[39]

While farmers began to plant crops in the spring of 1864 and attempts were made to settle refugees, the East Tennessee Relief Association appointed county agents to supervise the distribution and selling of goods on the local level. But relief supplies at first reached East Tennessee in a trickle, compelling some people to take ameliorative actions on their own. Several citizens of Loudon, cooperating with the local provost marshal, held a series of meetings in early summer 1864 to obtained provisions for destitute citizens. It was proposed that the horses of known Rebel sympathizers be confiscated to make up teams to go to Kentucky for relief supplies. Also a committee was formed to traverse the neighborhood and "take whatever anyone had that was not positively needed for their support," according to one citizen. Apparently the committee had the right to determine what items were not "positively needed."[40]

It was not until mid-summer that East Tennessee Relief Association shipments, now including shoes and clothes, came regularly and in sufficient volume to have much impact on the region. But from the very beginning of the relief program, there was a geographic inequity of distribution. Knoxville and its immediate vicinity received a disproportionate share of goods, mainly because the city was a major distribution point. Most of the officers of the East Tennessee Relief

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[39] Ibid., May 28, June 18, July 23, December 14, 1864; Chattanooga Gazette, November 26, 1864.

[40] Mary Jane Reynolds to Simeon D. Reynolds, June 20, 1864, Reynolds MSS, UT Special Collections. Mrs. Reynolds did not indicate whether or not citizens actually went to Kentucky to obtain supplies.

Association--Humes, Temple, Brownlow, Baxter, et al.--were Knoxvillians or Knox countians. Therefore, they may have shown favoritism to their own immediate neighbors. Without doubt, however, both the lack of good roads and the presence of Confederate troops or guerrillas in much of rural East Tennessee, especially the upper counties, precluded the delivery of relief supplies.[41]

Indeed the summer and early fall of 1864 were the most terrifying months that many East Tennesseans experienced throughout the entire war. As Sherman advanced into Georgia in May, Union troop strength in East Tennessee was drastically reduced, leaving only a few regiments stationed around Chattanooga and Knoxville. Almost immediately Confederate guerrillas and bands of bushwackers went on a rampage in the unprotected areas of the region. As Adeline Deaderick of Washginton County recalled, ". . . our whole land was filled with bands of mauraders [sic] not belonging to any army: . . . savage men, who preferred plunder and stealing to fighting at all." Thus the intermecine war that had existed since the beginning of the war intensified. After describing the extent of violence and destruction in upper East Tennessee, D. L. Boren of Carter County maintained that regular Confederate soldiers were not to blame. From what he could determine, "it has been Rebel citizens &

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[41]In December, 1864, as General John B. Hood's army invaded Middle Tennessee, relief shipments to East Tennessee stopped completely. When Hood neared Nashville, over $10,000 worth of shoes and woolen goods destined for East Tennessee was purposely burned by the Federals for fear that they would be seized by the Rebels. But soon after George Thomas' smashing victory over the Confederates at Nashville in late December, 1864, the railroad to Chattanooga was reopened and supplies reached Knoxville without interruption. Thomas W. Humes, Second Report to the East Tennessee Relief Association at Knoxville (Knoxville, 1866), 4-5, 7.

Guerrillas operating together that has been doing nearly all the devilment. . . ." Warfare had degenerated almost to brute criminal activity in East Tennessee. In the early days of the war, although there were several exceptions, guerrillas had restricted their activities mainly to purely military targets, such as troops and military installations. But now civilians became fair game. Revenge-minded Unionists and Confederates attempted to terrorize their enemy, whether that enemy was attached to the military or not. After Rebels had pillaged several Union families in upper East Tennessee, Brownlow maintained that the "rebel families" responsible for pointing out Unionists to the Confederates would regret the day in which they were born. "We will endorse our soldiers in putting them to death by any modes that cruelty can invent," he concluded. And Lieutenant Colonel John B. Brownlow (the editor's youngest son) maintained that it was useless to conciliate Rebels. The only way to restore peace was "to kill and subjugate them."[42]

Men were taken from their homes at night and whipped, beaten, and sometimes murdered. Food was stolen, citizens robbed, barns burned, cattle driven off, and crops trampled upon by men on horseback. Robert Cooper, a wealthy pro-Confederate farmer from Hawkins County, reported

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[42]Anna Mary Moon (ed.), "Civil War Memoirs of Mrs. Adeline Deaderick," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, VII (1948), 53; D. L. Boren to David G. Boren, June 30, 1864, Boren Family MSS, McClung Collection; Knoxville Whig, August 10, 1864; John B. Brownlow to Oliver P. Temple, September 9, 1864, Temple MSS, UT Special Collections. With revenge-minded Unionists on a rampage in East Tennessee, Confederate General John C. Vaughn commented: "--no people in this Confederacy has suffered as our relations & friends have. they are all robbed & imprisoned--not allowed the liberty of negros." J. C. Vaughn to David M. Key, September 28, 1864, Key MSS, Chattanooga-Hamilton County Library.

that every springhouse in his vicinity had been stripped by robbers. One Friday night in August, 1864, nearly thirty pistol-brandishing marauders attacked the home of Major S. Temple near Greeneville. They stole all the family's valuables; and only through the pleading of his wife, was Temple saved from being shot. After this, he allowed his wife and children to stay at home only during the day. At night, he informed his brother, "they roam through the Forest like wild beasts for protection." Samuel Milligan and several other men in Greeneville who had been pronounced Unionists were so harassed by night riders in the spring of 1864, that they packed up a few items and moved to Nashville for safety. Although A. J. Fletcher had moved from East Tennessee to Indiana early in the war to escape the Confederates, he had planned to return to his native region. But reports from home in the summer of 1864 prompted second thoughts. While admitting that there were drawbacks to living in Indiana, Fletcher added, "I feel so much the sense of personal safety that I confess I am almost tempted to think no more of my native hills." At least there was no fear of advancing and retreating armies or of brutal soldiers and assassins; one could "walk the streets [at] all hours without arms and lie down at night and sleep soundly. . . ."[43]

Throughout the summer of 1864, East Tennessee Unionists pleaded with Governor Johnson to send troops to relieve the area. John Gaut of

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[43]Robert Cooper to James M. Cooper, June 28, 1864, Civil War Records, II, 160; M. S. Temple to Oliver P. Temple, August 31, 1864, Temple MSS, UT Special Collections; Samuel Milligan Memoir, TSLA; A. J. Fletcher to Oliver P. Temple, June 18, 1864, Temple MSS, UT Special Collections.

Cleveland complained that since Sherman's departure, Joseph Wheeler's Confederate cavalry had completely disrupted mail service and had kept people in a constant state of alarm. Reports coming from upper East Tennessee were even more distressing. From Strawberry Plains, just north of Knoxville, to the Virginia line, roving bands of guerrillas and John Hunt Morgan's Rebel cavalry held complete sway. Besides committing acts of terror, these Confederates disrupted agricultural production in an already depleted area. In May, John Netherland reported that Rebel parties were harvesting winter wheat for their own use at the expense of Unionists in the region. A. A. Kyle of Rogersville warned that if some action were not taken to regain the upper counties they would be completely desolated. Only one-fourth of a normal crop had been planted anyway and now it might easily be lost. By early June, word reached East Tennessee that the governor might send troops to clear out the Confederates. "For God's sake send them and that quickly," begged U. S. Marshal Blackston McDannel. According to McDannel, the presence of one regiment of Federal cavalry in upper East Tennessee would enable the people to return to their homes and save their harvest.[44]

Other East Tennesseans turned from despair to anger because of the situation. One group, the "Voters of East Tennessee," complained to the governor that although several companies of East Tennessee troops had been organized, they were not protecting the region. Instead, they were

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[44]John C. Gaut to Andrew Johnson, June 21, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC; John Netherland to Andrew Johnson, May 26, 1864, ibid.; Blackston McDannel to Andrew Johnson, June 9, 1864, ibid. See also Official Records, Series 1, XXXIX, pt. 2, pp. 74-76.

stationed in Middle Tennessee guarding "rebel property." If the troops were not transferred back home, Johnson's name as vice-presidential nominee would be stricken from many ballots in East Tennessee in November. To insure that the governor understood the seriousness of their demand, the East Tennesseans furnished a copy of their letter to the Chicago Times for publication. Despite such threats, Governor Johnson was unable to send immediate help; but by late July the way was cleared to dispatch Colonel Alvan C. Gillem, acting State Adjutant General, with the 13th Tennessee Cavalry (an East Tennessee unit) into the eastern counties. A strong appeal from Brownlow, T. A. R. Nelson, and other prominent citizens urged Johnson to quickly order the troops into the region. The Rebels, they said, were rapidly repairing the railroad, preparing to carry off grain and livestock. If Federal troops could not be sent before the Confederates ran off with the supplies, "then we ask in mercy to the citizens, that no troops of ours come afterwards, to eat out what little may be left."[45]

Even though the Confederates were able to abscond with much of the harvest, four days after Brownlow, et al.'s request was written, Gillem and the 13th Tennessee left Nashville for East Tennessee. The general,

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[45]"Voters of East Tennessee" to Andrew Johnson, June 12, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC; Hall, Military Governor, 186; W. G. Brownlow, et al., to Andrew Johnson, June 12, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC. Central East Tennessee apparently was not as bothered by Confederate raiders as the lower and upper sub-regions. Sarah DeLozier of Kingston, after commenting on the possibilities of a poor corn crop, however, reported that "everything has been very peaceable" in her part of the country. Sarah C. DeLozier to F. M. Millican, July 31, 1864, Civil War Records, I, 106. See also D. F. Harrison to Andrew Johnson, June 27, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC, and Chauncey Welton to "folks," May 1, 1864, Welton MSS, SHC.

Johnson's protégé and trusted friend, was ordered to kill or drive out all marauders in East Tennessee; and he could pursue them beyond state lines if necessary. After this, he was to direct his efforts to aiding civil authorities in restoring law and order. Any regiments now being organized in East Tennessee would come under Gillem's command; and the general was empowered to raise more units if he needed them.[46]

After arriving in Knoxville on August 16, Gillem pushed his forces to Morristown and then to Bull's Gap. Along the way, he scattered bands of Rebels and took several prisoners, including Confederate Senator Joseph Heiskell. His most notable achievement, however, came on the morning of September 4, when he led a surprise attack on Confederate cavalry posted at Greeneville. His troops captured the town and routed the Rebels; but most important of all, the famous Confederate raider John Hunt Morgan was killed in the fray.[47] For the remainder of September and well into October, Gillem's command fought a running battle with Confederates under John C. Vaughn and Basil Duke. By late October, after dispersing a Confederate force at Panther Springs near Morristown, it seemed as if Gillem had nearly reestablished Federal control in upper East Tennessee.[48]

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[46]W. G. Brownlow to Andrew Johnson, August 18, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC; Hall, Military Governor, 186.

[47]Scott and Angel, Thirteenth Tennessee, 153-56; Knoxville Whig, August 31, 1864. For details of this incident see Forest Conklin, "Footnotes on the Death of John Hunt Morgan," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, XXXV (1976), 376-88. Parson Brownlow praised Gillem "for the timely and religious act of terminating the life, robberies and wholesale thefts of John Hunt Morgan, the most renowned land pirate of the nineteenth century." Knoxville Whig, September 21, 1864.

[48]Scott and Angel, Thirteenth Tennessee, 155-56.

In the meantime, Governor Johnson started a statewide program to organize militia to help in the campaign against guerrillas. Because regular troops were in such short supply, some other means had to be devised to provide protection for loyal citizens. As early as July 1, 1864, Horace Maynard had suggested that each county organize a small force--fifty to one hundred men--for local self-defense. The idea was popular, he said, although some people were afraid that such units would be ordered away from their home counties. Other spokesmen throughout the state endorsed the proposal and Johnson himself appreciated its advantages.[49] Finally on September 8, the Governor issued a proclamation stating that whereas the militia of the state, "constitutes the military power, which must, when necessary, sustain the civil in the suppression of crime and punishment of evil doers," all able-bodied males, white and black, between the ages of 18 and 50, were to be enrolled. The magistrates in the rural districts and wards were to act as commissioners. Refusal to serve in the militia would mean punishment by law.[50]

Although there was resistance to this new militia policy in much of Middle and West Tennessee, the plan was accepted with little problem in the eastern counties. There was no mass exodus to the hills as during the period of Confederate occupation. As a matter of fact, a week before the militia proclamation, a thousand citizens in the Knoxville area had already joined volunteer home guard companies and had been issued arms

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[49]Horace Maynard to Andrew Johnson, July 1, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC. Brownlow had proclaimed: "Let our citizens everywhere organize, band together, and fight rebels and home traitors. Shoot them down like dogs, for they are no better." Knoxville Whig, August 31, 1864.

[50]Hall, Military Governor, 188-89.

and ammunition by the state. At a public meeting at the Knox County courthouse on September 7, several resolutions were passed including one endorsing the organization of a state militia. Another resolution urged that one third of this militia be on duty at all times to defend against Rebel raiders and guerrillas. Even though many East Tennesseans welcomed the organization of citizen soldiers, hopes that it would end guerrilla activities were never fulfilled. Guerrillas and bushwackers continued to strike frequently during the winter of 1864-65. And quite often, the newly organized militia terrorized the civilian population, indiscriminately accusing people of being "rebel families."[51]

As Federal authorities attempted to control guerrilla bands, upper East Tennessee fell under Confederate control again in the late fall of 1864; and there was great fear that a Rebel army under General John B. Hood might dash into East Tennessee from Georgia. Although Hood eventually marched into Middle Tennessee instead, a small army under General John C. Breckinridge launched a counterattack into East Tennessee from Virginia in early November. The Confederates forced Gillem back from Bull's Gap on November 11; and when the latter attempted to make a stand at Morristown, Breckinridge completely routed him. The Confederates pursued Gillem all the way to Strawberry Plains and rounded up large numbers of prisoners along the way. Breckinridge then spread his small force over the territory he had just taken, concentrating along the railroad line from Strawberry Plains northward, burning the bridges, and tearing up track. Refugees from upper East Tennessee again

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[51] Knoxville Whig, August 31, September 7, 1864.

poured into an already-crowded Knoxville. "It is sickening to the heart," exclaimed Parson Brownlow, "to stand here and look at one thousand men, women, and children, coming in through the mud and rain herding their stock, and driving cows and stock to save what they can. . . ." But Confederate domination of upper East Tennessee was short-lived. In mid-December, Generals George S. Stoneman, Stephen G. Burbridge, and Gillem launched a three-pronged Federal attack which proved too much for Breckinridge. Within days, they pushed the last organized Confederate forces out of upper East Tennessee.[52]

The expulsion of these Rebels, however, did not bring peace to East Tennessee. Bushwackers and Confederate guerrillas continued to roam the hills and back roads and harass the local population. In December, a large band of guerrillas from northern Georgia under Captain John P. Gatewood stormed through Polk and Bradley counties. Twenty-five Union men were reported to have been killed in the raid. Eight Unionists were murdered by bushwackers in January, 1865, at Lick Creek in Greene County. And in February, Rebel guerrillas, operating out of the mountains of North Carolina, raided Cocke, Sevier, Blount, Jefferson, and parts of

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[52] William C. Davis, Breckinridge, Statesman, Soldier, Symbol (Baton Rouge, 1974), 468-69; Scott and Angel, Thirteenth Tennessee, 207-09, 220-29; Official Records, Series 1, XXXIX, pt. 1, pp. 885-86, 893; ibid., VL, pt. 1, pp. 817-20; Knoxville Whig, November 16, 1864. Much to Brownlow's delight, J. A. Sperry was captured at Bristol. The Parson's archenemy had accompanied Breckinridge's army into East Tennessee and began to republish the Knoxville Register, using the facilities of the Bristol Gazette. Knoxville Whig, October 19, 1864, January 11, 1865; Knoxville Register (published in Bristol), October 25, 1864. An interesting account of the campaign by an officer in the 15th Pennsylvania is in Suzanne C. Wilson, J. Ferrell Colton, and Antoinette G. Smith (eds.), Column South with the Fifteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry (Flagstaff, Arizona, 1960), 188-208.

Knox counties. One day, forty of them charged into Maryville; and although they did no property damage, they murdered a Union man as they left town. Confederate guerrillas under Champ Ferguson and their Unionist counterpart Tinker Dave Beatty terrorized East Tennessee counties on the upper Cumberland Plateau. Reminiscent of Unionist sabotage in the fall of 1861, twelve Rebels armed with matches, fuses, and torpedoes were arrested near the railroad bridges at Loudon and Kingston. "Indeed the like has not been known since the rebellion broke out," commented Parson Brownlow on the reign of terror that existed in East Tennessee. Unionists were by no means the only ones who suffered. In Hawkins County, H. G. Wax, a Southern sympathizer, reported that bushwackers attacked his home at 2 o'clock in the morning, plundered it of almost everything, and threatened to murder him. Wax was ready to move into Rogersville "for I am afraid to stay at Home for fear of being killed at any time," he said. If bushwackers did not kill him, regular Federal troops would rob him of anything not already stolen.[53]

It soon became evident that East Tennessee would never be safe from guerrilla attacks unless the Confederate bands were broken up and their bases of operation destroyed. Accordingly, in March, 1865, a cavalry force, composed of the veteran 15th Pennsylvania, 10th Michigan, 12th Ohio, and 8th, 9th, and 13th Tennessee Cavalry, gathered in

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[53]Hurlburt, Bradley County, 6-11; Knoxville Whig, December 14, 1864, January 11, February 1, 22, 1865; Helen Bullard and Joseph M. Krechniak, Cumberland County's First Hundred Years (Crossville, Tennessee, 1956), 54; Blackston McDannel to Andrew Johnson, Records Relating to the Appointment of Federal Judges, Marshals, and Attorneys, 1857-65, General Records of the Department of Justice, RG 60, NA; H. G. Wax to "App," February 25, 1865, Wax MSS, UT Special Collections.

Knoxville under the command of General George Stoneman. Their mission, as ordered by General Sherman, was to deprive the enemy of any ability to wage war. They were to paralyze the economy, destroy supplies, scatter families, and do anything else that would weaken enemy morale. General George H. Thomas gave further instructions to the expedition insisting that its mission was "to destroy but not fight battles."[54]

On March 21, 1865, General Stoneman commenced the campaign northward up the Tennessee Valley from Knoxville. After reaching Morristown on March 23 amid cheers of the local populace, the little army split and moved on, sweeping all before it. Confederate guerrillas were scattered; and Southern sympathizers received rough treatment, especially if they resisted. The Tennessee soldiers under Alvan Gillem were particularly brutal, for old personal memories stirred them to indiscretions they might not have otherwise committed. While the Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan troops generally behaved with discipline and restraint, the Tennesseans adopted the practices of the guerrillas and bushwackers as they robbed, pillaged and wantonly destroyed furniture, clothing and even food. As Ethie F. Eagleton, a Confederate sympathizer living at Mossy Creek recorded in her diary after hearing that the Federals were headed her way, "I don't fear Batie's [Beatty's] army--but do Gillems: Oh God of mercy protect us."[55] A soldier serving in the 15th

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[54]Ina W. Van Noppen, "The Significance of Stoneman's Last Raid," North Carolina Historical Review, XXXVIII (1961), 21, 25; Official Records, Series 1, VL, pt. 2, p. 622; ibid., Series 3, III, 153.

[55]Elvie Eagleton Skipper and Ruth Gove (eds.), "'Stray Thoughts': The Civil War Diary of Ethie M. Foute Eagleton," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 40 (1968), 125. Skipper and Gove state that Ethie Eagleton was referring to General Samuel Beatty in her statement concerning the conduct of Federal soldiers. However, Samuel Beatty

Pennsylvania commented: "The sympathy we used to feel for the loyal Tennesseans is being rapidly transferred to the enemy." By the end of March, Stoneman's expedition had reached the Watauga River in upper East Tennessee, having swept almost everything in its path. The Federals now moved into the mountains of North Carolina and continued their mission of breaking up guerrilla bands and organized Confederate units. As Stoneman's troops crossed the mountains, for all practical purposes the war ended in East Tennessee, although reports of guerrillas and bushwackers would continue even until June of 1865.[56]

Because of the extensive destruction in the region, the East Tennessee Relief Association distributed supplies to the needy for several months after the ending of armed hostilities.[57] Despite these efforts to alleviate suffering nothing could eliminate much of the bitterness that had been engendered among the people after four years of strife. Although ravaged by large armies, East Tennessee had also been plagued by an internecine war that intensified in severity. As a result of this civil war within a civil war, Confederate and Federal

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was a division commander in the IV Corps with Thomas' army at Nashville. He never served in East Tennessee. See Ezra J. Warner, Generals in Blue (Baton Rouge, 1964), 29. More than likely Eagleton was referring to Tinker Dave Beatty, the Union guerrilla, who was known to most Confederate sympathizers in the region.

[56]Von Noppen, "Stoneman's Last Raid," 526; H. K. Wood, "Our Last Campaign and Pursuit of Jeff Davis," Charles H. Kirk (ed.), History of the Fifteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry (Philadelphia, 1906), 507; Wilson, et al., Column South, 275-78.

[57]Humes, Second Report, 5-7; Thomas W. Humes, Third and Fourth Reports of the East Tennessee Relief Association (Knoxville, 1868), 4, 14.

authorities alike faced similar problems in establishing and maintaining control of East Tennessee; and it was not until the very last weeks of the war that one side, the Federals, could be said to have gained a firm grip on the region. Much like their Confederate counterparts, Federal authorities, both civil and military, were frequently accused of being too lenient with enemy sympathizers. And much like the irrepressible supporters of the Confederacy, devout followers of the Union such as Brownlow, from 1863 onward urged a severe and quite often violent policy against the opposition. Because Federal authorities never possessed the military strength to secure dominance in East Tennessee, the citizenry, whether directly influenced by Brownlow's exhortations or not, frequently took direct revenge against its enemy. Thus the division, bitterness, and violence that had wracked East Tennessee throughout the war would not be easily removed by the surrender of Confederate armies elsewhere or the collapse of the Confederate government in Richmond. As a result, for months after April, 1865, institutions such as local government and even the churches of East Tennessee would continue to experience much of the discord that had prevailed during the Civil War in East Tennessee.

CHAPTER V

POSTWAR EAST TENNESSEE:

A LAND WITHOUT PEACE

Peace settled uneasily over East Tennessee in the spring of 1865. Even though the armies of Robert E. Lee and Joseph E. Johnston had surrendered, the tensions and bitterness of four years of civil war still prevailed in almost every town and rural settlement of the eastern counties. Many Unionists and returning soldiers continued their cries for revenge, while paroled Rebel soldiers and their families, dejected and wary of the reception they might receive, attempted a return to normal life. Earlier in the year Myra Inman had proclaimed, "My happiness would be complete if we could all assemble around the fireside of old." But she was certain that "that happiness will always remain untasted . . .," a prophetic statement that could have been uttered by many East Tennesseans. By the end of the war, Myra confessed that she was "completely subjugated." She had placed all of her hopes, wishes, and plans in the Confederacy, but now she doubted that she could ever cherish the "old flag" of the Union as she once had.[1]

Regardless of emotions, Unionists and ex-Rebels alike lived in a region visibly scarred by the ravages of war; burned homes, barns and broken fences littered much of the landscape. In Cumberland County, it was reported that only three houses remained untouched by war on the road from Crossville to Sparta. Stocks of hogs and cattle had been depleted;

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[1]Myra Inman Diary, January 14, April 27, May 8, 1865, SHC.

and many fields had lain fallow since early in the war. Well into May of 1865, soldiers returning from the front still felt free to confiscate foodstuffs and property from civilians. On May 17, a group of Confederate cavalrymen who had surrendered in North Carolina and were returning home rode up to the farm of Simon Browder in Bradley County and seized several bushels of corn, forage, and foodstuff. Although Browder later sued the officer in charge for theft, the Confederate was eventually acquitted. By mid-summer, as most soldiers had returned home, East Tennessee farmers were at long last free of the dreaded foraging parties. Bushwackers continued, however, to harass the local citizenry. Stringent army orders stated that "no quarter will be shown guerrillas and robbers; they will be shot down whenever found." Although the bands of desperados were mostly broken up by mid-summer, at night many rural families still quaked at the sound of horses' hooves and shouting men. One young woman in Monroe County wrote her cousin, "Major Lane, Willie and I were sitting in the Parlor last night, Willie was thumping the piano, and some one knocked at the window blinds. The first thought was bushwackers of course. . . ."[2]

In the meantime, the East Tennessee Relief Association continued its work in the region, although some areas were in little need of aid. The Knoxville area, for example, had benefitted from a disproportionate share of relief and by early 1865 was well on its way to complete

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[2]Tennessee Supreme Court Cases, 4th Circuit Court, October 22, 1866, Simon Browder vs George S. Dibrell, TSLA; General Order No. 2, Headquarters, Post Commandant, Jonesboro, Tennessee, April 24, 1865, in John W. Hines MSS (microfilm), SHC; Mary Caldwell to Carrie Stakely, June 18, 1865, Stakely-Hall MSS, McClung Collection.

recovery. In March of 1865, Wilson S. Miller, an Ohio soldier stationed in Jefferson County, noted that "This Country is well supplied with provisions" and prospects for the year's crop looked good. And by midsummer, the Knoxville Whig could report that the region between Knoxville and Chattanooga was prospering. Farmers were planting large crops and trade had picked up considerably in the towns. Although the wheat crop was not bountiful, it was sufficient for home consumption. The new crop of oats compared favorably to that of pre-war years; and hay and corn were also abundant. "Providence is dealing kindly with the downtrodden and oppressed Union people," stated the Whig, "and the people in turn have gone to work in good earnest to live, and to restore the country to its former prosperity."[3]

East Tennessee's two urban centers displayed resilience in the immediate aftermath of fighting. By late summer of 1865, Cornelius Madden, an Ohio soldier stationed in the quartermaster's office in Chattanooga reported, "This place has improved very much since I was last here. . . ." Buildings were being constructed everywhere and Northern businessmen and their families had moved to the town in large numbers. "Everything is topsy-turvy, a regular young california," exclaimed Madden. In 1867 a Knoxville newspaper reported that while the city had been left fenceless and with most of its buildings either damaged or destroyed at the end of the war, within three years recovery had been unbelievably rapid. And in 1868, another newspaper told of the continued prosperity in the city. "In all directions," it said, "as if

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[3]Wilson S. Miller to H. J. Miller, March 20, 1865, W. S. Miller MSS, TSLA; Knoxville Whig, June 29, July 19, 1865.

by magic, factories, machine shops, storehouses, dwelling houses, and buildings of every description are springing up. Business, in all its varieties, seems to be thriving." The financial status of the Chattanooga and Knoxville municipal governments also indicated rapid economic recovery soon after the war. As will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, the city revenues of Knoxville and Chattanooga had been cut drastically during the war, but they increased quickly, almost immediately, after peace was restored. By 1866, Chattanooga reported a surplus of over $5,000, and in 1867, Knoxville reported a $4,300 surplus, both figures exceeding pre-war financial balances.[4]

But immediate recovery and a return to prosperity did not occur in upper East Tennessee. It was this sub-region that had suffered the most and longest during the war. As Susan McCampbell of Dandridge recorded, "The people in the upper part of this state and in south western Virginia must have suffered dreadfully" because of the almost constant fighting in those areas. Soon after Stoneman's raid to clear out guerrilla bands in upper East Tennessee in March, 1865, the East Tennessee Relief Association, aided by agents of the Freedmen's Bureau and the American Missionary Association, began to direct its efforts toward areas that had received little or no aid. As a result of the early relative prosperity in central and lower East Tennessee, the Association determined,

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[4]Cornelius Madden to Gennie, September 11, 1865, Madden MSS, SHC; Abram Ryan to Mr. and Mrs. Crump, September 12, 1865, Ryan MSS, TSLA; Knoxville Free Press, August 22, November 5, 1867; Knoxville Press and Herald, October 24, 1868; Knoxville City Records, Book D, 366, Knoxville City Hall; Chattanooga City Records, 1865-69, p. 166, Chattanooga-Hamilton County Library.

on March 15, to make a concerted effort to distribute two-thirds of its supplies to the more remote counties. The Association concentrated mainly on Greene, Johnson, Carter, Washington, Hawkins, and Sullivan counties; thousands of dollars' worth of food and clothing were dispersed from centers in each. Occasionally the need was so great that impatience and disorder accompanied the distribution at Rogersville, Elizabethton, and Greeneville. As had been true since the beginning of the Association, supplies were sold to those who could pay, but distributed free to those who could not. But at Elizabethton, agents of the Association attempted to sell relief supplies to those able to pay before making a free distribution. An impatient and hungry crowd, however, demanded that the agents give the goods away without delay. The crowd's size and hostility persuaded the agents to yield to the demands.[5]

Although the East Tennessee Relief Association was to disband in the summer of 1865, the extreme destitution in upper East Tennessee delayed complete suspension of activities until 1866. It was not until after the harvest of that year that this section had recovered sufficiently to feed itself.[6] After this, funds were expended for purposes

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[5]Susan Heiskell McCampbell Diary (microfilm), April 25, 1865, TSLA; Thomas W. Humes to J. E. Jacobs, May 22, 1866, American Missionary Association MSS (microfilm), Fisk University (hereinafter cited as A.M.A. MSS); Paul D. Phillips, "A History of the Freedmen's Bureau in Tennessee" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1964), 73; Thomas W. Humes, Third and Fourth Reports of the East Tennessee Relief Association, 12, 14.

[6]Upper East Tennessee had other problems that resulted from the war. Nearly two years after its end, citizens from Grainger County petitioned the General Assembly for $10,000 to repair the Bean Station Turnpike which had been nearly destroyed by retreating Federal forces during the Civil War. Memorial #47, Petitions and Memorials of the 1865-66 General Assembly, 2nd Session (1866), TSLA. Citizens from Washington County

other than direct relief to the indigent. For example, $500 were given to victims of a fire in Portland, Maine, and $2,000 to two physicians who were trying to build a hospital in Knoxville. It was understood that the institution would reserve half of its beds for charity patients. When the Association closed its books in 1868, the remaining funds were donated to this hospital for the care of the "sick and poor" of East Tennessee.[7]

Although the East Tennessee Relief Association greatly aided the recovery process, the chief burden fell upon the individual citizens of the region. In the spring and summer of 1865, many families attempted reconstruction either without men or with men unable to work because of war wounds.[8] The retention of prisoners of war by Federal authorities meant an additional shortage of manpower for families who had members in Confederate service. Governor William G. Brownlow was constantly petitioned to exert his influence in behalf of prisoners who

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begged for the passage of a law extending the period to pay debts. According to their petition "the experience of the Rebellion has pushed many to the brink of bankruptcy." Petition #2 (January, 1866), in ibid.

[7]Humes, Second Report, 5-7; Third and Fourth Reports, 4, 14.

[8]Union soldiers stationed in East Tennessee during the war noted that many women were forced to take on additional responsibilities because of the shortage of men. A soldier from Ohio posted near Knoxville commented that most of the women living on farms were having to do all of the work. "I got some butter the other day of a woman who has six little children and a field of fifty acres which she has cultivated alone and supports herself and children besides." Letter of unknown Federal soldier to his mother, October 15, 1863, Kay Walsh MSS, UT Special Collections. See also William G. Boren to David G. Boren, April 15, 1864, and D. L. Boren to John C. and David G. Boren, June 17, 1864, Boren MSS, McClung Collection.

were desperately needed by their families. In June of 1865, several Hamilton County citizens requested the release of Thomas McPherson, a prisoner at Camp Morton, Indiana. Although McPherson had been a Rebel, he had taken an oath of allegiance. "His family needs his services badly at home," the petition claimed. Mrs. Sarah Meek of Jonesboro pleaded with T. A. R. Nelson to help gain the release of her husband who had taken a Confederate civil office to avoid conscription into the army. Meek's absence allegedly caused his wife and small children to suffer extreme destitution.[9]

Most prisoners held in Northern camps were released in the summer of 1865; but many who returned to their native East Tennessee were met with a hostility that raised strong doubts about remaining in the region. As one scholar points out in his study of immediate post-war conditions in Tennessee, even though returning Confederate veterans experienced some antagonism from Unionists in parts of Middle and West Tennessee, this hostility in no way matched the fury and bitterness found in the eastern counties. Because of four years of brutal internecine warfare and because they were the losers and in the minority, many ex-Rebels found life in East Tennessee almost unbearable.[10]

Adding to the difficulties of the returning Confederate soldiers were court litigations. In late May, 1865, Crawford W. Hall, Federal

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[9]R. J. Gaines, et al., to W. G. Brownlow, June 8, 1865, Brownlow MSS, TSLA; Sarah Meek to T. A. R. Nelson, April 19, 1865, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection.

[10]Thomas B. Alexander, "Neither Peace nor War: Conditions in Tennessee in 1865," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 21 (1949), 41-42.

District Attorney for East Tennessee, reported that in the circuit court at Knoxville there had been almost 1,200 indictments for treason and "aid and comfort"; and by March 1, 1866, the number had increased to 2,014. Federal court was held on the second floor of the Knox County courthouse; and it was reported that during the trials the court room was so crowded that some feared the floor would collapse under the weight. Indeed, on one occasion the floor began to groan and creak so much that the multitude stampeded out of the building.[11]

Despite the large number of indictments, most of the defendants had taken an amnesty oath and were released from any sentences assessed by the court. And toward the end of his presidential administration, Andrew Johnson ordered District Attorney Hall to dismiss all pending treason cases. Just as he had during the war, Governor Brownlow distrusted the actions of the Federal court in East Tennessee, and in particular its judge, Connally F. Trigg. Trigg had criticized some of the governor's policies; and Brownlow accused the judge of permitting certain attorneys to practice who were not entirely loyal. John B. Brownlow, now editing his father's paper, managed to castigate Trigg in a manner worthy of the Parson. "Judge Trigg is understood to be hostile to the entire radical policy . . .," claimed the Whig, and his court was nothing but a "one-horse concern." Trigg retaliated by taking all of his legal advertising away from the Brownlow paper. But attempts

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[11] Crawford W. Hall to James Speed, May 24, 1865, Attorney General's Papers, Letters Received, 1819-70, General Records of the Department of Justice, RG 60, NA; Persons Indicted or Prosecuted for Treason in the United States Court of the Eastern District of Tennessee, 1866, ibid.; [Crawford W. Hall] Threescore Years and Ten (Cincinnati, 1884), 216. This is Hall's autobiography.

were still made to use the Federal court against former Rebel sympathizers. Editor J. Austin Sperry was indicted for writing treason in the pages of his Knoxville Register during the war. Yet he was acquitted, which the Whig regarded as a burning outrage. John E. Gamble, who had been a Confederate conscription officer in Blount County was hauled into court; but he was also acquitted.[12]

Actually the ex-Confederates of East Tennessee suffered more from the damage suits filed against them in state courts by revenge-minded Unionists. Parson Brownlow, for one, had long encouraged Unionists who suffered imprisonment or loss of property due to Confederate action to enter damage suits against the men responsible for their losses. He had personally taken such action in the Knox County circuit court by charging John H. Crozier, W. H. Sneed, and Robert D. Reynolds with having caused his arrest, imprisonment, and banishment early in the war. After a short trial and a five-minute jury deliberation, Brownlow was awarded $25,000 in damages. The properties of Sneed, Reynolds, and Crozier were attached and sold and the plaintiff purchased them. Soon after the Brownlow award, the heirs of Samuel Pickens, a Unionist state senator who had died in the Confederate prison in Tuscaloosa, were granted damages.[13]

The Parson was elated at the results of these cases and urged his fellow East Tennessee Unionists to follow his example. "Imprison the

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[12]Hall, Threescore Years and Ten, 219; Coulter, Brownlow, 274; Knoxville Whig, May 31, June 21, September 6, December 20, 1865

[13]Alexander, "Neither Peace nor War," 50-51; Knoxville Whig, March 1, 1865; Knox County Circuit Court Minutes, Book 15a, pp. 454-55, Knox County Records, Lawson McGhee Library.

villains--," he demanded, "take all they have--give their effects to the Union men thay have crippled and imprisoned--and let them have their 'Southern Rights.'" Indeed, many East Tennessee dockets were loaded with damage suits. By the fall of 1865, the Whig was filled with notices from the county courts of East Tennessee of attachments, sheriffs' sales, and other such actions.[14]

Those men who had been prominent or active as Confederate leaders were most often taken to court. For example, James M. Hickman brought suit against P. A. Heartsill, the former Rebel enrolling officer in Monroe County. During the war, Heartsill had arrested and imprisoned Hickman for resisting conscription. Heartsill had since moved south; nevertheless the plaintiff sued him for damages and hoped eventually to obtain some of his Monroe County property. Available records, however, do not reveal how successful Hickman was in this case. Officers who had led raiding parties during the war also faced the wrath of the courts. In Sevier County, Mrs. Caroline King sued Colonel James Henry of Thomas' Legion of Indians and Highlanders for $312, because his troops had confiscated a horse, saddle, silverware, dishes, a hat, and even a bee hive in January, 1864. Although Mrs. King won the suit, she apparently never collected the damages. And although the paper did not explain the nature of the case, the Knoxville Whig reported that in Bradley County, Dr. William Hunt, a local agent for the Treasury Department, sued and was awarded $20,000 in damages from W. H. Tibbs, who had been a member of the Confederate Congress.[15]

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[14]Knoxville Whig, March 1, 1865.

[15]James M. Hickman to O. P. Temple, April 24, 1865, Temple MSS, UT Special Collections; "Caroline B. King vs Colonel James Henry,"

John B. Brownlow rejoiced over such decisions. He resented the fact that so many "rich rebels" had returned to East Tennessee since the end of the war. These men had been the chief movers in the prosecution of Unionists and they therefore must be punished, he maintained. Besides, there was always the possibility that they would try to regain much of their political and social influence in the region. To Editor Brownlow "Money Is Power!," and unless Union men exercised the power they now possessed to destroy the Rebels, the day would come when Unionists and their children "will be at the mercy of their unscrupulous enemies!"[16]

It seems, however, that the courts, both Federal and state, were never entirely successful in punishing Confederates. Even though several convictions were made, appeals to Federal courts by defendants frequently resulted in the annulment of sentences. John Sneed and Robert Reynolds, for example, eventually recovered their property from Brownlow after prolonged litigation in the Federal courts. And John Crozier finally acquired his in 1868 when he compromised with Brownlow, allowing the latter to retain all rents collected in the interim and paying the taxes for the whole time himself. And, although damages were awarded plaintiffs like Mrs. Caroline King, collection quite often was never made. As John B. Brownlow noted in the margin of the May 17, 1865 Whig, "Loyal men never gained, finally, by these suits. The Rebels won."[17]

Sevier County, Tennessee, August 25, 1865, in William H. Thomas MSS (microfilm), Duke University Library.

[16]Knoxville Whig, May 17, 1865.

[17]Ibid., December 25, 1867; Deaderick, "Register of Events," 1868, McClung Collection; Knoxville Whig, May 17, 1865.

Other charges placed against former Confederates were little more successful in the state courts. Even before the war ended, state circuit courts attempted to punish Rebels on charges of treason. A typical case was that of William Owens who was indicted by a Knox County grand jury in late 1864. According to the county Circuit Court records, Owens "not regarding the duty of his said allegiance nor having the fear of God in his heart, and being moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil wickedly and traitorously aided and assisted traitors and himself took a commission in the Rebel army." Despite the gravity of these charges, he was apparently never convicted, Then after the war, Governor Brownlow attempted to establish the policy that all Rebels were criminals, because by engaging in war they had made themselves guilty of treason. He rejected the Federal court interpretation that these men were obeying orders of the Confederacy, a de facto government. As a result, in 1866 three Confederates who had been involved with the execution of the decree of the court martial which had condemned to death bridge burner C. A. Haun were tried by the Knox County Circuit Court but were acquitted. The circuit court for Jefferson County, however, tried and sentenced DeWitt C. Williams for "Treason against the State of Tennessee in aiding and abetting the late rebellion." Williams appealed his case to the state supreme court and received a nolle prosequi on the grounds that his treason was against the United States and not against Tennessee.[18]

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[18]Coulter, Brownlow, 275-76; Knoxville Whig, April 25, June 27, September 26, 1866; Knox County Circuit Court Minutes, Book D, 171, Lawson McGhee Library.

Much more serious to ex-Confederates than the actions of the civil courts were the threats and actual application of physical violence from revenge-minded Unionists in the months after the war. Several Confederates under summons to appear before the Federal court in Knoxville in 1865 on charges of treason were afraid to stay in the area or return at the time for trial. James Wallace, writing from Middle Tennessee, explained that he had been driven out of East Tennessee in August, 1865, by a band of "enemies," and he was afraid they would kill him if he returned to go on trial. Wallace and others like him requested delays for this reason; and the courts, recognizing the situation as dangerous, granted extensions. In February, 1866, David Key reported that when the Hamilton County Circuit Court convened, fights broke out and "several poor rebels--most of them old men, were severely beaten." The problems of these former Confederates reveals the general plight of all who had supported the South during the war and who were attempting to remain in East Tennessee. Initially those men who had been prominent or active as Confederate leaders received the roughest treatment from the Unionists. Rebel conscription officers were very unpopular in their home counties. In Grainger County, although almost all Confederate veterans had come home by the end of May, 1865, former enrolling officer Tom Smith dared not return for fear of his life. For a while he would remain in the friendly confines of Sullivan County where Confederate sentiment had always been strong. Smith's predicament was not unusual for in late May, 1865, Robert Johnson reported to his father that Union men would not permit Confederate leaders who had persecuted Union families to

live in East Tennessee and that he had personal knowledge of several murders.[19]

As Union soldiers were mustered out of service and returned home to East Tennessee, revenge was dealt out to almost anyone who had had some association with the Confederacy. J. L. Burts of Sullivan County asserted that discharged Union soldiers were committing "all mann[er] of cruelty against the peaceful and very best citizens of the country calling Evryman a Rebel, who dont incorage [sic] them in their lawless conduct. . . ." In late May, J. V. J. Worley of Greeneville reported that incidents of violence had increased greatly in that town once the former Federal soldiers began to return home. A. M. Brown, an ex-Confederate from Jonesboro, informed T. A. R. Nelson, "I cannot go to the country and go into farming for when those Tennessee [Union] troops return home they will be with out restraint & a man [is] wholly unsafe. . . ." And Sam Milligan of Washington County reported to President Johnson that no part of the country was in worse disorder than parts of East Tennessee--"Not, to be sure, from a spirit of rebellion but from the lawless conduct of the returned soldiers."[20]

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[19]James W. Wallace to T. A. R. Nelson, November 7, 1865, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection. See also W. W. Wallace to T. A. R. Nelson, August 23, November 30, 1865, ibid.; Ada Stakely to Carrie Stakely, May 28, 1865, Stakely-Hall MSS, ibid.; John G. King to Messrs. Netherland and Nelson, October 23, 1865, ibid.; N. M. Taylor to T. A. R. Nelson, October, 1865, ibid.; and Robert Johnson to Andrew Johnson, May 31, 1865, Johnson MSS, LC.

[20]J. L. Burts to Andrew Johnson, October 10, 1865, Johnson MSS, LC; J. V. J. Worley to Rose and Nannie Kingsley, May 21, 1865, Roswell Kingsley MSS, UT Special Collections; A. M. Brown to T. A. R. Nelson, July 25, 1865, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection; Sam Milligan to Andrew Johnson, September 1, 1865, Johnson MSS, LC.

Reflective of the attitude of many East Tennessee Union veterans was a semi-literate letter written by two soldiers, about to be mustered out of service, to their father in Washington County in July of 1865. They warned that all Rebels in their neighborhood "must leav theair before we come or we will Kill and lintch them & that without distinckstion." Furthermore, they maintained, "we doont expect to meet them at church nor eney other gheathern in our settlement for we no them all and what they have don and thay hav nothing to plead that will give satisfaction to us. . . ." And in Jefferson County, Union veterans, calling themselves simply "Old Soldier," issued "Spetial Order No 1" on July 14, 1865. Apparently distributed in the New Market area, the order demanded that "all damed Rebels" leave the community immediately. "We are working by the order that you theving [sic] God forsaken hell-deserving Rebels issued four years ago--Union men and Rebels cannot live together which we find not altogether bogus," concluded the order. Although they may have been exaggerated, reports of violence against former Rebels were frequent and widespread. When James Harris was released from Federal prison in Baltimore and returned to Blount County in late May, 1865, he discovered that Union veterans had organized into groups of "night riders." These bands attacked ex-Confederate soldiers and forcefully exiled every preacher in the county who had been pro-Southern. As a result, Harris had to sleep in the woods and move his bed every night. Finally caught by one of the bands, he was given thirty-four lashes, and told to leave the county or face death. Federal troops stationed in Knoxville treated ex-Rebels roughly in the summer of 1865. Mrs. William Caswell, the widow of a Confederate militia general,

reported several severe beatings of pro-Southern men by the soldiers. In a letter to her son, a student at Princeton, she exclaimed, "I am so rejoiced my boy you have been spared away from this place and hope by the time you get back we may have law and order once more--. . . ." In Greeneville, many Rebels thought peace had been restored by mid-summer since so many of them had been pardoned and left alone. But a giant Fourth of July celebration completely broke the spell. Reverend Samuel Sawyer reported that hundreds of ex-Confederates "were whipped and booted through every street." And in Jonesboro and Rogersville, any Rebel who ventured to show himself during the celebration was driven out of town.[21]

To the Confederates who remained in or returned to East Tennessee and hoped to find peaceful acceptance in the months after the war, the hostility from the Unionists came as a bitter blow. In the view of O. R. Broyles of Jonesboro the efforts of Unionists to drive friends of the Southern cause out of the region were contrary to the principles of humanity and civilization. He simply could not believe "that citizens of the same communities, yea, neighbors and friends, should continue the acts of devastation and butchery after . . . a formal peace has been agreed upon by the national leaders. . . ." Father Abram J. Ryan, a

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[21]John C. and David G. Boren to D. L. Boren, July 28, 1865, Boren MSS, McClung Collection; "Spetial [sic] Order No 1," manuscript copy in Nelson MSS, McClung Collection; Questionnaire of James M. Harris (C. S., Blount County), Questionnaires of Civil War Veterans, TSLA; Mrs. W. R. Caswell to William Caswell, June 19, 1865, Caswell MSS, McClung Collection; Samuel Sawyer to anon., July 8, 1865, in Richard H. Doughty, Greeneville, One Hundred Year Portrait, 1775-1875 (Greeneville, 1975), 240-41. These reports of crime and violence were not limited only to East Tennessee. In the immediate years after the Civil War, there was a significant increase in crimes of all types nationwide. See Edith Abbott, "The Civil War and the Crime Wave of 1865-70," Social Service Review, I (1927), 212-34.

former Confederate chaplain, exclaimed in the fall of 1865 that he simply was not able to like the people of East Tennessee--"their satanic hatred of southern people, makes me feel sometimes very miserable."[22]

Although revenge-minded Unionists justified the rough treatment of ex-Rebels on grounds that it was simple justice for what had been done to them in the first two years of the war, not all East Tennesseans were convinced of this. O. R. Broyles, for one, was certain that most of the abuses and slaughter of returning Confederate soldiers "resulted from old grudges before the war, and personal injuries during its progress. . . ." Furthermore, those who had proclaimed that no one of the "Southern party" would be allowed to return home were in reality "looking to the chances of acquiring fortunes" from the confiscation of property from Confederates. To another man who was seeking patronage in Jonesboro for Democrats, political motives were intertwined in many of the acts of persecution in East Tennessee. Writing President Johnson, Henry Maxwell of Washington County was certain that the chief advocates of revenge wished for a revival of the old Whig party. There were several Confederate conscription officers in the county who had been Whigs before the war, he stated, yet not one of them had been indicted for treason. At the same time, every Democrat in Washington County who had occupied a "respectable position . . . without regard to the conduct in the rebellion" had been sued in court or beaten, murdered, and driven out of the

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[22] O. R. Broyles to T. A. R. Nelson, July 24, 1865, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection; Abram J. Ryan to Mr. and Mrs. Crump, September 12, 1865, Ryan MSS, TSLA; Abram Ryan to Mrs. and Mrs. Crump, no date, ibid.

country. "The plan is to rid East Tennessee of Democrats," he concluded.[23]

Despite a pervasive spirit of revenge against ex-Rebels, some East Tennessee Unionists disagreed with that commitment. Two Union men, for example, gave a party in Madisonville in the summer of 1865 at which, according to Margaret Stakely, they had "invited all us that had been rebels to attend; their object was to restore good feelings among the young folks." In Rhea County a Unionist gave Confederate W. G. Allen seed corn and horse feed so that he could get his farm started again. In the summer of 1865, Confederate Major David M. Key had his brother inquire among Unionists and a former friend, William Crutchfield, if it would be safe to bring his family back to Chattanooga. Crutchfield replied, "Maj. Key's deportment was such as far as I have been informed to treat all men kindly, courteously & gentlemanly regardless of their political opinions--any man in the Rebel Army deporting himself thus--has nothing to fear from an honorable high minded intelligent community." Crutchfield went on to assure Key that his brother would be treated kindly and would be given help if needed. In Knoxville, one Unionist designating himself "Rednaxela" ("Alexander" reversed), wrote to the Whig and advocated conciliation. He maintained that he was a Unionist who had suffered as much as anyone in East Tennessee; but he demanded that "passion and mad impulse" come to an end. "Let us," he concluded, "by conciliation and kindness, win back to

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[23]O. R. Broyles to T. A. R. Nelson, August 15, 1865, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection; W. Henry Maxwell to Andrew Johnson, November 2, 1865, Andrew Johnson MSS, LC.

a reverence of the old flag the thousands of our unfortunate countrymen, so lately estrayed, who are now wishing to acknowledge its supremacy. To seek revenge may be human, but it is God-like to forgive."[24]

There was strong feeling that the Knoxville Whig and other newspapers in East Tennessee were contributing to the region's violence. A Confederate veteran wrote President Johnson, "the union Flag so called published in Jonesboro [and] the Knoxville Whig . . . are all combined to inflame and incourage these deluded and wicked men [discharged Union soldiers], in their lawless conduct. . . ." A correspondent of the Nashville Dispatch wrote from East Tennessee that a new paper had been established at Greeneville demanding the expulsion of ex-Rebels, and that the Jonesboro Union Flag, edited by George Grisham, was advocating the same policy. The reporter was certain that the position of these papers was evidence that Unionists and ex-Confederates could never live in peace in East Tennessee. In late June, 1865, the unanswered diatribes of the Knoxville Whig greatly concerned ex-Rebels and those Unionists who did not condone a policy of violence. Bird G. Manard of Morristown sent a long plea to T. A. R. Nelson urging him to establish a conservative newspaper in Knoxville. "The increasing hostility toward the returning Confederates and their sympathizers is alarming," he exclaimed, "and can't be attributed to any other source than the influence arising from the circulation of a certain journal in this country." The distribution of a paper like the Whig was detrimental to society because the

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[24]Margaret Stakely to Carrie Hall, August 8, 1865, Stakely-Hall MSS, McClung Collection; Questionnaire of W. G. Allen (C. S., Rhea County), TSLA; Livingood and Govan, Chattanooga, 271; Knoxville Whig, June 7, 1865.

mob used it as a guide and textbook. "The circulation of a journal advocating a lenient policy," concluded Manard, "would palliate these differences and restore the former equilibrium of society." Despite Manard's plea, Nelson did not become involved, and a truly "conservative" newspaper would not be established in Knoxville for at least two years.[25]

Some East Tennesseans attempted to put direct pressure on the governor as one means of dealing with the region's problems. In May, 1865, nearly one hundred Knox County Unionists sent a petition to Governor Brownlow stating that "loyal men," feeling they had been dealt personal or political wrongs during the war, were not inflicting violence upon those who had sympathized with the Confederacy. Such behavior, declared the petitioners, was deeply regretted out of a sincere regard for law and order. They then urged the governor to issue a proclamation asking all law-abiding citizens to refrain from acts of violence and to give proper respect to civil authorities. This was necessary, they maintained, to correct the dangers to citizens, to protect the weak from crime, and to allay the feeling of needless terror throughout the community. "For every citizen who declares and renders allegiance to the Government under which he lives is entitled to its protection" regardless of past loyalties, concluded the petitioners.[26]

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[25] J. L. Burts to Andrew Johnson, October 10, 1865, Johnson MSS, LC; Nashville Dispatch, July 6, 1865; Alexander, "Neither Peace nor War," 47; Bird G. Manard to T. A. R. Nelson, June 28, 1865, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection. Greeneville established a conservative newspaper in September, 1866, which strongly defended the moderate reconstruction policy of President Johnson. Of radicals it said, "Such villains ought to be hung by the heels and nibbled to death by young ducks!" Doughty, Greeneville, 242.

[26] Alexander, "Neither War nor Peace," 43; Deaderick, "Register of Events," 1865, McClung Collection.

Because Brownlow's Whig may well have been partly responsible for inciting a spirit of revenge in East Tennessee, the petition caught the governor in a potentially embarrassing position. But Brownlow considered the petition merely a trick to injure him politically. In a letter to Oliver Temple, the Parson contended that most of the signers were Conservative Unionists, many of whom had alienated themselves from him by supporting McClellan in the 1864 presidential campaign. "I think you will agree with me," he concluded, "that the tricksters who got up the the petition asking for a Proclamation have not made much by the operation and will not be apt to make much."[27]

On the same day that the governor wrote Temple, he issued a proclamation which expressed a desire for law and order, yet did little to stop vengeful Unionists. He noted the major points of the petition from the Knox Countians and advised all wronged Unionists to seek redress in the courts rather than by the tactics allegedly in use. Brownlow, however, maintained that should guilty parties be shielded by the corruption of civil or judicial officers, "it will be impossible to prevent the injured and oppressed from taking their remedies into their own hands." And for those Confederates who notified Union men that only one party could live in East Tennessee and then drove them from their homes early in the war, the governor exclaimed, they "would act wisely to quietly and forever with draw from the country." From the numerous reports of violence in East Tennessee in the summer and fall of 1865

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[27]W. G. Brownlow to O. P. Temple, May 30, 1865, Temple MSS, UT Special Collections.

one may infer that many Unionists followed the governor's countenance of taking the law into their own hands rather than seeking redress in the courts.[28]

President Johnson could not long ignore the problems in his home region. When Maria Wofford of New York City visited her sister in Greene County in August of 1865, she was appalled at the spirit of vindictiveness and the incidents of violence against the Rebels. She penned a letter to the President, assuring him of her steadfast devotion to the Union, but she begged "for the sake of humanity" that he do something to help restore peace in the eastern counties. She asked how could there be a reunion of feeling between North and South as long as the defeated enemy was murdered and driven off. "I would not live in East Tennessee if they were to give me the whole of it, unless there is a change," she declared. Other reports prompted Johnson to write General George H. Thomas, commander of the Department of Tennessee, inquiring about conditions in the region. He ordered Thomas to confer with Governor Brownlow and to "take the proper steps to stop these outrages." Brownlow, however, was anxious to allay Johnson's fears. "Some few bad Rebels in each county have been driven out," he admitted, but "there [sic] friends are very sore under it, and exaggerate all that is done." He assured Johnson that it was "notoriously quiet" in East Tennessee. And from Chattanooga, General Alvan C. Gillem, Johnson's former adjutant general, reported that "good order and prosperity are rapidly reviving" in East Tennessee. But as will be discussed later, Gillem became concerned over acts of

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[28]Knoxville Whig, June 7, 1865.

violence committed against freedmen by whites, both Unionists and ex-Rebels.[29]

Indeed by the winter of 1865-66, the violence and bitterness which had been so prevalent in East Tennessee for almost five years subsided considerably. Possibly more Unionists began to feel that enough retribution had been extracted from the conquered foe and that a return to complete peace was necessary. As will be discussed subsequently, some East Tennessee Unionists became dissatisfied with the radical policies of Governor Brownlow, particularly his proposals to allow Negro suffrage and the use of Negro militia. Also a major factor in the decline of violence in East Tennessee seems to have been the simple fact that by the end of 1865 so many Rebels had left the region.

As one East Tennessean maintained in the late summer of 1865, the spirit of revenge had measurably subsided because the material to operate on had been almost completely driven out. He reported that seventy-five families of East Tennessee refugees had moved to Franklin County in Middle Tennessee and even more were in counties farther west. Many ex-Confederates had moved out of the region in the spring of 1865 even before the return of the vindictive Federal soldiers; and several families left the state entirely. In May, J. V. J. Worley of Greeneville reported that two Rebel families had moved to Kansas and had written that they were happy in their new homes. Then with the return of discharged

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[29]Maria S. Wofford to Andrew Johnson, September 11, 1865, Johnson MSS, LC; Andrew Johnson to General George H. Thomas, October 4, 1865, ibid.; W. G. Brownlow to Andrew Johnson, November 10, 1865, ibid.; Alvan C. Gillem to Andrew Johnson, November 11, 1865, ibid.

Federal soldiers, large numbers of former Confederates departed East Tennessee. David A. Deaderick of Knoxville noted in his diary that the lynching of a returned Confederate soldier who had killed a man in self-defense and general threats of violence were causing all former Rebel soldiers to flee south. His two sons, both Confederate veterans, moved to Macon, Georgia, for their own safety. "A number of our best citizens are seeking other homes," he stated, "and even conservative union men are thinking of leaving." And in Blount County, "rebel women" were ordered to leave by "self-constituted patriots." It was Deaderick's observation that these acts were not those "of the best of the union men, but of low and irresponsible men generally. . . ." William Neil of Knoxville heard from several Rebel friends who had moved to Virginia, Arkansas, Georgia, and Kentucky. One man who had moved to Atlanta exclaimed, ". . . how hard it is to be born and raised in a state and driven off . . . and can't be safe in going back. . . ." J. G. Owens wrote from Arkansas that he was "on the half way ground from East Tennessee to Mexico by land." He hoped to reach Brazil eventually where he could acquire a thousand acres of land, ten Negro slaves, a year's provisions, and free transportation.[30]

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[30]Anon. to William H. Thomas, January 16, 1866, Thomas MSS, Duke University; Hiram Bogle to O. P. Temple, August 26, 1865, Temple MSS, UT Special Collections; J. V. J. Worley to Rose and Nannie Kingsley, May 21, 1865, Roswell Kingsley MSS, ibid.; "Confederate History of Hawkins County," 10; Deaderick, "Register of Events," 1866, McClung Collection; Anon. to William Neil, February 18, 1867, Hugh Graham MSS, McClung Collection; J. G. Owens to William Neil, February 12, 1866, ibid. For information on Confederate emigration to Latin America after the Civil War, see Blanche Henry Clark Weaver, "Confederate Emigration to Brazil," Journal of Southern History, XXVII (1961), 33-53; Robert E. Shalhope, "Race, Class, Slavery, and the Antebellum Southern Mind," ibid., XXXVII (1971), 557-74.

Testifying before the Joint Committee on Reconstruction, Senator David T. Patterson of Tennessee[31] stated that there were few Rebels in East Tennessee by February, 1866. The cause for this was that Union men had resorted to retaliation when the Federals gained control of the eastern counties. These Union men were guilty of a great many excesses, he admitted, "and can only be excused upon the ground that they had themselves been made to suffer terribly by those rebels." Patterson then assured the committee that there was no reason to fear Rebel votes or influence in the section. "I doubt very much," he averred, "whether there are more than three counties in East Tennessee where a rebel would present himself for any office or any character. . . ." Well into 1866, ex-Confederates would continue to find East Tennessee hostile territory. When Bradley Kimbrough, a Confederate veteran, inquired in May whether it was safe to return to his native McMinn County, a friend advised him to stay away. One former Confederate official had returned to Athens in the spring; and within days five men entered his home at night and wounded him so severely that his arm required amputation. In October of 1866, Adeline Deaderick, writing from Bristol, reported that a Union League in Jonesboro, numbering five hundred men, had driven out nearly every family with Confederate sympathies in Washington County and that it was still risky to return there.[32]

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[31]Patterson was President Johnson's son-in-law.

[32]Joint Committee on Reconstruction Report, 34th Congress, 1st Session, 116; W. C. Vaughn to Bradley Kimbrough, May 12, 1866, Kimbrough MSS, TSLA; Adeline Deaderick to Eliza D. Anderson, October 25, 1866, in Moon, "Civil War Memoirs of Mrs. Adeline Deaderick," 69-70. See also James W. Deaderick to David T. Patterson, April 28, 1866, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection.

Over the next three years, however, the tensions and bitterness of the war years diminished enough so that East Tennessee was no longer forbidden territory for Rebels. As one Union veteran from Carter County recalled, Unionists and Rebels alike "had had enough of strife and bloodshed and those on both sides appeared willing to forgive and forget and 'let the dead past bury its dead.'" Several Rebels who had fled East Tennessee began to filter back into their native region. Captain Richard G. McCalla, for example, had moved his family to South Carolina during the war because of the harassment by Unionists; but in the summer of 1868, he and his family felt safe enough to return to their home in Morristown. Even arch-secessionist J. G. M. Ramsey, who in 1863 had been forced to flee East Tennessee as Federal troops moved in, had no problems when he resettled in Knoxville in 1871. Those who had worn the blue and the gray began to intermingle in social and religious relations. By the end of the decade, as ex-Confederates regained the right to vote, some even attained elected office in East Tennessee. In the 1869 election for delegates to a state constitutional convention, David Key, Confederate veteran from Chattanooga, was elected to represent Rhea, Bledsoe, Sequatchie, and Hamilton counties. And in 1870, under provisions of the new state constitution, James W. Deaderick, who had been driven out of Washington County by the Union League in 1866, was elected to the Tennessee Supreme Court by a large majority.[33]

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[33]Scott and Angel, Thirteenth Tennessee, 417; Robert Partin, "The Wartime Experience of Margaret McCalla: Confederate Refugee from East Tennessee," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, XXIV (1965), 41-42, 52; Eubanks, "J. G. M. Ramsey," 301; Hamer, Tennessee, II, 653; Moon, "Civil War Memoirs of Adeline Deaderick," 52.

Without question, it was not until the end of the decade of the 1860's that peace truly reigned over much of East Tennessee. For the situation in the region was, as one scholar has described it, one of neither war nor peace until around 1868. As long as a part of the population lived in constant dread of night riders, was forcefully driven from home, or brought into court for damage suits or on charges of treason, there could be no reconciling of the differences that had divided East Tennessee during the war. Although the other parts of Tennessee, and much of the South as a whole, witnessed a spate of violence in the post-war period, it was not the same as that in East Tennessee. For in each of those regions, although the Confederates were the losers, they were still in the majority. Organized night riders such as the Ku Klux Klan terrorized blacks and those who had been Union sympathizers and/or supported the Republican party. As will be discussed below, there was virtually no Klan activity in East Tennessee. On the contrary, the losers of the Civil War were in a minority in most of the eastern counties of Tennessee. Because the government they had supported during the war had tried, in the minds of Unionists, to subjugate and persecute the population, it was the fate of ex-Rebels to be punished for their "sin" of supporting the rebellion. As a result, bands of Union veterans waged a campaign of terror against Confederate sympathizers in much of East Tennessee, forcing large numbers of the latter to leave the region. With much of their hated foe removed, Unionists, through the operations of the Republican party, would reign preeminent in most of the region for years to come. In this way, much as it had before, East Tennessee would tread a different path from the rest of the state, and for that matter, the rest of the South.

CHAPTER VI

LOCAL GOVERNMENT GOES TO WAR

Just as the war touched the lives of the people of East Tennessee, it also affected the institutions that were threads in the fabric of their society. Because of the divisive nature of the conflict, all formal institutions--local government, schools, churches, and slavery--were severely strained during the decade of the 1860's. The impact of the war on the churches of East Tennessee would be felt even into the twentieth century; and although slavery was not as important an institution to East Tennessee as it was to other parts of the South, its demise nevertheless was of major consequence to the region. The demands of armed hostilities would saddle local government with responsibilities and functions never dreamed of in times of peace. And as East Tennessee began to suffer from the ravages of war, attempts at formal education would come to a near standstill. This and the next three chapters examine the war's imprint upon East Tennessee's institutions.

During the 1861-65 period, local government in East Tennessee functioned as never before. It took on added responsibilities, was used by national and state authorities to support the war effort, was at times disrupted, and in the end was used as a tool for seeking revenge on a defeated enemy. Once the Civil War in East Tennessee had ended, city and county government would gradually return to normal, never to experience the immediate pressures and strains of war again.[1]

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[1]For a discussion of the role and function of the various branches of local government in antebellum Tennessee, see Wooster, Politicians,

There was no consistent pattern of reaction to the outbreak of the Civil War by the various forms of local government. Quite often on days of county or circuit court meetings, when a large number of people gathered in town, local Union or secession leaders took advantage of the occasion to hold a rally. In May, 1861, secessionists in Polk County organized a "Southern rally" during a session of the circuit court in Benton. A crowd gathered to hear speakers plead for a vote of separation from the Union and for whole-hearted support of Governor Harris. And after the June 8 referendum on secession, a reporter for the Athens Post took advantage of the quarterly meeting of the Blount County Court to test public opinion in that county. Sometimes local government reacted in direct response to the national crisis. In late April, 1861, the Chattanooga mayor and board of aldermen increased the police force to guard against "dangerous persons"; and out of fear of a slave insurrection, the board sternly clamped down on the movement of slaves and free blacks in the city. Then as troops moved through the city on their way to Virginia, Chattanooga imposed strict regulations regarding the sale of liquor. In Knoxville, city government increased the police force by twenty members "for the present time and to continue to act as such police so long as it may be thought necessary," no doubt in response to the large number of troops either passing through or being stationed in the area.[2]

Planters and Plain Folk, 96-100. Throughout my study, the county records of Blount, Carter, Knox, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Rhea, Roane, and Washington counties were consulted.

[2]Athens Post, May 24, July 5, 1861; Minutes of the meetings of the Chattanooga Mayor and Board of Aldermen, Chattanooga-Hamilton County Library (hereinafter cited as Chattanooga City Records), April, 1861,

After the June referendum and Governor Harris' re-election in August, 1861, it became evident to many East Tennesseans, whether they liked it or not, that their state was now part of the Confederacy. For those participating in local government, new requirements and responsibilities increased as the war became more intense. In mid-August, Governor Harris "requested" each county court clerk in the state to issue orders to county constables for the collection of arms belonging to the state. Members of the militia had been allowed to retain their arms before the war and now the Governor was anxious to acquire as many weapons as possible for his Tennessee regiments. County court clerks were thus authorized to give a paltry reward of one dollar for each musket, bayonet, or rifle, and 50 cents for each sword or pistol to induce citizens to give up their arms. The clerks met with varying degrees of success in collecting weapons; some, particularly those with strong Union sympathies, may have been less than diligent in their duties. But in the spring of 1862 the Athens Post complained that the campaign to recover militia weapons had been so successful in lower East Tennessee that the pro-Southern population was at the virtual mercy of Union guerrillas.[3]

As Confederate control of East Tennessee tightened in the fall of 1861, Rebel authorities became increasingly concerned over the loyalty of local government officials. It was feared that as long as men who possessed political power in the community were still loyal to the Union,

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pp. 100-01; Minutes of the meetings of the Knoxville Mayor and Board of Aldermen, Knoxville City Hall (hereinafter cited as Knoxville City Records), Book D, 149-50; Knox County Court Minutes, Book 22, June, 1861, Lawson McGhee Library.

[3]Athens Post, August 16, 1861, March 14, 1862.

the task of affirming Confederate control would be much more difficult. It was well known that there were several county and city officials still in office in East Tennessee who had been Unionists during the secession crisis. Justices of the peace from Blount, Campbell, Carter, Greene, Knox, and Roane counties and sheriffs William H. Swan and James G. Reeves of Knox and Greene counties, respectively, had been delegates to the East Tennessee Convention. Mayor James C. Luttrell of Knoxville had attended the Knoxville Convention in May. In June, the Knox County Court seemed less than enthusiastic about the Southern cause when it unanimously voted against organizing a "home guard" as authorized by the General Assembly in May. All officials who had been elected in the biennial March county elections had taken oaths to uphold the laws of the state and the United States Constitution. As late as July 1, three weeks after Tennessee had officially voted to join the Confederacy, three county constables elected in a special election in Roane County affirmed their loyalty to the Federal government.[4]

Rebel authorities began to worry more than ever about the sympathies of local government officials when county officials in upper East Tennessee did not even bother to open the polls for the Confederate Congressional election in November, 1861, and when the famous bridge burnings occurred a few days later. The state legislature had made no move to prescribe Confederate test oaths for state, county, or municipal officers; but in light of recent events, Rebel authorities urged local

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[4]Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 347-54; Roane County Court Minutes, July, 1861 (microfilm), TSLA.

officials to swear loyalty to the Confederacy. East Tennessee county records indicate that beginning in November, 1861, officials elected in special and regular elections pledged themselves to uphold the laws of the Confederate States of America.

By early 1862, the Confederates began to insure the loyalty of local officials already in office. At the January session of the Knox County Court, an army officer administered the Confederate oath to chairman Columbus W. Jones, court clerk William Craig, and thirty-two justices of the peace. Thomas Rodgers, an active Unionist the year before, refused to take the oath, however, and resigned his seat. A few days later, three officers from the army garrison in Knoxville traveled to Dandridge for the meeting of the Jefferson County Court. As the court convened, Lieutenant Charles Freeman addressed a large crowd urging all county officials and citizens voluntarily to take the Confederate oath. If they did so, he asserted, it would do much to dissuade the "unfavorable opinion" concerning the loyalty of Jefferson Countians. Whether influenced by the officer's plea or simply out of fear, the sheriff, deputy sheriff, tax collector, deputy clerk, clerk and master, circuit court clerk, county court clerk, trustee, coroner, a constable, and twenty-eight justices of the peace signed the oath. But four justices of the peace, one of whom was in prison in Tuscaloosa because of a conviction for disloyalty, did not show up for the meeting. The Knoxville Register reported that on the same day, all county officials in Sullivan County took the oath; it commended Sullivan for being one of the most united counties "in opposition to the invasion of the South. . . ." The editors applauded the actions of the various county officials and

emphasized that contrary to Yankee propaganda, these men had acted on their own volition. The paper construed the event in an optimistic light. "Where our county officers, therefore, have thus voluntarily acted," it stated, "it must be regarded as the best evidence of the cheerful acquiescence of the civil authorities in the new government, and the genuineness of their loyalty."[5]

Such optimism, however, was ill-founded, because the question of the faithfulness of local officials would plague the Confederates as long as they occupied East Tennessee. Actually the program of voluntary loyalty oaths was never entirely successful, despite pressure from the army. And in the biennial county elections in March, 1862, men with Union sympathies displayed surprising strength. One man, writing from Maryville, reported that in the county elections, the newly-elected sheriff, county court clerk, and all but two constables were Union men. In upper East Tennessee, Judge David T. Patterson, won re-election to his second district circuit seat. In response to such results, General Edmund Kirby Smith, commander of the Department of East Tennessee, ordered in April that all county officers elected in the March election should swear an oath to the Confederacy. If anyone refused, he was to be arrested and sent to prison in Knoxville.[6] Despite the general's stern pronouncement, the problem remained. For example, two months after

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[5]Knox County Court Minutes, Book 22, January, 1862; Knoxville Register, January 10, 14, 1862.

[6]A. C. Montgomery to Mr. Rutledge, March 12, 1862, Rutledge MSS, Whitehead Collection; Official Records, Series 1, X, pt. 2, pp. 385-86; ibid., XXXIX, pt. 2, pp. 133-34; William S. Speer, Sketches of Prominent Tennesseans (Nashville, 1888), 531.

Kirby Smith's order, the deputy provost marshal in Greeneville was forced to warn all local officials who had not taken the oath to do so immediately or their "acts" would be considered "null and void until they comply." James L. Churchman, a justice of the peace in Grainger County, avoided taking the Confederate oath as long as possible, in hopes that a Federal army would rescue the area before he had to affirm his loyalty. But when threatened with arrest and possible conscription into the Rebel army, Churchman apparently relented and took the required oath.[7]

And in the various elections held in East Tennessee after Kirby Smith's decree, Unionists continued to be successful at the ballot box, as in the May 22, 1862, judicial elections. In the contest for supreme court judge for the Eastern District, Robert J. McKinney sought re-election. McKinney had been a Whig before the war and a Unionist early in the secession crisis; but despite Tennessee's departure from the Union, he stayed in East Tennessee and continued his judicial duties. In early May, 1862, he belatedly took the Confederate oath of allegiance "at the suggestion of the military authorities," according to the Knoxville Register. The newspaper asserted that this "was better late than never"; yet in the upcoming judicial election, it strongly backed Joseph B. Heiskell, also a former Whig but an ardent secessionist. Giving a hint that Unionists still had some political clout, the Register called for all "Southern men" to show their full strength at the polls. Despite the Register's endorsement of Heiskell, McKinney gained re-election, winning his native Greene County (1,098 votes to Heiskell's 320) and

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[7]Greeneville Tri-Weekly Banner, June 4, 1862, UT Special Collections; James L. Churchman to Andrew Johnson, October 4, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC.

even carrying McMinn County, which had voted for secession the year before. The Athens Post suggested that McKinney did so well because a large percentage of the voting population was in the Confederate army; but it also admitted that "the Union men generally voted for Judge McKinney." Albert G. Welcker and John C. Gaut, both identified as Union men in 1861, handily won re-election as circuit court judges despite the Register's editorial endorsement of opposition candidates.[8]

The political strength of Unionists was evident in another way in the fall of 1862. The Knoxville Register complained that East Tennessee Unionists were using political proscription in the judicial branch to strengthen their political base. For example, when a Mr. Folsom's term as clerk and master of the judicial district at Elizabethton expired, Chancellor Seth J. Lucky refused to renew his appointment and gave the position to Ham C. Smith instead. Although Smith would have to take the Confederate oath, the Register asserted that he would still be a disloyal person. Folsom appealed to Lucky; but the judge refused to hear him, stating that since Folsom was "an early and ardent Southern man," public opinion in pro-Union Carter County forced Lucky to appoint Smith. The Register went on to report that the clerk and master in Claiborne County, a Mr. Blackburn, was a man of "Southern principles," and that the local population was clamoring for his removal so that he could be replaced by J. J. Bunch, "a noted Unionist." The paper expressed relief that Lucky was powerless to remove Blackburn merely for

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[8]Knoxville Register, May 3, 22, 1862; Athens Post, May 30, June 13, 1862. No other results for these elections have been found.

"political considerations," but was concerned that the judge would be willing to appoint a "Union applicant" if "the resignation of the Southern incumbent can be brought about."[9]

The term "Unionist" in relation to local officials was used loosely in East Tennessee, because by mid-1862 all local civil officers still in office had sworn loyalty to the Confederacy. But it was evident that although these men had taken the Confederate oath, the hearts of many were still loyal to the Union. In 1864, Union General Samuel P. Carter wrote that in East Tennessee "quite a large number of the county offices were [sic] filled by loyal men, who were elected by the Union voters in order to keep them from falling into the hands of rebel sympathizers, and with the desire of continuing the reins of government in the hands of true men." Then using Judges Seth Lucky and David Patterson as examples, Carter maintained that even though these men had taken the Confederate oath, they were in reality the "warmest and truest men of the [Federal] Government in East Tennessee."[10]

Quite often the response of these "galvanized" Unionists to events of the war was noncommittal; they would neither express opinion nor take actions which would identify them as being either pro-Southern or pro-Union. To some Confederates such a stance was just as bad as being an all-out Unionist. In the January, 1863, Knoxville municipal election, J. Austin Sperry, editor of the Register, attempted to make this problem a major issue. He urged all "true Southern men" to throw out the

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[9]Knoxville Register, October 14, 1862.

[10]Official Records, Series 1, XXIX, pt. 2, pp. 133-34.

administration of Mayor James C. Luttrell in order that "a new era will dawn upon Knoxville." The editor made vague accusations that the Luttrell administration had performed poorly; but more important was the question of its loyalty. Knoxville had been cursed by Unionism, said the Register, but that had "played out." Agreed, there was no Unionism left in the city, "but its bastard and most malignant offspring 'NEUTRALITY,' has succeeded it." Sperry then urged all citizens to show that they "consider the offspring more odious than honest enmity" by voting for Charles M. McGhee, a "staunch and unequivocal Southern man," for mayor and ten non-incumbent candidates for aldermen. But the entreaties of the editor were ignored, as Luttrell crushed McGhee with a 71 percent margin. In addition, not one of the alderman candidates endorsed by the Register was elected.[11]

While editorial endorsements seemed of little value, the Confederates at times used intimidation to strengthen their political base. In some cases civil officials used the army to influence elections. In Bradley County, for example, the sheriff and an election commissioner schemed to weaken the voting strength of a particularly strong Unionist civil district in the March, 1863, county elections. A day before the election, the commissioner, a Mr. Donahoo, made arrangements with the local provost marshal to issue a voting permit to all men under the age of forty-five; without it, one could not vote. Donahoo informed every pro-Southern man in the district of the required permit but kept the

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[11]Knoxville Register, January 3, 1863; William J. MacArthur, "Charles McClung McGhee, Southern Financier" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Tennessee, 1975), 15; Knoxville City Records, Book D, 217-18.

information secret from known Unionists. On election day, with Confederate troops backing him up, Donahoo turned away all men without permits; as a result, pro-Southern candidates carried the civil district.[12] Prior to the 1863 Knox County judicial elections, James T. Shields informed John Crozier of the strategy to run Confederate officer John J. Jarnagan for attorney general. Although Jarnagan was popular and would probably do well, Shields felt certain that if two regiments of Confederate cavalry were in the district, "there would be no doubt about the result!" Despite such schemes, Unionists still retained enough political strength in the region to elect and re-elect several of their candidates.[13]

So it seems that the somewhat precarious Confederate military grip on East Tennessee from 1861 to 1863 was matched by tentative civil control of the region. Few restrictions were placed on suffrage;[14] and as a result, Unionists or so-called Neutralists were free to retain or vote for men who reflected their own sentiments. There were East Tennessee officials, however, who were very pro-Southern; for instance, Judge George Brown of the second circuit court district in central East

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[12]Hurlburt, Bradley County, 86-88.

[13]This letter, Shields to Crozier, March 23, 1863, was found and brought to William G. Brownlow, who published it verbatim--so he claimed. Knoxville Whig, January 16, 1864. It is not known whether Jarnagan won the election.

[14]In an article entitled "Who May Vote?," the Knoxville Register quoted section 833 of the Confederate Code: "Every free white man of the age of twenty-one years, being a citizen of the Confederate States and a citizen of the county where he may offer his vote six months preceding the election, shall be entitled to vote for members of the General Assembly and other civil officers in the county or district in which he resides." Knoxville Register, March 3, 1863.

Tennessee and Chancellor T. Nixon Van Dyke in lower East were professed Confederates. But at the same time more officials were unenthusiastic about the Southern cause. Such men as Mayor Luttrell, Judges Lucky, McKinney, Patterson, Gaut, and Welcker remained in office throughout the period of Confederate occupation; and many would retain their posts after the Federals moved in. But occasionally a local officer overstepped the bounds of loyalty and suffered as a consequence. Judges Patterson and Lucky were threatened with arrest; and a justice of the peace, a former delegate to the East Tennessee Convention from Blount County, was arrested and imprisoned for "treasonable activities" against the Confederate government in March of 1863. Such instances, however, seem to have been exceptional. Many local officials did not resist Confederate control, but only cooperated to the extent necessary to assure their own security.[15]

Local government in East Tennessee from 1862 to 1863 operated almost totally independent of state government. With the surrender of Nashville to the Federals in February of 1862, Governor Harris and the state legislature fled to Memphis; and within a few weeks they were again forced to flee and disband as Federal troops drew near. Consequently, the executive and legislative functions of the state came to a halt. Harris issued requests and executive orders <u>in absentia</u> to county and state officials in East Tennessee, such as calling for state judicial elections; but he exerted no influence on local government in the region.

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[15]Speer, <u>Prominent Tennesseans</u>, 531; <u>Official Records</u>, Series 1, XXIX, pt. 2, pp. 133-34; Blount County Circuit Court Minutes, March, 1863 (microfilm), TSLA.

In the meantime, Andrew Johnson had assumed the military governorship and prepared to reconstruct his state. But because East Tennessee was still under Confederate control, Johnson's policies were inoperative there. Thus county, circuit court, and chancery court officials were in effect independent of any superior authority except the military commanders in East Tennessee. These men were beholden only to the constituents they served, which makes the actions of Judge Seth Lucky in refusing to reappoint a pro-Southern clerk and master all the most understandable. Because they had no effective state authorities to help them and because they were beset by a multitude of army problems of their own, military officials could do little to secure stricter control over the local civil officers.

Ironically the question of the loyalty of local officials became as great a concern to Federal authorities as it had been for the Confederates, as the former attempted to reconstruct local governments to assure support of the Union. Plans for the reconstruction of state government began soon after East Tennessee seemed secure for the Union, following Burnside's occupation of Knoxville. On September 11, 1863, President Lincoln wrote Governor Johnson that "it is the nick of time for reinaugurating a loyal State government." He went on to advise that no one should be permitted to participate in the work of reconstruction whose loyalty could not be trusted. Then on December 8, Lincoln gave further impetus to reconstruction with a proclamation of amnesty and reconstruction. Whenever one-tenth of the qualified voters in the 1860 presidential election should take a loyalty oath and reorganize their state government on the basis of the provisions of the oath, he would

recognize that government as the true government of the state.[16]

In response, Federal authorities in Tennessee felt that reconstruction must begin on the local level. On the same day that the President issued his proclamation, Horace Maynard, Johnson's attorney general, wrote a public letter which appeared in the Tennessee press concerning the reconstruction of county governments. Because many of the county offices were vacant and because their functions were at a standstill, Maynard urged that in the upcoming March, 1864, elections loyal citizens must select proper men to restore local civil government. Voters would have to take an oath of allegiance to the Union to prove their loyalty. The people elected would be required to swear loyalty to the United States and, once in office, to make certain that all previous legislation passed by "men who repudiated the national government" would be declared null and void.[17] On January 5, 1864, General Samuel P. Carter, Provost Marshal for East Tennessee, issued "Circular no. 16," which proposed the reorganization of county government in East Tennessee <u>before</u> the March elections. After commending the people of the region for their loyalty, the general urged all loyal men in each county to meet and prepare to reorganize their state government according to the provisions of President Lincoln's proclamation. Their first task was to choose "worthy and loyal" county officers. "Let the day of the meeting be as early as possible," he concluded. One county court, Roane, is

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[16] Abraham Lincoln to Andrew Johnson, September 11, 1863, in Roy P. Basler (ed.), <u>The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln</u> (8 vols.; New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1953), VI, 440-41.

[17] Knoxville <u>Whig</u>, January 16, 1864.

known to have carried out Carter's reorganization plan when it met on February 1, at Harriman. According to the county records, Chairman Isaac A. Clark and several justices of the peace "who are disloyal & having acted with the Rebels, but who have subscribed & taken the [amnesty] oath are permitted to take their seats." County Court Clerk Austin Greene, however, refused to take the oath and was therefore dismissed. The court then appointed a "loyal man" in his place.[18]

In the meantime, Governor Johnson came up with his own idea of reconstruction. To him the terms of President Lincoln's plan (as well as General Carter's) were too lenient. He felt that simply taking an amnesty oath might allow Confederates to secure pardons and thus absolve themselves from punishment for treason. It would therefore not be long before ex-Rebels could regain considerable political power in the state. To Johnson, a more stringent oath was necessary for franchise rights. When on January 26, 1864, Johnson ordered that an election of county officers be held throughout the state on the first Saturday in March, he insisted that "a hard oath, a tight oath," must be used for those who wished to vote. Prospective voters, Confederate sympathizers and Unionists alike, would be required to support the United States Constitution and the government and to agree ardently to "desire the suppression of the present insurrection" and to the extension of the provisions of the Emancipation Proclamation to Tennessee. In early February, Attorney General Maynard ruled that former supporters of the Confederacy could not vote until six months after taking the amnesty oath. A man

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[18] Ibid.; Roane County Court Minutes, February, 1864 (microfilm), TSLA.

who had subscribed to rebellion, he argued, had lost his citizenship; and although he regained it by taking the oath, the state constitution required that a voter must have been a United States citizen for six months preceding an election.[19]

Although Johnson hoped that the March election would be an important step in reconstructing the state, he was to be disappointed. In East Tennessee, the canvass seems to have been of little significance. Those counties in upper East Tennessee under Confederate control were not able to hold elections; and in Federal-occupied counties, the voter turnout was light. Although exact results cannot be found, Brownlow reported that the vote in Knox County was less than half that of normal elections. He observed that there were two reasons for this: ex-Rebels stayed away from the polls; moreover several "unfaltering Union men" did not vote because they were humiliated at having to take an oath to prove their loyalty. Because there were no county officials to supervise the polls, elections were not even held in Marion, Meigs, McMinn, Roane, and Sevier. Nevertheless, officials were elected or re-elected in several East Tennessee counties; and for those counties that held no elections, reorganization of government would come later.[20]

Johnson's proclamation had stated that any loyal county officer could proceed to reorganize the county government if most of the local officials had deserted their posts. Acting under this provision, certain

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[19]Hall, Military Governor, 118-20; copy of January 26, 1864, proclamation in Johnson MSS, LC; Moore, Rebellion Record, VIII, 841-42; Knoxville Whig, February 6, 1864.

[20]Knoxville Whig, March 12, 1864.

men could possess considerable political power on the local level. Justice of the Peace Owen Solomon, for example, organized a new Meigs County Court on June 6, 1864, by appointing a loyal clerk and sheriff; in July, he named James T. Griffith as county chairman. The business of county government could now proceed, although on a limited basis.[21]

Other counties which failed to elect officials in March, either out of simple failure to open their polls or because they were behind Confederate lines, were authorized by the governor to hold county elections as soon as possible. Roane County, for example, elected its county chairman and justices of the peace in May, 1864. Citizens of Marion County elected county court officials in early July. At the same time Horace Maynard informed the governor that Grainger and Sevier were not ready to reorganize their county governments, even though many people were willing to have an election. For these and other counties, reorganization would not come until later in the year or near the end of the war.[22]

The results of these various elections were by no means revolutionary. A look at the records of Blount, Knox, and Roane counties reveals that the county court chairmen and most of the justices of the peace were re-elected to office. Chairmen Columbus Jones and Isaac Clark of Knox and Roane counties, respectively, had both been in office

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[21]Meigs County Court Minutes, June, 1864 (microfilm), TSLA. The following year Solomon would lead an unsuccessful campaign to select a new county seat, since Decatur had been a center of Confederate sympathy. Lillard, Meigs County, 113.

[22]Roane County Court Minutes, May, 1864, TSLA; Horace Maynard to Andrew Johnson, July 1, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC.

throughout the period of Confederate occupation.[23] One man even warned Governor Johnson that the newly elected county court chairman and one other official in Marion County were Rebel sympathizers. Apparently they had been elected by "Rebels" who had taken the amnesty oath and expected favors in return. Obviously restrictions against the supporters of the Confederacy outlined by Horace Maynard were not applied in East Tennessee, nor was Johnson's "damnesty oath" required for voting. As Brownlow put it, "Our East Tennessee people have a way of their own in many ways." He reported that on election day in several counties even where Union sentiment was overwhelming, "the judges and people required and took no oath but that prescribed by the old Code of Tennessee."[24] Thus as county courts were reorganized, many of the officials who were elected or re-elected had served in the same capacity during Confederate occupation. They continued their duties except under a different oath. But as General Carter observed, pro-Union county officials had been kept in office by the voters of East Tennessee during Confederate occupation to prevent the positions from being taken over by secessionists. Because these officials had been less than supportive of the Confederacy and showed no reluctance in reembracing Federal authority, many of them were retained in office in the 1864 county elections.

While county courts were undergoing reorganizations, a concurrent movement to reestablish circuit and chancery courts in the region was

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[23]Blount County Court Minutes, April, 1864 (microfilm), TSLA; Knox County Court Minutes, April, 1864, Book 22; Roane County Court Minutes, May, 1864, TSLA.

[24]P. A. Wilkinson to Andrew Johnson, July 24, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC; Knoxville Whig, March 12, 1864.

underway. These courts did not meet from the occupation by Federal forces until October, 1864, and not until 1865 in some counties. The state courts were not declared suspended by Federal authorities; but the inability or lack of desire of judges to attend regular court session led to a nearly complete paralysis of the judicial system. Occasionally the military situation interfered with the workings of the court. In October, 1863, Clerk and Master David Deaderick had to cancel the regular session of the Knox County Chancery Court because of the absence of Judge Seth Lucky. According to the court records, Lucky was "detained, as is presumed, on account of the occupancy of the Country between Knoxville & Jonesboro by the troops of the Federal and Confederate armies. . . ." Chancery court had to be cancelled in April, 1864, when Lucky again did not appear. Some justices failed to meet their obligations out of fear of reprisals by Federal authorities. Unlike county court officers who had only indirect ties to state government, justices of the circuit and chancery courts were considered officers of the state. As such, once East Tennessee came under Union control, they were placed under the authority of Governor Johnson. Thus the military governor could take a direct hand in determining the qualifications and loyalty of his circuit and chancery judges. Apparently George Brown, circuit judge for the second district and a known Confederate sympathizer, did not linger in East Tennessee to see what his fate would be. When the Knox County circuit court opened on October 26, 1863, Brown was not to be found. As a result, court was dismissed; and since no replacement for him was made by April, 1864, court was again cancelled. Judge T. Nixon Van Dyke, chancellor of the second judicial district, did not leave the region and

suffered for his decision to stay. In January, 1864, he was arrested at his home in Athens and sent to prison at Camp Chase, Ohio, where he remained until March, 1865.[25]

With the breakdown of the state courts and a suspension of Federal courts, many East Tennesseans complained to Governor Johnson. "We have not a Single Court or other civil remedy to meet the contempt which is being Shown for law and order!," protested a group of Knoxvillians in January, 1864. Any legal problems had to be settled by the military, which the citizens maintained "can never meet the ends of Justice in our Community." They then begged Johnson for the reestablishment of a circuit court in the district. John C. Gaut, who had been circuit judge of the fourth district, wrote the Governor that "our people have been exceedingly anxious to see the circuit & chancery courts established and the laws executed upon the thieves, robers [sic] & murderers." But he warned that East Tennessee would have to be more secure militarily or else the courts, once established, would be unable to operate. Samuel Childress of Kingston informed Johnson that the citizens of Roane County were anxious for the reestablishment of civil courts; but a rumor had apparently been circulated that George Brown would be reappointed as circuit judge to the district. The people, however, would not allow this "traytor" to hold another court in Kingston, said Childress. Someone loyal needed to be appointed along with a vigorous prosecuting attorney

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[25]Knox County Chancery Court Minutes, Vol. E, 603, Knox County Courthouse; Knox County Circuit Court Minutes, Book 14, pp. 560-62; Speer, Prominent Tennesseans, 560.

"to go to work & clean out the Rebel Horse thieves."[26]

Whether influenced by these pleas or not, Andrew Johnson took steps to reestablish state courts in East Tennessee in late June of 1864. He appointed a chancellor, circuit judge, and attorney general for central East Tennessee in late June and the same for lower East Tennessee in July. Because the upper counties of the region were still torn by constant fighting, judicial appointments for them could not be made until the spring of 1865. Ironically, two of Johnson's appointees were men who had served under Confederate oath. After obtaining special pardons from President Lincoln with Johnson's recommendation, John C. Gaut was appointed to his old seat as judge of the fourth circuit in lower East Tennessee and Seth Lucky was reappointed chancellor for the Eastern District.[27] Then while some of these judges removed court clerks who had served under Confederate oath, others kept the incumbent clerks. William S. Patton of Roane County and William A. Walker of Blount County were retained as circuit court clerks; and David A. Deaderick stayed on as clerk and master of the Knox County Chancery Court.[28] With the state judicial

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[26]Citizens of Third Judicial District to Andrew Johnson, January 11, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC; John C. Gaut to Andrew Johnson, June 11, 1864, ibid.; Samuel L. Childress to Andrew Johnson, July 2, 1864, ibid.

[27]Hall, Military Governor, 131; Miller, Official and Political Manual of Tennessee, 182, 185. Albert G. Welcker, who had also been circuit judge of the second district under Confederate occupation, complained to Oliver P. Temple that Governor Johnson had worked to obtain special pardons for Gaut and Lucky, but had done nothing to help him. He then asked Temple to use what influence he could to "turn the scales in my favor." It is not known whether or not Temple attempted to help Welcker; but regardless, the judge never received another appointment. Albert G. Welcker to O. P. Temple, June 17, 1864, Temple MSS, UT Special Collections.

[28]Blount County Chancery Court Minutes, August 16, 1864, TSLA; Blount County Circuit Minutes, September, 1864 (microfilm), TSLA; Roane County Circuit Court Minutes, 190-91 (microfilm), TSLA; Knox County Circuit Court Minutes, Book 15a, p. 37; Knox County Chancery Court Minutes, Vol. E, 603.

system reestablished, the courts, regardless of the previous loyalty of their judges, began a vigorous prosecution of Rebels, as discussed earlier. From the fall of 1864 until mid-1866, the dockets of circuit courts would be filled with treason cases, while chancery courts issued large numbers of attachments on the property of former Rebels. In this respect, the state courts were used as yet another instrument for Unionists to seek revenge on their former enemies.

While the national loyalty of local officials troubled Confederate and Federal authorities alike, the fact remains that local government carried out its various responsibilities during much of the war regardless of the national sentiments of its officials. And throughout the period of Confederate occupation, it functioned in most counties with a remarkable lack of interruption. It was not until Federal control was reasserted and East Tennessee was torn by almost constant fighting in 1864, that any disruptions in local government on a broad scale occurred. There were exceptions of course. Judge Lucky was forced to call off chancery court in Newport in March of 1862 because of wild rumors that Federal troops were approaching. And counties in upper East Tennessee on the Cumberland Plateau maintained only a semblance of civil government after 1861, because of the continuous fighting in the area throughout the war. A Unionist from Huntsville informed Governor Johnson in the summer of 1862 that local government in Scott County had come to a complete halt--there were no judges or clerks; and because there had been no local elections since the spring of 1861, the terms of office for the sheriff and justices of the peace had expired.[29]

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[29]S. J. Lucky to O. P. Temple, March 3, 1862, Temple MSS, UT Special Collections; George L. Ridenour, The Land of the Lake: A History of Campbell County, Tennessee (LaFollette, 1941), 57; S. H. Creekmore to Andrew Johnson, July 1, 1862, Johnson MSS, LC.

When President Jefferson Davis declared martial law in April, 1862, a great deal of confusion ensued as to whether all functions of local civil government would come to a halt. The original proclamation implied that the only civil functions to be allowed would be the probating of wills, registering of deeds, levying of taxes, etc., and that no criminal procedures would be carried out by local government. But Confederate officials soon made it clear that any criminal offenses would still be dealt with by the various civil tribunals. Martial law would be imposed locally only at the order of the local commander. A survey of local government records in East Tennessee reveals that Davis' proclamation had no impact on the workings of municipal, county, or chancery courts. These records make no mention of the decree and working procedures of local government continued on a regular basis.[30]

The functions of the circuit courts, however, diminished somewhat in 1862. The Athens Post reported that "Circuit Courts are getting to be rather diminutive institutions"; and circuit court records from Blount and Knox counties reflect this. There is no clear explanation for the reduced activities of these courts, although in some areas, the army may have suspended their operation as provided by the martial law declaration. Even so, circuit courts continued to operate, although on a reduced scale; and they sometimes attracted considerable attention as they had in pre-war days. The meeting of the Polk County Circuit Court in September, 1862, for example, created great interest. The Athens Post reported the case of a preacher who was charged with "yielding to

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[30]Knoxville Register, April 17, 1862; J. G. Wallace to O. P. Temple, April 2, 1862, Temple MSS., UT Special Collections.

the promptings of the world, the flesh and the devil, and meddling more with things below than things above." The Post stated that a "large crowd" was present; and two months later it reported a sizeable turnout for the circuit court meeting in Athens.[31]

It was not until late 1863 that major disruptions of local government in East Tennessee occurred. When the region became a battleground for armies and guerrillas in that year, local government in many areas was unable to operate. McMinn County records are blank from August, 1863, until after the war. Most county officials in pro-Confederate Meigs County fled to Georgia in the wake of the Federal armies in the fall of 1863. As a result, the county was virtually without local government for nearly a year. As long as upper East Tennessee was still under Confederate domination, Hawkins County held county court until October of 1863. But when Federals moved into the area in November, many of the county officials who had been pro-Southern fled, fearing reprisals. Only three justices of the peace and the county court clerk took the Federal oath, and the county court operated on a very limited basis until the end of the war. Then with Confederate guerrillas virtually controlling upper East Tennessee until March of 1865, county officials who had sworn loyalty to the Union maintained very low profiles and kept their official duties to a minimum. Between October, 1863, and June, 1865, only eight deeds were registered in Hawkins County. Government in Sullivan had a severe setback in the autumn of 1863, when the county seat was largely destroyed by the contending armies. Confederate soldier

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[31]Athens Post, April 18, September 19, November 7, 1862.

Robert Rutledge reported, "Blountville is burned almost entirely up, from Ct House to lower end of town all destroyed Ct House & all papers burned up."[32] And circuit courts disbanded completely in East Tennessee until reestablished by Governor Johnson in mid-1864.[33] As rival armies struggled for control of Chattanooga in the fall of 1863, civil government in the city was disbanded by Federal military authorities and would remain so for two years.[34]

Not all local governments suffered as a result of the fighting or the establishment of Federal control. The Blount County Court, for example, met in November of 1863; several officers took a Federal loyalty oath; they elected a new chairman in February, 1864. Thereafter the court convened regularly without interruption.[35] The Knox County Court met in regular session on September 7, 1863, just a few days after Burnside had occupied Knoxville. In October, the court reassembled, whereupon chairman Columbus Jones, Clerk William Craig, Sheriff William H. Swan, the county trustee, county tax collector and twenty-eight justices of the peace took the "oath to support the Constitution of the United States of

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[32]Lillard, Meigs County, 113; "Confederate History of Hawkins County," 6-7; Robert Rutledge to "Mother and Wife," October 19, 1863, Rutledge MSS, Whitehead Collection.

[33]Some counties held no circuit court until 1865. Rhea County Circuit Court records are blank from August, 1863, until February, 1865; and McMinn County Circuit Court records are blank from August, 1863, until July, 1865.

[34]Govan and Livingood, Chattanooga Country, 234. Chattanooga city records are blank from May 1, 1863, until October, 1865.

[35]Blount County Court Minutes, November, 1863, February, 1864, 1864-65 passim.

America in open court," according to the county records.[36] Like Blount County, the Knox County Court would meet regularly for the remainder of the war. The Knoxville city government likewise continued on a regularly scheduled basis. The mayor and board of aldermen conferred with General Burnside on September 4, 1863, to offer their cooperation. And when Mayor Luttrell was re-elected to office in January, 1864, he and his aldermen swore loyalty to uphold the laws of the United States. Knoxville government then conducted regular business, although the mayor and board of aldermen failed to meet in July and August of 1864.[37]

Although local government in East Tennessee operated sporadically at times during the war, many of its functions continued despite the circumstances. Regularly scheduled elections were held at many places. In Knoxville, for example, the mayoral and aldermanic elections were held every January without interruption. And in March, 1862 and 1864, East Tennessee county officers were voted into office in the biennial elections, although some counties failed to open their polls in 1864. Despite the regularity of elections, voter turnout was adversely affected. In the 1862 elections for chancellor and circuit judge, the Athens Post reported that "less than half" of the normal vote was cast in McMinn County. In Polk County there was a "very small voter turnout"; whereas well over a thousand votes were normally cast, only 320 men went to the polls this time. The Post was certain that the light turnout was caused by so many

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[36]Knox County Court Minutes, Book 22, September, October, 1863. Three-fourths of those justices of the peace who had taken the Confederate oath in January, took the Federal oath in October.

[37]Knoxville City Records, Book D, 243, 251, 262-63.

men being in the army "fighting for the institutions and independence of the South." And in the March, 1864, Knox County elections, the Whig reported that the votes cast "amounted to about thirteen hundred against about thirty-three hundred in time of peace."[38] The Knoxville city records show a steady attrition of votes in the January municipal elections.

TABLE 1

Voter Turnout, Knoxville Mayoral Races

Year	Votes Cast
1861	342
1862	267
1863	252
1864	71
1865	111

Source: Knoxville City Records, Book D, 171-73, 217-18, 248-49, 269-70.

As in times of peace, men announced their candidacy for a certain office in the local newspaper and then solicited votes. During both periods of occupation, men in the army often sought office. In March, 1862, a candidate for circuit judge in the fourth judicial district promised to leave the Confederate army if elected. In 1864, Will H. Roberts, in announcing for Knox County Court Clerk, vowed that if elected, he would resign his commission in the Union army "to serve the people."

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[38] Athens Post, May 30, 1862; Knoxville Whig, March 12, 1864.

Such promises were noble, but many soldiers no doubt ran for office in hopes that their military careers would be ended, since election to state office meant exemption from military service.[39] In March of 1864, John Chapman was tempted to enter his son's name for office in the Campbell County election so that he could come home from the Union army if elected. "thare is a great menny men trying to get in ofice to get shet of the ware," stated Chapman.[40]

The systematic holding of elections was but one example of the continued functioning of local government during the war. County courts continued to assign orphans, register deeds, probate wills, and appropriate increasingly limited funds for road and bridge repairs and the upkeep of poor people. Knoxville and Chattanooga officials still concerned themselves with street repair, sanitation, the maintenance of gas lights, and fire protection. Furthermore, the scope and functions of local government broadened significantly in response to the war. Cities and counties alike took on unprecedented responsibilities, such as expanded relief efforts, disease control, local defense, and cooperation with the military authorities.

Both state and Confederate authorities attempted to use the various agencies of local government in their effort to win the war. As previously mentioned, in August, 1861, Governor Harris charged county court clerks with the responsibility of recovering weapons from militiamen.

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[39] Athens Post, March 21, 1862; Knoxville Whig, February 20, 1864. For a court case involving this question, see "McMillan vs. Capt. Beagles," in Athens Post, February 6, 1863.

[40] John Chapman to William H. Chapman, March 13, 1864, Chapman MSS, TSLA. The election might have saved young Chapman's life had he run and been elected; he died of chronic dysentery in camp near Nashville in the summer of 1864. See notice of the death of William Chapman in Chapman MSS, ibid.

In March of 1862, the General Assembly ordered all judges and chairmen of county courts to appoint enrolling officers in each civil district to make certain that every able-bodied man not already in the army was enrolled in the state militia. If an official failed in this duty, he was subject to punishment for a "high misdemeanor." The following month, General Kirby Smith saddled county chairmen with another responsibility--the appointment of enrolling officers to help enforce the recently legislated Confederate conscription act. The enrolling officers chosen in most cases were the justices of the peace of the county; and as evidence of the ways in which Unionists or "neutralists" could exert influence, quite often these officers shirked their duties. In November of 1862, the Athens Post complained that local enrolling officers had been completely remiss in their job, for conscripts were not being enrolled as they should have been. It was the editor's understanding that two or three other counties had the same problem.[41]

When Braxton Bragg retreated into East Tennessee after his unsuccessful Kentucky campaign in the fall of 1862, desertion ran high in the undernourished and exhausted army. As usual, the problem was rampant among East Tennesseans in the ranks. The army alone was unable to control the situation, so officials of local governments were again called upon to help out. Lieutenant Hannibal Paine of the 26th Tennessee reported that the army had ordered all county sheriffs in the region to round up deserters within their jurisdiction and bring them back to camp.

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[41]Athens Post, August 16, 1861, March 21, April 11, November 7, December 5, 1862; Reba Boyer (ed.), Monroe County Records, 1820-1870 (2 vols.; No place, 1970), II, 61.

There is no indication of how cooperative or successful the East Tennessee sheriffs were.[42]

Another means by which local government was called upon to aid in the Confederate war effort was to provide relief for the families of Southern volunteers. In May of 1861, even before the state was officially out of the Union, the city of Chattanooga passed an ordinance "to provide for the families of soldiers in the field." A committee was appointed to visit the respective families to determine their needs. Provisions were then to be distributed as required and paid for "out of any money subject to the control of the city authorities not otherwise appropriated." The mayor and aldermen later allocated a not so munificent sum of $500 for purposes of relief; but as city funds grew smaller, the ordinance was rescinded in February of 1862.[43]

The actions of Chattanooga were purely voluntary, but early in 1862 the General Assembly passed legislation stipulating mandatory relief efforts by county government. On February 11, the legislature passed a bill entitled "An Act for the Relief of Indigent Soldiers." Under its provisions, the chairman of a county court and the circuit court clerk were to constitute an ex officio agency designated as the "Board of Relief." It in turn would appoint up to three commissioners in every civil district and city ward whose duty it was to determine which families were needy and then to draw the required appropriations from

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[42]Connelly, Autumn of Glory, 17-18; Hannibal Paine to O. J. Paine, November 9, 1863, Paine MSS, TSLA. The Official Records and available county records give no indication of this incident of the army's attempt to use local government for military purposes.

[43]Chattanooga City Records, May, 1861, February, 1862, pp. 102-03, 123.

the Board of Relief. A month later, the Assembly, convening in Memphis after the fall of Nashville, passed another act explaining the method by which appropriations would be obtained for the project. First of all, county courts were authorized to use any unappropriated funds for the support of the families in question. But counties were also to levy "an annual tax of 9¢ on each $100 worth of property held in the State; and 25¢ on each $100 worth of merchandise purchased for sale whether in or out of the State." Moreover, county courts could assess more tax money for relief if they desired. In January of 1863, for example, the Polk County Court assessed an annual tax of 30¢ per $100 of property, 10¢ of which was "for the benefit of families of indigent soldiers now in service." Monroe and Meigs counties, both very pro-Confederate, assessed a much larger sum of 50¢ per $100 worth of property for family aid.[44]

In a day and age when national and state government played practically no role in public welfare, the burden of such responsibilities fell on local government. A normal peacetime function of the county court was to assess taxes and appropriate funds for the poverty-stricken citizens of the county. Various East Tennessee county records show that in the antebellum years, county funds were regularly set aside for such items as "poor relief," the upkeep of a "poor house," and even the buying of burial clothes and coffins for the impoverished.[45] But for East

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[44] Public Acts of Tennessee, 34th General Assembly, 1861-62 (Nashville, 1862), 6, 57-60; Athens Post, January 16, 23, 30, 1863.

[45] This information has been gleaned from an examination of the nine county records cited in footnote 1.

Tennessee, the question of relief for the families of Confederate soldiers was a different matter. Given the pro-Union sympathies of the region, it is little wonder that the relief program had serious problems. Not only did Unionists resent and resist the paying of taxes to aid Rebel families; quite often, local officials made no concerted effort to enforce the provisions of the relief act.

Evidence of divided sympathies regarding relief is seen early in the war. In the fall of 1861, a member of the Washington County Court proposed that county funds be given to the local Soldier's Aid Society, which had been organized by several women in the community. Apparently after considerable debate and a sharply divided vote of seven to six, the court finally gave $100 to purchase clothing and hospital supplies for local men in the Confederate army who were "unable by reason of poverty either of themselves or family to furnish such articles as they may need for winter." And in an example of how local officials could be less than cooperative in supporting the rebellion, the Knoxville Register accused the Knox County Court of "shamefully disregarding" the state laws respecting the relief of families of soldiers. Charging the Luttrell administration with negligence in this respect, the paper used it as an argument for the mayor's defeat in the upcoming municipal election. It assured the voters that if elected, Charles M. McGhee "will not only make an efficient Mayor, but we understand that he will devote the salary of the office to the relief of the destitute families of soldiers and the poor of Knoxville."[46]

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[46]Minutes of the Washington County Court, October, 1861 (microfilm), TSLA; Fink, Jonesborough, 143-44; Knoxville Register, January 3, 1863.

The most vivid example of the relief controversy occurred in Bradley County. For a year its justices of the peace, most of whom were Union men, had resented the collection of taxes solely for Rebel families. So when the county court convened in April of 1863, the justices pushed through a tax levy of 25¢ per $100 worth of property "to be used and appropriated for the women and children, or for all suffering humanity, in the county of Bradley." Almost immediately the heavily pro-Confederate Cleveland Banner denounced the action of the "Worshipful County Court." "If the minions of Lincoln are part of the 'suffering humanity' of Bradley County," exclaimed the Banner, "let Mr. Lincoln provide for them, or if it is too inconvenient to do so, he has plenty of sympathizers here, who can draw on their private purses for their support." The paper urged the court to expunge its action in its next regular meeting. Apparently the court refused to take the advice and as a result, Confederate military authorities stepped in to make certain that the funds went only to Rebel families.[47]

While the issue of Rebel family welfare stirred considerable controversy, another aspect of relief--the acquisition of salt by local government--caused no such dissension. Since it was absolutely essential for the curing and preservation of meat, salt was one of the most important staples of everyday life; and families required large quantities of it.

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[47] Hurlburt, Bradley County, 197-98, 199; Cleveland Banner, April 9, 1863, in ibid., 198-99. While Unionists objected to paying taxes for the relief of Rebel families during the period of Confederate occupation, it is no surprise that in May, 1865, the General Assembly, controlled mainly by East Tennesseans, passed an act for the relief of the indigent families of Union soldiers. County courts were to levy a tax on property and at the voting polls to raise the necessary funds. Public Acts of Tennessee, 1865-66 General Assembly, 29.

As civil war swept over the South, the demand for salt soared. Because much of the diet of the Civil War soldier consisted of salt pork, Southern and Northern armies alike consumed immense amounts of salt. At the same time, the Federal blockade of Southern ports gradually cut off shipments of European salt to the Confederacy. As a result, by the second year of the war, East Tennessee, like much of the South, began to experience acute shortages of what many began to call "white gold."[48] As people throughout Confederate-controlled Tennessee began to clamor for salt in the spring of 1862, Governor Harris in absentia apparently made an arrangement with wholesalers McClung, Jacques, & Co. at the great salt works at Saltville, Virginia. Under the terms of the deal, agents appointed by the county courts of Tennessee were to go to Saltville, where they would be allowed to purchase salt at near wholesale prices using county funds, then return to their respective counties to sell the substance, without profit, to needy citizens.[49]

Over the next several months, under the terms of Harris' arrangement, the various county courts of East Tennessee appointed "salt agents" who signed purchasing contracts. In May of 1862, the McMinn County Court

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[48]Ella Lonn, Salt as a Factor in the Confederacy (Chapel Hill, 1933), 14.

[49]The actual terms for this deal cannot be found in any of the published official state documents or in White's Messages of the Governors of Tennessee. However, the October 25, 1864, Knoxville Register (published in Bristol) gives a general description of the arrangement. The governors of Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi made similar contracts with the Saltville works; and agents from the counties in those states purchased large quantities of salt during the first two or three years of the war. Lonn, Salt as a Factor, 90-91, 96, 111-14.

appointed salt agents for each civil district and ordered them to assess the requirements of the people, "both black and white." The county then arranged to buy six thousand bushels.[50] The Knox County Court sent an agent to Saltville, purchased $14,000 worth and designated "the Justices of each District [as] commissioners to receive the salt alloted [sic] to their respective Districts and distribute it to the citizens as in their Judgement may be just and equitable. . . ." As other counties followed suit, many citizens of Knoxville began to urge city officials to start a salt purchase program of their own. Finally on November 11, 1862, a citizens' committee, headed by Knoxville postmaster and arch-secessionist Charles W. Charlton, sent a petition to Mayor Luttrell and the board of aldermen complaining of the inability of Knoxvillians to obtain salt. The following day, Luttrell and the aldermen granted the wishes of the petitioners and appointed Charlton salt agent. Within a week he had signed a contract with McClung & Jacques for the purchase of two car loads at a cost of $2,401.20 (including transportation). Then according to the city records, all needy residents of the city were allowed to purchase salt at wholesale price after they listed the number

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[50]Athens Post, May 30, 1862. It is impossible to determine just how much salt was purchased by the various agencies of local government in East Tennessee, but scattered records give some rough indication. In April of 1863, Roane County purchased "2 car loads"; in July of 1863, Knox County appropriated $14,000.75 for salt; and in January of 1864, Washington County bought $4,500 worth of salt at $15 a sack. When one considers that before the war most counties (excluding the urban counties) operated on expenditures of $5,000 or less (see Wooster, Politicians, Planters, and Plain Folk, 102), the funds appropriated for salt during the war, even considering wartime inflation, must have placed an almost unbearable strain on county budgets. Knox County Court Minutes, Book 22, July, 1863; Roane County Court Minutes, April, 1863; and Washington County Court Minutes, January, 1864.

of people in their families and reported how much pork they intended to cure. Various distribution points were established throughout the city to prevent congestion and help speed delivery of the precious commodity.[51]

The procurement program met with no opposition within local government. The ability to obtain salt at reasonable prices was too beneficial a project to be opposed by Unionists just because it emanated from Governor Harris' office. Apparently the only controversy concerning salt acquisition revolved around its confiscation by the military. In McMinn County, a Confederate patrol impressed two barrels of salt from Elijah Cate, who had just bought them from the county. Even though the soldiers paid $30 in Confederate currency, the incident caused such an uproar in the community that the salt was returned by an officer. And in Knoxville, when the mayor and board of aldermen agreed to establish a salt procurement program, they sought the assurance of local military authorities that the army would not impress the salt. In spite of military confiscation of county or municipal supplies, acquisition continued in East Tennessee throughout the period of Confederate occupation. Even after the region came under Federal control, those counties still behind Confederate lines regularly sent agents to Saltville. Washington County, for example, purchased $4,500 worth of salt in January of 1864. And in the fall of 1864, the Knoxville Register (published in Bristol) urged all East Tennessee county courts within Confederate control not to fail in sending their agents to Saltville. But once the region came under Union occupation, the salt procurement program by local governments came to an

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[51]Knox County Court Minutes, Book 22, November, 1862; Knoxville City Records, Book D, 209-13.

end. As advertisements in the Knoxville Whig in 1864 and 1865 indicate, citizens could purchase salt at retail stores, now that commercial ties to the North, especially Cincinnati and Louisville, had been reestablished.[52]

The expanded role of local government during the Civil War was especially evident in the two major urban centers--Chattanooga and Knoxville. Because they were occupied by troops throughout much of the war and experienced mushrooming populations, the two municipal governments operated under unusually severe stress. In the face of hardship they often responded with boldness and innovation. The city of Knoxville not only attempted to relieve the salt shortage, but also sought to obtain through municipal funds supplies of fuel and food for its citizens. Because much of the area around Knoxville had been stripped of timber by the army, the city appointed editor J. Austin Sperry in November of 1862 as agent to procure firewood for needy residents. Once the wood was obtained, distribution points were set up in the city. In April of 1863, because of an anticipated shortage of corn over the next several months, the Knoxville government appointed a committee to travel to Georgia to purchase corn for citizens. The committee was ordered to buy 3,000 bushels "so that it may be placed within the reach of all citizens of the city."[53]

Both Knoxville and Chattanooga took extensive measures to prevent crime and disease. Knoxville expanded its police force by twenty members

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[52]Athens Post, December 5, 1862; Knoxville Register, October 25, 1864; Knoxville Whig, 1864 and 1865 passim.

[53]Knoxville City Records, Book D, 209, 231. The records do not indicate whether or not the corn purchase was eventually made.

in May, 1861, and would maintain a large staff until September, 1863, when many of the police functions of the city were taken over by the Federal provost marshal. In November of 1861, the Chattanooga government took the unique step of conscripting into the city police force all white male residents between the ages of 18 and 45 not in military service. The city was divided into four police districts; in each, a police company with elected officers, was organized to patrol the streets. According to the Chattanooga records, this extreme measure was taken because the city was "destitute of any adequate organized force for its protection and defence, and the perils of the times render life and property insecure for the common defence. . . ."[54]

Health problems also placed extra demands on Knoxville and Chattanooga during and immediately following the war. As was true of most 19th century American urban areas, both cities had poor sanitation and were periodically swept by epidemics of smallpox and cholera in the antebellum period. The war only served to exacerbate these health problems. With the large influx of troops and refugees into the towns, sanitary conditions deteriorated; and as early as 1862, an outbreak of smallpox was reported in Knoxville. Using the authority granted in an 1853 city ordinance, the mayor and board of aldermen quarantined any place where smallpox was found and forbade entrance into the city by infected people. In one instance, the mayor and aldermen used positive incentive for disease prevention. In December of 1862, the city awarded $100 to Mr. and

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[54] Ibid., 149-50, 245, 294; Chattanooga City Records, November, 1861, p. 113.

Mrs. Hugh Perry for voluntarily leaving town when they contracted smallpox. Despite the commendable efforts of the Perrys, the disease spread widely in January of 1863.[55]

Under orders from the Confederate military authorities, Knoxville was instructed to set up "pest houses" to accommodate infected citizens. In a rare example of county-city governmental cooperation, the city of Knoxville and the Knox County Court jointly bought two houses on Tazewell Pike to be set aside as "pest houses" and hired a doctor and nurse to treat patients. The city was empowered to send anyone to the quarantine houses, especially, according to city records, "any persons of color either free or slaves, where they may be congregated in any numbers and [the city] has fear that the disease may break out amongst them." As the war progressed, the problems and expenses of running the pest houses mounted; and as previously discussed, Parson Brownlow accused the municipal officials of poorly handling the job of disease control. Such criticism, however, was not entirely fair because the exigencies of war made the task a difficult one. During the siege of Knoxville the city pest houses received extensive damage; and in January of 1864, as funds dwindled, the board of aldermen was forced to urge that the city be released from the expenses of running the pest houses and that the patients should "provide themselves with nurses if they desire to remain there. . . ." But as the smallpox epidemic subsided considerably in the late spring and early summer with the return of fair weather and

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[55]Lucille Deaderick (ed.), Heart of the Valley, A History of Knoxville, Tennessee (Knoxville, 1976), 92; Knoxville City Records, Book D, 214-15.

after police chief Conklin's cleanup campaign, the city was able to maintain control of the pest houses. Smallpox would appear again in epidemic proportions in 1866; and again strict quarantines, pest houses, and the distribution of lime were required to control the disease.[56]

Likewise, in the fall of 1865, the Chattanooga city government passed ordinances ordering the cleaning of houses and lots, forbidding the congregating of large numbers of people, and ordering the expulsion of vagrants to prevent another smallpox epidemic.[57] But for Knoxville and Chattanooga alike, the problem of epidemics would not be solved until years later when a better understanding of sanitation and disease control was attained.[58]

Given the broadened responsibilities of local government, it is little wonder that excessive demands were placed upon the treasuries of the various cities and counties in East Tennessee. Although it is impossible to obtain a precise accounting of the cost of the war on the local governments, some indication can be obtained from available records. Those of Knox County, for example, reveal that the circulation and use of Confederate notes during Confederate occupation meant the eventual loss of considerable county revenue later. In the spring of 1862, General Kirby Smith ordered that the only medium of exchange would be Confederate

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[56]Knoxville City Records, Book D, 223, 224-25, 228, 232-33, 252, 258.

[57]Chattanooga City Records, 1865-69, November, 1865, p. 4.

[58]According to Ridenour, Campbell County, 66-67, that county was also ravaged by smallpox in 1864. Apparently the county court established a pest house and appropriated $487.90 for its upkeep.

notes. So from early 1862 until Federal occupation in September, 1863, all revenues collected by local government were in Confederate notes. When Federal control was established in East Tennessee, the question of the disposition of Confederate notes arose. On October 5, 1863, in order to relieve uncertainty in the minds of officials, the Knox County Court ordered that all county officers and salt agents holding Confederate notes collected for taxes on salt prior to Union occupation deposit them into the county treasury. County chairman Columbus Jones was made an agent to dispose of the Confederate notes, "to the best interest of the county." Unfortunately nothing could be done with them, as indicated by the report of the county trustee for July, 1866, which showed an accumulation of $15,008. On the following day, the court ordered that "the Confederate Treasury notes mentioned . . . be destroyed as being entirely worthless."[59]

An act passed by the General Assembly on June 8, 1865, designed to help the individual citizens of the state worked, however, to the disadvantage of the county governments. According to the law, the people of Tennessee were released from the payment of any state taxes or county taxes for the years 1862, 1863, and 1864. But fortunately for the county courts, the county was not required to refund taxes already collected for those years. Since most of the accumulated tax money was in Confederate notes, this provision did little to help the various counties. As a result, two or three years of county tax revenue was

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[59]Knox County Court Minutes, Book 22, October, 1863; ibid., Book 23, July, 1866; Rothrock, French-Broad Holston Country, 152-53.

completely wiped out and many counties would be faced with financial difficulties for years to come.[60]

The strains of war also caused a financial burden on the municipal governments of Knoxville and Chattanooga; but recovery occurred soon after the war. Both cities hired additional policemen in the spring of 1861 and funds had to be diverted or created to pay their salaries. These extra policemen proved to be a financial burden which was part of the reason why Chattanooga instituted a city-wide police conscription. And when Knoxville came under martial law in the spring of 1862, the mayor and aldermen dropped four officers from duty because, according to city records, "it would be a useless expenditure to keep up the usual number of policemen" while the military authorities maintained a "vigilant police of their own." For much the same reason, an additional thirteen policemen were suspended after Federal troops occupied the city in September, 1863.[61]

Other city workers in Knoxville placed additional strains on the city budget. The city was forced to increase the pay of its street force to $1.50 a day in August of 1862 because inflation had made their previous salary entirely inadequate. Then a few days after Federal occupation of the city, the workers threatened to strike because they were being paid in worthless Confederate notes. After some debate, the city agreed to sell some of its state bonds in order to pay the workers.[62]

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[60] Public Acts of Tennessee, 1865-66 General Assembly, 49; Rothrock, French-Broad Holston Country, 152-53.

[61] Chattanooga City Records, 1861, pp. 100, 113; Knoxville City Records, Book D, 149-50, 198.

[62] Ibid., 204, 243.

The various charity and relief efforts of the two municipalities further drained the city treasuries. As previously discussed, Chattanooga appropriated $500 in city funds for the relief of the families of soldiers, but was forced to abandon the project in less than a year because the expenditure was too great. Knoxville took a much more active role in local relief such as appointing a salt agent, as well as agents to acquire fuel and corn for its citizens. On January 2, 1863, the city appropriated $1,000 for the "relief of the wounded & suffering in the late battles at Murfreesboro." Commendable as these efforts were, the added strain on city budgets eventually caused serious financial difficulties. Whereas the balance in the Knoxville treasury was $605 in 1859, it dipped to $3 by the end of 1862. After Union forces took control of the city, the city treasurer continued to take in Confederate notes and old scrip from solvent banks, although much of this money was not acceptable on the streets. But by December, 1863, the recorder was ordered to accept "nothing into the Treasury that will not be received from him in payment" of any outstanding debt. This, however, did little to relieve the financial plight of the city. By early 1864 the board of aldermen temporarily abandoned its yearly contribution to a "sinking fund" which had been established before the war to help liquidate a bonded debt of $58,000. According to city records, this action was taken because of "the deranged condition of the currency and the unusual small amount collected of the tax passed for the year 1863. . . ."[63]

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[63]Chattanooga City Records, 1861-62, pp. 102, 123; Knoxville City Records, Book D, 63, 216, 246, 247; Deaderick, Heart of the Valley, 87.

Once the war was over both cities, especially Chattanooga, would still be faced with financial problems. During the war most of the latter's public buildings had been destroyed or rendered totally useless. In addition, the town had no civil government from 1863 until October, 1865. According to city records "during this time the municipal authorities lost all revenue it had previously accumulated & were powerless to collect or in any way raise any revenue whatever. . . ." Once civil government was restored, Chattanooga was saddled with the responsibility of dealing with thousands of refugees still congregated within the city limits and a mounting smallpox problem. Local authorities then successfully requested General George Thomas, commander of the Army of Tennessee, to release "post funds" which had been collected as fines and tolls by the army on citizens. They also asked that the army turn over two abandoned government saw mills so that they could be used as pest houses.[64] Chattanooga and Knoxville both held Confederate notes in their treasuries after the war; but both would have to give them up as worthless, just as the county courts were forced to do.

Fortunately, the financial plight caused by the war was only temporary; by 1867 the balance in the treasury of both cities was healthy again. Apparently the growth and development of business and industry immediately after the war spurred the local economy and thus helped city revenues rise. In January of 1867, Knoxville reported revenues at $38,691, disbursements at $34,555, for a balance of $4,336.[65] And Chattanooga's

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[64]Chattanooga City Records, 1865-69, October, 1865, pp. 4, 7.

[65]Knoxville City Records, Book D, 366.

balance of payments had returned to better than pre-war standards by 1867, even with inflation taken into account (as revealed in Table 2).

TABLE 2

City of Chattanooga Revenues and Expenditures
Selected Years

	1859	1861	1862	1866
Revenue	$21,389.37	$12,225.90	$9,601.23	$23,117.00
Disbursements	19,069.72	11,942.00	8,774.99	17,629.00
Balance	$ 2,319.65	$ 283.90	$ 826.24	$ 5,488.00

Source: Chattanooga City Records, 1858-63, pp. 54, 117, 130; ibid., 1865-69, p. 166.

While the Knoxville and Chattanooga governments were fortunate enough to experience fiscal recovery soon after the war, county government in many parts of the region would require much more time to recover. Some counties were faced with extensive and expensive repairs. County courts in Anderson, Monroe, and Sullivan were burdened with the expense of building new courthouses to replace those destroyed during the war. And in several counties, extensive repairs would have to be made on long neglected roads and bridges. One man living in rural Sevier County recalled that "public works" (i.e., road and bridge repairs) were not renewed in his area until the 1880's.[66]

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[66] Marion Pearsall, "Some Aspects of Culture Change in a Mountain Neighborhood of East Tennessee" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1950), 54. This is an anthropology dissertation in which Pearsall utilizes several oral interviews.

The Civil War was thus a great financial encumbrance on local government in East Tennessee; but in this respect, the region was no different from the rest of the state or from many other parts of the South. County and city governments in those areas also experienced grave economic problems during the war and faced very slow recoveries. Indeed in many ways the war experience of local government in East Tennessee was not unique. For example, the temporary broadening of power of local government during the war occurred in other states. And the appointment of salt agents by county courts was also made in North Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, and Mississippi. Studies of wartime Richmond, Virginia, and Athens, Georgia, indicate expanded local relief efforts.[67] But the very nature of the conflict in East Tennessee made other features of local government exceptional, such as the significant influence that Unionists or "neutralists" exerted in local government in the face of Confederate authority. Unlike other areas of the South, many of these local officials were retained in office once their community came under Federal control. Moreover, nowhere else in the South were local and state courts used as extensively as those in East Tennessee to seek revenge on supporters and participants in the rebellion. Thus even local government was swept into the vortex of the bitter conflict that disrupted East Tennessee in the decade of the 1860's. As we shall see, other institutions also were unable to escape a similar fate.

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[67] Emory Thomas, The Confederate State of Richmond (Austin, Texas, 1971), 40-41; Kenneth Coleman, Confederate Athens (Athens, Georgia, 1967), 69.

CHAPTER VII

EDUCATION'S PARADOX: WARTIME DESTRUCTION LEADS TO POSTWAR PROGRESS

While local government in East Tennessee struggled to function as fully as possible during the Civil War, private and public education faced a similar challenge. As students and faculty alike rushed to join the ranks of newly formed regiments in 1861, or tried to escape the persecution caused by neighbors or the occupying enemy authorities, classrooms throughout the region quickly emptied. And as large armies and guerrilla bands roamed the eastern counties, any thought of organized education became almost ludicrous. In addition, the disruption and economic stringency of the war years caused public and private support of education nearly to disappear. The state had seldom displayed much willingness to finance educational institutions and the war only served to cut off what limited public funds had been available. As a result, most educational institutions would be faced with the immense task of recovery. Many suffered so severely during the fighting that their doors never reopened. Yet despite the hardships imposed by war, education on all levels managed to recover by the end of the 1860's; and the predominance of East Tennesseans in state government in the postwar years made possible the enactment of educational measures long sought by the people of the eastern counties.

On the eve of the Civil War the structure, distribution, and quality of educational instruction in East Tennessee was probably not greatly different from the rest of the state, although the region had traditionally

maintained a divergent stance on the issue of public education. Unlike Middle and West Tennessee, the eastern counties had long advocated public support for primary and secondary education; and in the state constitution of 1835, East Tennessee strongly backed provisions for the establishment of a permanent state public school fund based on the sale of public lands while the other sections reluctantly went along. In 1854 under the urging of Governor Andrew Johnson, the General Assembly passed the first act for levying a direct tax for the support of common schools in Tennessee. The law provided for a small tax on property and a poll tax; and it also made it possible for each county to levy a school assessment on polls, property, and privileges, not exceeding the sum received by it from the state taxes. Again the poorest section of the state was most strongly in favor of a direct tax for the support of schools.

It is therefore likely that the overwhelming majority of young people in East Tennessee received their early education at state and county supported public schools. Even though statistics by county are unavailable, the 1860 census reveals that in Tennessee nearly 140,000 pupils attended public schools, while only 15,000 were enrolled in "private academies and other schools." Since, according to one scholar of education in the state, "the main strength of private academies was in Middle Tennessee and was not slight in West Tennessee," the major source of education in East Tennessee was the public school. There is no way to determine how many public schools existed in the eastern counties, but the number per county must have varied significantly according to local population. The quality of schools could not have been very high, however, regardless of location, because of the meager amount of funds

available to public schools. Teacher salaries were low, facilities poor, and quite often voluntary contributions were necessary to supplement the small amount of state funds. Instruction centered around the very basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic; and quite often complaints were registered that some teachers were not even qualified to teach these rudiments. In most cases public schools were open only a few months out of the year. Schools in Knox County, for example, kept their doors open from two to four months out of the year.[1]

While common schools provided the bulk of secondary education in the section, private academies nevertheless played a significant role. It is impossible to determine the exact number of private academies in the eastern counties, but East Tennessee newspapers aid in identifying some of them. If such advertisements are an indication of their number and distribution on the eve of the war, it appears that lower and central East Tennessee had the heaviest concentration. The Athens Post and Cleveland Banner, for example, regularly carried advertisements for a dozen private schools in McMinn, Bradley, and surrounding counties. The Chattanooga Advertiser featured three private academies in Hamilton County; and the Knoxville newspapers published ads for the East Tennessee Female Institute and Knoxville Female Institute. Yet only two private institutions, the Rogersville Female Institute and Rhea Academy in Greeneville, can be identified in upper East Tennessee. Moreover it is likely that few, if any, private academies operated in the poor counties of the

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[1]Robert H. White, Development of the Tennessee Educational Organization, 1796-1929 (Nashville, 1929), 67-70, 77; A. P. Whitaker, "The Public School System in Tennessee," Tennessee Historical Magazine, II (1916), 24; Rothrock, French-Broad Holston Country, 257.

Cumberland Plateau or in the mountain sections along the North Carolina border. The low per capita wealth of the majority of the people in these areas would have made it extremely difficult to supply the necessary tuition.[2]

While the quality of private schools varied, they generally provided better education than public schools. The financial structure of many of these institutions was sounder than that of public schools. Although the figures cannot be broken down by region, in the state as a whole the funds available for 2,965 public schools totalled only $402,904; but $581,561 were available for a mere 274 private academies. While the bulk of these private school funds came from tuition payments, some money was available from the state public school fund; and many private academies were subsidized by churches, fraternal organizations such as the Masons, and to some extent by local government. As a matter of fact, some of the so-called private academies were in many ways semi-public institutions. Rittenhouse Academy in Roane County, for example, was subject to the county court clerk for the appointment of trustees and financial assistance. Occasionally the school borrowed money from the county treasury for repairs and other concerns.[3] With more money available to them, most private schools could afford better facilities

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[2]Athens Post, Chattanooga Advertiser, Cleveland Banner, and Knoxville Whig, 1860, passim.

[3]Ninth Census, Population and Social Statistics, I, 451, 456; William J. Fowler, "History of Roane County, Tennessee, 1860-1870" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1964), 57-58; Roane County Court Records, April and September, 1861, TSLA; In Greene County also, the county court selected the trustees for Rhea Academy. Doughty, Greeneville, 197.

and qualified teachers, although some of the small rural academies were little better than the public schools.[4]

Higher education in mid-nineteenth century East Tennessee was limited to seven small private colleges. The total number of students enrolled in 1860 would not have been more than five hundred which was less than the enrollments of either the University of Nashville or Cumberland University in Lebanon. Of the East Tennessee colleges, only East Tennessee University in Knoxville was non-sectarian. Because of a compact with the state in 1806 and resulting land grants, East Tennessee University was looked upon as a state institution, although technically it was not. From the 1840's onward, the school expanded its physical plant and attempted to upgrade its academic quality by employing an able faculty. Yet in 1860, its total enrollment numbered only 110 students. For the majority of young people seeking college education in East Tennessee, church-associated schools were the most popular institutions. In fact, the largest college in East Tennessee on the eve of the Civil War was Mossy Creek Baptist College (the forerunner of Carson-Newman) in Jefferson County, with an enrollment of 160 students in 1858.[5] And the Presbyterian Church, which had traditionally insisted on an educated clergy, supported four institutions of higher learning in the region--Washington College near Jonesboro, Greeneville College and Tusculum College in Greeneville, and Maryville College in Blount County.[6] The

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[4]See Temple, Notable Men, 153n.

[5]Stanley J. Folmsbee, East Tennessee University, 1840-1879 (Knoxville, 1959), 16, 28; Isaac A. Carr, History of Carson-Newman College (Jefferson City, Tennessee, 1959), 21.

[6]Ernest T. Thompson, Presbyterians in the South (3 vols.; Richmond, 1963-73), I, 251, 269-72. Tusculum College had an enrollment of only 75

Methodist Episcopal Church backed Athens Female College (predecessor of Tennessee Wesleyan), the only institution of higher learning in the region open to women.[7] The curricula in these schools centered around courses in religion and the Bible; and all were staffed predominantly by ministers of the Gospel.

In 1861, as East Tennessee became quickly engulfed in war, the educational structure of the region was particularly vulnerable to any major shocks that might occur. For one, the financial base of education was not strong to begin with and the extra demands of war could be potentially devastating. With public schools only a minor part of state and county budgets, it is little wonder that such an institution might suffer when many tax dollars would be lost and available state and county revenues diverted to the various problems caused by the war. Likewise private academies could not escape the fate that their public counterparts experienced when sources of revenue dried up. But remarkably enough many of these schools, particularly the girls' schools, lingered on until actual fighting in the region forced their suspension. The colleges suspended classes early in the national crisis. All had faced serious financial difficulties before the war; and most at one time or the other had been threatened with the possibility of closing their doors because of a

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students in 1860, while Maryville College was even smaller, having only 46 students. Allen E. Ragan, A History of Tusculum College, 1794-1944 (Bristol, Tennessee, 1945), 56; Ralph W. Lloyd, Maryville College, A History of 150 Years, 1819-1969 (Maryville, Tennessee, 1969), 8.

[7] R. N. Price, Holston Methodism (5 vols.; Nashville, 1903-13), III, 261; Mrs. Bennet Bell, "Female Schools in Tennessee Prior to 1861," Confederate Veteran, XXXII (1924), 170-74. Athens Female College was a "college" only in name. Like most Southern female colleges and collegiate schools, it granted no degrees and was mainly concerned with preparing proper Christian ladies for society.

shortage of funds. Now the conflict would serve only to exacerbate these monetary predicaments. But the colleges had other traits that would make them particularly vulnerable to the vagaries of war. The majority of the students enrolled were of fighting age; and as a result most young men would be lost to the armies, either Northern or Southern.[8] And like the internecine struggle that affected East Tennessee in general, the conflict would spread into the college halls, as faculty members would voluntarily resign or else be forced to do so over questions of national loyalty.

The outbreak of hostilities in the spring of 1861 signalled the rapid deterioration of East Tennessee's colleges. Only eight days after the firing on Fort Sumter, Dr. John Robinson, president of Maryville College, conducted a final chapel service and proclaimed the suspension of college work "on account of a state of armed hostilities in the country." Division among faculty and students apparently led to such an immediate decision. Of four faculty members, two (including Robinson) supported the Confederacy, while the other two remained loyal to the Union. The 46 students were divided in sympathy and with the suspension of classes, many joined the Confederate army or escaped to Kentucky to join Federal regiments. Not one of them, however, would return to his alma mater at the end of the war--some died on the battlefield or in hospitals, others simply saw no need to come back. As one historian of the college

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[8]Athens Female College, of course, did not suffer a loss of enrollment like other colleges whose male students left in large numbers. It, like other female institutions in the South in general, initially suffered least of all during the war. E. Merton Coulter, The Confederate States of America, 1861-1865 (Baton Rouge, 1950), 520.

succinctly stated, "Their school days at Maryville were ended." At East Tennessee University, where students were organized into military companies, young men were anxious to drop the title of cadet in favor of becoming full-fledged soldiers. Most joined the Confederate army, although some, including Edward Maynard, son of Congressman Horace Maynard, enlisted in the Federal army.[9]

The rush of students to join military service brought an almost complete halt to other institutions of higher learning in East Tennessee. While Maryville College suspended operations in April, Washington, Greeneville, and Tusculum apparently followed suit and did not resume classes in the fall of 1861. Even with this exodus, East Tennessee University and Mossy Creek College were stubbornly determined to continue in spite of the war. In the summer of 1861, officials of the university made plans for the reopening of school in the fall term. Successive issues of the Knoxville Register announced that "exercises" would be resumed on September 12, with the same faculty as before except for Professor Milford C. Butler, who had "recently vacated" his seat in Ancient Languages. More than likely Butler, who submitted his resignation in June, 1861, was the faculty member referred to in Humes' Loyal Mountaineers who "hailed from the north of the Mason and Dixon line" and who had expressed Union sentiments in letters to friends in the North. Apparently the professor's mail was intercepted and read by Confederate sympathizers, namely Knoxville postmaster Charles W. Charlton; and before long Butler began to receive

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[9]Lloyd, Maryville College, 10-11; Samuel T. Wilson, A Century of Maryville College and Second Century Beginnings (Maryville, Tennessee, 1935), 112; Folmsbee, East Tennessee University, 44.

anonymous threats. Unwilling to risk staying in Knoxville, he moved to Ohio and according to Humes, "left goods and chattels behind him, which were afterwards seized and confiscated." In the meantime, a much reduced student body reported in September and classes were resumed; but efforts at education were made extremely difficult. After the battle of Mill Springs in January, 1862, several university classrooms were taken over for use as hospitals for the wounded. On January 30 the Board of Trustees considered the possibility of suspending school until the fall term in hopes that local conditions would improve. This measure was postponed, but on February 7, President J. J. Ridley resigned. Ridley, a Southern sympathizer, arranged to have his colleagues teach the few remaining students and then left for North Carolina because of his fear that Knoxville would soon come under Federal occupation. Quickly the strain of war proved too much for the three remaining faculty members. Professor Robert W. Strong, a Unionist fearing conscription into the Rebel army, escaped to Washington, D. C., only to return after Burnside's invasion of East Tennessee. A. A. Blair resigned his seat to accept a commission in the Confederate army. With the ranks of faculty and student body alike depleted by the sectional conflict and with its buildings occupied by the military, East Tennessee University was forced to suspend operation sometime in late spring of 1862. The Mossy Creek institution bravely resumed classes in the fall of 1861; but one by one, and sometimes in groups, students donned blue or gray uniforms, and by June 1, 1862, the doors of this college closed.[10]

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[10]Howard E. Carr, Washington College, A Study of an Attempt to Provide Higher Education in Eastern Tennessee (Knoxville, 1935), 41; Ragan, Tusculum College, 56-57; Knoxville Register, August 3, 7, 8, 1861; Humes,

Initially the impact of the war was much less severe on the primary and secondary schools of the region as compared to the colleges. Some of these schools were forced to suspend operations when they lost teachers to the war. Myra Inman of Cleveland, for example, indicated that her school closed when the teacher left town in August of 1861; and no doubt many men of fighting age who served as underpaid instructors at common schools or private academies were anxious to exchange the routine of the classroom for the expected glory and excitement of the battlefield. But unlike the colleges of the region, these institutions had a majority of students under fighting age; hence there was no real problem of losing them to the army. As a result, many private academies and some common schools remained open well into the war. Contrary to one scholar of Tennessee public schools, who stated that the Civil War "put an end to [common school] activity," there is some evidence that common schools were maintained in East Tennessee in the first two years of the war. Records of Roane County public schools, for example, show that James Hickey taught school at Kelsey's Schoolhouse in the eighth civil district during 1862-63. Although it may have been an exceptional case, the number of pupils enrolled in Meigs County common schools for unexplained reasons increased from 1861 to 1862. And in July of 1862, voters in Rhea County elected two commissioners for the twenty-first common school district. But overall, common schools were unable to continue because of a shortage of public funds. A survey of East Tennessee county court records during the war reveals that unlike times of peace, county money was not set aside

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Loyal Mountaineers, 179-80; Folmsbee, East Tennessee University, 44-45; Carr, Carson-Newman, 23.

for the common schools. As a result, these schools in the region gradually closed and remained so until after the war.[11]

Initially the private academies were much more fortunate. Advertisements in East Tennessee newspapers reveal that these institutions continued to function until Federal occupation. Newspapers carried advertisements for Athens Female College, East Tennessee and Knoxville Female institutes, Rogersville Female Academy, and various coeducational institutes until August of 1863. Sewee Academy in McMinn County attracted the reader's attention to its announcement with the heading "School in War Times!" In the summer of 1862, citizens in the fourteenth civil district of McMinn County banded together and set up a "high school" at Coghill under the direction of Professor W. A. Nelson. In a series of advertisements in the Athens Post, parents and guardians were urged "to join us in the good work" so that their children would be "better prepared for usefulness" after "the dark cloud of a bloody Revolution shall have blown away." It was their firm conviction that boys and girls might grow up and "be compelled to grovel in ignorance through life, if we wait for the ship of State to anchor in the haven of peace." Tuition would be low and dormitories would be provided near the school for those students who needed them. And Professor Henry W. von Aldehoff maintained his Aldehoff Institute on Lookout Mountain until late 1862. An advertisement in the Chattanooga Rebel, announcing the fall term of 1862, boasted, "The fact that the school has successfully maintained itself in the general wreck

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[11] Whitaker, "Public Schools in Tennessee," 26; Meigs County Court Records, Common School Record, TSLA; Rhea County Court Records, Common School Record, I, ibid.

of similar institutions caused by war is additional evidence of its excellence."[12] The various female academies in East Tennessee operated at almost full scale until mid-way through the war. East Tennessee Female Institute in Knoxville functioned without interruption until late 1863[13] and Rogersville Female Academy maintained a large enrollment until early 1864. A Confederate soldier passing through Rogersville in February, 1863, reported that "there is a fine Female school going on in town." A hundred girls came out to cheer the soldiers and a few nights later a giant military ball was held at the academy.[14]

Despite their ability to survive longer than common schools or colleges, some private schools suffered because of the war. Rittenhouse Academy in Roane County was forced to borrow $1,000 from the county court in September, 1861, to make long overdue repairs and then had to cut tuition rates in 1862 to maintain enrollment. An advertisement in the Athens Post in May, 1862, stated that "owing to the crisis upon the country" the trustees had "made a liberal appropriation from the Academy fund" so that tuition payments could be reduced to help parents. A

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[12]Knoxville Register, July 25, 1862, February 3, August 26, 1863; Knoxville Daily Southern Chronicle, August 21, 1863; Athens Post, September 6, 1861, January 31, March 14, April 18, June 27, August 8, December 26, 1862, July 17, 1863; Chattanooga Rebel, August 9, 1862.

[13]A February 3, 1863, advertisement in the Knoxville Register stated that this "old and flourishing" institution was operating "under the most favorable circumstances."

[14]Laura E. Luttrell, "One Hundred Years of a Female Academy, 1811-1846, The East Tennessee Female Institute, 1846-1911," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 17 (1945), 80; T. Matt White to Carrie Stakely, February 9, 1863, Stakely-Hall MSS, McClung Collection. Another soldier, writing to the Knoxville Register, reported that the Rogersville institution was in a "flourishing condition." Two hundred and ten young ladies were enrolled and everyone "seemed satisfied." Knoxville Register, February 17, 1863.

schedule of the new tuition rates was published.

1st class per session--$ 4.50	were--$ 6.00
2nd class per session--$ 6.50	were--$ 8.00
3rd class per session--$ 8.00	were--$10.00
4th class per session--$12.50	were--$15.00

Unable to maintain its solvency, Rittenhouse Academy was apparently forced to end classes sometime in 1862. Despite the boastfulness of its advertisements, Adelhoff Institute in Chattanooga failed to survive after its autumn 1862 term as students dropped out and the financial status of the school deteriorated. William Davis tried to run a private academy in Warrensburg, but confessed that "My school is quite small," despite the modest two-dollar-a-month tuition he charged.[15]

The most important factor in the disruption of private education, however, came in the fall of 1863 with Federal occupation of East Tennessee and the subsequent two years of large-scale fighting and guerrilla warfare in the region. Professor Nelson announced the successful completion of examinations at the Coghill school in McMinn County and assured parents that another ten month term would begin on September 28. But with the movement of Union forces into lower East Tennessee in late August and the recurrent skirmishing and marching of troops in the area, Coghill was unable to continue operation. The disruption of schools caused by the change in military and civil authorities resulted in empty classrooms and quite often school buildings were singled out for use by the army as hospitals or barracks as were other "public" buildings, such as churches, warehouses, and courthouses. Federal military authorities took possession

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[15]Roane County Court Records, September, 1861, TSLA; Athens Post, May 30, 1862; Fowler, "Roane County," 58; Armstrong, Hamilton County, II, 160-61; William Davis to Mary Covington Wilson, June 10, 1863, Wilson MSS, SHC.

of the East Tennessee Female Institute for use as a hospital until the end of 1864. Post Oak Springs Academy in Roane County had been occupied by Confederate troops earlier in the war, and Federal soldiers simply took over the building and grounds after the evacuation of the Rebels.[16]

The several colleges, with their classrooms empty, were likewise singled out for use by the military. East Tennessee University, wh ch had been taken over as a hospital by the Confederates since early 1862, continued in this capacity under the Federals. One Indiana soldier wrote from the university in December, 1863: "The buildings were very much crowded . . . many of the rooms are occupied by the sick and hospital attendants." And prior to the siege of Knoxville in the fall of 1863, the university buildings were fortified, while trenches and ar illery emplacements were dug into the hill on which the campus was located. Athens Female College was improvised into a hospital until the summer of 1864. Both armies used the buildings at Maryville and Mossy Creek colleges as barracks and stables. At Washington College, Union soldiers took over a dormitory, stabled their horses on the first floor, and quartered themselves on the remaining floors. Although its buildings were apparently never occupied, passing armies inflicted considerable damage upon Tusculum College, as indicated in the college records at the end of the war.[17]

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[16] Athens Post, July 17, 1863; Luttrell, "East Tennessee Female Institute," 80; Fowler, "Roane County," 59.

[17] John J. Hight, History of the Fifty-Eighth Regiment of Indiana Volunteer Infantry (Princeton, Indiana, 1895), 236; Price, Holston Methodism, III, 261; Carr, Carson-Newman, 117-18; Isabelle Foster, "Washington College and Washington College Academy," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, XXX (1971), 252-53; Ragan, Tusculum College, 58.

With schools of all types closed throughout most of East Tennessee by the end of 1863, apparently some adults were determined that the education of their children should suffer as little as possible. Mary Jane Reynolds of Loudon, for example, gave regular lessons in the basics of reading and writing to neighborhood children at her plantation home in 1864. Myra Inman gave private lessons, including music, to several children at her home in Cleveland. Her sister, Rhoda, indicated that a "Miss Nannie" gave private lessons to boys and girls in her Cleveland home throughout much of 1864. And Mrs. James Haire of Knoxville went so far as to advertise private instruction in her home. She announced in the Whig a twenty-week term, with "instruction in the elementary branches of a good English education" for a tuition fee of $16 per term.[18]

As will be discussed in a later chapter, various Northern benevolent societies began to operate small schools for East Tennessee freedmen in 1864. By the spring of 1865, the Freedmen's Bureau played an active role in providing education for the region's blacks, much to the displeasure of local whites. In the meantime, gradual attempts were made to reopen private schools for whites even before the war had ended. In the spring of 1864, Reverend Erastus Rowley, president of Athens Female College, travelled to Cincinnati and purchased books, music, groceries, and other supplies in preparation for the reopening of classes. By July, Rowley succeeded in having everything shipped to the college except the groceries; and he urged Governor Andrew Johnson to help in speeding along

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[18]Mary Jane Reynolds to Simeon D. Reynolds [undated, but probably late January], April 1, 1864, Reynolds MSS, UT Special Collections; Inman Diary, February 5, 1865, SHC; Knoxville Whig, February 27, 1864.

the shipment of these much needed supplies so that he could reopen his "Boarding Department." Whether the Governor was able to help is not known, but Athens Female College resumed classes on a limited basis in the summer. And by late 1864 and early 1865, some private schools opened for instruction. A. E. Blount, who had operated a private academy near Cleveland before the war, reopened his school in December, 1864. An announcement in the Whig stated that Blount's academy was refitted, a "fine supply of books and stationery" had been purchased, and that "a good boarding house can be had on reasonable terms." Rhoda Inman of Cleveland observed that Blount was conducting "a very large school." Myra Inman reported the opening of another school in the Cleveland area under the direction of a Mrs. McNabb. And in January, 1865, upon request of the board of trustees, General Samuel Carter, Provost Marshal for the region, relinquished the East Tennessee Female Institute property and agreed to repair damages done by Federal troops so that classes could resume in March. When the Institute reopened, there was no problem in filling the classrooms. Near the end of the war, Margaret Hall reported that when a Mr. Wilson opened a school near Madisonville, over fifty pupils showed up, "too many for his house." Plans had to be made for an additional room to the school. A few weeks later, Carrie Stakely of Madisonville begged her sister in Knoxville for reading material because she had many more students than books. She especially needed McGuffey's first and second readers. Carrie went on to boast, "My school is flourishing." And once the war ended and peace was restored to much of East Tennessee, other private schools made preparations for the fall, 1865, term. Knoxville Female Institute resumed classes on September 5 and two small

coeducational schools, Walnut Grove Academy and Hampden Sydney Academy, opened in Knox County in the late summer.[19]

These few schools may have been so crowded because many of the private academies which had flourished before the war and had managed to operate up until 1863 were now war casualties. Rhea Academy in Greeneville, Rogersville Female Institute, and most of the private institutions in lower East Tennessee never reopened after Appomattox. Of the several academies that regularly advertised in the Athens and Cleveland newspapers before the war, only one, the Masonic Female Academy near Cleveland, resumed announcements once peace was restored. A December, 1865, notice stated that "This institution continues successfully," but a later statement thanked area Masons for their liberal donations in helping sustain the school. Professor Henry Adelhoff returned to Chattanooga after the war and started another school, this time in a building in town. But this new venture was never as successful as the pre-war Adelhoff Institute, possibly because the professor still attempted to

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[19]Erastus Rowley to Andrew Johnson, July 16, 1864, Andrew Johnson MSS, LC; Price, Holston Methodism, III, 262; Knoxville Whig, December 7, February 15, 1864, August 2, October 4, 1865; Williams, "Journal of Events," 102; Luttrell, "East Tennessee Female Institute," 80; Rhoda Inman to Captain John G. Carter, February 2, 1865, Civil War Records, II, 103; Inman Diary, December 8, 1864, SHC; Margaret Hall to Carrie Stakely, April 3, 10, 1865, Stakely-Hall MSS, McClung Collection; Carrie Stakely to Martha Hall, April 27, 1865, ibid. Several other private academies opened in East Tennessee after the war. One of the most interesting of these was the Lookout Mountain School in Chattanooga, founded by Christopher R. Roberts, a wealthy New York philanthropist. While the school attracted many children of prominent Chattanooga families, with the aid of funds from the Freedmen's Bureau it intentionally enrolled students of limited financial means in hopes of uplifting the poor whites of the South. See Martin Abbott (ed.), "A Mountain School in Tennessee: Some Reconstruction Letters," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, XVII (1958), 70-73.

charge very high tuition rates as in antebellum days.[20]

With the war's end, the colleges of East Tennessee were also faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles in resuming full operation. All had suffered extensive physical damage and had experienced the scattering of faculty and students. In addition, institutions which had had to struggle to maintain solvency before the war were now on the brink of financial ruin. Most of the buildings at Mossy Creek College, for example, were in deplorable condition; and to make matters worse, the school had accumulated heavy debts before it closed in 1862. As a matter of fact, the college property had to be sold at auction in June of 1865 to satisfy creditors; but fortunately for Mossy Creek, supporters rallied to raise enough money to purchase the property. Late in 1866 the board of trustees paid $1,272 in cash for the property, but classes were not resumed until September, 1868. Tusculum College began small-scale operation in the early spring of 1866; to strengthen the institution, appeals were made to prospective donors on the basis that Tusculum had been loyal to the Union cause and was a Presbyterian college of the "Old School" variety. After receiving donations from several sources, including English, Tusculum was able to repair some of its buildings and in the words of the institution's historian, "in some fashion or the other weathered the war." But even with the consolidation of Tusculum and Washington colleges in late 1866 in an attempt to strengthen the two, Tusculum was never able to fulfill the expectations of the postwar board

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[20]Cleveland Banner, December 15, 1865, January 1, 1866; Charles D. McGuffey, Standard History of Chattanooga, Tennessee (Knoxville, 1911), 409.

of trustees who hoped to restore the school "to its one time state of power and position." Greeneville College was much less fortunate. With the ending of classes in June of 1861, the school was so weak financially by the end of the war that the trustees abandoned all thoughts of reopening. As a matter of fact, in December, 1866, the trustees arranged with an agent of the Freedmen's Bureau to lease the building for a colored school. By January, 1868, representatives from Greeneville College, however, arranged the consolidation of their charter with that of Tusculum, and for a while the new institution was called Greeneville and Tusculum College. But before many years, the name Greeneville was dropped and the old school was nearly forgotten.[21]

With the possible exception of East Tennessee University, Maryville College suffered the worst physical damage during the war. The original buildings had been poorly constructed at best and after serving both armies as barracks and stables, most were mere shells at war's end. The Synod of Tennessee elected a new board of trustees. Under the new leadership of Professor Thomas Jefferson Lamar, the board conducted an intense campaign to solicit funds for the reopening of Maryville College. Fund-raising trips to the North in December, 1865, and April, 1866, proved fruitless, but enough money was raised locally to repair buildings sufficiently so that classes could be resumed in September. Buildings still bore the scars of war and the college's treasury was far from secure. While the school's endowment fund had been a modest $16,000 before the war, it was only $6,000 in the fall of 1866. Only thirteen students

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[21]Carr, Carson-Newman, 24-27; Ragan, Tusculum College, 58-60; Doughty, Greeneville, 172-73, 179-81.

reported for class, but by the end of the academic year enrollment had increased to forty-seven. And as donations steadily increased after intense efforts by the board of trustees, Maryville College moved to a new campus in 1871, where enrollment continued to rise, including a few women and black students for the first time.[22]

Athens Female College struggled to stay alive and hovered close to bankruptcy despite the fact that it had been the first institution of higher learning in East Tennessee to reopen its doors. In 1866 the school went up for auction at a chancery sale to satisfy claims held against it by Erastus Rowley. Fortunately for the future of the institution, the Northern Methodist Episcopal Church bought it in 1867 and the following year the name was changed to East Tennessee Wesleyan University.[23]

The board of trustees at East Tennessee University also faced nearly insurmountable odds; the institution was near bankruptcy and its buildings and grounds were badly damaged. But the board made a wise decision in selecting Thomas W. Humes as the new president of the University on July 10, 1865. Esteemed as rector of St. John's Episcopal Church, Humes had been an avowed Unionist and had made several important contacts when he served as chairman of the East Tennessee Relief Association. It was hoped that his background would help overshadow the fact that much of the school's student body and the previous president had been Rebels during the war.[24]

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[22]Wilson, Maryville College, 117-22; Lloyd, Maryville College, 13-14.

[23]Price, Holston Methodism, II, 261-62.

[24]Folmsbee, East Tennessee University, 47-51.

On July 21, 1865, Humes traveled to Washington with a memorial requesting the Federal Government to pay for damages to the university incurred during the last two years of the war. A War Department survey estimated damages at $15,000 and in October, 1865, the quartermaster general informed Humes that since the school was "an Institution of learning, apparently a loyal institution . . . the houses now standing, and which have been used by the United States as hospitals or barracks, should be repaired by the Quartermaster Department. . . ." Unfortunately the quartermaster was willing to appropriate only $2,227.11 for the project. Loud protests from the board of trustees that this sum was entirely inadequate persuaded the government to increase the appropriation, but only by about $900. But because of government red tape even the $3,100 sum was not forthcoming. One of the major obstacles was the government's requirement that all members of the board of trustees prove their unbending loyalty to the Union during the war. The board gave assurance that secessionist members had fled the region in the fall of 1863 and that the state legislature had filled these vacancies in November, 1865, with Unionists. Finally, in January of 1872, three years after the institution was declared a land grant college as authorized by the Morrill Act of 1862, the Senate Military Affairs Committee agreed to pay $18,500 in damages, maintaining that East Tennessee University was particularly deserving of the consideration of Congress. "It is the only educational institution of known loyalty, in management and influence," declared the committee report, "in any of the seceding States during the war." Besides it was located in the center of the region and

surrounded by a population "known for their loyalty and sacrifices to the cause of the Union."[25]

In the meantime, classes resumed in the spring of 1866. Only twenty students reported and exercises had to be conducted at the Deaf and Dumb Asylum and the county courthouse, since the buildings of the university were still in poor condition. But by the following fall, enrollment increased to seventy-five, as many veterans returned home; and for the first time since early 1862, classes could be held in repaired portions of the university.[26]

While higher education was struggling to stay alive in East Tennessee and in the postwar period, considerable interest in strengthening and expanding state public schools was aroused. Given East Tennessee's support for public education in the antebellum years, it is not surprising that the first whole-hearted attempt to establish an effective system of state-supported free schools was made after the war when state government was dominated by men from the eastern counties. In his inaugural address in April, 1865, Governor William G. Brownlow maintained that illiteracy had multiplied in Tennessee because of the lack of educational opportunity during the war; and a few days later the East Tennessee-controlled General Assembly began to consider proposals for a state public school system. In July, 1865, an educational convention meeting in Knoxville under the leadership of John F. Spence, principal of the Knoxville Female Institute, urged the legislature to grant "liberal

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[25] Ibid., 51-55.

[26] Ibid., 55-56.

provisions" for education. "The education of the masses is the true 'life strata' that underlies the body politic," Spence declared, "and like the heart, when it throbs with regular pulsations, the whole system is healthy and strong."[27]

Not until March, 1867, however, did the legislature act on a common school program. The new law provided for centralized control by which the new system would be headed by a state superintendent of common schools, under whom county superintendents would finance a system of racially segregated common schools. John Eaton, Jr., a New Hampshire-born minister who had served as an army chaplain and a Freedmen's Bureau official, was named state superintendent. A man of considerable energy, Eaton toured the state to determine educational needs and in 1869 he prepared a comprehensive survey of educational conditions and needs in Tennessee. Of the state's three grand divisions, Eaton reported that East Tennessee had made the most progress in establishing common schools. For one, most East Tennessee county school superintendents, many of whom had considerable experience in private education, had been conscientious in their duties.[28]

Within less than a year after passage of the common school law, the new system was functioning on the classroom level in most parts of East Tennessee, although on a limited basis because of the slowness of

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[27]Campbell, "Reconstruction in East Tennessee," 76-77; House Journal, 1865-1866, p. 28; Knoxville Whig, July 19, 1865.

[28]M. C. Wilcox to John Eaton, Jr., October 2, 1867, Eaton MSS, UT Special Collections; J. M. Barnum to John Eaton, December 1, 1868, ibid.; R. D. Black to John Eaton, February 3, 1869, ibid.; John Eaton, Jr., First Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Tennessee (Nashville, 1869), cxviii-cxxxiv.

state funds in reaching many school districts. The public schools that had opened were operating without state funds to pay teachers. But when money began to reach teachers and superintendents in August, 1868, there was a multiplication of new schools. Schools were organized in practically every sub-district of Anderson County and forty-seven were opened in Claiborne County in the late summer of 1868. Scott County, one of the poorest counties in the state, was the first to report its schools organized and opened in every district. The new school system was far from perfect in spite of its popularity. Physical facilities were usually poor. Schoolhouses were generally constructed of rough-hewn logs, and a few were wood frame structures. Even Knox County could boast of only one brick school within its boundaries. And in many schools, teachers were quite often poorly qualified. In Bradley County, superintendent A. E. Blount reported a combination of problems including the scarcity and poor quality of school houses, the lack of qualified teachers, and the indifference of some parents. Nevertheless, Bradley County had forty-five schools in operation by the end of 1868, most of which operated on five-month terms.[29]

School administrators throughout East Tennessee urged Eaton to obtain increased appropriations to improve educational conditions. And in his published report, Eaton asked for additional monies for schools, plus the development of normal schools for teachers, and equal opportunities for Negro teachers and pupils. But within a few months

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[29]Eaton, First Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 9, 11; see also LeRoy P. Graf (ed.), "Education in East Tennessee, 1867-1869, Selections from the John Eaton, Jr., Papers," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 23 (1951), 97-114.

after Eaton issued his report, Democrats who had gathered considerable political strength after many voting restrictions on ex-Confederates had been lifted, regained control of the General Assembly. Anxious to destroy the vestiges of the Brownlow Republican years, the new legislature scrapped much of the previous administration's programs including the 1867 school law. In its place, the lawmakers passed another law that remitted the whole question of public education to the counties without imposing any obligation to levy taxes for the support of schools. As a result, public schools throughout the state deteriorated rapidly. According to a Freedmen's Bureau official in July, 1870, not a single county had taken any step toward providing funds for education since the repeal of the 1867 law. Considering the weak financial condition of many counties in East Tennessee during and after the Civil War, it is easy to understand how local government was unable to carry the fiscal burden of supporting public schools. But the public outcry was so intense throughout the state that the General Assembly passed another law in 1873 which to a great extent revived the late 1867 statute and which is considered the "parent act" of the present public school system in Tennessee.[30]

In summary, it may be said that the Civil War had a dramatic, but temporary, impact on public and private education in East Tennessee. Colleges and secondary schools attempted to function as best they could, but divisions among students and faculty, the disruption of the economy, and the omnipresent threat of armies and guerrilla bands forced the

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[30]White, Tennessee Educational Organization, 113-14; Henry L. Swint (ed.), "Reports from Educational Agents of the Freedmen's Bureau in Tennessee, 1865-1870," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, I (1942), 166, 169.

closing of schools of every kind. East Tennesseans became painfully aware that formal education was virtually impossible in time of war. Yet once peace returned, the region made rapid educational recovery; and it seems that a renewed and more intense interest in education developed in the eastern counties. All colleges in the region but one (Greeneville College) opened their doors after the war, and even though they faced critical financial problems, all are still in existence today. Even though many of the antebellum private academies failed to survive the conflict, by the late 1860's several others had sprung up in their place.

But probably the most significant aspect of educational development in the Civil War decade was the intense campaign, led by East Tennessee, to establish a state public school system. Having supported the idea for years before the war, East Tennesseans were at last given the opportunity to organize an educational system from which even the poorest section of the state could benefit. As a result, by late 1868 public schools flourished throughout East Tennessee, and despite some local opposition, the new system was loudly applauded. For East Tennessee the war brought serious disruptions in education, but the end result was a system of public schools which the region had long sought.

CHAPTER VIII

"SAD DIVISIONS AND BITTER ALIENATION AMONG GOD'S PEOPLE": THE CHURCHES OF EAST TENNESSEE

No other aspect of the war in East Tennessee more cogently demonstrated the civil strife of the people than church divisions; for in many ways the activities of East Tennessee churches mirrored the anxieties, frustrations, and bitterness of society as a whole. While the vast majority of the clergy and churchmen in the rest of the South felt a strong identity with the Confederacy, no such feeling existed in the eastern counties of Tennessee. Beginning with the secession crisis, great numbers of East Tennessee congregations divided along lines of loyalty to the Union or Confederacy. No denomination or sect could escape the painful impact of political issues upon doctrinal faith; consequently, many congregations were rent asunder by the war, never to reunite.

This internecine religious conflict is especially significant in a study of East Tennessee's war experience, because it disturbed one of the region's key institutions. From the earliest settlements in the 1770's to the eve of the Civil War, the church had been an integral part of the lives of East Tennesseans. Initially Presbyterianism was the largest denomination, but over the decades the Baptist and Methodist churches, presenting services heavy laden with emotion and excitement, forged ahead in the number of congregations and church members under their charge. As a matter of fact, by 1860, some of the mountainous counties in upper East Tennessee were exclusively Baptist and Methodist, although

Presbyterians were a strong third contender elsewhere in the region. Regardless of local denominational proclivities, the landscape on the eve of the war was dotted with structures erected for worship; and although East Tennesseans were probably no more pious than their fellow Southerners, religion was nevertheless an important part of their lives. Thus their churches could not escape the bitter struggle that disrupted the region.[1]

Ironically, the Civil War was not the first time that the churches of the region clashed among themselves. As was true of American religion in general, inter- and intra-denominational disputes flourished in East Tennessee in the first half of the nineteenth century. As Oliver Temple observed, the people seemed to have a fondness for religious controversy much as they would for political campaigns. "Nothing pleased them so much," he remarked "as to hear their ministers launch their thunderbolts of arguments, sarcasm, and ridicule, and even hate, against other sects." For that matter, it was through heated religious debates that William G. Brownlow gained the title of "The Fighting Parson," as he championed the cause of Methodism and quarrelled with rival churches in the pages of the Whig.[2]

While the various denominations waged heated battles among themselves to win believers to their faith, there were also internal schisms over doctrine. By the 1830's, the Presbyterians of East Tennessee had divided into Old School and New School wings; and over the years the Baptists experienced constant dissension as splinter groups seceded from

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[1]Temple, East Tennessee, 67; Eighth Census, IV, 465-70; J. E. Alexander, A Brief History of the Synod of Tennessee (Philadelphia, 1890), 14.

[2]Temple, East Tennessee, 60; Coulter, Brownlow, 58-59, 64-72.

the parent church and formed into strongly independent sects. Meanwhile, East Tennessee Methodism was remarkably free of theological and doctrinal disputes. Possessed of a highly organized church structure, blessed with capable leadership within the Holston Conference, and with Parson Brownlow sounding the trumpet, the East Tennessee Methodists directed their quarrels to rival denominations.[3]

Although the East Tennessee churches had a well-established tradition of conflict, both internal and external, none of the earlier struggles matched the rancor and intensity of the Civil War years. The major reason was that the dispute which rocked the region's churches in the 1860's was not caused by mere doctrinal and theological differences, but by the major social and political issues that disrupted the nation and East Tennessee. This was the unique feature of the religious struggle of the 1860's, because prior to the Civil War, the churches had been remarkably quiescent on the controversial non-secular issues of the day. Before the war the major denominations of East Tennessee had generally sided with their Southern colleagues on endorsing the institution of slavery; but with the exception of Parson Brownlow, they expressed none of the rabid and

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[3]William B. Sprague (ed.), Presbyterianism, Vol. III of Annals of the American Pulpit . . . (9 vols.; New York, 1857-69), x; Ezra H. Gillet, History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (2 vols.; Philadelphia, 1872), I, 1; Alexander, Synod of Tennessee, 29-32; Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, I, 409-10; W. Fred Kendall, A History of the Tennessee Baptist Convention (Brentwood, Tennessee, 1974), 48-49, 52-53, 84-85; Lawrence Edwards, "History of the Baptists of Tennessee with Particular Attention to the Primitive Baptists of East Tennessee" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1941), 45-46; Price, Holston Methodism, IV, passim; Temple, East Tennessee, 95-103; R. N. Price, "Methodism in East Tennessee, Before, During, and Since the War," Methodist Quarterly Review, XXXIV (1908), 293; Coulter, Brownlow, 94-95.

almost militant rhetoric espoused by many Deep South ministers. Certainly the churches of East Tennessee did not regard the issue of slavery as a major concern to the worship of God; to most, the issue was best left alone.[4] And much like Brownlow, even though many East Tennesseans may have endorsed their church's alignment with the pro-slavery wing of their denomination, it did not mean that they backed a similar move to support the Confederacy. Because of this seemingly ambivalent stance, the churches of East Tennessee were on the verge of their bitterest and most divisive split as clouds of civil war drifted over the region in 1861. Just as many churchmen would oppose secession, others, clergy and laymen alike, maintained that it was the duty of every true Christian to support the new Southern republic and to persuade the churches to join the cause.

Scholars of the church during the Civil War have maintained that Southern churchmen, as a whole, supported secession and felt a strong identity with the Confederacy. According to William Sweet, this feeling was so strong that frequently ministers served their congregations with patriotic speeches rather than sermons based on the Gospel. Another student points out that Southern clergymen had for generations given the church's blessings to the institution of slavery and its spread; and when the sectional crisis intensified in late 1860 and early 1861, "the more militant men of God were easily in the vanguard of the secession movement."[5]

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[4]William W. Barnes, The Southern Baptist Convention, 1845-1953 (Nashville, 1954), 30-32; Kendall, Tennessee Baptist Convention, 104-07; Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, I, 409, 546-47; Alexander, Synod of Tennessee, 35; Ben W. Barrus, Milton L. Baughn, Thomas H. Campbell, A People Called Cumberland Presbyterians (Memphis, 1972), 151.

[5]William W. Sweet, Methodism in American History (New York, 1933), 283; James W. Silver, Confederate Morale and Church Propaganda (Tuscaloosa, 1957), 23-24; W. Harrison Daniel, "Protestant Clergy and Union Sentiment

But was this true of the East Tennessee clergy during the secession crisis and the war years? Somewhat sketchy and contradictory evidence makes a precise determination difficult. But the official actions and policies of the Methodist Holston Conference and the Union Presbytery during the war indicate that several ministers in those denominations approved of the Confederacy.

Parson Brownlow stoutly maintained that the clergy of East Tennessee as a whole sided with the South. He declared that the ministry, high and low, without regard to denomination, "have raised the howl of Secession, and it falls like an Indian war-cry upon our citizens from their prostituted pulpits every Sabbath." In 1862 he insisted that preachers had done more to bring about the deplorable state of affairs than any other class of men. And a little later the arch-defender of Methodism exclaimed, "The worst class of men who make tracks upon Southern soil are Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Episcopal clergymen, and at the head of these for mischief are the Southern Methodists." Brownlow became so ensnared in the events of 1861 and embittered over the politics of the pastorate that he began to advocate the elimination of all denominationalism. He urged instead the formation of a "Union Church," where "portions of us belonging to different denominations, or even to no sect" might organize a congregation and attract a minister who would not "mix

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in the Confederacy," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, XXIII (1964), 284. Another student of Southern churches observes that while clergymen from the Border States were generally moderate in attitude during the secession crisis, "Once the die was cast . . . their deep sense of loyalty, coupled with a sincere belief that God favored the South led the overwhelming majority . . . to become ardent supporters of the Confederacy." Willard E. Wight, "Churches in the Confederacy" (Ph.D. dissertation, Emory University, 1957), 198.

up the sacred truths of Holy Writ with the abominable heresy of secession." The pro-Confederate Knoxville Register, however, maintained that this church would be even more political than the old sects. "Not repentance for sins and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, but blind adherence to Lincoln's military despotism," would be the foundation of the congregation. Despite Brownlow's hopes, a "Union Church" never materialized.[6]

The Parson, who often took a warped or at least unrealistic view of issues, may have been greatly influenced by his immediate environment, because the Knoxville ministry was mostly pro-Southern. Yet in reality a large number of the Protestant clergy in East Tennessee professed devotion to the Union. Undoubtedly the sectional loyalties of many pastors were determined by the allegiances of their congregations. The Holston Conference was the only conference in the Methodist denomination, according to Bishop James O. Andrew, where there was any serious division of sentiment among the clergy. In his History of the Rebellion in Bradley County, J. S. Hurlburt listed twice as many (14 to 7) "Union Methodist" clergymen as "Rebel ministers" in the county. And of eight Cumberland Presbyterian churches recorded in Bradley in the 1860 census, Hurlburt noted five Cumberland ministers who were Unionists. Ernest Thompson, historian of Southern Presbyterianism, points out that in East Tennessee the Knoxville pastorate was definitely Confederate, pastors of the rural churches in the surrounding area leaned toward the Union, while Northern sentiment was supreme in the mountainous sections. Several East Tennessee preachers served as chaplains in the Union army; and Reverend William B.

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[6]Knoxville Whig, May 18, August 10, 1861; Knoxville Register, August 15, 1861.

Carter, a Presbyterian minister, was the chief instigator of the bridge-burning episode of November, 1861. At the same time there must have been a large number of East Tennessee clergymen who had ambivalent feelings about the national crisis and they simply did not know which way to go. In the summer of 1861, J. K. Stringfield, a Methodist circuit rider in upper East Tennessee and soon to become a chaplain in the Confederate army, noted in his diary those Methodist ministers who, he believed, were secessionists or Unionists. He analyzed them by district.

Rogersville--2 Secessionists, 1 Unionist, 20 unmarked
Knoxville --4 Secessionists, 2 Unionists, 10 unmarked
Cumberland --0 Secessionists, 1 Unionist, 15 unmarked
Chattanooga--1 Secessionist, 0 Unionists, 15 unmarked
Athens --3 Secessionists, 3 Unionists, 15 unmarked

The total number of secessionists outnumbered Unionists 10 to 7, but there were 75 names unmarked. Stringfield gave no explanation why he did not assess the loyalty of so many pastors; possibly he was ignorant of the nature of their stance. Several may have steadfastly refused to reveal their sympathies while maintaining that their loyalty was to the Gospel only. At the annual meeting of the Nolachucky Baptist Association in August, 1861, even though some preachers had clearly defined national loyalties, the majority agreed to remain neutral and not allow political strife enter into their work. Even Parson Brownlow had maintained that his Union Church would have a pastor who would "neither preach, exhort, or pray anything connected with party politics." Despite such wishes, most pastors and churches in East Tennessee were eventually caught up in the vortex of civil war; and just as the people of the region were torn by sectional strife, so were their churches.[7]

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[7]George S. Smith, The Life and Letters of James Osgood Andrew (Nashville, 1882), 439; Hurlburt, Bradley County, 278; Eighth Census.

Stringfield's diary reveals how one East Tennessee preacher reacted to the secession crisis. Toward the end of 1860 political concerns were more on his mind than ever before. On November 6, he cast his ballot for John Bell for president, the first election in which he had ever bothered to vote; to him, the election was too important to ignore. By the spring of 1861, especially after Sumter, Stringfield made it clear that secession and impending war had become closely intermingled with his ministerial duties. He tried to preach at Kelly's School in upper East Tennessee on April 20, but excitement about "the war" was so intense that he was certain little good was done by his sermon. But he was determined to be faithful in his religious duties; for the present crisis was no time to neglect them. By mid-June, however, Stringfield was carried away by a spirit of secessionism. On June 8 he voted for the "immediate, unconditional and eternal separation of the State of Tennessee from the miserable yankee union." And then for the first time in his life he did not preach a sermon based solely on the Gospel, but a "secular sermon" in anticipation of war. Within a few weeks, he would give up his circuit and become chaplain of the 1st Tennessee Volunteers.[8]

Various aspects of religious activity were affected in East Tennessee as a result of the national crisis. By the summer of 1861, Parson Brownlow reported that few "camp meetings" (revivals) had been held and

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IV, 467; Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, II, 66; J. K. Stringfield Diary, summer 1861, SHC; Glenn A. Toomey, The Sesquicentennial History of the Nolachucky Baptist Association, 1828-1977 (Morristown, Tennessee, 1977), 42-44; Knoxville Whig, August 10, 1861.

[8]Stringfield Diary, November 6, 1860, April 19, 20, June 18, 1861, SHC. There is no indication that another minister replaced Stringfield on the circuit.

those that had met were failures. As a matter of fact, he observed, the "state of feeling" in the region was by no means favorable to religious meetings of any kind. Several preachers had become army chaplains--for the $90 a month, said the Parson. Too many pastors had entered into public issues of the day and the result was that almost every congregation had a division of sentiment. "The pastors are becoming brutish, advising bloodshed and death, and the flocks are scattering--Churches are breaking up--men and women are refusing to attend religious services," he cried. Unfortunately there were no prayers for peace, concluded the Parson. Indeed many congregations in East Tennessee began to fall apart in the summer of 1861. Even the Lutheran church in the German community of Wartburg split into warring factions with Reverend John Wilcken leading Unionist members and George F. Gerding taking charge of Confederate sympathizers.[9]

It is evident from church records in East Tennessee that almost immediately the division of the people and the pressures of war interrupted the religious activities of many congregations. For these churches the records are starkly blank during the war years, probably indicating that all religious activities came to a halt. The Sevierville Baptist Church, for example, held its last service in January, 1861; and although there is some indication that occasional services were held in the Sevier County courthouse, the congregation did not resume full worship until April, 1876. In December, 1861, the last entry in the minutes of the First Baptist Church of Clinton stated, "The Church meetings have been

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[9]Knoxville Whig, August 31, 1861; Ethel Freytag and Glena K. Ott, A History of Morgan County, Tennessee (Wartburg, 1971), 55.

suspended because of the great national calamity." Records for this church did not resume until August, 1867. In parts of East Tennessee where Confederate loyalties were strong, congregations lost young men who volunteered into the army. And as Confederate control tightened in the eastern counties, people with Union proclivities left for Kentucky in large numbers, much to the detriment of the churches they may have attended.[10]

It would be incorrect, however, to assume that all church functions and organized religious activities came to a halt during the Civil War. On the contrary, churches operated on a normal schedule well into the conflict until the occupation of Federal troops or the campaign of terror by guerrillas and bushwackers shut the doors of many houses of worship. Myra Inman of Cleveland, for instance, had a record of regular church attendance until the last year or two of the war. Throughout the war, chaplains from military units stationed nearby preached in pulpits in the absence of local preachers. And a few churches kept continuous records throughout the war which reveal that regular congregational activities were maintained and give no indication that a bitter national struggle was going on outside the walls of the church.[11]

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[10] Records of the Sevierville Baptist Church, passim, McClung Collection; Mary Weaver, One Hundred Years--A Story of the First Baptist Church, Clinton, Tennessee (Clinton, no date), 13; Toomey, History of Nolachucky Baptist Association, 46-47. For other examples, see Records of Hopewell Presbyterian Church (Dandridge), Hickory Grove Cumberland Presbyterian Church (Monroe County), St. Mary's Evangelical Lutheran Church (Monroe County), McClung Collection; Boone's Creek Church of Christ (Washington County), TSLA; and Slate Creek Baptist Church (Cocke County), UT Special Collections.

[11] Myra Inman Diary, passim, SHC; see Records of the Paw Paw Hollow Baptist Church (Knox County), Washington Presbyterian Church (Knox County), McClung Collection; and Notchey Creek Baptist Church (Monroe County), TSLA.

Although many churches continued to function routinely, they were nevertheless greatly affected by the war. Most churches experienced a dramatic reduction in membership after 1861. As mentioned above, churches lost large numbers of young men of military age; but this had a less serious impact on congregations located in major military centers such as Chattanooga and Knoxville. Reverend David Sullins, pastor of Knoxville Methodist Church (now Church Street), reported that while many men in the congregation had joined the army, the city was so full of soldiers and "strangers" in the first years of the war that he had no trouble in filling the pews. First Presbyterian of Chattanooga was near enough to the Confederate camps to draw large numbers of soldiers. As a matter of fact, Reverend T. H. McCallie recalled that in the summer of 1863 "our own ordinary congregation of citizens was about crowded out by the soldiers." But the congregation's composition could change almost overnight. On the first Sunday of September, 1863, McCallie preached to a house filled with gray coats, soldiers and officers of the Confederate army, and a scattering of citizens. On the second Sunday, after Chattanooga came under Federal control, the church was crowded again, but this time with the blue coats of Union soldiers.[12]

Churches in Knoxville were similarly affected by the war, but with some unique developments. For example, John Scott was a member of the Second Presbyterian Church, which had long supported temperance; as troops began to pour into Knoxville in 1861, Scott opened a saloon in

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[12]David Sullins, Recollections of an Old Man, Seventy Years in Dixie, 1827-1897 (Bristol, Tennessee, 1910), 253; anon., "First Presbyterian Church, Chattanooga," unpublished typescript, TSLA.

response to demand. Reverend Joseph Martin and the session of Second Presbyterian summoned Scott several times to appear before them to explain his actions; but the saloon keeper realized a good thing when he saw it and refused the summons. So in January, 1862, the church struck Scott from its rolls. In a similar but somewhat seamier incident, it came to the attention of Reverend W. A. Harrison and the elders of First Presbyterian Church in 1862 that Emma Park, a member of the congregation, was running "a house of ill repute and committing lewd acts herself," no doubt in response to a large soldier clientele. When two elders called on Park to determine the validity of the rumor, she readily admitted her guilt. Within a few days, the session ordered her to appear before it on a Friday morning in the basement of the church to confess her sins openly. After several days of consideration, Park sent a stiff letter declining the summons of her church. Although again admitting that she was committing a sin, she was not yet ready to repent and reform. When that day came, she assured the session, she would seek the forgiveness of God, but not at First Presbyterian Church.[13]

By 1863, as the war wore on, many churches in East Tennessee had begun to falter--for several reasons. For one, by 1863 the region had become a battleground for opposing armies when General Rosecrans moved into lower East Tennessee and General Burnside took Knoxville. As the armies traversed the countryside and frequently skirmished, many citizens felt it unsafe to congregate even in church. Cedar Fork Baptist Church

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[13]Session Minutes (1861-62), Second Presbyterian Church, Knoxville (microfilm); and Session Minutes (1862), First Presbyterian Church, Knoxville (microfilm), McClung Collection.

in Philadelphia had met regularly since the beginning of the war, but this changed in the fall of 1863. An entry in the minutes stated, "Owing to the Raids made by the Rebels we held no church meetings in September, October, November and December." And Myra Inman, who had faithfully recorded church attendance in Cleveland since the commencement of the war, filled her pages with accounts of the activities of the armies, but made no mention of going to church during the winter of 1863-64. Until the end of the war, worship seemed to be only an occasional event for her. Again the ever present reality of armies and war seemed to interfere with religious concerns. "Mingling with the clear peels of the church bell was the distant roar of the drum--one calling the worshippers of God to the sanctuary the other waking the soldier up from his lazy place and calling him to the place of assemblage before going to inspection," she wrote in the summer of 1864.[14]

The campaign of terror waged by guerrillas and bushwackers in rural East Tennessee also contributed greatly to the demise of many houses of worship. The preacher of the Cades Cove Primitive Baptist Church was driven away and the church was forced to close its doors from late 1862 until 1865 for this reason. "It was on account of the rebelion [sic] and we was union people and Rebels was too strong here in Cades Cove," read the minutes. Big Pigeon Baptist Church in Sevier County met "up to sum time in 1863"; but according to its records, "the ware [sic] became so troublesome we had no more meetings untill first April 1872." And Cedar Fork Baptist Church in Philadelphia, after having to suspend

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[14]Records of Cedar Fork Baptist Church (Loudon County) (microfilm), TSLA; Inman Diary, 1864-65, passim, July 31, 1864, SHC.

services in December, 1864, because of sickness, possibly small pox, was again shut down in January "owing to raids made by the Rebels." Although many churches were forced to close their doors, a few of these congregations refused to let the war interrupt their worship completely. Greeneville Presbyterian Church, for example, did not have a regular minister during the war and services were held only sporadically. Nevertheless, members of the congregation faithfully maintained Sunday school classes even under the most trying of circumstances. When the Big Spring Primitive Baptist Church in Claiborne County ended formal services in May, 1863, because soldiers occupied the building, members simply moved their worship to a nearby school house. First Baptist Church of Clinton met week by week in the houses of its members and "prayed to God for mercy and help during the perilous times," according to the historian of the church. In Scott County, an area torn by fighting throughout the war, worshippers often held prayer meetings in private homes while local home guards patrolled the neighborhood to warn of impending Rebel guerrilla attacks.[15]

Another major factor which caused the waning of many East Tennessee churches was the question of loyalty--that is, the question of the national loyalty of the church organization, an individual minister, or the majority of a congregation. Although the Baptist associations and the minor

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[15]Records of Cades Cove Primitive Baptist Church (June, 1865), quoted in Durwood C. Dunn, "Cades Cove During the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Tennessee, 1976), 153; Records of Big Pigeon Baptist Church (Sevier County), McClung Collection; W. S. Rosenbalm, "History of Big Spring Church" (Claiborne County), privately published pamphlet, 1934, copy in McClung Collection; Mary Weaver, First Baptist Church, Clinton, 13; Sanderson, Scott County, 72.

denominations of East Tennessee never made official pronouncements concerning the allegiance of their churches, the hierarchy of both the Methodist and Presbyterian churches did. Initially both denominations tried to stay away from any political dabbling. At the annual meeting of the Holston Methodist Conference in October, 1861, the presiding bishop was James O. Andrew, a moderate averse to mixing religion and politics. The only politically related action taken was to insert prayers for the Confederacy rather than the United States in its litany. Within a year, however, the official policy of the church changed dramatically. Under the direction of Bishop John Early, brother of Confederate General Jubal Early, the Holston Conference proclaimed fidelity to the Confederate government. According to the historian of the Holston Conference, Early was "deeply pious," but he was "aristocratic and haughty, and he was a typical Southern fire eater." When the conference met in Athens in October, 1862, Early dominated it and convinced the delegates that Southern rights and religious endeavors were identical. The conference then proceeded to expel nine ministers who were professed Unionists; it elected Jefferson Davis, and Generals Sterling Price, John Hunt Morgan, Simon B. Buckner, Robert E. Lee, and Stonewall Jackson to life membership in the "Parent Missionary Society." The next year, after East Tennessee had fallen under Federal control, the Holston Conference met at Wytheville, Virginia, and again expelled ministers considered disloyal to the Confederacy. In 1864, Bishop Early held the conference in Bristol, where additional ministers were stricken from the rolls. The

conference also forbade any minister from taking an oath to support the Federal government.[16]

Similar sentiments were expressed by the Presbyterian Church. The Synod of Tennessee held no regular meetings after the fall of 1861, because of wartime disruptions. But in May of 1863, Union Presbytery, twenty of whose thirty churches were in Blount, Knox, and Jefferson counties, passed resolutions stating that they would not license, ordain, or receive from another presbytery any man who "does not sympathize with the South in her present struggle for independence, or who holds that slaveholding is sinful and ought to be abolished."[17]

By thus taking a public stand on national loyalty, these churches were subject to reprisals, once their enemy gained control of the region. But even a church or congregation which had made no public statements concerning loyalty could suffer, simply because its pastor or a majority of its members were identified as pro-Union or pro-Confederate. Those churches that were known to be predominantly Union in sympathy, such as the Cedar Fork Baptist Church or the Cades Cove Primitive Baptist Church, could be forced to close out of simple considerations of safety. But the question of loyalty could weaken a church in other ways. For example, if a pastor expressed strong sympathies for the Confederacy and had a large following, those in opposition to his views could refuse to participate in the church's functions or break away on their own, thus weakening

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[16]Price, Holston Methodism, IV, 299-304.

[17]Records of the Presbytery of Union (1863-74), typescript, VI, 5, McClung Collection; Alexander, Synod of Tennessee, 34-35; Thompson, Presbyterians of the South, II, 126.

the original congregation. Two Cumberland Presbyterian ministers in Greeneville, John P. Holtsinger and Joseph B. Dobson, who were Unionists, came under the wrath of the Greeneville Tri-Weekly Banner in June, 1862. The paper accused Holtsinger of breaking up the church. If he had only "behaved himself" he could have had one of the finest churches in upper East Tennessee. "But instead of doing as a sensible man ought to," the paper declared, "he pawed and bellowed around for old Abe Lincoln and his abolition host, got himself into close quarters and had as he thought to hide out in caves, and elsewhere, until he is ashamed to be seen in our town and church house standing statu quo [sic], and the flock gone to the four winds, so far as an organization is concerned." As for Dobson, he had made "fine progress" toward breaking up his Shiloh Church. The Banner concluded with a grim warning: "Lookout Dobson, for Tuscaloosa [Prison]." Dobson was forced to abdicate his pastorate until after the war and Holtsinger escaped the area to become a chaplain in the 13th Tennessee Cavalry.[18]

Just as Dobson and Holtsinger were compelled to give up their parish ministries during Confederate control, the same thing happened to Rebel clergymen after 1863. George F. Eagleton, a Presbyterian minister who was a refugee from Middle Tennessee, accepted the call of the New Market Presbyterian Church in Jefferson County in 1863. Although

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[18]Greeneville Tri-Weekly Banner, June 4, 1862. W. H. Duggan, a Methodist minister who rode the Athens Circuit, did not escape punishment. In September, 1861, he was arrested by Confederate officials for continuing to pray for the United States government and was forced to march fifty miles to Knoxville to face charges in Confederate court. Fortunately for him, the charges were dropped and he was released. Knoxville Whig, September 28, 1861; Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 144.

Eagleton was pro-Southern, he made no references to political concerns from the pulpit. But after Federal occupation in the fall of that year, a small group of Unionists in his congregation, using veiled threats and anonymous letters, tried to force him to resign. When he refused, a gang of ruffians came to his home, forced him out of bed into the night air, and gave him "forty save one" bloody stripes to the back. "The men who inflicted this merciless scouraging [?] were mere tools, in the hands of the disaffected minority in the New Market Presbyterian Church!," he recalled. Even after this beating Eagleton was determined to stay on; but threats to his family and friends convinced him to flee the area in the fall of 1864.[19]

The clergy of Knoxville in particular was identified as being pro-Southern. Reverend Joseph Martin of Second Presbyterian Church was a friend of the South early in the secession crisis. When one of his elders, Congressman Horace Maynard, escaped East Tennessee in the fall of 1861, Martin prayed for the damnation of all such traitors. It was reported that Maynard's wife sat in the congregation as Martin uttered the prayer. In April of 1862, the session of the First Presbyterian Church left little room for doubt about its sympathies when it sent official word to the Confederate Ordnance Department officer in town that "the church bell was subject to his order, provided the Confederate Government needed it for the defense of the country." After East Tennessee came under Federal control, Daniel Larned of General Burnside's staff noted the pro-Southern leanings of the Knoxville churches. One Sunday in

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[19]Alden B. Pearson, Jr., "A Middle-Class Border-State Family During the Civil War," Civil War History, XXII (1976), 331-32.

October, 1863, he went to Second Presbyterian where half the congregation was composed of Union soldiers and the other half was regular members who "stared daggers" at the men in blue. As Larned prepared to take his seat, a woman in the opposite end of the pew gathered up her skirt and turned her back to him. Reverend Martin made no mention of the war or of the country that day. Reverend W. A. Harrison of First Presbyterian, however, was much more outspoken. Larned quoted him as declaring publicly, "Jesus Christ and all his apostles were Southern men save one. That was Judas a vile Massachusetts Yankee." Larned decided that he would attend the Episcopal Church thereafter, because it was "strongly Union" and its rector, Thomas W. Humes, was a recently returned refugee.[20]

Ministers who had shown pro-Confederate tendencies suffered soon after Federal occupation. Parson Brownlow, for one, was determined that clergymen who supported the rebellion should pay for such sentiments. He had proclaimed from exile that he was going to "resurrect the Knoxville Whig and pour hot shot into their rotten hulks." As far as Brownlow was concerned, there had been little true religion in Knoxville "since we Christians were driven out, and forced into Kentucky." Once back in town, he began to publish names of individuals under the title of "Traitors in our Midst!" He reported that Joseph Martin "is a traitor whose guilt is only equaled by his impudence in daring to walk the streets in day time, and look honest men in the face." Then the Parson "ventilated" W. A. Harrison of First Presbyterian and Isaac Lewis of First

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[20] Riggs, "Horace Maynard, Some Facts and Stories," 27; unidentified newspaper clipping in Tilghman-Haws Scrapbook, UT Special Collections; Session Minutes (1862), First Presbyterian Church, Knoxville, McClung Collection; Daniel Larned to "Sister," October 5, 1863, Larned MSS, LC.

Methodist. How much influence Brownlow had cannot be determined; but by the end of January, 1864, both Martin and Harrison were classified as traitors by the Provost Marshal and sent south behind Confederate lines. Rufus Stevens, a Methodist minister from Knoxville and a devoted Confederate sympathizer, was arrested and sent to prison in Cincinnati, where he died in February, 1864, after suffering through several weeks of serious illness.[21]

Soon the functions of almost all the big churches in Knoxville came to a halt. In September of 1864, the Baptist Home Mission Board of New York sent the Reverend Daniel W. Phillips to help reorganize First Baptist Church. Shortly after his arrival, Phillips dispatched reports to his headquarters office describing the state of religion in Knoxville. He noted that only one of the city's regular ministers--Humes of St. John's Episcopal--was left in the city. At one time the Federal government had taken possession of all churches except the Episcopal. One Methodist church had been destroyed during Longstreet's siege and another had been made into a government warehouse, only to have the floor cave in after the building had become over loaded with supplies. First Baptist Church had been turned over to the United Presbyterian Mission and was being used as a school for freedmen and an army hospital. Some churches, however, were subsequently returned to their congregations. Through the influence of elder Horace Maynard, Second

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[21]Knoxville Whig, November 11, 1863, January 9, 30, February 13, 27, 1864; Price, Holston Methodism, IV, 374-75; Sullins, Recollections of an Old Man, 260-61; Edward Maynard to Horace Maynard, February 7, 1864, Maynard MSS, UT Special Collections.

Presbyterian was restored as a house of worship in August of 1864, after being used as a hospital for several months. By the end of the year, Reverend Phillips persuaded Federal authorities to return the First Baptist property to its congregation. But regular church meetings were not held until 1866, because the church was without a pastor and the congregation was so scattered.[22]

Churches in Chattanooga experienced a similar fate. Many were taken over as army hospitals and did not resume normal worship until the end of the war. Reverend Thomas McCallie of First Presbyterian held services in his home after his church was occupied as a hospital. On one occasion he was arrested and reprimanded for praying for the health of Jefferson Davis; but the pastor was allowed to continue his ministry and preached to large numbers of Federal soldiers who overflowed the rooms of his home almost every Sunday morning. Nevertheless, by late 1864, in both the rural areas and urban centers of East Tennessee, the churches were still under severe strain. As a correspondent wrote in the Christian Observer, an official publication of the Presbyterian Church, "the public exercise of religious worship is rapidly being destroyed" in East Tennessee. "Many of our ministers have been compelled to flee the country--," continued the report, "others have abandoned the work of the ministry and devote their attention to the support of their families." From what he could determine, most of the Presbyterian churches in the region were closed.[23]

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[22]Report of Reverend Daniel W. Phillips, quoted in anon., "History of First Baptist Church, Knoxville" (microfilm), McClung Collection.

[23]Isaac P. Martin, Church Street Methodists, Children of Francis Asbury (Knoxville, 1947), 67; Session Minutes (1864), Second Presbyterian

By the end of the war the churches of East Tennessee were in the most depressed condition of their existence, in terms of property and finances. Cleveland Baptist Church was totally wrecked--its floor, pews, pulpit, doors, blinds, and window sashes had been used for fuel by soldiers. To make matters worse, the congregation was forced to sell what was left of the building to satisfy the debt contracted during its original construction. T. H. McCallie recalled that when the congregation of First Presbyterian, Chattanooga, reentered the church building "there were only bare blackened walls, not a pew and not a vestage [sic] of church furniture of any kind. . . ." Members of Knoxville Methodist Church were faced with making immense repairs after their sanctuary had been used for the storage of commissary supplies. The financial condition of most churches was such that any thoughts of using church funds to repair damages were unrealistic. Westminster Presbyterian of Morristown, for example, reported a congregational fund of $2,481.50 at the end of 1861, but during the war it plummeted to as low as $2.20. By the end of 1865 the fund had risen only to $238.80, barely enough to pay a pastor.[24]

Church, Knoxville, McClung Collection; Records of First Baptist Church, Knoxville (microfilm), McClung Collection; Zella Armstrong, History of the First Presbyterian Church of Chattanooga (Chattanooga, 1945), 23; Christian Observer, September 29, 1864, quoted in Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, II, 67.

[24]John M. Wooten, A History of Bradley County (Cleveland, Tennessee, 1949), 137-38; Armstrong, First Presbyterian, Chattanooga, 35; Records of Knoxville Methodist Episcopal (Church Street Methodist) Church, typescript, UT Special Collections; Records of Westminster and St. Paul's Presbyterian Church (Hamblen County), McClung Collection. See also Toomey, History of the Nolachucky Baptist Association, 51, 55.

The extent of damage to East Tennessee churches as a whole cannot be exactly determined, but a comparison of the 1860 and 1870 censuses gives some indication of how the war years exacted their toll upon church property. Fifteen out of the region's thirty-one counties reported decreases in the value of church property during the 1860's. Particularly hard-hit was lower East Tennessee (see Figure 9), where military operations had been extensive and where political divisions had been so pronounced as to have possible impact upon church divisions. When compared to the rest of the state, it is evident that the churches of the eastern counties suffered much more during the decade. Only five counties in Middle Tennessee and three in West Tennessee reported decreases in the value of church property. While the total value increased by 92 percent in Middle Tennessee and 100 percent in West Tennessee, it increased by only 28 percent in East Tennessee.[25]

Many churches in the region immediately tried to seek aid in recouping their losses. In July of 1865, Knoxville Methodist Church appointed three men to assess damages to the church and then sent representatives to Nashville to meet with Colonel A. I. Mackey, Chief Quartermaster for the Department of Tennessee. Possibly because the new pastor of the church was a Unionist and because Parson Brownlow, a former member, was now governor of the state, the church was awarded $3,600 in damages. First Presbyterian Church in Chattanooga was also very fortunate. Mrs. William Crutchfield, wife of the Republican Congressman, pleaded with Federal authorities for funds to help restore the church of which she

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[25] Eighth Census, IV, 467, 470; Ninth Census, I, 554.

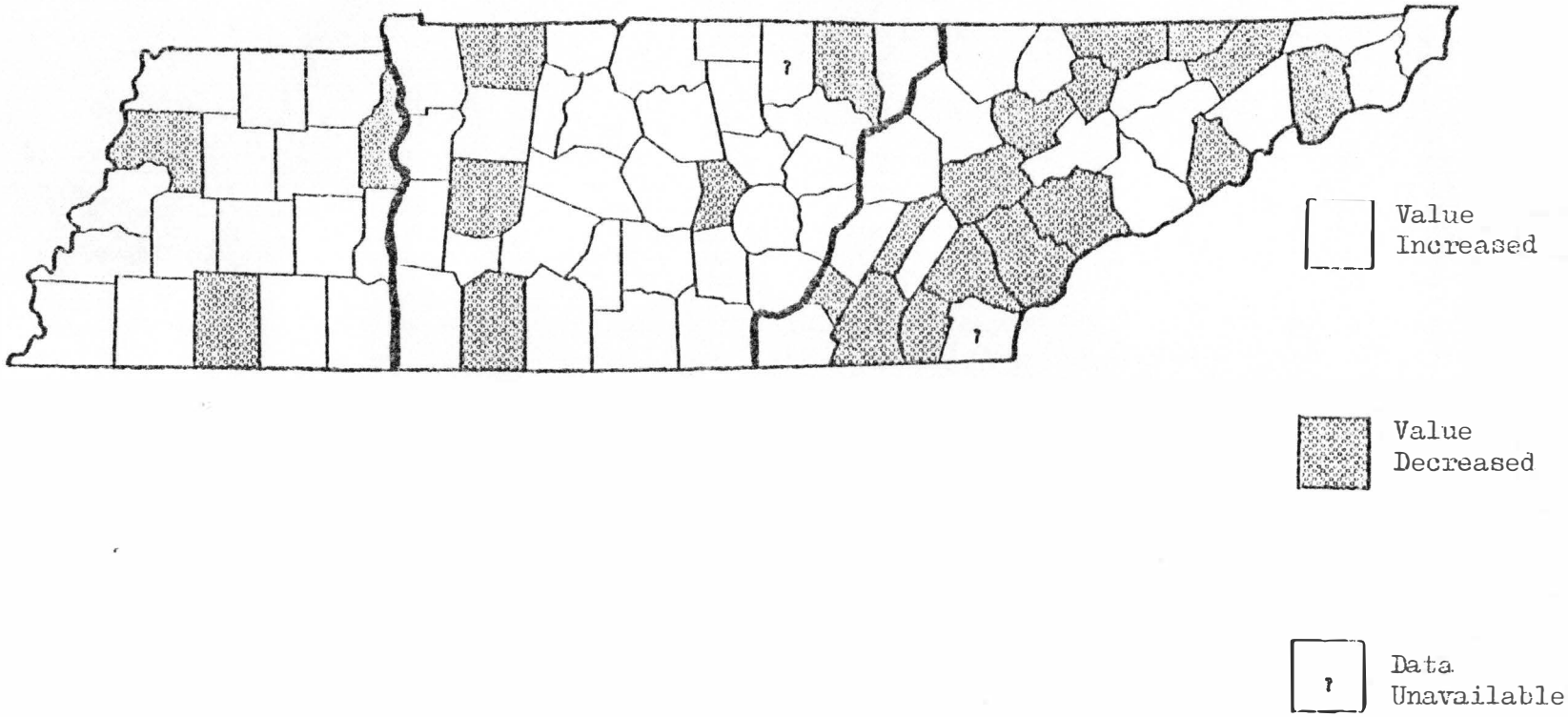

Figure 9. Fluctuations in value of church property, 1860-70.

Source: 1860 and 1870 Census.

was a member. Through her influence and the influence of some Congressmen who had been Federal officers and had attended First Presbyterian during the war, Congress awarded $4,590 to the church in 1866. The money was quickly put to use for making repairs and buying furniture. Other churches with less influence, however, were not so fortunate. Chattanooga Methodist had been very pro-Confederate during the war. While the city was under Federal occupation, all of the furnishings were removed, the church bell stolen, windows and doors knocked out, and the floor torn up. Despite the church's repeated attempts to receive compensation after the war, not until 1918 did the Federal government award it a damage claim. The house of worship for Shunem Presbyterian Church of Strawberry Plains was destroyed by Federal troops during the war. The church, however, was unsuccessful in receiving compensation from the Federal government or donations from the New School General Assembly even though it had been "notoriously known as the Lincoln Church" of the community during the war. Nevertheless, Shunem Church was able to take care of the matter itself. "We have determined to erect another house," declared the church records, "and for this purpose have obtained in reliable subscription eighteen hundred dollars this too in the face of extreme devastation by the war--our fences almost wholy [sic] destroyed and our live stock wholy consumed by the two armies which during the last two years of the war were settled like locusts upon us."[26]

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[26]Records of Knoxville Methodist Episcopal (Church Street Methodist) Church, UT Special Collections; Armstrong, First Presbyterian, Chattanooga, 35-36; Mary T. Peacock, The Circuit Rider and those Who Followed, Sketches of Methodist Churches Organized Before 1860 in the Chattanooga Area (Chattanooga, 1957), 84; Session Minutes (1866), Shunem

In addition to the appalling physical and monetary losses incurred during the war, East Tennessee churches suffered in more serious ways. Many churches, regardless of denomination, experienced serious rifts because of political differences within the congregation; and the wounds that resulted simply would not heal, though armies ceased to fight and peace was proclaimed throughout the land. Although one of the chief tenets of Christianity is absolution, there was little forgiveness in the churches during and immediately following the war. A year after the war, the newly created Holston Presbytery recorded the evidence of unsanctified as well as sanctified affliction:

> The ravages of war have left many of our church buildings and school houses in a dilapidated condition with but little means of repairing them. But in some places there are ruins sadder than these. Sad divisions and bitter alienation among God's people furnish the world an opportunity of taunting and reproaching by saying, "see how these Christians hate one another."[27]

The Methodists of East Tennessee, the strongest and most unified denomination in the region in the antebellum period, were the most bitterly divided as a result of the war. The actions of the Holston Conference in expelling Unionist ministers laid the foundations for trouble in the Methodist Church in the years to come. When Parson Brownlow returned to Knoxville in the fall of 1863, he attempted to persecute his former Methodist colleagues, asserting that he would "feel more honored to be

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Presbyterian Church (Jefferson County), McClung Collection. For the general problems of collecting damage claims after the war see Frank W. Klingberg, The Southern Claims Commission (Berkeley, 1955).

[27]Minutes of the Holston Presbytery (1866), quoted in Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, II, 130.

associated with a pack of Professional Gamblers than with a Conference of Methodist Rebel preachers." It was not long before he began advocating the organization of the "loyal" Methodist churches of East Tennessee into the Methodist Episcopal Church (Northern Methodist). The idea was not unique to East Tennessee. Several Methodist army chaplains in Confederate-occupied territory had urged that churches deserted by their pro-Southern ministers be turned over to the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Two influential bishops, Matthew Simpson and John Ames, persuaded Secretary of War Edwin Stanton to grant favors to their church. On November 30, 1863, the Secretary issued an order which placed at the disposal of Bishop Ames "all houses of worship belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in which a loyal preacher appointed by a loyal bishop does not officiate." By early 1864 plans were made to carry out the program in East Tennessee and some of the pro-Union ministers who had been ousted from the Holston Conference in 1862 were reinstated.[28]

But some Unionist ministers were divided over whether to join the Methodist Episcopal Church or to form an independent Wesleyan church. While some feared that joining the Methodist Episcopal Church would mean domination by Northerners, others like Brownlow emphasized that an independent Wesleyan church involved the danger of being annexed by the "vile hypocrits" of the Southern Methodist Church. To come to a firm decision, the "loyal" Methodist ministers of East Tennessee held a convention in Knoxville in July of 1864. With fifty-five delegates in attendance,

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[28]Knoxville Whig, January 23, 1864; William B. Hesseltine, "Methodism and Reconstruction in East Tennessee," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 3 (1931), 47-48; Price, Holston Methodism, IV, 478.

including twenty-seven preachers, the convention agreed to return to the Northern church and proposed the formation of a new Holston Annual Conference. Afterwards supporters campaigned for the proposal and at an Athens meeting on June 1, 1865, the new Holston Conference was created. In its final form, it numbered fifty-three preachers, thirty-two of whom came from the old Southern church, and 6,494 members. Parson Brownlow urged all Southern Methodist ministers to join the "loyal" church and advocated the ousting of all "Rebel" bishops such as John Early.[29]

In the meantime, the bishops of the Southern Methodists set about reorganizing their own church. In September of 1865, East Tennessee members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, held an organizational meeting of the Holston Conference in Marion, Virginia. Delegates stated their desire to undo any wrongs which they might have committed and proclaimed their intention to be loyal. They pronounced their actions at the Athens meeting in 1862 as "hasty" and accepted the fact that slavery was dead. They urged all "brothers" who might have withdrawn from their conference to return; and ignoring the fact that many churches had voted to join the Northern church and were filled with ministers of that church, the conference announced appointments to all the charges in the territory.[30]

It did not take long for the Southern Methodists to realize that any attempt to reestablish themselves in East Tennessee would be no easy task. Taking time out from his gubernatorial duties, Brownlow urged

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[29]Knoxville Whig, May 28, 1864.

[30]Hesseltine, "Methodism and Reconstruction," 51-53; Price, Holston Methodism, IV, 353-54.

returned Union soldiers to seek revenge against those Southern Methodist ministers like Bishop Early who were responsible for the persecution of Unionists during the war. "If these men really believe that the Lord had called them to preach in East Tennessee," concluded the Parson, "they had better apply for a furlough, and ask to be relieved. For if they understand it, they will realize the truth of what they have often sung at their camp meetings--'Through tribulation deep the way to glory lies.'" Whether inspired by Brownlow or not, many veterans took revenge on Southern Methodist clergymen. When a group of preachers tried to hold a quarterly meeting in Decatur, a mob seized them, took them to Athens, and then drove these hapless clergymen out of town amidst jeers and taunts. There were reports of interrupted Southern Methodist meetings throughout East Tennessee. Reverend Thomas H. Pearne, ruling elder of the "loyal" Holston Conference, openly deplored the use of violence in dealing with the ministers of the Southern Methodist Church, despite genuine grievances against them. Regardless of Pearne's admonitions, force continued to be used in some instances and charges of personal violence were made on both sides.[31]

Fortunately the strife within the Holston Conference region was for the most part verbal rather than physical. Ironically, the rhetoric of both sides sounded much like the diatribes that national politicians would

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[31]Knoxville Whig, September 30, 1865; Price, Holston Methodism, IV, 459; Hesseltine, "Methodism and Reconstruction," 54-55. When Unionists attempted to disrupt the services of a Methodist minister in Blount County, the preacher simply drew two Colt '44 pistols from his saddle bags and proceeded to lead the congregation in the singing of "How Firm a Foundation." Questionnaire of William G. Allen, Questionnaires of Civil War Veterans, TSLA.

soon engage in. The Southern Methodists constantly accused the Methodist Episcopal Church of being radical, political, and abolitionist. When the Southern Holston Conference met at Asheville in 1866, a local newspaper praised the delegates and then declared that the Methodist Episcopal Church was "razed by abolition sociology" and desired to convert the people into "fanatics of politico-religious character, like themselves." Other accusations such as "negro equality" church, "horsethief" church, were directed at the Northern Methodists. Brownlow, Pearne, and their colleagues were just as vehement in their rejoinders and were not averse to "waving the bloody shirt." They declared that the Southern Methodists were pro-slave traitors who only maintained the interests of the Southern Confederacy. "Thousands of mounds in the National Cemetery within sight of Knoxville," declared Pearne, "proclaim the sad story of the rebel methodists. Thousands of hearts clad in mourning and homes dreary for the absent and the dead attest it. . . ." Such verbal jousting in East Tennessee led the Methodist Quarterly Review to observe that the area was "a lively battlefield even for the churchly war of thoughts and words."[32]

The strife within East Tennessee Methodism even spilled over into the courtroom. Because rival conferences had been established, each claimed possession of church property, asserting that it was the rightful owner. Several houses of worship were held by the Methodist Episcopal Church until a War Department order after the war restored the property to Southern Methodist congregations. And as late as 1869, a split in the

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[32]Knoxville Whig, May 30, October 24, 1866, February 27, 1867; Methodist Quarterly Review, I (1868), 634.

Jonesboro Methodist Church resulted in a lawsuit for control of the church building.[33]

The Presbyterians of East Tennessee confronted many of the same problems as their Methodist brethren. Although the Federal government made no attempt to intervene in Presbyterian affairs, the question of which wing of the denomination to affiliate with at war's end divided the church. After Federal control was restored in East Tennessee, "loyal" members of the Presbytery of Union quickly declared null and void the resolutions supporting the Confederacy and endorsing slavery. To them, such resolutions were a "shameful and inexcusable apostasy from those principles of patriotism and universal freedom."[34] In September, 1864, when most of the Southern ministers had left the region, Union and Kingston presbyteries voted unanimously to reconnect themselves with the New School General Assembly (predominantly Northern in membership) from which they had been separated since 1857.[35] The New School General Assembly (now officially the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.) met in May, 1865, and readily admitted the two East Tennessee presbyteries. There were conditions, however; they were directed "not to recognize or admit, as a

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[33]Price, Holston Methodism, IV, 357; Hesseltine, "Methodism and Reconstruction," 59. Unionist members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Maryville sought advice from Oliver Temple as to how they could gain legal title to the church. "The Point is that we want the Church in Loyal hands where it properly belongs," wrote one of the members, "& it is thought by pressing this claim we can get it now." It is not known how successful the "loyal" members were in gaining sole possession of the title. W. T. Parham to O. P. Temple, October 31, 1865, Temple MSS, UT Special Collections.

[34]Records of the Presbytery of Union, VI, 8, McClung Collection.

[35]Knoxville Whig, September 28, 1864. Holston Presbytery would join the New School Assembly in the fall of 1865. Alexander, Synod of Tennessee, 35.

member of their representative bodies, any minister known to be disloyal to the Government of the United States." The presbyteries concurred and also accepted the General Assembly's ruling that, within each congregation of the presbytery, members who had aided and abetted the rebellion would have to confess their sins for so doing. Soon afterward the East Tennessee presbyteries officially cast out their "rebel" ministers. The Presbytery of Union dropped seven ministers from its rolls, including Joseph Martin. It then invited those ministers from Northern states who so desired to come fill the empty pulpits. And throughout the East Tennessee presbyteries, loyalist clergymen proceeded to read out the names of those from whom penitence and confession were required. Upon a member's failure to respond, the congregation then excommunicated him as authorized by the General Assembly.[36]

By the spring of 1866, a letter published in the Christian Observer reported that nearly every Presbyterian minister between Washington and Hamilton counties, nearly 200 miles in length, whose sympathies were with the Confederacy during the war, had been driven away. Ministers from the North had frequently taken their place but had not been wholly successful in gaining respect. And in almost every congregation there were still wide differences of opinion on political subjects. These divisions led to the formation and growth of the Holston and Kingston presbyteries in 1865 and 1866, respectively, which became associated with the Southern General Assembly. Presbyterians who had been stricken from the rolls of

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[36]Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, II, 124-26; Alexander, Synod of Tennessee, 85-86; Records of the Presbytery of Union, VI, 13-14, McClung Collection.

churches because of their Rebel sympathies formed new congregations and joined the Southern presbyteries. Some congregations which had had Union proclivities during the war even joined these new presbyteries, because they disliked many of the "Yankee" ministers who had come to East Tennessee, claiming that these men were overly concerned with secular politics, especially with questions of racial equality. As a result, by the end of the decade the Southern Assembly came close to equalling its Northern counterpart in the eastern counties. In 1870 the respective assemblies reported as follows:

Assembly	ministers	churches	communicant members
Southern	17	42	2,427
Northern	25	47	3,141[37]

Although the Baptists of East Tennessee maintained loose denominational organizations as compared to the more rigid structures of the Methodists and the Presbyterians, they were by no means exempt from bitter internal struggles. After the war, the Powell Valley, Nolachucky, Hiwassee, and Tennessee associations of Primitive Baptists declared non-fellowship with those ministers and congregations which had "aided or abetted willingly in the past wicked rebellion against the government of the United States." And as was true of other denominations, pro-Confederate Baptists formed their own associations after the war. In Meigs County, for example, pro-Union Baptist churches remained in the independent Hiwassee United Baptist Association, while those with Southern sympathies joined the

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[37]Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, II, 129, 135.

newly-formed Eastanallee Baptist Association of the Southern Baptist Convention, which had no requirement to denounce former loyalty to the Confederacy. But because the association was in many ways nothing but an informal organization, such declarations were relatively insignificant to the Baptist churches in the region. By tradition, the individual congregation had been the backbone of the Baptist polity, and it was at this level that the denomination was most affected by internal division.[38]

The records of the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church of Kingston vividly reveal the bitterness that ruptured many churches. The congregation met only periodically during the war, and when it reassembled in October, 1865, the hatred instilled by four years of civil war prevailed. With Unionists in control of the church, the congregation passed resolutions declaring "an unfellowship with the Rebellion of 1861." They then sent a summons to certain "Brothers and Sisters" to come to the next congregational meeting in November and confess to "their course of action during the late rebellion." When the summoned members did not appear in November, the congregation agreed to give them another opportunity and wait another month. But when no confessors came in for the December meeting, Shiloh Baptist began to pass resolutions of "exclusion." It "excluded" thirteen men for having joined the Rebel army and for refusing to renounce their actions before the church. Over the next five months another forty-five men and women were removed from the church rolls for their "Rebel associations." In the meantime, the "Rebel" members

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[38] Edwards, "History of the Baptists in Tennessee," 73-74; Lillard, Meigs County, 141.

assembled in December, 1865, declaring themselves the "true Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church." Since they proclaimed themselves the legitimate church body, they began to "exclude" the Unionists members of the congregation for having caused "discord and confusion in the church."[39]

The forces that divided Shiloh Baptist ripped through many other churches in East Tennessee in the immediate postwar period. Just as ex-Rebels were being excluded from the ballot box and forced to leave their homes, revenge-minded Unionists saw to it that Rebels would also be excluded from any "loyal" house of worship. In some areas occasional acts of violence against "Rebel" preachers were reported as late as 1869 and acts of exclusion based on wartime loyalties would be continued by a few churches until the 1870's. But as was true of East Tennessee politics and society in general, sectional tensions within the churches began to subside by the end of the decade. Much of this was due, of course, to the fact that splits within congregations over war issues had resulted in separate congregations which had gone their own way. But in some cases there was genuine redemption and forgiveness. As early as 1866, Cedar Fork Baptist Church in Loudon County dropped earlier resolutions which had excluded Rebels. After some debate, the congregation agreed "to take the Bible alone" in determining qualifications for membership in the church. And Mount Horeb Presbyterian Church in Jefferson County rejected the ruling of its General Assembly requiring Rebels to confess their sins. As long as such members "cheerfully and heartily" cooperated

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[39]Records of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church (Roane County), 2 vols. (microfilm), TSLA. For a similar example, see the records of Cedar Fork Baptist Church (Loudon County) (microfilm), TSLA.

with their fellow Christians in "building up the church together," no questions would be asked. In the early 1870's several Primitive Baptist churches began to bring pressure on the Powell Association to rescind its Rebel non-fellowship act. For five years the association resisted, but in 1875 it officially declared: "We repeal all former acts of the association touching the fellowship of the saints contrary to the word of God and take the word of God as our Guide." In one instance, a disrupted church reunited in 1879. The minutes of the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church in Roane County best relate the story.

> Be it remembered that in the year of 1865 there arose a disunion in Shilo church which has remained until the present and it has long since been found that said division has not been beneficial to the cause of our Lord & Master but instead thereof we feel satisfied that it has proven detrimental to the cause of religion in the vicinity of our once-happy church. Therefore we the surviving members of each body mutually agree to recind [sic] all our acts of exclusion.[40]

The reunion of Shiloh Church was exceptional inasmuch as most churches which had split as a result of the war never reunited. And although most of the vestiges of war, such as requiring national loyalty for church fellowship, would be eliminated, the mark of war would be indelibly imprinted for years. The divisions within the Methodist and Presbyterian churches in East Tennessee, for instance, continued well into the twentieth century. The once-powerful Methodists divided into two denominations and bickered among themselves regarding title of church property. It was not until 1908 that a leader of the Methodist Episcopal

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[40] Edwards, "History of the Baptists of Tennessee," 78-79; Price, Holston Methodism, IV, 492-506; Records of Cedar Fork Baptist Church; Session Minutes of Mount Horeb Presbyterian Church (1866), McClung Collection; Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church (microfilm), TSLA.

Church could observe that the region's communicants were "almost past" their early problems. The church was gradually being drawn together "in the common work of the master," and he felt there were advantages to having the churches working together in friendly rivalry. Nevertheless, it was not until 1939, when the Northern and Southern churches merged into one national governing body, that there was one Methodist denomination in East Tennessee again. Ironically, the national conference at which the church reunited was held in Knoxville.[41]

Even to the present day, there are two wings of the Presbyterian Church (excluding Cumberland Presbyterians) in East Tennessee. One spokesman for the church felt the rivalry was not entirely harmful to the denomination. As with the Methodists, these rival branches of the Presbyterian Church "are now seeking out vacant fields on which to plant their standards; their jealousies impose a strong check on the disposition to preach anything but the Living Word, and the gospel is thus carried to the heart of many a wilderness, which, but for the feuds referred to might have remained solitary and barren wastes."[42]

But such optimism was not realistic, because in terms of membership both the Methodists and Presbyterians began to fall behind the combined Baptist groups in East Tennessee by the end of the century. Most of the "regular" East Tennessee Baptists were willing to cooperate in the formation of a statewide convention in the 1870's, and as a result, the

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[41] Hesseltine, "Methodism and Reconstruction," 61.

[42] Christian Observer, July 28, 1869, quoted in Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, II, 135.

church was thereafter only in competition with other denominations and not fighting within itself. R. N. Price pointed out that rather than join a Southern Methodist Church if there was not a Northern church in their neighborhood, many Unionists would simply seek out another denomination; and the reverse was true for Southerners.[43] The same was true for the Presbyterians and by the 1880's J. E. Alexander, a spokesman for the church in East Tennessee, was concerned over its decline in power. "When we consider that our church was in this field more than a century ago," he observed, "and in advance of nearly all denominations, with a population favorable and ready to enter and abide in Presbyterian churches . . . in contrast with the fewness and weakness of our churches [and] with the slight hold we have on the immense population now on our field, the results appear humiliating." Alexander hoped that the Presbyterian Church would eventually recover its position of supremacy in East Tennessee, but his wishes were never fulfilled.[44]

The experience of the churches of East Tennessee during the Civil War vividly demonstrate the extent of the internecine conflict in the region. Just as the people of the eastern counties divided over the question of national loyalty, so did their churches. Both during and after

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[43]Kendall, Tennessee Baptist Convention, 144-45; Price, Holston Methodism, IV, 298. Soon after the war, a Reverend M. R. Hyden called a meeting of the Post Oak Methodist Church near Rockwood and announced that he would organize a "loyal" church. He then proceeded to strike off the names of sixty-one church members for being disloyal during the war. The expelled group considered taking over the church forcibly or organizing another Methodist Church. Instead, they decided to join the Christian Church down the road where politics and war animosities had been ignored. Harry C. Wagner, "History of the Disciples of Christ in Upper East Tennessee" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1943), 40.

[44]Alexander, Synod of Tennessee, 15-16.

the war, individuals sought to use the church as a means of punishment and revenge. The bitterness of the conflict at times became ludicrous. When a Reverend Drake, a "loyal" Methodist minister, was holding a funeral service in Jonesboro, the Reverend J. D. Tadwell of the Southern Methodist Church forced his way into the service and proceeded to utter the last words as the body was lowered in the grave.[45]

Although examples of church division were no doubt seen in other parts of the Confederate South, they could not match the extent and fury of that in East Tennessee. Studies of the churches in Alabama and Memphis, for example, indicate that there was great unity of purpose in supporting the Confederacy; and once the war was over, the churches there were mainly concerned with regaining their material losses. Unlike East Tennessee, there was no problem of divided congregations. As one scholar said of Alabama, "There was a Solid South in church as well as in politics." Only in East Tennessee was there a definable Northern and Southern Methodist Church; and only there was the Methodist Episcopal Church successful in establishing a strong foothold. Likewise, the New Assembly of the Presbyterian Church succeeded in establishing thriving churches; in fact in Blount County to this day, there are no Southern Presbyterian churches, only Northern. Elsewhere in the ex-Confederate South, pastors of the New School met with a general rebuff.[46]

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[45]Knoxville Whig, January 23, 1867.

[46]Walter L. Fleming, "The Churches of Alabama During the Civil War and Reconstruction," The Gulf States Historical Magazine, I (1902-03), 127; Fred T. Wooten, "Religious Activities in Civil War Memphis," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, III (1944), 131-49; Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, II, 135.

The internal strife of the churches in East Tennessee served to demonstrate further that the lines dividing Confederates and loyalists often continued long after armies had surrendered and the soldiers had returned home. It was only when the churches of the region sought to exclude black members from their congregations that East Tennessee religion began to resemble that found in the rest of the South.

CHAPTER IX

BLACKS AND THE TROUBLED ROAD TO FREEDOM

While the Civil War experience of East Tennessee was in many ways unique because of the strength of Unionism and the bitter internal struggle that raged within the region, one aspect of the war years, however, was not unlike the rest of the South. For East Tennesseans, both black and white, the conflict dramatically altered the master-slave relationship and saddled the region with racial problems--much like other areas of the Confederate South. Fears of slave insurrection, problems with runaways, military impressment of blacks, controversy over emancipation and the Freedmen's Bureau, and the instituting of racial segregation in the post-war years affected the eastern counties of Tennessee somewhat, as they did elsewhere. Just because East Tennessee showed strong Union proclivities during the war and spawned a vibrant Republican party later does not mean that there was a corresponding improvement in the role and status of black people. And certainly most white East Tennesseans, regardless of their wartime loyalties, made no effort to embrace the freedman and make him an equal partner in society. Therefore, for the region's blacks the war experience was not greatly different from that of other Southern blacks.

Considering that in the antebellum period, East Tennessee had slavery, albeit on a modest scale, it is not surprising that the treatment of blacks in the Civil War decade did not differ appreciable from that seen in other parts of the South. The region's early antislavery

heritage has perhaps been over-emphasized by scholars.[1] While East Tennessee had several manumission societies in the first third of the 19th century, such organizations were small and scattered, and their influence was not great. Just as significant was the fact that many of these societies also urged the immediate colonization of blacks from the South after a program of gradual emancipation. After 1840 abolitionist organizations languished and quickly faded.[2]

White East Tennesseans, like most white Americans, regarded blacks as inferior beings and believed without question that they should have clearly defined and inferior roles in society. Indeed, recent scholarship has demonstrated that while there may have been opposition to the growth and spread of slavery in the mountain regions of the South, it was not accompanied by sympathy for blacks as persons. Most East Tennesseans did not even object to slavery per se; and as one scholar of Tennessee slavery has observed, they, like all Tennesseans, felt the institution was "the only practicable, sensible, and feasible solution to the race problem." In other words, they may have disliked the growth of slavery and the power of large slaveholders in Middle and West Tennessee; yet they accepted and supported the institution as a means of social control. Not

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[1]See Queener, "East Tennessee Sentiment," 66; Patton, Unionism and Reconstruction in Tennessee, 22; and Temple, East Tennessee, 22. Caleb P. Patterson, for example, in The Negro in Tennessee, 1790-1865 (Austin, Texas, 1922), 197, states that there were scattered groups of abolitionists throughout Tennessee as long as slavery existed, but "East Tennessee was almost solidly anti-slavery."

[2]Gordon E. Finnie, "The Antislavery Movement in the Upper South Before 1840," Journal of Southern History, XXXV (1969), 331-32, 342. By the 1840's the major religious denominations in East Tennessee ruled that it was acceptable for their clergy and laymen to own slaves.

unlike other parts of the South, East Tennessee counties maintained regular slave patrols, newspapers carried frequent announcements of runaway slaves, and restrictions were placed on the movement and liberty of free blacks. When word reached the region of John Brown's raid in 1859, local newspapers strongly denounced the militant abolitionists, indicating that East Tennesseans shared the general fear of most Southerners of servile revolt.[3]

There is no evidence to indicate that slavery was any more humane in East Tennessee than in the rest of the South. The debate continues over the question of whether small slaveholders were generally more lenient with their slaves than large slaveholders--a debate especially pertinent to East Tennessee since the vast majority of slaveholders owned fewer than ten slaves. As Eugene Genovese maintains, although the pace of work and material conditions differed on small farms, the range of treatment of slaves was about the same as that prevailing on big plantations. Also by the eve of the Civil War, treatment of slaves in the upper and lower South did not vary greatly. The major difference was that the slaves on small farms, throughout the South, usually received inferior material benefits, such as food and clothing, inferior to those on larger farms and plantations. Therefore most slaves did not clamor to be sold to

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[3]Mooney, Slavery in Tennessee, 85; Finnie, "The Antislavery Movement in the Upper South," 342; George M. Fredrickson, The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914 (New York, 1971), 20; Gordon B. McKinney, "Southern Mountain Republicans and the Negro, 1865-1900," Journal of Southern History, XLI (1975), 495; Knoxville Whig, October 22, November 5, 13, 1859; Athens Post, November 5, 1859; Cleveland Banner, October 29, 1859.

to small farmers even when they had a choice.[4]

The strong Unionism of East Tennessee during the secession crisis was not tied to an opposition to slavery. As discussed previously, many of the leading Unionists in East Tennessee owned slaves. Several delegates to the East Tennessee Convention were slaveholders; and in no part of the debates of 1861 were antislavery sentiments voiced in defense of East Tennessee's pro-Union stand. On the contrary, most Unionists expressed their loyalty in terms which advocated white supremacy and the preservation of slavery. A Unionist from Greeneville, convinced that the South was "fighting for the negro as much as any one thing," maintained that it had acted much too rashly because the North did not want "to place us on an equality with the negroes. . . ." T. A. R. Nelson vigorously affirmed that there was no evidence that President Lincoln would subjugate the South and emancipate the slaves by force. Should Lincoln do so, however, Nelson advised resistance, "at all hazards and to the last extremity." William G. Brownlow was as anxious as any Southerner to preserve slavery, but he thought the institution could be best maintained by remaining in the Union and fighting for the rights that amply guaranteed it and protected it under the Constitution. But the Parson also stressed "if we were once convinced in the border Slave States that the Administration at Washington . . . contemplated . . . the abolishing of slavery, there would not be a Union man among us in twenty-four hours." Not until the war had changed the whole aspect of slavery did Brownlow and some of his Unionist

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[4]Eugene D. Genovese, Roll Jordan Roll, The World the Slaves Made (New York, 1974), 7-9.

colleagues alter their firm support of the peculiar institution.[5]

Obviously East Tennessee Unionists were convinced that the newly-elected Lincoln administration was not a threat to slavery. But ironically, soon after the election and well into the spring of 1861, many whites had fears of slave insurrection. Recent studies of Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina on the eve of the Civil War by William L. Barney and Steven Channing demonstrate that whites in those states became almost paranoid in late 1860 and early 1861. Barney argues that while quite often alarms of slave unrest were exaggerated, they nevertheless contributed to disunion in Mississippi and Alabama. Channing contends that the "fear-of-insurrection-abolition syndrome" was the core of the secession persuasion in South Carolina in 1860.[6]

Although such an argument cannot be successfully applied to East Tennessee, the people of the region, nevertheless, exhibited some apprehensions of servile revolt. A few weeks after Lincoln's election, a Greeneville Unionist reported that fear swept the community after a stable had been burned in town. Three blacks were arrested for the crime and rumor had it that they declared "it was just a commencement." Then in the spring, fears of Negro unrest mounted in much of the region as the nation seemed to be falling apart. In April, the Chattanooga mayor and board of aldermen passed an ordinance "in regard to slaves & free persons

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[5]William Davis to Mary Wilson, September 6, 1861, Mary Wilson MSS, SHC; Knoxville Whig, June 8, May 18, 1861.

[6]William L. Barney, The Secessionist Impulse: Alabama and Mississippi in 1860 (Princeton, 1974), 171-74; Steven A. Channing, Crisis of Fear, Secession in South Carolina (New York, 1970), 264-65.

of color." Previously any black, free or slave, could be on the streets of the city after 7:30 P.M. only with the written permission of an owner or employer; violation of the code could result in twenty lashes. Now no black would be allowed on the streets after 7:30, with or without permits, and the penalty was increased to thirty lashes. An incident in Hawkins County no doubt convinced many people that racial warfare was near. On May 1, 1861, near Rogersville, two slaves murdered their mistress, her daughter, son-in-law, and another woman. Immediately extra slave patrols were organized all over the county and the movement of blacks was severely restricted. Two weeks later a community of seventy-seven free blacks was broken up by a company of local Confederate volunteers much to the satisfaction of local whites, since free Negroes had always been regarded with disdain and suspicion. In the meantime, two black suspects were arrested for the murder of the whites and after confessing to the crime, they were quickly sentenced to be hanged.[7] Whether or not she was aware of the Hawkins County incident, Myra Inman of Cleveland recorded that citizens were arming themselves with pistols because "the negroes were to have an insurrection." And secessionists in Meigs County planned to keep a close watch on both Unionists and slaves in the area. On May 10, 1861, John M. Lillard wrote a friend that "we have a company called the home guard formed of old men . . . who will attend to

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[7]William Davis to Mary Wilson, December 19, 1860, Wilson MSS, SHC; Minutes of the Chattanooga Mayor and Board of Aldermen, April 29, 1861, p. 101, Chattanooga-Hamilton County Library; "Confederate History of Hawkins County," 2; Catherine Watterson to W. H. Watterson, May 21, 31, 1861, Watterson MSS, McClung Collection. Miss Watterson wrote that her uncle, an attorney, believed the evidence against the accused was suspect because "a negro will confess any thing under the lash!"

the Negroes and white men that take the Lincoln side in the struggle . . . there will be about 3 such companies in the county." Fears of slave rebellion subsided by late summer of 1861 when several regiments of Confederate troops arrived and when an intermecine struggle among whites developed. That no mass rebellion of blacks occurred may also have eased fears somewhat.[8]

But incidents of racial violence in East Tennessee in 1862 rudely aroused old fears of slave plots. For example, in early August, as he returned to his rural home, William R. Caswell, prominent Knoxville businessman before the war and now Tennessee militia general, was knocked from his horse, severely clubbed, and then slashed at the throat. Neighbors found him lying in a pool of blood near the road but were unable to help him--he died within a few minutes. Although no one was ever arrested for the murder, the Knoxville Register, no doubt mindful of an increasing runaway slave problem, stated that there was "a strong presumption that the murderer . . . was a runaway negro."[9]

Similar incidents in Meigs County a few weeks later also rekindled fears that, given the opportunity, slaves might violently strike back at whites. Sometime during the day of September 23, Jacob Womack, a 63-year old farmer and owner of several blacks, whipped some of his slaves after an argument. Angered by the incident, two Negroes, Jim and Kit, wanted revenge. At sunset, they grabbed Womack and slashed him from ear to ear with a butcher knife. Some of Womack's neighbors discovered his body the

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[8]Myra Inman Diary, May 13, 1861, SHC; Lillard, Meigs County, 119.

[9]Knoxville Register, August 7, 14, 1862; Athens Post, August 15, 1862.

next day; and within a few hours the two slaves were captured by a detail of the "home guard." They condemned the slaves to death by hanging and locked them up in Womack's kitchen. Kit managed to escape during the night and was never recaptured; but Jim was lynched the next morning from a nearby tree. A few days later another racial flare-up occurred at the plantation of John Womack (a cousin of Jacob). A slave became bitterly angry with his master, picked him up and carried him to a wood pile, where he tried to cut the old man's head off. Fortunately for Womack, his son, home on leave from the Confederate army, shot the slave in the nick of time.[10]

The Athens and Knoxville newspapers gave prominent attention to such incidents and hand in hand with Confederate authorities attempted to use the race issue as a means of drawing "Tories" into the Southern fold, especially after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. Even though the preliminary proclamation of September, 1862, exempted the loyal border states, in addition to Louisiana and Tennessee, supporters of slavery argued that it would eventually be struck down everywhere. A Sullivan Countian felt the proclamation might lead to racial violence. He maintained that he had always dreaded the thought of servile insurrection especially now that civil war had grown out of "the abolition strife." East Tennessee newspapers printed copies of Lincoln's document, no doubt with the hope of raising the ire of all citizens. In the same issue that described the grisly murder of Jacob Womack, the editor of the Athens Post called for a public meeting to consider recent events.

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[10]Athens Post, October 3, 1862; Lillard, Meigs County, 117-19.

Certain that anyone who read the proclamation could no longer support the Union, he hoped that a public rally in Athens would help old enemies in the county forget their differences and now join in a common cause against Lincoln in his attempt "at the subjugation of the white race, and the emancipation and equalization of the negroes."[11]

Confederate General Samuel Jones, placed in command of the District of East Tennessee in September, 1862, tried to use the Emancipation Proclamation as a means of changing the loyalty of many Unionists, including T. A. R. Nelson. In a private meeting held in Knoxville, General Jones persuaded the Congressman to issue an address to the people of East Tennessee condemning the proclamation. In it Nelson declared that had he known it was the object of the North to subjugate the South and emancipate the slaves in viclation of the Constitution, "I would have gone as far as the farthest in advocating resistance to the utmost extent." Lincoln, said Nelson, in one fell swoop had deprived the Southern people of their right to hold slaves, a right guaranteed by the very Constitution he was attempting to defend. Nelson reminded his readers that he had warned of slave insurrection at the outbreak of the war. "The Union men of East Tennessee are not now and never have been committed to the doctrines of incendriaism [sic] and murder to which Mr. Lincoln's proclamation leads," he asserted. If the proclamation was maintained, there would be no Union to work for, no Constitution to struggle for, and no hope of peace.[12]

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[11] R. P. Fickle to T. A. R. Nelson, October 7, 1862, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection; Athens Post, October 3, 1862.

[12] Official Records, Series 1, XVI, pt. 2, pp. 909-11; Knoxville Register, October 3, 1862.

Although Nelson did not go so far as to endorse the Confederacy, General Jones intended to make the most of the Congressman's address. The general asked the editor of the Athens Post to copy it and to comment in such a way as to please Nelson and his followers. Even the Knoxville Register gave favorable editorial attention to its old foe. At the same time, other Unionists such as John Netherland, Nathaniel G. Taylor, and Seth Lucky assured Jones of their tacit endorsement of the Nelson stance; and the general was encouraged that the time had passed for the Union party in East Tennessee. Yet Jones was disappointed in his campaign to sway East Tennesseans away from the Union on the race issue. Many East Tennessee Unionists were appalled by the Emancipation Proclamation and their loyalty to the Federal government may have wavered; but in the end, they could not be converted to the Southern cause. Possibly mindful of the exemption of Tennessee from emancipation and still hopeful that the proclamation could be rescinded, these slave-supporting Unionists would retain their loyalties and welcome Federal occupation in 1863. Yet they would never forgive the Lincoln administration for its stance against slavery.[13]

The question of slavery and its future as a viable institution became a special concern to many East Tennesseans upon Federal occupation of the region. Within months, the slavery issue would do much to drive a wedge into the East Tennessee Unionist coalition which had been formed in 1861. For Nelson and the Unionist colleagues who had endorsed his position in 1862, the belief that slavery should be preserved did not alter

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[13] Official Records, Series 1, XVI, pt. 2, pp. 907-08, 946-47; Knoxville Register, October 5, 1862.

once East Tennessee came under Federal control; and by late 1863 other loyal supporters, including John Williams, John Fleming, Judge John Baxter, bridge-burning ringleader William B. Carter, and Brigadier General James G. Spears of Bledsoe County, joined their ranks.[14] For that matter, Oliver Temple, who did not become a member of this new coalition, conceded that "a majority of the Union leaders of East Tennessee" opposed the Lincoln administration and its policies in 1864.[15]

Most of these men had been staunch Whig partisans before the war; and allied with Parson Brownlow and Oliver Temple, they had provided stiff opposition to the Democratic party in East Tennessee, especially one of its key leaders, Andrew Johnson. In 1861, party labels were at least temporarily tossed aside by these men in an effort to preserve their region for the Union; and the people of the eastern counties witnessed the spectacle of old bitter political foes joining hands in a common cause. Yet none of these men had questioned the morality or legality of slavery in 1861. Even Andrew Johnson originally based his Unionism on terms that still assured the preservation of slavery. As one student of the former tailor's racial attitudes points out, although Johnson had a deep distrust of the slaveholding aristocracy, he supported slavery as long as there was no other available means of protecting white supremacy. But because the perception of slavery that Johnson and other East

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[14]Spears had served bravely in the Union army throughout the first three years of the war; but soon after President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, the general openly criticized the policy. Although warned to keep his political views private, Spears refused to remain silent and was therefore court-martialed and dismissed from service for insubordination in early 1864. Temple, Notable Men, 188.

[15]Ibid., 165.

Tennesseans held changed during the war, the league of Unionists formed early in the war began to crack.[16]

While some East Tennessee Unionists like Nelson and Netherland openly rejected the Emancipation Proclamation, the attitudes of Governor Johnson and William G. Brownlow toward slavery changed and they were not disturbed by the new policy. Within months after the final proclamation, Johnson would lend his whole-hearted approval. For that matter, as early as July, 1862, two months before Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, the Governor had intimated that his position on slavery had shifted. In a Fourth of July speech, Johnson exclaimed that as long as the Southern states remained in a state of rebellion, slavery would die. In fact, said Johnson, if they persisted "in forcing the issue of slavery against the Government, I say in the face of Heaven, 'Give me my Government, and let the negroes go!" By the end of the summer of 1863, he had completely abandoned his lifelong belief in and defense of the peculiar institution. In a public speech, the Governor declared that slavery was a cancer on society and that statesmen should take up the scalpel "not simply to pare away the exterior and leave the roots to propagate the disease anew, but to remove it altogether." But Johnson had not actually undergone a complete metamorphosis in his racial attitudes, for in January, 1864, he stated publicly that he preferred that the Negro be colonized to Mexico "or some other country congenial to his nature." The self-proclaimed champion of the common man before the war believed that the end of slavery would break the hold of the aristocracy which had

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[16] Ibid., 407-08; David W. Bowen, "Andrew Johnson and the Negro" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Tennessee, 1976), 155-56.

controlled state government and society for so long. In addition, abolition would in a sense serve as a means of punishment for those whom he blamed for initiating the rebellion. Therefore in January, 1864, when announcing his policy for reconstructing Tennessee, Johnson maintained that slavery would have to be abolished. To loyal slaveholders, he offered personal advice by urging them to do as he had done with his own slaves--hire them out for their labor.[17]

William G. Brownlow approached the slavery issue along similar lines. While he did not embrace immediate emancipation as early as Johnson, the Parson excoriated the slaveholding aristocracy while maintaining his own blatant racism. To him these elites had lorded it over East Tennessee for forty years and should be driven out. "This was an aristocracy founded alone upon the nigger," he maintained, "and so far has it carried its insolence for years" that its members treated the common folk only with an air of great condescension. By the spring of 1864, Brownlow had fully accepted the idea of complete and immediate emancipation as a means of punishing Rebels. In April of 1864, he stated that there was no issue that troubled "a certain class of Union men" more than the freeing of the slaves. The Parson had little sympathy for these men though. Slavery should be abolished "if for no other reason as a punishment of those who brought on the rebellion, and plunged the country into all its trouble."[18]

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[17]Nashville Daily Union, July 6, 1862, September 1, 1863; Hall, Military Governor, 117; Knoxville Whig, February 13, 1864.

[18]Knoxville Whig, February 20, April 23, 1864.

Support for emancipation had other advocates in East Tennessee. Samuel Milligan, an old friend of Andrew Johnson from Greeneville, wrote the Governor that he was convinced there could be no hope for peace and prosperity as long as slavery existed in a single state of the Union. "I am aware this doctrine is not palatable to many of the larger slaveholders even in E. Tenn.," he added, "and it must be much less so to those of middle and west Tenn; but who that has studied its history as I have attempted to do . . . from Abraham down even [to] Jeff Davis can believe it is a permanent institution, and must not one day be abolished?" A public meeting in Roane County in January, 1864, adopted gradual emancipation as one of its resolutions. The Roane Countians maintained that the Southern states were warring on "free and republican government." They had placed slavery at the cornerstone of their government, thus making that institution an issue which should have been left alone. Because of their disloyalty, the rebellious states should suffer the consequences. The meeting then resolved that since the Southern slaveholders had by their own hands "stricken the fatal and suicidal blow at that peculiar institution," accomplishing what could not have been effected in years by "outside enemies," a system of gradual emancipation should be adopted as soon as possible. In March of 1864, slaveholder William Clift of Chattanooga stated that emancipation was the chief political issue of the day in Tennessee. When asked his opinion, Clift was willing to endorse freedom for the slaves "& leave them in the states where they respectively belong. . . ." In February of the following year, as Congress prepared the Thirteenth Amendment, John Underwood of Cleveland wrote, "I shall vote ratification to the amendment to the constitution if permitted by the

Rebs to do away with slavery the curse of Families the curse of communities and the great curse of this nation so that our grand children will not share the fate of us and our children."[19]

Nevertheless, debate continued in East Tennessee and the conflicting views became particularly evident in April of 1864 with the reconvening of the East Tennessee Convention. Aware that Abraham Lincoln's reelection would be decided the following November, T. A. R. Nelson issued a call for all available delegates of the old East Tennessee Convention to meet in Knoxville on April 12. Nelson hoped that the former Whigs of Tennessee would make their weight felt in the election of a president to succeed Lincoln who would bring the war to a quick conclusion and guarantee the protection of slavery in the state. Delegates met on the appointed day, and as Oliver Temple recalled, a major breach developed immediately. While Nelson, John Baxter, William Carter, James Spears, William Heiskell, and John Fleming, old leaders of the Greeneville Convention, agreed to oppose Lincoln and his "radical" policies, they were confronted by Governor Johnson, Brownlow, Horace Maynard, Daniel C. Trewhitt, Samuel Milligan, and Oliver Temple. The latter group was in turn joined by a new group of men who had risen to positions of prominence in the Union army and had acquired a martial hatred of foes still in arms against them. They expressed full support of the Lincoln administration and endorsed Governor Johnson's policy of immediate emancipation in the state and stringent

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[19]Samuel Milligan to Andrew Johnson, October 21, 1863, Andrew Johnson MSS, LC; Knoxville Whig, April 23, 1864; William Clift to Nancy B. Clift, March 17, 1864, Clift MSS, TSLA; John Underwood to Enoch Underwood, February 13, 1865, in Burl Underwood, The Underwoods, from Roaring Gap (NC) to Dumplin Valley (TN) & Onward (Knoxville, 1975), 142.

treatment of Rebels. As a result, all sessions of the meeting were dominated by bitter debate, and by the fourth day, passions were so heated that the convention voted to adjourn sine die without issuing one resolution.[20]

The 1864 session of the East Tennessee Convention did nothing to resolve any of the points of contention within the ranks of the Unionists; and if anything, it served to widen the rift between those who called themselves Conservatives and those who now referred to themselves as Unconditionals or Radicals. Not satisfied with the results of the convention, Unconditional Unionists two days later held a public meeting in Knoxville as suggested by Governor Johnson. The conclave endorsed emancipation, urged the punishment of those who had committed treason, and gave its endorsement of Lincoln in the November elections. And when Johnson was nominated to serve as Lincoln's vice-presidential candidate, the Unconditionals gave the Governor their full support throughout the election campaign. Forsaking their lifelong antipathy for the Democracy, Nelson and most of his East Tennessee Conservative colleagues joined Middle Tennessean William B. Campbell and West Tennessean Emerson Etheridge in support of the Democratic presidential nominee George B. McClellan. Although they established a political organization for the McClellan campaign, they were virtually eliminated by Andrew Johnson who used his authority as military governor. He prescribed that in order to vote, each

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[20]Alexander, T. A. R. Nelson, 114-15; Temple, Notable Men, 92, 120, 165, 407; Knoxville Whig, April 2, 16, 23, 1864. Unfortunately, the minutes of this third meeting of the East Tennessee Convention have not been preserved. I have been unable to determine how many delegates attended or what counties were represented. The only primary source accounts of the meeting are brief reports in the Knoxville Whig, Nashville Times and Union, and Chattanooga Gazette.

qualified citizen would have to take a test oath stating that he would reject armistice or peace with Rebels and that he would support emancipation in Tennessee. Since these were the very issues that the Conservatives had rallied around, for all practical purposes they were disfranchised in the election. As a result, only a small minority of Tennesseans voted and, as expected, they supported the Lincoln-Johnson ticket.[21]

In the meantime, the debate over emancipation continued. When several loyal East Tennessee slaveholders proposed gradual emancipation, the Unconditional Unionists rejected the idea. Parson Brownlow felt the only acceptable pay for releasing slaves was a $300 bounty given masters who enlisted their slaves in the army. Other than this, loyal slaveholders possessed no exemption from the losses and calamities of the conflict. "We have all had our losses in this war--the mechanic and the laboring man--but who can reckon them up, and pay them all?," Brownlow asked. By early 1865 the Parson contended that the test of a man's Unionism was his willingness to "discard what favors the rebellion." Because slavery "favored and strengthened the rebellion," besides being the main cause of the conflict, it must be totally destroyed. The Parson then concluded his editorial,

> No man joined in the revolt who did not own slaves or was the tool of some one who did own slaves. Every rebel banner thrown in the breeze is in the name of slavery. . . . The nigger is the rebellion and the rebellion is the nigger, and to put down the one we have to get rid of the other. Nor will it do to talk about gradual abolishment of slavery in Tennessee. Gradual emancipation means the gradual putting down of the rebellion.[22]

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[21]Temple, Notable Men, 407-08; Hall, Military Governor, 126-27.

[22]Knoxville Whig, April 16, 1864, January 11, 1865.

The official death of slavery in Tennessee came when five hundred Unionists, mostly East Tennesseans, including Parson Brownlow, gathered in Nashville in January, 1865, to amend the state constitution and provide for the restoration of civil government. After considerable debate, the convention submitted a "schedule" to "the people" which repudiated the state's ordinance of secession and military league with the Confederacy in 1861, and amended the state constitution so as to declare the unequivocal and immediate emancipation of all slaves in Tennessee. Those eligible to vote did so in a February referendum which approved all of the convention's proposals. Thus the controversy over slavery's continuation as a legal institution ended abruptly.

But the event was in reality anti-climactic in East Tennessee, because for all practical purposes slavery there had long since suffered a de facto death. And in many ways the heated debate that raged in 1864 over slavery had been superfluous because the very disruptive nature of the war itself had done much more to weaken the peculiar institution than did the proposed policies of Governor Johnson and Parson Brownlow. As a matter of fact, in issuing his January, 1864, proclamation advocating the end of slavery in Tennessee, Johnson pointed out that emancipation was really a moot question because the institution had already undergone a process of disintegration. From what he could tell, all of the slaves were "turned loose" anyway. "The institution of slavery is turned into a traveling institution," he argued, "and goes just where it pleases." And in the spring of 1864, Parson Brownlow ridiculed Unionists who cried for

the preservation of slavery because in reality the institution was already "done for."[23]

Johnson and Brownlow were correct in their assertion that slavery had suffered a de facto death. For that matter, the process of deterioration actually began during the period of Confederate occupation and quickly gathered momentum after Federal authorities regained control of the region. Yet in some ways the system operated during the war as it had in times of peace. For example, the buying and selling of slaves continued throughout the war, although on a diminished scale after Federal occupation. Newspapers frequently carried advertisements for auction in which slaves of all ages were sold. In February, 1863, W. S. Rogers placed a notice in the Knoxville Register announcing the sale of fifty "Valuable Negroes, just received from Virginia and North Carolina." In the group were house servants, field hands, and mechanics. J. S. Hurlburt reported that three or four men in Bradley County maintained a regular slavetrading business. One of them, Confederate Congressman William H. Tibbs, took advantage of his governmental position in Richmond to bring groups of ten or fifteen slaves back to Cleveland to sell at high profit. Just a few weeks before Federal occupation, the Athens Post announced the sale of ten "likely negroes" to help settle the estate of the late Thomas B. McElwee. And in January, 1864, after Federal control had been established in the region, the Anderson County Court announced the sale of slaves to to settle the estate of the late Peggy C. McKamy.[24]

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[23]Andrew Johnson's Speech on Restoration of State Government, January 21, 1864, Johnson MSS, LC; Knoxville Whig, April 23, 1864.

[24]Knoxville Register, August 27, 1862, February 17, 1863; Broadside Advertising the Sale of Slaves at Knoxville, February 10, 1862, Tilghman-Haws Scrapbook, UT Special Collections; Hurlburt, Bradley County, 18;

Despite examples such as these, the disruptive nature of the war did much to break the old system and disturb the master-slave relationship. As in other parts of the Confederacy, East Tennessee slaves were probably hired out by their masters or sometimes pressed into service by the Southern army to help perform much of the physical labor, especially the construction of fortifications and other military installations. Although masters were paid in most cases for the use of their slaves, they nevertheless lost the service of their chattels for short or sometimes long periods of time. In some instances, slaveholders never saw some of their slaves again and they complained that quite often their servants were returned in poor condition.[25]

Slavery in East Tennessee was affected in another way because of the intense social, political, and economic tensions that gripped the region from early in the conflict. With large numbers of men joining the Southern army and even more escaping Confederate persecution in the region, and with East Tennessee whites involved in a bitter struggle among themselves, strict control over slaves became extremely difficult. As a result, an increasing number of East Tennessee slaves attempted to take advantage of the situation and escape the bonds of slavery. Undoubtedly aware of the large-scale escape of Unionists from the region, many slaves sought to emulate their example.[26] While large numbers fled

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Athens Post, September 20, 1861, February 27, July 17, 1863; Knoxville Whig, January 30, 1864.

[25]Bell I. Wiley, Southern Negroes, 1861-1865 (New Haven, 1938), 113-14, 123-24; Harrison A. Trexler, "The Opposition of Planters to the Employment of Slaves as Laborers by the Confederacy," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXVII (1940-41), 211, 223-24.

[26]At times slaves may have helped white Unionists escape from East Tennessee. Abram Jobe of Washington County, for example, reported that a

into Kentucky, many probably crossed into Middle Tennessee, especially Nashville where thousands of black refugees crowded almost as soon as Federal occupation began in early 1862. The number of want ads concerning runaway slaves in the Knoxville and Athens newspapers increased by mid-1862; and in the fall of that year, the editor of the Athens Post complained that "skeedaddling towards Abraham's domain" was not confined entirely to Unionist "poor white trash." Large numbers of the "colored brethren" were also escaping to the mountains and he advised slaveholders to maintain a close watch over their property and insure that slaves were kept in their "proper places."[27]

While the structure of slavery began to crumble in the first two years of the war, this process of deterioration accelerated when East Tennessee came under Federal control. Like other institutions of the region, slavery was deeply affected by the powerful shock of transition. Although it was still a legal institution because of Tennessee's exemption from the Emancipation Proclamation, according to the Confiscation Act passed by Congress in July, 1862, all slaves of persons who had in any way aided or abetted the rebellion were considered free once they came within Union lines. Therefore when rumors became rampant in August of 1863 that Federal invasion of East Tennessee was imminent, many of the Confederate sympathizers who hastily fled south took their slaves

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black man directed him to hiding places and escape routes to avoid Rebel patrols. "Memoirs of Abram Jobe," 140, TSLA.

[27]Peter Maslowski, "'Treason Must Be Made Odious': Military Occupation and Wartime Reconstruction in Nashville, Tennessee, 1862-1865" (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1972), 228; Athens Post, November 7, 1862.

with them. Some masters simply sent their slaves farther into the southern interior with plans to use them on rented farms or plantations. Myra Inman of Cleveland, for example, recorded that her family packed up many of their "darkies" and sent them south. Like many slaveholders who decided to stay on their own property and brave the invasion, the Inmans selected only the able-bodied and most valuable slaves for removal. Other masters left in such haste or regarded their slaves as an encumbrance that they simply abandoned them to their own fate. A deep-seated distrust of slaves was heightened in the tension of the moment. Amid the confusion of impending invasion, it was easy for some to slip away or be lost by other means.[28]

In spite of the de jure protection of Unionists' slaves, loyal citizens also lost many of their Negroes once East Tennessee came under Federal domination. Many of these slaveholders were aware that preservation of the institution would be difficult. Within days after the Federal army had gained control of lower East Tennessee in September, 1863, W. J. Kelly, a concerned loyal slaveholder from Marion County, wrote Governor Johnson, seeking advice "as to what is best for us to do with our negroes." He owned forty; but now their services were "worthless" and unfortunately they were consuming about all of his meager provisions. He could turn them over to the army, but he was concerned for their future; he also did not want to cause an additional drain on army supplies. "They have nearly all been raised in our families," he asserted, "and we feel a great deal of sympathy for them." Kelly then suggested

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[28]Wiley, Southern Negroes, 3-4; Myra Inman Diary, August 21, September 6, 7, 1863, SHC.

that "we would rather . . . you take them," apparently meaning to turn them over to the large contraband camps in Nashville. For this Kelly was willing to be paid "whatever the Government price may be" for them. There is no record of Johnson's reply, but it is unlikely that he responded favorably because of the already overcrowded conditions in the contraband camps and his stated belief in immediate emancipation without compensation to slave owners. Kelly may have let his slaves go or they may have left on their own as many others did in the months following the change in occupying forces.[29]

Whether they were released by their master or escaped on their own initiative, the number of slaves on East Tennessee farms quickly began to diminish. In November, 1863, the Knoxville Whig observed that many slaves had "struck for liberty" since Federal troops had moved into East Tennessee. And in the spring of 1864, Mary Jane Reynolds of Loudon reported the wholesale desertion of slaves from Unionist and Rebel sympathizers alike. William Heiskell, staunch Unionist and delegate to the East Tennessee Convention in 1861, lost every one of his fifty Negroes. With transportation and communications being disrupted, it was nearly impossible for a master to launch an effective search to reclaim escaped slaves. Moreover if the slaves of a Unionist ran away and were captured, the master, under the Confiscation Act, had to prove his loyalty to Federal authorities in order to reclaim his property. Brownlow frequently complained of "notorious" ex-Rebels who attempted to assert their loyalty to the Union in order to reclaim their slaves. "We confess to having no sympathy with

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[29] W. J. Kelly to Andrew Johnson, September 9, 1863, Andrew Johnson MSS, LC.

rebels whose negroes are leaving them, and who are crying and howling over their losses," pontificated the editor.[30]

While those slaves who had escaped from bondage during Confederate occupation fled to Kentucky or Middle Tennessee, after East Tennessee came under Federal control, freed or abandoned slaves rarely sought refuge outside of their native region. Instead, they began to crowd into the towns and cities, especially when troops and guerrillas roamed East Tennessee. Those blacks remaining in the countryside were sometimes at the mercy of the armies, both Confederate and Union. Myra Inman reported that when Sherman's army moved into the Cleveland area in November of 1863, soldiers entered the quarters of her family's house servants and stole everything that could be moved, including even the quilt off the bed of one of the elderly slaves. In the early fall of 1864, several former slaves paid with their lives because they had joined a Federal work camp in Meigs County. A detachment of Confederate cavalry attacked a Union work camp at Stewart's Landing, scattering soldiers, Negro laborers, and women in all directions. According to one of the Rebel troopers, several of the unarmed Negroes were killed outright and one Confederate soldier cut the throats of three wounded Negroes with a bowie knife. Then as the leader of the cavalry rounded up his troops and prepared to rejoin the main Confederate force under General Joe Wheeler, his soldiers held on to one large black who, according to the account, had been "impudent and insulting," and then carried him off, possibly to be sold into slavery

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[30] Knoxville Whig, November 11, 1863; Mary Jane Reynolds to Simeon D. Reynolds, March 13, April 1, 1864, UT Special Collections.

again. Freedom for these former slaves had been short-lived.[31]

While many slaves moved to the city for the relative security it offered, Thomas Humes asserted that most blacks "manifested a strong inclination for town life." This inclination on the part of some freedmen was no doubt prompted by a desire to obtain wage-earning jobs which were offered in limited numbers and also by a desire to receive an education. Mary Jane Reynolds reported that several slaves from the Loudon area had moved to Knoxville for jobs and the availability of schools.[32]

Several Northern benevolent organizations attempted to aid the freedmen by issuing supplies to the destitute and by providing education. Most organizations, including the Freedmen's Aid Commission (Cincinnati), the Northwestern Freedmen's Aid Commission (Chicago), the Pennsylvania Freedmen's Relief Association, the United Presbyterian Freedmen's Association, the American Baptist Home Missionary Society, and the American Missionary Association, began operating schools for blacks in East Tennessee in 1864. The United Presbyterian Mission in Knoxville under the direction of R. J. Creswell opened a school in May, and soon more than a hundred pupils were enrolled. Like the other benevolent association schools, Creswell's was forced to operate in the available structures, because the stresses and strains of war prevented the construction of new buildings. Initially Creswell held classes at the abandoned First Baptist Church, but in the late summer local members of the congregation forced the

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[31]Myra Inman Diary, November 29, 1863, SHC; Lillard, Meigs County, 120-21.

[32]Humes, Loyal Mountaineers, 298; Mary Jane Reynolds to Simeon D. Reynolds, April 1, June 20, 1864, Reynolds MSS, UT Special Collections.

teacher to find other facilities. By October a congregational committee persuaded military authorities to return the church to the congregation. Creswell pleaded with a deacon of the church to let him use at least the basement for a classroom; but the deacon replied that because of a long-standing church policy, no portion of the building could be used "for other than religious services connected with the Baptist Church." Nevertheless, the deacon assured Creswell, individual members of the church would be glad "to forward the interests and improvement of our colored population." As a result, the school moved to an old blacksmith shop, where it paid $20 a month rent. Through Creswell's efforts and others like him, many East Tennessee blacks began to gain at least the rudiments of an education in the last months of the war.[33]

Many whites bitterly resented the establishment of these schools, arguing that they were an attempt to provide social equality for Negroes. Also the negative attitude toward these schools was in part a reaction to the large-scale migration of blacks to the urban centers. As might be expected, white citizens in the cities of East Tennessee grew increasingly uneasy over the movement of black refugees into their environs. "Stop the Niggers!," exclaimed Parson Brownlow. He deplored the fact that many Confederate sympathizers had abandoned their slave property and now the loyal people of Knoxville had to put up with "insolent Negroes" who crowded the streets and tried to see "how filthy and lazy they can be."[34]

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[33]Swint, "Report from Educational Agents," 56; Historical Sketch of the Freedmen's Mission of the United Presbyterian Church, 1862-1904 (Knoxville, 1904), 22-23; R. J. Creswell to Moses S. Smith, October 19, 1864, in Records of First Baptist Church, Knoxville, McClung Collection; Moses Smith to R. J. Creswell, no date, ibid. Creswell's school was the forerunner of present-day Knoxville College.

[34]Knoxville Whig, November 11, 1863, January 23, 30, 1864.

By early 1864, Federal military authorities, as in other parts of the occupied South, were forced to take action to control the flow and restrict the movements of blacks in East Tennessee. In a dual attempt to provide relief for black refugees and segregate them from the urban white population, the army established contraband camps near Knoxville and Chattanooga. Although the army provided tents, foodstuff, and other supplies, sanitary conditions were wretched; smallpox frequently ran rampant among the black population. From the camps, blacks were put to work in gangs chopping wood, repairing railroads, and unloading steamboats for the government. Although they were to be paid by the government for their labor, many never received a cent; and as late as October, 1867, a Freedmen's Bureau report stated that a majority of freedmen in the Kingston area had yet to be reimbursed for their labor services during the war.[35]

Another means of controlling East Tennessee blacks was to enlist them into the army either voluntarily or under duress. Since the summer of 1862, Negro troops had been recruited and organized on a limited basis in various parts of the occupied South. While the concept of making ex-slaves into Federal soldiers had met with initial hostility in the North, by mid-1863 most Northerners saw the arming of blacks as a means of filling the ranks with black men rather than white. For Federal commanders in occupied enemy territory who were bothered with thousands of homeless blacks, the drafting of young Negro males provided a convenient means

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[35]Louis S. Gerteis, From Contraband to Freedom: Federal Policy Toward Southern Blacks, 1861-1865 (Westport, Conn., 1973), 36-37; Wiley, Southern Negroes, 184; C. R. Simpson to George W. Ballock, October 19, 1867, Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, RG 105, National Archives (hereinafter cited as BRFAL); C. R. Simpson to J. B. Coons, October 24, 1867, ibid.

of placing at least some of them into an organized structure. It is therefore not surprising that within a few months after the Federal occupation of East Tennessee orders went out from army headquarters to enlist or impress local blacks into military service. On January 6, 1864, Major General John G. Foster, temporary commander of the Department of East Tennessee, issued General Order no. 6, stating that "all able-bodied colored men" between the ages of 18 and 45 within Federal lines would be enrolled in the Union army. Blacks employed as laborers by the Federal government, servants of Union officers, and "those servants of loyal citizens who prefer remaining with their masters" were exempt. There was, however, a catch to the latter provision, for if a loyal master wished, he could turn a slave over to an enrolling officer in return for a $300 bounty. Mary Jane Reynolds of Loudon reported that one of her neighbors released several of his slaves to the army and collected a healthy sum in bounty money. Once the enrolling officers attained a certain quota, they would take their conscripts to camps at Knoxville, Loudon, or Kingston, where the former slaves were organized into an artillery brigade under the command of Brigadier General Davis Tillson.[36]

Although not intentionally designed to do so, the enlistment and drafting of blacks into Federal service served further to weaken slavery in East Tennessee. Some slaves of loyal citizens decided to join the army as a means of acquiring freedom. Unionist Robert Hodsden of

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[36]Dudley T. Cornish, The Sable Arm, Negro Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865 (New York, 1956), 96; Knoxville Whig, January 16, April 16, 1864; Mary Jane Reynolds to Simeon D. Reynolds, no date [probably late January or early February, 1864], Reynolds MSS, UT Special Collections.

Sevierville wrote that eight of his mother-in-law's slaves had gone to Knoxville to enlist in the army; and in a few months two of his own slaves had done the same.[37]

While enlistment could serve as a route to freedom, many black males simply did not want to join up, partly out of fidelity to their masters. Absolom Burum of Hawkins County reported that one of his father's slaves had been pressed into Federal service, but had deserted and returned home. Mary Jane Reynolds noted that several enrolling officers had tried to pressure a slave named Henry to enlist; but the slave resisted, stating that he wanted to take care of his master as long as he lived. In return, his master pledged that as long as Henry stayed on, he would try to keep him out of the army. But loyalty to a master was not always a major concern. For example, Mrs. Reynolds later observed that Henry left the plantation once, came back, and then left again. Each time he took his family with him and evinced no desire to join the army. Mrs. Reynolds remembered that her father at last told Henry he could go anywhere he wanted, but that he would no longer be responsible for him in any way.[38]

Despite the reluctance of blacks to join the army and their loyalty to slave owners, Federal enrolling officers began to gather up Negroes in large numbers and force them into the service. In June of 1864, Robert

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[37]Robert H. Hodsden to "wife," February 3, 16, 1864, Hodsden MSS, private collection of Reese Marshall Ripatti, Sevierville, Tennessee; Certificates of Enlistment for Milton Hodsden and William Hodsden, May 25, 1864, ibid.

[38]Absolom Burum Diary, April 6, 1864, TSLA; Mary Jane Reynolds to Simeon D. Reynolds, February 16, March 2, March 13, April 7, May 1, June 20, 1864, Reynolds MSS, UT Special Collections.

Cooper, a Confederate sympathizer from Hawkins County, wrote of a Yankee raid between Knoxville and Rogersville which searched the countryside for horses and slaves. One patrol passed by with fifty blacks in its possession; and its commander left with a promise to return and "take them all." Cooper saw little hope in the situation, because he was certain that if "our negroes are brought home they would all run off for sure." Federal authorities also began to ignore the exemption provision of the original Order no. 6. Apparently enlistment and draft quotas were not being filled, so any black male of age became fair game for military service. Mary Jane Reynolds wrote her husband that many Negroes in the Loudon area had been conscripted and she had heard that almost all able-bodied black males around Kingston had been pressed into service. "They take Union men's and all," she exclaimed. Even a group of local blacks who had been contracted to work on the railroad were gathered up by an enrolling officer and put into uniform. Colonel William Clift, recovering from the ordeal of an escape from Confederate prison, instructed his wife to keep their two Negro "servants" with her in Chattanooga rather than send them to him on his farm in Hamilton County. Not only might they suffer from "robbers" who roamed the countryside, they also stood a good chance of being pressed into the army.[39]

Protests from Unionists met with little sympathy from Federal authorities. Parson Brownlow castigated "conservative, copperhead, peace-loving Union men" who were appalled at the arming of blacks. Brownlow

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[39] Robert Cooper to James M. Cooper, June 28, 1864, Civil War Records, II, 160; Mary Jane Reynolds to Simeon D. Reynolds, June 20, 1864, Reynolds MSS, UT Special Collections; William Clift to Mary B. Clift, March 17, 1864, Clift MSS, TSLA.

thought it an excellent policy to fight the Rebels with Negroes. He accused the enemy of initiating the policy anyway by their use of mixed blood blacks and Indians to track down conscripts. "Let us give them negro soldiers till they are sick of them," he exclaimed.[40]

With the added strain of the forced enlistment of black males, the hold of master over slave in East Tennessee had become more tenuous in 1864. Confederate Captain Robert A. Rutledge commented that the slaves belonging to his aunt and uncle in Sullivan County were "doing no good," robbing their masters of almost everything they could get their hands on and even stealing hay to sell to the army. Other whites complained of the surliness and sometimes outright hostility of their slaves. In February all of the slaves of a Dr. Gregory from Loudon left their master, taking a wagon and oxen with them. The doctor went after them and with the aid of the local provost marshal was able to recover the wagon and some of the women and children. But on the way home, two of the male slaves and some black soldiers caught up with the doctor and beat him severely. Fortunately for Gregory, a squad of white Union soldiers arrived on the scene and scattered the blacks. The doctor was never able to retrieve his slaves. When Unionist William Heiskell of Monroe County went to Knoxville in April to reclaim some of his runaway slaves, one of his house servants, armed with a pistol, threatened to kill his master. When Heiskell reported the incident to Provost Marshal General Samuel P. Carter, the latter immediately arrested the slave. His fate is unknown, but apparently his master had little luck in recovering any of his runaways.[41]

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[40] Knoxville Whig, April 23, 1864.

[41] Mary Jane Reynolds to Simeon D. Reynolds, February 10, 1864, Reynolds MSS, UT Special Collections.

Mary Jane Reynolds' letters to her husband are in many ways a chronicle of the deterioration of the institution in the first half of 1864. Early in the year, she expressed the hope that "our negro problems" were at an end, but over the next few months most of her slaves left and those who remained were unreliable. She complained that supposedly loyal slaves simply packed up and departed without saying a word; and there was practically nothing she could do to stop them. The impudence of some of the former slaves particularly galled her. One servant named Jim boasted that he was helping operate a railroad switch and cooking for railroad crews for $5 a month. Nancy, another former slave, wrote Mrs. Reynolds informing her that she had moved to Knoxville where she was attending school and "has everything that [her] heart could wish." As a matter of fact, Nancy bragged that she was doing much better than when she was in Loudon "waiting on Rebs." Mrs. Reynolds was careful not to let any of her remaining slaves learn about Nancy's letter.[42]

Myra Inman of Cleveland recorded similar experiences in her diary. The family was forced to do its own domestic work, because of the desertion of many slaves and the death of an old faithful servant. "I got up this morn and dressed myself, came out and got breakfast for the first time in my life," she lamented. The duties of the house now had to be divided among the white women of the family. "It fatigues us a good deal as we are not accustomed to it," she complained. Months later, she was reduced to milking the cows, for the first time in her life.[43]

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[42] Ibid., February 10, April 1, June 20, 1864.

[43] Myra Inman Diary, February 22, 25, 26, May 7, 1864, February 26, 1865, SHC.

The death of slavery compelled many East Tennesseans, white and black alike, to make significant adjustments in their lives. With the end of armed hostilities in the spring of 1865, the question of the role and place of free black people in society became a major concern. For blacks, newly-found freedom offered opportunities to educate themselves, to find gainful employment, or simply to do as little as possible. Some slaves were fortunate in the treatment they received from their former masters. Abram Jobe of Jonesboro paid his slaves in greenbacks for all labor they had performed since Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and promised to take good care of those who wanted to remain with him. The Inmans of Cleveland kept their old house servants and did as much as possible to care for them. Such kind treatment seems to have been an exception though, for most East Tennessee whites made little effort to help the former slaves. As in much of the rest of the South, these whites frequently displayed blatant hostility toward blacks who attempted to improve themselves or toward whites who aided the freedmen.[44]

In the summer of 1865, many blacks who had moved to the urban centers of East Tennessee during the war returned to the countryside now that peace had been restored there.[45] They moved back to their old homesteads and in some cases boldly took over abandoned property. O. R. Broyles, who during the war had moved to South Carolina with several of his slaves, complained that his abandoned farm in Greene County had been

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[44]"Memoirs of Abram Jobe," 141-42, TSLA; Myra Inman Diary, December 12, 1865, SHC.

[45]Mrs. William R. Caswell to William Caswell, June 25, 1865, Caswell MSS, McClung Collection.

taken over by his former slaves. Much to his disgust they had left their own "comfortable quarters" and moved into the big house and divided the land among themselves. Two of the slaves he had taken to South Carolina had run away, joined the Union army, and eventually had turned up in Greene County to share in the distribution of their former master's estate. He informed T. A. R. Nelson that hundreds of freedmen were leaving South Carolina for East Tennessee because of the reported ease of acquiring land there. Broyles warned that "unless your people, or the laws of your state, resists it at the outset, there will be an avalanche of Blacks from the Cotton states on Tennessee in a short time, that will contaminate the atmosphere you breathe."[46]

How soon Broyles was able to regain his farm is not known, but it is highly unlikely that his former slaves were allowed to keep possession of the property for very long. While freedmen may have attempted to take over the property of Rebels who had been driven from their homes by revenge-minded Unionists, such abandoned property was usually confiscated and sold at public auction to loyal whites by the county courts or chancery courts. Even when courts did not give legal settlement of property to whites, Negroes were forced off land that they had settled on. In the fall of 1865, the Freedmen's Bureau reported several incidents in Knox, Blount, and Sevier counties where whites drove freedmen from abandoned Rebel farm

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[46] O. R. Broyles to T. A. R. Nelson, August 15, 1866, Nelson MSS, McClung Collection. Although there is no statistical evidence to corroborate Broyles' comments on black migration to East Tennessee, M. M. Wagner of Johnson County reported in the fall of 1866 that abandoned houses in the county were being taken over by blacks. Writing to relatives in North Carolina, Wagner stated, "there are a good many Negroes from your state coming to Tennissee [sic]." M. M. Wagner to "nephew and niece," September 10, 1866, Wagner MSS, ibid.

property, even though the Bureau had given the blacks permission to settle there.[47]

Generally, however, freedmen were allowed to return to the rural areas. And in most cases, they began working as farm hands or sharecroppers for whites under contract arrangements. By the summer of 1866, for example, M. J. R. Gentle, a Negro spokesman from Knoxville, reported that four hundred blacks were engaged in farming in Knox County, each tending an average of fifteen acres. These farmers gave up from one-third to one-half of their crops in return for tools, livestock, and seed supplied by white planters. The Freedmen's Bureau frequently received complaints that white farmers, by refusing to distribute supplies or refusing to pay fair wages to their farm hands, were not living up to their agreement with their black sharecroppers. One Bureau agent reported that planters in Bradley County were seldom "liberal and just" to the freedmen. In reality, "from seven to nine tenths of them wish to get their labor for free," he asserted. Another agent noted in March, 1866, that large numbers of blacks had left the Knoxville area for plantations near Memphis, where they hoped to find better employment and higher wages. Most black East Tennesseans, however, remained in their native region. As was true of the rest of the South, very soon after the war the sharecropper system became the predominant means of livelihood for rural blacks.[48]

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[47] David Boyd to Andrew Montgomery, September 1, 1865, Knoxville, BRFAL MSS; David Boyd to Nathaniel Harris, September 16, 1865, ibid.; David Boyd to John Leek, October 17, 1865, ibid.

[48] A. A. Taylor, The Negro in Tennessee, 1865-1880 (Washington, 1941), 127; David Boyd to Ransom Budget, September 18, 1865, BRFAL MSS; David Boyd to John Leek, October 17, 1865, ibid.; James Warr to Samuel Walker, May 4, 1866, ibid.; John A. Henry to J. E. Walker, March 31, 1866, ibid.

Large numbers of blacks remained in the towns and cities of East Tennessee where Northern benevolent societies and the Freedmen's Bureau were most active in attempting to aid the former slaves. The benevolent societies, with the American Missionary Association in the forefront, continued their efforts to provide education for blacks. With the cooperation of the Freedmen's Bureau, these societies located teachers, many of whom were Northerners, and made provisions for school buildings. By late 1865, these benevolent groups were sponsoring twenty-four teachers who instructed over 1,700 freedmen in East Tennessee.[49]

While the Freedmen's Bureau provided aid to education, it also took on several other functions. The Bureau was set up in East Tennessee sometime in the late spring of 1865, with one of the state's three major sub-district headquarters located in Knoxville. The sub-district was further divided into units roughly corresponding to counties; over each of which was an agent or superintendent for local administration. However, in East Tennessee, the Bureau was never fully established in all the counties as it was in Middle and West Tennessee. Once situated, it attempted to assure fair treatment of the freedmen, by arranging employment, housing, and supplies where needed. Occasionally the agency's efforts to obtain employment for freedmen were welcomed by East Tennessee whites, especially when it meant removal of blacks from the region. In 1865, for example, the Freedmen's Bureau secured employment for many blacks from

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[49]George R. Bentley, A History of the Freedmen's Bureau (Philadelphia, 1955), 171; Phillips, "Freedmen's Bureau in Tennessee," 188-89; Richard B. Drake, "The American Missionary Association and the Southern Negro, 1861-1888" (Ph.D. dissertation, Emory University, 1957), 37-38; Swint, "Report from Educational Agents," 56.

the Chattanooga area on plantations in possession of Northern men in the Mississippi Valley. Most Chattanoogans lauded this reduction of the local black population which had mushroomed during the war.[50]

The Bureau attempted to prohibit abuses of sharecroppers by planters; and in several instances it stepped in to prevent the forced removal of freedmen from property claimed by whites. To support its authority in such cases, the Bureau relied upon the Federal troops, mostly black soldiers, who remained in East Tennessee for nearly a year after the war. It also attempted to provide protection for blacks in the courtroom; and when the 1867 General Assembly gave black males the right to vote, the Bureau tried to insure that blacks received fair treatment at the ballot box. Through the aid of the agency, after 1868 a few black officials were elected to local office in East Tennessee--Chattanooga, Knoxville, and Maryville each claimed one black on their boards of aldermen.[51]

The duties of the benevolent aid societies and the Freedmen's Bureau were not limited to aid for freedmen. A. M. A. agents, for example, tried to encourage the uplifting of the poor whites of East Tennessee by providing teachers and schools for them. And the Freedmen's Bureau on several occasions provided relief supplies, in cooperation with the East Tennessee Relief Association, for needy whites, although in the latter case the Bureau was instructed to "take peculiar pleasure in caring

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[50] J. T. Trowbridge, The South, A Tour of its Battlefields and Ruined Cities . . . (Hartford, Conn., 1866), 251-52; Weymouth T. Jordan, "The Freedmen's Bureau in Tennessee," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 11 (1939), 50-51; Phillips, "Freedmen's Bureau in Tennessee," 140-41, 158, 277.

[51] Phillips, "Freedmen's Bureau in Tennessee," 79-81.

for those who had supported [the Federal Government] during its recent hour of trial." In the spring of 1867, when East Tennessee, particularly the Chattanooga area, was ravaged by extensive flooding, the Freedmen's Bureau provided temporary housing and much needed food and medical supplies for blacks and whites alike.[52]

Despite such efforts, the Freedmen's Bureau and many of the benevolent societies, particularly the A. M. A., were never welcome in East Tennessee. To the majority of whites, such agencies were completely unnecessary; moreover their presence was viewed as an insult because of the loyalty of these counties during the war. To the East Tennesseans, there was nothing wrong with establishing agencies to aid freedmen as a means of punishing ex-Rebels in the disloyal South; but what had they done to deserve similar treatment?

Much of the hostility engendered against the Freedmen's Bureau and the benevolent societies was due to the strong antipathy of the region's whites toward blacks, an enmity that seemed to mount after the war. As might be expected, areas which had shown strong Confederate sympathies were openly hostile to the former slaves. A Bureau official noted that by the summer of 1867 almost every black had been driven out of Polk County, "a strong Rebel community," with a large slave population before the war. Chattanooga was another area which gained a strong anti-Negro reputation. "There is a bad disposition exhibited toward negroes at this place," wrote General Alvan C. Gillem, commandant of the Chattanooga

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[52] Ibid., 84-85. For information on the 1867 Flood see David E. Donley, "The Flood of March, 1867, in the Tennessee River," East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications, No. 8 (1936), 74-81.

post after the war. And in a Freedmen's Bureau report on thirteen murders of freedmen by whites in East Tennessee from July, 1867 to July, 1868, nine occurred in Hamilton County. Antipathy toward blacks was of course not limited to ex-Rebels. James Warr, a Bureau agent in Cleveland, reported that "three-fifths" of the people in Bradley County exhibited bitter feelings toward blacks and the Freedmen's Bureau. "Men who served for three years and upwards in the Federal army are cursing the Freedmen's Bureau and everyone who is in favor of it," he exclaimed. The Knoxville Whig, which had advocated emancipation as a means of punishing ex-Rebels, continued to call for the colonization of blacks from the region.[53]

When state government in Nashville extended civil rights to blacks after the war, most East Tennessee Unionists were not sympathetic. In January of 1866, the General Assembly passed a bill authorizing Negro testimony in the courts; but the East Tennessee legislators were almost unanimous in their vote against it, strongly reflecting the sentiments of the constituents. The passage of the bill and subsequent talk of granting Negro suffrage met with an angry response in East Tennessee; and on February 13, several Knoxvillians held a protest rally, which a Freedmen's Bureau agent described as a "mob." The agent observed that the feeling of enmity toward the Bureau and the freedmen had increased considerably. An ex-Rebel who returned to his home in Jefferson County

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[53] James Warr to Samuel Walker, June 30, 1867, BRFAL MSS; Alvan C. Gillem to Joseph S. Fowler, December 19, 1865, Fowler MSS, SHC; "List of Outrages Perpetrated upon the Freedmen," Report of James M. Johnson, July, 1868, BRFAL MSS; James Warr to J. E. Jacobs, February 28, 1866, ibid.; Knoxville Whig, August 23, 1865.

in January, 1866, discovered that unlike the summer before, the Union people there treated him very kindly. They had become "very much soured" toward their "bosom friends" the Yankees because of talk of Negro equality; "how they detest the thought of Negro suffrage & testimony in the Courts!!" As the Knoxville Whig observed, "It is a matter of regret among all good men that the prejudices against the negro population continue so strong and so general."[54]

Another source of contention among East Tennesseans was the question of education for blacks. When schools for freedmen had been set up during the war, local whites had been somewhat distrustful and this feeling continued after the war. The Knoxville Whig doubted the wisdom of educating blacks. "Some of the Northern men in charge of the negro interests know nothing of the negro character, save what they have heard at a distance, and they really need themselves to be educated in this respect before they take charge of the colored population," commented John Brownlow. To Brownlow, it was much more important that blacks be taught habits of industry, sobriety, and strict economy rather than anything they might pick up in a schoolhouse. This attitude was commonly held by East Tennessee whites, especially outside of the cities. One Freedmen's Bureau agent observed that in regard to Negro education "the most bitter prejudice exists amongst all classes of people" in the rural

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[54]John A. Henry to J. E. Jacobs, March 1, 1866, BRFAL MSS; anon. to W. H. Thomas, January 16, 1866, Thomas MSS, Duke University Library; Knoxville Whig, January 3, 1866. In the fall of 1866, a Freedmen's Bureau agent in Chattanooga stated that the passage of the Negro testimony bill really made no difference because "Negro testimony in the Courts is given but slight credence, and the verdicts in their favor if for damages are always of a trifling amount." F. E. Trotter to J. E. Lewis, September 12, 1866, BRFAL MSS.

districts. Another agent who served in the rural counties of northeast Tennessee stated that there was a complete feeling of revulsion toward "the instruction of the colored race" in his district. And when the Union Presbytery asked all churches under its charge to give financial support to Maryville College, Shunem Presbyterian Church in rural Jefferson County refused, citing the college's policy of admitting blacks as students.[55]

Some whites went so far as to obstruct physically the educational efforts of the benevolent societies and Freedmen's Bureau. In the fall of 1865, R. J. Creswell arranged the purchase of an old government building in Knoxville to house his school for freedmen; but before the school opened its doors, someone burned down the building. Creswell had to get by as best he could, until a regular school building was erected the next year; but soon afterward a group of white citizens warned him to "close up his nigger school and go North." Despite the threat, the school continued to operate. John Tate, a black man, attempted to open a school in Clinton "in the face of the highest possible predges [prejudice]." When he tried to operate a school in a Methodist church, the whites became so enraged that he had to abandon the house of worship. Tate finally assembled local blacks and built a crude structure for classes. Eventually the Freedmen's Bureau offered aid and a better building was constructed. Unfortunately the school was destroyed by an incendiary in

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[55]Knoxville Whig, July 12, 1865; F. E. Trotter to J. R. Lewis, September 12, 1866, BRFAL MSS; Hermann Bokum to S. W. Groesbeck, May 31, 1867, ibid.; Session Minutes, Shunem Presbyterian Church (Jefferson County), April, 1869, McClung Collection.

March, 1869; but for once, local whites came to the aid of the freedmen by subscribing $400 for the construction of a new school.[56]

Gradually hostility toward Negro schools diminished in East Tennessee when most whites no longer regarded the segregated institutions as a threat to the social order. In the late 1860's, Bureau reports indicated that the freedmen schools were being accepted by whites, but the main problem was black truancy. Agitation over black education would not become evident again in East Tennessee until the school desegregation crisis in Clinton in the 1950's.[57]

While black schools may have gained grudging acceptance, whites remained hostile to the Bureau and especially resented the stationing of black troops in East Tennessee. More than once, whites clashed with black soldiers. After a shooting incident between black troops and some whites in Knoxville in August of 1865, the Knoxville Whig assumed that the soldiers were at fault and then objected to the frequency with which black troops leveled their muskets at white men. "The truth is no troops are needed in East Tennessee, and the sooner they are removed, the better for them and the country," the newspaper commented. Later that same year the Whig attacked the Freedmen's Bureau for meddling in civil affairs; and although it never called for the dismantling of the Bureau in East

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[56] Freedmen's Mission of the United Presbyterian Church, 22-23; John Tate to John Ogden, no date [probably late 1865], American Missionary Association MSS, Fisk University; Swint, "Report from Educational Agents," 158.

[57] James M. Johnson to W. P. Carlin, April 30, September 5, 1868, BRFAL MSS; Samuel Walker to James Thompson, April 30, 1869, ibid.

Tennessee, it did not urge its continuation. To Bureau officials, the removal of troops and their agency from East Tennessee would be a grave mistake. No doubt they put much stock in frequent threats by whites like the old Union adherent who stated, "if you take away the military from Tennessee, the buzzards can't eat up the niggers as fast as we'll kille [sic] 'em." General Alvan C. Gillem in Chattanooga wrote in January, 1866, that he felt it frankly unwise to withdraw troops from anywhere in Tennessee. John A. Henry, Bureau sub-agent in Knoxville, heard rumors that once troops were removed from the city, large numbers of whites "from north of the city" would march in and "bring down the Bureau." In the opinion of another agent in Chattanooga the presence of the Bureau "acts as a restraint upon the passions of the ignorant."[58]

The dire predictions concerning the removal of troops from East Tennessee were never realized, because when the Federal soldiers were withdrawn after Tennessee's readmission to the Union, there was no sudden uprising by whites to drive out the Negro population or even attempt to dismantle the Freedmen's Bureau. By 1866, most East Tennessee whites were assured that the place of Negroes in their society would be one of inferiority. Urban blacks rarely proved a threat to white jobs as they did in other cities like Memphis and New Orleans; rural blacks were well ensconced in the sharecropping system soon after the war, and very few

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[58]Otis A. Singletary, Negro Militia and Reconstruction (Austin, Texas, 1957), 112; Knoxville Whig, August 23, 30, December 27, 1865; Allan Nevins, The Emergence of Modern America, 1865-1878 (New York, 1927), 18; Alvan C. Gillem to Joseph S. Fowler, January 26, 1866, Fowler MSS, SHC; John A. Henry to J. E. Jacobs, March 1, 1866, BRFAL MSS; F. E. Trotter to J. R. Lewis, September 12, 1866, ibid.

Negroes held elected office in East Tennessee government when allowed to, following legislation from the state General Assembly.[59] And as in the rest of the South, examples of the instituting of various forms of apartheid in the months following the war can be found in East Tennessee. In the fall of 1865, the Knoxville city government ruled that blacks would be excluded from the public market as retailers. Also soon after the war, just as the churches of East Tennessee experienced a purge of ex-Rebels from their congregations, blacks, either voluntarily or by means of official exclusion, left the white congregations they had attended and established their own churches.[60]

In conclusion, the Civil War experience of black East Tennesseans was not markedly different from that of other members of their race in much of the rest of the Confederacy. Although the war did bring freedom, it is difficult to escape the belief that blacks were used and exploited by both contending white factions during the war, that their freedom was regarded in many ways as more of a tool of revenge against Rebels rather than a means of uplift and liberation, and that they lived amidst a large

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[59]Because of these factors, East Tennessee cities never experienced the bloody race riots that erupted in other urban areas. Examples of post-war problems in other Southern cities are in Jack D. L. Holmes, "The Underlying Causes of the Memphis Race Riot of 1866," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, XVII (1958), 195-221; Singletary, Negro Militia, 66-80.

[60]Knoxville City Records, Book D, October 6, 1865, pp. 297-98, Knoxville City Hall. From the records of East Tennessee churches with black members, it seems that most black communicants withdrew voluntarily. However, an entry in the session minutes of the Second Presbyterian Church of Knoxville stated that eight blacks were "dismissed" and that they would join the First Colored Presbyterian Church of Knoxville. Session Minutes, Second Presbyterian Church, Knoxville, September 24, 1865, McClung Collection.

white population determined to keep them in inferior social, political, and economic positions after the war. Although East Tennessee was a locus of Southern Unionism, it is evident that this Unionism was marred by racial attitudes little different from that of the most devoted Confederates.

CHAPTER X

CIVIL WAR LEGACY: A SUMMARY

The Civil War experience of Tennessee's eastern counties served to confirm a fact that had become increasingly evident in the antebellum years--East Tennessee was an unique Southern region. Possessed of a society and economic system having less dependence on slavery than most of the South, with political leanings divergent from Middle and West Tennessee, and with a heritage of independent action evident in the State of Franklin movement of the 1780's and in the desire for separate statehood in the 1840's, most East Tennesseans saw little future in joining a rebellion in which they had little at stake and much to lose. Organized early in the secession crisis under the capable leadership of William G. Brownlow, Andrew Johnson, T. A. R. Nelson, Oliver Temple, and many others, the Unionists did not waver in the face of a mounting tide of secessionism within the state. They voiced their disapproval of Tennessee's steps toward disunion by holding well-attended conclaves in Knoxville and Greeneville and then by voting over two to one against separation from the Union. Even after Tennessee had officially seceded, most East Tennesseans never accepted the authority of the Southern Confederacy.

Although the majority sympathized with the Union, a sufficient number of East Tennesseans supported the Confederate States to create a civil war within a civil war. Both sides seemed bent on rooting out or destroying those who would not conform to the appropriate cause. Neighbors, classmates, and even fellow worshippers at local churches were suddenly turned into the bitterest of enemies. As a result, life for

the people of the region became one of fear, distrust, deprivation, and often extreme misery. Contributing to this predicament was the fact that East Tennessee, like the rest of the state, experienced immediate military action. Moreover, unlike many areas of the lower South which saw little or no armed clashes until the waning months of the war, the eastern counties of Tennessee were torn by fighting even after Lee's surrender. Whether on a large scale, such as the Knoxville and Chattanooga campaigns, or the smaller--but in many ways more terrifying--scale of almost constant guerrilla warfare, the area remained in the vortex of war.

Given these circumstances, neither Confederate nor Federal authorities were entirely successful in controlling the region. The Confederates, desperately concerned for the safety of the vital East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad, feared not only external invasion by Federal forces from Kentucky but also a mass uprising of East Tennessee Unionists. Federal invasion was not a serious threat until 1863; but the menace of internal rebellion existed from the beginning. Incidents of sabotage and constant harassment by bands of Unionist guerrillas convinced the Confederates that the region was a hotbed of insurrection.

The Confederate leaders never quite understood how to deal with the problem. Their alternating and inconsistent policies of occupation did more harm than good. Initially they attempted a policy of conciliation in hopes of gradually winning East Tennesseans to their cause. They were convinced that the people had been misinformed and misled by self-seeking politicos. Through the lenient policy of General Felix Zollicoffer, even Parson Brownlow, the most rabid Unionist, seemed to lose some of his

ardor. But overzealous Confederate civil officials negated much of the good will engendered by Zollicoffer when they arrested and prosecuted Unionists, often on flimsy charges. In November, 1861, saboteurs destroyed six crucial railroad bridges in the region, thus convincing Southern officials that the lenient policy had been a costly blunder. Despite Unionist condemnation of the incident, the Confederates instituted harsh measures to smother Unionism. Large numbers of "Tories" were arrested on little or no pretense.

By early spring 1862, General Edmund Kirby Smith was ordered to take charge and secure the region firmly for the Confederacy. He persuaded Jefferson Davis to declare martial law; and then the most controversial policy of all, conscription, was instituted. The latter policy was a failure, as thousands of East Tennesseans fled into Kentucky to escape what they regarded as gross oppression. Realizing the enormity of the conscription debacle, Kirby Smith persuaded Richmond to suspend the draft in East Tennessee and urged Tennesseans to return to their native land where they would be left alone as long as they remained peaceful. But Unionists no longer trusted the Rebel authorities and this attempt at conciliation failed. Kirby Smith's successors also tried to heal the breach with the native population; but orders from Richmond to resume the draft, in addition to mounting opposition from Unionist guerrillas, prevented the Confederates from ever successfully overseeing the region.

Federal forces occupied East Tennessee in September, 1863, but it was not until the final weeks of the war that the region was securely under their administration. Ironically, much like the leaders in charge

of Confederate occupation, Federal officials debated whether a program of leniency or harsh retribution should be extended to the enemy. The result was an almost constant battle between those who urged absolution and others who insisted on severe punishment. While Provost Marshal General Samuel P. Carter attempted to maintain law and order in the region, William G. Brownlow's Knoxville Whig urged revenge-minded Unionists to take the law into their own hands. The Parson's admonitions were frequently followed. Thus an internecine conflict that had existed from the beginning of the war intensified. Moreover by mid-1864, most of the eastern counties were at the mercy of roaming bands of guerrillas, Confederate or Unionist, and bushwackers who pledged loyalty to no cause. To a region already ravaged by the presence of large armies, the disruption caused by guerrillas only deepened the suffering of the people. Not until Union General George Stoneman's raid in March of 1865, was East Tennessee cleared of the armed desperados.

But the end of the war did not bring peace. Benevolent aid societies such as the East Tennessee Relief Association and the Pennsylvania Relief Association attempted to alleviate much of the material suffering of the people; but they could not dissipate the hatred engendered by four years of civil war. Embittered Unionists were determined never to allow their former enemies to live within their midst. Hence many ex-Rebels could not return home and those who did so risked their lives. Unlike other parts of the South, where the men in gray returned home defeated but still heroes, East Tennessee's Rebels were treated as villains. Not until the end of the decade, when heated passions had cooled significantly, could many former Confederates consider resettling without fear.

Because of the extremely divisive and disruptive nature of the conflict, the institutions that were integral parts of the region's society felt its powerful impact. Local government continued to operate throughout the war, but its regular functioning was frequently interrupted and it quickly became a tool of both Confederate and Federal authorities. The Confederates required county officials to collect arms, arrest deserters, and enforce conscription; and the Federals used them to organize militia units in 1864. Near the end of the war, Unionists also saw the state courts as another means of seeking revenge on the Rebels; and even several months after the war, chancery and circuit court dockets were dominated by treason cases. While local government was sometimes at the mercy of the occupying authorities, it nevertheless continued normal business as much as possible. Ironically, Unionists maintained considerable political strength on the local level during the period of Confederate occupation. Although government officials swore allegiance to the Confederacy, many never fully cooperated with the Southerners. Once under Federal control, these same civil officers simply took the Federal oath and continued their duties.

In many ways the role and function of local government grew to unprecedented levels in response to the stresses of war. Chattanooga and Knoxville city governments expanded their police forces to assure the maintenance of law and order amid rapidly increasing and constantly fluctuating populations. When citizens experienced shortages of salt, corn, hay, and even firewood, city and county governments alike appointed agents and appropriated funds to acquire these needed commodities. This expansion in services, coupled with a marked decrease in revenues taken

into city and county coffers, brought local government to near bankruptcy in much of the region. For the governments of Chattanooga and Knoxville, where local economies recovered soon after the war, city treasuries quickly filled; but county governments in rural areas suffered the effects of war for many years.

Education was unable to withstand the strains of conflict. College classrooms emptied rapidly; the already limited funds available for public schools quickly dried up. Private academies, especially female institutes, managed to function, although on a diminished scale, until the disruptions of Federal occupation and the growing intensity of the war after 1863. Many children, however, obtained the basics of an education in their own homes; and in the last months of the war, small private classrooms opened and met with overwhelming response. The colleges faced an enormous task of recovery. Most had suffered not only losses of students, but also extensive physical damage caused by occupying armies. Fortunately, almost all were able gradually to resume instruction by the end of the 1860's.

Ironically, although the war greatly disrupted the educational system of the region, in the long run, the conflict resulted in legislation for education sought by East Tennessee for years. With East Tennesseans controlling state government after the war, their native region was rewarded with the establishment of a statewide system of public schools supported by public funds. So despite the temporary negative effects caused by the Civil War, the education system ultimately benefitted.

Of all institutions, the church most visibly revealed the bitterness that troubled East Tennessee's population. Since there was immediate armed conflict in the region, some churches closed in the first months; but many stubbornly refused to allow the clash of armies to interfere with worship. In urban areas where armies were concentrated, churches flourished as soldiers and civilians alike flocked to the sanctuaries.

Although there were numerous incidents of soldiers disrupting churches and even demolishing places of worship, the most destructive force was internal division. For decades, the various denominations in the region had warred among themselves and within themselves over theology and church polity. But the political questions of the 1860's tore the churches asunder, irrespective of denomination. Unlike other parts of the South, the East Tennessee clergy was not overwhelmingly in favor of the Confederacy. Yet a large enough element was pro-Rebel so as to cause divisions within the several denominations. The governing bodies of Methodist and Presbyterian churches at one time or another prescribed national loyalty to the Confederacy and later to the Union as a test for the ministry and in some cases for church membership. Individual congregations split into Unionist and Rebel factions; and even though the armies laid down their weapons in 1865, the conflict within many church bodies continued for years. Unionist-dominated congregations insisted that communicants who had been Confederates must confess their "sins" or suffer excommunication. Usually the ex-Rebels refused to recognize their wartime loyalties as a sin; and rather than return to their former churches, they banded together to create new congregations with persons of compatible wartime sympathies. Such bodies inevitably joined the Southern wing of

their denomination, such as the Methodist Episcopal Church, South or the Southern Presbyterian Church.

One institution did not survive the war. Although slavery was not as crucial to the social and economic structure of East Tennessee as to the rest of the South, its demise was nevertheless significant. The eastern counties had a small slave population and the people were generally opposed to the institution's growth and expansion; yet there was never a serious or widespread movement to abolish the system. At the same time, East Tennesseans demonstrated a basic antipathy toward blacks that became particularly evident as a result of the war. During the secession crisis, Unionist leaders affirmed their loyalty to the Federal government while maintaining that the peculiar institution could be best preserved under the Lincoln government. Almost all, including Brownlow, however, admitted that if they perceived a threat of abolition from Washington, they would be as ardent as any Southerner in opposition. Like several other areas of the South in 1861, fear mounted over threats of slave insurrection; and minor incidents of racial violence resulted in harsher restrictions on the freedom and movement of blacks.

The question of slavery's existence as a legal institution in East Tennessee arose after Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and more than any one factor served to fragment the coalition of Unionists which had formed in 1861. While conservative Unionists maintained that slavery must be preserved, conflicting views were held by others, namely Governor Andrew Johnson, William G. Brownlow, and Oliver Temple. To the latter group, slavery not only stood as a symbol of the rebellion, it also served to support the Southern war effort. Therefore, abolition

was an essential war policy. Just as important was the belief that the destruction of slavery would serve as a primary means of punishing Rebels. Because Brownlow and Johnson firmly believed that the chief instigators of the war were the slaveholding aristocracy, they saw no better way of extracting retribution. Although the slave question would not be settled until February, 1865, when a state constitutional amendment abolishing the institution in Tennessee was ratified, the debate engendered by the issue polarized the Unionists into contending factions, a split that would remain in the state even after the war.

Yet the controversy over slavery's continuation as a legal institution was superfluous, because the war did more to destroy the system than the actions of any politician or government official. Even during the period of Confederate occupation, the number of runaways increased significantly and the master-slave relationship was weakened as Confederate troops borrowed Negroes from owners. After Federal occupation, the system began to disintegrate rapidly. Thousands of slaves managed to escape bondage. Even though proven Unionist owners were assured protection of their property by the Federal government, the wholesale conscription of blacks into the army and the establishment of work camps offering wage-paying jobs for all practical purposes destroyed the hold of master over slave. By mid-1864, therefore, the institution in East Tennessee was virtually dead.

As more and more East Tennessee blacks experienced freedom, the innate hostility of whites toward Negroes seemed to take a corresponding rise. Partially because of white pressure, the army segregated into contraband camps the thousands of blacks who crowded into the region's

towns and cities. When Northern benevolent associations began to offer education to the freedmen, such efforts were resented by many East Tennesseans. And as in the rest of the South after the war, the Freedmen's Bureau received a hostile reception in East Tennessee. To East Tennesseans, who had remained loyal to the Union, the establishment of the Bureau in their region was unfair because they perceived its main purpose to be punishment of Rebels. State legislation granting Negro suffrage and additional legal rights was greeted with overwhelmingly negative attitudes in the eastern counties. Like the rest of the postwar South, the people of East Tennessee segregated the small black population in various ways. Thus although East Tennessee was an anomalous Southern region, its racial attitudes were little different from those found elsewhere in the Confederacy.

In conclusion, a study of East Tennessee's Civil War experience reveals that its people and institutions were profoundly affected. The population not only suffered from the presence of contending armies, but most of all from a malicious internal struggle that pitted citizen against citizen, which presented a microcosm of the struggle that divided the nation as a whole. The strong Unionism that emerged in the region was clearly a distinctive part of the whole Civil War saga. With the exception of West Virginia, no other major area of the South demonstrated such devotion to the Stars and Stripes. The Unionist inclinations of the East Tennesseans, however, should not be regarded as an aberration, because with the exception of the slave issue the Civil War only strengthened and reaffirmed an uniqueness and sense of independence that the region had developed in the antebellum period. Having aligned most of

its population with the Union, having subverted the ex-Rebels within its midst, and having never been faced with the dilemmas accompanying the presence of a large and temporarily politically powerful black citizenry, East Tennessee continued as a locus of political leanings and economic growth somewhat divergent from the rest of the state and much of the South.

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