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# MARYLAND

## *Historical Magazine*

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*Silks, Scraps, and Splinters . . .*

Anniversaries of nation-changing events generate bursts of creative intellectual energy as historians of every stripe, from armchair warriors to scholars in the country's most prestigious universities, reexamine the causes, events, and legacies of monumental wars. This year the country stands at the sesquicentennial of the Civil War and over the next four years publishing houses and cultural institutions will bring forth thousands of books, articles, exhibitions, programs, and tours, all designed to engage the curious in the story of a war that claimed more than six hundred thousand lives. Some look for family connections, others search for deeper understanding of the forces that shredded the bonds between North and South, and then there are those who stumble across documents and artifacts and find new people and stories that add to our knowledge.

The Maryland Historical Society staff deftly wrestled with the challenge of how to engagingly and respectfully commemorate this anniversary, and this special issue of the magazine is our permanent contribution to the state's Civil War history. Scholars featured herein are at vastly different points in their careers. Celebrated historian Frank Towers is among the reigning experts on sectional politics; Claudia Floyd has enviable command of Baltimore's post-war Confederate culture; Jonathan White masterfully harnessed the gritty personalities of those who witnessed the Pratt Street Riot; Kevin Konrad, Manon Parry, and Diane Wendt perceptively pulled Amanda Akin's sympathetic humanity from her memoirs; Gregory Lande confidently tackled George W. McDonald's court-martial; and Meirah Shedlo, whose work as an undergraduate museum intern delighted and amazed us, crafted an intriguing glimpse of civilian life. Matt Hetrick, University of Delaware doctoral student and current book review editor served as "guest editor" and skillfully managed the calls for papers, submissions, reader reports, and author correspondence.

The question of how to tell Maryland's Civil War story in an exhibition began in 2009 with discussion of the classic "house divided" and "brother against brother" themes, bounced off of Charley Mitchell's *Maryland Voices of the Civil War*, and landed on "Divided Voices." The result is a striking and at times chilling account told through the letters, diaries, images, and personal belongings of those who lived through it—and did not know how or when it would end. We strove to identify representative persons among the men, women, children, Union supporters, Southern sympathizers, Confederates, free and enslaved blacks, immigrants, and native-born families who had been here for generations, in an effort to present the complexities and personal conflicts that certainly existed between and within the people of Maryland.

Sorting and sifting through the thousands of Civil War papers and objects left in our care over the past century and a half produced a stunning selection from which to choose. Robert E. Lee's iconic camp chair and the haunting shadowbox featured on the cover come quickly to mind. More intriguing, however, are the pieces, the fragments, all the more powerful in that they have survived. The thumb-sized sliver of wood from the platform on which John Brown was hanged after a failed attempt to capture a federal arsenal in Harper's Ferry; the regimental flag that the 4th United States Coloured Troops carried and so gallantly saved at Chaffin's Farm, the remaining shattered silk now meticulously conserved; and the scrap of faded burgundy and cream floral wallpaper removed from President Abraham Lincoln's box at Ford's Theatre after the assassination, curiously found among the papers of John Wilkes Booth's family.

These are the pieces that attract a second look and prompt the questions that drive us deeper into the past on a period rush that carries us back to the 1860s. And once there, on familiar terrain, the release of intuitive imagination allows us to retrieve more of Maryland's story. This is history at its best.

PDA

Cover:

*Antietam National Cemetery Memorial Shadowbox, Sharpsburg, Washington County, Maryland, 1887*

On September 17, 1862, seventeen-year-old John Philemon Smith witnessed the horrific battle near his home in Sharpsburg. The aftermath left 4,000 men dead and more than 15,000 wounded or missing. As did many, Smith walked the battlefield, collecting the grim souvenirs. In later years he crafted this shadowbox. The text inside records the dedication of the Antietam National Cemetery in 1867 and a list of the Union soldiers who lost their lives. The centerpiece is a miniature replica of the Private Soldier Monument, installed at the cemetery in 1880. Smith's shadowbox reflects the enduring personal impact of the Civil War on Marylanders. (Maryland Historical Society, 2002.22.)



*A group of Baltimore businessmen demonstrate their support for the Union shortly after the riot of April 19, 1861. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

# Strange Bedfellows: The Union Party and the Federal Government in Civil War Baltimore

FRANK TOWERS

**D**uring the Civil War, the Union Party governed Baltimore with help from the federal military. Although united in their opposition to Confederates, Baltimore Union Party leaders and federal officials disagreed on policies central to the war effort such as suppressing dissent and ending slavery. The dynamics of this federal-municipal alliance were influenced by the late antebellum partisan conflict between Know-Nothings and Democrats. Locally, the war carried forward the 1850s alignment of parties, but it also intensified a trend evident in the political violence of the Know-Nothing era, namely, the militarization of politics and the denial of legitimacy to the opposing party, a process aided at times by federal provost marshals.

These changes in the political process shaped the outcomes of wartime policy. The partnership between the Lincoln administration and the Baltimore Union Party gave enough power to the city's heretofore subdued antislavery movement to bring about emancipation in Maryland, yet it was sufficiently fragile to enable racial conservatives and even some Confederate sympathizers to regain control of the city government shortly after the war. What looked to Baltimore's die-hard secessionist faction like a seamless alliance between former Know-Nothings, Republican abolitionists, and federal occupiers was, from the perspective of Union Party supporters, an unstable coalition that exemplified the maxim: politics makes strange bedfellows.

Municipal politics in Civil War Baltimore illustrated a pattern common to Union-controlled areas of the slave states. White southern unionists opposed secession but generally supported slavery. In 1861 that outlook conformed to Lincoln's promise to preserve the Union while leaving slavery intact in states where it already existed. By the summer of 1862, however, pressure from tens of thousands of escaped slaves and rising antislavery sentiment among northern whites pushed Congress to move against slavery. Federal legislation such as the Second Confiscation Act, which prevented the return of runaway slaves to Confederate masters, and the abolition of slavery in federal territories, including Washington, D.C., put the Lincoln administration on a course to make emancipation a war goal.

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This shift in federal policy strained Washington's relationship with the South's white unionists. Even in loyal border slave states like Maryland, proslavery unionists opposed compromise measures such as financial compensation for masters who manumitted their slaves. Although Lincoln held out hope that conservative unionists would take the lead in rebuilding loyal governments, on the slavery issue he had to empower southern politicians who were willing to embrace emancipation. Accompanied by a change in the political process that restricted the role of Confederate sympathizers in local politics, the tension between federal policy and proslavery unionists in the South created an opportunity for the antebellum minority that had opposed slavery to grow in number and move to the forefront of local politics.

The surge of radicalism in Baltimore had counterparts in other Union-controlled districts of the South that together gave the appearance of a more broadly based movement for the social transformation of the South along the lines advocated by free-labor radicals in the Republican Congress, such as Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner. Those appearances were deceiving because they ignored the federal government's other priority—restoring loyal governments to the South that had broad support. Preferring to serve as the guarantor of public order rather than to act as the instrument for partisan revenge, the Lincoln administration balanced its goal of winning southern support for emancipation with the aim of cultivating loyalty among the established political and economic leaders, a group that generally supported slavery.<sup>1</sup>

### **Know-Nothings, Republicans, and the Beginning of the Union Party**

Crucial decisions about party allegiance made during the 1860 presidential campaign and the ensuing secession crisis shaped the dynamics of wartime city politics. In 1860, Baltimore Know-Nothings, who had governed the city for six years, faced a dilemma. On one hand, like other Union supporters operating in a state whose voters had consistently supported slavery, they could not endorse emancipation and expect to win.<sup>2</sup> On the other, given the weakness of the American Party nationally—by 1860, Baltimore and New Orleans were the last significant Know-Nothing strongholds—their chances would improve if they had an ally outside of state and local government. That ally was the Republican Party, which opposed the extension of slavery and had the patronage resources, national prominence, and, in the volatile context of the secession crisis, the military might necessary to combat the Democratic Party.

In 1859, the General Assembly, then ruled by a Democratic majority, took control of Baltimore's police and courts, laying the groundwork for the officially nonpartisan but Democratic-led City Reform Association to win the October 1860 municipal elections and drive Know-Nothings from office. The bitterness of the late antebellum party battle had become entangled in the city's approach to the sectional conflict and informed the local case for secession as a means of keeping the Know-Nothings and their working-class street gangs permanently out of power. For example, during the

city's riot against federal troops on April 19, 1861, some gang members took to the streets in support of the Union, while partisan Democrats in the Customs service and elite militia units attacked federal troops.<sup>3</sup> Fused to the question of secession or Union, partisan identities shaped in the late 1850s could not be easily abandoned after federal troops took control of the city in mid-May 1861. To regain power, Baltimore Know-Nothings would have to overthrow the Reform administration and their Democratic allies in Annapolis.

Yet, despite the compelling reasons to fuse with Republicans, Baltimore Know-Nothings refused to do so. The poison pill preventing fusion was the view widely held among southern whites that Republicans were abolitionists. In 1860 supporters of the American Party backed proslavery Constitutional Union candidate John C. Bell rather than Lincoln, who garnered only 4 percent of the city's votes. Know-Nothing campaigners attacked Republicans with the same racist invective as Democrats, and their supporters mobbed Republican meetings. Even those who crossed over to support Lincoln were proslavery. William Schley, one such convert, promised Governor Thomas H. Hicks, a Know-Nothing, that if the Republican Party dared to "interfere . . . with the domestic institutions in all of the States, or in any State, I would in a second separate myself from it." For his part, Hicks, an Eastern Shore supporter of slavery, told a pro-Republican city editor that "to read . . . good accounts of Lincoln and [vice-presidential candidate Hannibal] Hamlin . . . does not fill me with pleasure."<sup>4</sup>

Had Baltimore voters in 1860 wanted a genuine break from entrenched local politicians and their policies, Republicans offered it. They advocated a different choice on slavery, and their leaders were not typical politicians. Francis Corkran and William Gunnison, the Republican Party's most outspoken Baltimore leaders, were merchants, a common job for politicians, but Corkran's Quaker faith and Gunnison's New England origins put them outside the mainstream of party operatives. Augustus Becker, who as the editor of the abolitionist *Der Wecker* endorsed Republican presidential nominee John C. Frémont in 1856, had been active in Germany's communist movement during its unsuccessful 1848 revolution. These men complained of the "odium" and "personal abuse" they suffered for their "fearless advocacy of the Republican ticket." For example, Gunnison's business failed in the 1850s because of what he termed "political proscription." As a protection for his supporters, Gunnison kept his list of party members secret. The persecution felt by Baltimore Republicans indicates the absence of significant public support from Know-Nothings, the reigning party until October 1860.<sup>5</sup>

Unwilling to endorse the Republicans in 1860, most Baltimore Know-Nothings joined the new Maryland Union Party that emerged out of the mass Union rallies held during the winter of 1860–61. As it did in other non-seceding states, the name "Union Party" first appeared on ballots in elections held in the summer and fall of 1861. Candidates adopted the label "Union Party" on a district-by-district basis,

and in some cases it was adopted by candidates competing for the same office. The label connoted a nonpartisan nationalism as well as conservative opposition to emancipation, a stand that supporters hoped would attract prowar Democrats in the free states and proslavery unionists in the slave states who had voted for Bell. In office, Union Party candidates supported the Lincoln administration, and in 1864 Lincoln himself ran for reelection as the nominee of the National Union Party. That organization had the full support of Republicans but nonetheless adopted the mantle of antipartisanship in an effort to project themselves to voters as patriots who rose above factional interest and to portray their Democratic opponents as disloyal self-seekers. In Baltimore, the Union Party label justified claims to support the national government in Washington while maintaining distance from the Republicans and charges of abolitionism. As was the case elsewhere, locally the Union Party's "partisan antipartisanship," as one historian terms it, sanctioned dealing with the opposition as traitors suitable for disfranchisement.<sup>6</sup>

In 1861, Baltimore Union Party leaders followed the official Lincoln policy of supporting reunion and keeping slavery intact where it already existed, but they did so with a proslavery gusto that was lacking from the president's public statements. John Pendleton Kennedy, a Whig leader who joined the Know-Nothings after his former party collapsed, blamed secession on a "parade of idle and mischievous debate," not a substantive difference over slavery. He criticized extremist tactics by fire-eaters and abolitionists alike, and said "African slavery, in this country, at least, is for the most part, a clear gain to the savage it has civilized. Whatever it may be to others, it has been a blessing to *him*." To reunify the country, Kennedy argued, not only proslavery extremists but also abolitionists would have to be defeated.<sup>7</sup>

Kennedy's views on slavery resembled those of other leading Know-Nothing converts to the Union Party. Kennedy's brother Anthony, one of Maryland's two U.S. Senators, asked his colleagues, "is there no real cause for alarm in the Southern States . . . when Mr. Seward declares boldly that the election of Lincoln is the downfall of slavery?" Reiterating other proslavery arguments for the Union, a Baltimore pamphleteer argued that secession would abrogate Northern enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law and thereby provoke a mass exodus of Maryland slaves. American Party congressman James Morrison Harris, who declared that secession "has none of my sympathy, and no particle of my approval," joined a committee of border state representatives seeking to head off war. In early January he called for a constitutional amendment that prohibited federal interference with slavery in the territories. Congressman Henry Winter Davis, the Know-Nothing leader who did the most to bring his party around to emancipation, told a friend that his support for Bell and Everett was solely for "local policy" and that he preferred Lincoln but that "it will be impossible to carry the state for him under the name *Republican*." Explaining his reasons, Davis told Lincoln that Marylanders "can be won to support your administration if you will allow them to see in it something besides the

representatives of a northern anti-slavery policy.” This proslavery emphasis on the policy of reunion was largely absent in the statements issued in support of Lincoln by Republicans in the free states.<sup>8</sup>

Observing these statements, Baltimore’s antebellum Republicans doubted the fidelity of Know-Nothings to Republican promises to put slavery on the road to extinction. During the presidential campaign one party loyalist said, “Davis is cowering from the reproach of Republicanism but planning to derive the highest honors from its success.” Commenting on the flood of their former foes into the new Union Party, Gunnison complained to treasury secretary Salmon P. Chase, “we have been overrun with new men who are far from being informed on the issues of our party.” Gunnison believed that “now that success has crowned our cause [they] are very willing to share the spoils of office themselves, or *obtain* them for *themselves* to the exclusion of the devoted and proscribed men who have withstood everything for principle and conscience.” During the interregnum between Lincoln’s election and his inauguration, a critical period in which seven slave states seceded from the Union, American Party leaders upheld the proslavery consensus that had long dominated politics in the city and state. Their point of entry into an alliance with the Lincoln administration established a conservative policy on race and slavery that anchored resistance to radicals who later moved toward the antislavery policies that local Republicans had long advocated. In this context, the accusations of cynical opportunism that Baltimore’s small band of antislavery Republicans leveled against Know-Nothing converts to the Union Party appeared well warranted.<sup>9</sup>

### **Preventing a Secessionist Revival: Federal Police and Union Party Politics in 1861**

Already coming into focus prior to Lincoln’s March 1861 inauguration, the contours of Baltimore’s wartime politics were established in the aftermath of the riot of April 19, a clash between Baltimoreans and federal volunteers that appeared to put the city at odds with the Lincoln administration. Upon taking office Lincoln confronted the problem of protecting federal property in the seceding states. Lincoln’s decision to hold Fort Sumter, located on a small island in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, met with a Confederate attack on the facility on April 12. The opening of formal hostilities set in motion a chain of events that prompted four Upper South slave states to join the Confederacy rather than take up arms against their sister slave states in response to Lincoln’s call to suppress the rebellion by force. The Virginia State Convention’s passage of an ordinance of secession on April 17 put Maryland’s allegiance to its greatest test during the crisis. Two days later, rioters attacked federal volunteers marching through the city. At least sixteen people, four of them U.S. soldiers, died in the violence, and many more were injured. For a tense three-week period the Reform administration declared a policy of “armed neutrality” and took actions to isolate itself from the federal government, such as cutting telegraph and

rail connections to Washington and Philadelphia and soliciting arms from Virginia secessionists. Although union sympathizers were initially cowed by the riot and an ensuing police sweep of armed unionists, they gradually reasserted their political presence. Meanwhile, federal troops seized key connections between Baltimore and Washington. On May 13, U.S. soldiers entered Baltimore without resistance and established a camp on Federal Hill.<sup>10</sup>

Immediately after the riot, Republicans looked at Baltimore as a threat to military security and Maryland's loyalty. *New York Tribune* editor Horace Greeley helped shape this view when he wrote that Baltimore's "government was in the hands of the Breckinridge Democracy, who had seized it with the cry of reform; and the leaders of the Democracy were deep in the counsels of treason."<sup>11</sup> Months before the riot, Lincoln heard similar warnings from Baltimore Know-Nothings about the Reform administration that had just come to power. In February, Davis told the president to "beware of any reconciliation from any [D]emocratic forces . . . the *reformers* . . . are the most mischievous enemies you have in Baltimore." Although Lincoln left the city alone in the weeks following the riot, after the arrival of U.S. troops federal authority gradually came to bear on Confederate sympathizers in the name of enforcing "respect and obedience to the laws."<sup>12</sup>

Federal intervention in city politics began with the police, an institution that had been critical to either controlling or encouraging election violence in the 1850s. As U.S. commanders saw it, police acted in sympathy with the Confederacy during and after the riot of April 19. The actions of the police board, the Reform-appointed body that governed the city's police, exacerbated this impression. In late May, the police board investigated officers who had testified against it to a grand jury and fired eight men who refused to take down a federal flag. Individual officers continued to speak out for secession and fought with unionists. Police board chairman Charles Howard and Marshal George P. Kane refused to cooperate with military searches for hidden arms, a decision remembered in the subsequent discovery of a weapons cache in City Hall. Convinced that the Reform police "stealthily wait to combine their means and forces with those in rebellion," on June 27, Middle Department commander Nathaniel Banks arrested Kane and replaced him with a provost marshal responsible to the army. In August, John A. Dix, Banks's replacement, wrote that "we have no doubt the old city Police are busy stirring up disaffection. I shall arrest any one of them who is so engaged if I can obtain the proof." Taking control of the police, the municipal agency charged with maintaining public order, was a prime task for federal authorities.<sup>13</sup>

Relying on a congressional appropriation to pay the department, federal officers had the final say over city police until March 10, 1862, when the state gained the power to appoint two commissioners in charge of the municipal force who, in turn, named eight assistants. Independent of the city force, the military assigned a provost marshal and twenty officers "to perform special duties" like monitoring

soldiers and rooting out disloyal citizens. Federal officers also took charge of the city telegraph, a communications link with Washington that rioters had temporarily severed on April 19. In 1860, the Democratic-controlled Maryland General Assembly had asserted its authority over Baltimore's police and promptly replaced municipally appointed Know-Nothings with state-approved Democrats. Roughly a year later, the police force again changed hands with the help of allies beyond the reach of municipal power.<sup>14</sup>

The reorganized police force exemplified wartime collaboration between federal officials and former Know-Nothings. The first provost marshal, attorney John R. Kenly, an antebellum Whig who had commanded troops in the Mexican War and was now colonel of the 1st Maryland Infantry, had supported the American Party but switched to the Reformers in reaction to Know-Nothing election rioting. As provost marshal, Kenly immediately fired thirty suspected secessionists on the police force and reviewed the dossiers of the remaining 370 officers, but he was uncomfortable with the job of arresting his fellow citizens—most of those arrested were Reformers like himself—and he quickly left the post to resume his command in the field. His eventual successor, William Van Nostrand, had been a Know-Nothing city councilman and displayed none of Kenly's reserve about arresting Confederate sympathizers. Ex-Know-Nothings remained influential when the police returned to civilian control in 1862. One of the new commissioners was Samuel Hindes, a former city sheriff nominated for mayor by the Know-Nothings in 1860, and one of his deputies had been an American Party police marshal.<sup>15</sup>

In September, the state's attorney tried to redress the Reform administration's lax prosecution of the April rioters by trying several suspects. Federal police continued to arrest those aiding the Confederate cause and clamped down on public displays of Southern sympathy. Most importantly, police jailed the leadership of the Reform Association and Southern and State's Rights legislators who had won their seats in the Maryland General Assembly in an uncontested special election held on April 24 during the standoff between the city and the federal government. These officials defended themselves by distinguishing secession from their declared support for "armed neutrality," a policy of non-alignment with either the Union or the Confederacy backed up by force. Whether city officials truly supported secession, or as historian William Evitts argued, used armed neutrality "to buy time for the Union," has been the subject of debate ever since.<sup>16</sup> In terms of wartime city politics this debate over Reformers' true intentions mattered less than did the perception of Reformers held by hardcore unionists and federal administrators. By the summer of 1861, the distinction between secession and neutrality was lost on both.

Before the riot of April 19, neutrality did have some support among Baltimore unionists. The most prominent pro-Union case for neutrality was John Pendleton Kennedy's widely distributed pamphlet *The Border States: Their Power and Duty in the Present and Disordered Condition of the Country*. Written shortly after South

Carolina seceded in December 1860, Kennedy argued that by virtue of their location near the front in the event of a civil war, the border slave states were uniquely able to sympathize with South Carolina's fears of Republican antislavery policies. At the same time, the border understood that their "injuries" regarding slavery could only be remedied "within the Union." Kennedy held out hope for a compromise roughly approximating the plan advanced by Kentucky U.S. Senator John J. Crittenden to extend the Missouri Compromise line dividing slave and free territory to the Pacific Ocean and prevent via constitutional amendment future abolitionist measures. Should compromise fail, Pendleton proposed a "separate confederacy of the Border States" that would "serve as a center of reinforcement for the reconstruction of the Union."<sup>17</sup> As historians Evitts and Jean Baker have shown, the majority of Marylanders supported Kennedy's general point that the Union must be preserved.<sup>18</sup> Within that pro-union consensus, however, opinion on how to deal with secessionists changed over time from seeking grand compromises such as Kennedy's plan for tactical neutrality to treating them as enemies with whom no accommodation could be reached.

Kennedy's plan for a border state confederacy never came to pass, but one state, Kentucky, did proclaim neutrality with support from unionists who viewed the policy as preferable to disunion. Given Kentucky's defeat of secession, neutrality proved effective as a short-term, pro-Union tactical measure. Not all border states were alike, however, and for Maryland unionists, particularly those in Baltimore, neutrality came to be associated with the Reform administration and the April 19 riot against Union troops. Reformers' hostile actions against the federal government and their long-term antagonism with Know-Nothings, who constituted the majority of the Union movement, combined to turn Baltimore unionists away from neutrality and toward a more divisive, antagonistic stance regarding their opponents. Their views came to accord with those of Know-Nothing publicist Anna Ella Carroll who wrote in July that, "he who is not with the Government is against it, and an enemy to his country."<sup>19</sup>

Along with a less forgiving local opposition, the arrests of Reform officials and Southern and State's Rights legislators sent a message that the federal government would not permit politicians who openly disagreed with its war aims to run Baltimore. Other signs that the municipal government had someone looking over its shoulder included the stationing of federal troops at strategic points throughout the city and a ban on the display of Confederate symbols. By mid-summer small acts like cheering for Jefferson Davis could lead to arrest. As the fall elections approached, Marylander Montgomery Blair, Lincoln's postmaster general and an influential former Democrat whose brother represented St. Louis in the U.S. Congress, urged Dix to stop publication of three pro-Southern newspapers. Between September 12 and 14, federal officials closed two papers by denying them use of the mails and incarcerating their editors, Frank Key Howard and Thomas Hall. Dix saw this work as enhancing the

political chances for local unionists. "I do not think the secessionists could be more intemperate than they are now," Dix wrote in a mid-August request to build more fortifications, "and the Union men would be encouraged and strengthened by such a demonstration."<sup>20</sup> The search for disloyal Baltimoreans continued throughout the war. Provost marshals paid plainclothes detectives to spy on suspected secessionists, and newspaper and government records report a steady stream of arrests for acts of treason.<sup>21</sup>

The summertime change in police personnel and policy corresponded to a shift in electoral politics. Congressional elections held on June 13, 1861, showed that steadfast support for the Lincoln administration was not yet a winning platform. Prior to the election, some former Know-Nothings dropped out of the Union Party rather than endorse the federal's hard line against secessionists. For example, despite his earlier denunciation of secession, Harris declined the Union nomination for the Third District because he rejected "the idea of subjugating and holding the Seceded States by force." Henry May, a Democrat who proclaimed himself an "Independent Unionist," defeated Davis' reelection bid in the Fourth District. The Third District winner, Cornelius L. L. Leary, a former Know-Nothing lawyer and the Union nominee, announced his support for "Southern rights" in opposition to Republicans. May and William P. Preston, Leary's opponent, won 54 percent of 25,284 ballots cast in Baltimore, a turnout close to the antebellum high set in 1860.<sup>22</sup>

Instead of a return to equal party competition, however, the summer and fall of 1861 moved Baltimore back to the pattern set by the Know-Nothings of one-party domination and diminished voter participation. By the time of the October election for the First Branch of the City Council, the police had been reorganized, suppression of secessionists had increased, and the local Union Party had become more forthright in denouncing political opponents as traitors. Giving voice to this policy shortly before the city council election, the *Baltimore American* told readers that "the union party in the state should omit nothing which can insure the utter demolition of the treacherous organization opposed to them."<sup>23</sup>

Union Party nominations for the First Branch city council election provided more evidence that Know-Nothings had found a new home. Thirteen of the twenty nominees had been American Party officials, and the remaining seven had no connection to the Democrats. Democrats like John B. Seidenstricker lost out in Union Party ward nominating conventions to ex-Americans. In a bid to sidetrack the vote, election officials appointed by the Reform police board refused to take an oath to uphold the Constitution. With these officials barred from serving, unionist justices of the peace used a state law that allowed them to appoint election judges and clerks should those already chosen refuse to serve. In this uncontested election, Union candidates won, but they polled only twenty more votes than the Southern and State's Rights ticket did in the low-turnout, uncontested election of April 24, 1861, an indication that participation declined in contests with a prefigured outcome.<sup>24</sup>

The culmination of the 1861 effort to suppress secessionist political activity came at the election for governor held on November 6. The Democrats, now calling themselves National Democrats, fared poorly in Baltimore, where they garnered only 22 percent of the total of 21,529 votes, the lowest turnout for a gubernatorial election since 1850. Democrats ran Benjamin Chew Howard, a member of a prominent political family, several of whose members were either in federal prisons or Confederate units on election day. Howard's association with secession, a poor campaign, and his Catholicism contributed to the decisive triumph of Union Party nominee Augustus W. Bradford, a Baltimore attorney and old-line Whig who had stayed out of politics during the Know-Nothing era but gained attention as a delegate to the border state peace conference held in the spring.

Maryland voters clearly preferred the Union Party regardless of interference at the polls, but in Baltimore Bradford's majority increased with the help of federal troops. Although the military was absent from most Maryland voting districts, in Baltimore General Banks stationed troops at the polls to "protect Union voters and to see that no disunionists are allowed to intimidate them, or to interfere with their rights." The Middle Department gave judges of election wide latitude to disqualify the votes of suspected rebels. Federal police arrested 164 men, including some Democratic candidates, for offenses ranging from Confederate military service and rioting on April 19 to less tangible demonstrations of support for secession. Unionists swept local offices, and, although most Democrats cast their ballots freely, the presence of soldiers, who made arrests in every ward, contributed to the low turnout by convincing some Confederate sympathizers to stay home. Democrats cried foul, but state and federal Union Party officeholders rejected their claims. Davis was especially zealous on the point and spoke out in defense of stationing federal troops at the polls in other contested border South elections.<sup>25</sup>

Federal assistance in removing Reformers from municipal office continued after the arrests of Mayor Brown and members of his administration in the summer of 1861. The remaining Reformers on the city council resigned under duress the following summer in response to Governor Bradford's request that the city government raise \$300,000 in bounties for federal volunteers to help Maryland meet its recruitment quota. On the council's First Branch, Union Party nominees elected in the fall of 1861 approved the measure, but it was rejected by the biennially elected Second Branch, which was composed of Reformers chosen in 1860. Threatened by mobs, Second Branch legislators sought help from Middle Department commander John Wool. Wool made it clear that he supported the appropriation, and his reluctance to disperse pro-bounty rioters convinced council members to resign rather than face arrest or injury. Viewing the resignations as coerced, Reform-Democratic editor William Watkins Glenn denounced it as "an outrage to public liberty and a violation of the rights of every freeman in the city."<sup>26</sup>

Disagreeing with Glenn, Union Party supporters pushed for and received addi-

tional restrictions on political opponents. In 1863, Middle Department commander Robert C. Schenck ordered election judges to have voters swear to “protect and defend the Constitution of the United States” and refrain from aiding or communicating with rebels against the government. Officials administered more exacting loyalty oaths in 1864 and 1865. A few agents of the provost marshal regularly went to the polls to assist election judges and ensure that loyalty oaths were taken, but companies of soldiers rarely appeared alongside them.<sup>27</sup> In 1864, the observance of the new rules by all involved led Severn Teackle Wallis, one of the Southern and State’s Rights legislators arrested in 1861, to lament of his compatriots’ refusal to swear false oaths and vote against Lincoln, “We paralyze the strength of the South here by—I don’t know what to call it, but in plain English, is called, not swearing to a lie.”<sup>28</sup>

Even without federal poll watchers, the departure of an estimated five thousand white men of voting age for Confederate military service removed from the city a large bloc of potential anti-Union Party ballots, possibly one-third of the late antebellum Democratic voter base.<sup>29</sup> These men left of their own accord, but the changing political climate helped motivate them. Some would have fought for the Confederacy regardless of local politics, but others, such as police marshal Kane, who after leaving federal prison engaged in a plot to attack the United States from Canada and later organized Maryland volunteers in Richmond, might have stayed on to run city government had they not faced arrest.<sup>30</sup> Their inability to exercise political power in wartime Baltimore doubtless made the move south more attractive. Meanwhile, Confederate service by leaders of the Reform administration tainted the opposition with disloyalty and drove some Democrats to the Union Party.

Every indicator of party competition in the election returns showed that participation had declined and that the Union Party never faced a serious challenge. The highest wartime turnout occurred at the November 1861 gubernatorial contest, but even that number fell almost nine thousand votes below the prior year’s presidential balloting. Turnout reached an all-time low in an uncontested 1865 local race that attracted only 5,197 voters, and even the 17,605 ballots cast in the presidential election of 1864 would have been among the lowest totals of the 1850s. Despite diminished numbers, the Union Party benefited because it won such a huge majority of the vote, never falling below the 77 percent margin garnered by Bradford in 1861. After that, every ward produced landslide margins of two-thirds or more for the Union Party.<sup>31</sup> An early spate of arrests followed by a Confederate exodus and new rules for voting laid the foundation for the demise of two-party competition in city politics.

For some Baltimore Democrats with ties to the Confederacy, federal occupation seemed like a return of the Know-Nothing coercion that had mobilized the Reformers in the late 1850s. In September 1861, city police failed to aid the Maryland Peace convention when Gregory Barrett Jr., a leader of west Baltimore’s Rip Rap gang, and John Horner, described by one Democrat as “formerly a Swann policeman and some time inmate of the penitentiary,” led a mob that broke up the meeting. After

arresting the Reform leadership, federal agents searched their homes for arms and incriminating evidence. In his Massachusetts prison cell, Charles Howard received word from his wife Elizabeth that “the sanctity of [our home] has been invaded, and the worst ruffians, the terror of the city two years ago—sent into our house.” During the Confederate invasion of Maryland in the fall of 1862, Reform supporter Aaron Friedenwald, a unionist from a family that included Confederate volunteers, wrote that “the rowdy faction of the Know-Nothing party has attached itself to the Union Party here, and instead of arming and meeting the foe as they should, they threaten to wreak their vengeance on the secessionists here.” These characterizations of unionist officials as former Know-Nothing hoodlums expressed the fears of longtime Democrats that the Lincoln administration would sponsor a permanent revolution in city politics that outlawed dissent from Know-Nothing rule.<sup>32</sup>

### **Reigning in the Union Party: Federal Officials and Political Dissent**

These fears were exaggerated. Despite the belief of Union Party foes that the Lincoln administration sought to ban them from political participation, in fact, federal authorities frequently restrained Baltimore unionists seeking reprisals against their secessionist neighbors. For example, while Glenn thought Wool had forced Reformers off the city council in 1862, the federal commander resisted calls from former Know-Nothings to have them arrested. After Wool broke up a meeting of the “Committee of Investigation,” a group created to ferret out Confederate sympathizers, its defenders protested his “needless and wicked exercise of military power.” U.S. commanders turned away numerous requests for harsher measures like the demand to shut down the *Republican*, an anti-administration paper that an “out and out and to the death Union Man” claimed spread “moral poison” to his “secession relatives.” In 1863, Lincoln was “somewhat mortified” to learn that Baltimore’s radical unionists believed he would carry out their demand to have troops at the polls for the fall elections. He told a conservative Union Party leader that “I wish to see loyal qualified voters . . . have the undisturbed privilege of voting at elections and neither my authority nor my hand can be properly used to the contrary.” Similarly, at the 1864 presidential contest, the adjutant general’s office made it clear to the provost marshal that “in the city of Baltimore I particularly desire to avoid the slightest demonstration looking to military interference. In no case must bodies of armed soldiers be allowed to approach the polls, except to put down outbreaks for which the police are insufficient.” No matter its image among Confederate sympathizers, federal authority often found itself at odds with zealous local unionists.<sup>33</sup>

Perhaps the most vivid example of federal military suppression of union partisans occurred in the spring of 1862. On May 23, the Union’s 1st Maryland Regiment suffered heavy casualties and had most of its survivors taken prisoner in a battle with their opposite number in the Confederacy at Front Royal, Virginia. Three days later, news of the defeat reached Baltimore and sparked a unionist search of the business

district for Confederate sympathizers. In dispersing the mob, police announced that “if they were Union men they were in favor of the Union, the constitution, and the enforcement of the laws.” Police commissioners ordered a round-the-clock curfew for the next day.<sup>34</sup>

Thwarted downtown, rioters moved west to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad’s Mount Clare repair shops. Although the road’s management had been suspected of Southern sympathies in the spring of 1861, by summer the B&O had cast its lot with the Union. A decision to make all employees take loyalty oaths in March 1862 added to the unionist climate of opinion in company shops from which many hands had already departed to enlist in federal regiments. The capture of the 1st Maryland set off a wave of indignation at the minority of workers known to support the Confederacy. Around midday on the twenty-sixth, Barrett, the Know-Nothing gang leader who had earlier disrupted the peace convention, led twenty-five men to shouts of “O you son of a bitch” and “Rip Raps” through the shops in search of Confederate sympathizers. The Rip Raps attacked seven workers before a company of U.S. troops appeared and arrested Barrett and other leaders of the raid. Forty soldiers remained on the premises for the next week, and the provost marshal assured workers targeted by the gang that they would keep their jobs under federal protection.<sup>35</sup>

Benjamin “Beast” Butler, a Union commander notorious for his harsh rule over occupied New Orleans, lasted one day as Baltimore’s military commander. More typical were officers like John A. Dix, a New York City financier and Democrat who opposed the centralizing thrust of Republican policy and, in 1863, strove for lenient enforcement of conscription in his home city. Dix wanted to preserve order at the B&O, had some sensitivity for the South, and shared the views of B&O president John W. Garrett, who said “perfect protection is absolutely necessary to Enable the Company to accomplish urgent and important military service.” The evening after the attack, “the Loyal Employees” of the B&O petitioned Garrett for the “discharge of all and every disloyal individual employed at said road.” Having suppressed workers’ collective action in the late 1850s, Garrett would not permit them to dictate hiring during the war, especially when their promise to “furnish the names of said disloyal individuals” showed signs of a job busting purge by men who might later exploit the war’s labor scarcity for higher pay and shorter hours. Garrett’s goodwill mattered more to the Middle Department than did that of the Rip Raps. As Barrett sat in jail, it likely dawned on him that the army was in Baltimore for its own purposes, and gangs would lose out if they interfered. Perhaps reflecting on the riot’s outcome, three months later Barrett enlisted in the U.S. Army.<sup>36</sup>

The raid on Mount Clare also points to the way that the war grafted working-class political participants’ local basis of solidarity onto the national institution of the army and the goals of the Lincoln administration. Like Barrett, hundreds of other Know-Nothing gang members joined the Union army. Together they did so at more than twice the rate of 23 percent for all fighting-age Maryland white men.

The Rip Raps' choice of targets at Mount Clare exposed the staying power of the rivalries forged in the 1850s, and it showed how those earlier conflicts flowed into the antagonisms of the Civil War. The gang not only singled out men implicated in secessionist activities—one victim, Richard T. Moran had been arrested in 1861 on suspicion of sabotaging federal property at Harper's Ferry—it also targeted workers with longer partisan pasts. According to a manager who tried to shield him from the mob, Gustavus Ford “has been very faithful to this company . . . he served us during the great strike several years ago, called the Seal Strike,” a reference to Ford's strikebreaking during a violent 1857 standoff between labor and management over the liability of conductors for theft on trains. Although strikebreaking might have been a motive for the attack, Ford believed that his service as a Reform police officer in 1860–61 had made him particularly odious to the Rip Raps. The opportunity to settle local scores added incentives to support the Union and reinforced the public association of late antebellum partisan conflict with wartime politics.<sup>37</sup>

Beyond the events at Mount Clare, working-class Know-Nothing unionists who sought gains at the expense of employers associated with secession and/or the Democratic Party repeatedly discovered that their business opponents had become prized allies of the Union war effort who could count on federal assistance. The Lincoln administration had few qualms about contracting with partisan foes of former Know-Nothings like Democratic shipbuilders William Skinner and Sons and Hugh Cooper, who in 1859 had been the targets of a job busting campaign coordinated by Know-Nothing police and gangs against their black workers.<sup>38</sup> During the war these businessmen made fortunes building vessels for the U.S. Navy. The Lincoln administration also welcomed the cooperation of Garrett and the B&O board, many of whom had flirted with secession and who previously had fought the same Know-Nothing officials who would go on to lead the wartime Union Party. At the B&O and on the docks, Baltimore provost marshals joined their counterparts in Pennsylvania's coal country and New York City's docks in blocking labor's collective action. However, unlike provost marshals in the North who generally found employers solidly in the Union camp, in Baltimore siding with capital against labor often meant turning against workers who had a better record of unionism than did their employers.<sup>39</sup>

### **New Alliances and New Possibilities: Baltimore Unionists and Emancipation**

In 1860, Baltimore's American Party had upheld one of the constants of the city's antebellum political culture, the defense of slavery. Like a sandcastle, that ideological construction dissolved when the tide of civil war shifted the balance of political power. Having forged an alliance with the Lincoln administration, Baltimore's Americans-cum-unionists moved from supporting slavery to opposing it in the space of a few years.

In the 1861 gubernatorial campaign, Bradford pledged unconditional support for

the Union, but his party's motto, "The United States—one country, one constitution, one people, now and forever," kept silent on slavery and black civil rights. In his January 1862 inaugural address, Bradford devoted equal time to attacking emancipation as "a treason far more potent for mischief" and to criticizing the Confederacy.<sup>40</sup>

In 1862 national events shifted the political ground upon which proslavery unionists stood. The ability of border state slaveholders to control rebellious bondsmen weakened in the face of the abolition of slavery in Washington, D.C. (a plan endorsed by Maryland's Union Party but opposed by its U.S. senator, Anthony Kennedy); Lincoln's offer of compensated emancipation to loyal masters; and the escape of thousands of slaves to federal lines. Although to many observers these events made abolition inevitable, Maryland Union Party leaders clung to halfway measures that would forestall freedom and maintain the racial hierarchy. At the end of May, the city Union convention adopted a resolution in favor of compensated and gradual emancipation. City unionists continued to denounce "the violent projects of fanatical abolitionists" even as they called support for gradual emancipation "the *duty* of the loyal people of Maryland." All of Maryland's federal representatives opposed the Second Confiscation Act, which freed slaves of rebel masters who had escaped to Union lines. Although city Democrats generally had supported John C. Breckinridge in 1860, some joined the Union cause, most notably Reverdy Johnson, who defeated Davis in the legislative race for the U.S. Senate in 1862. Their presence bolstered conservative unionists who joined Bradford in opposing Lincoln's preliminary version of the Emancipation Proclamation announced in September. Davis, who still favored gradual emancipation, said that Lincoln's plan "would destroy the supremacy of the only rule of action—the law of the land—which stands between us and anarchy, arbitrary discretion and those civil confusions which are sure to result in despotism, either of a multitude or a master." In a compromise proposal, Brantz Mayer, a Baltimore Whig and Know-Nothing who chaired the State Union Committee, asked for a federally funded program to deport free African Americans out of the state.<sup>41</sup>

This temporizing frustrated the local antebellum Republicans who merged with the Union Party. In May 1862, Francis Corkran, then an officer in the Baltimore Customs House, complained to Montgomery Blair, the Marylander in Lincoln's cabinet, that "every official I have reference to pronounces the man an Abolitionist who dare[s] second the propositions of the President." In June, Corkran expressed his contempt for Davis and other former Know-Nothings who had begun to criticize slavery. "What do these men care for Emancipation," Corkran asked Blair, "if they did not suppose that they could make it a stepping stone for their own political advancement?" Corkran coveted patronage spoils that went to what he perceived as opportunistic Know-Nothings, but he was also an idealist devoted to what had long been a politically unpopular issue. In that sense, Corkran and his circle of committed antislavery friends acted within a political subculture largely unconnected to his

Union Party colleagues. As he put it, “I greet them and every one else who may put their shoulders to the wheel as brothers and coworkers in the cause. I would like it much better if ‘Self’ had less consideration with them.” These comments reinforce the point that as late as 1862 the leadership of the Union Party, which was overwhelmingly made up of former Know-Nothings, had not deviated from their antebellum support for slavery.<sup>42</sup>

That policy had to change after January 1, 1863, the date that the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect and signaled to Baltimore unionists that abolition was federal policy. After the Emancipation Proclamation, officials like Governor Bradford continued to quarrel with Lincoln’s slavery policy, but an April 1863 Baltimore rally by the Union League—a quasi-secret society not unlike the early Know-Nothing order that generated similar alarms about political extremism—resolved that “the safety and interest of . . . Maryland, and especially of her white laboring people, require that Slavery should cease to be recognized by the law of Maryland.” That month the state-level Union Party declared its support for emancipation.<sup>43</sup>

During the summer the Union Party split into radical and conservative factions. The formal reason was a call issued by the radicals, now calling themselves “Unconditional Union men” (because they were associated with the Union League, members of this group were also known as “League Unionists”), for a constitutional convention that would, among other objectives, outlaw slavery. Based in Baltimore and led by Davis and city American Party veterans Hugh Lennox Bond, Henry Stockbridge, and Archibald Stirling, unconditional unionists endorsed immediate emancipation without compensating slave owners and the military recruitment of emancipated slaves. In terms of electoral strategy, unconditionals such as Henry Hoffman wanted to make these policies “the leading issues of the approaching canvas.”<sup>44</sup>

Other former Know-Nothings like John Pendleton Kennedy and Thomas Swann, former B&O president and Know-Nothing mayor, joined the camp led in Washington by Postmaster General Blair. This group adopted the label “Conservative Unionists.” Swann, who had stayed out of politics after finishing his term as mayor in 1860, reemerged in the spring of 1863 as a champion of the conservative plan for compensated emancipation, a measure that most conservatives had opposed a year earlier. Conservatives also opposed African American military service and the unconditionals’ plan to campaign on emancipation. A Conservative convention held in June resolved that its supporters would “ignore all issues, local or national, but those of war, until treason shall succumb.”<sup>45</sup> Taking up claims leveled against Know-Nothings by antebellum Democrats, conservative unionists equated unconditionals’ support for immediate emancipation with the elevation of African Americans to an equal plane with whites.

Aided by support from the Union League, Davis overcame Swann’s bid for the Union Party nomination for the Third Congressional District. Swann then managed to gain the party’s gubernatorial endorsement. Both men cruised to victory in the

absence of significant Democratic opposition. Swann's election notwithstanding, unconditional unionists won most of the 1863 legislative races.<sup>46</sup>

The influence of Baltimore radicals waxed as Lincoln abandoned Maryland's most intransigent proslavery unionists. In the first two years of the war, Lincoln had been "loathe to alienate" Eastern Shore congressman and slaveholder John A. Crisfield because of his influence with moderates at home and in Congress. By 1863 Lincoln's patience had worn thin. After first refusing the administration's offer of compensated emancipation in the border slave states and then denouncing presidential policy from the floor of Congress, Crisfield found himself shut out of Lincoln's counsels. Davis exploited the opportunity by convincing Schenck to thoroughly enforce the new loyalty oath in the Eastern Shore via a heavy military presence at campaign rallies and polling places. Other Baltimore Unconditionals lobbied for the appointment of a "thorough Union man" as provost marshal for Crisfield's congressional district. These efforts helped emancipationist John Creswell defeat Crisfield in the November balloting. The new unconditional majority held through April of the next year, when a referendum for a constitutional convention intending to abolish slavery won with the help of three-to-one majorities in the northern counties and Baltimore.<sup>47</sup>

In the aftermath of these victories, Baltimore's unconditional unionists pressed their case. Indicative of their new outlook, Charles Taylor, a reporter for the *Clipper*, one of the most avid Know-Nothing newspapers of the 1850s, declared to federal officials "Let us now have a fixed and settled policy. No compromise with slavery. . . . Free labor and free Maryland should be the watchwords of the coming legislature."<sup>48</sup> That sentiment guided the actions of Baltimore's delegation to the constitutional convention created by the April election. Unanimous in support of emancipation, the eleven Baltimore delegates included seven former Know-Nothings. In Annapolis they issued attacks on slavery that were staples of antebellum Republican and other free-soil political rhetoric that their old party had denounced only a few years earlier. Edwin A. Abbott, previously a Know-Nothing school commissioner, echoed Charles Sumner's 1856 critique of southern Democrats as purveyors of sexual license. Another Baltimore delegate invoked the Slave Power conspiracy to explain the causes of the war. "The leaders of the Southern democracy determined to separate the slaveholding state from the balance of the union . . . and thus to subvert and overthrow the best and freest government upon earth." Making the antislavery case in Biblical terms, Baltimorean John Daniel prophesied that "as God has heard their cries and groans and prayers . . . so I believe He is about to deliver this people of the African race." Emancipation "*is right*," Stockbridge declared, "right between man and man—right before God." These attacks on slavery and slaveholders were new to Baltimore's former Know-Nothings but they were standard, even clichéd, fare for longtime abolitionists. The victory of these ideas in a Baltimore election and the conversion of former Know-Nothings to abolitionist arguments marked the potential for radical change created by the war and federal occupation.<sup>49</sup>

Further illustrating this transformation, Baltimore's former Know-Nothings took the lead on constitutional questions related to civil rights. Abbott, Stirling, and Stockbridge were among the few to oppose repressive provisions for the apprenticeship of African American minors. Abbott challenged southern Maryland delegates who wanted to banish freedmen from the state. Stockbridge spoke in favor of equal rights and suffrage for black Marylanders. Thirteen years earlier, Baltimore delegates to a constitutional convention backed protection for slave property as part of their effort to win the support of rural Democrats for expanding municipal representation in the legislature. In 1864, the federal government had much greater influence in state affairs than it had in 1851, and the Lincoln administration counted Baltimore's unconditional unionists among its surest friends. That point was reinforced in claims made by unconditionals such as the Eastern Shore supporter who, in a patronage request, told Lincoln that without such men "it would have been twenty years hence before we would have had a free state constitution."<sup>50</sup>

In 1864, rural proslavery legislators found themselves in the same weak spot that Baltimore's orphaned Know-Nothings had occupied four years earlier. Lacking powerful friends elsewhere in government, they were at the mercy of the majority. Davis understood "that simple rule of political arithmetic" by which proslavery forces could "carry every slaveholding county in the State [and] elect only half the Convention, and with half the Convention they can pass no ordinance."<sup>51</sup> The enemies of the unconditional unionists were by no means driven from the political field in 1864, but for the time being the balance of government power and the rules for political participation favored the radicals.

Submitted for the fall ballot, the antislavery constitution was vehemently opposed by Democrats, who rallied against the radicals on the question of racial equality, something the new constitution did not promote in any significant way but a charge that was long associated with emancipation. Within the Union Party, deep-seated racial fears and lingering support for slavery dampened enthusiasm for the referendum. Even with disloyal men barred from the suffrage and lenient provisions for soldiers in the field to cast ballots, the new constitution was ratified with a razor thin 375-vote majority, a far cry from the victory margins given the unconditional unionists in 1863 and the spring of 1864. Outside Baltimore, Democrats did well, winning control of the state senate. Soldiers and Baltimore voters, of whom 83 percent approved the new constitution, made the difference in ending slavery, but even in Baltimore the unconditional candidate for mayor lost to his conservative rival.<sup>52</sup>

The closeness of the 1864 vote notwithstanding, the abolition of slavery demonstrated in bold terms how politics had changed after three years of war. In 1861, declaring one's support for slavery had been a basic requirement for political viability. By 1864 even the enemies of the new constitution had to frame their criticism in antislavery terms. Conservative officials like Bradford and Swann objected to the

speed of abolition and the lack of compensation for masters, but they agreed in principle that slavery was finished.<sup>53</sup>

Although the basic lineaments of party politics in Maryland persisted from the late 1850s through the war, some notable changes had occurred in the ideology of Baltimore Know-Nothings who went on to participate in the Union Party. In addition to their about-face on emancipation, Know-Nothings abandoned the anti-immigrant policies that had been the impetus for the party's formation. Politicians like Davis had gone from arguing that abolitionists conspired with immigrants to subvert white freedom to claiming that antislavery men were the salvation of that freedom. At the 1864 constitutional convention, Baltimore delegates voted to retain a bar on court testimony by atheists, but Stirling, president of the city's Supreme American Council in 1860, led the fight to accept testimony by Jews. Liberal German immigrants had been among the Republicans' few early supporters. Former Know-Nothings dropped their virulent nativism when they realized that German-American ballots would be essential for wartime political survival. At an April 1864 Turner Hall rally to promote the constitutional convention, Baltimore German unionists listened to early Republican advocate Becker defend emancipation and rail against "decidedly puritanical" cultural laws regulating the Sabbath and alcohol that had been promoted by antebellum Know-Nothings. Among the meeting's officers were two former American Party officeholders. The rally closed with the reading of a letter from Davis stating that he "heartily approved of the great cause which would be advocated."<sup>54</sup>

### **The Limits of Change: The Union Party after Emancipation**

The transformation of nativist, proslavery Know-Nothings into civil libertarian abolitionists was remarkable, but as evidenced in federal intervention against local unionist reprisals against Confederate sympathizers, there were other facets to the politics of federal occupation. On the one hand, military arrests and loyalty oaths removed enough proslavery voters from the electorate to make the unthinkable—emancipation—politically viable. On the other, the Lincoln administration's firm restraint on broader purges of political opponents created space for conservative unionists and eventually the Democratic Party itself to reassert control over city government and constrain the possibilities for racial equality implied in emancipation and discussed in concrete proposals by Baltimore delegates to the 1864 constitutional convention.

Underlying the limits on radical change was the racism of white Marylanders. Democrats and conservative unionists strenuously opposed treating blacks equally before the law, and the new constitution denied African Americans such basic political liberties as the vote and the right to testify against whites in courts. On the campaign trail, Davis, the most radical of the Maryland Union Party's federal officeholders, advocated immediate emancipation as an anti-slaveholder measure that would benefit working-class whites primarily and African Americans secondarily.

Even longtime abolitionist Francis Corkran hedged on equal treatment for emancipated blacks. In advising Blair about the appropriate strategy for ending slavery, Corkran looked forward to the day “when all who tread upon Maryland Soil, shall be *freemen*.” Alluding to his support for the colonization of free blacks in Africa, he added that, “I would prefer that they be white men.”<sup>55</sup>

Freedmen’s educational and charitable organizations received little aid from Baltimore’s white churches and private philanthropists. Baltimore whites working for the army ruthlessly and sometimes illegally impressed black refugees into Union military service in order to meet their recruiting quotas. Because most Maryland politicians refused to act, the state’s African American men waited for the Fifteenth Amendment to gain the franchise. Together these actions demonstrated what historian Richard Fuke terms white Marylanders’ “inability to address the full implications of emancipation.” In terms of partisan politics, the failure of unconditional unionists to expand their case for freedom to a campaign against prejudice left them rhetorically unprepared for the onslaught of white supremacist attacks unleashed by conservatives within their party and Democrats from without.<sup>56</sup>

Bolstering the power of white supremacy was a pattern of remaking political rules to suit the needs of those in office that built on late antebellum innovations, such as election violence and state usurpation of municipal powers to sanction the militarization of elections through policing and oath-taking. In 1864, unconditional unionists added to the new constitution measures that would give them an edge against the opposition stirred by emancipation. The convention adjusted legislative apportionment in Baltimore’s favor by increasing its share of seats at the expense of southern Maryland, home of Confederate sympathizers, Democratic majorities, and the state’s largest slaveholders. A second change required voters and officeholders to swear an ironclad oath of allegiance to the U.S. government and vow that they had been loyal in the past. These test oaths were reinforced in the 1865 Registry Law that gave judges of election and registrars broad powers to disqualify voters.<sup>57</sup>

Depending on how it was administered, the new law had the potential to disfranchise a sizeable share of the Democratic electoral base. Confederate sympathizers like Wallis feared that “the Constitution will be adopted, under the oath proscribed, and then everybody who is opposed to Lincoln is, *ipso facto*, disfranchised.”<sup>58</sup> Wallis underestimated the rift between Swann, now Maryland’s governor, and unconditional unionists. Swann staffed the Registry offices with conservatives who enrolled tens of thousands of men barred in 1864 and 1865. In Baltimore alone, Swann’s registrars added 14,078 new voters to the rolls. Yet with legal opinion divided over the constitutionality of the Registry Law, enforcement came down to the judges of election, most of whom had been appointed by unconditional unionists in municipal government. These officials, aided by four hundred special police guarding the polls, barred many of the newly enrolled voters from casting ballots at the October 10, 1866, municipal elections. That effort aided an unconditional unionist victory.<sup>59</sup>

Democrats then appealed to Swann, who removed the police commissioners that had served since 1862 and replaced them with men favorable to permissive interpretation of the Registry Law. City officials had Swann's appointees arrested, but Swann trumped local authorities by appealing to President Andrew Johnson to station federal troops at Baltimore's polls. As mayor nine years earlier, Swann had fought a Democratic governor's attempt to post state militia at city polling places. Reminiscent of his predecessor's argument that "the sovereignty of State" took priority over local government, Swann told the General Assembly, "I held myself responsible only to your Honorable Body for the course which I deemed it my duty to pursue in the removal of these delinquent officers." Swann argued, "the time will be opportune also, to revise the whole system of laws relating to the City of Baltimore, to prevent the recurrence of similar proceedings in the future." Less inclined to support the radicals than Lincoln, who himself had broken with Davis before their deaths in 1865, Johnson agreed to Swann's request. Although they did not man the polls, soldiers were at the ready in city barracks, and judges of election agreed to permit voters registered in 1866 to cast ballots.<sup>60</sup>

With the aid of these tactics Democrats won the November state races. In 1867 the party rewrote the state constitution with the aim of reducing unconditional unionist gains made in 1864. The new document did away with voting requirements for loyal citizens and shrank Baltimore's share of seats in the legislature. Having tinkered with the rules on participation to their advantage, Democrats settled in to enjoy their own run of one-party rule.<sup>61</sup>

The leaders of Baltimore's antebellum Democratic Party experienced a renaissance after 1866. Isaac Freeman Rasin, a former Know-Nothing, was the reputed boss of the postwar municipal party, but the top officeholders had connections to the Reform battle against the Know-Nothings. This restoration began in 1867 with the election of Mayor Robert T. Banks, an 1850s Democratic city councilman and opponent of the Union Party in 1861. Joshua Vansant, antebellum mayor and federal congressman, succeeded him and during his reign George P. Kane, one of many Confederate veterans politically rehabilitated during the late 1860s, won election as sheriff and went on to become mayor in 1877. Ferdinand C. Latrobe, scion of a family of Baltimore lawyers and engineers, served seven terms as mayor with breaks for other Democrats to take the office. A dominant figure in postwar politics, William Pinckney Whyte served as Maryland's comptroller in 1854 and 1855 and charged Henry Winter Davis with using fraud and violence to defeat him in an 1857 congressional election. Although he had had been disfranchised under the Registry Law, Whyte was elected governor in 1871 and took a turn as mayor in the early 1880s. In 1885 the mayor's office again went to a veteran of the Reform Association, James Hodges, descendant of a mercantile family with roots in the colonial elite. Now aligned with the Democrats, prominent former Know-Nothings like Swann and Anthony Kennedy also held leadership positions in postwar politics. During

these years, the Democratic nomination meant victory at the general election. In 1867, Banks won with 79 percent of the vote, and Democrats ran unopposed in many subsequent contests. Postwar Baltimore played the same role for the Democracy as it had for the Know-Nothings, providing the party with victory margins above their statewide level in every election and shoring up their position in the General Assembly during occasional challenges by the Republicans.<sup>62</sup>

Gilded Age Baltimoreans also inherited the hostility toward partisanship developed during the Civil War era. In the 1870s, Severn Teackle Wallis and J. Morrison Harris led the Civil Service Reform Association and the Baltimore Reform League in campaigns to curb patronage and keep intact the 1860 transfer of the jury system into the state's hands. Long-time Democrats and attorneys who had started out as Wallis's law students finally toppled the Rasin machine at the turn of the century. Along with personal connections to the partisanship of the 1850s, latter-day reformers carried forward the strategy of weakening the municipally dominant party by limiting its control over patronage and changing election laws. Again adopting a nonpartisan label, Gilded Age reformers shared their predecessors' concerns about having the best men rule the city and keeping partisan enemies from holding power.<sup>63</sup>

Maryland's intransigent stand on African American suffrage was another example of professional politicians' efforts to limit participation. After emancipation, the General Assembly tried to control the labor of freedmen with an apprenticeship law that resembled the Lower South's notorious Black Codes of 1865 and 1866. Although federal authority and local unconditional unionists overturned the statute, the Union Party minority (in 1867 they adopted the name Republican Union Party) that supported Radical Reconstruction and black suffrage lost repeatedly in the late 1860s, most notably in the 1868 gubernatorial election where their nominee, Hugh Lennox Bond, garnered only a fourth of the vote. Even after the Fifteenth Amendment added African American voters to the Republican column, Democrats won consistently in Baltimore and the rest of the state.<sup>64</sup>

Before the Civil War, Baltimore proved a difficult haven for African Americans trying to escape the storm of slavery and racial discrimination. Reconstructed Maryland continued to deny them equal citizenship and owed this failure to the work of influential statesmen, many of whom had cut their political teeth in pre-Civil War Baltimore. In the middle of the war they embraced change, but only because of the presence of a powerful external ally in the Lincoln administration and its elevation of political viewpoints heretofore advocated on the margins of city politics by unconventional actors like Gunnison and Becker. In 1863 and 1864 radicals in Baltimore, like their counterparts in other slave state cities, held the upper hand. Recognizing the determination of their foes to regain power and stifle the radical program, they advocated a battery of measures that would bar large numbers of Democrats and, in the case of the Registry fight, conservative unionists, from political participation. Those changes depended on assistance from federal occupiers who in Baltimore,

as in other parts of the slave South, pursued a separate agenda that sometimes cut against the political survival of their staunchest local allies.<sup>65</sup>

Emancipation's passage showed the potential for more sweeping changes in Baltimore politics, but notwithstanding the fears of Democratic critics of radicalism, the actors with the most power to effect those changes—the federal government and the competing factions of the Union Party—were in one way or another opposed to bringing them about. Radicals did the most to press for the overthrow of the antebellum racial order, but even this group, composed entirely of white men entitled to vote and hold office, shared the white supremacist opinions of their political foes and proved reluctant to fully mobilize the city's black population as allies. For their part, conservative unionists had been reluctant supporters of emancipation, much less equal rights. They joined forces with radicals during the war out of a shared partisan history and the need to cooperate with all allies who would keep Maryland in the Union. Union Party leaders' common past as Know-Nothings locked in struggle against Democrats began to fracture after the militarization of politics removed the threat of party defeat and emancipation opened new divisions. Finally, the Lincoln administration brought to Baltimore the same mix of pragmatism and idealism that it used to prosecute the war in its entirety.

Whatever the true inclinations of Lincoln on race and slavery, his public statements consistently subordinated these issues to restoring the Union.<sup>66</sup> Practically, this meant balancing the goodwill of proslavery unionists against that of antislavery unionists. One enigma of the Civil War's outcome was its intertwining of continuity and change. Emancipation overturned what had arguably been the defining institution of the prewar republic. Yet the war also kept that republic intact in ways that went well beyond the formal shell of the federal union of states. Not only was the constitutional form of government preserved and with it the same division of sovereignty among local, state, and federal governments, but after the defeat of Radical Reconstruction in the 1870s the same political actors and constituent blocks continued to hold the reins of power throughout the South. Ironically, it was the loyal border slave states that experienced the quickest return to prominence of the prewar political elite. Three border states—Maryland, Missouri, and the breakaway state of West Virginia—ended slavery and grappled with questions of black civil rights during the war. Delaware and Kentucky refused emancipation until compelled to enact it by the Thirteenth Amendment. In the seceding states the process took longer, even if the Emancipation Proclamation obviated a debate over emancipation in reconstructing state governments. This chronology made Baltimore an early site for the playing out of Reconstruction political conflicts. To the extent that a border state like Maryland and its principal city offered a blueprint for the outcome of Civil War party politics, they showed that once Republicans in Washington were assured that secession was no longer a threat, they would put few barriers to the return of former enemies to local power.

For some contemporaries and many subsequent observers the failure to realize full equality during the Civil War era stands as an “unfinished revolution” that the civil rights movement of the next century brought to fulfillment. That perspective has come under criticism from scholars who argue that a twentieth-century liberal, civil rights agenda was not widely shared by Republicans in Washington or by their supporters, black and white, across the country.<sup>67</sup> The tangled, contradictory alliance between federal officials and radical unionists in Baltimore, arguably the most hospitable environment in the slave states for the kind of radical vision embodied by congressional leaders such as Charles Sumner and Thaddeus Stevens, brings out the profound limits on a bi-racial, rights-driven agenda anywhere in the South. In short, if a transformation in law, custom, and political leadership could not occur in Baltimore, what chance did it have in places that had actually seceded from the Union?

#### NOTES

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4. William Bruns and William Fraley, “‘Old Gunny’: Abolitionist in a Slave City,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 68 (1973): 357; *Baltimore American*, November 5, 1856; *Sun*, November 7, 1860; *Daily Exchange* August 18 and October 12, 1860; William Louis Schley to Thomas H. Hicks, January 16, 1861, Thomas H. Hicks Papers, Special Collections, Maryland Historical Society, hereinafter cited as MdHSSC. Also see Thomas Hicks to Editor, *Baltimore Patriot*, May 25, 1860, Abraham Lincoln Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, (hereinafter cited as LC).
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8. Anthony Kennedy, *The Position of the Country and the Position of Maryland* (Baltimore: n.p., January 3, 1861), 6; William H. Collins, *An Address to the People of Maryland, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition* (Baltimore: James Young, 1861), 8; Charles W. Mitchell, “Whose Cause Shall We Embrace? Maryland and the Fort Sumter Crisis,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 95 (2000): 73 (Harris quoted on secession). For Harris’s January 3, 1861, resolutions see Harris Papers, box 3. Henry Winter Davis to Samuel F. DuPont, Samuel Francis DuPont Papers, Winterthur Manuscripts, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware; Henry Winter Davis to David Davis, June 28, 1860 and Henry Winter Davis to Abraham Lincoln, February 1861, Lincoln Papers. On Republican attitudes towards proslavery solutions to the secession crisis see Russell McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War: The Northern Response to Secession* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 120.

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TO THE  
CONFEDERATE WOMEN  
OF MARYLAND  
1861 + 1865  
"THE BRAVE AT HOME"

# Baltimore's Confederate Women: Perpetuating a Culture of War

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Every January for twenty years, the Baltimore chapters of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Sons of Confederate Veterans gathered in Wyman Park to celebrate the birthdays of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson in front of a magnificent bronze double equestrian sculpture of the two generals. On a frigid winter morning in 2009, participants marched in formations, listened to an invocation and speeches, pledged allegiance to the U.S. flag, and then paid tribute to their heritage: "I salute the Confederate flag with affection, reverence, and undying devotion for the Cause for which it stands." Women from the United Daughters of the Confederacy spoke on several occasions during the commemoration, and laid wreaths at the feet of the bronze monument at the center of their attention. After the ceremony, according to their tradition, the participants would cross the street to the campus of Johns Hopkins University and partake of refreshments with their friends. This decades-long tradition ended that year, when William R. Brody, president of Hopkins, denied them access to campus facilities, citing the university's objection to the presence of Confederate flags and uniforms. When the *Baltimore Sun* featured this story on its front page, it set off a firestorm of controversy in the city that was not extinguished for weeks.<sup>1</sup> A century and a half after the Civil War, on the editorial pages of the newspaper and in the barrooms, classrooms, and living rooms of Baltimore, the verbal battles over the meaning of these rituals and symbols raged on.

The women involved in this annual commemoration of Southern heroes and ancestors were continuing a long legacy of activism that had begun in the city and surrounding areas 150 years ago. During the Civil War, a very distinctive and close-knit community of female Confederate sympathizers emerged in Baltimore, playing a major and very effective role in smuggling, spying, and sabotaging the efforts of the enemy in their midst. Since women did not possess the franchise, were not eligible for the military, and were not commonly viewed as political actors, there are no records of the numbers of female area activists supporting the newly formed Confederate States of America. Historian William J. Evitts, in his study of

*Opposite: "To the Confederate Women of Maryland." Descendants and admirers of the state's female Confederate activists and sympathizers commissioned this monument and dedicated it in 1912. (Author's photograph.)*

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the allegiances of Baltimoreans and Marylanders from 1850 to 1861, concluded that unionists were the majority of the populace in the state and city at the beginning of the Civil War, a finding that accords with most contemporary scholarship and that is supported by examining the overwhelming ratio (at least two to one) of soldiers from the Free State who fought with their Northern rather than Southern brothers.<sup>2</sup> The rapid military seizure of Maryland in May 1861 further solidified the Union's hold on the economy, politics, and social institutions, leading the dissident minority of pro-Southern women into an even more marginal and precarious situation and making it virtually impossible to know their number.

This essay argues that the severity and length of the Union occupation of the city produced a culture of war among women who supported the Confederacy, characterized by a notably high degree of self-imposed isolation that arose in 1861 and continued until the end of the nineteenth century. The defensiveness and cohesiveness of these women were due in part to the repressive tactics of government authority they regarded as illegitimate, the barrage of scornful attacks on the part of the Northern press, and the necessity of operating in a city where large numbers of their fellow citizens provided material support, family members, and intelligence for the Union. This self-imposed segregation, exclusivity, and social networking continued in a more overt fashion after the war ended, particularly in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, when former general Bradley T. Johnson and his wife Jane Claudia assumed leading roles in a variety of Confederate organizations and institutions, including the Ladies' Confederate Memorial Association, the Society for the Army and Navy of the Confederate States in Maryland, and the Maryland Line Confederate Soldiers' Home. Historians such as David Blight and Gaines Foster argue that it was at this time (the 1880s and 1890s) that many Confederate organizations elsewhere in the South sought reconciliation and fraternalism with their Northern counterparts.<sup>3</sup> That was not the dominant theme in Baltimore. Instead, the evidence shows that Baltimore's Confederate community continued its defiant allegiance to the Lost Cause mythology and to a doctrine of separation for the Blue and the Gray.

Self-segregation was brought about by the demands of total war in an occupied zone. The mobilization of personnel, resources, and information on behalf of their cause blurred distinctions between men on the battlefield and women in the domestic realm. As suggested by historians LeeAnn Whites and Alecia Long, women in Union-occupied cities created a "second front" that can be perceived as an alternative form of military engagement. Their weapons were as varied as the women who employed them—handkerchiefs and chamber pots in New Orleans, provisions and medicines for guerrillas in Kentucky, Confederate colors and flags in Maryland. In defiance they found an outlet for their frustration and anger, and steadily eroded authority. From the point of view of Union occupational forces, this lawlessness was "an incubator of military policies that reflected the exigencies and activism of occupied women."<sup>4</sup>

Their challenges to Union authority were serious. Confederate women in Baltimore created a subterranean network of intelligence that stretched across Maryland and down through the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. In their attics, lofts, basements, and stables, they concealed contraband and provided refuge to rebel sympathizers and soldiers. They helped to fashion and conduct what they dubbed an “underground railroad” that carried provisions, messages, and people across the lines. These “manly deeds” that Baltimore’s women performed in the Civil War were replaced after the conflict by more traditional female services: honoring the dead, offering material and emotional support for the veterans and their families, and shaping the historical memory that perpetuated their particular culture of war.

### **Bravest and Truest**

This culture of war had its origins in regional socioeconomic developments of the antebellum period that generated in Baltimore many of the deep divisions and contradictions that characterized the Civil War as a whole. The home of slaves and, at the same time, the nation’s largest urban free black population, the city and surrounding area supported large plantations such as those in the Greenspring and Worthington Valleys, and a burgeoning commercial and industrial base. With secession threatening to tear the nation asunder following Abraham Lincoln’s election in 1860, many residents and outsiders at the time were uncertain about the city’s and the state’s loyalties. Which way would Maryland go? Consciously or not, Marylanders had already cast their fortunes with the bustling, progressive North. Textiles, shipbuilding, flour processing, and the B&O Railroad were providing jobs for both native-born Americans and increasing numbers of European immigrants, particularly from Ireland and Germany. Waterborne commerce on the Chesapeake Bay and rail and canal traffic westward linked Baltimore with ever-expanding markets for its products. The rapid explosion of population, trade, and industry was accompanied by the steady disintegration of slavery as an institution. On the eve of the Civil War, nearly half of the state’s African Americans were free men and women.<sup>5</sup> With a population of 212,418 in 1860, Baltimore had just 2,218 people in bondage, a figure far eclipsed by the city’s 25,680 free blacks.<sup>6</sup>

Although race remained a divisive issue in Maryland at this time, its potency was temporarily eclipsed by fears of impending war. Marylanders were traumatized and sharply polarized as secession spread across the Deep South. Sometimes called “Mobtown,” Baltimore’s population contained volatile elements prone to spasms of agitation and violence, exemplified by the famous Pratt Street Riot in April of 1861. When the 6th Massachusetts Regiment passed through the city on its way to defend Washington, D.C., an angry and confrontational mob hurled stones and epithets at the soldiers, resulting in a running gun battle that left at least sixteen dead and many others wounded. These casualties were in fact the first in the Civil War, and spurred cries of vengeance against the city and its inhabitants on the part of many



*Jane Claudia Johnson (1832–1888), wife of General Bradley T. Johnson, raised money and arms for the Confederacy. After the war she led the Ladies Confederate Memorial and Beneficial Association and the board of visitors of the Confederate Soldiers' Home. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

living north of the Mason-Dixon Line. The *New York Times* described the outrage in Baltimore as a “paroxysm of insanity” and a “universal horror.”<sup>7</sup> Another *Times* columnist asserted: “The city seemed to be possessed with the devil, so mad was it with unreasoning excitement, so furiously was it bent on blood.”<sup>8</sup> In the month after the Pratt Street Riot, Union troops under General Benjamin Butler launched a preemptive strike to avert possible secession by seizing the cities of Annapolis and Baltimore. Maryland was occupied for the duration of the war. Habeas corpus was suspended, as federal officials arrested many prominent Baltimoreans, including businessmen, landed gentry, state legislators, newspaper editors, and police, and confined them in nearby Fort McHenry until permanent prison accommodations were found elsewhere.

The Union occupation of Baltimore brought an immediate backlash, and it also served to forge an alliance among the city’s Confederate women. Thus organized, they began a whole series of covert activities, outwardly disobeyed the authorities, and created an array of powerful symbols to differentiate them from their enemy. Because public assembly was forbidden, women sympathetic to the South met regularly at locations such as the homes of Mrs. Samuel Hoffman at Franklin and Charles streets, and of the Misses Robinson at Charles and Saratoga streets.<sup>9</sup> At residences like these, women could mobilize their resources and energies for the cause, and talk freely in a city where the smallest act of defiance could lead to arrest and detention. Since Gen. Butler had made it clear that displaying any symbol of the Confederate states was considered a treasonous act,<sup>10</sup> Southern flags, songs, and colors were either deliberately hidden or provocatively paraded in front of Federal officers as acts of civil disobedience. Like many other minorities subject to censorship and sanctions, these women united and separated themselves from those whom they considered the oppressors—unionists, both military and civilian.

*Bradley T. Johnson (1829–1903), prominent Frederick lawyer, helped organize the 1st Maryland Infantry and later served as president of the Association of the Maryland Line and the Society of the Army and Navy of the Confederate States in Maryland. (Maryland Historical Society.)*



Some Confederate women early in the war witnessed the departure of their husbands, sons, and friends as they headed for Harper's Ferry, Virginia, to enlist in the Confederate army assembling there. Bradley T. Johnson, a prominent lawyer from Frederick, and his wife, Jane Claudia, were key figures in the creation of the 1st Maryland Infantry and subsequent units. When the Johnsons reached the Potomac River, they were met by a motley collection of volunteers, known as "Plug Uglies" for their tattered clothes and unwashed and unkempt appearance. Bradley Johnson noted that these volunteers had no government to appeal to for arms or uniforms, since they were considered outlaws by their own state.<sup>11</sup>

Jane Claudia, the daughter of a congressman, granddaughter of a Supreme Court justice, and whose great-grandmother was an active patriot during the Revolutionary War, volunteered to return to her native North Carolina to raise money and arms for the Maryland men.<sup>12</sup> Mary Chesnut, a confidant of Jefferson Davis and his wife, wrote in her famous diary that Mrs. Johnson was a "regular heroine" who "out-generated the governor of North Carolina in some way and has got arms and clothes and ammunition for her husband's regiment."<sup>13</sup> Mrs. Johnson went on to Richmond, where she received additional money and military support for her men. When she returned to Harper's Ferry with five hundred Mississippi rifles, ammunition, tents, uniforms, and equipment, Col. Thomas J. Jackson, as well as the men of the newly formed 1st Maryland Infantry, praised Mrs. Johnson.<sup>14</sup> When the soldiers donned their new



*Belle Boyd (1844–1900), courier and spy for Confederate generals Jackson and Beauregard in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley, educated at Baltimore’s Mt. Washington Academy, was arrested sixteen times for subversive activity between 1861 and 1865. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

uniforms, the transformation was instantaneous. As the regimental biographer noted: “The boys no longer blushed through the bronze on their cheeks if any of the fair ladies of Winchester happened to be in camp.”<sup>15</sup> Mrs. Johnson would visit with the Maryland units in Virginia periodically throughout the entire war, serving as a courier between Gen. Joseph Johnston and Jefferson Davis and later providing the soldiers with a library and a church for their religious services.<sup>16</sup> To the men of the Maryland Line she was both a mother and a sister, and was later called by one of the veterans the “bravest, truest, manliest woman that ever breathed.”<sup>17</sup> Some years after

the war, she and her husband relocated to Baltimore and continued to be central figures in the Maryland Line and its activities.

While the Johnsons were in Virginia, Confederate sympathizers in Baltimore faced the difficulties associated with the Federal occupation, including the threat of arrest and detention. Despite obstacles, women living in and around the city found ways to aid their cause by creating a subterranean network of resistance. Gen. Robert C. Schenck, commander of the Middle Department, Eighth Army Corps, complained about the “incredible” amount of smuggling for the Rebel cause occurring in the city. He noted that men were not involved in this for they knew better than to interfere. They “leave it entirely to the women, who are cunning beyond belief and bold on account of their sex.”<sup>18</sup>

Baltimore's Confederate women regularly penetrated enemy lines, carrying not just supplies but information as well. Mrs. Catherine V. Baxley was arrested for spying after traveling to Richmond to seek a commission for a friend from Jefferson Davis. In a letter to Secretary of State William H. Seward, she claimed that she carried nothing but a few friendly letters in her bonnet.<sup>19</sup> Mrs. Baxley remained defiant in her cell in the Old Capitol Prison, where she soon became known for her temper, her foul language, and for giving a guard a black eye.<sup>20</sup> Another city woman, Miss Gibson of Cathedral Street, went south with a variety of contraband imaginatively concealed on her person, on her infant, and in her possessions. Under her clothes were linen for bandages and hundreds of yards of gold braid for uniforms. Her buttons were gold pieces sent by mothers to their sons, and “Her baby's pillow was stuffed with lint, its rag doll with quinine and vaccine virus, and letters were tied in its little garments.”<sup>21</sup>

Secretary of War Edwin Stanton received a letter that contained intelligence from Elizabeth Van Lew, head of one of the most successful Union spy networks in the South, with a warning for authorities not to permit Baltimore's women to travel to Richmond anymore because of the harm that they did.<sup>22</sup> Union officers quickly grew frustrated dealing with what they considered to be the treasonous activities of Maryland's female rebels. Gen. Philip Sheridan, mere months before Lee's surrender, still felt it necessary to exile eight of these women to the South where they could do less damage. In his special order regarding the eight, Sheridan observed: “These ladies have so forgotten themselves as to provoke an exercise of Military power by giving constant annoyance.”<sup>23</sup> He was particularly concerned about the connections between the Confederate sympathizers in the city of Baltimore and Union enemies in the Valley.

Sheridan's apprehension was justified. Because of its size and location, Baltimore nurtured and housed more than its fair share of female rebels. One was Belle Boyd, who served as a courier and spy for Confederate generals Jackson and Beauregard in the Shenandoah Valley. Boyd had been educated at Baltimore's Mt. Washington Female Academy and at the tender age of sixteen was detained in the city—the first of her sixteen arrests for subversive activities.<sup>24</sup> While in custody, she was visited

by old friends and by people who knew her only by reputation because, as Boyd expressed it, “Baltimore is Confederate to its heart’s core.”<sup>25</sup>

During one of Boyd’s forced exiles to the South, she crossed paths with a young Baltimore woman, Euphemia Goldsborough, when they both were captured late in 1863 and taken to Fortress Monroe for transfer to the Confederacy. Goldsborough had been arrested and charged with treason for a wide variety of activities, including nursing wounded Confederates at Gettysburg for nine weeks, smuggling, and communicating with the enemy. Brought before the fort’s commander, General Butler, she was sentenced to banishment to what she called “sweet Dixie” and informed she would be shot if she dared to return. Before embarking on the truce ship, she was strip-searched by two women with the door open while men made crude remarks out in the corridor. Calling it an unforgettable humiliation, she intensified her resolve and defiance toward the Yankees.<sup>26</sup> When she reached Richmond, President Davis created a position for her in the Treasury Department, where she worked until that city was evacuated near the end of the war. The war had taken an enormous toll on Euphemia, particularly the horrors of Gettysburg, robbing her of her strength and her youth. “In truth,” said her sister Mona, “she was never the same joyous girl again.”<sup>27</sup>

Also involved in subversive causes were the wealthy and well-bred Cary sisters, Hetty and Jennie, members of a group called “the Monument Street Girls,” who met regularly at the home of Mrs. Winn to sing and chat.<sup>28</sup> When the war began, Jennie, at her sister’s behest, set to music James Ryder Randall’s poem, “Maryland, My Maryland.” Emotional, sentimental, and rousing, it entertained Southern troops around campfires throughout the war and remains the state’s official song, despite some extreme language that calls for Maryland’s secession and brands Lincoln a “tyrant” and a “despot.” After their work was published in Baltimore, the two sisters, accompanied by their brother—who was on his way to enlist in the Confederate army—carefully worked their way through enemy lines with contraband (trunks full of military clothing and a concealed flag). In the dead of night, they crossed the Potomac to the Virginia shore, found transportation by way of a cart drawn by an ox and a mule, and were invited to Gen. P. G. T. Beauregard’s headquarters at Fairfax Court House.<sup>29</sup> There Jennie, in her lovely contralto voice, first sang “Maryland, My Maryland” for the soldiers who had gathered to see and serenade them. According to Hetty, hundreds of rebel voices joined in the refrain. “As the last notes died away, there surged forth from the crowd a wild shout – ‘We will break her chains! She *shall* be free! Three cheers and a tiger for Maryland!’”<sup>30</sup> Because of their activities, the sisters were forbidden to return to Baltimore and took up temporary residence in Richmond.

Despite an outstanding warrant for her arrest in Baltimore, Hetty Cary returned to the city but found it necessary to escape to the Confederate capital once again, this time by way of Philadelphia and the Eastern Shore. In January 1865 she married

*Hetty Cary (1836–1892) and her sister Jenny, two of the Baltimore's "Monument Street Girls," repeatedly carried contraband across Union lines into Virginia. Beautiful and popular for artfully setting James Ryder Randall's "Maryland, My Maryland" to music, they found favor with Confederate leaders. (Maryland Historical Society.)*



Gen. John Pegram in a ceremony attended by the Richmond elite, one of the few light moments for the Confederacy in its darkening twilight. Her cousin, Constance Cary Harrison, observed that “all our little world flocked to see the nuptials at St. Paul’s Church of one called by many the most beautiful woman in the South, with a son of Richmond universally honored and beloved.”<sup>31</sup> Three weeks later Hetty stood on the same spot in that church for the funeral of her husband, who had succumbed to battlefield wounds. When Richmond fell to the enemy a few months later, Hetty returned to Baltimore, but Provost Marshal Lt. Col. John Woolley issued still another warrant for her arrest. Hetty and her mother had been traveling under a pass issued by General Ulysses S. Grant, commander of all the Union armies, so a sensational controversy involving the family ensued once again. Grant ordered their release, relieved Woolley of his command, and required him to apologize to the ladies. Hetty later in life married Professor Newell Martin, a prominent biologist at Johns Hopkins University, and as she grew older, she settled into a more conventional social life. In 1892, the *New York Times* noted that her death in September of that year took away “one of the most remarkable and brilliant women who have given Baltimore its reputation for beauty.”<sup>32</sup>

During the war, the Northern press could not decide whether to satirize the “crinoline-clad rebels” or to issue periodic warnings that Baltimore’s females were a recurring nightmare and danger to the Union cause. The Baltimore correspondent to the *New York World* depicted in his writings an ominous underground network of communication between Baltimore rebels and those elsewhere in the state and region. “The vigilance, and craft, and alertness, and industry of the traitors here put to the blush the profession of these qualities on the part of loyal citizens and government officials.”<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, the famous illustration in *Harper’s Weekly* of the Baltimore rebel flaunting her secessionist clothing in front of the Union soldiers was captioned with the notation that “the women of Baltimore presume upon their sex and wear secessionist colors, and salute the boys with – ‘Hurrah for Jeff Davis!’ ‘How about Bull Run?’ ‘Why don’t you go home?’ – vastly to the amusement of our fellows.”<sup>34</sup> When Rose Greenhow and Baltimore’s Catherine Baxley were moved to the Old Capitol Prison, *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper* presented an unflattering portrait of two spoiled women subject to tantrums: “We infer that they will not suffer much except from their inability ‘to gad about,’ since it took a large army wagon drawn by six horses to convey their baggage to their new abode.”<sup>35</sup>

The war forced the female Confederate sympathizers to endure all manner of dangers and indignities to aid their adopted cause. A group of these women attempted to visit injured prisoners of war brought to Baltimore from Gettysburg and confined at West’s Buildings, then being used as a hospital near Camden Station and the harbor. As they approached the facility, the women “were driven from the sidewalk by a volley of decayed eggs hailed at them by the hospital guards.”<sup>36</sup> Some of the Baltimore women who were arrested and detained for a variety of alleged offenses were Mrs. Gertrude Winder, for treason, Mrs. Ralph Semmes, for poisoning the wine that she sent to Union patients in a hospital, and Ellen A. Maris, for the possession of Confederate songs.<sup>37</sup> Policemen were ordered by Gen. John A. Dix to conduct constant surveillance outside two Roman Catholic convents in the city, to discover if the nuns were involved in helping to store or ship arms for the rebels; if smuggling was discovered, the entire police force and the military would be called out to deal with these activities.<sup>38</sup> Throughout the city, behind closed doors, Confederate women conducted activities that they knew to be risky for the sake of their cause. As former mayor George William Brown, himself a Union prisoner, observed: “Perhaps the sensation of danger itself and the spirit of resistance to an authority they refused to recognize, gave zest to their toil; nor did they always think it necessary to inform the good man of the house in which they were assembled either of their presence or what was going on beneath his roof.”<sup>39</sup>

Inevitably, some females, either as children or adults, were profoundly impacted by the activities of their family members or neighbors. Margaret Keenan, who lived next door to Baltimore’s police chief, George P. Kane, found her own residence surrounded when they came to arrest him. The danger was indeed palpable, since

members of her family were also involved in illegalities, including the concealment of a Confederate smuggler and his two large trunks full of quinine and arms. Nearby, Ellen Emmerick found herself an unwilling prisoner in her own home with her small children for five months. Nannie, Katherine, and Mary Gibson witnessed the arrest of their mother for sympathy with the cause, while Florence S. Ehlen never forgot the trauma of her father's imprisonment in Fort McHenry for disloyalty.<sup>40</sup> These events were relatively common in the Baltimore Confederate community, and as Mona Goldsborough observed, "Rebel boys home to see family and sweethearts found plenty of their rebel friends here ready to hide them away for weeks at a time and take chances of discovery and all the punishment the government saw fit to deal out to us."<sup>41</sup>

The Goldsborough family was just one of many willing to assume the risks inherent in aiding Confederate troops passing through Maryland. Col. Harry Gilmor, in his famous ride and raid through several jurisdictions as part of Jubal Early's 1864 Maryland/D.C. campaign, found local women very helpful. When Gilmor's men burned the bridge at Magnolia Station and captured a B&O train, they robbed the rich and influential passengers who were identified as such by several ladies, "evidently accomplices of the rebels," according to *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*.<sup>42</sup> In his autobiography, Gilmor denied any criminal intent on the part of these women (one of whom was tried before a military commission) and claimed they were merely childhood acquaintances greeting the men with warmth and joy.<sup>43</sup> Another local woman, Sarah Hutchins, so admired the dashing cavalry leader that she commissioned and then presented Gilmor with a ceremonial sword, an act that resulted in her incarceration. She was later pardoned and released, much to the consternation of a Northern press outraged that she, and other women like her, these "most useful agents of the traitors," had seldom been punished.<sup>44</sup>

Decades after the war's end, with fading memories—and possibly self-aggrandizement—contributing to some embellishment of their roles, hundreds of Baltimore's women recounted their deeds on their membership applications to the city's chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Mrs. Robert C. Barry wrote that she helped Confederate prisoners coming through the city, made clothing for prisoners at Fort McHenry and Point Lookout, sheltered Confederate recruiters from spies who pursued them, and helped to smuggle a load of rifles. Rosella Kenner Brent visited the sick and wounded in western Maryland hospitals, in Baltimore prisons, and on the field at Gettysburg. Even the very young remembered their contributions to the war. Mary Ames argued convincingly on her application: "Also I ask admission on account of my personal services in carrying dispatches through the lines when a little child and other aid given to the Confederate cause."<sup>45</sup>

The war empowered these and many other Maryland women to step outside the submissiveness and domesticity expected of their gender in the nineteenth century. They could do so because of the necessities brought on by a war that engaged much

of the civilian population, and because they shared with the men in their lives a passionate commitment to their cause. For a good many, the solidarity and sisterhood they created in reaction to a common enemy would outlast the war and continue beyond the end of Reconstruction. The contributions they made to the Confederacy facilitated their acceptance into the activities and organizations established by the veterans after 1865. In addition, independent of their male loved ones, women continued to play a major role in fashioning the collective consciousness of the war and its prolonged aftermath. As Edward Pollard recognized in 1867: "Defeat has not made 'all our sacred things profane.' The war left the South its own memories, its own heroes, its own tears, its own dead. Under these traditions, sons will grow to manhood, and lessons sink deep that are learned from the lips of widowed mothers."<sup>46</sup>

### **The Oldest and Most Aristocratic of Maryland's Blood**

The activism of Baltimore's Confederate community did not end with the hostilities in 1865, nor did its attempts to set itself apart. The postwar period witnessed the establishment of a Confederate Soldiers' Home, a Confederate Women's Home, the designation of a special section of Loudon Park Cemetery for their dead, and the creation of monuments and institutions to honor their cause. Although this culture of war persisted for decades, some fundamental changes in its nature did emerge. Most notably, the power relationships between the genders, which had been altered during the war, returned to prewar customs fairly quickly. Both sexes resumed their traditional gender roles, including male prerogatives. Women raised money for monuments and pinned medals on their veterans, but men dedicated the memorials "in their behalf," and seldom invited women to speak at public ceremonies. Though men verbally acknowledged the courage and loyalty of their women on nearly every commemorative occasion, the mothers, wives, and female friends and relatives of the veterans were relegated to roles that were largely behind the scenes, either in auxiliaries to male organizations or in separate all-female organizations such as the Ladies' Memorial Society or the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Historians Jane Turner Censer and Gaines Foster, among others, find that Confederate women across the South dutifully returned to the role of "helpmate and servant of the Southern man."<sup>47</sup> Censer argues that, although women had more authority and autonomy immediately after the war, particularly in their memorial-related activities, by the last two decades of the nineteenth century they "found themselves in demand more as figureheads of pure white Southern womanhood than as dedicated workers."<sup>48</sup> Going one step further, Drew Gilpin Faust maintains that race trumped gender issues in the postwar South, as women made an unspoken bargain with their husbands, returning society to a full white, male patriarchy after defeat in an effort to ward off challenges to their class and racial identities.<sup>49</sup>

Whatever lay behind the resurgence of patriarchy, women's conventional roles

as providers and nurturers for those in need were apparent in Baltimore right after the war, when Confederate women were in the forefront of efforts to provide relief for the destitute South. They did most of the fund-raising on behalf of southern veterans and their families, organizing a series of bazaars and fairs at the Maryland Institute or the Fifth Regiment Armory. Aware of the need for prompt aid, the Ladies' Southern Relief Association sponsored its first and largest event in 1866, promising it would be "the greatest and most extensive fair ever held in this country."<sup>50</sup> Donations of money, merchandise, clothing, and even scholarships poured in from Maryland and adjoining states to be raffled off to the crowd. Paintings, a piano, opera cloaks, breakfast jackets, Bibles, clocks, champagne bottles, and other collectibles were among the offerings. Fairgoers were promised plenty of entertainment with a band, fortune-tellers, refreshments at Jacob's Well, an art exhibit, games, and displays of crafts. The Norfolk and Richmond Steamship Lines provided free transportation, and huge crowds led to the fair's extension for an additional six days.<sup>51</sup> The ladies of Baltimore collected over \$160,000 to be distributed to the former Confederate states according to their population and degree of distress—nearly twice the amount raised at a Union fair held two years earlier in the city.<sup>52</sup>

Bazaars similar to the 1866 event were also held in 1885, 1898, and 1901, each yielding tens of thousands of dollars for Confederate causes. The public knew that the Union provided bounties and pensions for its veterans after the war, but those benefits were not offered to the losing side.<sup>53</sup> The states of the former Confederacy attempted to assist their veterans in various ways, but Maryland was in the anomalous position of having a sizeable contingent of ex-Confederates living in what had remained a loyal state. The bazaars were therefore intended as charity events on behalf of the Maryland Line. As the literature for the 1885 event noted: "There are many men in Maryland who served faithfully and honorably in the Confederate Army and Navy, who are broken down by wounds, diseases, and hard fortune . . . whose only protection from the almshouse is such assistance as the large-hearted and open-handed people of Maryland will extend to them."<sup>54</sup> In addition to raising money, the fairs also served to romanticize and glorify the Confederacy and its heroes. The Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee tables were common sights at these events, as were tables devoted to each of the eleven former Confederate states.

Nowhere was the culture of war more apparent than in the Maryland Line Confederate Soldiers' Home in Pikesville, just outside Baltimore. The State of Maryland, bowing to pressure from the tightly knit and influential ex-Confederate community organized around the Confederate Maryland Line Beneficial Association, in 1888 donated a former federal arsenal for conversion to a home for ailing and destitute veterans, and it remained in operation until 1932.<sup>55</sup> As one might expect, the former arsenal was a large fortification surrounded by a high brick wall, and its history, military construction, and architecture reinforced the martial atmosphere for both inmates and visitors. The state provided partial funding for the home throughout its



*Confederate veterans ca. 1895. The state legislature, under pressure from the ex-Confederate community, aligned with the Confederate Maryland Line Beneficial Association and in 1888 donated a former federal arsenal in Pikesville as a home for “ailing and destitute” veterans. The home operated until 1932 when the state moved the last resident to a private home. (Maryland Historical Society.)*



existence, and this was supplemented by private donations and volunteer services. As Albert Weinberg observed: "The list of supporters of the institution is a register of the oldest and most aristocratic Maryland blood."<sup>56</sup>

The women of Baltimore played a major role in establishing and maintaining this facility. They raised funds, helped to furnish some of the rooms, staffed the Stonewall Jackson Infirmary, and ran the board of visitors.<sup>57</sup> Inmates were required to wear their Confederate uniforms on occasion, and to help with maintenance.<sup>58</sup> In their spare time, they visited the Relic Hall that held weapons and artifacts related to the war, participated in annual reunions of the Maryland Line, and lived in buildings named for revered figures in their history. Donations were sent from elsewhere in the state to Mrs. Lucy Dorsey of Baltimore and others associated with the home to furnish specific areas (such as the Robert E. Lee Room) and to assist the occupants.<sup>59</sup>

The veterans of the Maryland Line, their wives, and their supporters found the Soldiers' Home in Pikesville to be a convenient and congenial location for social activities. It was a "favorite gathering spot" for events that reflected both the nostalgia for the "good old" antebellum days and concern for the health and livelihood of their comrades.<sup>60</sup> Dress balls and festivals were held frequently, and residents hosted annual jousting tournaments featuring knights and ladies, to celebrate Southern martial abilities, equestrian skills, and chivalry. In 1894 about ten thousand visitors flocked to the premises for jousting, horse jumping, an all-day fair, and a formal ball in the evening, where the fairest maiden was crowned "the queen of love and beauty," and the most skillful knight received a silver cup.<sup>61</sup> Events such as these reinforced friendships for the veterans and their families and yielded additional revenue for the home. The community came together even in death, as they commemorated the lives and heroic deeds of those who were buried on Confederate Hill in nearby Loudon Park Cemetery under the watchful eyes of the life-sized marble statue of Stonewall Jackson. On every Confederate Decoration Day, held on June 6, hundreds of women joined the men to scatter flowers on the graves.<sup>62</sup>

The same three people held multiple leadership positions in Maryland Confederate organizations and institutions. James R. Wheeler was the head of the board of managers of the Confederate Soldiers' Home and later founded the Confederate Women's Home in Baltimore. General Bradley T. Johnson was president of the Association of the Maryland Line and the Society of the Army and Navy of the Confederate States in Maryland. His wife, Jane Claudia, the most prominent among local Confederate women, was elected head of the Ladies' Confederate Memorial and Beneficial Association and became the only female member of the Association of the Maryland Line. Additionally, in recognition of her past service and organizational skills, Mrs. Johnson was named to head the board of visitors when the Confederate Soldiers' Home was established. In that capacity she selected committees of women for each month of the year. Those chosen visited the home during their assigned month to oversee the care and condition of the facility and its honored residents.<sup>63</sup>



James R. Wheeler, a veteran of the 1st Maryland Cavalry, president of Commonwealth Bank, and a lifelong bachelor who lived with his sisters and niece, in 1906 established the Confederate Women's Home at 1020 Linden Avenue in Baltimore, a row house next door to his own. Wheeler was providing a replacement for another such home for Confederate mothers and widows that had just closed in the city.<sup>64</sup> In

the new location, he provided eligible women a rent-free residence, daily visits, and even burial plots in Loudon Park Cemetery when they died. The Women's Home, although smaller and more spartan than its male counterpart, was run in much the same way, with sixty women on the board of governors providing the assistance for the elderly ladies. In addition to Wheeler, a key figure in maintaining the Women's Home was Mrs. Ellen Mears, who would later be the first president of one of the

*A statue of Stonewall Jackson watches over Confederate Hill in Loudon Park Cemetery. In 1861 the federal government purchased ground for the remains of Union soldiers. The following year Confederates donated lots that the cemetery later exchanged to keep their dead together. Two hundred seventy-five soldiers are buried on "Cemetery Hill" and 2,300 in the "Government Lot." (Author's photograph.)*



Baltimore chapters of the UDC.<sup>65</sup> Mears worked tirelessly to raise money to assist poverty-stricken women, and to recruit volunteers. Her correspondence indicates that she employed a wide-ranging network, which included the governor's office and the Maryland Senate, in her successful quest to secure state funding for the Women's Home. Mrs. Mears kept meticulous records of contributions and expenditures that were itemized down to the penny for food, sundries, coal, medicines, servants, and housekeepers. She helped to plan special events to entertain the residents of the home on holidays and birthdays, as well as a theater benefit entitled "Memories of the South."<sup>66</sup> This play consisted of songs, dances, and stories, "all in some way or another recalling the romance and poetry of the South before the war-time."<sup>67</sup>

Nowhere were Confederate nationalism and its adherents' preoccupation with the "true history of the War Between the States" more apparent than in the unveiling ceremonies for Confederate monuments in and around Baltimore. The Ladies' Confederate Memorial and Beneficial Society, which later evolved into the United Daughters of the Confederacy, was the organization primarily responsible for raising funds and staging these dedication ceremonies. In a speech at Loudon Park Cemetery, attended by thousands, Gen. Bradley T. Johnson urged the crowd to donate to a fund for the creation of a monument to Maryland's veterans in Baltimore. Tailoring his appeal to the cause's most energetic fund-raisers, he praised Maryland Confederate women who, during the war, "had a division of men to keep them in check and who kept ten thousand men stationed as guards from 1861 to 1865" in an unsuccessful attempt to suppress their courageous and subversive activities.<sup>68</sup>

These efforts to raise money paid off handsomely in 1903, when a long parade of veterans marched to accompanying rebel yells from an enormous crowd on Mt. Royal Avenue to dedicate a bronze monument eighteen feet high to the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors of Maryland. The ceremony featured prayers, songs including "Dixie" and "The Bonnie Blue Flag," and addresses by veterans. In his "Presentation of the Monument to the Mayor," Capt. George W. Booth paid tribute to the "loving hearts and unwavering devotion" of the women involved, and to the monument that "stands for undaunted souls; for unsullied honor."<sup>69</sup>

There was a structured relationship between the men and the women when it came to shaping the collective memory of the war. The men did most of the speaking at public events, young girls unveiled the monuments, and women often sang the hymns at ceremonies.<sup>70</sup> Not only were the ladies frequently lauded for their efforts during and after the war, their contributions were recognized as well by a splendid twelve-foot bronze statue erected in 1918 just north of the campus of the Johns Hopkins University by the State of Maryland and Confederate organizations, and Jane Claudia Johnson became the first Maryland woman from the Civil War to be honored with her own monument. Located on Confederate Hill in Loudon Park Cemetery, this monument adjoins two others dedicated solely to the South's mothers and widows.<sup>71</sup>

Some women, particularly those from prominent families, would continue to



*Confederate Soldiers and Sailors of Maryland, 1903. The Ladies' Memorial and Beneficial Association, forerunner of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, raised the money for the city's monuments and staged the dedication festivities. (Author's photograph.)*

use their political connections and financial skills to promote an ideology that they shared with their husbands, sons, and friends. Mary Greenhow Lee, a renowned spy from a prominent Virginia family, and Louise Wigfall Wright, famed author of *A Southern Girl in 1861*, both moved to Baltimore after the war and assumed positions of leadership in the city's UDC near the end of the century. The chapter hosted a convention in 1897 that brought together Southern sympathizers from all over the nation to report on their activities and to discuss topics ranging from the education of veterans' children to the bias about the conflict that they detected in written histories of the war.<sup>72</sup> Maryland women in the UDC's many chapters regularly visited the Confederate Soldiers' Home and the Confederate Women's Home until the last residents there passed away or were relocated. They provided sumptuous Christmas dinners of turkey and oysters and presents for the inmates, supervised services with music and flowers at Loudon Park Cemetery, and made generous donations to Confederate causes.<sup>73</sup>

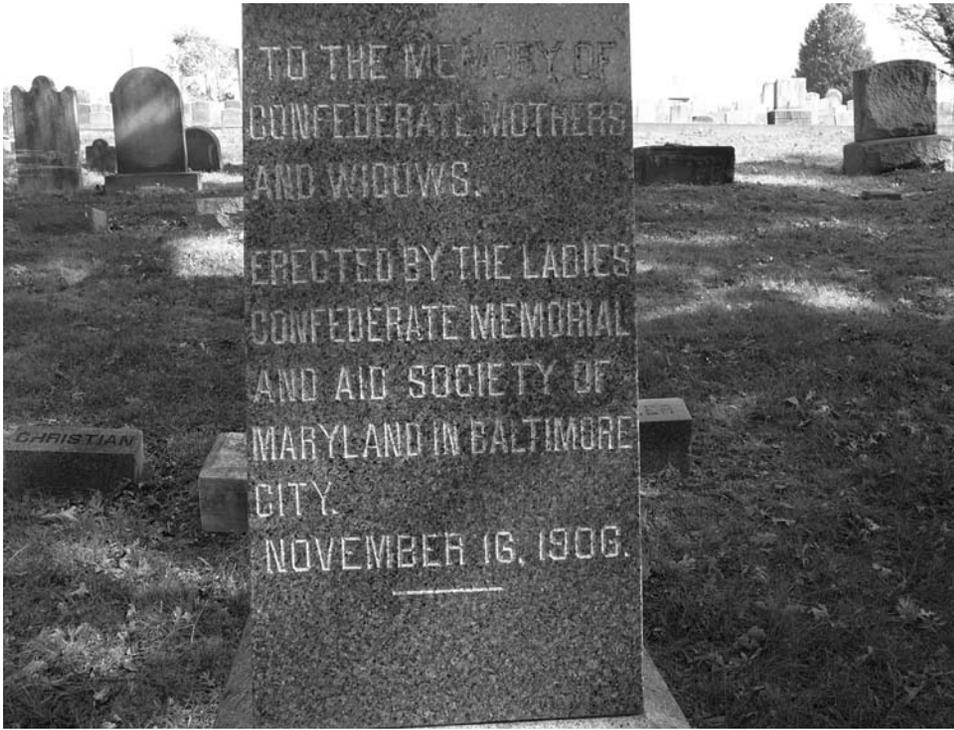
Jane Claudia Johnson, who took advantage of her military connections with the Maryland Line to transcribe oral histories of Civil War events in a book, *Table Talk*, was also greatly concerned with preserving their version of the war in the community's memory. Compiled from 1875 to 1889, these short recollections of key battles

*Monument to Confederate Women, Loudon Park Cemetery. (Author's photograph.)*



by Confederate officers symbolized her efforts to shape the collective consciousness of her generation and to imprint tales of gallantry and self-sacrifice into the imaginations of future generations.<sup>74</sup> As one who had frequently traveled with Maryland soldiers during the war and as the only female member of the Association of the Maryland Line, she was uniquely suited to the undertaking.

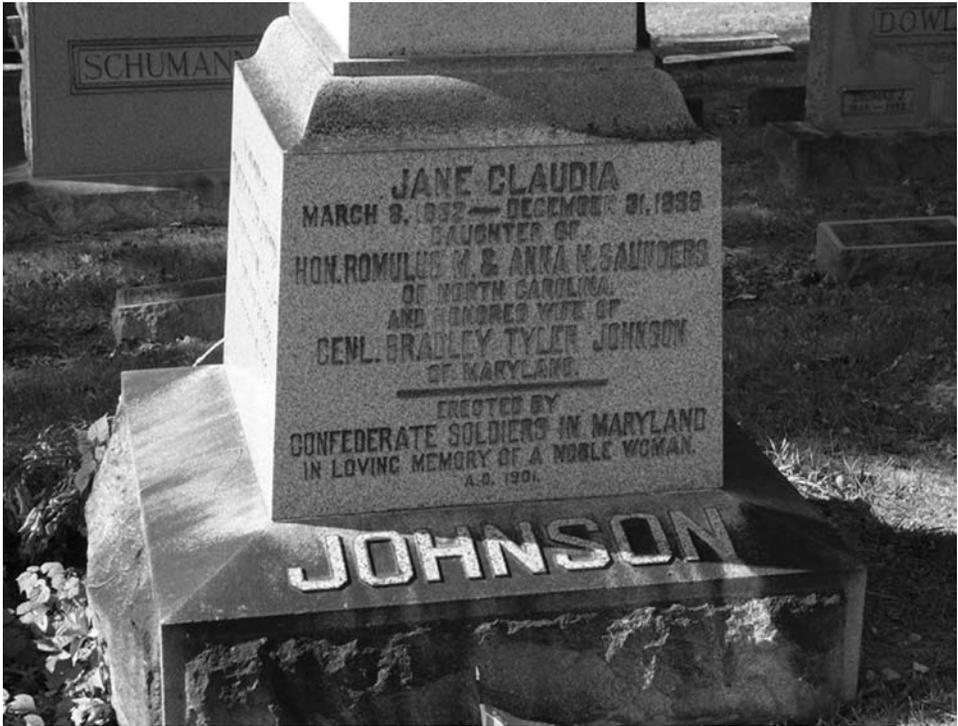
The personal and social lives of these women activists thus became politicized, infused with an ideology that asserted their cause was holy and worthy of the time, money, and labor that they devoted to perpetuate a culture of war. Historian Lloyd Hunter, who characterized women as “the least reconstructed Southerners,” correctly pointed out the religious dimensions of their devotion to the Lost Cause and the UDC’s critical role in “the process of sacralization by elevating the symbols of the Confederacy to sacred status.”<sup>75</sup> As the war receded into distant memory, their energy and passion remained strong. Louise Wigfall Wright, then head of the UDC, observed in 1902: “From time to time we have gathered our forces, summoned by that irresistible call, to whose clarion note I believe our souls would respond when the heart fails and the eye grows dim.”<sup>76</sup> At that point, Wright and other Confederate women were raising money for the monument to the soldiers and sailors of Maryland that would be dedicated the following year. This memorial, the definitive symbol of



*The monument to Confederate mothers and daughters, erected by the Ladies' Confederate Memorial and Aid Society of Maryland, in Loudon Park Cemetery. (Author's photograph.)*

their worldview, featured the allegorical winged figure of Glory supporting a dying soldier, towering over the inscription: "Glory stands beside our grief."

AS RUMORS OF still another war, this time with Spain, swept through the crowds at the 1898 Southern Relief Bazaar in Baltimore, Mrs. Russell Wetmore observed that a Mr. Adams, a local Civil War veteran familiar to many of the women staffing the tables at the fair, continued to keep his wartime vow not to cut his hair until the South won. "As that wasn't to be, his long, gray locks are allowed to grow, and only ennoble his beautiful countenance, so full of pathos and manly resolve."<sup>77</sup> The long-haired veteran was a symbol and a reminder of a lost cause that retained an irresistible appeal despite the march of decades. In 1888, writer Albion Tourgee observed, "The man who fights and wins is only common in human esteem. The downfall of empire is always the epoch of romance. The brave but unfortunate reap always the richest measure of immortality."<sup>78</sup> The ladies of Baltimore understood this well, and knew that adversity and defeat can inspire and lift the human spirit, creating an unbreakable bond among those involved. They shared with their male counterparts a sense of exclusivity and even superiority over those who had supported the Union. William H. Pope, the superintendent of the Confederate Soldiers' Home, made that clear in



*“In Loving memory of a Noble Woman” is the inscription of Jane Claudia Johnson’s tombstone, from the “Confederate Soldiers in Maryland,” Loudon Park Cemetery. (Author’s photograph.)*

1893. “We have never mixed in any manner with the other side—no joint reunions, no joint banquets, no decoration or memorial days in common. In fact . . . we go our way and they go theirs.”<sup>79</sup> Bradley T. Johnson expressed a similar view when he publicly opposed extending an invitation to the GAR to come to Richmond in 1899 for a reunion, because he believed that the women of that city would never extend a welcome or hospitality to the former Yankees. “All the shaking of hands and mingling of blue and gray,” he noted, “is bosh, pure bosh.”<sup>80</sup> Johnson, one of the original members of the Virginia coalition that developed and promulgated the Lost Cause mythology, was unable to rise above his animosity, even in the last years of his life.

The die-hard tendencies evident in the remarks of Johnson, Pope, and others in the Baltimore Confederate community had become somewhat atypical by the end of the century. Historian David Blight finds that reconciliation was apparent as early as the 1870s and became the dominant theme in veterans’ culture by the 1880s and 1890s, as the causes of both sides were subordinated to the idea of common heroism and sacrifice.<sup>81</sup> Foster maintains that industrial and urban expansion, with the concomitant rise of the middle class in the South, contributed to this conciliatory mood, as advocates of the New South increased their political and economic influence.<sup>82</sup> These developments were accompanied by a national retreat from any attempt to

address or reverse the rise of Jim Crow and Northern abdication on this issue after the end of Reconstruction eased the process of reconciliation among whites in the two sections. Maryland, despite its status as a Union state during the war, followed the rest of the states south of the Mason-Dixon Line into a maze of segregation and anti-miscegenation laws.

With the deaths of Jane Claudia and Bradley T. Johnson early in the twentieth century, leadership in the Baltimore Confederate community passed into the hands of others. As Maryland veterans and their wives disappeared from the scene, so, too, did their original organizations, replaced largely by the Sons of Confederate Veterans and the United Daughters of the Confederacy. The danger, excitement, and intensity of life that characterized the Civil War were fading memories for those who remained. Urbanization and modernization of the South and the common national experiences of the Spanish-American War and World War I steadily eroded the unity and exclusivity of the Confederate community in Baltimore. But their collective consciousness remains inscribed in the writings, monuments, and institutions they created. The passions engendered by America's bloodiest war, although muted by time, are still alive today. Despite Johns Hopkins University's ban on Confederate organizations gathering on campus, the faithful decided to continue to meet every January in Baltimore to pay tribute to their icons, Lee and Jackson. When they commemorate the birthdays of their heroes and scatter Decoration Day flowers on the graves atop Confederate Hill in Loudon Park Cemetery, they are following reverently in the footsteps of their ancestors.

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*The Maryland Guard, begun as a social organization in 1859, could take up arms if needed. They were mustered into the Fifty-third regiment of the Maryland Volunteer Militia the following year. Membership in the Maryland Guard reflected the divided sympathies of the state. Some members, including William H. Murray (center), went south and led companies in the First and Second Maryland Infantry. He was killed in action on Culp's Hill, Gettysburg.*

## Portfolio

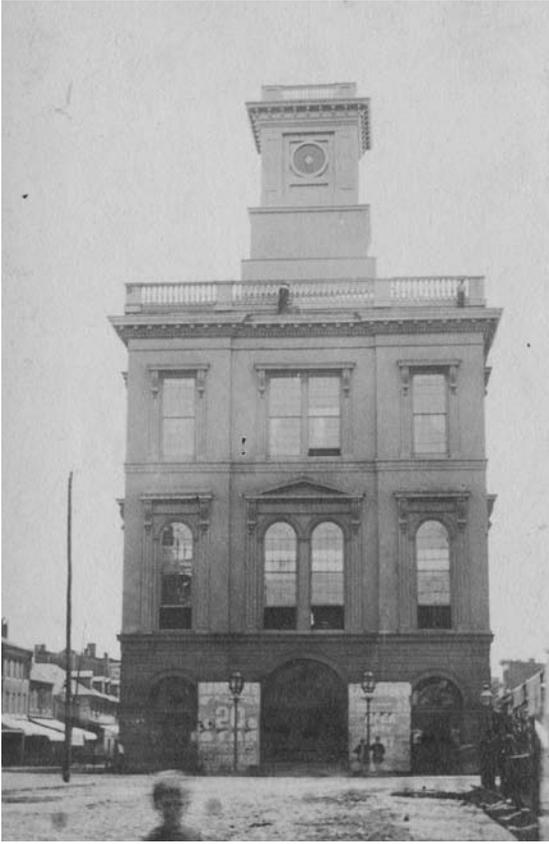
*Preview: A Photographic History of Maryland in the Civil War, by Ross Kelbaugh, forthcoming from the Press at the Maryland Historical Society (late 2011)*

Decidedly one of the institutions of our army is the traveling portrait gallery. A camp is hardly pitched before one of the omnipresent artists in collodion and amber bead varnish drives up his two-horse wagon, pitches his canvas gallery, and unpacks his chemicals. Our army here (Fredericksburg,) is now so large that quite a company of these gentlemen have gathered about us. The amount of business they find is remarkable. Their tents are thronged from morning to night, and "while the day lasteth" their golden harvest runs on. Here, for instance near Gen. Burnside's headquarters, are the combined establishments of two brothers from Pennsylvania, who rejoice in the wonderful name Bergstresser. They have followed the army for more than a year, and have taken, the Lord only knows, how many thousand portraits. In one day since they came here they took in one of the galleries, so I am told, 160 odd pictures at \$1 each. The style of portrait affected by these traveling army portrait makers is that known to the profession as the melainotype, which is made by the collodion process on a sheet-iron plate and afterward set with amber-bead varnish.

—*Scientific American*, October 18, 1862

So wrote a reporter for the *Scientific American* during the second year of the war. As he rightly observed, photography proved popular and lucrative in camp and on the home front as Americans caught up in the war found comfort and connections with loved ones. Soldiers sent pictures home to families, wives, and girlfriends. Politicians and generals immortalized their actions, and savvy new businessmen such as Mathew Brady and Alexander Gardner shocked civilians with horrific images of the carnage on corpse-strewn battlefields.

What follows is a small sampling of the more than three hundred images that will soon appear in Ross Kelbaugh's latest book. A veteran collector, interpreter, and educator, Kelbaugh has assembled the largest private collection of vintage Maryland photographs and related material in the state.



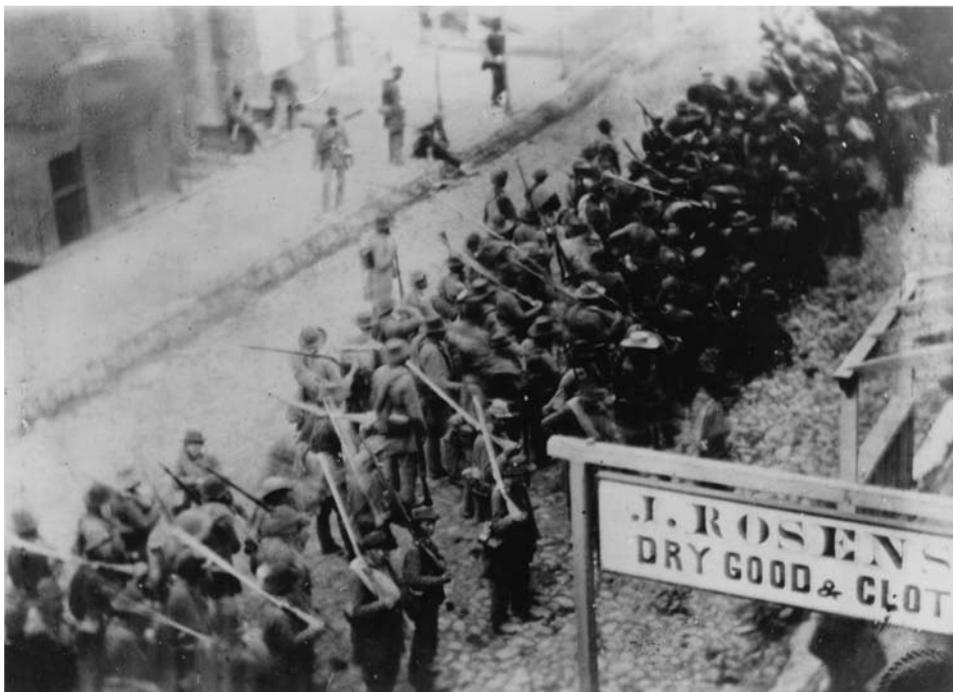
*The Maryland Institute, at left, was a prominent assembly hall in the 1850s and 1860s. The Baltimore Sanitary Fair of 1864 was held here.*

*Opposite page, top left: James Ryder Randall, author of "Maryland, My Maryland." The poem was later set to music and became a Southern favorite. Top right: Maryland's governor in the secession crisis, Thomas Holliday Hicks. Below opposite: Members of the "Brown Veil Club," also known as the "Monument Street Girls," collected supplies and sewed uniforms for local men who fled Baltimore to join the Confederate army. The group's most well-known members, Hetty and Jennie Cary, were in Richmond when Rebecca Lloyd Nicholson, Henrietta Penniman Carrington, Sophia Sargeant, Alice Wright, Rebecca Gordon, and Ida Winn posed for this photograph in Baltimore early in the war.*

*Additional members of the former Maryland Guard as volunteer militiamen, 1860–1861.*







*Confederates marching through Frederick in September 1862. Days later they would confront the Army of the Potomac at Sharpsburg. (Historical Society of Frederick County.)*

*Alexander Gardner took this photograph of Sharpsburg's Hall Street, looking northwest toward the field of battle, in September 1862.*





*Mathew Brady's assistant, Alexander Gardner, arrived on the battlefield at Antietam on September 19, 1862, and began taking a remarkable series of photographs that portrayed war as few civilians had seen it. The photograph at left shows Confederate dead in the Sunken Road, or "Bloody Lane." Below: Looking toward West Woods near the Dunker Church.*

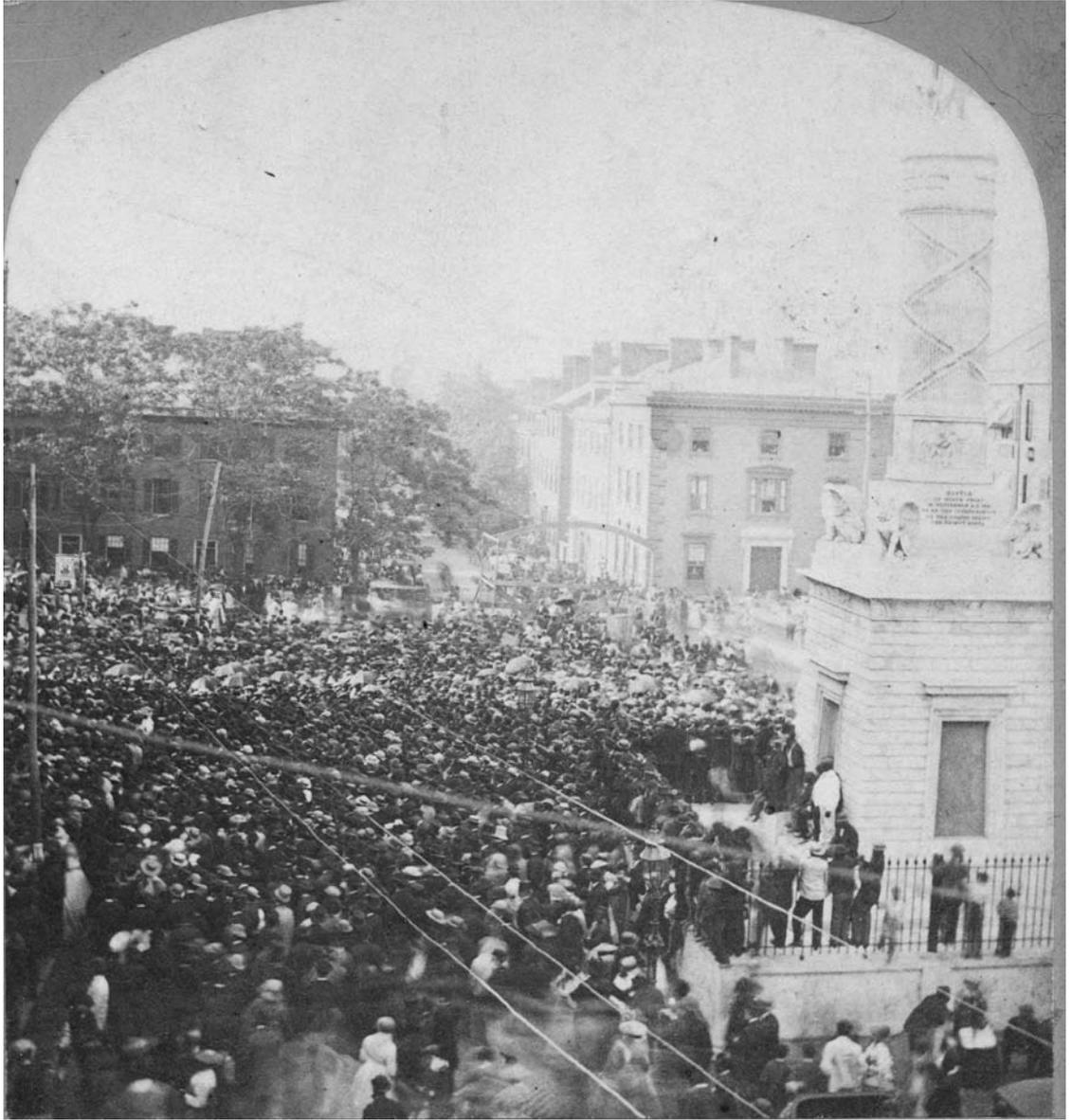




*President Abraham Lincoln and Gen. George B. McClellan confer on the Antietam battlefield in October 1862. Lincoln later removed the general from command of the Army of the Potomac.*

*“Point Lookout, Md. View of Hammond Gen'l Hospital and U.S. Gen'l Depot for Prisoners of War.” Lithograph by E. Sachse & Co., 1864.” Begun as a federal hospital in 1862, Point Lookout was enlarged to receive captured Rebels from Gettysburg, and eventually held more than ten thousand Confederate prisoners-of-war. Conditions grew increasingly harsh as the war progressed, and many died of disease in the summer of 1864. The hospital is in the foreground, the prisoners' compound at upper right.*





*Celebration of the Fifteenth Amendment, 1870. Six years after Maryland abolished slavery, the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution guaranteed black men the right to vote. Frederick Douglass rejoiced with the crowds assembled in Baltimore, remembering that thirty-five years earlier he had been enslaved. But the state's history of slavery left a legacy of segregation that lasted for generations, and Maryland did not ratify the Fifteenth Amendment until 1973.*

# Research Notes & Maryland Miscellany

## Forty-Seven Eyewitness Accounts of the Pratt Street Riot and Its Aftermath

Edited by JONATHAN W. WHITE

Violence erupted in Baltimore on Friday, April 19, 1861, when the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment and one thousand unarmed Pennsylvania volunteers attempted to pass through the city on their way to Washington, D.C. The troops arrived at the President Street Station on the east side of Baltimore harbor in thirty-five railroad cars at 10 A.M. The cars had to be detached from the locomotive and drawn by teams of horses about one-and-a-half miles to Camden Station, where they would be attached to different locomotives and sent south to the capital. As the troops arrived in Baltimore they saw angry crowds gathering outside the station.<sup>1</sup>

The first six cars, carrying about four hundred men of the Sixth Massachusetts, made it to Camden Station without much trouble, but soon a mob formed, laying sand, anchors and other debris on the track to impede the passage of the troops. The remaining 228 Massachusetts soldiers at the President Street Station formed ranks and marched toward Camden Station, leaving behind the unarmed Pennsylvanians. As they marched through the city, they exchanged shots with the crowd. Four Bay State soldiers fell dead, two from gunshot wounds, a third was knocked down and beaten to death, and one was “mortally wounded by stones and other objects which fractured his skull.”<sup>2</sup>

While the Massachusetts soldiers fought their way through Baltimore, the Pennsylvania boys found themselves stranded at the President Street Station without uniforms, arms, or protection. These unarmed troops faced the brutality of the mob until about 2 P.M., when they were able to board a train back to Philadelphia.<sup>3</sup>

1. Stephen M. Klugewicz, “‘The First Martyrs’: The Sixth Massachusetts and the Baltimore Riot of 1861,” *Southern Historian*, 20 (1999): 6–8.

2. Edward Ayrault Robinson, “Some Recollections of April 19, 1861,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 27 (1932): 275; Klugewicz, “First Martyrs,” 8–10.

3. Frank Towers, “‘A Vociferous Army of Howling Wolves’: Baltimore’s Civil War Riot of April 19, 1861,” *Maryland Historian*, 23 (1992): 1–27; Klugewicz, “First Martyrs,” 8–10.

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"The Lexington of 1861." Lithograph by Currier & Ives, 1861. (Maryland Historical Society.)

In addition to the four Massachusetts soldiers, a dozen civilians were killed in the melee.<sup>4</sup>

On the night of April 19, Mayor George William Brown, Police Marshal George P. Kane, and Governor Thomas H. Hicks met at the mayor's home to determine how best to deal with the threat of additional troops coming through Baltimore. Although accounts of the gathering vary, it is clear that the participants all opposed the passage of more Union troops through the state and desired to find a way to impede their route. Burning railroad bridges seemed the most efficient way. Mayor Brown insisted that unless the troops were somehow stopped, "a terrible collision and bloodshed would take place, and the consequences to Baltimore would be fearful, and that the only way to avert the calamity was to destroy the bridges." Some members of the meeting claimed that Governor Hicks verbally authorized the burning of bridges. According to Brown, Hicks replied: "It seems to be necessary." But Hicks later denied giving explicit consent.<sup>5</sup>

The following documents are transcriptions of testimony taken by a federal grand

4. George William Brown, *Baltimore and the Nineteenth of April, 1861: A Study of the War* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1887), 53. Some estimates give higher casualty rates. See, for example, Frank Towers, *The Urban South and the Coming of the Civil War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004), 166.

5. George L. P. Radcliffe, *Governor Thomas H. Hicks of Maryland and the Civil War* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1901), 56–57; Charles W. Mitchell, ed., *Maryland Voices of the Civil War* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 62–66; Brown, *Baltimore*, 58; *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 14 and June 11, 1861.

juror between September 4 and October 12, 1861. The grand jury had been summoned to investigate the Baltimore Riot and the subsequent burning of the railroad bridges around Baltimore, as well as other federal crimes that occurred within the District of Maryland, such as counterfeiting and crimes on the high seas. At the time that this testimony was being taken, the city of Baltimore was in a period of upheaval. Baltimore had come under the control of the Union military in May. In late June and early July, federal authorities had arrested the city's police commissioners and Police Marshal Kane. Now, in September 1861, the military imprisoned Mayor Brown, Congressman Henry May, two pro-South newspaper editors, and several "disloyal" members of the Maryland legislature. It was within this larger context that the grand jury convened to take testimony regarding the Pratt Street Riot.

The grand jury testimony spans 104 handwritten pages in Record Group 21 (Records of the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Maryland) at the National Archives at Philadelphia.<sup>6</sup> I have selected forty-seven entries (out of about 230) that convey a sense of what the participants saw and experienced in the spring of 1861. This testimony gives perspectives on the riot that have never before been heard, including those of Custom House officials, railroad employees at the President Street Station, bridge watchmen and their families, police officers, city officials, businessmen, and ordinary citizens of Baltimore. The testimony also provides new perspectives on the riot, particularly with regard to the actions of the Baltimore police.

I have arranged the testimony to open in the Custom House, which was located on the northwest corner of Gay and Lombard Streets.<sup>7</sup> According to historian Frank Towers, "During the height of Know-Nothing election violence, Democrats used the U.S. Customs House as a paramilitary base, a function similar to the one taverns served for nativist gangs."<sup>8</sup> From the Custom House we walk out onto the streets of Baltimore, following the mob as it pelts the soldiers with stones and tears up the railroad tracks. We then proceed with the mob back to the President Street Station, where the unarmed Pennsylvanians are anxiously waiting to leave the city. Next we hear testimony from police officers who were present during the riot. Finally, we ride with the police and militia to burn railroad bridges in the twilight hours of April 19 and 20. I have kept spelling and grammar as close to the original documents as possible. For the sake of readability, I have silently corrected or added punctuation in a few instances. I have identified as many of the participants as I could using *Wood's Baltimore City Directory Ending Year 1860* (as well as a few other sources, which are identified in the footnotes). Because the grand juror spelled names phonetically and

6. Most of the historic records of the federal courts in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland are held at the National Archives at Philadelphia.

7. The original manuscript testimony is arranged chronologically at the National Archives.

8. Towers, *Urban South*, 168.

in haste, the reader will at times find the same word or name spelled several different ways in a single paragraph.<sup>9</sup>

*George W. McElroy, a clerk at the Custom House who lived at 164 N. High Street, testified:*<sup>10</sup>

On morning of 19th Apl. when I went to office about 8 1/2, one clerk Charles E. Getzlich<sup>11</sup> remarked there is something in the wind. Asked him what's out, he said the soldiers coming in at the depot are to be attacked—he said there is a good deal of moving about & whispering. . . . I saw Robbins, Dr. Jas. S. Owens,<sup>12</sup> Geo. Gail,<sup>13</sup> John E. Tool<sup>14</sup> whispering suspiciously. Said they were going down to see what was going on. (About a week previous W. Norris,<sup>15</sup> Kane<sup>16</sup> & Walters<sup>17</sup> were constantly down making a complete companion of Sam McKubbin<sup>18</sup> & John Lutz.<sup>19</sup>) Robbins, Owens & Gail presently came down & put on their gloves. I asked Gail where he

9. I have rendered unidentified names according to my perception of the grand juror's spelling. I have also left misspelled names in the text but have given correct spellings in the footnotes.

10. McElroy testified on October 5, 1861.

11. Charles E. Gettslich (also spelled Getslick), a clerk at the Custom House, lived at 311 Franklin Street.

12. Dr. James S. Owens, deputy collector at the Custom House. According to the *Baltimore Sun* (July 23, 1861), Dr. Owens helped provide part of the \$40,000 in bail for B. Welch Owens, who was indicted for treason in the U.S. Circuit Court in Baltimore. Benjamin Welch Owens later joined the Confederate army.

13. George Gale, measurer at the Custom House who lived at 37 N. Gay Street.

14. John E. Tool, auditing clerk at the Custom House.

15. Possibly William Henry Norris, who made a pro-Union, pro-slavery, anti-Republican speech at the Maryland Institute in February 1861. See *Baltimore Sun*, February 2, 1861. For Norris's other pro-southern actions—including becoming an officer in the Confederate army—see Mitchell, *Maryland Voices*, 48, 285.

16. Police Marshal George P. Kane (1820–1878) was imprisoned by the federal military for fourteen months during the war. He was also indicted for treason in the Maryland federal court in 1861, but he was never prosecuted. Following the war he was elected mayor of Baltimore.

17. Possibly William T. Walters (1819–1894), importer and dealer in wine and liquor at 68 Exchange Place, who left the country during the war because of his pro-South views.

18. Samuel McCubbin (spelled MacCubbin in the 1860 directory), an officer at the Custom House who lived at 341 N. Gay Street, was indicted for treason in 1861 in the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Maryland for his role in the Baltimore Riot. In 1866 President Andrew Johnson pardoned McCubbin and the case against him was dismissed. Unless otherwise noted, information regarding indictments for treason in the federal courts comes from RG 21 (Records of the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Maryland), Baltimore Division, Criminal Records, National Archives at Philadelphia.

19. According to Frank Towers, "John Lutz and Samuel McElwee, customs workers involved in the attack on Union troops, had brawled for Democrats at the Eighth Ward polls." See Towers, *Urban South*, 168.

was going. He said going down to see some fun. Went down Lombard St. About 3/4 hours after Seth<sup>20</sup> came running in pale & said by God we have been giving them hell. Barnes<sup>21</sup> rushed in crying the Sons of bitches are firing upon our best citizen & Robbins came in saying who wouldnt resign? Then Beatty<sup>22</sup> rushed in with a soldiers musket saying I've finished one of the d—d sons of b & set the musket down very much excited—the others got round him & applauded him. J. J. Grinnel<sup>23</sup> came in & went on to state Beatty's bravery in attacking. Toole said he believed Beatty killed that man. McKubbin came in with a sword & horse pistol saying he cut the hand off an officer & beat a stone in a soldiers brain pan. Seth & Mason<sup>24</sup> came in and applauded McCubbin. Mason said why dont you get arms. There were a good many arms there.

Next day Mason ordered over from public store three cases of arms & had George Riley<sup>25</sup> & Toole to take account of the muskets & rifles which were given to the watchmen and others to shoot down the damned Northern Sons of bitches who were coming. Mason was present & superintending.

John E. Howard<sup>26</sup> came in after Beatty & shewd a pistol which he said he had discharged 5 times at the Northern sons of Bitches.

Konigs<sup>27</sup> was there all the time.

20. Possibly William George Seth, a commission merchant who lived at 18 Warren Street.

21. Abraham Barnes, an inspector at the Custom House.

22. Edward Beatty, deputy surveyor at the Custom House.

23. Josiah J. Grindall, a Custom House officer who lived at 289 Aisquith Street (the 1860 directory lists him as Isaiah). Grindall was indicted for treason in the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Maryland in 1861. In March 1864, Grindall sought pardon under Lincoln's December 1863 Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction. U.S. Attorney William Price endorsed the petition: "Grindall since the 19th of April 1861, in the outrages of which day he participated, has behaved himself in a peaceable & orderly manner, & I have reason to believe is now sorry for what he did on that occasion, and think his case a fair one for the exercise of the executive clemency." Lincoln agreed, writing on April 2, 1864: "In this case, not as a precedent for any other cases, the District Attorney will be justified by me, if in his discretion, he shall enter a *Nolle Prosequi*."

24. John Thomson Mason Jr. (1815–1873) had been a member of Congress (1841–1843), a judge on the Maryland Court of Appeals (1851–1857), and was collector of customs at Baltimore from 1857 until the end of April 1861.

25. George Reilly was an inspector at the Custom House.

26. John E. Howard was an adjusting clerk at the Custom House.

27. George Konig Sr., was a tattooed, battle-scarred Democratic rowdy from Fells Point who played a prominent part in the riot. Konig was convicted of rioting in the Baltimore City Court and was sentenced to one year in prison. He was also indicted for treason in the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Maryland in 1861. The charges against Konig were not dropped until November 1868. For a colorful and illuminating account of Konig's many violent escapades, see Tracy Matthew Melton, "The Lost Lives of George Konig Sr. & Jr., A Father-Son Tale of Old Fell's Point," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 101 (2006), 332–61.

John N. Watkins<sup>28</sup> knows a good deal—was anxious to have the Custom House shut up.

Slicer<sup>29</sup> told me he could have Mason indi[c]ted for removing the money out of the vault into the Merchts bank.

James Miller,<sup>30</sup> messenger of Mason, told me that many attended at M's room one evening who when they found out the object, refused to remain.

Judge Legrand<sup>31</sup> & John E. Graves<sup>32</sup> were in the habit of associating with them. Kane would go there every morning for some weeks before 19th.

*Dr. W. N. Worthington testified.*<sup>33</sup>

On 19th Apl. was pretty much all day in Custm House. Saw the ankers on track heard Sam McKubbin say (in the Custm House) he helped to do it. Also bro't in a sword which he had taken from a soldier. Also had a horse pistol with which he said he had threatened to blow out the soldiers brains. . . .

There was a great excitement in the Custm House. Robbins said no union man would be permitted to walk the streets by sundown. Said, Our citizens have been shot down &c. as before. Dr. Chabermier at same time exclaimed "Where are your Union men now?"

(Judge Mason ordered the guns to be brought over from the public store—& said parties taking the guns must give receipts. Toole was taking part. This was probably afterwards.) A written notice was stuck up that if any employee wanted to take up arms to defend the City they sh'd report to the collector. I had a private paper which I got Mr Webber (Cash'r)<sup>34</sup> to put in the vault for safe keeping. After 19th asked W. for it & he said it was in the Bank. Baughman<sup>35</sup> came back crying for arms—think Robbins was with him. On the day the flag was cut down by Lemmon,<sup>36</sup> J. E. Howard said that when he told L. the flag ought to come down he did not think he was going to do it. Gentlemen had been in the constant habit of coming & calling out low persons & talking with them privately—such as Norris. The moment Hoffman came in the proposition was that every clerk sh'd leave his desk.

28. John N. Watkins was the entry clerk at the Custom House.

29. Edward Slicer was the assistant cashier at the Custom House.

30. James Miller, a messenger at the Custom House, lived at 251 Franklin Street.

31. John Carroll LeGrand (1814–1861), was a southern sympathizer who served on the Maryland Court of Appeals from 1851 to 1861. For his political views at the beginning of the war, see LeGrand, *Letter to Hon. Reverdy Johnson, on the Proceedings at the Meeting, Held at Maryland Institute, January 10, 1861* (Baltimore: Murphy & Co., 1861).

32. Perhaps Dr. John J. Graves, president of the Mechanics Savings Bank of Baltimore and collector for the city of Baltimore.

33. Worthington testified on October 8, 1861.

34. See the next witness.

35. John W. Baughman, appraiser general at the Custom House.

36. Possibly William P. Lemmon, president of the Merchants' Shot Works on the southeast corner of Front and Fayette Streets.

*William Webber, a former deposit clerk at the Baltimore Custom House, testified:*<sup>37</sup>

At 10 or 11 o'clock persons came running in & reported that the troops were about to be attacked & there was a rush out. All left in the course of the morning except two or three. Col Edmonson<sup>38</sup> came in exclaiming "My God! They are shooting our own citizens." A messenger brought a mass. rifle into (think it was Miller) my room saying it had been taken by Ed. Beatty & Beatty afterwards got it & said he was going to give it to his son. Also McKubbin brought in a sword & said he had knocked down an officer. Col Toole had asked Owens to go down & see the sport (word had come that the tracks were barricaded). I talked with Mason about the money & he said the . . . money must be removed—& said it must be removed quietly. Owens, Matthews,<sup>39</sup> myself & Gardner<sup>40</sup> were privy to the removal. Slicer was not to know it because he drank. . . . On 19th at 3 o'clock, sent it to Merchants Bank. Remained there about 10 days. It was about \$80,000.

*John Sharpley Jr., who worked with his father at John Sharpley & Son cotton manufacturers and commission merchants at Smith's Wharf, testified:*<sup>41</sup>

On 19th Apl. saw Jas. Whiteford<sup>42</sup> & Mactier<sup>43</sup> trying to put on ankers. Saw Michael Hooper<sup>44</sup> also. Heard there was a meeting the evening before to arrange the attack & the men were there—Konig & the Custom house party. At dusk on Thursday saw Slicer & other Custom house employees moving down towards the Custom house & parties remarked something is brewing.

*Alexander Rieman, a merchant who lived at the corner Howard and Fayette streets, testified:*<sup>45</sup>

37. Webber testified on October 11, 1861.

38. Probably Horace S. Edmondson, inspector at the Custom House.

39. Thomas H. Matthews, a clerk at the Custom House who lived at 46 Saratoga Street.

40. Alderson Gardner, a messenger at the Custom House who lived at 122 Cross Street.

41. Sharpley testified on October 7, 1861.

42. James Whiteford was a commission merchant at Spear's Wharf; he lived at 21 N. Front Street. Whiteford was indicted for treason in the U.S. Circuit Court in Baltimore in 1861. Whiteford was one of about sixty treason cases instituted in Baltimore in 1861. In July 1863 the U.S. attorney in Baltimore stopped pursuing about forty-five of the sixty cases. Whiteford's—like many of the cases mentioned in these notes—was among the dismissed cases.

43. Samuel Mactier was indicted for treason in 1861 in the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Maryland for his part in the riot. In 1864, Mactier appealed to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton for executive clemency: "I have been indicted for Treason," he told Stanton, "& have rested under this heavy charge for near three years. God knows, I am not guilty of any intent to do wrong, & the punishment which I have suffered in mind & body for near 3 years is only known to Him." Lincoln chose not to end the prosecution against Mactier and the case against him was not dismissed until November 4, 1868. See Samuel Mactier to Edwin M. Stanton, March 28, 1864, Abraham Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

44. Michael Hooper was indicted for treason in 1861 in the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Maryland for his role in the Baltimore Riot. His case was dismissed on November 4, 1868.

On 19th Apl. going along Gay St just as a car passed through, but after it passed another made its appearance at bridge, when a man unknown swore he would not stand it any longer & seized a pick. I asked [and] remonstrated for police & said this ought to stop. When George Evans said damn the police then the track was covered with ankers and sand very quickly. A man came riding on horse who said they are marching up street & said give it to them. The crowd were throwing a whirlwind of stones. An irishman came running along with a new musket (he had been employed at Sullivans) afterwards the troops fired. Whiteford—two of the Pendergasts<sup>46</sup>—Jas. M. Girvin<sup>47</sup>—think Mactier—did not see Warfield—these were evidently approving and inciting the mischief. The people who were putting ankers on the track & abetting were as respectable in appearance as this Grand Jury.

*William P. Smith, of 323 E. Lombard Street, testified.*<sup>48</sup>

Met train at Canton & rode up with troops—not a dozen persons at depot when we arrived. Some boys came first & called them niggers, then went back & brought down a crowd with a secession flag . . . a boy named Andrews (threw the first brick, saw it) sure his name is Andrews lives in neighborhood of Prest. St. Also saw Cosgrove throw several stones—John Slater with a gun. Saw him take a gun from a soldier. Is now out of town. George Konig appeared to be leader. Saw Bill Konig<sup>49</sup> & Cosgrove throw stones. Think John Slater killed a man near corner of Fred'k St. Saw Goodrick<sup>50</sup> & Slater & McKubbin take hold of muskets in soldiers hands & wrench off bayonettes. By the time troops came to Stiles & Prest. St. there were 200 in the crowd—& men were knocked down & stamped on. There were many strangers in the City the day before & in the crowd. Saw a man said to be an Alabamian give out money to the

45. Rieman testified on September 17, 1861.

46. Jerome Pendergast was indicted for treason in 1861 in the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Maryland for his role in the Baltimore Riot. His case was not dismissed until November 4, 1868.

47. James M. Girvin was a ship commission merchant and produce dealer at Spear's Wharf. The *Baltimore Sun* (November 7, 1861) listed a James McGirvin as being indicted for treason in the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Maryland.

48. Smith testified on September 13, 1861.

49. William Konig was indicted for treason in the U.S. circuit court in Maryland in 1861. See *Baltimore Sun*, November 7, 1861.

50. Probably George W. Goodrich, a watchman at the Custom House. Washington Goodrich was remembered by one eyewitness as "a notorious ruffian" who headed "the mob with the confederate flag flying." See Robinson, "Some Recollections," 274. The *New York Times* reported on May 10, 1861 that Goodrich "left for Virginia with fifty-five men in the Norfolk boat." Goodrich later served as a spy for the Confederacy. See H. B. Smith, *Between the Lines: Secret Service Stories Told Fifty Years After* (New York: Booz Brothers, 1911), 84. He was indicted for treason in the federal circuit court in Baltimore but was never prosecuted. See *Baltimore Sun*, November 7, 1861.

same crowd of rowdies, at corner of Holliday & Fayette St. . . . Saw Gifford<sup>51</sup> later in day—did not offer to protect the troops. Saw Sargent Perry<sup>52</sup> pushing them about in a hostile manner—did not see him beat any. Saw nobody arrested except Cook<sup>53</sup> for tearing up the secession flag.

I told them ten men if resolute could put down the riot, they took hold of me and threatened to arrest me & said *I* was making a riot. The Police were hallooing for Jeff Davis<sup>54</sup> when the cars arrived & I for the Union when they ordered me to shut up, that I was creating a riot.

*Private William Lynch of the 2nd Maryland Regiment, Company D, testified:*<sup>55</sup>

On 19 Apl. on corner Ann & Canal the North troops were coming through & went up to the depot talking to troops whom I know. At the depot they were attacked by mob. Officer George Jones<sup>56</sup> assaulted John Hoffman & broke his head with a spontoon, crying “You black son of a bitch you came here to fight us white men.” Saw G. Konigs at depot with Palmetto flag in his hand. Saw Kane half a square from there looking on and seeing troops assaulted. [I] did not see any man arrested except Fred Cook for trying to take away a Palmetto flag—saw Konigs & others go in the end of the train & driving out the unarmed men, and the police knocking them over the head as they came out. . . .

*Robert B. Meads, a policeman who lived at 85 Elliot Street, testified:*<sup>57</sup>

On 19th saw Bill Konigs pick up a paving stone & throw into a car & strike a man. I called on officers to interfere, they told me it was none of my damned business, took me by neck & shoved me out.

Officers Jarden,<sup>58</sup> Geo. Jones, Robb<sup>59</sup> were in the party that burned Canton bridge.

51. Thomas Gifford served as superintendent of the Custom House until he was appointed deputy marshal of the Baltimore police in May 1860. *Baltimore Sun*, May 8, 1860; *Our Police*, 41. Gifford lived at 131 Orleans Street. He was indicted for treason in 1861; his case was dismissed in November 1868.

52. Sergeant F. W. Perry of the Eastern District joined the police force in May 1860. All police who joined the force at that time are listed in *Baltimore Sun*, May 7, 1860.

53. Frederick Cook and Frederick Cook Jr. were both butchers at 242 Montgomery Street.

54. Confederate President Jefferson Davis. In a few instances Davis’s name is abbreviated J.D. in the testimony.

55. Lynch mustered into the 2nd Maryland on June 10, 1861, and mustered out in June 1862 on account of disability. He testified before the grand jury on September 9, 1861.

56. George W. Jones, a patrolman in the Eastern District, had joined the force in May 1860. See de Francias Folsom, ed., *Our Police: A History of the Baltimore Force from the First Watchman to the Latest Appointee* (Baltimore: J. D. Ehlers & Co., 1888), 347. This is likely the same George Jones who was indicted for treason in 1861. *Baltimore Sun*, November 7, 1861.

57. Meades testified on September 16, 1861.

58. Possibly Samuel Jarden, listed in the 1860 directory as a postal worker; the Baltimore

Saw Geo Konig with a revolver, hurraing for J.D. cursing the soldiers, hindering the man from M[?] coupling cars. Saw Kane put his arm round Konig's neck & whisper something in his ear. Konig immediately then went on to hurrah for J.D. & riot generally in Kane's presence.

*Edward Airey, a carter who lived at 170 Orleans Street and who later became a teamster in the Union Army, testified.*<sup>60</sup>

Was at Depot when Cars came in on 19 Apl. Saw Konigs & Goodrick & stones coming from where they stood—thinks they were throwing—were running up & down the crowd exciting them & hurraing for Jeff. Davis.

Ehrman the lumber inspector the best witness against G. Konigs. The police could have stopped the riot but did not try. Stones came from right among the police. . . .

*John Ehrman, a carpenter who lived at 74 Albemarle Streets, testified.*<sup>61</sup>

On 19th Apl. (the cars had just arrived) a few rowdies came to the Depot about 10 A.M. Wash Goodrich, McElvee (the older Bob)<sup>62</sup> & 8 or 10—hurrah'd for J.D.—then some hurrah'd for Union. Some Gentlemen urged on the Secession party & said the Sons of Bitches ought to be killed—viz. Richd Price,<sup>63</sup> Isaac Trimble<sup>64</sup> & Matthew Placide.<sup>65</sup> Said, "the damned abolitionists ought to be killed." After the cars started Placide said damn them we must take up the Road—he went off then came back & said damn them the cars are stopped now. After the cars went up they came back again, & by that time a large crowd formed. McGee<sup>66</sup> & another came down in a

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*Sun* (November 30, 1889) listed Jarden as a former "police justice at the southern station."

59. Probably John T. Robb, an officer who joined the Eastern District in May 1860. The 1860 directory lists Robb as a stevedore.

60. Airey testified on September 9, 1861.

61. Ehrman testified on September 18, 1861.

62. Tracy Matthew Melton describes "Samuel McElwee and his brother Robert" as "Democratic roughs, powerful men" who had no qualms with shooting and killing a man in a fight. See Tracy Matthew Melton, *Hanging Henry Gambrill: The Violent Career of Baltimore's Plug Uglies, 1854-1860* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2005), 90.

63. Richard Price, a lumber merchant and a notorious rowdy, was arrested in September 1861 and then indicted for treason in the U.S. circuit court in Baltimore.

64. Isaac R. Trimble (1802-1888) led Baltimore police and Maryland militiamen to burn bridges around Baltimore in the days following the Pratt Street Riot. In 1861 he joined the Confederate army, where he eventually rose to the rank of major general. At the Battle of Gettysburg Trimble was wounded and captured, and for the next year and a half he was a prisoner of war. Trimble was indicted for treason in the U.S. Circuit Court in Baltimore in 1861; the case against him was dismissed in 1867.

65. Matthew Placide, a contractor, lived at 174 N. Calvert Street.

66. A George R. McGee was indicted for treason in 1861. See *Baltimore Sun*, November 7, 1861.

buggy leading a mob with a secess. flag [and] encouraged & incited the crowd. The crowd went on to throw mud in the soldiers faces [while the] troops formed on North of depot. I went to my office which was near & watched from there what was going on—this was about 12 o'clock. I then left for dinner and as I got to McClains planing Mill,<sup>67</sup> troops had passed up Prest St & a large mob was following. Just then Geo Konig & others came up & each picked up a paving stone & said we will go round & head off the Sons of bitches. I went on to dinner & afterwards coming back, as I was passing Pratt St. bridge (which was tore up) I saw a crowd & a man named Aleck Merrit was pulling & hauling & afterwards made a speech to crowd & then went away & made another speech. Saw Hiss coming down Pratt St. about 1 1/2 o'clock with a military cap on his stick saying it was his prize.

The police acted in such a way that I told some of them they were heading the mob. One asked a police man why he did not arrest a rioter; he replied I will arrest *you*. After 1 o'clock saw Gifford coming down Pratt St where the mob were breaking into Meyers gun store.<sup>68</sup> G. went over on the other side. Brown went up to a man trying to kick in Myrs store & begged him not to do so. The man pulled out a revolver. Edgerton<sup>69</sup> came down on horseback & said there was no use for guns, that the soldiers were ordered to be drove back. This was at Myers gun store.

*Henry S. Durkee, a huckster who lived at 163 Orleans Street, testified:*<sup>70</sup>

Was working at Tylers Bake house<sup>71</sup> when soldiers came along on 19th. Saw people throwing stones & putting ankers on track. Sarg. McComas,<sup>72</sup> Rutherford<sup>73</sup> & Biggs<sup>74</sup> came down. McComas took out his revolver & said it wouldn't do. McKubbin took hold of him & said you son of a Bitch put that up you cant frighten any body. McK, John Cruse<sup>75</sup> & Cashmeyer<sup>76</sup> I saw putting ankers on track.

I went down the track & saw the soldiers coming up marching. Saw Wash

67. Samuel R. McLeane's lumber mill was at the northwest corner of President Street and Canal Avenue.

68. John C. J. Meyer's gun store was located at 14 W. Pratt Street.

69. Brigadier General Charles Calvert Egerton (1816–1893) commanded the first light division of Maryland Volunteers. *Baltimore Sun*, April 22, 1861.

70. Durkee testified on September 6, 1861.

71. Tyler & Bro., manufacturers of biscuits, crackers, and pilot and navy bread, was located at 49 W. Pratt Street.

72. Police Sergeant Charles McComas of the Central Station had been on the force prior to the May 1860 reorganization.

73. See below for Alexander S. Rutherford's testimony.

74. Policeman Joseph Biggs lived at 90 N. Eden Street.

75. The 1860 directory lists two John Cruses, one a tavern keeper and one a tobacco-nist.

76. Philip Cashmyer (sometimes spelled Cashmeyer) was indicted for treason in 1861 in the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Maryland for his role in the Baltimore Riot. In 1866 President Andrew Johnson pardoned Cashmyer and the case against him was dismissed.

Goodrick take away a flag & tear it up. Saw a soldier lying in the gutter & two men kicking him almost to death. Edgerton rescued him. Grafton Bandel<sup>77</sup> living in Bond St was one of the two men. This was near corner of President & Styles St. The police officers were holding him down while the men were kicking him. . . .

*William H. Delano, a block and pump maker who lived at 233 E. Pratt Street, testified:*<sup>78</sup>

19th Apl. Saw Jas. Whiteford in S.W. corner Spears Wharf raise his hands and said “Kill the damn sons of bitches” (meaning the soldiers) & called to the mob “Rally boys & attack the train they have no business to go through this City.”<sup>79</sup> Afterwards when the 8th car came, the windows being smashed, I saw John Meyers<sup>80</sup> throwing at the car—shortly after I heard him say it was a shame to attack the troops—at 10 min past 12 I saw Wm H. Hiss<sup>81</sup> standing on the ankers & shouting hurrah for J.D. &c.

*James McKenney, a 13 year old boy, testified:*<sup>82</sup>

Saw Parkin Scott Jr.<sup>83</sup> shoot at the Massachusetts troops, calling shoot the God damned Sons of Bitches—had a new musket with a bayonnette. Was standing near curb stone near Charles St. N. Side.

*Charles M. Jackson, a grocer and ship chandler at the corner of Smith’s Wharf and Pratt Street, testified:*<sup>84</sup>

The most prominent man I saw was S. Mactier lifting ankers & encouraging others on. Heard Whiteford call out “here is a splendid lot of paving stones.” Saw Jerome Pendergast standing on the ankers on the track. Chas Pendergast was about to take hold of ankers when I interfered, and he desisted, brushing his hands. Jos. K. Brown apologized to me & said if I had known they were your ankers I would have had nothing to do with it—he was brushing his hands. Whiteford promised to have the ankers removed. Saw a young man, think he was a clerk in Exchge place, who

77. Grafton J. Bandel became a police officer in the Middle District in May 1860.

78. Delano testified on September 14, 1861.

79. Thomas J. Mitchell, who testified on September 13, 1861, heard Whiteford say “Rally boys! The cars ought to be stoned.”

80. John Myers was indicted for treason in the U.S. Circuit Court in Baltimore in 1861. See *Baltimore Sun*, November 7, 1861.

81. William Henry Hiss worked at a steam chair factory. Hiss was indicted for treason in 1861 in the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Maryland for his role in the riot. The U.S. attorney issued a *nolle prosequi* in his case on November 4, 1868, ending the prosecution against him.

82. McKenney testified on September 6, 1861.

83. The son of Thomas Parkin Scott, a prominent Baltimore attorney and Democratic state legislator who was arrested by the military in September 1861 and confined in military prisons for fourteen months.

84. Jackson testified on October 5, 1861.

threw the first missile after having shaken his fist & cursed the soldiers for some time. A large number of the Custom house employees were there—were standing at Carr's Store. They were cursing soldiers & cheering the mob. Saw the man take away a gun from a soldier—was rather a small man.

*Police Sergeant Charles McComas, who served the Middle District and lived at 3 Holiday Street, testified.*<sup>85</sup>

On 19th Apl. was stationed at Sun Build. with Jas. Diggs,<sup>86</sup> Wash. Loggers, Charles Moran,<sup>87</sup> Alex. Rutherford. Was there told of a spree in Pratt St. took the men & met Squire Hiss<sup>88</sup> corner Lombard St. Hiss told me go back. Went on, saw men picking up track—picked picks from them & took out my pistol. Mayor came & ordered ankers off the track, which we did. The Mayor & we went down to meet the soldiers—introduced Mayor. Saw a man run out & grab a soldier & take a musket. This was Joseph Bennet.<sup>89</sup> One of the men with picks was Michael Hooper—lives in Small St. near Howard. Saw McCubbin ordered me to put up my pistol said “What the hell did you draw the pistol for?” Lambden<sup>90</sup> says he saw me take the musket from a man. Bennet acknowledged to Rutherford that he picked away the musket. The musket was delivered up to James McLaughlin who had charge of Kaness office. . . .

*John Cunningham, a “hand” at President Street Station, testified.*<sup>91</sup>

Was at work outside depot on 19th Apl. After uniformed soldiers had passed up, a crowd came with secess flag & began stoning the cars containing troops—penned the men in & hit & stoned them coming out. They were treated very brutally. Saw a man take away a sword from soldier—was powder marked in face, a thumb cut off & mark of sword in his hand. Saw Wm & Geo Konig with the crowd & hallooing with them. Wm. Eckart<sup>92</sup> a police man was in the cars with axe breaking open boxes at the orders of the crowd & takeing out things. Police rather encouraged the riot.

85. McComas testified on September 10, 1861. According *Our Police* (p. 53): “Sergeant McComas and four policemen had been stationed at the foot of Gay street, where the anchors had been placed, but they were prevented from removing the obstructions by the rioters. Mayor Brown, upon appearing, ordered their removal, and his authority was not resisted.”

86. James Diggs, a clerk, lived at 30 Fawn Street.

87. Charles Moran, a plane maker, lived at 36 Maiden Lane. He joined the police force in May 1860.

88. Probably Magistrate Charles D. Hiss, who testified before the grand jury on September 16 (not included here).

89. The *Baltimore Sun* (November 7, 1861) listed a Joseph Bonnetti among those indicted for treason. The 1860 directory lists no one by that name but does list several Joseph Bonnetts.

90. Probably John H. Lambden, who testified on September 19 (not included here).

91. Cunningham testified on September 19, 1861.

92. William W. Eckhart became a policeman in the Middle District in May 1860.

When Kane came the mob gave 3 cheers for him (1 o'clock) he strung a force along both sides the cars. Crowd went on committing depredations till 4 or 5 o'clock. . . .

*Robert Miller, a brick maker who lived at 209 Conway Street, testified:*<sup>93</sup>

On 19th Apl. as train left Camden Depot, the soldiers in hindmost car had muskets pointed out of cars. Gifford pointed a pistol at them close to their heads and cried put in your muskets you sons of bitches or I will blow your brains out. The bricks had just been showered on cars by crowd. Another police officer did the same.

*Rev. Andrew Schwartz of the United Evangelical Church on the 200-block of Eastern Avenue, testified:*<sup>94</sup>

On 19th Apl. I was at depot & saw the riot—beggd them to desist & carried off some of the troops & protected them—dont identify any body. The police instead of arresting the rioters rudely arrested the poor wounded flying volunteers—*police had no numbers on their hats.*<sup>95</sup>

*Police officer William Brannan testified:*<sup>96</sup>

Between 12 & 2 P.M. I was standing on corner of Canal & Fleet St. B.<sup>97</sup> was a head of the crowd, leading them, with stones or brickbats in each hand. The crowd stopped on Bridge & hurrahd, then returned to Depot; & B. with them. Stones were thrown at soldiers, but I did not see B. throw.

The pol. officers in the crowd were urging the crowd on—two of these officers were walking along with a man who was smashing the windows of a car containing soldiers.

*Benjamin Upton, of 71 Britton Street, testified:*<sup>98</sup>

On 19th Apl. saw crowd stoning soldiers along Pratt St. returned to Depot. Saw men who said they were recruits from Phila.—the crowd were beating them desperately. Saw Richard Price with a stick in his hand striking & encouraging others—was more excited than I ever saw him in my life—Know him well—for last 20 years. Was striking at the Phila recruits. Said it was all wrong, that those men should be stopped from invading our soil. Saw George Konigs with stone in his hand crying “Kill the sons of bitches—hang them to the first lamp-post.” Edgerton made a speech which the crowd applauded—sent the troops back.<sup>99</sup> . . .

93. Miller testified on September 20, 1861.

94. Schwartz testified on September 19, 1861.

95. Numbers served as a form of identification for police officers.

96. Brannan testified on September 4, 1861.

97. John Bosley was indicted for treason in 1861. See *Baltimore Sun*, November 7, 1861. This is possibly police officer John Bosley who lived at 170 N. Howard Street.

98. Upton testified on September 17, 1861.

99. Col. R. S. Mercer of the 3rd Maryland Mounted Cavalry later told Governor Hicks:

*Constable John Plummer, who lived on Chester Street near Bank, testified:*<sup>100</sup>

We went to Police at Phila depot and told them (i.e. Dove, Cox, Perry & Horney) if they would assist us we could keep off Konigs crowd & they refused. Cook & I tore the secession flag. Police arrested only Union men who were trying to keep down the riot. . . .

*William S. Cross, who lived at the corner of Calvert & Monument streets, testified:*<sup>101</sup>

On 19th Apl. was not at depot when train arrived. Went down as the troops were being changed from one car to another. 3 P.M. were sending troops back to Phila—met Richd Price, & told him the row [w]as a disgrace. He denied it & said the troops had no right to come—he was much excited. When the rowdies were beating the soldiers he said “that is right boys, go in!” had a stick flourishing it, but did not see him strike with it.

Saw Green strike soldiers with fist.

Saw Irishman carrying confederate flag and heard Kane tell him if he wanted to fight to come back at 4 o'clock, that they would then organize & he would have a chance.

*W. J. Stowell, the Depot Master President Street Station, testified:*<sup>102</sup>

19th Apl. when I ret'd from Dinner at 12 or 1 P.M., heard of the riot up street—saw 50 or 100 men coming with a secession flag & making a fuss, beating men. Knew Geo. Konig—tried to get police men to make arrests—did not succeed. A man came along & said if he had his way every depot should be compelled to raise a secession flag. The crowd cried Kill the damned Sons of bitches—hurrahed for Marshall Kane & Jeff Davis—four or five men would jump on one. Saw a gentleman in consultation with Konig—was said to be Lawrence Sangston.<sup>103</sup> My impression was the officers did not want to make any arrests—when urged to do so would laugh. There were officers enough there to stop the riot; but evidently did not want to do so.

*Joseph Lee of Hudson Street testified:*<sup>104</sup>

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“I could allude to the liability of every one in Baltimore, on the 19th, confused by the excitement, to be mistaken. Indeed I remember an instance of this. General Egerton was ordered by you *to drive back the mob*, who were pressing upon the Pennsylvania troops. *He drove back the troops*. I heard you give the order to Egerton, and I heard him report to you. You disapproved of his act, and he pleaded misapprehension of your order.” See *Baltimore Sun*, June 11, 1861.

100. Plummer testified on September 20, 1861.

101. Cross testified on September 17, 1861.

102. Stowell testified on September 18, 1861.

103. Lawrence Sangston, a member of the House of Delegates, lived at 8 Waverly Terrace, Franklin Square. He was arrested by the military at midnight on September 12, 1861.

On 19th Apl. saw Konig throw first stone & then 3000 were cast. Saw a soldier fall back. Went up to him—an officer seized me & drew me back saying I'll take charge of him. Konig came back leading the riot—the crowd then returned to Depot & beat all the soldiers as they came out & battered the cars. Kane came in and said “boys you wont spoil my reputation will you?” Konig who had a chain & iron ball in his hands replied “No Marshal Kane we are your boys we[']ll stand up for you.”

*Charles W. Bates, who was identified as an “old police” officer in the grand jury testimony, and who lived at 18 McElderry Street, testified:*<sup>105</sup>

Was with Kane on Pratt St—at 8 o'clock got on train & went to Camden Station (the orders were for the force to divide into 2 divisions). Met K. with 200 men. About 10 o'clock report came that track was being torn up. K. left Gifford to remain with 100 men & K went down with 100. K. at Pratt St. said he & his men would lose his life to protect the troops. K. accompanied them up with the troops to Camden Depot. . . .

*Policeman Alexander S. Rutherford, of 228 N. Bond Street, testified:*<sup>106</sup>

On 19th April was stationed at Sun Building. We ran down to corner of Pratt & Gay, was blocked up with sand, ankers & stones. McComas rushed in with his revolver & stopped the picking up of track & ordered us to remove the ankers. We followed after soldiers & I arrested two men for throwing stones, one named Johnson & one Edwd Fuller.<sup>107</sup> (These were fined \$20 by City Court). Took them to Station house.

Was with McComas as he seized Bennett & he confest he had taken the musket from the soldier.

Evening was sent down to guard Depot till 1/4 of 12, when I was sent for to Station house. There was then a military Co. ready to start.

On Sunday, McComas, Hamilton<sup>108</sup> & myself & 2 others were sent out to cut down telegraph poles on R.R. Perry Road & Harford Road—and we cut 15 or 20.

On Saturday afternoon we were sent down to escort the ununiformed troops back again—two weeks ago was paid up except \$5.00 (as policeman). . . .

*Officer Daniel Lepson of 15 S. Poppleton, testified:*<sup>109</sup>

On 19th Kane came up about 10 or 11 to corner Howd & Prat[t] where we were

104. Lee testified on September 25, 1861.

105. Bates testified on October 3, 1861.

106. Rutherford testified on September 17, 1861. Rutherford had served on the force since before the May 1860 reorganization.

107. The Baltimore *Sun* reported on October 10, 1861 that Edward Fuller and Patrick Hartley were indicted in the Baltimore Criminal Court for rioting.

108. Probably Joseph E. Hamilton, a policeman who joined the Middle District in May 1860.

109. Lepson testified on September 25, 1861.

and ordered us [to the] office. Kane said they dont trust me with their dispatches. I have ordered you out an hour before the time. You may walk about for an hour or so. Some cars arrived & a crowd about them. They were detained there about 1½ hours. 8 or 10 of us remained at Camden Station afterwards got orders to march down till we met troops or Kane. Met the troops frightened & injured at corner of Howard. We took charge of them there & kept the crowd off. A large mob followed after. We fell back & tried to keep them back. I pulled out my pistol & went up to a leader who had bricks in both hands—he was arrested & taken to station—think he was named Morrison. Sargent Meredith told me Gifford said “Run you sons of bitches.” Capt. Zimmerman<sup>110</sup> released him.

*Police officer Alexander Barnes testified:*<sup>111</sup>

On 19th a crowd came down Prest St. to depot—headed by Geo Konig. Thos Graves & Cosgrove & Deuce in the crowd; also Anderson.<sup>112</sup> Broke into one car after the other, stoning & abusing the men. Saw Graves throw stones at the unarmed recruits, also Cosgrove throwing stones & pursuing the men. Saw Konig strike one man on back of head with stone. Saw Anderson strike one with a stone—was the first I saw throw. Saw Deuce throwing after the troops. Saw Price of Firm Thomas & Price<sup>113</sup> striking men with a yellow cane. Herring (John) was standing along side of me till he was threatened & obliged to leave. Think Edwd Ensor<sup>114</sup> also saw the violence. I saw Gough (after Konigs strike) arrest one of the rioters & I followed to Station house. Many of the officers arrested parties who reappeared as soon as officer did. Did not see Gifford. Saw no officers strike soldiers. One officer caught hold of Konigs who had a revolver but did not keep him—let him go. 15 or 20 officers there when I first went. After a man had been knocked down & beat by other parties Price beat him with cane. This was in Canton Av. between Extr & Albemarle.

*Police officer William H. Kennicker testified:*<sup>115</sup>

About 1 P.M. was at Depot & saw crowd beating soldiers, throwing bricks at soldiers. I tried to stop the rioting. Recognized very few; one Saml McKubbin, Fatty Carrol,<sup>116</sup> Konigs. These were urging on crowd to throw. Saw McK. stoop & gather

110. Prior to joining the police force as a lieutenant in May 1860, George H. Zimmerman had been a tobacco manufacturer in Baltimore.

111. Barnes testified on September 13, 1861.

112. A Clifford Anderson and a man named Cosgrove (the *Sun* did not have his first name) were both indicted for treason in 1861 in the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Maryland. See *Baltimore Sun*, November 7, 1861.

113. Richard Price, mentioned above, was part of the Thomas and Price lumber firm which was located on East Falls Ave. between Eastern Ave. and Canton Ave.

114. Edward Ensor was a ship joiner who lived at 38 Milliman Street.

115. Kennicker testified on September 6, 1861.

116. On April 21, 1865, the *Baltimore Sun* reported: “*Arrest of a Refugee*—William M.

up some missile: have no doubt he throw it—was urging on crowd saying “go on boys,” “damm the sons of bitches.” Saml Glen<sup>117</sup> was present at the burning of Bridges, lives at Caroline St. Hamilton participated in cutting down telegraph wires. Marshal Gifford ordered me not to beat the men I had seized. Konigs cursed the soldiers & urged on the crowd. Captn. Kenney<sup>118</sup> of Police came on 29th July & took away my pistol—refused to pay me with the rest of the policemen. Gifford was present & saw all the rioting but he ordered nobody to be arrested. I was then ordered to take my position on a car.

*James A. Glass, of 122 S. Eden Street, testified:*<sup>119</sup>

On 18th Apl was in a squad of 22 men—ordered to Bolton Depot under charge of Southern Sargent. A man picked up a stone & threw in a car. I seized him, when a sargeant No. 35 since 18, told me to let him go, he was “all right.” . . . On 19th I was marched to Monument Square. Kane headed us & ordered us to the Southern Station. Gorman<sup>120</sup> came in and ordered us to Depot—that the troops were coming from Phila depot. When the troops started to go move one of the men was taken with a fit & I was ordered to take care of him. Took him to the station house & the orders then were to stay there. When we first came to the depot there were only 22 men but no marshall, capt or lieutenant. Edgerton came down & spoke to the mob—who at first hooted—afterwards he addressed them again when they cheered him.

When Capt. Kenney was applied to for protection to the bridge he said if one or two came to burn it, [don’t?] let them do so, but if more came let them do it—heard this myself. . . .

On 29th July Capt Kenney came and demanded my pistol, saying he had orders from the commissioners & suspended me.

*Col. N. T. Dusham of the 1st Md. Regiment testified:*<sup>121</sup>

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Carroll, alias ‘Fatty Carroll,’ a former resident of this city, was arrested yesterday, charged with being one of the rioters on the 19th of April, 1861. He had just arrived from Richmond as a paroled prisoner. He was locked up for trial.” Prior to the war, Carroll had also appeared in Baltimore courtrooms for violent lawlessness. See *Baltimore Sun*, June 16 and 29, 1855, December 24, 1856, and August 20, 1859.

117. See testimony below.

118. Benjamin F. Kenney was appointed a lieutenant in the Eastern District on the police force in May 1860. When the force was disbanded in 1861 he returned to his trade of making sails. He rejoined the police as a captain of the Eastern District when the force was reorganized in 1867. He served in that position until his death at the age of sixty-two in 1883. *Baltimore Sun*, May 7, 1860, October 1, 1883.

119. Glass testified on September 6, 1861.

120. Either Detective Thomas W. Gorman of the Marshal’s Office or Police Officer William H. Gorman of the Middle District.

121. Dusham testified on September 9, 1861.

Saw the whole transaction from first attempt to stone cars till after the shooting but have never been able to identify any one.

Heard Kane several days after the riot say “Damn Lincoln he only wants to get the troops to Washington & then he will crush us.” . . .

*George Cassard, a commission merchant and provisions dealer, testified:*<sup>122</sup>

Went to Pol. Com office for purpose of protesting against the war they were making against govt—found difficulty in passing—doorkeeper tried to keep me out. As I was about expressing my protest—the Com’rs handed me over to Davis.<sup>123</sup> Told him the Com’rs were taking a fearful responsibility that they were making war against U.S. Davis replied they were willing to take the responsibility—that we are now in a state of Revolution. I reminded him that it was not the City of Balt. but the Pol. Com’rs who were waging this war. This was Monday or Tuesday after 19th.

*E. Wyatt Blanchard, the secretary of the mayoralty, testified:*<sup>124</sup>

On 19th Apl. arrived at Office at 10 o’clock—went to look for Mayor at Govr’s request & at corner of Pratt & Howd met a policeman who informed me that Kane & Brown had gone down together—followed down Pratt St. saw the obstructions. Was told the troops were expected. Went back to the hotel. Swan<sup>125</sup> came in agitated & said 5000 people were coming to attack the hotel. Govr got in the carriage & went to the Mayors office where he remained & many gentlemen called. . . . After Supper I went with Mayor to see Govr. Brown said he feared a demonstration wd be made agst Govr & wanted him at his own house. Mayor & Govr & myself then drove off in a carriage. Mayor stopped at Pol Com office & I went with Gov to M’s house. About 12 o’clock a military deputation called at M’s off[ice] & enquired for Gov. Went with them to Brown’s house. Gov was abed. He rose & they went into the room & had conversation about military matters. Saw no more that day.

*Samuel Glenn, an officer on Kane’s force, who lived at 63 N. Caroline Street, testified:*<sup>126</sup>

Was among 20 stationed in house. Information of Riot came & we went to depot. Saw rush made & several men jumped out cars; men kicked them; arrested one & took him to Station house—dont know his name, dont know whether the man kicked was a soldier. Four of us went down to protect the Canton bridge found Watchman there who shewed us where somebody had set fire to it. While standing at head of bridge with officer Gardner, saw parties coming, & drew a revolver; they turned out

122. Cassard testified on October 11, 1861.

123. Possibly Police Commissioner John W. Davis.

124. Blanchard testified on October 12, 1861.

125. Probably former mayor of Baltimore and future governor of Maryland Thomas Swann.

126. Glenn testified on September 9, 1861.

to be officers & military men (Maryland guards). Thinking they came to protect the bridge I left, but looking back saw the party splitting up wood to fire the bridge—did not recognize any of them. . . . This was between 3 and 4 A.M. on Saturday. . . .

*Samuel W. Briscoe, of 203 N. Howard Street, testified:*<sup>127</sup>

Am member of Md Guards—we were ordered out—going to Canton Bridge overtook Trimble with body of Police who burnt the bridge—did nothing but stand by—afterwards went up to Havre de Grace & burnt two bridges behind us on our return. Lieut. Woodville had command of our detachment. Trimble had charge of the whole concern. Woodville said so. This was 19th. Trimble took us to Police Station first. He went in & then came out & ordered us off—dont know the persons who set fire to bridges.

Went to the fort [McHenry] under Capt Clark next night. 300 or 400 of us—some thought to attack & some to defend the fort.

*Alexander Wiley, a baggage master for the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad, who lived at 13 Cambridge Street, testified:*<sup>128</sup>

On 20th Soldiers came down and stopped & the police came on bridge. I asked what they were doing, they said its none of my business. I told them I was watchman & begged them not to burn it. Nine of them seized me & took me to throw me into the river. I took out a stick & eight run. One held on & took me to Trimble his number was 209. This was between 1 and 3 o'clock. It was said the bridge was on fire before.

*Thomas Booz, of the shipbuilding firm Booz and Bro. on Boston Street in Canton, testified:*<sup>129</sup>

The police were burning the bridge at Canton. I beg'd them to help me to protect a vessel I was building—they said no matter if it was burned I would be paid for it—that they burnt the bridge by orders of Brown & the Governor. This was at 10 ½ o'clock on night of 19th Apl. Dont know names.

*John Severline, a railroad employee at Canton, testified:*<sup>130</sup>

127. Briscoe testified on September 14, 1861.

128. Wiley testified on September 17, 1861. In June 1861, an earlier federal grand jury had investigated the same set of events. The notes from that session, which were taken by the foreman David Creamer, are held by the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress. A typescript copy is available at the Maryland Historical Society in MS1860. Wiley's testimony before that earlier grand jury differed slightly from his testimony here: "Was at the Canton bridge April 20, a body of soldiers & police. Policeman No. 219, held me; they threatened me. Mr. Trimble ordered me to be set at liberty. No. 9 attempted to throw me into the river."

129. Booz testified on September 17, 1861.

130. Severline testified on September 20, 1861.

7 or 8 Officers in cars drinking beer; called me up to drink with them—knew Donahue<sup>131</sup>—Sullen there.

Bridge set fire 11 o'clock. . . . I told Henry about it & went to bed—told him to wake me if fire broke out again—went to bridge & saw company of soldiers & officers—only knew Trimble, this was after 2 o'clock. John Bucher put it out the first time.

Some of the beer was hauled to Hildebrand.

*Henry Kelly, of 247 Canton Avenue, testified:*<sup>132</sup>

Was watching Back River Bridge at time of fire between 12 & 1 o'clock Sunday night. 2 gentlemen came up to notify the man who was watching the bridge (Butler) & told this man that the governor had ordered them to fire the bridge. Said to be Daniel Steever<sup>133</sup> & Robert Broom.<sup>134</sup> Wm. Knight, Edwd Powers,<sup>135</sup> Saml Johnson & Benj. Sollers<sup>136</sup> were watching bridge with me in employ of R.R. Co. The bridge was fired by a crowd—the 2 gentlemen went to the house to notify Butler (he is now dead). We followed the 2 men into the house & Butlers daughters were present. The crowd split wood. We had to leave—Broom came out again & blow a whistle for the crowd.

*Mrs. Margaret Butler of Christiana, Delaware, testified:*<sup>137</sup>

When the bridge at Back River was burnt—a party of men came at 2 in the (Monday) morning of 22 Apl. Thomas Goodrick<sup>138</sup> & Danl Steever were the men and said the bridge must be burnt. . . . Goodrick & Steever said they were authorized by the Governor. I saw them go out with a can of camphene. . . . Sam Johnson, Powers & 3 others were guards on the bridge—the others had been frightened away by Trimble coming to the house on 5 o'clock A.M. on 20th Apl & removing the telegraph apparatus from the house. My husband remonstrated with Trimble & the others for their rude conduct and afterwards when Steever came to burn the bridge & my husband said he could not stop them, Steever replied he could command 1000 men if necessary. Trimble also carried off Wm. J. Dailey.<sup>139</sup>

*Miss Elizabeth Butler, the daughter of Margaret Butler, testified:*<sup>140</sup>

131. Possibly James Donahue, a police officer in the Eastern District.

132. Kelly testified on September 13, 1861.

133. Daniel Steever, a butcher, lived on Calverton Road near Frederick Ave. He was indicted for treason in 1861. *Baltimore Sun*, November 7, 1861.

134. Robert Broome was elected sergeant in the Byrne Guards. See *Baltimore Sun*, April 27, 1861.

135. Edward Powers, a puddler, lived at 197 Canton Ave.

136. Benjamin F. Sollers, a blacksmith, lived at 278 Canton Ave.

137. Butler testified on September 27, 1861.

138. Thomas T. Goodrick, a carpenter, lived at 32 E. Baltimore Street.

139. William J. Daley was a carpenter who lived on Mount Street near Lexington Street.

. . . Steever was captain—told my father he came on a painful duty, was going to burn the bridge—then he & Goodrick went out & whistled & the men came & burnt the bridge. . . .

*Jackson McComas testified:*<sup>141</sup>

Was watchman at Melville Bridge when it was burned. I was arrested by Danl Miller a policeman while I was on duty. After I was taken Kane came up & said they were going to burn the Bridge by authority of the Governor—heard K. ordering the men—suppose there were 40 policemen & soldiers. Understood they went to Wm Denmead<sup>142</sup> & get oil for the burning. They told me they were going to destroy the road for the purpose of keeping the northern soldiers back.

*William Denmead, proprietor of A. & W. Denmead & Sons Iron Works, testified:*<sup>143</sup>

At 2 ½ o'clock A.M. of 20th Apl. a party among whom was Fields (a policeman) came to the house & asked for camphene—had none—asked what it was for—said it was to burn the bridge by authority of Kane. Went down & saw the bridge burning. One named (probably James) Price (was not in uniform) asked me for the camphene. There were 15 or 20 men in the party. Saw the policemen putting on wood. Did not give them any oil or rosin. They told me the object was to prevent the troops from coming down.

We made pikes at our foundry for the city—were making canon balls at same time—City took them. Made 12 gun carriages.

*Robert H. Walker, a clerk who lived at 54 S. Bond Street, testified:*<sup>144</sup>

On 19th Apl. I was ordered out on Military duty. I mustered the men & Col. Steward<sup>145</sup> came to Armory & ordered us to Monument square. We were kept on duty for 3 weeks under Egerton. On 21 Col. Stuart sent me to his father to inform him the military were approaching and ordered us to be in residence. Genl. Steward ordered

140. Butler testified on September 27, 1861.

141. McComas testified on October 2, 1861.

142. A. & W. Denmead & Sons iron foundry and machine shop was located on the corner of North and Monument streets.

143. Denmead testified on October 2, 1861.

144. Walker testified on September 17, 1861. According to the *Baltimore Sun* (April 22, 1861), Capt. Robert Walker was a member of the Shields Guards, which was in the Fifth Infantry Regiment under Col. A. P. Shutt.

145. George H. Steuart (1828–1903) resigned his commission in the U.S. Army to join the Confederate service, where he rose to the rank of brigadier general. His father, also George H. Steuart (1790–1867) was a general in the Maryland militia at the beginning of the Civil War. The elder Steuart was indicted for treason in the U.S. Circuit Court in Baltimore in 1861; the younger Steuart was indicted for treason when he returned home from the war in 1865. Neither man was ever prosecuted.

us out one night to go out on the Annapolis Road to attack the U.S. troops. Eugee<sup>146</sup> and Elsey<sup>147</sup> prevailed on him to withdraw the order. We stood with arms till 2 A.M. waiting for the repeal of order. A. P. Shutt is my Col & recd the order. Steuart told me he had a very important order which he wants me to execute.

Eugee commanded the troops who were ordered down to fort—53d Reg.

On the same night that Genl Stewart ordered us to attack the junction, a man took me by the arm & dragged me along, and said he had orders to attack the custom house & wanted me to bring my company to break into it to get money. This man is a stout man named Miller. Shutt knows him. . . .

Edgerton said we'll let the troops pass through now but when they come back we will play into them. The officers generally spoke constantly of their expectation that the Virginians would come to aid them. I had orders to give troops lager beer at expense of city. Kane told me this was slow work—if he had been our Major Genl we would have been fighting long ago. I was in regimentals at the time.

*William T. Smith, an oyster dealer who lived at 387 W. Lombard Street and worked at the northeast corner of McHenry Alley and Lemmon Street, testified.*<sup>148</sup>

On 21st Apl a large man named Sharp was going from gun store to gun store leading a crowd. All but one was guarded by police. When he came to the store in Balt. St just above Liberty (King & Huffmans<sup>149</sup>) it was unguarded & Sharp encouraged the crowd to break in; were opposed by some one who threatened to shoot; but afterwards the guns were handed out to the crowd. . . .

*U.S. Marshal John Wesley Watkins testified.*<sup>150</sup>

Know nothing previous to riot. Went to Genl Stuarts office & spoke of the necessity of seeing the govnor—said he had left his card. While talking we heard the noise of the riot. Went down to Fountain Inn.

The govnor ordered out Stuart & he ordered out the Military. I understood afterwards that we were transferred to police authorities & were to receive orders from them. One night I recd an order to go out of town by Genl Stuart—it directed me to get 2 or 3 pieces artillery & 200 or 300 infantry & go to the Relay house to take possession of it & take care of the bridge. I resisted the order. I told the officers

146. Col. Benjamin Huger of the 53rd Maryland Volunteer Infantry. See *Baltimore Sun*, April 22, 1861.

147. Captain Arnold Elzey (1816–1871) resigned his commission in the U.S. army on April 25, 1861 and went to Richmond. Initially he was colonel of the First Maryland Infantry (C.S.A.), but he eventually rose to the rank of major general in the Confederate army.

148. Smith testified on September 30, 1861.

149. King and Huppmann, “importers and dealers in hardware, cutlery, guns, &c.,” was located at 307 W. Baltimore Street.

150. Watkins testified on October 2, 1861. Watkins served as U.S. Marshal in Baltimore from 1853 to 1861.

it was improper. I was ordered to fire upon any body of men who might come. On Sunday there was a good deal of talk about taking the fort; told the commissioners about it & said if they did not protect the fort I would. Genl Stuard informed me we had been transfered to Police Com'rs (next morning). When I remonstrated with Stuart told him among other things that the force was insufficient. The special point with Stuart was to attack U.S. troops which were then expected. He was very angry with me and scolded me for not obeying his orders. Had not been applied to by Collector to protect public property. Heard the Custom house would be attacked & put detachment to guard it.

*Greenberry J. Galloway, an "old police" officer who lived at 225 E. Lombard Street, testified:*<sup>151</sup>

On Thursday morning 16th May saw 2 furniture wagons loaded with boxes containing arms as I believe, under charge of Capt. Kenney, came down & were loaded on a schooner at Corners Wharf. K. told me it was all right I should say nothing. Capt'n refused to allow me to go aboard. Kenney told us one night if we had any arms to secrete them from the sons of bitches, meaning the Fed. Authorities. I spoke of the removal of the arms & the next Monday was removed to another beat. Heard that Sargent Perry broke open the boxes at Canton. Kenney appeared to superintend everything that was going on against the Govt. Heard K say that no man who voted for Leary<sup>152</sup> could stay on the police. Wm. Gough<sup>153</sup> expressed himself that the authorities had no right to pull down the Am flag—he was discharged in consequence. Union men on the force who ventured to express opinions were reported, while others cursed the Govt. with impunity for hours together. On 19th we were not sent to the Depot till about 25 minutes after it was known that a riot was about to occur. On Saturday after 19th it was an understood thing that an attack was to be made on the U.S. ship Alleghany & I was detailed to watch if any boats left either shore for the ship. . . . The week following police officers were detailed to row about the harbor—dont know for what purpose. Was p[ai]d up till the force was superseded. On 29 July Kenny came & demanded my pistol & told me I was superseded. He told me I was superseded for violating the rules by going to work—did not receive pay afterwards although the others did. Capt Stockton<sup>154</sup> ordered the volunteers in station house to have refreshments, but Kenney said he would see the Sons of bitches starve before he would give anything. Kenney did & said everything he could to oppose the Govt.

151. Galloway testified on September 28, 1861. He had joined the police force in May 1860.

152. Cornelius Lawrence Ludlow Leary (1813–1893), of Baltimore, a former Whig, then Know-Nothing, was elected to Congress as a Unionist in 1861.

153. William R. Gough had joined the police force in May 1860. See *Baltimore Sun*, May 7, 1860.

154. Captain Aaron W. Stockton of the Eastern District joined the police in May 1860. *Ibid.*



"Our Women and the War," appeared in Harper's Weekly, September 6, 1862. It depicts an array of women's Civil War roles, from sewing and laundering to nurturing sick and wounded soldiers. (National Library of Medicine.)

# Recollections of a Civil War Nurse: The Diary of Amanda Akin

KEVIN KONRAD, MANON PARRY, and DIANE WENDT

*My Dear Sisters: You are no doubt anxiously looking for a “sign of life” from me, but I can tell you initiation into hospital life of such a novice is not lightly to be spoken of, and until my ideas ceased floundering and I could recognize my old self again, I could not trust myself with a pen.*

—Amanda Akin, April 28, 1863

**T**hus begins the memoir of Amanda Akin (later Stearns), a young woman from a well-established family in Quaker Hill, New York, who served as a nurse in Armory Square Hospital in Washington, D.C., from April 1863 to July 1864. Despite her initial hesitancy, she often “trusted” herself with a pen, recording her nursing experience in long letters home and in her private journals, which she maintained through much of her stay.<sup>1</sup>

Akin was like many others who, during the war, recorded their experiences in private diaries and letters, and in published sketches, poetry, and news accounts that appeared during the war and in the years that followed. According to historian Jane Schultz, nearly 350 women left accounts of their war work, including forty-three who later sought to publish monographs based on their writings.<sup>2</sup> Akin was among those who published, although not until 1909, only sixteen months before her death. Her memoir, *The Lady Nurse of Ward E*, combined letters she had written home with entries from her diaries, interleaved with a few other pieces such as a poem she wrote and a newspaper sketch by Walt Whitman.<sup>3</sup>

Akin’s account is the centerpiece of a collaborative exhibition to be held at the National Museum of American History in 2011, which draws on the collections of the National Library of Medicine, located on the campus of the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda. Her recollections provide a glimpse into one woman’s role during wartime and insights into the shared experience of the many women who served as nurses. The Civil War remains a popular topic of study among scholars and the general public alike, and the 150th anniversary of the conflict, beginning in 2011, will no doubt intensify this interest. Yet of the more than 50,000 published histories of the period, those that explore the medicine of the era tend to focus narrowly on the brutality and heroism of battlefield surgery. The National Library of Medicine

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is developing a series of exhibitions that go beyond these common topics to explore some lesser-known histories, from the work of African American medical workers to the experiences of disabled veterans.

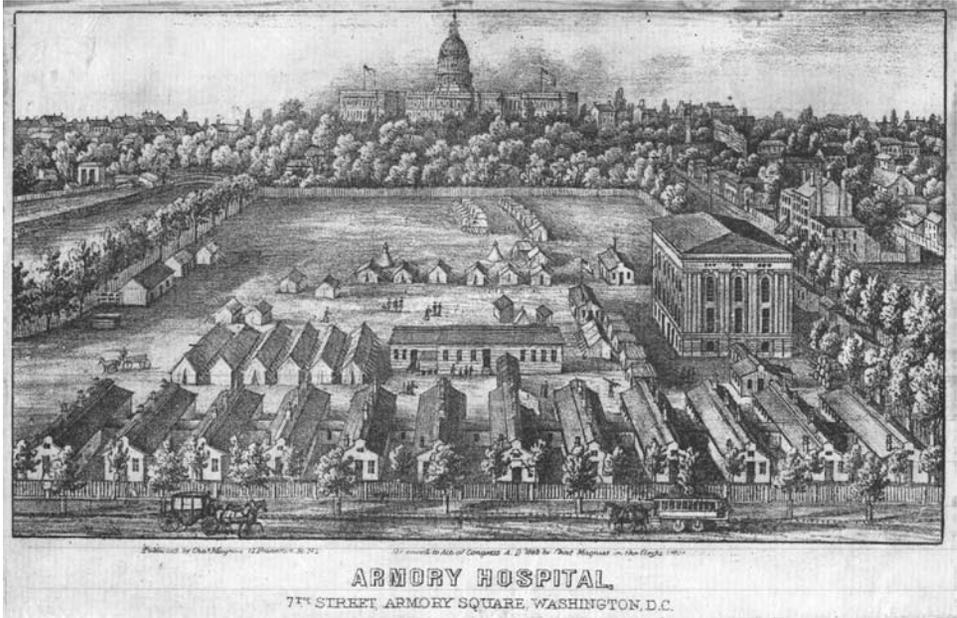
### Armory Square Hospital and Washington, D.C.

*Perhaps it is not known to many that the Armory Square Hospital was constructed through the desire of President Lincoln to have one as complete and comfortable as could be devised, near the steamboat landing.<sup>4</sup>*

The greatest concentration of hospitals during the Civil War was in and around Washington, D.C. At the beginning of the conflict, medical facilities were completely inadequate for the number of casualties, and the military used federal buildings as well as churches, homes, and hotels to care for the wounded. Once the government began constructing hospitals, buildings were designed to facilitate patient care and military efficiency, a vast improvement over the improvised structures that out of necessity also continued to be used throughout the war.

In August 1862, Armory Square Hospital was completed under the supervision of Surgeon Doctor Willard Bliss on land bordering 7th and B Streets, SW (now Independence Avenue), adjacent to the grounds of the Smithsonian Institution and just a few blocks west of the Capitol, where the National Air and Space Museum now stands. Located in the heart of federal Washington, under the watchful eye of the president and Congress, Armory Square gained a reputation early on as one of the best-run hospitals in the area.<sup>5</sup> Here Lincoln visited, Walt Whitman comforted the wounded, Mathew Brady took photographs, and Professor Joseph Henry of the Smithsonian came to tea. But the hospital's character was more deeply affected by its proximity to the landings at the foot of 6th and 7th streets, where the wounded from Virginia's battlefields arrived by steamboat. From these wharves the soldiers, who had often already spent several excruciating weeks *en route*, were then distributed to the Washington hospitals. The most severely wounded arrived at the nearest: Armory Square about ten blocks north. "I devote myself much to Armory Square Hospital," Walt Whitman wrote to his mother on June 30, 1863, "because it contains by far the worst cases, most repulsive wounds, has the most suffering & most need of consolation – I go every day without fail."<sup>6</sup>

The hospital was constructed in the pavilion style with long, wooden, single-story wards arranged in a row fronting 7th street. The design could be quickly constructed and easily enlarged, allowed for light and air, and facilitated the containment of infectious disease. At the time Amanda Akin arrived at Armory Square, there were ten such wards, A through K (there was no J), each with its "lady nurse." She was assigned to Ward E. The wards were about 150 feet long by 25 feet wide and could accommodate fifty beds, though the numbers changed as need demanded. In addition



*Armory Square Hospital (foreground) on the National Mall, with the Capitol in the background. The hospital's wards fronted on 7th Street, the city's main north-south thoroughfare. (National Library of Medicine.)*

to the lady nurse, a surgeon and several attendants were assigned to each ward. The attendants, usually six in number, were convalescent soldiers whose duties ranged from ward master, to nursing, to cleaning and fetching water for the ward. "It is like the solar system," Akin wrote, "Every ward revolves on its own axis, with its own surgeon, nurse (feminine), No. 6, or orderly for both, ward master, cadet surgeon to dress wounds, three attendants and two night-watchers – all together revolving around Dr. Bliss, the surgeon in charge."<sup>7</sup>

The environs of Washington provided the backdrop to Akin's nursing experience and she participated in events unique to the nation's capital, including receptions at the White House, political speeches at the Capitol, and lectures at the Smithsonian. She frequented Washington's Central Market, witnessed the completion of the Capitol Dome, walked for respite on the landscaped grounds of the Smithsonian, and sat in anxious suspense with fellow nurses in July 1864 as Confederate General Jubal A. Early advanced on the city.

### Civil War Nurses

Following a dedication to her fellow nurses at Armory Square Hospital and a brief preface, Akin began *The Lady Nurse of Ward E* with a letter written home to her sisters on April 28, 1863. It is the first of five "long rambling journal letters" that comprise the first part of her memoir. After a break in the narrative while she spent September

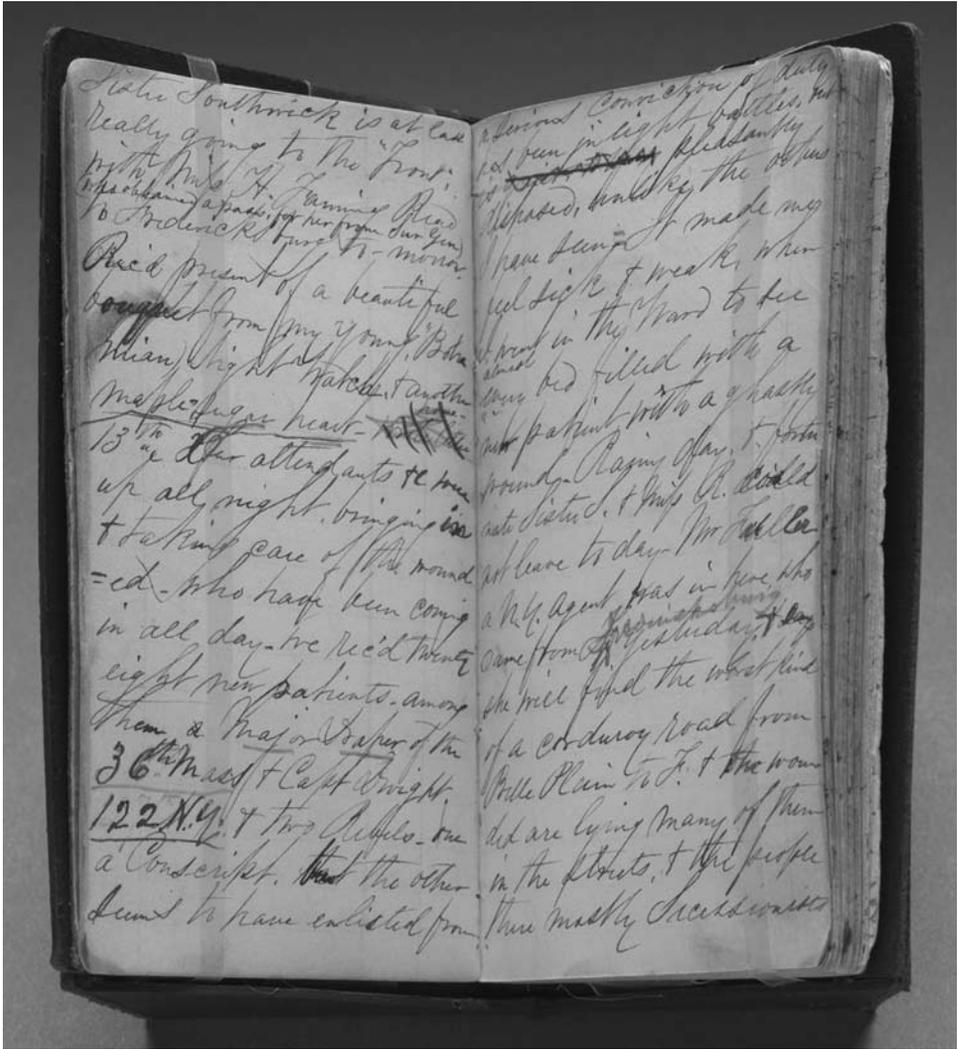


*Amanda Akin Stearns served as the “lady nurse” of Ward E at Armory Square Hospital from April 1863 to July 1864. (U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.)*

and October back home on furlough, her account continued on November 4, 1864, as a transcript of much briefer diary entries. The diary entries end on July 20, 1864: “The day has at last arrived to bid adieu to my ward and its absorbing duties, now realizing, reluctantly, how my life has been rounded within it.”<sup>8</sup>

In the book’s opening letter, Akin portrayed herself as a “novice,” alluding to the difficulty of adapting to her duties in the hospital. Since the professionalization of nursing did not occur until after the war, those who served in the hospitals as nurses generally did so without any specialized education. In fact, most Civil War nurses were drawn from the ranks of convalescing soldiers who were not yet strong enough to return to active duty. For female nurses, hospital activities drew on the traditional responsibilities of running a household and caring for a family. As Schultz notes, nursing in the nineteenth century “was a manifestation of female identity and a domestic responsibility; every woman was a nurse.”<sup>9</sup>

Union officials created basic hiring standards within the first month of fighting to organize a corps of women workers in response to the wartime emergency. In May 1861, acting Surgeon Gen. R. C. Wood placed Dorothea Dix in charge of employing female nurses for the Union army. Dix, a well-known social reformer who worked to improve conditions in prisons and asylums, made it her priority to enforce a strict selection process designed to dismiss any questionable applicants. As hospitals would be full of young men with only a few female attendants to care for them, many were fearful of inevitable hospital romances; Dix therefore rejected



Amanda Akin's journal, spanning the last few months of her service, from May 6, 1864, until mid-July 1864. Recollections from this account, now housed at the National Library of Medicine, are included in her published work, *The Lady Nurse of Ward E* (1909). (National Library of Medicine.)

many able applicants based on her stringent requirements. She insisted, for example, that women be between thirty-five and fifty years old, that they be “of strong health” and “dress plain . . . without ornaments of any sort,” and that they submit two reference letters confirming their “morality, integrity, seriousness, and capacity for the care of the sick.” Women who were highly educated or had relevant experience were given preference. The order declaring responsibilities and qualifications also asserted that nurses would be expected to maintain “neatness, order, sobriety, and industry” in their daily activities.<sup>10</sup>

Surgeons, unaccustomed to and uncomfortable working with women, often

CIRCULAR, }  
No. 8. }

WASHINGTON, D. C.

July 14, 1862.

No candidate for service in the Women's Department for nursing in the military hospitals of the United States, will be received below the age of thirty-five years, (35) nor above fifty.

Only women of strong health, not subjects of chronic disease, nor liable to sudden illnesses, need apply. The duties of the station make large and continued demands on strength.

Matronly persons of experience, good conduct, or superior education and serious disposition, will always have preference; habits of neatness, order, sobriety, and industry, are prerequisites.

All applicants must present certificates of qualification and good character from at least two persons of trust, testifying to morality, integrity, seriousness, and capacity for the care of the sick.

Obedience to rules of the service, and conformity to special regulations, will be required and enforced.

Compensation, as regulated by act of Congress, forty cents a day and subsistence. Transportation furnished to and from the place of service.

Amount of luggage limited within a small compass. Dress plain—colors, brown, grey, or black, and, while connected with the service, without ornaments of any sort.

No applicants accepted for less than <sup>six</sup> ~~three~~ months' service; those for longer periods always have preference.

*When  
over  
Military  
Routes.*

D. L. DIX,

APPROVED :

WILLIAM A. HAMMOND,

*Surgeon General.*

*Dorothea Dix established strict guidelines for hiring female nurses, outlined here in her July 14, 1862 order approved by William A. Hammond, the surgeon general. (National Archives.)*

found Dix's approach confrontational and objected to using her appointees. In the end she selected only about 6 percent of the over six thousand women nurses listed in the Union's official service records.<sup>11</sup> This number included not only those listed officially as nurses, but also matrons, cooks, laundresses, and other more ambiguous titles, all of which could encompass nursing duties. These latter positions were more often filled by working-class white women, free blacks, and "contraband"—fugitive slaves from the South. Armory Square Hospital employed the largest contingent of female workers of any Washington area hospital: 297 women were listed in the official records, of whom thirty-eight were black.<sup>12</sup>

Race and class significantly influenced many aspects of hospital life for the women who chose to serve. African American and working-class white women were more often assigned to perform menial and custodial work, such as laundry, mend-

*Dorothea Lynde Dix (1802–1887) was appointed Superintendent of Union Army Nurses in May 1861. In the winter of 1866 she received two national flags from Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton in recognition of her wartime work. (National Library of Medicine.)*



ing, and kitchen duties, rather than to provide care to wounded soldiers. In regard to their pay, white Union nurses made approximately twelve dollars a month, while their black counterparts made no more than ten. Even the term “nurse” reflected an obvious hierarchy, for it was more often applied to privileged women than any other group. At Armory Square Hospital, ward nurses such as Akin were officially designated “Lady Nurses,” not only distinguishing them from their male counterparts, but also reflecting their status as elite, well-connected women.<sup>13</sup>

Employing well-connected women incurred another benefit: their families and friends served as a great source of support in the form of money and supplies for the hospital. “The New England ladies here are constantly receiving valuable boxes of good and useful things, which are dispensed liberally,” wrote Akin to her sisters. The Boston friends of fellow nurse Anna Lowell contributed funds so that the hospital could construct a “special diet kitchen” as well as separate living quarters for the ward nurses. Dubbed the “chateau” by the “Lady Nurses,” a contemporary journalist described the quarters as the “snug little box beyond the Chaplain’s house” with “ten little rooms like the state rooms of a steamer” and a “good bathroom too, and a diminutive drawing room” where the nurses socialized and entertained guests.<sup>14</sup>

When Amanda Akin arrived at Armory Square Hospital in April 1863, Surgeon-in-Charge D. W. Bliss was in the process of replacing the paid nurses with an all-“volunteer” contingent. In reality the nurses’ pay was donated to the hospital coffers, where it was used to purchase supplies and food to supplement the soldiers’ rations. Significantly, Bliss’s insistence on volunteer nurses further guaranteed that the women who served would be drawn from the middle and upper classes. These women in



*The Smithsonian Castle, where Akin enjoyed the landscape and lectures by prominent scholars of the time. (National Archives.)*

turn took pride in the fact that they served without pay. Equating economic means with moral superiority, they often presented their motives as nobler than those of paid workers. “Imagine our virtuous disgust and indignation on being called to the general office to receive a month’s pay for our service!” wrote Akin to her sisters when Dr. Bliss’s absence allowed for this transgression. She and the other nurses were only reconciled to this “indignity” when they used the money to buy treats for the soldiers.<sup>15</sup>

According to Akin, Dr. Bliss was appreciative of her work during his frequent inspections for cleanliness, often noting that her ward was “perfect.” He also complimented the nursing staff as a whole, making “a charming little speech” during the hospital’s anniversary party in August 1863, “in which, as a matter of course, he alluded so beautifully to the ladies here.”<sup>16</sup> Numerous other accounts from the period document more acrimonious relationships between male medical staff and female nurses in Civil War hospitals. Indeed, arguments between surgeons and nurses were commonplace, especially when nurses dared to question a diagnosis or decisions regarding patients’ treatment and diet.<sup>17</sup> Such disagreements were perhaps avoided at Armory Square because Bliss managed the appointments of his staff so carefully.

Nurses who cared for Union soldiers were often motivated by a desire to contribute to the war effort. For many women in the middle and upper classes, hospital work was their equivalent to soldiering. Akin was no exception. The job fulfilled an ideal of selfless patriotic duty, while also providing adventure. Such important employment was also an acceptable way for well-to-do women to extend their influence beyond the home and take a more active role in public life. In a letter to her sister, dated April 28, 1863, Akin wrote that she “could not remain at home inactive when there was so much need of service.” Less than a month later, on June 13, 1863, she relayed to her sister feelings of pure exhilaration, stating that her nursing career “is one of constant interest and excitement, like a journey through foreign lands. The scene constantly changes, the principal actors and conveyance alone remaining the same, and the important feature of one day is obliterated by the one equally so of the next.”<sup>18</sup>

Akin’s fellow ward nurses, surgeons, and soldiers are everywhere evident in her written account, but the many other workers of lower rank are conspicuously absent. There is one fleeting glimpse of “a girl from the linen room” who had “taken possession” of the room at the end of Ward E, requiring an order from Dr. Bliss “to get her out again.” Akin had applied for the room for herself. Clearly her status as “Lady Nurse” far outranked the “girl.” At another time she mentioned “Uncle Ben and Aunt Sally” who clean the “chateau,” with “Uncle Ben” keeping the furnace going. She reported making only one visit to the contraband quarters, when she accompanied another nurse who was going to teach them writing. “The poor creatures are so anxious to learn that it makes my heart ache to see them. I found Sister Southwick there with a colored baby on her lap (rather too much for me), and a child on each side reading.” Although professing interest and sympathy, she expressed discomfort or detached curiosity in her few encounters with contrabands, not an unusual reaction for Northerners who had little prior contact with African Americans. Akin also recorded attending a “contraband wedding” in the new surgeons’ barracks behind the wards, a “truly amusing” ceremony with teary bride and giggling bridesmaids, followed by roast turkey and frosted cakes, and dancing, which she could not remain to witness. Such lively interaction with the contraband community, which resided in close proximity, is never again mentioned.<sup>19</sup>

### **Nursing Duties**

In general, most female hospital workers were expected to perform a variety of tasks with limited responsibility. More experienced nurses held greater accountability. Among their more conventional duties, nurses were responsible for maintaining a level of cleanliness in their wards, keeping clothing and bedding in order, dispensing medicines, and preparing and distributing food under the direction of hospital surgeons. Nurses were rarely allowed to perform medical tasks—male physicians argued that women did not have the intellectual or physical capacity to endure such rigors.<sup>20</sup> At Armory Square, the female nurses’ area of greatest responsibility lay in



*Flags, garlands, and other decorations hang from the ceiling above patients' beds. Akin described decorating her ward in a similar manner for holidays and celebrations such as the hospital's first anniversary and Christmas. (U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.)*

dispensing the medicines and diets prescribed daily by the surgeons. They were entrusted with the key to the medicine chest, which held the drugs and stimulants for each ward. Although Akin never defied orders, she did describe several heated encounters when she sought to obtain extra dietary rations for her soldiers, an area where the nurses were allowed extra latitude.<sup>21</sup>

Sometimes, when an exceptionally large number of wounded soldiers entered a hospital after a major battle, nurses were also allowed to work directly with surgeons. Some were only responsible for cleaning wounds or changing bandages, but others had the chance to assist in surgery. Though she never participated in such operations herself, Akin did muster the courage to observe an amputation firsthand in June 1864, in the process receiving moral support from her fellow nurses, Miss Griggs and Miss Israel. She recalled in her journal that she “suddenly came to the determination to witness it,” and “remained until they were tying the arteries, when, finding my limbs losing strength and a sickness and trembling coming over me, I thought it prudent to leave.”<sup>22</sup>

Nurses spent many of their days carrying out non-medical tasks, like writing letters and providing entertainment for their patients. As historian George Washington Adams noted, part of the Union nurse's job was to raise hospital morale. Accordingly, they “led singing in the wards, or played the piano to soothe the men to sleep. They

hung bright window drapes, twisted garlands to hang from the rafters, wrote letters ad infinitum, baked cakes, or smuggled in pickles and pie.”<sup>23</sup> In her diary Akin described picking out a piano, spontaneous hospital-wide concerts, decorating her ward, reading to injured soldiers, sharing food from home and from local markets with her patients, and, of course, writing letters for them. Nurses considered these tasks an important contribution to the care of convalescent soldiers, and they were not necessarily unaware of the ambiguities inherent in their work. As Akin wrote in a letter home: “You will wonder how there can be any gayety or amusement among so much suffering. That is all borne and seen, as unavoidable, and anything that will keep [the soldiers] from despondency, and not add to anyone’s sufferings is welcomed with pleasure. . . . A soldier’s life is one of strange contrasts.”<sup>24</sup>

On most days Akin’s routine began at 6 a.m. with the sounding of reveille and ended at 9 p.m. when the night watch took over. After lunch at noon, the nurses usually had several hours off to rest, take tea or go for walks. The pace at hospitals quickened markedly when an influx of new patients put greater demands on all staff, and as the war dragged on the terrible consequences of combat came to seem almost routine. On June 14, 1863, Akin wrote three separate entries in a letter to her sister, as wounded from Chancellorsville poured into Armory Square Hospital. As she sat down in the evening to write down the name of each arrival and to add to her medicine list, “calmly looking at the poor maimed sufferers carried by, some without limbs, on a ‘stretcher,’” she lamented that she “had forgotten how to feel,” for “it seemed as if I were entirely separated from the world I had left behind.” “Certainly, I am not myself at all,” she concluded. When one of her patients had an epileptic fit months later in front of two onlookers, she recorded similar feelings, stating that “both were extremely interested and I suppose thought me extremely cool, as I am becoming quite automaton-like in my manner.”<sup>25</sup>

Though Akin clearly felt overwhelmed and perhaps hardened by the nature of her work, she nevertheless developed relationships with the men for whom she provided care—her “boys.”<sup>26</sup> During her trips to the market, for instance, Akin regularly went out of her way to purchase treats for her patients to enjoy. She also received a number of small gifts from sick and wounded soldiers during her tenure at Armory Square, no doubt tokens of appreciation for the motherly care she provided. Such gifts included a “fine gold pen and handle in morocco case,” “a heart and cross, carved from ivory,” “a beautiful little bracket with the badges of different army corps carved on it,” “huge cakes of maple sugar,” and “an ornament of spun glass.” Akin also routinely expressed concern for the wellbeing of her patients in her writings, using such words as “poor” and “unfortunate” to describe the sick and dying. In March 1864, she reported in her journal on “the poor little boy ill with the measles,” whom Akin would visit and speak with, only to write that he died a few short days after being introduced. She paid her respect to the young soldier by writing a death notice for him in the in-hospital newspaper, the *Armory Square Hospital Gazette*.<sup>27</sup>

## Publishing Memory

Why Akin waited until 1909 to publish her account of her wartime experience can only be conjectured. Many of the earliest women to seek publication did so out of economic need, a need not shared, for the most part, by the “Lady Nurses” at Armory Square.<sup>28</sup> Perhaps other demands of Akin’s life continually postponed a project earlier envisioned, or perhaps the desire to tell her story never surfaced until she neared the end of her life. Possibly concerns of privacy and modesty held her back. However well-educated and well-read, women like Akin, reared in ante-bellum America, were nurtured for a private, domestic role. As Mary Kelley wrote in her study of nineteenth-century women writers, “A female’s person was to be shielded from public scrutiny. Neither her ego nor her intellect was cultivated for future public vocation.” The women who broke gender barriers by becoming professional writers often wrote under pseudonyms or anonymously. “I did hope my name could never be printed except on my tomb,” confessed one popular woman writer, starkly expressing the conflicted feelings of women navigating the private/public divide.<sup>29</sup>

To have one’s name appear in print, to tell one’s story publicly, was unseemly or vulgar, and flaunted norms of feminine modesty. Akin recorded an incident at Armory Square, for example, when the nurses declined to provide a visiting woman writer with a photograph and “slight sketch” for a book on “Heroic Women of the War.” Later the “important question” of whether to allow Mathew Brady to take a picture of the nurses was debated and, to Akin’s disappointment, turned down, the nurses “fearing they would be made too public.” When a hospital surgeon suggested that the names and rank of the “Lady Nurses” should be included in the hospital’s newspaper (as were the names and rank of all the men working at the hospital) a nurse replied, “No need of it. . . . Our rank is that of Privates.” Another added, “If we are privates let our names remain private.”<sup>30</sup>

At the same time, stories and sketches of women’s war work were immensely popular. By the end of the war’s first year, women’s service in hospitals was reflected favorably in news stories and literature in the North. In September 1862, *Harpers Weekly* devoted an issue to women’s war work. Indeed the entire Civil War was, in the words of historian Alice Fahs, one of “storied abundance,” teeming with the recorded experiences of diverse and ordinary people. The democratic ideal of the country, with notions of nationhood still in their formative stages, fostered the idea that all individual experiences were worthy and should be told.<sup>31</sup>

Akin was an eager writer and clearly harbored some writing ambition, however modest or ultimately thwarted. In an early letter home she confessed, “I feel the want of time for letter writing or scribbling in my journal as much as any sacrifice I am making, and should dearly love to write hospital sketches.”<sup>32</sup> In November 1863, she received a copy of Louisa May Alcott’s *Hospital Sketches* and enjoyed reading it to her soldier patients. The book, a lightly fictionalized account of Alcott’s experience

# Armory Square



# Hospital Gazette.

"Ask nothing of Society but the liberty to do it good."—F. H. HERDSEY.

Vol. 2.

ARMORY SQUARE, WASHINGTON, D. C., APRIL 29, 1865.

NO. 65.

(For the Gazette.)

**Mr. Editor.**—The following lines were written to some friends in St. Albans, Vermont, last February, who sent me a paper containing some original poetry:

Your paper came safely, and what paper lays  
When stowed away snugly in Uncle Sam's bags?  
I found me quite busy and sporting round quick  
Looking after the soldiers, both wounded and sick.  
I work for them daily, without any pay,  
And hope to be able for many a day.  
I love the poor soldiers, and will take their part;  
It rouses the feelings and touches the heart.  
I will help the soldiers when I see their distress,  
I shall go all I can and could not do less.  
I feel for the soldier when I hear his groan,  
And think of his wife and loved ones at home.  
His protector is wounded, away from the fold,  
His wife and dear children may be suffering with cold.  
We should love the soldier, and never should lag,  
He has fought for us all and the glorious old flag.  
We should mourn for those brave ones, and with  
our best breath

**Happy comes on those who have starved them to death.**

**Every leader I caught I would hang on the spot,**  
And leave his wife to cry and his children to rot.  
Every one of those leaders from his land should be banished.

For there are not fit to live with the rest of the world.  
We think of you often when sitting up late,  
As we watch the candle while it burns in the grate,  
And we see the gray ashes as they fall on the hearth,  
And we sure that all we shall all turn to earth.  
When we witness the changes as they pass every day.

We hear some exclaiming "they will soon pass away!"  
Others fill up their places as we know each day.  
Makes a noise in the world, maybe wiser and better,  
Some march on to battle, make a noise in the field,  
And will not be content till the rebel all yield;  
Some are sent on to Congress, they get up and speak.

Are followed by others who at length turn them out,  
They serve the dear people, but very soon learn  
To take misings when going and when they return,  
Three cents every mile, which the people must pay,  
While for love only a mile we can ride any day.

Three thousand dollars they get every year,  
Yet still they complain that they are not paid,  
And nobody is rising up there to rebuke them,  
They must draw more pay, or go without grub.

They must draw more pay, this conscience seems to teach,  
Or else they will soon have to go without bread,  
They are oft very reckless, care not how it looks,  
But vote away thousands of pay themselves to seek.  
When the nation is bleeding and groaning with death.

They think in some way, we shall pay it off yet,  
They are often found absent, and care not a lone,  
When the first thing you know, there's a call  
to the house.

Men are sent out to hunt them and where are they found?  
If the truth should be told the echo and sound  
Would wake up each valley, and hamlet, and hill,  
And rouse up the people and give them a chill.  
Some, perhaps, may be out to get names of 'N',  
Another had started to look for his wife,  
Some may be on the island, or in places much worse.

Where, not for a moment, they would leave a full purse,  
Some will stay out and fidget, and fonder, and stout,  
And care not, as the people don't know they are out,  
And when they are caught, it's found of no use,  
For they often get off with some flimsy excuse,  
Why not work for the people, and have it done soon,  
And when it is finished, returning home pure?  
It is better to more on the old fashioned job,  
Leave the fighting to others, with women and dogs,  
Could they work for themselves and increase their own pay.

The widows and orphans might whistle away,  
Till their breath was exhausted, resources all gone,  
And they left to struggle and pine alone,  
After seeing three terms, if they cannot get more,  
They will then consent to take these much lower.

They love the dear people, whenever they meet,  
Ask and from old members as they pass in the street,  
Like the old maid, while praying for a husband or two.

The old owl was hooting, "good lady who, who?"  
Oh! good Lord, I am willing to take any man,  
Send one right-away, good Lord, if you can."  
They would go to Kansasville, if they had any chance,  
But would rather prefer either England or France;  
They would go to "Dubuque, without any fear,  
If they could only be sure of five thousand a year,  
If they see a small opening, and the wall is not thick.

They are sure to jump through "like a thousand of bricks";  
They would go to Owyhee, drink whiskey and  
And send into "the dispatches they wrote";  
They are willing to work for the things that are  
And send on to N.—the choicest of seed;  
They would go on to Greenland, freeze in the ice,  
There out in the Spring and be back in a trice;  
They have a bad headache, and covet if they can,  
To be quartered forever upon poor Uncle Sam.  
We have heard of those raiders who robbed all  
your backs.

Who came over the river and set up such stands,  
May they soon come to Justice' bar, this is our  
hope;  
With all that endures such an unwise deed,  
It would give me great pleasure to see them all  
Dear friends, this is all I can find time to write,  
May you live on forever! so I bid you good night.  
J. A. K.

**Death of the Rebellion.**

The end has come at last! On the eve to be remembered Sabbath, the 9th of April, 1865, the electric wires thrilled throughout the land with the glorious tidings that the only great rebellion has produced had laid down his arms and surrendered with his entire army. After four years of civil warfare, of blood and tears, and agony, the national cause is nobly vindicated, and in its success, justice, humanity and freedom have gloriously triumphed. Hallelujah, Amen! No voice but the voice of praise to the Giver of all good is adequate to express the emotions which at this hour swell the hearts of all true lovers of liberty, peace, and good will to men on earth. So many causes for joy and thanksgiving now throng upon the mind that it is difficult to give adequate expression to any of them, but a few great thoughts must be uppermost in every mind.

The first of these is that the National unity is triumphantly established. The United States of America are one and indivisible now and forever. Secession, State Sovereignty, the whole hissing brood of Virginia abstractions, are banished forever from the land. Henceforth we have a country whose power and greatness no mortal enemy will dare to assail, while its mind will command the respect and admiration of all foreign nations. From this new birth the nation will enter upon a more glorious career than ever dawned upon the imaginations of its founders.

Again, we may rejoice that the rebellion is ended by the triumph of our arms, rather than by any patched up compromise with rebel leaders, which while it might have caused a temporary cessation of war, could not have ended internal strife, since the leaven of secession would still have been left to work in the national dough. By the surrender and dispersion of the rebel armies the rebellion is not only effectually crushed, but the power of those who created it is forever destroyed. The Southern aristocracy, based on slavery—an element entirely foreign and inimical to the spirit of our free institutions—is utterly broken and can never again be the ruling power in the land. There will no longer be an "irrepressible conflict" between the two sections of the country, with all its resulting trains of evils. The Southern aristocracy, based on slavery, will henceforth assimilate, and the people of the two sections, having tested each other's manhood, and come to better understanding of each other's qualities, will henceforth form one great national family.

We may rejoice too that the valor of the national armies, and especially of the long tried and heroic Army of the Potomac, has at last been so gloriously vindicated. While we would not triumph over a fallen

foe, especially when that foe is a fellow countryman, we may rightfully rejoice that the pernicious delusion of Southern superiority, so long cherished by the Southern mind, is effectually dispelled—in generalship the North has surpassed the South, while in valor it has at least proved it equal. Each section may now respect the courage and fortitude of the other, and from respect will flow esteem and brotherly feeling. It has been frequently remarked that in this war we have had no great decisive battles. That event has been reserved for the crowning triumph of our arms. No victory was ever more completed than that which Grant has won in the great battles just fought in Virginia. His combinations, slowly and thoroughly perfected, have exhibited the highest military genius, while his plans have been executed by Sheridan, Meade, and other commanders, with the greatest intrepidity and dashing valor.—The result is a victory more glorious than even that of Wellington at Waterloo.

And lastly we may especially rejoice that Davis and his traitorous cabinet are left to feel the full weight of the national indignation.—There has, thank God been no recognition of them that can shield them from the just consequences of their wickedness. They are fugitives from justice, and the nation will demand that they shall not be permitted to escape its penalties.

While the great body of the Southern people, many of them deluded by the arts of their leaders, and others reluctantly forced into the rebel service, should be treated with the utmost magnanimity, there can be no clemency extended to the leaders, designing, haughty aristocrats, with no other spark of feeling that should make them objects of our mercy. They have shown the utmost disregard for the lives and well-being of their own people, being intent only on establishing the power of their own caste upon the ruins of a nation's greatness and the freedom of the people. If they are not hanged, or at least driven into ignominious exile, then have we fought this great fight and gained the victory in vain. The cause of American nationality demands that an example should be made of those traitors that shall serve as an effectual warning for all time to come.—*Portland Transcript.*

**A Lock of Hair.**

I stepped into the post-office in the pretty little town of F. this morning, to mail a letter, and found the entrance of the box in which the white-winged messengers of love and haste, business and bunter, are deposited, obstructed by the stalwart form of a man. He stood reading a missive which he had just taken from the little opening among the glass cases, his back to the aperture, his face toward me. I did not ask the great man, six feet high with shoulders to match to stand aside.

A rough old farmer was he. His coat bespattered with hay-seed, told what had brought him to town. It might be that he had seen sixty summers, and his sturdy strength had battled with life's difficulties for five decades since the merry laugh of his boyhood startled the squirrels among the walnut boughs. Those broad, bony, toll-worn, brown hands told their own story of labor, as they clutched the open letter, into which his deep gray eyes, shrinking away under the heavily-lashed brows, were gazing so eagerly.

That lock of hair, that lock of agony, that iron vice that had fallen upon his sense and was crushing him! Was he

turning to stone? Were those livid lips closing over the shut teeth made of steel? What did those stern eyes see through that bit of paper and sideward that lock of hair? More of truth than ever psychical gists read from the same symbols. Away, away from the banks of the James River, near by where the white tents gleam in the summer sun, he sees a shallow grave made ready for a poor boy that was wounded on the Chickahomony. He clutches the paper tighter, and a great stirring emotion like the last desperate wave that dashes the mariner clinging to the wreck into the black storm-sunged sea, sweeps over him.

He sees the column of soldiers bearing the dead to that open grave; he hears the low shrill life, and muffled beat of the drum, the chaplain's hurried prayer, and sees him, ere dust is added to dust, ashes to ashes, stoop to sever from that fair young head that lock of hair to send to the mother who, every night turns her face eastward and sends up a wailing supplication to God to spare the life of her boy, her youngest. He sees the earth receive the form, and hears the tones of the life as it thrills forth "Hail Columbia" while the sorrowful company marches away.

Suddenly he starts, and his gaze is turned, not from the letter, but from the grave and its guest to the home near by where the good mother sits, ever now watching her eyes from the sunlight as she looks to see if the dust of his haystack is not to be seen. How can he meet her with that letter and that lock of hair! How can he tell her that George is dead, that he was shot through the shoulder, that he has lain six weeks in the hospital, that his young breath passed away, telling them, "Ost a lock of say hair for mother and Nellie. Tell mother I am going home where was do not come!"

How can he tell her that! He, the stout-hearted, that cut down the forest forty years ago with strong hands, that chased the wolf to his lair, and tracked the bear that invaded his fold to the depths of the forest with unflinching step! He could walk to the stake without paling one drop of his proud blood! He who almost rebelled at the law, would not let sixty years, with rheumatic limbs, stand in the ranks and march to battle against the traitors to his country! He, who never knew fear, how can he go home and tell her that!

O painter! paint me that strong old man's agony if you can, and it will embody in that one look, that one intense gaze him, that letter and that lock of hair, more of the wickedness of this terrible rebellion, than this feudish war waged by slavery against liberty—waged by barbarism against Christianity—than has been transferred to canvases since the records of time began. Do you wonder I did not ask him to stand aside?

**THE HESSE DOCTOR BOYLE.**—Among the paroled rebels who came to this city on the Washington Hunt yesterday was Dr. Cornelius Boyle, formerly of this city. Several persons approached him at the Provost Marshal's office, and showed much friendship and familiarity toward him. It will be recollected that this man was the ringleader of a band of traitors who left this city at the outbreak of the rebellion to go into the rebel service. Boyle wore a surgeon's cap, a rebel military coat and gray pantaloons, and had his medicine satchel slung to his side.

The Armory Square Hospital Gazette published articles, stories, and poetry written by patients, doctors, and nurses including Amanda Akin. (National Library of Medicine.)

nursing at Georgetown's Union Hospital in 1862–63, provided Akin with a model of a woman's published narrative even as her own experience unfolded.

Akin was proud of her literary ability and enjoyed writing poems for the entertainment of her co-workers, aiding less literate soldiers with their letters, and keeping the ward master's books and reports, because he was incapable, in her opinion, of clear exposition. She found another outlet for her ambition in the small newspaper published by and for the hospital staff and patients. The *Armory Square Hospital Gazette* was established in January 1864 and consisted of a single sheet, printed weekly by two patients and edited by Mrs. H. C. Ingersoll, a nurse at the hospital. Akin submitted several pieces during her time there, including accounts of religious services and concerts, a verse on "Spring," and death notices for some of her patients.<sup>33</sup> Aside from writing for the *Gazette*, she also contributed to *Drum Beat*, a newspaper published during the Brooklyn Sanitary Fair in March 1864. The piece, "Shadow at Christmas," a sentimental account of a dying soldier at Christmas-time, is included in her published memoir.

Not much is known about Amanda Akin's life after the war. She married Dr. Charles W. Stearns in 1879, had no children, and was widowed in 1887. She published an account of the historical homes of Quaker Hill, New York, in 1903 and her memoir of her Civil War nursing experience in 1909. She died in February 1911 and is buried with her husband in Pawling Cemetery, Pawling, New York.

In the end, Akin left out more than she revealed, giving her account a special poignancy as a testament to the limits of personal revelation. Whatever the sources of her limitation—modesty, inhibition, reserve, or a want of skill, time, motivation—she did not produce a memoir destined to be remembered, as were those by Whitman, Alcott, or Mary Chesnut, whose writings are enjoyed and studied to the present day. But as a modest record of one woman's experience in a hospital in Washington it speaks for the unrecorded, the silent voices of so many forgotten others.

## NOTES

1. One of her journals is housed at the National Library of Medicine. The diary covers the period from May 6, 1864, to the end of her nursing service, and is annotated with comments and proposed edits by the author. It was featured in a joint exhibition between the library and the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History (spring 2011).
2. Jane E. Schultz, *Women at the Front: Hospital Workers in Civil War America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 220. Epigram is from Amanda Stearns, *The Lady Nurse of Ward E* (New York: Baker and Taylor Co., 1909), 11.
3. Stearns, *Lady Nurse*, 92, 102. One of the first to publish was Louisa May Alcott, who spent six weeks as a nurse in Georgetown's Union Hospital. Her somewhat fictionalized account, *Hospital Sketches*, appeared in 1863, first in serial form and then as a single volume, and helped launch her literary career. Akin received a copy of Alcott's *Sketches* as a gift while working at Armory Square and read it to her patients, much to their enjoyment.
4. Stearns, *Lady Nurse*, 7.
5. Armory Square was one of the "model" hospitals built in Washington, beginning in 1862. See Martin G. Murray, "Traveling with the Wounded: Walt Whitman and Washington's Civil War Hospitals," *Washington History*, 8 (Fall/Winter, 1996/1997): 65. Hannah Ropes and Louisa May Alcott, nurses at Georgetown's Union Hospital, both commented on the superiority of Armory Square. The hospital's "neatness, comfort, and convenience," wrote Alcott, ". . . arouses all the covetous propensities of such nurses as came from other hospitals to visit it." Alcott, *Hospital Sketches* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004), 97.
6. Letter from Walt Whitman to Louisa Van Velsor Whitman, June 30, 1863, Walt Whitman Archive. Retrieved from <http://www.whitmanarchive.org/biography/correspondence/cw/tei/nyp.00183.html>
7. Stearns, *Lady Nurse*, 15.
8. *Ibid.*, 311.
9. Schultz, *Women at the Front*, 20.
10. Circular No. 8, July 14, 1862, Circular and Circular Letters, USGO, NARA; Schultz, *Women at the Front*, 15–16; Nina Silber, *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 113–14, 198.
11. Schultz, *Women at the Front*, 21. Of the 21,208 women named in the Carded Service Records of Union hospital attendants, 6,284 are listed as nurses, and 371 of these nurses are "Dix" appointees. The total number of women workers and nurses, however, is still much higher, for hundreds of Union women provided volunteer services for free and were consequently kept out of official hospital records.
12. Schultz, *Women at the Front*, 25.
13. Jane E. Schultz, "The Inhospitable Hospital: Gender and Professionalism in Civil War Medicine," *Signs*, 17 (1992): 364–65, 369–70; Schultz, *Women at the Front*, 46–47; Silber, *Daughters of the Union*, 199–201. Convalescent soldiers assigned to perform nursing duties in the hospital were often referred to as "Attendants" or "Ward Attendants."
14. Stearns, *Lady Nurse*, 29, 37; *Northern Monthly*, December 1864, 692–93. Many hospitals in the North established "special diet kitchens" to provide soldiers with individually prescribed diets suited to their medical condition. The idea of the kitchen originated with Annie Wittenmyer, agent for the Iowa State Sanitary Commission. Wittenmyer published *A Collection of Recipes for the Use of Special Diet Kitchens in Military Hospitals* in 1864, and later in life published an account of her Civil War work, *Under the Guns: A Woman's Reminiscence of the*

*Civil War* (Boston: E. B. Stillings and Company, 1895). At Armory Square Hospital, superintending the distribution of the special diet was a primary duty of the “Lady Nurses.”

15. Stearns, *Lady Nurse*, 20–21. According to an account by Jane Grey Swisshelm, prominent journalist and women’s rights advocate who served as a nurse in the Washington area during the war, Dr. Bliss at Armory Hospital and Dr. Baxter at Campbell Hospital refused to use Dix nurses or Catholic Nuns. “Bliss admitted the Dix nurses at first, but excluded them on charges of indelicacy.” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 27, 1881. On June 29, 1864 Amanda Akin recorded that “with the arrival of two more volunteer nurses the last paid ones will be relieved.” Stearns, 43.

16. Stearns, *Lady Nurse*, 52, 76, 143, 222.

17. George Worthington Adams, *Doctors in Blue: The Medical History of the Union Army in the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1952), 163.

18. Stearns, *Lady Nurse*, 22, 31–32.

19. *Ibid.*, 36, 95, 127–28, 140, 165, 201–2.

20. Schultz, “The Inhospitable Hospital,” 366, 370; Silber, *Daughters of the Union*, 197–98.

21. Stearns, *Lady Nurse*, 190, 240–41, 266, 296, 311.

22. *Ibid.*, 287.

23. Adams, *Doctors in Blue*, 163.

24. Stearns, *Lady Nurse*, 52–53.

25. The battle of Chancellorsville, May 1–4, 1863, resulted in about 17,000 Union casualties. Akin first mentioned the wounded from this battle in her letter to her sisters dated May 14, 1863, in which she recounted the arrival of about 250 men at the hospital. Beginning on the evening of June 13 and continuing through the fourteenth, additional wounded arrived. These men, she wrote, “were the most severely wounded from the battle . . . , and they have been lying six weeks at Potomac Creek [Aquia Creek near Fredericksburg, Virginia] and have now been sent here for fear of the Rebels reaching there.” Stearns, *Lady Nurse*, 34, 39, 191.

26. As historian Jane E. Schultz has pointed out, it was not uncommon for female nurses to refer to their patients as their “boys,” who in turn called their nurses “Mother.” This familiar terminology not only desexualized intimate contact between female nurses and male patients, but also helped the women who served in Union hospitals to maintain the strict moral standards with which Dorothea Dix was so concerned. For more on the family metaphor that came to define the nurse-patient bond, see Schultz, *Women at the Front*, 5, 95–98.

27. Stearns, *Lady Nurse*, 172, 205, 206, 209, 212–13, 221, 234, 247.

28. Schultz, *Women at the Front*, 228.

29. Mary Kelley, *Private Woman, Public Stage: Literary Domesticity in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 111, 130.

30. Other instances of women war workers hesitating to tell their stories publicly, can be found in Schultz, *Women at the Front*, 224–26. Many other accounts were collected in commemorative volumes such as Frank Moore’s *Women of the War: Their Heroism and Self-Sacrifice* (1866) and *Woman’s Work in the Civil War: A Record of Heroism, Patriotism and Patience* by L. P. Brockett and Mary C. Vaughan (1867). *Armory Square Hospital Gazette*, Vol. 1, No. 3, January 20, 1864. Stearns, *Lady Nurse*, 200.

31. Alice Fahs, *The Imagined Civil War: Popular Literature of the North and South, 1861–1865* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 140, 311.

32. Stearns, *Lady Nurse*, 32.

33. *Ibid.*, 25, 34, 45, 152, 176, 221, 227, 230–31.

# “The Flowers Are Still Fragrant”: Recreation on the Maryland Civil War Home Front

MEIRAH C. SHEDLO

In the spring of 1861, as young men left to join the Union and Confederate armies, daily life became increasingly arduous for those who remained behind. Many women found themselves facing greater domestic and economic responsibilities, whether managing small farms or plantations in the South or maintaining farms and households in the North. Families also faced shortages in food and material goods, especially in the South. With military installations in Annapolis and Baltimore and, in the first year of the war, the entire state under martial law, shortages appeared in Maryland as well.<sup>1</sup> “Lizzie Harrison gave me an interesting account of their privations,” twenty-year-old Rebecca Davis wrote in October 1863. “For months no light to burn, not . . . able to procure a drop of oil or point of tallow.” But Lizzie also remarked that not even “that old fashioned or makeshift attire of the ladies,” could dampen their spirits. “They gloried in it, being all done for Dixie; and part of the time, indeed are now, cut off from Richmond and being rebels, allowed nothing from Washington, really prisoners.”<sup>2</sup>

But even with shortages, the emotional toll on family and friends afraid for their loved ones at war was far worse. Readership of local newspapers surged as Marylanders scoured them for news of husbands, sons, fiancés, and friends. News was not immediately available. It might take days for reports of the battles to reach the public, and the impact of war news on daily life could be jarring. For example, unbeknownst to Baltimoreans, on the very day in September 1862 that men fell in appalling numbers along the banks of Antietam Creek, they were enjoying the drama *Rose Triquet* at Ford’s Theatre starring the acclaimed Maggie Mitchell.<sup>3</sup>

Marylanders tried to make the best of their situation. Former mayor George William Brown, who had fallen from grace after attempting to keep peace during the notorious Pratt Street Riot, wrote from his prison cell in Boston Harbor’s Fort Warren, that “the flowers are still fragrant.”<sup>4</sup> Through the worst hardship, pleasures and simple joys somehow prevailed. Marylanders enjoyed amusements they had delighted in before the war began.

One popular diversion in Maryland was the theatre. Although stage-acting was

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Undated photograph of the Holliday Street Theatre. (Maryland Historical Society.)

not immediately acceptable in the eighteenth century, Maryland was among the first colonies to popularize it. By the 1850s, Marylanders were attending performances at numerous venues, including the Holliday Street and Charles Street Theatres. The “amusements” section of the March 1855 edition of the *Baltimore Sun* advertised a selection of upcoming shows, including “J. H. Hewitt’s new comedy of *The Govern-ess* [to be] repeated at the Holliday Street Theatre to-night, with the same excellent cast as before, consisting of all of the most talented members of the company.”<sup>5</sup> The main performance was often followed by a farce or other form of comedy.

During the war, dramas and comedic conclusions played before sold-out crowds, providing escape into light hilarity, if only for the evening. The play took on a special significance during the Civil War. As American cultural historian Maxwell Bloomfield notes, “Indeed the ordinary playgoer of the Civil War era could respond wholeheartedly to almost any production, because the theater meant more to him than it does to his twentieth-century counterpart. For him all the world *was* a stage, in a very literal sense; he tended to view life itself as a romantic spectacle.”<sup>6</sup>

The Holliday Street Theatre was a popular Baltimore venue. Opened in 1794, it hosted the first performance of “*The Star-Spangled Banner*” in 1814. According to Elizabeth Schaaf, “The theater hosted a wide range of presentations, from grand opera and Shakespeare plays to popular entertainments where boisterous audiences would call out for favorite tunes like ‘Yankee Doodle’ and ‘Mad Bess.’”<sup>7</sup> Even as the fighting raged elsewhere, Marylanders, if unknowing, delighted in spending their evenings at this hall.

On April 12, 1861, the day Confederate cannon began the bombardment of Fort Sumter, the Holliday put on a performance of *William Tell* and concluded with the “laughable farce” *Hit Him, he has no Friends*, by N. H. Harrington. On February 6, 1862, the day of a major Union victory at Fort Henry in Tennessee, *The Rag-Picker of Paris* and *The Siamese Twins* played at the Holliday, with a dance performance between shows. In the days following the devastating Battle of Antietam on September 17, 1862, Shakespearean plays went on at the theatre, albeit the tragedies *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. “The house was radiant last night with an audience crowding every part,” the *Sun* reported. Asa Trenchard’s performance was much enjoyed: “Mr. Clarke was received well last night with an exceeding complimentary demonstration, showing the very firm and cordial esteem in which he is held by the popular heart.”<sup>8</sup>

Additionally, on June 29, 1863, as skirmishing broke out in nearby Westminster, the admired sister-actress duo Ada and Emma Webb performed in a new comic drama, *The Governor’s Wife*. “The most hearty applause is lavished upon them,” the *Sun* enthused prior to the show, “and the tax upon their genius is sometimes rather trying in persistent encores.” Other types of performances came to the Holliday as well, comedy routines and a burlesque based on *The Colleen Bawn*, a show popular in Britain at the time.<sup>9</sup>

Ford’s Theatre in Washington was also lively. Maggie Mitchell, the comedienne



Nationally renowned actress Maggie Mitchell (1832–1918) performed at Baltimore's theatres during the war. (Library of Congress.)

and actress who had gained a wide following, gave a series of performances at Ford's that included her signature role in *Fanchon the Cricket*. On October 8, 1862, as Union forces prevailed at Perryville, the *Sun* noted that "Miss Mitchell resumes her inimitable personation of *Fanchon the Cricket* this evening, and the opportunity to enjoy this charming play will of course be responded to by a full house as usual." Miss Mitchell performed *The Pearl of Savoy* before an eager audience at Holliday Street.<sup>10</sup>

At the Maryland Institute on November 19, 1863, the day President Lincoln disappointed a great throng at Gettysburg with the brevity of his address, a minstrel troop offered a blend of choral, instrumental, and humorous entertainment. In addition, the Institute featured parodies satirizing society and music, which the artists entitled "photographiana." The *Sun* recounted that "Mr. and Mrs. Watkins delighted a large audience at the Institute last evening. . . . The versatility of talent and variety of character are received with hearty applause." At the Front Street Theatre, on May 6, 1864, the popular Miss Western commenced her routine: "The regular weekly benefit of this popular artiste occurs this evening, when she will reproduce Leah, the Jewish Maiden, for the last time, with her spirited and emotional interpretation of the heroine."<sup>11</sup>

Literacy, regarded as necessary to develop the mind, was widespread, and people eagerly read newspapers and magazines, religious tracts, and escapist literature. In



*The Maryland Institute hosted events and fairs such as this one. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

addition to covering news of the war and current affairs, the *Baltimore Sun* announced a new weekly family journal:

Just as a wise, prudent, and provident man at the head of a respectable household takes care to supply nutritious and wholesome food for his family, so does it become him to secure a good and approved medium of current intelligence, and instructive and entertaining reading for the self-same household. Indeed, without such a healthful and profitable agency, men, women, and children are destitute of one of the most essential auxiliaries of human progress, and must languish for the want of the very elements of social life.<sup>12</sup>

Newspapers were a source of jokes, anecdotes, and uplifting stories to raise readers' morale. For example, in July 1863 as Marylanders anxiously awaited news of the armies at Gettysburg, the *Sun* ran one story that demonstrated the loving relationship between a father and his daughter, and another describing a friendly relationship between two young children.<sup>13</sup> These attempts to lighten the mood came at a time when readers were becoming increasingly apprehensive.

During the July 1864 battle for Fort Stevens outside Washington, another anecdote described a teacher's reaction to his pupil's habit of imitating a steam engine: "Come up here, William: if you have turned into a locomotive, it is high time you were switched off." There were riddles, too. On April 12, 1861, as cannon boomed

across Charleston Harbor, the *Sun* asked: "Why is one of our gold coins like the leg of a spring chicken? Its a leg-al tender." and "Why is it impossible for men born blind to be carpenters? They never saw."<sup>14</sup>

Articles of general interest were intended to divert the reader. The *Sun* of July 12, 1864, included "Origin of [Political] Party Names" reprinted from the *New York Post*, and "How Many Marry for Love," a lesson on the pitfalls of marrying for beauty alone. During the Battle of Stones River or Murfreesboro, in the winter of 1862–63, the *Sun* reported the discovery of two new comets by the Observatory of Leipsic.<sup>15</sup>

The most significant book read on the home front and in army camps was the Bible, since religious duty shaped the ideological motivation for great numbers of men on both sides of the conflict. On April 22, 1861, shortly after the Pratt Street Riot, the *Sun*, perhaps caught up in the wave of secession fever that swept the city, announced that "The South can fight their battles with the confidence that they have right and justice on their side, and, through Providence, can safely rely upon success." The paper was confident that the Confederacy would emerge victorious in its crusade for states' rights. That September, Union general George B. McClellan issued his General Orders No. 7 at the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac in Washington, stipulating that unless in the case of "extreme military necessity" no unnecessary movements should be made on the Sabbath to allow the soldiers as much rest as possible. In his view, "We are fighting in a holy cause, and should endeavor to deserve the benign favor of the Creator." In his memoirs, Confederate soldier Augustus James Albert certainly agreed. "It must have been a holy cause when the mothers of our Southern States could so far control themselves as to offer it to their husbands, and their sons, as my mother did, who said to me, 'Yes my dear son, it is time for you to go.'" And just days after the battle at Gettysburg, the *Sun* reported the donation of twenty thousand Bibles to the Confederate army, with special permission from the United States Treasury to allow them to be passed across the lines.<sup>16</sup>

Religion was especially important for the soldiers and their relatives at home as they struggled to make sense of the carnage, unprecedented in their experience, that characterized Civil War battlefields. Belief in an afterlife was a comfort to soldiers confronting their own mortality, as well as to anguished relatives grieving for lost or endangered loved ones. The soldier's belief in the nobility of his self-sacrifice in the service of God and his country sustained him through the horrors of battle, giving his fight an almost transcendent purpose. His focus on the meaning of his own death also served to distract the soldier from his responsibility to take other lives in the course of duty. As the death toll mounted, the troops on either side were often brought together with those of differing religious denominations to face the common crisis. Protestants, Catholics, and Jews alike believed in an afterlife, and the humanity of their shared experiences united the troops on both sides of the conflict. In her 1863 diary of life on the home front, Rebecca Davis wrote: "Went in the morning to St. John's, Mr. Brown officiated & administered the Holy Communion. Oh! May

we not lightly esteem these solemn & blessed privileges & ever strive faithfully to fight under Christ's banner!" It is evident that religious beliefs were an inspiration and comfort to the family at home as well as to the troops. Davis added, "Though our chastisement is great, our country bleeding at every pore, we can recount many mercies both temporal & spiritual and find cause to praise the 'Source whence all our blessings flow.'"<sup>17</sup> Through religion, she acknowledged the blessings still prevalent amidst the suffering.

Literature often afforded women an escape from their dismal reality, comforting them and encouraging them to confront the challenges at hand. During the nineteenth century the novel grew in appeal among middle- and upper-class women, particularly as a means of escapism. Women formed reading groups and read aloud, creating their own form of theatre-like entertainment. The resulting companionship was invaluable to countless women yearning for distant loved ones. Vocalized reading also permitted women to take care of their domestic duties, such as sewing and knitting, as they listened, allowing for a consonance between pleasure and productivity.<sup>18</sup>

Marylanders read such books as *Marcaria, or Altars of Sacrifice*, a compelling novel by beloved fiction author Augusta Jane Evans about the experiences and sacrifices of women in the war. It was especially popular in the South, where Evans dedicated her work to the Confederate heroism. Historian Alice Fahs notes that women especially appreciated "wide-ranging popular wartime literature that explored white women's domestic wartime experiences, imagining them as a source of self-knowledge, an education in patriotism, an initiation into the values of work, the occasion for romance, and, increasingly, the cause of unbearable anguish." There was a substantial readership for such fiction, as literature portraying women's domestic participation in the war effort became ever more popular. *Fourteen Months in American Bastiles* by Francis Key Howard was also widely read. Howard was arrested early in the war for his pro-Confederate views as editor of the *Baltimore Daily Exchange*, and he recounted his experiences as a political prisoner held by the Union authorities that solidified his opposition to the "unlawful and oppressive acts of Mr. Lincoln." Marylander Rebecca Davis related in her diary that she had enjoyed Howard's book.<sup>19</sup>

Many women enjoyed writing as well as reading. According to Drew Gilpin Faust the war turned thousands of women into "writers of letters and composers of journals recording the momentous and historic events as well as creators of published songs, poetry, and novels." Women enjoyed expressing their creativity, and often used their imaginations to craft blissful scenarios recalling happier days. Diaries not only recorded everyday events but also facilitated their authors in expressing feelings and thoughts. Many women, whose loved ones were not there to comfort them, vented their frustration and despair in their writings. Women produced their own literature to better cope with their new reality.<sup>20</sup>

Corresponding with their men away at war was another way for women to deepen self-awareness of their own feelings in writing, and receiving letters in return was a great pleasure. Robert Goodloe Harper Carroll, a Confederate soldier serving in Virginia, wrote often to his wife Ella in Baltimore professing his love. "Little darling I spend many sad moments away from you, not knowing what it is that makes me unhappy till your face appears then heartfelt wishes for this interminable war to end." Ella would die of tuberculosis in 1865. The disease was rampant in the South, and there were few doctors to tend to civilians. Robert Carroll returned to her in November 1864 in time to see his wife again before her death.<sup>21</sup>

Another great comfort and source of entertainment around campfires and on the home front was music. Since the American Revolution music had come to be considered a vital aspect of middle- and upper-class education. Rebecca Davis reflected in her diary that, "music is my greatest solace." She enjoyed playing music herself and dancing with her friends and family. "In the evening, thought we would 'trip the light fantastic,' Mamie & I alternately acting as musicians. Began with a polka; but Wat not approving of proceeding in such a business-like way, we ended in a general romp, making quiet old 'Greenwood' resound to our merry peals of laughter." Dancing permitted Davis to distract herself from her concern for her brother William Wilkins Davis, as he traveled to the Midwest to make a treaty with Native American tribes. Eventually he would reside in Minnesota, unable to return home as the climate in Maryland was bad for his lungs. In her diary, Davis also related her frustration with her cousin John Glenn's imprisonment for disloyalty—he had refused to take the oath of allegiance and had thereby forgone all rights as a Maryland citizen.<sup>22</sup>

Davis described playing the melodeon in church, and the pleasure the congregants derived from the sounds of "praise and thanksgiving." Music was an integral part of Marylanders' spiritual lives as much as it was for their everyday enjoyment. The piano was one of the more popular instruments. In her 1862 diary, Margaret Smith Preston, a resident of "Pleasant Plains" in Baltimore County, recounted her daughter's music practice: "May plays a great deal on her piano and seems to improve very much."

Farther South, Esther Lowe, wife of former Maryland governor Enoch Louis Lowe, who had gone with him to Richmond when fellow secessionists were imprisoned, recalled her daughter's music lessons: "to my surprise—it was all meant to give me such—Anna played upon the harp. I had no idea that she had taken lessons, so my wonderment and pleasure may be imagined."<sup>23</sup>

Mayor Brown wrote of his fellow prisoners playing music to pass the time at Fort Warren. "While I write the band (some of whom were captured at Sumter) are playing very charmingly before the Colonel's quarters, next door to ours, so we get the benefit of the music." When Harry Gilmor and his Confederate raiders trooped through Rebecca Davis's town, she and a friend entertained them. "Some of the of-

ficers begged us to give them some music and at Mr. Wilson's request Mary and I sang 'Annie of the Vale.' Almost forgot to be embarrassed, they were so free and easy, yet the idea of tuning up our faint pipes for Major Gilmor strikes me now laughable in the extreme." And, celebrated Confederate general J. E. B. Stuart arranged a jovial soiree with musical entertainment to celebrate his arrival in Maryland. On September 9, 1862, he prepared a party at the Landon House in Urbana that he called the "Sabers and Roses Ball." Although the party was briefly interrupted by a skirmish with Union cavalry, the soldiers returned afterward and renewed the festivities.<sup>24</sup>

Rebecca Davis described music as background for social gatherings: "With music, fruit for refreshment & social chat the time passed so pleasantly, we were quite amazed to hear the clock striking twelve & hurried off to rest wondering what Papa & Mama would say to such fashionable hours for country folks."<sup>25</sup>

Social visits, or "calling," upheld a lady's position in society. Visitors left a calling card upon departing to maintain a circle of acquaintances; it was even customary for a wife to leave her husband's card in his absence. Teacher Anna Maria Tilghman wrote in her 1859 diary: "Saturday afternoon I took a walk with Emily & I was introduced to a number of their lady friends at their gate. . . . After taking a walk we all stopped at E's Aunt, John and I went up again after tea." Margaret Smith Preston described a similar day in her diary: "May and I went down Mrs. Stausbury's and now Mrs. Stausbury and I walked over to Eudveia's, took tea, and went back again, Mr. Potee going with us, we remained till nine o' clock and then came home." Esther Lowe reminisced:

I call to mind one occasion when Adelaide gave a party—for although war was at its height Southern people continued to 'eat, drink, and be merry,' notwithstanding tomorrow we may die. Our cottage was small and without considering its limitation—the spirit of hospitality overruling discretion and good judgment—so numerous were the guests that some of them were obliged to sit on the stairs, on the porch, and fortunately as the weather was hot, managed to find comfortable seats under the trees in the garden; however, it was wartimes and all unheard of experiments were excusable.<sup>26</sup>

Lowe also recalled that friends made the difficult winter the family spent as refugees in the South significantly more bearable: "Fortunately we had kind friends there and but for that our sojourn would have been dismal in the extreme. A cord of sympathy bound us all together. We suffered the same terrors of suspense and bodily privations."<sup>27</sup> Friends were critical in supporting one another in times of hardship and fear.

Outdoor activities were enjoyable pastimes. Rebecca Davis described a pleasurable afternoon: "This evening Aunt Lou, Sisters, Mina & I repaired to a nook in our meadow and arrayed in slight [bathing] dress had rare fun splashing & plunging in the river. I only regret not having tried it before."<sup>28</sup> In a letter home, Mayor George

Brown described the afternoon ball games prisoners and civilians took part in at Fort Warren:

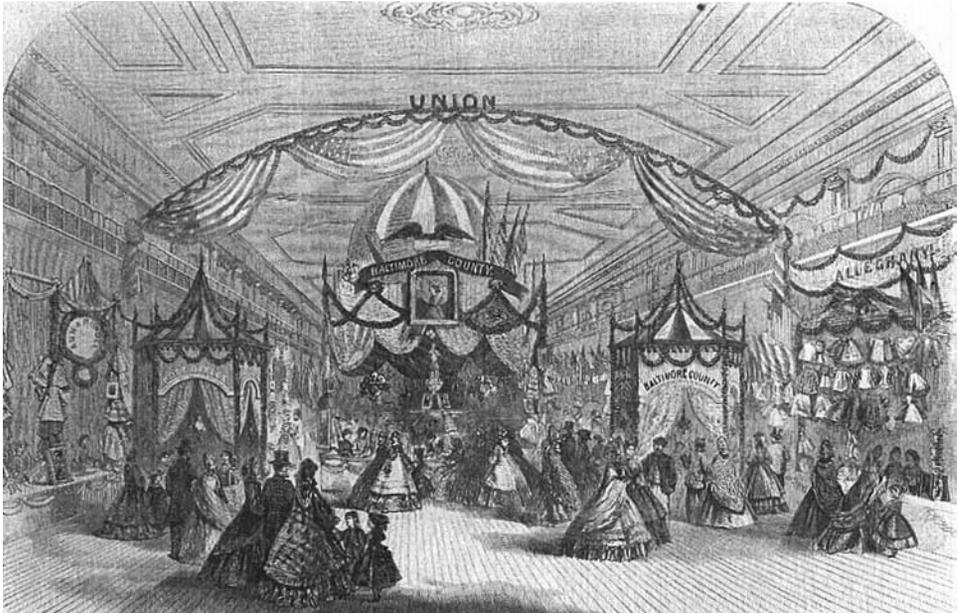
You would laugh if you could see the game of football which comes off nearly every afternoon. Old and young, tall & short, soldiers and civilians join in the melee and tumble each other & themselves about on the grass in the most unceremonious manner. I have not yet ventured to take part but it is only because the exercise is rather too violent.<sup>29</sup>

Soldiers passed the time playing sports such as baseball. Private Alpheris B. Parker of the 10th Massachusetts remarked, "The parade ground has been a busy place for a week or so past, ball-playing having become a mania in camp. Officers and men forget, for a time, the differences in rank and indulge in the invigorating sport with a school boy's ardor." Officers of both armies encouraged the sport as a physical conditioning activity, which additionally served to improve the soldiers' morale.<sup>30</sup>

With so many men away at war, the women on the home front occupied themselves with domestic activities. Rebecca Davis described making quince and pickle preserves, and baking cake.<sup>31</sup> The *Sun* even printed a recipe for the preparation of pineapple jam.<sup>32</sup> Anna Maria Tilghman described a day in which "I occupied myself by stoning some raisins, dressing Lottie, reading 'the Lessons' for the day, and assisted in arranging the room before Aunt returned." Margaret Smith Preston recounted planting seeds for cabbages, tomatoes, cotton, tobacco, and cucumbers in her garden, as well as a cherry tree.<sup>33</sup>

According to historian Victoria Ott, women often combined their household duties with political participation, in the current "atmosphere in which domestic and civic concerns were intertwined." Women were involved in sewing quilts and knitting socks for the troops as well as for home use. Sewing was considered a basic skill all women should know. Margaret Smith Preston described her handiwork in her diary: "I finished May's dress and it fits her beautifully and looks very well indeed. I've also finished two pairs of drawers for myself and two shirts for Mr. Preston."<sup>34</sup> The soldiers were appreciative; H. B. Davidson, a Confederate major imprisoned at Fort Warren, expressed delight upon receiving hand-sewn clothing from a Baltimore lady:

I find myself the owner of a beautiful smoking cap, the ingenious workmanship of delicate hands. . . . Why am I found with a present, which not only blends the useful and the beautiful, but which has a peculiar value beyond and above these qualities. I am told upon good authority that it is the work of a young lady of Baltimore—a rebel young lady between whom and myself there is no bond of interest, no tie except that both are rebels—she loves Dixie and so do I.<sup>35</sup>



*The 1864 Baltimore Sanitary Fair. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

Some women enjoyed hosting sewing bees, making the activity enjoyable social recreation as well.

Marylanders organized performances and social benefits to support the cause. The large Maryland State Fair for U.S. Soldier Relief, or Baltimore Sanitary Fair, of April 19–30, 1864, was organized and executed by women—Ann Bowen, Fannie Turnbull, and Harriet Hyatt among the more prominent. President Abraham Lincoln delivered an opening address, which was received with great enthusiasm as people repeatedly interrupted him with applause and rushed forward to shake his hand afterward. The fair featured display tables boasting myriad items for sale, and the entire hall was elaborately decorated with flags, flowers, and evergreens. The centerpiece was the Flower Temple, a flowered fountain inside a nearly thirty-foot-tall domed structure. The *Sun* noted that “All the arrangements for the Fair are perfect in every respect.”<sup>36</sup>

Refreshments at the Sanitary Fair were sold at “Jacob’s Well” and the “New England Kitchen,” and there was a “tea party” with cookies for the children. The fair also contained a “Fish Pond,” a game in which participants could try to catch a small prize; it was so alluring that Lincoln himself “seemed half inclined to bait a line and try his skill.” There was a fine arts gallery with paintings and photographs of distinguished soldiers; and a book for sale entitled *Autograph Leaves of our Country’s Authors*, containing manuscripts of noted American authors, including the president’s Gettysburg Address. The fair was a moderate financial success and highly praised:

“The noble women of Maryland who have labored so long and so well . . . deserve all praise and honor.”<sup>37</sup>

Everyday amusements and pastimes played an important role in lifting troubled spirits. Theatrical performances, music, and sports such as baseball provided wholesome family amusement and demonstrated that ordinary life could continue even during the most trying times. Women’s role in lifting home front morale did not go unnoticed, particularly among those who supported the Southern cause. In 1903, at the unveiling of the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors monument in Baltimore, Confederate soldier and staff officer McHenry Howard said:

History will record, as in the annals of no other war, their constancy under privations, anxieties and distresses at home, their ministrations and encouragement to their husbands, sons, and brothers in the field, and in the long, bitter years of reconstruction, which to the South were a prolongation of the worst miseries of the war. Hardest of all to bear, and they bore it in an unconquered spirit under harsh repression, was the lot of the Southern women of Maryland during the four years.<sup>38</sup>

Mayor Brown’s reminder that “the flowers are still fragrant” was true for many who strove to support those at war, while providing comfort and enjoyment at home.

## NOTES

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4. George William Brown Papers, April 11, 1862, MS2398, MdHS. Hereinafter George William Brown Papers.
5. Dorothy Denneen Volo and James M. Volo, *Daily Life During the American Revolution* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2003), 269–84; "Amusements," *Sun*, March 1, 1855.
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8. "Holliday Street Theatre," *Baltimore Sun*, April 12, 1861, February 6, and September 23, 1862, September 17, 1862.
9. *Ibid.*, June 23 and July 1, 1863.
10. *Ibid.*, November 19, 1863; "Ford's Theatre, Washington," *Sun*, October 8, 1862.
11. *Sun*, November, 19, 1863; "Maryland Institute," *Sun*, May 6, 1864; "Front Street Theatre," *Sun*, May 6, 1864.
12. Dorothy Denneen Volo and James M. Volo, *Daily Life in Civil War America* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2009), 245–60; "Provide Good and Wholesome Reading for the Family," *Sun*, July 4, 1863.
13. *Baltimore Sun*, July 1, 1863.
14. *Baltimore Sun*, April 12, 1861 and July 12, 1864.
15. "Origin of Party Names [From the N.Y. Post]," *Sun*, July 12, 1864; "How Many Marry for Love," *Sun*, July 12, 1864; "Two New Comets," *Sun*, January 2, 1863.
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17. Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2009), 5–9; Rebecca Davis Diary, July 26, 1863, November 26, 1863.
18. Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 153–61; Volo and Volo, *Daily Life in Civil War America*, 261.
19. Volo and Volo, *Daily Life in Civil War America*, 245; Alice Fahs, "The Feminized Civil War: Gender, Northern Popular Literature, and the Memory of the War, 1861–1900," *Journal of American History*, 85 (1999): 1461; Francis Key Howard, *Fourteen Months in American Bastiles* (Baltimore, 1863), 3; Rebecca Davis Diary, July 29, 1863.
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22. Volo and Volo, *Daily Life During the American Revolution*, 283; Rebecca Davis Diary, July 29, August 8, and September 12 and 26, 1863.
23. Rebecca Davis Diary, August 28, 1864; Margaret Smith Preston Diaries, January 8, 1862,

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26. Volo and Volo, *Daily Life in Civil War America*, 245–60; Anna Maria Tilghman Diary, November 22, 1859, MS1967, MdHS; Margaret Smith Preston Diaries, February 26, 1862, MS1861, MdHS; Lowe Family Papers, copied April 1925 from the original, MS1949, MdHS.

27. Esther Lowe, handwritten autobiography, Lowe Family Papers.

28. Rebecca Davis Diary, August 15, 1863.

29. Rebecca Davis Diary, August 15, 1863; George William Brown Papers, June 18, 1862.

30. Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site, "Civil War Baseball: Battling on the Diamond," <http://oha.alexandriava.gov/fortward/special-sections/baseball>. Friendly snowball battles have been documented among Confederate troops during the war. After two great snowstorms at the end of February 1863 in Fredericksburg, Virginia, General Robert Hoke's North Carolina troops advanced on Colonel Stiles's Georgia regiment and commenced a "battle" near Rappahannock Academy. Approximately 10,000 Confederate soldiers joined the fray, which one soldier described as "one of the most memorable combats of the war." A few minor injuries resulted, due to a few mischievous soldiers throwing ice or rocks embedded in the snowballs, but overall the battle was a great morale booster for the dejected and often bored young Confederate soldiers. See Kevin Ambrose, Dan Henry, and Andy Weiss. *Washington Weather* (Historical Enterprises: December 2002). Excerpt: "The Great Snowball Battle of Rappahannock Academy, February 25, 1863." Accessed July 29, 2010. <http://www.weatherbook.com/Snowball.htm>.

31. Rebecca Davis Diary, September 26, 1863.

32. Rebecca Davis Diary, September 26, 1863; "Pineapple Jam," *Baltimore Sun*, September 24, 1862.

33. Anna Maria Tilghman Diary, November 24, 1859, MS1967, MdHS; Margaret Smith Preston Diaries, March 13, 28, 1862, MS1861, MdHS.

34. Victoria E. Ott, *Confederate Daughters: Coming of Age during the Civil War* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008), 37; Margaret Smith Preston Diaries, February 8, 1862, MS1861, MdHS.

35. H. B. Davidson (no recipient), May 22, 1862, Harwood Family Papers, MS1022, MdHS.

36. See Robert W. Schoeberlein, "A Fair to Remember: Maryland Women in Aid of the Union," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 90 (1995): 466–88; "Opening of the Maryland State Fair," *Sun*, April 19, 1864.

37. Schoeberlein, "A Fair to Remember," 483; *Baltimore American*, April 20 and May 2, 1864; "Opening of the Maryland State Fair," *Sun*, April 19, 1864.

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# The Court-Martial of Sergeant George W. McDonald

R. GREGORY LANDE

**M**aryland soldiers usually served honorably in the Civil War. Personal diaries, newspapers, faded photographs, and stiffly written battlefield reports document the soldiers' everyday courage. The foundation for that courage came from military training, effective leadership, a supportive family, religious belief, strength of character, and a determination not to display cowardice in front of friends and neighbors in the same regiment. Shock and terror, and alternately boredom, homesickness, and liberal amounts of alcohol constantly tested these virtues. Most soldiers withstood the assault, but some did not. Fear led to flight, homesickness yielded to disabling dysphoria, and moral turpitude resulted in criminal misconduct.

Criminal behavior on the part of soldiers is an inglorious chapter in Civil War history. Sordid tales of assault, rape, and murder belie the common vision of gallantry and virtue. Those stories are not told in dusty campaign documents but unfold through verbatim trial transcripts.

To deal with those accused of grave offenses, military commanders appointed a general court-martial, the army's highest judicial authority. The judge advocate kept a record of the proceedings. Between five and thirteen officers sat in judgment. (Military law preferred that commanders appoint thirteen officers unless that number was impractical given the constraints of war.) Examples of misconduct warranting a general court-martial included disobeying an officer, various forms of "misbehavior before the enemy," revealing watchwords to the enemy, desertion, and spying. Conviction required a simple majority vote. Members of the general court-martial could assign a range of punishments to those convicted, including the death sentence. Imposition of the death penalty required the concurrence of two-thirds of the jury members.<sup>1</sup>

In 1861 seven soldiers were executed by military authorities. As the tempo of the conflict accelerated, the numbers of executions increased. At the midpoint of the war in 1863, official records listed fifty-nine executions. The following year saw the peak, when ninety-four soldiers were executed. The last year of the war claimed seventy-nine. A rapid demobilization followed the South's surrender, and the number of executions plummeted to only four in 1866. No officers were executed, and all but

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*Captured at Antietam, George W. McDonald was imprisoned at Fort Delaware. (Library of Congress.)*

twelve of the deaths held the lowest rank of private. Troops from New York suffered the greatest number of executions. Desertion was the main offense justifying the death penalty. Other soldiers met their fate following convictions for murder, rape, spying, and mutiny.<sup>2</sup>

The official list of U.S. soldiers executed during the war perfunctorily lists the foul deeds of ten Marylanders.<sup>3</sup> The court-martial of George W. McDonald, alias M. M. Dunning, of the 3rd Maryland Cavalry offers a fairly detailed view of military justice as it was practiced in 1864. The official list of soldiers “executed by United States Military Authorities during the Late War” reveals little more than names, regiments, and date of death. A bit more of Sergeant McDonald’s story is available through court-martial records and contemporary newspapers that reported the execution.

Of the ten Maryland soldiers executed, all held the rank of private except Sgt. George W. McDonald. All belonged to infantry regiments with the exception, once again, of Sergeant McDonald, a cavalryman. The ten were executed according to the custom of the time, either by being hanged or shot.<sup>4</sup>

McDonald was assigned to the Eighth Army Corps, 3rd Regiment, Company F of the Maryland Cavalry.<sup>5</sup> Around New Year’s Day 1864, McDonald deserted his unit in the vicinity of Baltimore and was arrested three months later. A scant six months later McDonald was executed. The nine-month odyssey from desertion to death was a compressed, but common, Civil War court-martial experience.

McDonald's short story opened with desertion.<sup>6</sup> The court-martial record provides no accounting, excuse, or explanation of any sort for the unauthorized absence. Perhaps the desertion on New Year's Day was the impulse of a new passion or ill judgment exercised after a prolonged night of drinking. In any event, history will not satisfy curiosity.

Despite the short span of time between desertion and arrest, McDonald managed to get himself into serious trouble. General Order 74 issued by the Middle Department authorized the formation of Sergeant McDonald's general court-martial.<sup>7</sup> An arraignment on August 17, 1864, presented the charges and specifications to the accused soldier. The charge of desertion specified that McDonald, "being a soldier in the Military Service of the United States, did on or about the 1st day of January 1864, at or near Baltimore, Maryland, desert said service and regiment, and remain absent from the same until arrested, on or about the 30th day of March 1864." The second charge—of assault with intent to kill—included two specifications reflecting two separate incidents. In the first incident Sergeant McDonald violently resisted arrest. As the first specification rather blandly noted, he "was concealed in Montgomery County, Maryland, at which place, on or about the 30th day of March 1864 . . . did resist Sergeant Haugh and other soldiers of the United States Army, who were duly detailed and authorized to arrest him." This dry passage gives no hint of the color, passion, and violence of McDonald's arrest. In a seemingly wanton act of gratuitous violence, the second specification described a disturbing incident. Apparently, "about the fifteenth day of March, Eighteen hundred and sixty-four [Sergeant McDonald] assaulted and wounded with intent to kill, one Ezekiel Monley, by discharging a loaded pistol at him . . . all this, at or near, Clarksburg, Md." Sergeant McDonald responded to the charges by pleading guilty to desertion and not guilty to both specifications of assault with intent to kill.

Civil War military tribunals were remarkably streamlined affairs, proceeding at a pace and manner that reflected a nation at war. Trials rarely consumed more than a few days. The prosecution would present a few witnesses, typically countered by no voices for the defense. A judge advocate was the military's prosecutor. In an interesting economy, the judge advocate served as a legal guardian to ensure a fair trial. This might even include providing legal advice to the accused soldier. In spite of that procedural rule, the accused soldier, most often a private, poorly educated, and no doubt intimidated, was mostly left to fend for himself. The judge advocate was an indispensable feature of a Civil War court-martial, but opposing military defense counsel was simply unheard of.

The court-martial unfolded in a recognizable pattern.<sup>8</sup> A plea was entered at the arraignment. The judge advocate presented an opening statement. The accused was afforded a similar opportunity but seldom took advantage of the procedural rule. The military prosecutor then typically presented a small number of witnesses, sufficient to support the criminal charges. Although the court-martial could compel

the attendance of a witness, the accused soldier rarely exercised the privilege. As the trial progressed, the more resourceful defendants actually conducted a rudimentary cross-examination. Closing arguments followed the evidence phase of the court-martial, and the prosecutor used his eloquence to condemn the accused. An accused soldier often used this time to beg for mercy or offer a weak excuse.

The court's deliberations were efficient, often returning verdicts in hours. The senior officer who authorized the court-martial reviewed the conviction and sentence.<sup>9</sup> He exercised considerable discretion, approving, disapproving, or modifying punishment. An execution approved at this level left few options for reversals, though soldiers and families might petition the commander-in-chief for relief. President Abraham Lincoln, standing between the accused and execution, solemnly reviewed many of their appeals.

Capt. A. G. Hennisse was the judge advocate at McDonald's court-martial and Sergeant Haugh was his first witness. The court-martial transcript recorded the prosecution's opening question: "Do you or not know the accused, if so, state to the Court all you know of the circumstances of his arrest?" Sergeant Haugh began a fairly lengthy narration by noting, "He is a man that I captured about sixteen or eighteen miles from Mount Airy on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad near Laytonsville." Haugh was unfamiliar with the rural area where McDonald was presumably hiding. He turned to William Talbott, a local resident and farmer for guidance. Talbott seemed convinced that McDonald was holed up at Joe Thompson's house. Thompson's house was situated in a grove of trees, which afforded the accused considerable privacy. After a brief discussion, the farmer willingly led Haugh and his small troop to Thompson's house and the deserter.

Talbott testified, "When we got near the house, within four or five hundred yards of the house, we hooked our horses and dismounted and went to the house." His memory faded after this revelation but Sergeant Haugh suffered no shortage of recollections. "I arrived at the place about Eight o'clock at night, and when he, the accused, heard us coming he ran up stairs." An alert neighbor must have warned McDonald, for when the soldiers arrived the house was almost completely dark. As Haugh entered the house invisible hands snuffed the lone candle. The quiet breathing of several people in the darkened house kept the troops on edge. Haugh "demanded them to get me a light – that if they did not I would put a light through some of them." He soon possessed a candle. Gradually, Haugh ascended the stairs. It was deathly quiet until the accused cocked his revolver, a sound that seemed to echo throughout the house. Haugh paused and then demanded that the deserter throw aside his weapon and surrender. Sensing his imminent capture, McDonald ominously declared "that he would not be taken alive." Sergeant Haugh paused for the briefest moment before responding, "I will smoke you out . . . I had smoked out coons before to night and will smoke you out." In preparation for fulfilling his promise to smoke McDonald out, Haugh noisily went outside to get some matches.

True to his word, he returned and started “firing the bed.” The menacing sound of a revolver once again being cocked was followed by “the cap exploding [but] the pistol did not go off, if it had, it would have killed me.”

McDonald was hiding in the attic. It seemed the perfect vantage point, one that forced his prey into a vulnerable position should he ascend the ladder. When he attempted to shoot Sergeant Haugh, McDonald was aiming his pistol through cracks in the floor. Haugh quickly responded. “I then fired the house and he did not come to the window until the floor commenced falling that he was standing on.”

The troops outside waiting for McDonald to scramble out of the house peppered the house with bullets. Finally, “He came to the window and begged for his life and I told him then if he threw down his arms that I would take him as a prisoner.” The whole affair came to a quiet conclusion as McDonald meekly complied.

McDonald’s subsequent trial was beset with frustrating delays and subplots. There was an unexplained lapse of time between his arrest at the end of March and the convening of his court-martial on August 17, 1864. The precise reason is unknown, but unlike civilian trials a military court assembles only when necessity demands it. Permanent military courts do not exist but instead are “convened” when a criminal matter justifies its creation. As a consequence, each court-martial appointed all members, from judge advocate to jury members, specifically for trial duty. The exigencies of war often demanded that combat on the battlefield take priority over courts-martial.

McDonald’s general court-martial consisted of eight officers. Although army rules preferred thirteen officers, the exact number appointed was left to the discretion of the senior officer ordering the court-martial. Col. G. A. Pierson was that senior officer. The seven officers joining the colonel included “Leut. Col. J. W. Babbitt, Major Geo. R. Bowers, Capt. W. H. Merritt, Capt. David L. Brown, Capt. Philip J. Cortey, 1st Lieut. C. F. Burr, [and] 1st Lieut. E. B. Richardson.” McDonald’s trial resumed one week later in Baltimore at the Headquarters of the Middle Department for the Eighth Army Corps. Capt. W. H. Merritt was removed from the jury, probably because he was needed for more pressing duties. Colonel Pierson was temporarily detained, but the court-martial pressed on despite the two absences. The judge advocate briefly reviewed the previous week’s proceedings before declaring “he could not have a case ready for trial before Friday next.” Anticipating the next question, the judge advocate blamed the tardiness of several essential witnesses for the delay. The court was forced to adjourn and set the second of September, 1864, as the next date for the officers to assemble.

The court-martial of Sergeant McDonald reconvened promptly at 10 A.M. on September 2, 1864. Colonel Pierson rejoined his fellow officers and explained that Capt. David Brown was absent “owing to sickness.” Captain Hennisse, the beleaguered judge advocate prosecuting the case, was visibly frustrated. Once again, witnesses were delayed and Hennisse was left explaining this ongoing embarrassment. An

important witness “had telegraphed that he could not possibly be present before Monday next on account of having received marching orders.” The court reluctantly adjourned until September 5.

On that day, only five officers sat in judgment. Despite the absence of the other two officers, justice could not be delayed any further. The judge advocate read the charges, desertion and two specifications of assault with intent to kill.

Sergeant Jesse Haugh testified first and faithfully recalled the capture of the accused. The judge advocate closely questioned him. “Did he [McDonald] or not admit to you that he shot one Monley a short time before his arrest.” Without hesitation, Haugh answered “Yes, Sir.” McDonald listened intently to Haugh’s damning testimony, but when offered the opportunity to cross-examine the witness, he declined. Sergeant Haugh was the prosecution’s only available witness. The day ended as a cliffhanger with the mysterious assault on Monley untold.

The court adjourned for three days, with members determined to finish the trial on the eighth. When the court reconvened, once again only five of the eight jury members were present. For the first time, the whereabouts of the missing officers was not mentioned, but the court record dispassionately noted yet another frustrating delay. “The Judge Advocate remarked that the witnesses in the case had not yet arrived and that he would apply to the Asst. Adj. Genl. of the eighth corps to have them arrested and brought before the Court.” The court optimistically assumed that the long reach of military justice would nab the wayward witnesses in short order and reserved September 14 to reconvene the much-delayed trial.

When the court-martial reassembled on the fourteenth, the errant witnesses were still absent. The judge advocate piteously complained “that he had, applied regularly to have them arrested.” The only evidence admitted to the court was a letter from the provost marshal’s office declaring that “Detective Taft [went] up to Monocacy on Saturday with a letter to Genl. Tyler to furnish a squad of mounted men to arrest these witnesses.” Despite the delays and frustrations, the second and last day of Sergeant McDonald’s trial started on the fifteenth.

The court convened promptly at ten o’clock with three members absent. Ezekiel Monley was the prosecution’s main witness. Monley was twenty-six years old and lived in New Market, Maryland, where for the last three years he had plied a trade “dealing in horses for the Government.” In telling his story, the hapless Monley testified he had just concluded a round of horse dealing in Washington. He had left the city around mid-morning on a Sunday in early March 1864, and had arrived in Rockville, Maryland, for an early dinner. He had struck up a casual relationship with a “boy that carried the mail.” Both desired companionship for the next leg of their respective journeys, and even though Clarksburg, Maryland, was a substantial detour back to New Market, Monley chose to “ride the road.”

The miles passed pleasantly enough as Monley and his newfound friend chatted amiably. When they arrived in Clarksburg, a noisy commotion caught their attention.

Almost immediately, "This man came up and says, 'Do you belong to the Government Service?'" Monley told the court he replied in the negative, only to be peppered by another accusatory question, "Does that horse belong to the Government Service?" The horse trader from New Market could scarcely contain his irritation at the interrogatory and curtly asked, "Are you a detective?" The friction between Monley, and the recent deserter Sergeant McDonald, exploded in a fury.

Monley's anger was still evident as he recalled the confrontation. Monley recalled how he was startled at the suddenness with which McDonald produced a revolver and "pointed it at [my] breast." In spite of the dangerous provocation Monley responded coolly. "You are not going to shoot me. I have never done anything for you to shoot me." For a moment McDonald seemed to hesitate, perhaps reconsidering his rash actions or possibly impressed by Monley's composure. In any event, the moment passed and the deserter demanded that Monley "draw your hand off that horse, you d—d dirty son of a b—h." Humiliated but resigned, Monley "took it just as orderly as a dog. It is very hard for a man to have to take his hand off his own horse." As a reward for his compliance McDonald "then fired and the ball came out through the calf of my leg. I said to him you shot me. Yes, says he that is not half as much as I intended to do." McDonald then mounted Monley's horse and rode off. Monley's anger was still evident when he testified that nearly thirty people including "two constables and two magistrates" watched the fracas unfold. Not one person "lifted a hand" either to help Monley or apprehend the perpetrator.

Following Monley's testimony, the accused soldier went on the offensive with a brief cross-examination. "Did you or not take me to be in my senses, when I shot?" A nonplussed Monley replied, "I could not answer. I never saw you before. I am very sorry I ever did see you. You have put me to a heap of trouble and misery." McDonald pressed the matter no further.

The judge advocate concluded the prosecution's case after Monley's testimony, confident that a military jury would reach a guilty verdict. Normally most courts-martial ended at this point, sometimes only preceded by statement of contrition from the accused. But Sergeant McDonald confounded convention and presented a vigorous defense, complete with one witness.

Thomas W. F. Warfield testified on his behalf. Warfield was a reluctant witness, and his intransigence soon had him residing in a military prison awaiting the pleasure of the court-martial. He had been among the idle throng that casually observed the drama involving Monley and McDonald. In somewhat sympathetic terms, Warfield recalled the assault. Although not a witness to the entire event, Warfield had spent time talking with many of those who were. He summed up his recollections by concluding, "They did not suppose he shot to kill. Some thought it might have been an accidental shot." Warfield was emphatic on one point. "You [McDonald] were very drunk."

The judge advocate vigorously cross-examined McDonald's witness. Warfield had

not seen the alleged assault, a point repeatedly clarified by the prosecutor. Members of the jury seemed skeptical, too. McDonald and his witness had been imprisoned together, offering an opportunity for the accused to coach the reluctant witness. A member of the jury asked the obvious question: "Have you or not had an interview with the accused since he has been confined?" Warfield must have anticipated this line of potentially incriminating inquiry, and his response may have reflected some planning. "I have had no private interview but the talking while passing by each other."

At the conclusion of Warfield's testimony, the case was submitted to the jury. The jury members returned a short time later "and having maturely considered the evidence adduced" found George McDonald guilty of the charges and specifications. The officers demanded the death penalty.

Perhaps the verdict was harsh. Many soldiers deserted, with untold numbers engaging in a revolving door scheme to collect lucrative bounties when they later "reenlisted." Besides desertion, McDonald's only other crime involved assault with intent to kill, which by itself did not seem to justify a death sentence.

The imposition of McDonald's death penalty might have turned on certain unstated facts. Curiously, McDonald's court-martial failed to make mention of one particularly damaging bit of evidence, his conversion from a loyal rebel to a Union soldier.

Company F of the 3rd Maryland Cavalry recruited Confederate soldiers to the federal cause.<sup>10</sup> Rehabilitated recruits pledged their loyalty to the federal government and shortly after swearing allegiance changed uniforms. It seems only natural that these newly minted Yankees would generate suspicion and mistrust among the Union veterans. It also seems natural that any indiscretion, with desertion among the more egregious, only confirmed that distrust. Confederates like McDonald who betrayed their oath of allegiance could expect little in the way of subsequent leniency. Sergeant McDonald was a former Confederate, given a second chance in the Union army, who squandered what little goodwill his conversion had created.

McDonald was about thirty-one years old and unmarried when he volunteered for Company F.<sup>11</sup> Prior to this, he had been a loyal Confederate soldier, a member of the Texan Rangers Cavalry. The war ended for McDonald at Antietam. After his capture, he joined other Confederate prisoners-of-war at Ft. Delaware.

The harsh life of a prisoner-of-war probably convinced some Confederate soldiers to trade prison garb for a federal uniform. McDonald took the pledge of loyalty and joined Company F on September 18, 1863. Captain H. C. Clark of Maryland's 3rd Cavalry Regiment administered the enlistment. McDonald received a twenty-five dollar bounty for his conversion.<sup>12</sup>

Just a few months later, on December 9, 1863, the company muster-in roll listed McDonald's desertion from Camp Lockwood near Baltimore.<sup>13</sup> His final battle took place in a military court. No mercy was extended as the court-martial jury pro-

nounced the sentence: "To be shot to death with musketry at such time and place as the Commanding General may direct." Two-thirds of the voting jury members concurred in the death sentence. Major General Lew Wallace chose the time and location at Ft. McHenry on the morning of the twenty-first of September, 1864.

A perfunctory paragraph in the local newspaper recorded the execution. "A few minutes after nine o'clock the prisoner was marched from his cell in the Fort to the outside yard of the outer Fort. . . . The soldiers were drawn up in a hollow square around the prisoner, and a squad of twelve men detailed to shoot the prisoner. . . . He had nothing to say but that the sentence was just. . . . The chaplain and the officers in charge of the prisoner bade him good bye, and when left alone he stood stoical, merely giving the sign that he was ready. . . . the order was given to fire . . . and the unfortunate prisoner dropped to the ground a lifeless corpse."<sup>14</sup>

#### NOTES

1. S. V. Benet, *Military Law and the Practice of Courts-Martial* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1862), 17–26.
2. List of U.S. Soldiers Executed by United States Military Authorities During the Late War, Adjutant General's Office, Washington, D.C., August 1885.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. Volunteer Enlistment, George W. McDonald, 1863, Tape No. 47, National Archives.
6. Court-Martial Transcript, George W. McDonald, 1864, Record Group 94, National Archives and Records Administration.
7. General Order No. 74, Headquarters Middle Department, Eighth Army Corps, Baltimore, Maryland, September 19, 1864.
8. Benet, *Military Law and the Practice of Courts-Martial*, 17–26.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Baltimore Sun*, September 21, 1864.
11. *Ibid.*
12. Volunteer Enlistment, George W. McDonald, 1863.
13. Company F, 3rd Maryland Calvary, Muster Roll, 1864, Tape No. 47, National Archives.
14. *Baltimore Sun*, September 22, 1864.

1856

List of negroes hired in Wilcox County

Ala

July

Isaac <sup>dead</sup>  
 Hulda <sup>dead</sup>  
 Noah <sup>doubt know - missing (living in Nashville - Tennessee)</sup>  
 Daniel <sup>alive (dead)</sup>  
 Jain <sup>dead (alive)</sup>  
 Mariah <sup>missing</sup>

Mr J. W. Davis hires all of above for \$125 00

John <sup>alive</sup>  
 Charles <sup>dead</sup>  
 Levin <sup>dead</sup>  
 Elisha <sup>alive</sup>  
 Sally + \$35 <sup>alive</sup>

Mr. Walter B. Raud do do for 300 00

Rhoda <sup>dead</sup>  
 Solomon <sup>dead</sup>

Mrs Sarah J. Malone do do for 25 00

Mr John P. Marsh do do for 25 00

Lucy + \$10 <sup>alive</sup>

Mr Fabius Raud do do for 10 00

Charlotte + \$35 <sup>alive</sup>  
 George } <sup>missing</sup>  
 Lydia } <sup>her two children both alive</sup>  
 + <sup>dead</sup>

Mr L. D. Bones do do for 35 00

Julia <sup>alive</sup>  
 Arnold <sup>alive</sup>  
 Josiah } <sup>her two children</sup>  
 alive

Mr C. A. Medors do do for 35 00

Mary <sup>dead</sup>  
 Spencer } <sup>alive</sup>  
 Minnie } <sup>her two children</sup>  
 dead (alive)

Mr Wm Sheffield do do for 30 00

Fanny + \$20 <sup>alive</sup>

Mr Aaron Hart do do for 20 00

1857

1857  
Feb 3

moving squarely

# Curtis W. Jacobs' Diary and Account Book, 1854–1866

DUSTIN MEEKER

The fight to end slavery began long before the first shots of the Civil War, as slaves defied their masters' authority and sought personal autonomy through countless acts of everyday resistance. Once the war began, resistance intensified greatly. Many slaves capitalized on the resulting social turmoil and fled to Union lines. In the fall of 1863, the War Department issued General Order 329, permitting the enlistment of slaves in Border States to meet the army's increasing need for manpower. The recruitment of slaves in Maryland ultimately destroyed the institution of slavery, for great numbers of slaves enlisted, to the consternation of the slave-owning elite, many of whom supported the South

The journal of Curtis Jacobs, a Worcester County planter, state legislator, and ardent pro-slavery advocate, chronicles the demise of slavery in Maryland and offers his perspective on the matter. On October 26, three weeks after the War Department authorized the recruitment of slaves, two of Jacobs' male slaves absconded, to be followed the next day by several others, leaving behind "only a few old men and the women and children." Ultimately, fifteen of Jacobs' slaves enlisted.

On January 4, 1864, Jacobs traveled to Berlin, Maryland, hoping to locate the fugitives. Upon arriving in the town, he saw several African American soldiers "parading the streets all day in uniform and musket in hand," which for Jacobs was undoubtedly an abominable sight. He approached a lieutenant and requested a receipt for his slaves, which would have entitled him to compensation, but the officer rebuffed him on the grounds that he was declared a disloyal citizen and therefore ineligible for compensation.

Throughout the summer of 1864, the Maryland state legislature, dominated by Unionists, deliberated on the future of slavery at the state's constitutional convention, eventually deciding to abolish the institution. Slavery officially ended when the new constitution, passed by the slimmest of margins, took effect on November 1, 1864. Jacobs lamented, "They passed the new Constitution freeing all the negroes. At the vote on the Constitution many were refused voting by the judges & the soldiers, myself among others."

Jacobs' journal is a valuable source for examining the war's impact on Maryland's Eastern Shore, particularly concerning the recruitment of slaves and the dissolution

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of slavery. Jacobs, Maryland's most vocal supporter of slavery, fought relentlessly to expand and perpetuate the institution. He also demonstrated significant historical consciousness throughout his narratives, apparently for posterity and not simply for himself. His journal entries do more than simply chronicle events and enumerate runaway slaves. They offer his perspective on the radical transformation of Maryland's social and economic order.