

The
SABER AND SCROLL
Journal

Volume 8, No. 1 • Summer 2019



Ex Tenebris Lux



The Saber and Scroll Journal
 Volume 8, Number 1 • Summer 2019
 © 2019 Policy Studies Organization

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome Letter 1
Lew Taylor

Steel’s Indictment: The Strike That Changed the Mahoning Valley 3
Brian Pearson

Arrows of Affliction: The Bubonic Plague and Its Representation in Medieval Art and Literature 29
Marisa Kahla

Strange Bedfellows: Nativism, Know-Nothings, African-Americans, and School Desegregation in Antebellum Massachusetts 49
Stan Prager

A Petticoat Society 73
Melissa Sims

Across the Etowah and into the Hell-Hole: Johnston’s Lost Chance for Victory in the Atlanta Campaign 89
Greg Drummond

Gettysburg Day One: Taking Cemetery Hill and Culp’s Hill 109
Douglas R. Kleinsmith



Welcome Letter

Welcome to the summer issue of the Saber and Scroll! We are excited that we are now a part of the Policy Studies Organization's Open Access Journal program.

For 7 years, the Saber and Scroll Journal was under the auspices of the Saber and Scroll History Society at the American Public University System. That changed in April of this year when the journal was moved to be the official journal of the American Public University's Historical Studies Honor Society. Along with the change in management, we have almost a whole new staff of editors and proof-readers.

I was honored to be asked to serve as Editor-in-Chief, and I can only hope that I can continue the fine work of those who came before me, specifically Anne Midgley and Michael Majerczyk.

This issue of the journal includes papers presented at the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Historical Studies Honor Society and because of that there are two papers included that have been previously published in earlier editions of the journal.

Our plan is to publish four journals each year, and beginning now we are actively reaching out to graduate and undergraduate students from any institution of higher learning.

I hope everyone has an absolutely wonderful summer.

Regards,

Lew Taylor

Editor-in-Chief, The Saber and Scroll Journal

Steel's Indictment: The Strike That Changed the Mahoning Valley

Brian Pearson

American Public University

ABSTRACT

Despite a depth of research focused on labor history and the working class in the Mahoning Valley, Ohio, the 1916 strike and riot at East Youngstown lacks a comprehensive and collective research examination. Perhaps that is because the incident left a deep scar on the conscious of the community, so penetrating that the residents chose to rename the town Campbell in 1926 to avoid the national reputation their town had earned. But from the strike came an improved quality of life for working people, made possible through: (1) collective wage increases; (2) better buildings and improvements to the local infrastructure; (3) and a new relationship between labor and management, wherein corporations began to focus on quality-of-life issues. While the 1916 strike left East Youngstown with such an irreversibly poor national impression that citizens petitioned for its renaming a decade later, the incident led to economic and social reforms that improved the quality of life for those living and working in the Mahoning Valley.

Keywords: Strike, Union, Welfare, Capitalism, Youngstown

Indicador de Acero: La Huelga Que Cambió el Valle de Mahoning

RESUMEN

A pesar de una profunda investigación centrada en la historia laboral y la clase trabajadora en el valle de Mahoning, Ohio, la huelga y disturbios de 1916 en East Youngstown carece de un examen de investigación exhaustivo y colectivo. Tal vez sea porque el incidente dejó una profunda cicatriz en la conciencia de la comunidad, tan

penetrante que los residentes optaron por cambiar el nombre de la ciudad a Campbell en 1926 para evitar la reputación nacional que su ciudad se había ganado. Pero a partir de la huelga surgió una mejor calidad de vida para los trabajadores, que fue posible gracias a: 1) aumentos salariales colectivos; 2) mejores edificios y mejoras a la infraestructura local; 3) y una nueva relación entre el trabajo y la administración, en donde las corporaciones comenzaron a enfocarse en los problemas de calidad de vida. Si bien la huelga de 1916 dejó a East Youngstown con una impresión nacional tan irreversiblemente pobre que los ciudadanos solicitaron su cambio de nombre una década más tarde, el incidente llevó a reformas económicas y sociales que mejoraron la calidad de vida de quienes viven y trabajan en el valle de Mahoning.

Palabras clave: Huelga, Unión, Capitalismo del bienestar, Youngstown.

钢铁的控告：一场改变马霍宁谷的罢工

摘要

尽管诸多研究聚焦于俄亥俄州马霍宁谷的劳工历史和工人阶级，但1916年在扬斯敦东部发生的罢工和暴动却缺少全面共同的学术研究。也许这是因为，这次事件给该社区留下了惨痛的烙印，以至于居民在1926年请愿将小镇更名为坎贝尔，以避免回忆起曾经因罢工而获得的全国名声。然而，罢工之后却迎来了工人阶级生活质量的改善，这可能归因于：1) 工资集体增长；2) 当地基础设施有所改善；3) 劳工和管理层之间的新关系，即企业开始关注员工生活质量。尽管1916年罢工事件使得扬斯敦东部在全国获得了无法改变的坏名声，以至于当地居民在十年后请愿给小镇更名，但这次事件引起了一系列经济改革和社会改革，这些改革提高了马霍宁谷本地劳工的生活质量。

关键词：罢工，工会，福利资本主义，扬斯敦

Gathering at the foot of the North Bridge entrance of the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company just before five o'clock in the evening on January 7, 1916, striking workers in East Youngstown, Ohio, found themselves face-to-face with armed company guards. The strike had begun just 11 days earlier at the nearby Republic Iron and Steel Company when demands for higher wages and overtime pay went unmet, and days later, workers at the Sheet & Tube Company set down their tools in unorganized solidarity.¹ Most of the men working at the two mills were recently arrived unskilled immigrants, living in crowded boarding houses in the village of East Youngstown. The village was a hastily built boom-town, with mud streets and no running water, sewers, or adequate housing. Their working conditions at the mills were equally untenable, and in many cases, they labored for more than 12 hours a day, earning less than nine dollars per week.²

Conditions for a violent labor uprising were widespread, and that evening, armed guards and strikers clashed for six hours before armed citizens organized to bring down the insurrection. In its aftermath, the fire had consumed the entire business district, hundreds received injuries, and three men were dead. In the days that followed, rumors of foreign influence and a Wall Street plot filled the newspapers, but a three-month investigation sought out the truth. The investigation brought the indictment of hundreds of strikers by the Mahoning County Grand Jury, and in an unprecedented move, the steel ex-

ecutives themselves for allegedly fixing wages. Although the judge dismissed the grand jury charges brought against the steel companies for their role in the 1916 East Youngstown Strike, the indictments signified a positive shift in the perception of labor rights and the relationship between workers and management in the Mahoning Valley.

West of the Allegheny Mountains on the edge of Appalachia lies Ohio's Mahoning Valley. In the Mahoning Valley, the steel mills were the most prominent feature of the landscape, forming a 25-mile chain of massive structures along the narrow banks of the Mahoning River. The colossal clusters of mill buildings crowded the river's edge, intersected by rail lines busy with activity. Smokestacks, rising high above the rolling and finishing mills released thick, dark soot which hung over the valley like storm clouds. "On a clear night," the *Youngstown Vindicator* claimed in 1915, someone standing outside of Akron, "looking to the east, may behold a horizon that reflects the glare of Youngstown's furnaces."³

Iron and steel production began in the Mahoning Valley in 1803, when James and Daniel Heaton began operating the area's first blast furnace. Located six miles southeast of downtown Youngstown on Yellow Creek, the "Hopewell Furnace" was the first of its kind west of the Allegheny Mountains. The discovery of black coal in the briar-covered hills northwest of downtown during the mid-1840s would revolutionize the Valley's iron and steel industry, replacing the traditional coking process.

Within a quarter-century, the Valley built 21 blast furnaces, mostly along the mighty Mahoning River.⁴ The growth of industry brought a flood of immigrants, generally of Welsh, Irish, and German descent to the hillside, transforming it into Youngstown's first working-class neighborhood, known as Brier Hill.⁵ By the turn of the century, one-third of Youngstown's population was foreign-born, crowding into ethnic-based neighborhoods throughout the city.⁶

Southeast of downtown, where the Mahoning River flows southeast after meandering through the business district, once lay open, grassy fields. It is there that investors from the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company chose to build their mill shortly after incorporating in November 1900. The stockholders included some of Youngstown's most prominent citizens: George, Henry and Charles Wick; John and Henry Stambaugh; and Paul Powers. Within five years, local businessman James A. Campbell became the president and chairman of the board, and the namesake of the plant. The Campbell Works stretched for five miles, including four sheet mills, 14 puddling furnaces, three tube mills, a skelp mill, and a Bessemer converter.⁷

In just a decade, the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company would lead a complete transformation of the wooded hillside, turning it into a booming industrial town known as East Youngstown.⁸ Like Brier Hill before it, the demands for labor in the mills led to a flood of immigrants. By 1915, East Youngstown was home to 10,000 residents, nearly all of which were foreign-born. They came

from Lithuania, Poland, Serbia, and Italy as unskilled laborers, easily finding work at the local Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company and the nearby Republic Iron and Steel Company.⁹

The development of East Youngstown was starkly different than the growth of the area's oldest working-class neighborhood, Brier Hill. The village lacked an adequate housing stock, forcing many new arrivals, mostly unmarried men, to stay with family members in crowded shacks and boarding houses.¹⁰ The rapid boom of East Youngstown left it underbuilt and underdeveloped. The town lacked running water and sewers, bringing with it sickness and disease. Thick mud sat on the unpaved streets, clinging to the boots of men as they traveled back and forth from their homes to the steel mills. The conditions inside the mills were poor as well. Many of the men worked 12–14-hour days, earning less than eight dollars and 50 cents per week.¹¹ The conditions of labor during this period led the *American Labor Year Book* to describe East Youngstown as having “one of the most complete economic backgrounds for a tremendous upheaval of labor that has ever been found in any industry.”¹²

The Mahoning Valley's iron and steel industry began to decline by 1913 and 1914.¹³ The price of finished product plummeted to the level of production costs, the mills functioned at one-third capacity, and frequent temporary plant shutdowns were commonplace. Still, manufacturing cost-cutting measures taken by the Republic Iron and Steel Company allowed it to boast a small profit to its shareholders in its

1914 annual report. By early March 1915, the industry began to rally, fueled by the demand of foreign governments like Great Britain and France for American steel. Within weeks, the mills returned to full capacity, including Republic Iron and Steel and Youngstown Sheet and Tube. Steel manufacturers promised that by summer, the mills would have "work for every able-bodied man in Youngstown."¹⁴

As the price of finished iron and steel products continued to rise in late March, the Republic Iron and Steel Company made a startling announcement. Despite their successful navigation of the earlier economic downturn, pipe cutters would receive a 17 cent wage reduction per 100 pieces of the finished product. The cuts were massive, sparking an embittered wage dispute that carried on for nine months. During that period, general laborers throughout the mill demanded a wage increase as well, calling for an advance from 19 ½ cents per hour to 25 cents. Just before Christmas, management reinstated the wages of the pipe cutters; however, they denied a pay increase for the general laborers. The denied increase enraged the already resentful laborers inside the mill, and two days after Christmas, both unskilled and skilled workers set down their tools in a massive demonstration.¹⁵

The strike at the Youngstown Works of the Republic Iron and Steel Company began on a Monday afternoon, December 27, 1915, when the company refused to grant wage increases to unskilled workers. Management claimed that the rate of 19 ½

cents per hour for unskilled labor was already high and that an increase to 25 cents would exceed the rate paid by competitors. Management was equally unwilling to hear the striker's other demands which included longer lunch breaks, a shorter workday on Saturdays, and time-and-a-half overtime pay for extra work, specifically on Sundays. While the strike remained unadjusted, it was growing in numbers by the day. As workers set down their tools to join the strike, they began to interrupt production at the mill. Fearing that the plant would shut down entirely, company officials and mill police summoned local law enforcement to help quell the strike.¹⁶

For the next two evenings, striking workers from Republic Iron and Steel crowded into the Krakusy Hall on Franklin Avenue to hear speeches in all languages by strike leaders. At the first meeting, the attendees learned of the company's plan to bring in 150 replacement workers. Though they pleaded urgently with skilled laborers to support them, the threat of unemployment made by replacement workers weighed heavily on the men who refused to join in solidarity. Undeterred, more than 600 people attended the meeting on the second day including organizers from the American Federation of Labor (AFL). One organizer, the AFL's John J. Graney spoke passionately toward trade unionism and the meaning of solidarity. His message resonated with those in attendance, and by the end of the night, the first steps of a new union local at Republic Iron and Steel became certain. The following night,

at the urging of Graney, both unskilled and skilled men met for a peaceful protest. Graney warned the men to stay away from company property and to refrain from violence, especially as replacement workers entered and exited mill property.¹⁷ Both the AFL and the striking workers remained hopeful that the demonstration could win over the holdouts at Republic Iron and Steel and spread the strike to other area mills.

The new year brought new orders for steel manufacturers across the country, especially in the Mahoning Valley where orders for billets and blooms from France and Italy booked production through June. The work orders at many of the area mills grew so large that management began to refuse orders. Meanwhile, steel executives continued to ignore the demands of the striking workers, utilizing replacement workers instead. As the strike continued, unrest among the Valley's iron and steel workers grew. On Saturday, New Year's Day, unskilled workers at the unaffiliated Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company left their post. Later in the day, unskilled laborers in the smelting department at the Haselton Bessemer branch of the Republic Iron and Steel Company walked off the job as well. Soon, engineers, riggers, boilermakers, and boilermaker helpers walked out, and before long, the slaggers joined them too.¹⁸

Through the weekend, the number of strikers at the demonstrations on Poland Avenue and the Center Street Bridge appeared to grow. On Monday, police began to take up lookout posts near the entrance of the striking mills, anticipating violence among the rest-

less workers. Throughout the night, police responded to nearly a dozen reported disturbances in the area of Republic Iron and Steel, resulting in a half-dozen arrests. Though the arrests were mostly related to the harassment of replacement workers entering and exiting the mill, two men were found to be in possession of weapons. When police attempted to apprehend one of the suspects, another striker attacked the arresting officer.¹⁹

The arrests outside of Republic only contributed to the growing unrest among its employees. Later on Tuesday, January 4, 400 sympathetic laborers walked out of the Lansingville and Brown-Bonnell branches of the Republic Iron and Steel Company and marched toward Youngstown for a massive demonstration. Thirty miles away in the Shenango Valley, laborers at the Standard Steel Company in New Castle, Pennsylvania, set out on strike. Part of a sympathy strike organized by the AFL, more than 100 laborers walked out demanding a nine-cent per hour pay increase. The increase would put wages at the Standard Steel Company at 25 cents per hour, a wage scale that the AFL hoped to make uniform throughout the region.²⁰

Early on Wednesday, January 5, the strike at the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company grew. The ignored demands for higher wages made by employees on the threading floor led 20–30 of the employees to walk out. That evening, AFL organizers met with the frustrated Sheet and Tube Workers and were confident that they fully realized the advantages of collective bargaining

as a means of gaining wage increases. Laborers met with organizers from the International Machinists Union as well. AFL organizers estimated that more than 600 employees from Youngstown Sheet and Tube were on strike or would be on strike in the coming days, though the company denied the claims. At noon the next day, at least 250–300 men had laid down their tools or failed to report for work.²¹

Recognizing the growing seriousness of the strike and the waning possibility that his small police force could protect the mills, East Youngstown Chief of Police Harry Hartenstein met with officials from Republic and the Sheet and Tube. Hartenstein found that, for steel executives making record profits, closure of their mills was not a viable option. Hartenstein suggested that the mills add special police to protect their property and the workers whom the strikers had harassed as they entered and exited the mills. Another sought to house replacement workers in bunkhouses on mill property. The decision remained unclear and unresolved, and like the nights before, strikers picketed along the Center Street Bridge and Poland Avenue throughout the night, urging workers arriving for their shifts to keep out of the mill, and threatening those who did.²²

For Republic Iron and Steel Company Police Chief Sam Butler, the situation quickly grew out of control that Wednesday night. Understaffed and ill-prepared, Butler phoned Sheriff J.C. Umstead asking for assistance. According to Butler, the crowd on Center

Street and Poland Avenue had turned violent, threatening arriving workers and even discharging weapons at them. By the time Umstead and his deputy came, no evidence of such an incident existed. Later calls made by Butler and Republic supporting the swearing-in of special deputies went unanswered by the tired Sheriff. By his account, his forces were fully capable of handling the magnitude of the situation.²³

On Thursday, January 6, the number of strikers between Republic Iron and Steel and Youngstown Sheet and Tube seized production, forcing Republic to call a meeting with strike leaders in an attempt to adjust the strike. At 10 o'clock that morning, strike leaders, steel executives, and their legal counsel met to discuss the matters which caused the strike. One man from each of the three departments of the mill represented the striking workers, while James H. Nutt represented the steel company. Nutt was an experienced arbitrator and successful one at that. In his entire 25-year career adjusting strikes, he had never failed. The company executives held steadfast to its position that the company had the highest wage scale among its competitors and that they could not possibly raise the wages in fear of paying a higher amount than its competitors. Still, by the end of the meeting, leaders of Republic were confident that the strike was in its final days. Meanwhile, fearing acts of violence, East Youngstown Mayor William H. Cunningham urged officials at the Youngstown Sheet and Tube to withhold from operating the mill with such a small police force available.²⁴

The Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company ignored Cunningham's wishes, and that evening as replacement workers arrived and left the plant, the strikers turned violent. Throughout the evening, 1,000 men amassed outside the North Bridge, the East Youngstown entrance to the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company. Strikers grabbed and threatened the workers, dragging men from their cars and brutally beating them. During the night, small fires burned in the streets while drunken men gave impromptu speeches. Finally, convinced that the local police could no longer handle the situation, Sheriff Umstead swore in additional deputies and notified Governor Frank Bartlett Willis of the escalating situation.²⁵

In the morning, Friday, January 7, some 900 picketers gathered near the North Bridge. Near eight o'clock, the violence from the night before continued, when strikers savagely beat a timekeeper for the railroad, believing him to be a replacement worker. Elsewhere, strikers threatened engineers from the Mahoning Valley Railroad when they refused to allow them to harass replacement workers arriving at the Sheet and Tube aboard their trains. The strikers instead harassed the train operators themselves, tossing bricks through their windows and damaging a half-dozen train cars before the railroad abandoned service in East Youngstown.²⁶ When the saloons opened, men drank freely throughout the day.

Witness to the influence that alcohol played in the previous week of growing violence, Sheriff Umstead

pleaded with Mayor Cunningham to order local saloons closed. Cunningham refused, believing it to be outside his legal authority. Instead, the mayor would recommend to saloon owners to close their businesses, but he refused to force them to do so. According to the Liquor License Commission, the authority to close the saloons rested only with Umstead. Though Umstead opposed the Commission's opinion, at four o'clock that afternoon, he ordered the saloons closed.²⁷ Throughout East Youngstown, drunken idled workers emptied from the saloons onto the village streets.

The sun had already set in Northeast Ohio by four o'clock on Friday, January 7, 1916, when the forced closure of the saloons led a crowd of men to gather at the North Bridge on Wilson Avenue.²⁸ As the strikers began to move across the bridge toward the mill, they encountered 35 armed company guards, crouched in a defensive position at the end of the bridge. Without warning, a single gunshot rang out, forcing both sides into a retreat under a torrent of gunfire. The guards dropped to their bellies and raised their Springfield rifles in preparation for a charge.²⁹ Instead, the retreating strikers set fire to the nearby employment office. Witnessing the incipient stages of the fire from across the street, the massive crowd of strikers grew in their ferocity, transforming them into a violent mob.³⁰

First, the mob broke into a nearby clothing store, looted it and set it on fire. Next, they moved to the hardware store, smashing through the windows, and gathering up more than two-dozen

rifles stored inside. Others broke into and looted the saloons, just hours after the county sheriff ordered them closed.³¹ The mob smashed open liquor barrels, consuming the alcohol with buckets and scooped hands. "The streets of the village were literally deluged with liquor," witnesses claimed, while others carried bottles home for future consumption. Looters cleared the entire contents of jewelry stores and clothing shops. Men with "eyes inflamed and bloodshot, bulging from their sockets," struggled with armfuls of stolen goods.³²

Responding to a disturbance near the south entrance of the mill on Poland Avenue, rioters surrounded Sheriff Umstead and his deputies in their vehicle. A rioter threw pepper into Umstead's eyes, while another struck a deputy over the head with a club. Deputies quickly drew their weapons, holding off the violent men long enough to escape. Shortly after, rioters surrounded a responding ambulance, but as the rioters descended upon the vehicle, an ambulance attendant raised his revolver and fired into the crowd. The shot struck one man in the neck and head, and in the chaos, the ambulance narrowly escaped.³³

The size of the rowdy crowd on Wilson Avenue instantly exceeded the capabilities of the local police force. Fearing that the mob would target them, the East Youngstown policemen took up refuge in stores outside the immediate area of danger as the mob looted and burned the business district. As the fires grew, bystanders alerted the local fire department. The East Youngstown Fire Department responded promptly to the

alarm, though as they stretched their hose lines, an armed mob descended upon them. The angry crowd threatened the firemen and slashed their hoses, rendering them useless. The firemen abandoned their equipment, while local officials pleaded with them and other bystanders to operate the abandoned fire apparatus, offering \$1,000 to any man brave enough, but no one accepted. Helpless, the town begged for help from the Youngstown Fire Department, but they refused to respond without adequate protection.³⁴ In desperation, Umstead alerted Governor Willis, "Please send the National Guards to the village of East Youngstown at once. Lives have been taken, and many portions of the town are being burned. We are helpless in trying to cope with the situation."³⁵

Word of the disorder in East Youngstown reached Governor Frank Bartlett Willis in Columbus just before midnight. Willis was an untested young governor aged only 44. However, his 30,000-vote upset of incumbent James M. Cox in the 1914 general election had thrust him into the national political spotlight.³⁶ Willis was a "party man and partisan at heart," who began his political career in the Ohio General Assembly in 1900 before going to Congress in 1911.³⁷ Though he believed himself to be a friend of the working man and others considered him a progressive, he never played a significant role in passing labor legislation. During the 1914 campaign, Cox criticized Willis heavily for his lack of support for workman's compensation and for voting against the Clayton Antitrust Act.³⁸ With no delay, Willis ordered three regiments of the Ohio

National Guard to East Youngstown; however, it would be hours before they arrived. Meanwhile, the crowd of several thousand looted and burned more than 100 businesses until citizens armed themselves and organized.

Dressed in long dark trench coats, their faces hidden by cocked hats, the vigilantes moved down Wilson Avenue with authority. Organized by East Youngstown Solicitor and Ohio State Senator Oscar E. Diser and led by East Youngstown Police Captain Frank Cunningham, the men marched with revolvers in hand, firing into crowds of unruly men during the height of the disorder. Later dividing into smaller squads, the men searched anyone they encountered, arresting scores of foreigners. Finally, after six hours of chaos, the vigilantes finally brought things under control. With fires still raging around them, four companies from the Youngstown Fire Department arrived to combat the flames. Within a few hours, the fires were mostly under control.³⁹ At nearly two o'clock in the morning, peace had returned to East Youngstown, though not before the destruction of the entire business district, dozens receiving gunshot wounds, hundreds more injured, and as many as 30 presumed dead.

The vigilantes patrolled the streets into the night until 309 troops from the Fifth Regiment of the Ohio National Guard arrived by special train from Cleveland after 4:30 in the morning. The men of the Fifth Regiment were the first of more than 2,000 soldiers ordered into East Youngstown. Armed with repeating rifles and revolvers and

supplemented by a machine gun company, the men stationed in and around the Sheet and Tube Company, holding off further violence. As the sun began to rise that morning, the full extent of the damage became clear. Windows left smashed, stores left empty of their inventory, and smoke rising from the smoldering ruins, the night of disorder had left the village in ruins, images more reminiscent of the war in Europe.⁴⁰

Village police, volunteer militia, and soldiers patrolling all areas of the town throughout the night apprehended 70 men, charging most with carrying concealed weapons. When the jail at East Youngstown overflowed, the Mahoning County jail arranged to take them in. Village police then set out to recover stolen goods, forcing their way into nearly every home in East Youngstown. The police searched under beds and between mattresses, piling wagons full of recovered property and arresting guilty parties. Over the next several days, the raids produced more than 300 arrests and 152 prisoners forcing the council chambers, basement, and fire apparatus bay at the village hall to become makeshift holding cells.⁴¹

Later that morning, the village attempted to assess the totality of the event. Despite rumors of as many as 30 deaths, only one person died while trying to force entry into a store. Twelve injuries came from the initial engagement at the North Bridge, the first of more than 125 reported. Local hospitals treated 21 of those injured persons, a dozen of which received gunshot wounds. The most staggering figures came from the more than 50 buildings that received

damage, including restaurants, movie theaters, and the post office. In total, the first damage estimates to the structures exceeded \$1 million, with another \$500,000 in goods and property looted or destroyed.⁴²

In the immediate aftermath of the riotous night in East Youngstown, interested parties tried to direct blame for the intensity of the incident. Sheriff Umstead placed blame on Mayor Cunningham for refusing to order the closure of local saloons, though officials from the Liquor License Commission had argued that only the sheriff held that power. The mayor's failure, Umstead suggested, kept the saloons open until four o'clock, allowing the idled to drink freely throughout the day. The drunkenness of the workers had unquestionably escalated the volatility of the incident, but Umstead himself had neglected to close the saloons until the late afternoon, disputing the legal interpretation of the commissioners. Given the opportunity to refute Umstead's claims, Mayor Cunningham argued that closing the saloons at four o'clock gave strikers nothing better to do than to loot and set fire to the town.⁴³

Mayor Cunningham directed blame towards the officials at the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company for attempting to operate the mills without adequate police protection. Cunningham stated that he warned the officials two days before the incident that his small police force would be incapable of stopping even a minor uprising. AFL General Organizer Thomas H. Flynn placed blame on steel officials as well, but for their use of "paid slug-

gers." He also blamed Sheriff Umstead for swearing in "professional gunmen" at the request of Sheet and Tube officials. Flynn made sure to distance his organization from involvement in the riot, claiming that when the AFL failed to bring the two sides together, he lost any influence over the striking workers. Monday also brought calls for the resignation of village authorities for their inaction during the early stages of the uprising and the police force for their warrantless search of village homes and seizure of property, not to mention the improper arrest of scores of residents.⁴⁴

Management from both the Republic Iron and Steel and Youngstown Sheet and Tube kept silent throughout the next day about the events of the night before, other than to lament the fact that they had not avoided such destruction. At the same time, both Republic and Sheet and Tube appeared to concede to Mayor Cunningham's blame. For the time being, both companies would agree to withhold from efforts to resume operation. Privately, Republic conceded to its striking employees as well. The morning after the strike, Republic offered an immediate wage advance to 22 cents per hour if workers agreed to end their strike and return to work.⁴⁵

That Monday, newspapers nationwide published two theories, or rumors, for the demonstration at East Youngstown; foreign influence and a Wall Street plot. Governor Willis' order to Prosecutor Henderson to launch an investigation into the cause of the strike and the participating parties immediately dispelled the first rumor of

foreign influence. The claim suggested that two Austrians had conspired to interfere with munitions manufacturing. Though police arrested two Austrian men during the incident, the investigation found they had only participated in the mob violence. While Henderson managed to find that claim unfounded, the second theory of Wall Street influence remained unanswered for days.⁴⁶

The Wall Street claim, initially made by Thomas Flynn of the AFL, appeared in newspapers nationwide, including several New York newspapers. Flynn claimed that the demonstration at East Youngstown was the outcome of a plot developed by monied interests to rig stock prices as a means of blocking a rumored merger involving Youngstown Sheet and Tube. Among the companies included in the merger claims was John D. Rockefeller's Colorado Fuel and Iron. John D. Rockefeller Jr. issued the first response to Flynn's claim by telegram days later, stating that neither he nor his father ever had an interest in the Sheet and Tube, while also demanding that Flynn correct his statement.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, Mayor Cunningham's court prosecuted 72 prisoners. Thirty pled guilty to charges of drunkenness and disturbances, while 15 more received guilty verdicts for larceny. The court held 12 more prisoners for grand larceny and arson, while the grand jury sought the testimony of five others for weapon concealment charges. Cunningham's handling of the court drew the criticism of some witnesses, who charged the mayor with "heavy-handedness," imposing heavy fines on those with money while waiving fees for oth-

ers. Additionally, in the case of 27 men delivered from nearby Coitsville Township, Cunningham called no prosecuting witnesses. Village officials met any criticism against its officials with fierce resistance, and in one case, village police threatened to shoot newspapermen who published negative articles about them.⁴⁸

On Tuesday, January 11, with peace restored, the Fourth Regiment of the Ohio National Guard returned home to Cleveland, leaving 1,000 men from the Fifth and Eighth Infantry quartered on nearby train cars. At the same time, skilled laborers from Republic Iron and Steel applied for charters under the American Federation of Labor. It began first with the electricians and cranemen, then stationary engineers and firemen. Thomas Flynn claimed that as many as 80 percent of unskilled laborers at the plant had already organized, with the remainder willing to follow suit. If Republic and Sheet and Tube met the demands of organized men at their mills, the AFL hoped that the industry would establish a competitive wage scale throughout the Mahoning Valley.⁴⁹

With order books full at both Republic Iron and Steel and Youngstown Sheet and Tube, mill officials made their first serious efforts to reconcile the strike. That afternoon, strikers from Republic met with state mediator Fred C. Croxton to make a single request, a permanent wage increase of 10 percent for both skilled and unskilled labor. At the same time, strike leaders from the Sheet and Tube and its officials met at the bargaining table. In exchange for a wage

increase of 2 ½ cents per hour, the striking workers agreed to return to work. With a prior agreement to match wage scales between the two companies, the agreement to a new wage by workers at Sheet and Tube made an agreement at Republic imminent.⁵⁰

The next morning, Wednesday, January 12, strikers from Republic along with their newly organized unions voted in favor of ending the strike and returning to work at a new 22 cents per hour rate. At the Sheet and Tube, workers agreed to return to work as well, though the 22 cents rate was a concession from their original demand of 25 cents. Nonetheless, 7,000 striking workers from the two mills agreed to the terms and would return to work in the coming days. The agreement brought celebration that week, especially among the 300 workers from Republic who gathered to celebrate at the Krakusy Hall. At noon, 100 men returned to Republic for the afternoon shift.⁵¹

Meanwhile, Prosecutor Henderson pressed on in his investigation into the strike. Though Henderson had immediately dispelled the rumors of foreign influence, that position changed near the end of the investigation's first week. "From what the investigation has so far developed, I am convinced that outside influences were largely responsible." Henderson also agreed to investigate the manner in which steel companies in the Mahoning Valley set the wages, a system he believed violated the Sherman Anti-Trust law." The county courts busied themselves as well, arraigning 100 men in a makeshift courtroom in the third-floor hospital.⁵²

The following morning as the Fifth Regiment boarded trains bound for Cleveland, the Mahoning County grand jury called its first witness, Thomas H. Flynn. The next day, the investigation led to the first and most severe sentences of the entire investigation. Both John Anglin and John Dopin received maximum fines of \$500 and 30-day jail sentences for leading the strike riot. Saturday brought the first 19 indictments issued to Judge W.S. Anderson by the grand jury. The investigation charged 26 defendants with various crimes, mostly for carrying concealed weapons, though four men received charges of aggravated murder.⁵³

With dozens of strikers behind bars, Governor Willis ordered the Eighth Regiment home, the last remaining state troops in the Mahoning Valley. Despite the dismissal, East Youngstown remained in disarray. Throughout the week, dozens of reports of missing persons rolled into the police station, and with many people unaccounted for, searches among the smoldering rubble of the business district continued. A week later, political instability grew with the resignation of two village councilmen, Hugh Boyle and Peter Julius.⁵⁴ Now three weeks removed from the outbreak, Governor Willis summoned investigators to Columbus.

Prosecutor Henderson and Assistant Attorney General Henry S. Ballard left for Columbus to meet with Governor Willis on Thursday afternoon, but not before issuing another partial report of their investigation. The report included 37 indictments to the common pleas court, the majority

of which were for carrying a concealed weapon, while others were for arson and malicious destruction of property. The indictments also included serious charges; five men received charges of assault with attempt to kill for their attacks on Sheriff Umstead. Meanwhile, Federal Secret Service agents reported back to Washington, DC. They would return with orders to deport any “Youngstown Aliens” involved in the incident.⁵⁵ When the men returned to Youngstown, the grand jury investigation planned to issue its final report.

On the evening before the grand jury issued its final report, Prosecutor Henderson and County Detective Kane worked diligently to draft the final indictments. Over the last three months, the two men had interviewed more than 500 witnesses among the 250 individual cases. The next morning, the total individual indictments would reach 229, and as promised, the men were saving the best for last. The work took the men until nearly midnight. They exited the courthouse and entered their county vehicle parked in front only for its engine to sputter and die. Later revealed to be an “ingenious and dastardly” plot to kill the two men, a local mechanic found gasoline in the oil tank, a mixture he believed would have certainly killed both men in a massive explosion. Over the course of the investigation, both men recalled having received several threats on their lives, highlighting the seriousness of the investigation.⁵⁶

The longest grand jury session in the history of Mahoning County came to an end on March 8, 1916, 37 days after tensions at the North Bridge

boiled over into mass violence and destruction. The 15-member jury was decidedly working class, led by foreman Robert N. Kerr, a city grocer. The other jurors included six farmers, two blacksmiths, two carpenters, a liveryman, a tailor, and two retirees. “Tense excitement prevailed about the court house” as Prosecutor Henderson entered the courtroom at 9:30 in the morning. Judge W.S. Anderson, Henderson, and the jurors exchanged pleasantries before beginning the day’s work. The jury began by emphatically thanking Sheriff Umstead for his “ready and quick service” before reading the returns, the first of which included the most severe charges. For the murder of Attorney B.O. Shulman, the jury found Lois Begale guilty of murder in the second-degree, and three of his associates guilty of attempted manslaughter.⁵⁷ The foreman Kerr went on to the most damning indictments.

For their “disregard for law and order and for their legal procedure” during the escalation and riot, the Mahoning County Grand Jury ridiculed East Youngstown Mayor Cunningham, the village council, and its police force. The jury found that Cunningham ignored countless warnings of the growing dangers in the village, refusing to accept aid from the county and state until it was too late. The jury also charged the police force with negligence for failing to intervene in the disturbance in the evening of January 6 and throughout the day on January 7. For these failures, the jury called Cunningham, his fellow village officials and the police force “unfit and unworthy of filling the hon-

orable positions which they, and each of them, then occupied as officers of the village.”⁵⁸

The jury assigned blame for the escalation of violence at the North Bridge on a local member of the Ohio National Guard. Local soldiers reported to the Guard's Youngstown armory in the early afternoon of January 7 but having received no further orders while mobs gathered on the streets, one guard took matters into his own hands. Without such authority, the guard ordered 10 of his fellow soldiers to gather ammunition and to accompany him to the Youngstown Sheet and Tube property to aid company guards in protecting the mill. The jury found that in mobilizing precipitously, the guard hampered the operations of the local sheriff and the entire Ohio National Guard. Furthermore, the disorganization among the troops and the inexperience of the company guards had led to the improper discharge of firearms at the North Bridge, which in some cases, cut down innocent passersby on Wilson Avenue.⁵⁹ Kerr then prepared to announce the final 62 indictments, which would make headlines across the country.

The working-class jury understood, perhaps more than anyone, of the “dissatisfaction prevailing among the men” of East Youngstown. The “evidence [shows] a lawless condition of affairs surrounding the labor conditions in and about the steel industries of this valley ... ;” Kerr recited, “... an absolute disregard on the part of certain corporations and individuals ... of the rights of, or justice to, the laboring

class.” The jury handed down 62 indictments against Youngstown area steel companies, charging that they had conspired to form a “trust to fix the wages of common labor,” a violation of the Valentine Antitrust Law. The companies indicted included, the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company, the Republic Iron and Steel Company, the Brier Hill Steel Company, the Youngstown Iron and Steel Company, the Carnegie Steel Company, and E.H. Gary, executive chairman of the U.S. Steel Company.⁶⁰

The steel executives were outraged, expressing themselves in the newspapers in the days that followed. James A. Campbell, President of the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company, denied any collusion between the steel companies, arguing that when the larger U.S. Steel Company granted wage increases, the smaller independent plants followed on their own. E.H. Gary called the indictments “an outrage—a travesty.” “Astonished beyond measure,” Republic Iron and Steel Company executive chairman John A. Topping denied any knowledge of such a conspiracy.⁶¹ Two weeks after the jury handed down the indictments, the companies would appear before Judge W.S. Anderson to appeal the case.

A crowd gathered in Judge W.S. Anderson's courtroom on March 23, 1916, along with Prosecutor Henderson, plaintiff for the state and the law firm Hine, Kennedy & Manchester, and Squires, Saunders & Dempsy in defense of the steel companies. The law firm had filed a motion of demurrer near the legal deadline just a week before,

challenging the claim that the companies had agreed to fix prices or wages, thus violating the Valentine Antitrust Law. Attorney William Day representing the Carnegie Steel Company spoke first, arguing that the indictment was an attack on the lifestyles of the wealthy rather than a technical claim. Also, he argued that the Valentine Act was not applicable to the jury's indictment because it applied only to regulate trade, not labor. Judge Anderson consulted his counsel, who was in full agreement. Considering labor a commodity, they claimed, would deliver "a blow at labor, skilled and unskilled ... [which] would place labor in the position of slavery." The defense concurred, citing that no legal precedence existed in which labor had been considered a commodity, but rather, the Clayton Antitrust Law had definitively stated labor was not a commodity. Attorney Manchester representing the Sheet and Tube and Republic Iron and Steel companies agreed as well, adding that men meeting to fight for a living wage would be criminals if labor constituted a commodity.

The court reconvened in the afternoon, where Prosecutor Henderson delivered his opening arguments. He argued that claims of dishonesty and unclarity were faulty, they had been charged with a single offense, "combining in an unlawful trust for the purpose ... to fix the prices of steel, and to keep down the wages of common labor." "As far as I am concerned in the interest of humanity I would rather have this court held that labor is not a commodity," he argued, suggesting that the corporations had "done more than any one else

to make labor a commodity." Additionally, he defended, corporations, had, in fact, filed suit against labor unions for conspiring to raise wages,

Labor is too sacred to be oppressed. The reason of the conspiracy was to make more money on steel. If it was not so why was labor not called in to ask what price it wanted. The corporation told labor they would get 22 cents an hour and no more if the workmen did not accept that vote they could not get any work in this valley.⁶²

The next day, Judge James B. Kennedy made the closing arguments, arguing that the state would not be able to provide proof that any companies entered into a private agreement, to which Prosecutor Henderson snapped back "Is that so? Give us a chance to go to trial, and we will show you whether we can prove the charges or not." Kennedy went on to argue that the court should throw out the indictments because they were improperly drawn up. The general counsel of the Republic Iron and Steel Company stressed that a conviction against the company, and especially the Carnegie Steel Company, would ruin the companies because they were both foreign corporations.⁶³ Still unsure of his ruling, Judge Anderson rested the case to delineate, returning after five days.

Bright eyed, with silver hair that thickened at the back as it reached the top of his color, Judge Anderson sat upon his bench, nearly hidden behind a pile of law books from which he would

soon reference. The steel companies' seven defense attorneys sat before him, as did Prosecutor Henderson and his team on behalf of the state. The crowded courtroom became silent as Anderson began to read his 17-page decision. "This case comes before me upon a motion to quash the indictment found by the grand jury, upon several grounds alleged in the motion," he uttered. Heeding the concerns of the Republic Iron and Steel Company, Anderson denied any wish to injure the companies, acknowledging that "our prosperity in this city, and in this valley, depends upon the manufacturing establishments and their success." After nearly an hour, he reached his conclusion.

Anderson concluded that the charges made by the grand jury claimed that the companies had entered into an unlawful combination involving labor as a commodity. Anderson stood firm, "the labor of a man is [not] a commodity to be hocked in the market and to be sold to the highest bidder." Treating labor as a commodity would strip it of its dignity. Furthermore, the Valentine Act did not include labor or wages. The final decision came to the conclusion that the indictments had failed to identify why the case applied to the state antitrust act, and though he offered Henderson the opportunity to appeal his decision in higher courts, Judge Anderson sustained the motion to quash the indictments.⁶⁴

In the weeks and months after Judge Anderson dismissed the charges against the steel companies, the mills in the Mahoning Valley returned to full capacity fulfilling growing war orders.

Despite the widespread destruction of property, the unlikely solidarity of unorganized workers, and the unprecedented indictments of the steel industry, the laboring men had little to show for their efforts beyond their two-and-a-half-cent wage advancement. The workers continued to spend long hours in the barbaric conditions of the steel mills only to return home to live their lives in squalor, with no hope of a better future for them or their family. What the rumors in the immediate aftermath of the strike riot, the months-long investigations and trials had failed to identify was the future of East Youngstown and an answer to its widespread inequalities.

The economic decline of the iron and steel industry in the Mahoning Valley that caused partial and complete plant shutdowns in 1913 and 1914 quickly turned to prosperity when war orders began in 1915, bringing with it profits never before seen. By 1916, the rapid economic change and the instability of wartime manufacturing pushed even the quietest laborers to declare their demands loudly.⁶⁵ When the demands of the workers went ignored, rioters filled the streets, destroyed property, and committed acts of violence against members of their community. But economic repression alone can hardly account for such widespread indifference among the rioters, rather, the reason for the violence is as much about civic neglect than anything else.⁶⁶

There were few opportunities for residents in East Youngstown to become citizens; no attempts had been made to establish such schools since the Youngstown Y.M.C.A. abandoned

its plan in 1915, citing lack of funds. Largely for that reason, fewer than 450 of the village's 10,000 inhabitants were qualified to vote. There were no night schools either, leaving few opportunities for the many foreign-born residents to learn English. Also, there were few benevolent associations, and no churches or religious organizations, though more than a dozen saloons operated in the village.⁶⁷ The mud streets, lack of running water and sewage, and the absence of a board of health further express how devoid East Youngstown was of human value.

On the same January 12 afternoon that the first 100 men filed back into the Republic mill after ending their strike, the *Youngstown Vindicator* published a powerful editorial questioning the role that the community had played in the strike riot.

And now when we have all had time to think it over the most insistent question is, was all right between this community and the men who in a moment of passion and excitement became outlaws? Have we as a people done all that we should have done toward these men who in such a striking manner have proved themselves to be our neighbors ... the hands of the rest of us are not clean because we have neglected to our part by these neighbors of ours.

The editorial called for patience, and a willingness to teach the men what living in a free country meant. Fore-

most, it called for citizenship schools following the successful model in Cleveland and equal justice for immigrants under the law.⁶⁸ Clearly, at the verge of a tipping point, the future of East Youngstown remained unclear as the United States prepared for war.

President Woodrow Wilson's declaration of war, signed on April 6, 1917, brought the United States into the global conflict later called the Great War. Earlier in the year, the relentless assault of American merchant ships by German U-Boats had made war inevitable, and while men across the country joined the war effort, the men at home in places like the Mahoning Valley continued to produce at full capacity to do their part in winning the war. After 18 months, depleted of resources and manpower, the Germans signed an armistice agreement with the Allied powers, ending the war.

Soldiers returning home to East Youngstown after November 1918 found it a much different place. Brick and steel buildings now replaced the vacant lots, scarred buildings, and dilapidated wooden structures.⁶⁹ At the urging of its citizens, the village had established a building department to oversee the reconstruction of the business district to ensure the uniformity of the new businesses and homes. The community had also reorganized its police and fire forces and completed work on a village water supply system.⁷⁰ The Pittsburgh and Lake Erie Railroad Young Men's Christian Association building became one of the most prominent buildings in the community.

By far, the greatest legacy of the East Youngstown strike riot was the new worker-management relationship, established through “welfare capitalism,” a new focus by industry on the worker’s quality of life.⁷¹ The Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company began investing heavily in the community, carving out a new role for management in the Mahoning Valley. By the end of the war, the \$75,000 Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company Hospital was in full operation.⁷² Additionally, a village park was built and given the name Campbell Park after the company executive president. The Sheet and Tube also built a massive structure, known as the Community Hall at East Youngstown. The building became the village’s center for social activity for mill employees. Along with hosting various dances and social gatherings, the Community Hall offered free English classes during the day and evening in the more than 40 different languages spoken by its 15,000 employees.⁷³ The largest sign of the company’s new commitment was the establishment of its housing subsidiary.

High on the hill above the town overlooking the business district and the Sheet and Tube Company, the Buckeye Land Company began constructing worker housing in 1917. Within the year, the company would construct nearly 300 homes and 400 rental properties which they built, sold, and rented to employees at cost. The company constructed four different neighborhoods, the first of which, known as the Blackburn Plat, was a rental district. The other three neighborhoods, divided along racial lines, included; the Loveland Farms

Plat, home to Americans, the Highview Plat, home to the foreign-born; and a third for African-American families.⁷⁴ The Buckeye Land Company created a sense of community among the working people of the village, who otherwise would not have been able to gain adequate housing.

Three years after the strike, workers of the Sheet and Tube created a company paper with monthly distribution, known as the *Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company Bulletin*. “The new paper should at least help everyone to understand better the big organization of which they are a part of;” James A. Campbell said in its first edition.⁷⁵ The Buckeye Land Company used the paper to advertise homes, and the company furnished a list of all the homeowners. Along with publishing company safety procedures, goals, and facts, it featured sections covering “society” news, gossip, and sports. The sports section specifically covered the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Employees Base Ball League, organized in early 1919. Each department of the plant organized its own team, which brought “interest and enthusiasm” to the players and workers. The baseball games were used to meet acquaintances from the company and to develop company pride.⁷⁶

At a special meeting on April 26, 1926, East Youngstown became Campbell, Ohio, as the first step in escaping the “unfavorable national publicity ... irretrievably attached to the name East Youngstown.”⁷⁷ Though the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company continued to face labor struggles, first in 1919 and again during the more

prominently known Little Steel Strike in 1937, in a large sense, it accomplished its goal of escaping the 1916 strike. At the same time, as the Mahoning Valley has learned, eliminating the symbols of the area's steel history has only deepened the pain and longing for a time foregone. Now nearly 40 years removed from September 19, 1977, the day the steel industry died in Youngstown, known to locals as "Black Monday," it is hard to believe that the Mahoning Valley is better off by forgetting its history.

Unquestionably, the 1916 strike and riot at East Youngstown improved the perception of labor rights and the relationship between workers and management in the Mahoning Valley. For the economically repressed and civically neglected unskilled foreign-born laborers living in the boom-town, deprived of adequate housing and working in barbaric conditions within the mills, it was their unrest that led a community to renew its commitment to society's most vulnerable. It was also their unrest which pushed the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company to implement measures of welfare capitalism, unquestionably improving the lives of the working-class in the village. For the workers at East Youngstown, labor was too sacred to be oppressed, but to make a change, it took steel's indictment.

Works Cited

Primary Sources

"2 Theories of Disturbances Are Advanced." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 11, 1916, 22.

"4th Regiment Arrives Home." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 12, 1916, 22.

"5th Regiment Receives Word to Return Home." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 13, 1916, 21.

"8th Regiment Ordered Home by Gov. Willis." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 15, 1916, 2.

"1,000 Troops Reach City in Special Trains." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 3.

"A Community Duty to Our Neighbors." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 12, 1915, 6.

"A Conference to End Strike." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 6, 1916, 2.

"A Question of Authority." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 2.

American Labor Year Book, 1916. Rand School of Social Science, 1916. Google-Books.

"Another Batch of Indictments." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 20, 1916, 23.

"Another Bound Over in Probe." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 14, 1916, 3.

"Argue Motions to Quash Corporation Indictments." *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 22, 2016, 23.

"Ask Militia Be Retained." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 13, 1916, 3.

"Cars Stopped Men Attacked by Picket-

- ers." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 7, 1916, 1.
- "Citizens Urge Building Code." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 14, 1916, 27.
- "Confer Over Riot Matter." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 21, 1916, 28.
- "Conference." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 11, 1916, 2.
- "Council Scorns Change of Name." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 20, 1916, 24.
- "Big Strides." *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 8, 1915, 2.
- Buckeye Land Company. "Buckeye Homes." Youngstown, Ohio, 1918. Accessed June 24, 2017. <http://www.ohiomemory.org/cdm/ref/collection/p267401coll36/id/1945>.
- "E. Youngstown Now Campbell." *Youngstown Vindicator*, April 26, 1926, 10.
- "East Youngstown Is but Skeleton of a Village After Reign of Terror." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1915, 1.
- Fitch, John A. "Arson and Citizenship." *The Survey* 34 (March 1916).
- "Five Cars Damaged." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 7, 1916, 3.
- "Ghoulish Men Hold Hellish Riot Carnival." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 4.
- "Giant Combine to Keep Down Wages Has Been Charged." *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 8, 1916, 1.
- "Good Wishes from Our Chief." *Youngstown Sheet and Tube Bulletin* 1, no. 1 (August 1919): 1.
- "Governor Is Given the News." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 7, 1916, 3.
- "Grand Jury Is Not Discharged." *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 8, 1916, 3.
- "Heads of Companies Make Their Statements." *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 8, 1916, 3.
- "Improvements Cost Millions." *Youngstown Vindicator*, February 18, 1915.
- "Judge Anderson Quashes Steel Indictments." *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 28, 1916, 1, 11.
- "Labor Trouble Ends and Men Are All Happy." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 13, 1916, 1.
- "Local Firemen Do Good Work." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 4.
- "Looting Done by Wholesale." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 2.
- "Mayor Makes a Statement." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 2.
- "Men Quit Work." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 5, 1916, 2.
- "More Men Quit." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 6, 1916, 3.

- “Mr. Topping Is Astonished Beyond Measure.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 9, 1916, 3.
- “Nine Strikers Are Under Arrest.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 5, 1916, 22.
- “Nineteen Bills Are Returned.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 15, 1916, 1.
- “Organizers Claim.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 5, 1916, 2.
- “Organizers Increasing.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 6, 1916, 3.
- “Our Base Ball League,” *Youngstown Sheet and Tube Bulletin* 1, no. 1 (August 1919): 15.
- “Our Mills Crowded with Work and Orders Are Being Refused Daily.” *Youngstown Vindicator*. January 3, 1916, 2.
- “Plot to Kill Law Officials.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 9, 1916, 3.
- “Poland Side Relieved by Other Riots.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 2.
- “Probers Strike Promising Lead.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 13, 1916, 2.
- “Received Call for Assistance.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 6, 1916, 3.
- “Refuse to Give Lists of Those Who Are Tried.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 11, 1916, 9.
- “Republic Men Vote Return to the Mills.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 12, 1916, 3.
- “Resumption Is Expected.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 11, 1916, 3.
- “Rioters Are Brought to County Jail.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 2.
- “Riot Leaders Get the Limit.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 14, 1916, 22.
- “Search Made in Ruins for Lost.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 17, 1916, 3.
- “Statement of Thomas J. Flynn.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 4.
- “Steel Strike Ends and Plants Reopen with Rush Orders.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 12, 1916, 1.
- “Strike On.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, December 28, 1915, 3.
- “Still Out.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, December 29, 1915, 7.
- “Strike Grows More Serious.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 4, 1916, 21.
- “Strike Spreading.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 5, 1916, 2.
- “Submit Motions to Quash Bills.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 23, 1916, 2.
- “The Grand Jury Which Returned Indictments.” *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 9, 1916, 3.

"Uncertainty Marked; Third Victim Dead; Investigation Is On." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 11, 1916, 1.

"What Is Akron Doing?" *Youngstown Vindicator*, December 20, 1915.

"Wild Plot Rumors Being Probed and Loot Trials Started." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 10, 1916, 1.

"Will Organize." *Youngstown Vindicator*, December 30, 1915, 3.

"Won't Discuss the Strike." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 3.

"Would Not Accept." *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 3.

"Would Squash Indictments." *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 17, 1916, 12.

"Youngstown in Trouble." *Daily Deadwood (SD) Pioneer-Times*, January 8, 1916, 1.

Ridinger, Gerald Edwin. "The Political Career of Frank B. Willis." Dissertation, Ohio State University, 1957. Accessed June 24, 2017. https://etd.ohiolink.edu/!etd.send_file?accession=osu1486575236782539&disposition=inline.

Ross, John B. Youngstown, "(Campbell) 1916 Fire and Riot." Interview by Philip J. Bracy, April 20, 1981. Oral History Archive, Youngstown State University. Accessed June 13, 2017. <http://www.maag.yosu.edu/oralhistory/cd1/OH1052.pdf>.

Works Cited

Secondary Sources

Butler, Joseph Green Butler. *History of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley, Ohio*. New York, NY: American Historical Society, 1921. GoogleBooks.

Linkon, Sherry Lee, and John Russo. *Steeltown U.S.A.: Work & Memory in Youngstown*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2002.

Posey, Sean T. *Lost Youngstown*. Mount Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2016.

Notes

- 1 Joseph Green Butler, *History of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley, Ohio* (American Historical Society, 1921), 530. GoogleBooks.
- 2 Sherry Lee Linkon and John Russo, *Steeltown U.S.A.: Work & Memory in Youngstown* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 28.
- 3 “What Is Akron Doing?” *Youngstown Vindicator*, December 20, 1915, 6.
- 4 Linkon and Russo, *Steeltown U.S.A.*, 19.
- 5 *Ibid.*, 20.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 26–27.
- 7 Sean T. Posey, *Lost Youngstown* (Mount Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2016), 30.
- 8 Butler, *History of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley, Ohio*, 528.
- 9 Linkon and Russo, *Steeltown*, 28.
- 10 Butler, 528.
- 11 Linkon & Russo, *Steeltown*, 28.
- 12 *The American Labor Year Book, 1916* (Rand School of Social Science, 1916), 52.
- 13 Butler, *History of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley, Ohio*, 530.
- 14 *Youngstown Vindicator*, February 18, 1915, 2; March 8, 1915, 2.
- 15 “Strike On” *Youngstown Vindicator*, December 28, 1915, 3.
- 16 *Youngstown Vindicator*, December 28, 1915, 3; December 29, 2015, 7.
- 17 *Youngstown Vindicator*, December 29, 1915, 7; December 30, 1915, 3.
- 18 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 3, 1916, 2; January 4, 1916, 21.
- 19 “Nine Strikers Are Under Arrest,” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 5, 1916, 22.
- 20 “Strike Spreading,” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 5, 1916, 2.
- 21 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 5, 1916, 2; January 6, 1916, 2, 3.
- 22 “Strike Grows More Serious,” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 4, 1916, 21.
- 23 “Received Call for Assistance,” *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 6, 1916, 3.
- 24 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 6, 1916, 2, 3; January 8, 1916, 2.
- 25 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 7, 1916, 1, 3.
- 26 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 7, 1916, 1, 3.

- 27 "A Question of Authority," *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 2.
- 28 Butler, *History of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley, Ohio*, 530.
- 29 "2 Theories of Disturbances Are Advanced," *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 11, 1916, 22.
- 30 John B. Ross, Youngstown, (Campbell) 1916 Fire and Riot, interview by Philip J Bracy, April 20, 1981.
- 31 Ross, Youngstown, (Campbell) 1916 Fire and Riot, interview by Philip J. Bracy.
- 32 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 2.
- 33 "Poland Side Relieved by Other Riots," *Youngstown Vindicator*, 8 January 1916, 2.
- 34 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 1, 3, 4.
- 35 "Youngstown In Trouble," *Daily Deadwood (SD) Pioneer-Times*, January 8, 1916, 1.
- 36 Gerald Edwin Ridinger, "*The Political Career of Frank B. Willis*" (Dissertation, Ohio State University, 1957), 74.
- 37 *Ibid.*, 206.
- 38 *Ibid.*, 45.
- 39 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 4.
- 40 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 1, 3.
- 41 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 2; January 10, 1916, 10.
- 42 "East Youngstown Is but Skeleton of a Village After Reign of Terror," *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 1.
- 43 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 2.
- 44 *Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 2, 3; January 10, 1916, 1; January 11, 1916, 1.
- 45 "Statement of Thomas J. Flynn," *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 8, 1916, 4.
- 46 "Wild Plot Rumors Being Probed and Loot Trials Started," *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 10, 1916, 1.
- 47 "Steel Strike Ends and Plants Reopen with Rush Orders," *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 12, 1916, 1.
- 48 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 11, 1916, 1, 9.
- 49 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 11, 1916, 3; January 12, 1916, 22.
- 50 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 11, 1916, 2; January 12, 1916, 1.
- 51 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 12, 1916, 3; January 13, 1916, 1.

- 52 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 13, 1916, 2, 3; January 14, 1916, 3.
- 53 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 13, 1916, 21; January 14, 1916, 22; January 15, 1916, 1.
- 54 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 15, 1916, 2; January 17, 1916, 3; January 20, 1916, 24.
- 55 *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 20, 1916, 20; January 21, 1916, 20, 28.
- 56 *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 8, 1916, 3; March 9, 1916, 3.
- 57 *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 8, 1916, 3; March 9, 1916, 3.
- 58 "Grand Jury Is Not Discharged," *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 8, 1916, 3.
- 59 "Giant Combine to Keep Down Wages Has Been Charged," *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 8, 1916, 1.
- 60 "Giant Combine to Keep Down Wages Has Been Charged," *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 8, 1916, 1.
- 61 *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 8, 1916, 3; March 9, 1916, 3.
- 62 *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 17, 1916, 12; March 22, 2016, 23.
- 63 "Submit Motions to Quash Bills," *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 23, 1916, 2.
- 64 "Judge Anderson Quashes Steel Indictments," *Youngstown Vindicator*, March 28, 1916, 1,11.
- 65 John A. Fitch, "Arson and Citizenship," *The Survey* 34 (March 1916): 479.
- 66 Fitch, 480.
- 67 Fitch, "Arson and Citizenship," 477.
- 68 "A Community Duty to Our Neighbors," *The Youngstown Vindicator*, January 12, 1916, 6.
- 69 Butler, *History of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley, Ohio*, 531.
- 70 "Citizens Urge Building Code," *The Youngstown Vindicator*, January 14, 1916, 27.
- 71 Linkon and Russo, *Steeltown U.S.A.*, 30.
- 72 Butler, 531.
- 73 Butler, 533.
- 74 Buckeye Land Company, "Buckeye Homes" (Youngstown, Ohio, 1918).
- 75 "Good Wishes from Our Chief," *Youngstown Sheet and Tube Bulletin* 1, no. 1 (August 1919): 1.
- 76 "Our Base Ball League," *Youngstown Sheet and Tube Bulletin* 1, no. 1 (August 1919): 15.
- 77 "E. Youngstown Now Campbell," *Youngstown Vindicator*, April 26, 1926, 10.

Arrows of Affliction: The Bubonic Plague and Its Representation in Medieval Art and Literature

Marisa Kahla

American Military University

ABSTRACT

No other disease in the history of mankind has been as devastating and destructive as the bubonic plague. By the time it finally burned itself off toward the end of the fourteenth century, the second bubonic plague epidemic had claimed the lives of roughly 60% of Europe's entire population. It has gained notoriety as one of the greatest-ever demographic disasters in human history and laid the groundwork for significant social and cultural changes in the centuries that followed. Its most profound and lasting impact can be seen in medieval art and literature, its representation both shocking and vivid. Using the plague as a literary and artistic trope, medieval society was able to address their fears of mortality and divine wrath and show how the plague served as the ultimate equalizer.

Keywords: plague, bubonic plague, art, literature, Death(as in Grim Reaper Death), Black Death, divine wrath, and disease.

Flechas de aAfflicción: La Plaga Bubónica y Su Representación en al Arte y Lieratura Medievales

RESUMEN

Ninguna otra enfermedad en la historia de la humanidad ha sido tan devastadora y destructiva como la peste bubónica. Para cuando finalmente se consumió a fines del siglo XIV, la segunda epidemia de peste bubónica había cobrado la vida de aproximadamente el 60% de la población de Europa. Ha ganado notoriedad como uno de los desastres demográficos más grandes de la historia de la humanidad y sentó las bases para importantes cambios sociales y culturales en los siglos que siguieron. Su impacto más profundo y duradero se puede ver en el arte y la literatura medievales, y su

representación es impactante y vívida. Utilizando la plaga como un tropo literario y artístico, la sociedad medieval fue capaz de abordar sus temores a la mortalidad y la ira divina y mostrar cómo la plaga sirvió como el máximo ecualizador.

Palabras clave: plaga, peste bubónica, arte, literatura, muerte (la personificación de la muerte), Peste Negra, divina ira y enfermedad

痛苦之箭：黑死病及其在中世纪艺术和文学中的体现

摘要

人类历史上从没有任何一种疾病能像黑死病一样极具摧毁性。当黑死病在十四世纪末终于平息殆尽时，第二次黑死病大流行已经夺去欧洲总人口将近60%的生命。黑死病被称为人类历史上最严重的人口灾难，同时为接下来的数个世纪中的显著社会变化和文化变化奠定了基础。中世纪艺术和文学中描述了黑死病所造成的最严重和持久的影响。黑死病的表现形式既震撼又生动。通过将黑死病瘟疫作为一种文学和艺术比喻，中世纪社会表达了其对死亡和天罚的恐惧，同时表明了瘟疫如何扮演终结者的角色。

关键词：瘟疫，黑死病，艺术，文学，死亡（死神），天罚，疾病

The final words of Brother John Clyn, a Franciscan friar of the Covenant of Kilkenny, appear grimly resigned, the last entry of 1348 fatalistic and defeated. He describes himself as expecting death among the dead, the great pestilence around him so profound that it sent both confessor and penitent to the grave together.¹ Yet, he remains dismally hopeful, proclaiming, “I leave parchment for continuing

the work, if haply any man survive, and any of the race of Adam escape this pestilence and continue the work which I have commenced.”² There follows a very brief entry in 1349, the words written in a different hand. They are succinct and poignant, simply explaining, “here, it seems, the author died.”³

Eerie and abrupt, such a scene would have been commonplace follow-

ing an outbreak of the bubonic plague. Perhaps no other disease in the history of mankind has been as devastating and destructive, killing en masse and laying waste to entire cities. Its effects were widespread and overwhelming, affecting everything from politics to economics to religion. Historians like Louise Marshall have argued that the outbreak and spread of the plague is one of the single most decisive events in late medieval/early modern history.⁴ Medieval art and literature depict vivid and graphic images of the plague, from its first appearance in sixth-century Byzantium to its disastrous resurgence in fourteenth-century Europe. Unflinching and candid, both art and literature incorporated a variety of patterns, motifs, and themes to discuss the theories, beliefs, and fears regarding the plague. These artistic styles captured the breakdown of societal conventions, physical and metaphorical representations of death, and how the disease spread, usually represented in the form of plague arrows sent from the heavens, striking down humanity with unwavering ferocity. Utilizing their skills, artists and writers began employing the plague as a trope in their work, using the disease to address the concerns and fears of their society such as death, mortal sin, and the fear of divine wrath.⁵

Nathaniel Weyl suggests that the epidemic which swept through Europe between 1347 and 1350 was the greatest single disaster, measured in loss of human life, in history.⁶ While this plague was responsible for wiping out roughly one-third of Europe's population in the span of a few years, it was

hardly the first. In fact, the devastating fourteenth-century outbreak was the second plague pandemic to carve its mark into history, a lethal descendant of an earlier and equally ruthless predecessor. Humanity's first brush with the bubonic plague occurred several centuries earlier in the Eastern Roman Empire during the reign of Justinian I. Beginning in 541, the plague seized much of the Byzantine empire before finally arriving in Constantinople in 542. The Byzantine historian Procopius thoroughly recorded what came to be known as the Plague of Justinian. Never before had such pestilence besieged the empire and, alarmed by the havoc it caused, Procopius described the event as a calamity, "by which the whole human race came near to being annihilated."⁷

While the exact origins of the plague are still debated, Procopius reasoned that the plague which consumed Byzantium originated in Pelusium, a major city in Egypt's Nile Delta. The disease traveled easily along the coastline, ferrying in the hulls of merchant ships along trade routes throughout the Mediterranean. Infection rapidly took hold of coastal cities, the disease slowly but surely pushing its way inland. Procopius described the onset of the disease as sudden and crippling, a high fever followed by delirium and vomiting. Frightening and unnerving in their own right, these symptoms were simply the precursor to a more alarming affliction, the appearance of bubonic swellings. He explained that these swellings, called *boubons*, frequently appeared beneath the armpit or around the groin.⁸

For those afflicted, once the swellings appeared death was all but guaranteed. Remarking on this, Procopius described how “death came in some cases immediately, in others after many days; and with some the body broke out with black pustules... and these did not survive even one day, but all succumbed immediately.”⁹

Once it reached Constantinople, the plague raged and burned its way through the heart of the city, delivering a crippling blow to the population. While the accuracy of his claims is still the subject of debate, Procopius declared that at the height of the Byzantine plague, “the dead reached five thousand each day, and again it even came to ten thousand and still more than that.”¹⁰ Unable to keep up with the mounting number of victims, traditional burial methods had to be foregone in favor of a more efficient mass burial system. According to Procopius, the bodies of victims had to be stacked high in the city’s churches and mounted towers and sometimes loaded onto skiffs to be released out to sea.¹¹

By the end of its reign, the Plague of Justinian had claimed the lives of an estimated 25 million people.¹² Although it continued to resurface periodically until the eighth century, no other outbreaks were as severe or as devastating as the Byzantine epidemic. Over the next few centuries, the terror of the plague waned and gradually it disappeared from historical record, its desolation becoming the stuff of myths and legends. The monster had faded, its legacy becoming little more than a disturbing yet distant threat. It would

soon find new ground in a much more populated country, however, and its impact would be just as traumatic and profound.

In the late summer of 1346, the bustling port city of Kaffa found itself besieged by the Mongolian army. The densely populated Kaffa, an active seaport and popular trade center located in the Crimean peninsula, would turn out to be the perfect breeding ground for the next resurgence of the plague. It struck the Mongol army first, appearing suddenly and spreading like wildfire. An account by Gabriele de’ Mussi described the appearance of the dreadful disease, explaining that, “in 1346... countless numbers of Tartars and Saracens were struck down by a mysterious illness which brought sudden death.”¹³ The disease was quick, painful, and efficient, cutting through the Mongol army effortlessly and dropping them where they stood. Like a macabre phoenix rising from the ashes, the bubonic plague had returned.

The alarming account de’ Mussi provided bore a striking resemblance to the epidemic described by Procopius. Like the plague which swept through Byzantium, de’ Mussi reported that “the whole army was affected by a disease which overran ... and killed thousands upon thousands every day. All medical advice and attention was useless; the Tartars died as soon as the signs of disease appeared on their bodies: swellings in the armpit or groin caused by coagulating humours, followed by a putrid fever.”¹⁴ The few remaining Tartars, those not afflicted by the disease, opted to flee the port of Kaffa and abandoned the

siege. Their departure, however, would not come without its consequences. Before leaving, the Tartars loaded the bodies of those who died from the plague onto catapults and lobbed them into the city.¹⁵ Once within the city walls, the plague, specifically the rats and fleas carrying the plague, was able to quickly spread throughout the city.

Once in Kaffa, it was only a matter of time before the plague made its way onto departing trade ships which had been docked in the ports. According to de' Mussi, "as it happened, among those who escaped from Kaffa by boat were a few sailors who had been infected with the poisonous disease. Some boats were bound for Genoa, others went to Venice and to other Christian areas. When the sailors reached these places and mixed with the people there, it was as if they had brought evil spirits with them: every city, every settlement, every place was poisoned by the contagious pestilence."¹⁶ By the early spring of 1348, the plague had already spread through Italy and had rapidly seized control of France and Spain. By 1349, it reached England. By 1350, the second bubonic plague pandemic covered nearly all of Europe.

Like a wildfire cutting through kindling, the plague burned its way through every city it came across. It was not uncommon for an entire town to become infected and be all but wiped out by the disease. The shock and horror of those who survived was captured by contemporary authors and writers who did their best to describe the devastation they were witnessing. In the

words of the Italian chronicler, Agnolo di Tura, the plague, "was a cruel and horrible thing ... it seemed that almost everyone became stupefied seeing the pain. It is impossible for the human tongue to recount the awful truth. Indeed, one who did not see such horribleness can be called blessed."¹⁷ From Tournai, the French poet Gilles Li Muisis recounted a similar sight, remarking, "no one, whether rich, in moderate circumstances, or poor, was secure, but everyone from day to day waited on the will of the Lord."¹⁸ Cruel and indiscriminate, the plague struck young and old alike, rich and poor, and killed without regard for class, status, or creed.

The origin and cause of the disease baffled physicians and little could be done to treat those afflicted. As such, the mode and ease of transmission became a focal point for many authors. In his detailed, thorough account of the plague, Giovanni Boccaccio explained, "to the cure of this malady, neither medical knowledge nor the power of drugs were of any effect ... the physicians could form no just idea of the cause, nor consequently devise a true method of cure."¹⁹ The virulence of the plague was incredible and Boccaccio went on to describe how it jumped from the sick to the healthy, spreading daily like a fire coming in contact with dry tinder.²⁰ So swift were the ravages of the disease that Boccaccio lamented that it was not uncommon for someone to be healthy at dawn and then dead by dusk.²¹ Sicilian author Michael Platiensis recorded a similar account as the plague gripped the city of Messina. He described how, "in their bones [the victims] bore so virulent a

disease that anyone who only spoke to them was seized by a mortal illness and in no manner could evade death. The infection spread to everyone who had any contact with the diseased.”²²

Just as with Procopius’ account and, later, de’ Mussi’s, the symptoms of the plague were painful and gruesome. Boccaccio provided a vivid, disturbing description of the appearance of the disease, specifically the infamous bubonic swelling. “There appeared certain tumours in the groin or under the armpit ... and afterwards purple spots in most parts of the body, in some cases large but few in number, in others less and more numerous. Both were the usual messengers of death.”²³ Platiensis attested to this as well, remarking that once the swellings appeared, death was all but imminent. He described them as, “exceedingly painful, and irritated the body, causing the sufferer to vomit blood. The sickness lasted three days, and on the fourth, at the latest, the patient succumbed.”²⁴

As terrible as the infection was, the cruelty of the plague extended beyond death and infection. Due to the fear and trauma caused by the spread of the disease, an odd phenomenon began to emerge in the writings of many contemporary writers. Although the cause of the disease was still not known, people quickly came to the conclusion that the infection must be contagious and that close proximity to those stricken with the disease would lead to infection. As such, a stunning breakdown of traditional social obligations arose in response. According to Boccaccio, “a brother fled from his brother, a wife

from her husband, and (what is more uncommon) a parent from its own child.”²⁵ Di Tura lamented a similar account in Siena, explaining how during the height of the disease, “father abandoned child, wife husband, one brother another; for this illness seemed to strike through breath and sight.”²⁶ There was hardly time for grief or mourning in the grip of the plague and as such, human interaction and empathy were often the first to break down.²⁷

As society appeared to collapse around them, another alarming trend began to emerge in the annals of medieval literature. With social ties and obligations broken, significant role reversals were noted by observers. Reversal reactions were not uncommon in the wake of widespread destruction and calamity, but the plague produced an entirely new set of behavior. As Rene Girard pointed out, the plague had the unique ability to turn an honest man into a thief, a virtuous man into a lecher, and a prostitute into a saint. Friends would murder friends and enemies would embrace enemies.²⁸ It seems that as society broke down, the familiarities of society broke down with it.

With surgeons and physicians providing little to no answer as to the cause and spread of the disease, people began developing their own methods of protection. In the words of Boccaccio, some “maintained free living to be the best preservative, and would balk no passion or appetite they withheld to gratify, drinking and revelling incessantly from tavern to tavern.”²⁹ Because of this, the absolute worst of society soon emerged among those who sur-

vived. Excessive drinking, stealing, and every kind of vulgarity became commonplace in plague-stricken cities. Jean de Venette, a Carmelite friar, labeled these actions as deplorable, remarking, “men were more avaricious and grasping than before, even though they had far greater possessions. They were more covetous and disturbed each other more frequently with suits, brawls, disputes, and pleas.”³⁰ It seemed that everywhere, humanity could do little but watch as the very foundations of civilization appeared to crumble away in the wake of the plague.

Additionally, the second pandemic mirrored the earlier Byzantine outbreak in how communities coped with and disposed of the mounting dead. Just as with the Plague of Justinian, the European outbreak killed so many so quickly that traditional burial methods and funeral procedures had to be completely abandoned. In conjunction with the horror and desolation, they witnessed among the living, medieval authors also began writing about the flippant, almost callous treatment of the dead. Boccaccio described the nightmarish scenes around him, claiming that, “every place was filled with the dead” and that because of this “people cared no more for dead men than we care for dead goats.”³¹ Cold indifference and an adoption of hardened apathy added just one more level of cruel inhumanity to the culture of the plague.

Overwhelmed by the sheer number of victims who fell to the plague, the churches in most cities found that they did not have enough consecrated

ground to perform traditional, Christian burials. With cemeteries full and more bodies arriving by the hour, many churches began resorting to digging huge trenches for mass burials.³² Boccaccio described this grim solution, remarking that in these trenches, the church buried hundreds, stacking them on top of one another like bales of hay, until the trench was full.³³ Back in Siena, Di Tura recounted that, “in many places in Siena great pits were dug and piled deep with the multitude of dead. And they died by the hundreds both day and night, and all were thrown in those ditches and covered over with earth. And as soon as those ditches were filled more were dug.”³⁴ Another, equally tragic account relayed by de’ Mussi described how, “the cemeteries [were] failing, it was necessary to dig trenches to receive the bodies of the dead. It frequently happened that a husband and wife, a father and son, a mother and daughter—nay, whole families—were cast together in the same pit.”³⁵

Scenes of these mass burials found their way into the artwork of the time, one of the most jarring examples appearing in the chronicles of Gilles Li Muisis and his description of the burial of plague victims in Tournai.³⁶ The grim image depicts a lone grave digger who is quickly becoming overwhelmed by the arrival of survivors carrying multitudes of coffins for burial. As tragic and ghoulish as it may appear, such was the state of many towns once the plague struck. As de’ Mussi decried, “I know not where to begin: everywhere there was weeping and mourning. So great was the mortality that men hardly

dared to breathe. The dead were without number, and those who still lived gave themselves up as lost, and prepared for the tomb.”³⁷ Such scenes make it terrifyingly clear that during the height of the plague’s rampage, the dead were rapidly beginning to outnumber the living.

At its peak, the plague touched every aspect of medieval faith and culture. It weighed heavily and prominently on the hearts and minds of all who encountered it and, as such, distinct literary patterns and tropes became prevalent in much of the literature produced during its spread. Perhaps the most salient theme was the belief that the plague was a result of divine wrath. Humanity already lived in a somewhat constant state of fear that incorrect practice or worship would result in calamities exactly like the outbreak of the plague. As with other traumatic events like earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, the explanation for the plague was not sought in the human sphere but rather the divine. In the view of Christine Boeckl, medieval society saw illness, particularly epidemics, as divine punishment for the sins of humanity.³⁸ Sharon Achinstein echoes a similar argument, claiming that ever since the first outbreak in fifth-century Byzantium, the plague almost immediately became coded into Christian theology and was likened to other biblical examples of divine punishment.³⁹

It came as no surprise, then, that the notion of divine wrath colored much of the literature produced during the height of the plague. In his recording of the outbreak in Sicily, de’ Mussi described the pestilence as “the judge-

ment of God” and lamented that it was the sins of man that had caused “God’s chastisement to manifest.”⁴⁰ Boccaccio remarked on this as well, declaring he had no doubt that, “the plague was sent from God as a just punishment for our sins.”⁴¹ Rather than fearing the spread of the disease and the havoc it wrought, there was a kind of grim acceptance that became prolific through much of medieval thought. As the Italian scholar Petrarch wrote, “oh happy people of the future, who have not known these miseries and perchance will class our testimony with the fables. We have, indeed, deserved these [punishments] and even greater.”⁴²

In a letter to a friend, Petrarch relayed his fears that the plague was a harbinger for something much worse, remarking, “it looks to me as if the end of the world is at hand.”⁴³ He was not alone in his thoughts. Having witnessed the great suffering and loss of life that appeared to be running rampant through all of Europe, concerns that the plague was simply a precursor to the end of all life on earth were extensive. Marshall argues that for many frightened and anxious Christians, the advent of the plague was not just punishment from God but also heralded the beginning of the End of Times which would eventually culminate in Armageddon.⁴⁴

In a society still torn by numerous wars and struggling to regain its footing following the devastating famine of 1315–1317, the plague was but one more step toward judgment day. Faye Getz lends credence to this theory by explaining that the matrix of thought surrounding much of the Christian un-

derstanding of the plague stemmed from a biblical framework, specifically the Book of Revelation. In this, she argues that the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse were Pestilence, War, Famine, and finally Death, concepts and characteristics medieval citizens would have been intimately familiar with by the time the plague made its appearance in the mid-fourteenth century.⁴⁵

Petrarch, in particular, seemed to capture one of the universal, unspoken fears which haunted all survivors of the plague: the fear of being left alone. Like many during the outbreak, Petrarch could only watch helplessly as his friends and loved ones succumbed to the illness in droves. According to Renee Watkins, Petrarch frequently described scenes of mass terror and mass burial in his letters and viewed himself as a hard-pressed survivor in constant fear of death.⁴⁶ The year 1348 seemed to be particularly merciless toward Petrarch as the plague suddenly removed several of his closest friends and the great love of his life, Laura. Grief-stricken and reeling, Petrarch proclaimed in a letter to his brother, “what are we to do now? Now that we have lost almost everything and found no rest? The year 1348 has left us lonely and bereft.”⁴⁷

Grieving the loss of his loved ones, Petrarch’s writings frequently reflected the mindset of a man possessing a sense of weary self-abandonment in God.⁴⁸ He accepted the plague as punishment for the sins of mankind but bemoaned its cruelty and callousness as it killed by the thousands. In much of his later writing, there appears to be a significant dichotomy in Petrarch’s words,

a desire for death mixed with a fear of it.

By the spring of 1349, Petrarch recounted how he could not even weep for the loss of his friends anymore and had begun to feel like the solitary survivor of a great calamity. “Where are our dear friends now?” he wondered in letter to one of his few surviving friends. “Where are the beloved faces? Where are the affectionate words, the relaxed and enjoyable conversations? What lightning bolt devoured them? What earthquake toppled them? What tempest drowned them? What abyss swallowed them? There was a crowd of us, now we are almost alone.”⁴⁹ As Renee Watkins grimly points out, for someone like Petrarch survival in the midst of so much death was nearly unbearable; in such a hellish landscape death would have been a mercy.⁵⁰ It seems that unbeknownst to him, Petrarch had unwittingly become the voice of the generation of survivors who were left alone to pick up the pieces.

In addition to the literature, the plague was responsible for an unexpected resurgence of ancient motifs in medieval art and expression. The most prominent of these was the symbol of the arrow and its representation as a bringer of the plague. A deadly weapon by itself, the arrow could kill swiftly and without warning, attributes which made it the perfect symbol for the horror of plague. One of the earliest references to this idea came from de’ Mussi and his description of the disease which cut down the Mongol army. According to his account, “it was as though arrows were raining down from heaven to strike and crush the Tartars’ arrogance.

They fell as if struck by a lethal arrow which raised a tumor on their bodies.”⁵¹

According to Boeckl, the arrow exemplifies one of the oldest and most commonly utilized symbols used to signify pestilence.⁵² The plague arrow was primordial, dating all the way back to the Greek pantheon and the god Apollo. The patron god of prophecy and music, Apollo also had the unique ability to strike down humanity with arrows of pestilence and disease. The presence and use of plague arrows are mentioned in many classical texts and are almost always attributed to Apollo who aims his bow at humans to punish them for their transgressions with sudden illness and death.⁵³

The ancient symbol of the arrow quickly worked itself into a more modern setting in mid-fourteenth-century art and literature. While still attributing the outbreak of the plague to the work of an angry and vengeful deity, the symbolic arrow of pestilence was transferred from the skilled hands of Apollo to the arsenal of the Christian God. As it was in Graeco-Roman myth, the arrow made its appearance as a potent weapon in God's armory in the Old Testament, serving as an instrument of sudden, divinely inflicted misfortune, disease, and death.⁵⁴

Such an image was particularly vivid in the artwork of Giovanni Sercambi and his illustrations of humanity being struck down by plague arrows from above.⁵⁵ The scene is graphic, depicting winged beings holding bows loaded with deadly, disease-ridden arrows hovering menacingly above helpless

targets. They are merciless in their hunt and numerous arrows protrude from the unlucky victims scattered along the ground. The afflicted are piled high and riddled with arrows, their expressions contorted in agony and suffering.⁵⁶ It is perhaps one of the most explicit illustrations of the metaphorical plague arrow in use and the utter helplessness of humanity to stop it.

In response to this, there was a rise in artistic representations of the *Madonna della Misericordia*, or the Virgin of Mercy. The images often depict the towering Virgin shielding humanity from the deadly blows of the arrows raining down from the heavens. As Marshall explains the plague arrows used by Christ to mete out justice against the sins of humanity are directly thwarted by the presence of the Virgin.⁵⁷ Their roles are polarized, vengeful and punitive on the side of Christ yet merciful and protective on the side of the Virgin.

One of the best examples of this can be seen in the *Plague Madonna Della Misericordia* by Barnaba da Modena.⁵⁸ In it, the Virgin stands tall and imposing, her cloak extended to deflect the arrows that have been fired at the cowering people at her feet. She is both merciful and formidable, able to avert the arrows easily and keep humanity safe. This image, one of a merciful and divine guardian, became remarkably popular in medieval artwork as fearful, anxious citizens sought protection from the heavenly Mother against the wrath of God.

However, it was not just ancient deities and the Christian God who ap-

peared as bearers of plague arrows. In some instances, the personification of Death itself became the wielder of the weapons, taking personal control of the suffering it wrought. One painting in particular exemplified this grim representation, a fresco painted along the walls of a former Abbey in France.⁵⁹ The painting shows a tall, blindfolded woman holding two thick handfuls of barbed arrows. She is intended to be the physical manifestation of death, the victims of her arrows littering the ground around her feet. The figure of death in this image is indifferent and impersonal, literally blinded to class or creed and striking indiscriminately at all around her.

With death becoming such a prominent fixture in everyday life during the height of the plague, it comes as no surprise that it often found itself represented in a physical, frequently human-esque form in both art and literature. The concept of death shifted from a natural, if sudden, event to an actual character in the lives and thoughts of the medieval people. A good example of this can be seen in *The Apocalypse Tapestries* where the manifestation of Death has taken on the form of a well-known and feared biblical figure: the Fourth Horseman of the Apocalypse.⁶⁰ Sitting atop an alabaster steed with a sharp sword in his right hand, Death is displayed as riding aimlessly from one place to another, reaping as he goes. He is skeletal and ghoulish, a foreboding harbinger of terrible things to come.

Other images displayed Death taking a much more active role in the ending of a life. Deathbed scenes were

quite common in fourteenth-century art and there existed a desire to capture and immortalize the final moments of someone's life. In many of these portraits, the sick person is left alone and the room is emptied in the presence of Death, generally represented by a grim, skeletal figure.⁶¹ Death could often be seen hovering just on the outside of a house or room, looming and omnipresent in the wake of the plague. Usually, in such scenes, Death is depicted as a stoic, expressionless figure whose presence is required to end physical suffering. Not all of these interpretations are as kind, however. One particularly cruel illustration shows Death physically strangling a victim afflicted with the illness.⁶² It is a deathbed image but the figure of Death has taken on the role of murderer, bony fingers wrapped around the throat of the afflicted and violently ushering in his demise.

The figure of Death found its way into medieval literature as well, appearing, most notably, as a character in Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer's character of Death is transformed into a complex and active member of medieval society, a stark contrast from its contemporary representation as a silent, looming presence. In "The Pardoner's Tale," Death effectively becomes judge, jury, and executioner of those who cross his path. Contrary to the widespread belief that Death was merciless and indiscriminate, Chaucer depicts Death as a moral figure intent on maintaining justice in the world. According to Peter Beidler, the character of Death in Chaucer's "The Pardoner's Tale" is selective and

only carries off those he perceives to be evil.⁶³ In the tale, the Pardoner's main argument is that wickedness and vice invite Death and that morality is the only thing that can save one's soul. The Pardoner proceeds to give his audience a simple yet effective warning: if they act sinfully, Death will take them. In the words of Beidler, "what could be a more effective warning against depravity than the sinister image of the plague, the most frightening killer in Chaucer's time?"⁶⁴

In "The Pardoner's Tale," Death is both a character and an adversary, representing both goal and foil to the three main characters. When they are first introduced, the three rioters are drinking to excess and actively engaging in gluttony and vice. Their behavior is remarkably similar to what Boccaccio had described in witnessing people's reversion to immorality and depravity in the face of death and misery. Overindulgence and instant gratification were things in which many engaged when faced with the lethal grip of the plague and it was something Chaucer would have been all too familiar with in regions where the plague struck.⁶⁵ In the case of Chaucer's three rioters, this is precisely the response they adopted.

The rioters witness a passing funeral and, upon inquiring about the departed, are told that a cowardly thief named Death killed the man. The pallbearer goes on to tell them that Death resides in the next village over and that "there hath the tyrant flain of every age, woman, and man, and child, and hind, and page."⁶⁶ Overly drunk and full of bravado, the three men declare that

they will avenge the dead man and take Death head on. They are arrogant and cavalier, "elate with frantic joy, Death, should they meet him, they will quick destroy."⁶⁷

The exchange is interesting in that it places both the character and concept of Death in the tangible realm. For Chaucer, who likely had personal familiarity with death due to the plague, it is likely that these characters, flamboyant though they may seem, were actual caricatures of real people and their response to the outbreak of disease. Healthy and feeling invincible, the three men vow not only to take on the very embodiment of Death but to make him bow to their will. It is entirely possible that some men, like the ones mentioned in "The Pardoner's Tale" believed the same and felt they could outwit the cruel and seemingly inescapable clutches of Death. As Beidler explains, the unfairness of death and, by extension, the plague, provided ample motivation for the three rioters' and their goal to destroy Death.⁶⁸

Their own corruption and vice is what seals their fate, however. On their way to destroy Death, the men stumble across a cache of gold hidden beneath a tree. Debased and greedy, the three men secretly plot to kill one another in an effort to claim the gold for themselves. In the end, all three men are killed and, in an ironic twist of fate, they do indeed meet Death. As The Pardoner explained, the men were "victims of their deep-laid villainy"⁶⁹ and could blame no one but themselves for their downfall. Overall, Death is presented by The Pardoner as a neutral character,

neither malicious nor benevolent, and he cannot be swayed by the wills and whims of man.

Perhaps one of the most prominent artistic genres to develop in the late medieval period following the recession of the bubonic plague was the allegorical *Danse Macabre*. The genre emerged as an aesthetic interpretation of the Latin Church theory, *memento mori*, the art and practice of reflecting on mankind's ultimate mortality.⁷⁰ Most representations featured the personified Death accompanied by figures from all walks of life including a holy man, an emperor/king, a laborer, and a child. They are willingly following Death to the grave, dancing as they go, in a metaphor for life's ultimate conclusion. Although most interpretations of the *Danse Macabre* did not emerge until the mid-1400s toward the end of second pandemic, the theme was one that those who suffered through the plague would have been intimately familiar with. For many, death was represented as the only universality; it cared not for station or status and was the only certainty one could rely on.

By the time it finally burned itself off toward the end of the fourteenth century, the second bubonic plague epidemic had claimed the lives of roughly 60% of Europe's entire population.⁷¹ It has gained notoriety as one of the greatest-ever demographic disasters in human history and laid the groundwork for significant social and cultural changes in the centuries that followed.⁷² Its most profound and lasting impact can be seen in medieval art and litera-

ture, its representation both shocking and vivid. Using the plague as a literary and artistic trope, medieval society was able to address their fears of mortality and divine wrath and show how the plague served as the ultimate equalizer.

Bibliography

Achinstein, Sharon. "Plagues and Publication: Ballads and the Representation of Disease in the English Renaissance." *Criticism* 34, no. 1 (1992): 27–49.

Alchon, Suzanne Austin. *A Pest in the Land: New World Epidemics in a Global Perspective*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003.

Bataille, Nicolas, and Jean De Bandolt. *Pale Horse and Death. 1378–1379. The Apocalypse Tapestries, Château et Galerie de l'Apocalypse, Angers, Maine-et-Loire, Pays de la Loire, France*. University of Michigan: Visual Resources Collection. <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/h/hart/x-704980/09d001918>

Beidler, Peter G. "The Plague and Chaucer's Pardoner." *The Chaucer Review* 16, no. 3 (1982): 257–69.

Benedictow, Ole Jørgen. *The Black Death 1346–1353: The Complete History*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008.

Boccaccio, Giovanni, and Charles Bally. *The Decameron, or, Ten days Entertainment of Boccace*. London: Printed for R. Dodsley, 1741.

- Boeckl, Christine M. "Giorgio Vasari's 'San Rocco Altarpiece': Tradition and Innovation in Plague Iconography." *Artibus Et Historiae* 22, no. 43 (2001): 29–40.
- Bowsky, William M. *The Black Death: A Turning Point in History?* New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971.
- Chaucer, Geoffrey, and Joshua Cooke. *The Canterbury Tales of Chaucer: Completed in a Modern Version. In Three Volumes*. Oxford: Printed for J. Cooke, 1795. Eighteenth Century Collections Online.
- Clyn, John. *The Annals of Ireland*, edited by Richard Butler. Dublin Irish Archaeological Society, 1848. *Internet Archive Digital Database*. archive.org/details/annalsofireland00butluoft
- Da Modena, Barnaba. *Plague Madonna Della Misericordia*. Genoa: Parish Santa Maria dei Servi, 1372. http://servidimariagenova.it/dyn_art1.php?ids=16&ida=30
- Death Strangling a Victim of the Black Death Plague*. 1376. Clementinum Collection of tracts by Thomas of Stitny, National Museum, Prague. Werner Forman Archive, Bridgeman Images. <http://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-death-strangling-a-victim-of-the-black-death-plague-60315455.html>
- Deaux, George. *The Black Death: 1347*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1969.
- De Muisit, Gilles. "Burial of Plague Victims at Tournai." Digital image. Milner Library Digital Collections. <http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/gilles-de-muisits-annals-the-plague-at-tournai-france-news-photo/535783611#gilles-de-muisits-annals-the-plague-at-tournai-france-brussels-picture-id535783611>.
- Gasquet, Francis Aidan. *The Black Death of 1348 and 1349*. London: Bell, 1908.
- Getz, Faye Marie. "Black Death and the Silver Lining: Meaning, Continuity, and Revolutionary Change in Histories of Medieval Plague." *Journal of the History of Biology* 24, no. 2 (1991): 265–89.
- Girard, Rene. "The Plague in Literature and Myth." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 15, no. 5 (1974): 833–50.
- Herbermann, Charles G., and George Williamson. *The Catholic Encyclopedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church*. Vol. IV. New York, NY: Encyclopedia Press, 1913.
- Marshall, Louise. "Manipulating the Sacred: Image and Plague in Renaissance Italy." *Renaissance Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (1994): 485–532.
- Medrano-Cabral, Sardis. "The Influence of Plague on Art from the Late 14th to the 17th Century." Part of essay collection: *Plague: Biology, History, and Sociology*. Montana State University, 2005.

- Mormando, Franco, and Thomas Worcester. *Piety and Plague: from Byzantium to the Baroque*. Kirksville, MO: Truman University Press, Truman State University Press, 2007.
- Newhall, Richard A. *The Chronicle of Jean de Venette*. Translated by Jean Birdsall. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1980.
- Nohl, Johannes. *The Black Death*. Translated by C. H. Clark. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1926. 18–20.
- Petrarca, Francesco. *Letters on Familiar Matters, Rerum familiarium libri*. 3 vols. Trans. Aldo S. Bernardo. Vol. 1. Albany: State University of New York, 1975.
- Procopius. *History of the Wars, Books I and II (The Persian War)*. Translated by H. B. Dewing. Vol. I. Loeb-Harvard: Cambridge, 1954. Chapters XXII and XXIII of Book II.
- Rosen, William. *Justinian's Flea: Plague, Empire, and the Birth of Europe*. New York, NY: Penguin Publishing, 2007.
- Sercambi, Giovanni. "Allegorical Representation of the Black Death in Europe, 1347–1348." National Archive, Lucques. <http://photographersdirect.com/buyers/stockphoto.php?image=2537530>.
- Watkins, Renee Neu. "Petrarch and the Black Death: From Fear to Monuments." *Studies in the Renaissance* 19 (1972): 196–223.
- Weyl, Nathaniel. "The Black Death and the Intellect of Europe," *Mankind Quarterly* 15 (1975): 243–54.
- Wheelis, Mark. "Biological Warfare at the 1346 Siege of Caffa." *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 8, no. 9 (2002): 971–75.

Notes

- 1 John Clyn, *The Annals of Ireland*, ed. Richard Butler (Dublin Irish Archaeological Society, 1848), vi–vii.
- 2 *Ibid.*, vii.
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 Louise Marshall, "Manipulating the Sacred: Image and Plague in Renaissance Italy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (1994): 486.
- 5 Sharon Achinstein, "Plagues and Publication: Ballads and the Representation of Disease in the English Renaissance," *Criticism* 34, no. 1 (1992): 27.

- 6 Nathaniel Weyl, "The Black Death and the Intellect of Europe," *Mankind Quarterly* 15 (1975): 254.
- 7 Procopius, *History of the Wars, Books I and II (The Persian War)*, trans. H. B. Dewing. Vol. I (Loeb-Harvard: Cambridge, 1954), Chapter XXII of Book II: 451.
- 8 Procopius, 457–58.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 463.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 465.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 467–69.
- 12 William Rosen, *Justinian's Flea: Plague, Empire, and the Birth of Europe* (New York, NY: Penguin Publishing, 2007), 3.
- 13 Mark Wheelis, "Biological Warfare at the 1346 Siege of Caffa," *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 8, no. 9 (2002), 972.
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 *Ibid.*, 973.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 Agnolo Di Tura, "The Plague in Siena: An Italian Chronicle," quoted in William M. Bowsky, *The Black Death: A Turning Point in History?* (New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 13.
- 18 Gilles Li Muisis, "The Chronicles of Gilles Li Muisis," quoted in Francis Aidan Gasquet, *The Black Death of 1348 and 1349* (London: Bell, 1908), 61.
- 19 Giovanni Boccaccio and Charles Balguy, *The Decameron, or, Ten days Entertainment of Boccace* (London: Printed for R. Dodsley, 1741), 2.
- 20 *Ibid.*
- 21 *Ibid.*
- 22 Michael Platiensis, "The Black Death—A Description of the Plague in Messina," quoted in Johannes Nohl, *The Black Death*, trans. C. H. Clark (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1926), 18.
- 23 Boccaccio, 2.
- 24 Platiensis, 18.
- 25 Boccaccio, 4.
- 26 Di Tura, 13.
- 27 Rene Girard, "The Plague in Literature and Myth," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 15, no. 5 (1974): 835.

28 *Ibid.*, 833.

29 Boccaccio, 3.

30 Jean De Venette, "The Plague in France," quoted in Richard A. Newhall, *The Chronicle of Jean de Venette*, trans. Jean Birdsall (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1980), 51.

31 Boccaccio, 5.

32 Faye Marie Getz, "Black Death and the Silver Lining: Meaning, Continuity, and Revolutionary Change in Histories of Medieval Plague," *Journal of the History of Biology* 24, no. 2 (1991): 269.

33 Boccaccio, 5.

34 Di Tura, 13.

35 Gabriele de' Mussi, "The Plague at Kaffa and Sicily in 1348," quoted in George Deaux, *The Black Death: 1347* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1969), 75.

36 Gilles De Muisit, "Burial of Plague Victims at Tournai," Digital image. Milner Library Digital Collections.

37 de' Mussi, 76.

38 Christine M. Boeckl, "Giorgio Vasari's 'San Rocco Altarpiece': Tradition and Innovation in Plague Iconography," *Artibus Et Historiae* 22, no. 43 (2001): 29.

39 Achinstein, 29.

40 de' Mussi, 75.

41 Boccaccio, 1.

42 Francesco Petrarca, quoted in George Deaux, *The Black Death: 1347* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1969), 94.

43 Francesco Petrarca, *Letters on Familiar Matters, Rerum familiarium libri*. 3 vols, trans. Aldo S. Bernardo. Vol. 1 (Albany: State University of New York, 1975), 443.

44 Marshall, 516.

45 Getz, 267.

46 Renee Neu Watkins, "Petrarch and the Black Death: From Fear to Monuments," *Studies in the Renaissance* 19 (1972): 197.

47 Petrarch, 3.

48 Watkins, 198.

49 Petrarch, 443.

- 50 Watkins, 202.
- 51 Wheelis, 973.
- 52 Boeckl, 31.
- 53 Ibid., 33.
- 54 Marshall, 493.
- 55 Giovanni Sercambi, "Allegorical Representation of the Black Death in Europe, 1347–1348," National Archive, Lucques.
- 56 Boeckl, 35.
- 57 Marshall, 511.
- 58 Barnaba Da Modena, Plague Madonna Della Misericordia (Genoa: Parish Santa Maria dei Servi, 1372).
- 59 The Personified Blindfolded Holding Arrows of Affliction. Mid-fourteenth century fresco in the Abbey of Saint-André-de-Lavaudieu, France. In Franco Mormando and Thomas Worcester. *Piety and Plague: from Byzantium to the Baroque* (Kirksville, MO: Truman University Press, Truman State University Press, 2007), 45.
- 60 Nicolas Bataille and Jean De Bandolt, Pale Horse and Death, 1378–79. The Apocalypse Tapestries, Château et Galerie de l'Apocalypse, Angers, Maine-et-Loire, Pays de la Loire, France. University of Michigan: Visual Resources Collection.
- 61 Sardis Medrano-Cabral, "The Influence of Plague on Art from the Late 14th to the 17th Century." Part of the essay collection: *Plague: Biology, History, and Sociology*. Montana State University, 2005.
- 62 Death Strangling a Victim of the Black Death Plague, 1376. Clementinum Collection of tracts by Thomas of Stitny, National Museum, Prague. Werner Forman Archive, Bridgeman Images.
- 63 Peter G. Beidler, "The Plague and Chaucer's Pardoner," *The Chaucer Review* 16, no. 3 (1982): 260.
- 64 Ibid., 261.
- 65 Ibid., 258.
- 66 Geoffrey Chaucer and Joshua Cooke. *The Canterbury Tales of Chaucer: Completed in a Modern Version*. In Three Volumes (Oxford: Printed for J. Cooke, 1795). Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Vol. III, 168.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 Beidler, 257.
- 69 Chaucer, 175.

- 70 Charles G. Herbermann and George Williamson. *The Catholic Encyclopedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church*. Vol. IV (New York, NY: Encyclopedia Press, 1913), 617.
- 71 Suzanne Austin Alchon, *A Pest in the Land: New World Epidemics in a Global Perspective* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), 21.
- 72 Ole Jørgen Benedictow, *The Black Death 1346–1353: The Complete History* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008), 3.

Strange Bedfellows: Nativism, Know-Nothings, African-Americans, and School Desegregation in Antebellum Massachusetts

Stan Prager

American Public University

Previously published in *The Saber & Scroll Journal*, Volume 6, Number 2.

ABSTRACT

Rapidly changing economic conditions fueled a bewildering set of dislocations. The value of labor for the working class fell. The population of the foreign born increased exponentially, their numbers pregnant with an unfamiliar culture and a religious faith despised by most Americans. Urban life was beset with poverty and crime. Traditional social and political institutions were incapable of redressing or even containing a growing discontent. These factors and other forces translated into a rage directed at the elite and their failed institutions, spawning a populist revolt that manifested itself in racism, hatred, xenophobia, exclusion and a determination to overthrow the old order and start afresh. That was Massachusetts in 1854.

African-Americans—chafing at life at the margins in a state that nevertheless offered the best overall quality of life in the nation—sought equality of education for their children in fully integrated schools. Utilizing boycotts, non-violent tactics and an alliance with elite whites who objected to inferior “separate but equal” schools, a movement formed driven by a charismatic yet unassuming leader that demanded desegregation. That too was Massachusetts in 1854.

At the nexus of these unlikely arcs, the nativist American Party, known popularly as the “Know-Nothings,” swept the state, capturing the legislature and the governor’s office. Paradoxically, it was this legislature dominated by Know-Nothings—who rose to power plying the politics of exclusion—that outlawed segregation in schools across the state. The improbable cooperation between nativists and champions of African-American equality resulted in legislation that in 1855 made Massachusetts the first state in the nation to outlaw segregation in schools.

Keywords: nativism, Know-Nothings, American Party, Massachusetts history, African-American, desegregation, immigration, Irish immigration, Antebellum era, education, xenophobia, political parties, American history

Compañeros Inusuales: Nativismo, “Know-Nothings”, Afroamericanos y Desegregación Escolar en Massachusetts antes de la Guerra Civil, por Stan Prager

RESUMEN

Las condiciones económicas rápidamente cambiantes alimentaron un desconcertante conjunto de dislocaciones. El valor del trabajo para la clase obrera cayó. La población de los nacidos en el extranjero aumentó exponencialmente, su número estaba lleno de una cultura desconocida y una fe religiosa despreciada por la mayoría de los estadounidenses. La vida urbana estaba acosada por la pobreza y el crimen. Las instituciones sociales y políticas tradicionales eran incapaces de corregir o incluso contener un descontento creciente. Estos factores y otras fuerzas se tradujeron en una ira dirigida a la élite y sus instituciones fallidas, lo que engendró una revuelta populista que se manifestó en el racismo, el odio, la xenofobia, la exclusión y la determinación de derrocar el antiguo orden y comenzar de nuevo. Eso fue Massachusetts en 1854.

Los afroamericanos, que se quejan de la vida en los márgenes de un estado que sin embargo ofrece la mejor calidad de vida en general en la nación, buscaron la igualdad de educación para sus hijos en escuelas totalmente integradas. Utilizando boicots, tácticas no violentas y una alianza con blancos de élite que se oponían a escuelas “separadas pero iguales” inferiores, un movimiento formado por un líder carismático pero sin pretensiones que exigía la integración de la ley. Eso también fue Massachusetts en 1854.

En el nexo de estos improbables arcos, el nativista Partido Americano, conocido popularmente como los “Know-Nothings”, barrió con el estado, capturando la legislatura y la oficina del gobernador. Paradójicamente, fue esta legislatura dominada por “Know-Nothings”, que se alzó con el poder de la política de exclusión, la que prohibió la segregación en las escuelas de todo el estado. La im-

probable cooperación entre nativistas y defensores de la igualdad afroamericana dio lugar a una legislación que en 1855 convirtió a Massachusetts en el primer estado de la nación en prohibir la segregación en las escuelas.

Palabras clave: nativismo, Know-Nothings, American Party, historia de Massachusetts, afro-americano, desegregación, inmigración, inmigración irlandesa, era de antes de la Guerra Civil, educación, xenofobia, partidos políticos, historia de Estados Unidos

某种意义上的同盟：南北战争前马萨诸塞州的本土主义、一无所知党、非裔美国人和学校去种族隔离

摘要

快速变化的经济情况增加了一系列令人困惑的混乱。对工人阶级而言劳动产生的价值有所降低。外国人口的出生数量呈指数型上涨，这一数量充斥着外来文化和宗教信仰，后者被大多数美国人鄙夷。都市生活受到贫困和犯罪的困扰。传统社会制度和政治制度无法纠正不断上涨的不满情绪，甚至都无法抑制这种情绪。这些消极情绪，加之其他因素，共同转化为指向精英阶层及其失败体制的愤怒，导致了民粹主义反抗，其表现形式为种族主义、仇恨、仇外、排外、以及“推翻旧秩序，建立新秩序”的决心。这便是1854年的马萨诸塞州。

非裔美国人——尽管在美国拥有最好的总体生活质量，但也对其边缘身份感到烦恼——试图为其子女在全面取消种族隔离的学校中寻求教育平等。通过使用抵制、非暴力策略和与反对那些“实行隔离却宣称平等”的学校的白人精英结为联盟，这项运动在以去种族隔离（desegregation）为目标的领导人带领下得以展开，这位领导人既谦逊，又富有人格魅力。这也发生在1854年的马萨诸塞州。

在这些难以相信的事件轨迹所形成的复杂关系中，极具本土主义的美国入党——被熟知为“一无所知党”——横扫马萨诸塞州，赢得立法机关和州长办公室。然而矛盾的是，正是由一无所知党（其通过使用排外政治获得政治胜利）所主导的立法机关废除了该州学校的种族隔离。本土主义者和争取非裔美国人平等的拥护者之间看似不可能的合作，促使

了1855年马萨诸塞州成为全美首个立法废除学校种族隔离的州。

关键词：本土主义，一无所知党，美国人党，马萨诸塞州历史，非裔美国人，去种族隔离，移民，爱尔兰移民，南北战争前时期，仇外，政党，美国历史

Introduction

Rapidly changing economic conditions fueled a bewildering set of dislocations. The value of labor for the working class fell. The population of the foreign born increased exponentially, their numbers pregnant with an unfamiliar culture and a religious faith despised by most Americans. Urban life was beset with poverty and crime. Traditional social and political institutions were incapable of redressing or even containing a growing discontent. These factors and other forces translated into a rage directed at the elite and their failed institutions, spawning a populist revolt that manifested itself in racism, hatred, xenophobia, exclusion, and a determination to overthrow the old order and start afresh. That was Massachusetts in the early 1850s.

African Americans—chafing at life at the margins in a state that nevertheless offered the best overall quality of life in the nation—sought equality of education for their children in fully integrated schools. Utilizing boycotts, nonviolent tactics, and an alliance with elite whites who objected to inferior “separate but equal” schools, a move-

ment formed driven by a charismatic yet unassuming leader that demanded desegregation. That too was Massachusetts in the early 1850s.

At the nexus of these unlikely arcs, the nativist American Party, known popularly as the “Know-Nothings,” capitalizing on rampant anti-Irish and anti-Catholic sentiment, swept the state, capturing the legislature and the governor’s office. Paradoxically, it was this legislature dominated by Know-Nothings—who rose to power plying the politics of exclusion—that outlawed segregation in schools across the state. The improbable cooperation between nativists and champions of African-American equality, and its highly significant result, is the topic of this paper.

Massachusetts in the Early 1850s

Massachusetts in the early 1850s had undergone dramatic changes that had radically upended the social, economic, and political dynamics of its very recent past. Once a primarily agricultural state with a thriving urban hub in Boston and its vicinity, by the 1850s, Massachusetts

had become “the nation’s most densely populated, urbanized, and industrialized state ... Social and economic dislocations on a scale exceeding those in other states exerted intense pressures for a political response.”¹ The relatively small size of the state constrained population growth in its heyday of agriculture, leading to wide emigration patterns to the expanding west. But the steady growth in manufacturing from flourishing textile mills and other industries proved a magnet to the native born as well as immigrants from abroad.²

Massachusetts had long been moving toward industrialism, but as manufacturing intensified and agriculture declined, there was a profound shift from the traditional rural and small-town way of life to one often brutally focused upon wage labor in an urban environment. These cumulative trends generated exponential social and economic dislocations that brought dramatic changes to lifeways and bred psychological stress that left great numbers in the population uncertain, angry, and resentful toward those who controlled the political arena—typically legislators beholden to the interests of the “Brahmin” elite—who seemed unwilling or incapable of addressing their concerns.³

Much of the complaints of the growing class of wage laborers coalesced around the so-called “Ten Hour Law,” a proposal that would for the first time restrict the number of consecutive hours a laborer could be tasked to work. Such calls were vehemently resisted by the captains of in-

dustry that owned the mills and factories and effectively controlled the economic life in the urban industrial milieu, as well as their business-friendly patron, the Whig Party, which commanded outsize political power in the state, backed by the full authority of the police and the judicial system. There was an often-promoted capitalist fiction that celebrated the freedom of wage earners to sell their labor to the highest bidder, but the reality was instead starkly bleak, as members of the proletariat typically worked long hours for low wages in mind-numbingly repetitive jobs in unsafe working conditions—and one employer was no better or worse than the next.⁴ As historian John R. Mulkern underscores:

Factory work meant low pay, excessive hours, harsh discipline, and deplorable working conditions on a year-round basis. Female operatives put in a seventy-five- to eighty-hour week. Factory children, who constituted a majority of the employees in some mills, worked up to seventy hours a week for a few pennies a day. And everyone labored under a contract dictated by the owners. Through it all, Whig spokesmen and other apologists heaped encomiums on the factory system as the benefactor of the workers. Preachments that factory employment in the mills spelled opportunity for the self-reliant, however, clashed with the ugly reality of factory life.⁵

At the same time, there was a growing resentment in the remaining rural, agrarian segments of the western and central geography still centered upon small-town life that their concerns were completely ignored by a state government preoccupied with rapid economic growth in urban industrialization. “Rural Bay Staters, ever jealous of their political influence on Beacon Hill, viewed with trepidation the demographic trends that were multiplying the number of urban seats in the General Court.”⁶ Moreover, passionate voices for change—in the pro-temperance and anti-slavery movements, for example—remained muted by elite power brokers deaf to their concerns. Add to this combustible mix a massive influx of immigrants.⁷

Much has been made of the breakdown of the two-party system in the Antebellum period, a national fracture formed along the fault line of slavery, but often overlooked are the local dynamics that put stress upon traditional party politics in individual states, tensions entirely unrelated or only peripherally correlated to the slavery question. Perhaps nowhere was this more evident than in Massachusetts. The same two parties—Jacksonian Democrats, popularly known as “the Democracy,” and Whigs, descendants of the anti-Jackson National Republicans, whose core values were called “Whiggery”—were rivals with competing political philosophies in Massachusetts as elsewhere in the nation, but it was their identification with parochial concerns that more starkly defined the parties in the Bay State.⁸

Whigs, who were strongly associated with the pro-business interests of the economic elites, were dominant and had been for some time. Whig control of Beacon Hill—both the legislature and the governor’s office—had nearly become institutionalized. The bicameral Massachusetts legislature known as the “General Court” had an over-crowded lower house that made it unwieldy and sharply diluted the power of representatives.⁹ Districting, growing in popularity in other states, was unknown here. So too was plurality. As such, the governor won election by majority vote. A failure to achieve such majority—which occurred with some frequency—sent the race to be decided by the Whig-controlled legislature, which all but assured continued Whig dominance.¹⁰

Out-of-power Democrats chafed at the status-quo and were eager for any opportunity to gain ground by challenging Whigs where they might be vulnerable, but were left mostly frustrated. As in other geographies, Democrats appealed to the interests of the yeoman farmer, championed the destiny of the common man, promoted laissez-faire economics, and fiercely defended local government from any encroachment from above. Their greatest political opportunity was perhaps in the “Ten Hour Law,” which had near unanimous support among the working class yet had little hope for passage as long as pro-business Whigs gripped the reins of power. But there was an inherent paradox: how could the Democracy embrace a law that was otherwise anti-thetical to its core belief that

government should ever take a hands-off approach in the economic and social arenas? As it turned out, it could not.¹¹ Yet, in a rather brief span of time, these same arenas had been subjected to dizzying changes that brewed widespread dissatisfaction and frustration, which the state government would not or could not even attempt to mitigate.¹²

There were other forces clawing at the margins for political power, including the nativists and anti-temperance elements. But the largest and most prominent was the anti-slavery Free Soil Party, whose leadership plotted for a way to gain ground. What happened next was unexpected: a “Coalition” of Free-Soilers, anti-corporate Democrats (known as “Locofocos”), and disaffected Whigs combined to deliver a surprising electoral upset that brought them to a command of the General Court in 1851. Since it was the state legislature that chose members of the U.S. Senate in those days, the greatest historical significance of the Coalition coup was the selection as U.S. Senator of the notable anti-slavery warrior Charles Sumner, who was to loom large on the national stage in the decade ahead. But the Coalition was less successful locally, championing a new state constitution predicated upon wide reforms that ultimately went down to defeat. The Coalition fractured, leaving deeply wounded Whigs, uncertain Democrats, and various splinter groups all jockeying for power in increasingly unfamiliar territory.¹³ This chaos created a vacuum that was exploited and eventually occupied by what was called the “Dark Lantern” politics of the Know-Nothings.¹⁴

Nativism and Irish Immigration

The presence of an ever-growing mass of Irish refugees from Europe with an unfamiliar culture and an offensive religion served up an attractive target for xenophobia that united otherwise disparate constituencies in shared opposition. Nativists hated the Irish because they were both foreign and Roman Catholic.¹⁵ For the working class, the Irish seemed to pose an economic threat as unwanted competition in the job market, although this was far more imagined than real: factories were booming and had no shortage of low-paying dangerous jobs to go around.¹⁶ Like most despised recent immigrants to the United States, the Irish took the worst jobs at the lowest wages that no Americans wanted. Whigs—the party of the Brahmin elite, the factory owner, the wealthy—viewed the Irish, who tended to naturally gravitate toward the Democrats, as another bloc of future voters who threatened their hegemony.¹⁷ Meanwhile, Democrats took them in only warily, collectively holding their noses, but with an eye toward their eventual value at the ballot box.¹⁸

Traditionalists blamed the Irish for the increases in crime typical to rapid industrialization.¹⁹ Free-Soilers, who in Massachusetts could count on an unusual number of downright abolitionists, were affronted by the apparent racism of the Irish toward blacks that seemed to exceed that of the native born.²⁰ Pro-temperance true-believers viewed the Irish, who like the Germans loved their beer, as a drunken mob.²¹ Native Protestants had a visceral ha-

tred for Roman Catholicism, as well as an unshakable belief that loyalty to the Pope superseded all national borders; the Irish were Catholic almost to a man and thus instantly suspect. Many of these various cohorts overlapped, of course, sometimes on multiple levels, overcoming their differences in the commonality of their hatred of the Irish. This served as a kind of glue that bound together the several different elements that comprised the Know-Nothing membership.²²

Nativism has a long, dreadful history in American politics that dates back almost to the very dawn of the Republic. The “Alien and Sedition Acts” enacted in 1798—only a single decade after the Constitution was ratified—increased the residency requirements for naturalization, and granted extraordinary arbitrary authority for the President to imprison and deport aliens deemed “dangerous to the peace and safety,” as well as noncitizen aliens in residence during a time of declared war.²³ One unlikely champion for such extreme measures was Alexander Hamilton, who in a 1798 letter to the then Secretary of State Timothy Pickering declared: “My opinion is that ... the mass [of aliens] ought to be obliged to leave the Country.”²⁴ The irony of this “disappointing stance” was not lost on his biographer, Ron Chernow, who notes that Hamilton, born in the West Indies, was “America’s most famous foreign-born citizen.”²⁵ A little more than a century later, Woodrow Wilson asserted that: “Now there came multitudes of men of the lowest class from the south of Italy and men of the meaner sort out of Hun-

gary and Poland ... where there was neither skill nor energy nor any initiative of quick intelligence ... as if the countries of the south of Europe were disburdening themselves of the more sordid and hapless elements of their population.”²⁶ And, of more recent familiarity, then-candidate Donald Trump insisted that: “When Mexico sends its people, they’re not sending the best. They’re ... sending people that have lots of problems and they’re bringing those problems. They’re bringing drugs, they’re bringing crime. They’re rapists.”²⁷ As such, this pithy 1841 comment by John Pintard, New York City merchant and philanthropist, hardly seems out of place: “The vice and drunkenness among the lowering laboring classes is growing to frightful excess, and the multitudes of low Irish Catholics ... restricted by poverty in their own country run riot in this ... as long as we are overwhelmed with Irish immigrants, so long will the evil abound.”²⁸ In this context, nativism is hardly an aberration in America. It is a part of our national DNA. Thus, it rears its ugly head again and again. As historian Ronald P. Formisano underscores, such “impulses were as mainstream as tolerance and plurality—coexisting and contesting, side by side.”²⁹

Spikes in nativism have frequently coincided with an increase in the percentage of the foreign-born population and immigration trends. Pintard’s comments anticipated the 1850 census, which logged a foreign-born population of 9.7%. At the time Wilson wrote, that number had risen to 13.6%, and continued to historic highs before

declining precipitously—to a low of 4.7% in 1970—then rising once more to 12.9% in 2010, just a few years prior to Trump’s soundbite.³⁰ The ethnicity of the immigrant varied, but the dynamic was unchanged.

In this era, the chief target of nativist outrage was the Irish. As Formisano points out:

It was hardly coincidental that the peak of Know-Nothing/American success came in the very years that unprecedented numbers of immigrants arrived in America—over 400,000 in 1854. The influx of close to 3 million new immigrants from 1844 to 1854 amounted to 14.5% of the nation’s 1845 population. The culture shock registered in countless ways, most notably in the political tsunami of nativism and anti-Catholicism.³¹

These anti-Irish trends had a long history that included the burning of a convent in Charleston, Massachusetts, in 1834,³² and a series of riots in 1844 in Philadelphia that had the city in flames and claimed dozens of lives.³³ But the massive mid-century influx of the Irish exacerbated existing antipathies.³⁴

The potato, a New World crop, made its way to Europe via the Columbian Exchange, and was a key ingredient to an “agricultural revolution” that resulted in a population boom. This was most evident in Ireland, which consumed more potatoes than anyone else, and increased its population of 1.5

million in the 1600s to something like 8.5 million in the 1800s, largely due to a substantial decrease in infant mortality from famine times.³⁵ Another New World product was a type of bird guano that made excellent fertilizer, sourced from islands off of the coast of Peru and exported to Europe.³⁶ It is likely that one of the guano ships brought a new strain of Andean potatoes to Belgium in 1843/1844 along with a hidden passenger, an oomycete called *Phytophthora infestans*—a kind of water mold—that caused a blight that devastated potatoes across Europe.³⁷ It was first spotted in Ireland in September 1845, and in two months, more than one-quarter of the potato crop was wiped out. And that was only the beginning. Ireland was a nation beset by poverty with a population so dependent upon this staple that 40% ate “no solid food but potatoes.”³⁸ According to Charles Mann, “The consequences were horrific; Ireland was transformed into a post-apocalyptic landscape People ate dogs, rats, and tree bark. Reports of cannibalism were frequent So many died that in many Western towns the bodies were interred in mass graves.”³⁹ Between 1845 and 1855, Ireland lost one-third of its population—1 million people died from starvation and disease, and 2 million emigrated.⁴⁰

Many such emigrants made for Massachusetts, with its convenient port that was on a direct line from Liverpool. For the Bay State, as Mulkern notes, this translated into an,

Influx during the 1840s and 1850s of thousands of Irish immigrants,

driven by poverty, famine, and oppression from the Old World to seek a better life in the New. Over ten thousand arrived in the Commonwealth in 1845. Just two years later, the number entering had doubled, and by 1855, one out of every five Bay Staters was foreign-born. Immigrants and their children were in the majority in Boston, the capital city of Yankee Massachusetts, and were fanning out in apparently inexhaustible numbers to the other cities and manufacturing towns of the state.⁴¹

Know-Nothings Sweep to Power

Frustration with the existing parties united disparate entities who lacked the ability to otherwise turn their respective political voices into consequential results, including nativists, temperance advocates, and anti-slavery forces. The American Party—known as the Know-Nothings, or simply as “Sam”—after the identification with Uncle Sam’s nephew that became its emblem—wore a nativist cloak, but one that belied a complexity in the fabric of its membership. And the most significant threads were those former members of the Free-Soil Party, who briefly tasted political power during the coalition days—long enough to put Charles Sumner in the Senate. Some clearly sought to hijack the mantle of the Know-Nothings in order to advance anti-slavery ideals, but not all: a number of Free-Soilers, in Massachusetts as

elsewhere, also held to pro-temperance and nativist ideals.⁴² Yet, it was the mass of followers with anti-slavery loyalties that had the most impact upon the Know-Nothing Party—and ultimately upon African Americans—in the state of Massachusetts.

Perhaps most emblematic of these associates was Henry Wilson, a cunning and chameleonlike operator whose first allegiance was to Free Soil but according to historian William E. Gienapp “joined the nativist bandwagon as part of a calculated bid to be elected to the United States Senate.”⁴³ Less cynically, Dale Baum argues that “Wilson genuinely hoped to make Know-Nothingism the vehicle for a strong antislavery program.”⁴⁴ Virginia Purdy concurs, noting that: “It was Wilson’s strong conviction that office-holding was the only way to get ‘principles’ into the statutes that led him into the Know-Nothing party.”⁴⁵ It was true that Wilson was not willing to sacrifice political power for ideological purity, a lesson that perhaps should not be lost on anyone seeking to be an agent of change. Mulkern perhaps best captures the complexity of Wilson as a political figure, describing him as a,

Study in pragmatism. He comprehended politics as the art of the possible, and to make things work it was sometimes necessary to blur decisive issues and to resort to expediency He also understood the significance of political power and that in a republic power flows from the ballot box. Political victories, he

wrote, were not won by adhering scrupulously to abstract ideals, however noble they might be.⁴⁶

Significantly, it was Wilson, who was to join Sumner as an anti-slavery force in the United States Senate, who earlier proved to be a key figure in forging the short-lived Coalition, as well as later helping to engineer the later Know-Nothing sweep to victory.

The key ingredient to Know-Nothing success was a network of local fraternal lodges comprised relatives, friends, and neighbors.⁴⁷ These lodges, which met in secret, initially represented an organic yet “protean force” that was “built on antipartyism,” yet morphed into a unique party of its own.⁴⁸ The core values of the organization could be traced back to the Native American Party of the 1840s and its especially virulent strain of anti-Irish nativism. While its descendant was loyal to its roots in this regard, it was much more of a bigger tent populist movement that developed as a byproduct of a paralyzed political culture unresponsive to popular dissatisfaction. Their secrecy, a trademark of what was styled “Dark Lantern” politics, spawned the sobriquet “Know-Nothings,” which was at first a pejorative, but later embraced by the membership. The genius of their secretive “Dark Lantern” approach was this organizational structure rooted in local lodges whose members were especially loyal precisely because their fellow associates were friends and neighbors. The strength, discipline, and clandestine nature of the lodge organization was clearly the reason for

the near universal astonishment at the 1854 election results: “What had been a shadowy network of fraternal lodges suddenly erupted at the polls, electing the governor, all forty senators, and all but three representatives in the House, with 63 percent of the vote.”⁴⁹

The political impact of the Know-Nothings was a national phenomenon, but only Massachusetts produced such a landslide.⁵⁰ Like their brethren elsewhere, and true to their ideological commitment, once in power Bay State Know-Nothings sought to deprive Roman Catholics of “their right to hold public office,” and to make the naturalization process for aliens longer and more arduous.⁵¹ However, much of their nativist zeal was spent on such absurdities as replacing “the Latin inscription above the house Speaker’s podium with an English translation.”⁵² But unlike their counterparts in much of the rest of country, the Beacon Hill Know-Nothing legislature passed a host of extremely progressive reform legislation, creating laws to protect workingmen, enacting mechanics’ lien laws, and—significantly—ending imprisonment for debt.⁵³ There were also laws that provided an overall boost to public school expenditure, made vaccination compulsory, funded libraries, took tentative steps to regulate child labor, and strikingly improved women’s rights in property, marriage, and divorce.⁵⁴ They came close to actually passing a version of the Ten Hour Law, but ultimately failed in that endeavor.⁵⁵

There was much more, however, including a law that “prohibited

the exclusion [from public schools] of children for either racial or religious reasons.”⁵⁶ This landmark legislation, which effectively made Massachusetts the first state in the country to ban school desegregation, has been largely overlooked or given scant attention by historians of this era. A 1989 book-length treatment of the Know-Nothing legislature by the historian Virginia Purdy, for example, devotes but a single line of its 289 pages to this momentous and truly historic moment: “They also passed (‘with a shout’ in the House of Representatives) a law prohibiting all distinctions of color and religion in admitting children to Massachusetts public schools, ending a long and bitter struggle to desegregate Boston’s schools in particular.”⁵⁷ Conspicuous in its absence in the historiography is how all of this came about.

African Americans and School Desegregation

By the 1850s, Massachusetts arguably offered the best overall quality of life for African Americans anywhere in the country, making the commonwealth a favored destination for runaway slaves who were welcomed into thriving black communities that would actively aid and abet their escape.⁵⁸ It was “a hotbed of abolitionism and the most egalitarian state in the nation.”⁵⁹ That is not to say that blacks did not experience racism, as well as elements of separation and exclusion typical for that era, but by all accounts, conditions were vastly better than those in other states, north and south. Massa-

chusetts, for instance, was one of only five states where African Americans had the right to vote. In the economic sphere, blacks put a grip to almost every rung of the occupational ladder, most notably evidenced by African-American attorney Robert Morris, and there was a thriving black middle class. Massachusetts also had a very active abolitionist movement with key players both white and black. Yet, for all that, conditions varied by region within the state, and, it should be noted, the rights enjoyed evolved by custom rather than protection by law. Disparities were most pronounced in Boston, where for many years, segregation was the *status quo* in housing, in theaters, in transportation—and education.⁶⁰

According to historian Rabbi Louis Ruchames, the first public schools were viewed as “eleemosynary institutions” for educating the poor through public charity, thus stigmatized with an implied dependency blacks sought to avoid by fostering separate Negro schools, financed largely by wealthy and sympathetic white philanthropists.⁶¹ Over time, public education was widely seen as a shared right, and blacks lobbied for public funds to support their schools. In 1820, the first Negro public school was established in Boston; there were others in New Bedford, Salem, and Nantucket. But it soon became clear that separate schools not only tended to inferior facilities, but underscored an inferior status for blacks by virtue of their separation. Black leaders and their white abolitionist allies lobbied for integration, which was surprisingly successful; by 1846, public schools were

fully effectively desegregated throughout the state with the lone exception of the Boston school system. There, the city's school committee took an uncompromising stand against integration that launched a nearly decade long "scene of one of the most prolonged and intense campaigns for Negro rights in the history of the North."⁶²

The somewhat unlikely figure at the center of this struggle was William Cooper Nell, who as a boy attended one of these segregated schools, Boston's Belknap Street School for Negroes, where he was scarred by a humiliation that turned him into an ardent integrationist. In this episode, Boston's Mayor, William Gray Otis, and a noted civic leader, Samuel T. Armstrong, oversaw examinations for academic excellence that awarded top students highly coveted "Franklin Medals." Nell was one of the recipients, but instead of a medal, he and other worthy black students were given instead a biography of Benjamin Franklin. Worse, their white counterparts were honored with a grand dinner at Faneuil Hall, where the medals were presented, and black honorees were not invited. The resourceful Nell conspired with a friend who was a waiter so that he was able to observe the proceedings while assisting with food service. Armstrong recognized Nell, and whispered, "You ought to be here with the other boys." He wondered to himself: "If you think so, why have you not taken steps to bring it about?" Many years later, Nell recalled: "The impression made on my mind, by this day's experience, deepened into a solemn vow that, God helping me, I would

do my best to hasten the day when the color of the skin would be no barrier to equal school rights."⁶³

William Cooper Nell was a remarkable individual who has somehow been nearly lost to history. Born in Boston, the son of a free black anti-slavery advocate, the polymath Nell became—often simultaneously—a journalist, a writer, a historian, an activist, an abolitionist, a civil servant, and a tireless promoter of African-American rights. From his youth, he was inspired by William Lloyd Garrison's abolitionist crusade, and he worked first as assistant and later as journalist on Garrison's famous newspaper, *The Liberator*. He also wrote for Frederick Douglass's *The North Star*, but when a schism developed in the abolitionist movement, Nell remained loyal to Garrison and was alienated from Douglass. Nell studied law, but was never admitted to the bar because, deeply influenced by Garrison, he believed that he could not take an oath to the Constitution, which both men saw as a pro-slavery document.⁶⁴ Nell wrote two books—*Services of Colored Americans in the Wars of 1776 and 1812* and *The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution*—the first histories focused on blacks ever published in the United States.⁶⁵ Most characteristic of Nell was his unswerving opposition to what he termed "colorphobia," as well his uncompromising stance on integration. Nell resisted anything that smacked of separation, even otherwise benevolent efforts that were sympathetic to his goals but were divided by color. In an especially radical stance for many black as well as white audiences of the

day, Nell also strictly opposed separate churches.⁶⁶

The heir to Nell's old school on Belknap, rebuilt and renamed the Smith School, was the focal point of the resistance to segregation. The Smith building hosted a primary school, as well as the only public grammar school (for children 8–13 years old) for blacks; there was no high school. Because the Smith Grammar School was near Boston Common, and most blacks lived "on the back slope of Beacon Hill," the location was inconvenient. There were also allegations of substandard leadership by Smith's white principal.⁶⁷ In 1844, a group led by John Hilton, a black barber and anti-slavery activist, Nell, and (then law student) Robert Morris, began a petition drive to end segregation.⁶⁸ When this attempt, which was stubbornly repeated in several subsequent years, ended in failure, a call for boycott began. Hilton pulled his own daughter out of Smith, "where she was doing poorly, and moved her into an integrated school in Cambridge where she carried away the honors from the white children."⁶⁹ Other blacks followed suit, although not all black families advocated integration.⁷⁰ Attendance dropped at Smith, but the Boston School Committee was intransigent, ruling repeatedly—although by narrower margins over the years—that segregation was the best solution for children of both races.⁷¹

By 1849, Smith attendance had dropped by half, but the boycott was threatened by the appointment of a competent new headmaster who was black—and had the support of those

African-American families who did not object to segregation. The integrationists, with Nell now in a central leadership role, ratcheted up pressure for the boycott, including a peaceful but nevertheless physical presence at Smith School to discourage registrants, which was eventually scattered by police. That evening, when Nell and his boycott advocates met at the nearby Belknap Street Baptist Church, opponents outside threw stones, breaking church windows. Nell, who consistently advocated for strict nonviolence—and whose methods and mien in some senses prefigured by a century those of Martin Luther King—told the crowd that the stones will be kept "as trophies of the prowess of those who resort to such methods of appeal."⁷² The boycott continued.

Meanwhile, the courts got involved. A black parent, Benjamin R. Roberts, sued for equal protection rights under the state constitution because his daughter was barred from attending a school near her residence and was compelled to a long walk to Smith instead. He was represented by Robert Morris, now one of the first African-American attorneys in the United States, and Charles Sumner, who would later serve as U.S. Senator. In April 1850, the state Supreme Court ruled against him, declaring that each locality could decide for itself whether to have or end segregation.⁷³ (This ruling was to serve as an unfortunate precedent for the ignominious separate but equal ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* some decades hence.⁷⁴) Rather than lose hope, Nell doubled down his efforts, this time with

a new tactic—a “Negro taxpayer’s boycott of Boston.” Prominent blacks began to move out of the city to the suburbs, which all featured integrated schools, depriving Boston of tax revenue.⁷⁵

Ironically, larger national events with grave implications for the state overshadowed the desegregation endeavor while infusing it with new vigor. The Compromise of 1850, embraced by prominent Whig Daniel Webster, included a powerful Fugitive Slave Act that put former slaves in Massachusetts in grave jeopardy, and fully alienated anti-slavery Free-Soilers from the Whigs. Southern agents made well-publicized attempts to seize and return escapees to their owners, which energized active legal and extra-legal resistance in the state. Integration efforts paled alongside this greater crisis for African Americans. Yet, it also brought greater sympathy and legitimacy for their struggle to a wider audience. The legislature passed a “Personal Liberty Bill” that forbade state officials from aiding federal authorities in the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act.⁷⁶ Because opponents questioned its organic nature and cast his movement as but a pawn of abolitionists, Nell had long downplayed the quiet, consistent support of his white allies. But in the wake of the unfortunate Massachusetts Supreme Court ruling, he actively reached out to them. Abolitionists were too preoccupied with resisting the Fugitive Slave Act to lobby vigorously for integration, and one of several school desegregation bills died in the legislature early in 1851, but anti-slavery sentiments intensified.⁷⁷

There was even greater irony ahead. The Whigs were swept out of office in the populist revolt that put the Know-Nothing Party in control of the General Court, which in Massachusetts manifested itself as a virulently nativist yet curiously progressive and anti-slavery political entity. Many Know-Nothings were—like Henry Wilson—Free Soil, or allied to their interests. Now a powerful and influential U.S. Senator, Charles Sumner also had a friendly relationship with both the Know-Nothing lawmakers and Nell’s integrationists. This time, a new bill “easily passed the ... House ... with a shout, not more than half a dozen voices being heard in opposition ... the Senate quickly concurred, and the Know-Nothing governor signed the bill on April 28, 1855.”⁷⁸

Nell’s persistent agitation over more than a decade had finally succeeded; Massachusetts became the first state in the United States to prohibit public school segregation.⁷⁹ Still, in retrospect, this celebration should be tempered by the racist motives of some of those Know-Nothing lawmakers, who saw little threat in the “small, Protestant Negro minority” but much menace in the growing numbers of Irish Catholics swelling the population. In debate prior to the passage of the desegregation bill, one proponent who was a representative from Boston regretted “that Negroes living on the outskirts ... were forced to go a long distance to Smith School ... while ... the ‘dirtiest Irish,’ were allowed to step from their houses into the nearest school.”⁸⁰

Conclusion: Populism and Progressivism

A landmark law favoring black education represented just a fraction of the host of progressive legislation passed by the Know-Nothing legislature. What can historians make of the fact that what at first glance looks like a nativist, reactionary political entity turned into one of the most progressive legislative forces in American history? It could well be that populist revolts take on many faces but at root most are simply and essentially populist revolts, striking out against the *status quo*. The recent past can serve as guide. For example, as essayist Lance Morrow observed of the presidential election of 1968: “There was poetry, if not logic, in the fact that many voters who would have supported Robert Kennedy switched to Wallace after Kennedy’s death. Kennedy and Wallace, so different in most ways, drew from the same deep pools of passion and longing for a voice.”⁸¹ Just as incongruously, there is strong suspicion that a number of 2016 Democratic primary supporters of Bernie Sanders ultimately voted for Donald Trump, who represented an agent of change, even if one nearly diametrically opposed to their original candidate.⁸²

Historian Ronald P. Formisano argues convincingly that a mosaic of forces can serve as engine to revolts against the *status quo*, and that it did in this case, noting:

That Know-Nothingism was populist *and* progressive *and* reactionary. It was not progressive

because it was populist, or reactionary because it was populist. Rather, all three of these currents came together, making it a classic case of the combination of progressive and reactionary elements in a populist movement.⁸³

In this sense then, the paradox of a movement defined on its face by racism advancing the rights of African Americans may be no less remarkable, perhaps, but at least bears clarity.

Epilogue

Gearing up for the 1856 presidential race, the national Know-Nothings met in convention and declared the party agnostic on slavery, seeking to unite the country behind nativism. Massachusetts Know-Nothings, however, met in Springfield in August 6–7, 1855, and while championing nativism countered with a free soil and anti-slavery position known as the “Springfield Platform.” This severely wounded the national party, which nevertheless nominated the former President Millard Fillmore, who went down to defeat in 1856 as anti-slavery votes hemorrhaged from the American Party and flowed in great numbers to the emerging Republican Party.⁸⁴ The Know-Nothings were essentially relegated to a footnote in history. Republicans obtained the White House for the first time in the 1860 election, and Civil War ensued that resulted in the abolition of slavery. Henry Wilson capped off a distinguished career as Vice-President of the United

States in the second term of President Ulysses S. Grant.⁸⁵ In a life marked by many notable achievements, in yet another milestone, William Cooper Nell “became the first African-American to hold a federal civilian post,” when he was selected as Boston postal clerk in 1861.⁸⁶ The rights of blacks, however, suffered after Reconstruction, in the north as well as the south. African Americans had to fight a long battle to effectively desegregate Boston schools once again, more than a century after Nell and his determined movement integrated schools the first time.⁸⁷ Anti-Irish and anti-Catholic prejudice lingered long after the Civil War, as well, and while the Irish have now long been assimilated into American life, as recently as 1960, the Catholic religion of the Democratic nominee for President, John F. Kennedy, remained a significant liability in a very close election.⁸⁸ And nativism, this time directed at an entirely different ethnicity, remains a thriving business in 2017.⁸⁹

Bibliography

Anbinder, Tyler. *Nativism & Slavery: The Northern Know Nothings & the Politics of the 1850s*. NY: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Baum, Dale. “Know-Nothingism and the Republican Majority in Massachusetts: The Political Realignment of the 1850s.” *The Journal of American History* 64, no. 4 (1978): 959–86.

Carvalho III, Joseph. “Uncovering the Stories of Black Families in Springfield and Hampden County, Massachusetts: 1650–1865,” excerpted from *Black Families in Hampden County, Massachusetts 1650–1865, 2nd edition. Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 40, no. 1/2 (Summer 2012): 59–93.

Celebrate Boston. “Ursuline Convent Destruction.” Accessed March 14, 2017. <http://www.celebrateboston.com/crime/ursuline-convent-destruction.htm>.

Chernow, Ron. *Alexander Hamilton*. NY: Penguin Books, 2004.

Delmont, Matthew. “The Lasting Legacy of the Boston Busing Crisis.” *The Atlantic*, March 29, 2016. Accessed August 1, 2017. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/03/the-boston-busing-crisis-was-never-intended-to-work/474264/>.

Durden, Tyler. “I’m a Bernie Sanders Voter ... Here’s Why I’ll Vote Trump.” *zerohedge.com*. October 2, 2016. Accessed July 28, 2017. <http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2016-10-02/im-bernie-sanders-voter-heres-why-ill-vote-trump>.

Formisano, Ronald P. *For the People: American Populist Movements from the Revolution to the 1850s*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008.

Friedman, Uri. “What Is a Nativist? And Is Donald Trump One?” *The At-*

- lantic, April 11, 2017. Accessed August 1, 2017. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/04/what-is-nativist-trump/521355/>.
- Gienapp, William E. "Nativism and the Creation of a Republican Majority in the North before the Civil War." *The Journal of American History* 72, no. 3 (1985): 529–59.
- Haynes, George H. "The Causes of Know-Nothing Success in Massachusetts." *The American Historical Review* 3, no. 1 (October 1897): 67–82.
- Hilton, John T., et al., A resolution appearing in *The Liberator*, June 28, 1844, reprinted as "Struggle Against Jim Crow Schools, 1844." In *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*, edited by Herbert Aptheker. NY: The Citadel Press, 1951.
- In the Past Lane*. "Nativism Yesterday and Today—The Case of the Irish." Accessed March 14, 2017. <http://inthepastlane.com/category/quotes-histquote/>.
- John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum*. "John F. Kennedy and Religion." Accessed August 1, 2017. <https://www.jfklibrary.org/JFK/JFK-in-History/JFK-and-Religion.aspx>.
- Kierdorf, Douglas. "Getting to Know the Know-Nothings." *Boston Globe*, January 10, 2016. Accessed March 14, 2017. <https://www.bostonglobe.com/ideas/2016/01/10/getting-know-know-nothings/yAojakXKkiauKCAzsf4WAL/story.html>.
- Kousser, J. Morgan. "The Supremacy of Equal Rights: The Struggle Against Racial Discrimination in Antebellum Massachusetts and the Foundations of the Fourteenth Amendment." *Northwestern University Law Review* 82, no. 4 (1988): 941–1010.
- Laurie, Bruce. *Beyond Garrison: Anti-slavery and Social Reform*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Leonard, William. "Black and Irish Relations in 19th Century Boston: The Interesting Case Lawyer Robert Morris." *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 37, no. 1 (2009): 64–85.
- Library of Congress*. "Alien and Sedition Acts." Accessed March 14, 2017. <https://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Alien.html>.
- Lockwood, John. "Springfield and the Know-Nothing Party." *Catholic Journal*, November 16, 2015. Accessed March 14, 2017. <http://www.catholicjournal.us/2015/11/16/springfield-and-the-know-nothing-party/>.
- Mabee, Carlton. "A Negro Boycott to Integrate Boston Schools." *The New England Quarterly* 861 (1968): 320–25. Accessed March 14, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/363982>.
- Mann, Charles. *1493: Uncovering the New World Columbus Created*. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011.
- Morrow, Lance. "1968: Like a Knife Blade, the Year Severed Past from Fu-

ture.” *Time Magazine*, Monday, January 11, 1988. Accessed July 26, 2017. <http://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/articles/1968.pdf>.

Mulkern, John R. *The Know-Nothing Party in Massachusetts: The Rise and Fall of a People's Movement*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1990.

National Archives. “From Alexander Hamilton to Timothy Pickering, [7 June 1798].” Accessed March 14, 2017. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Hamilton/01-21-02-0276>.

Purdy, Virginia Cardwell. *Portrait of a Know-Nothing Legislature: The Massachusetts General Court of 1855*. NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989.

Ruchames, Louis. “Race and Education in Massachusetts.” *Negro History Bulletin* (December 1949), 53–59, 71.

Smith, Jessie Carney. “African American Firsts.” *Highbeam Research*, January 1, 2008. Accessed March 14, 2017. <https://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G2-269000010.html>.

Smith, Robert P. “William Cooper Nell: Crusading Black Abolitionist.” *The Journal of Negro History* 55, no. 3 (July 1970): 182–99. Accessed August 10, 2017. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2716420>.

Stauffer, John. “The Union of Abolitionists and Emancipationists in Civil War-Era Massachusetts.” In *Massachusetts and the Civil War: The Commonwealth*

and National Disunion, edited by Matthew Mason, Katheryn P. Viens, and Conrad Edick Wright, 9–46. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2015.

The Economist. “The Irish Famine: Opening Old Wounds.” December 12, 2012. Accessed March 14, 2017. <https://www.economist.com/blogs/prospero/2012/12/irish-famine>.

Thejournal.ie. “When Fear and Hatred of Irish Catholics Set Fire to an American City.” January 3, 2016. Accessed March 14, 2017. <http://www.thejournal.ie/1844-bible-riots-nativists-philadelphia-irish-catholic-religion-immigration-donald-trump-2434867-Jan2016/>.

Time Magazine. “Here's Donald Trump's Presidential Announcement Speech.” June 16, 2015. Accessed March 14, 2017. <http://time.com/3923128/donald-trump-announcement-speech/>.

United States Census Bureau. “Foreign-Born Population and Percentage of Total Population, for the United States: 1850 to 2010,” from “The Foreign-Born Population in the United States.” Accessed March 14, 2017. https://www.census.gov/newsroom/pdf/cspan_fb_slides.pdf.

Wesley, Dorothy Porter, and Constance Porter Uzelac, eds. *William Cooper Nell: Nineteenth-Century African American Abolitionist, Historian, Integrationist: Selected Writings 1832–1874*. Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 2002.

Wilson, Woodrow. *A History of the American People*. 1903. Accessed June 4, 2016. https://books.google.com/books?id=L4QUAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA212&lpg=PA212&dq=Now%20there%20came%20multitudes%20of%20men%20of%20the%20lowest%20class%20%20history%20of%20the%20american%20people%20by%20wilson&source=bl&ots=PqAUWVv3_g&sig=RKDgrj1H8wSk7mIQ_vFReQSpXl0&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjH4c2m-OfRAhVCj1QKHttJDZsQ6AEIHDAa#v=onepage&q=Now%20there%20came%20multitudes%20of%20men%20of%20the%20lowest%20class%20%20history%20of%20the%20american%20people%20by%20wilson&f=false%5D

Notes

- 1 John R. Mulkern, *The Know-Nothing Party in Massachusetts: The Rise and Fall of a People's Movement* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1990), 83.
- 2 George H. Haynes, "The Causes of Know-Nothing Success in Massachusetts," *The American Historical Review* 3, no. 1 (October 1897): 71–72.
- 3 Douglas Kierdorf, "Getting to Know the Know-Nothings," *Boston Globe*, January 10, 2016, accessed March 14, 2017, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/ideas/2016/01/10/getting-know-know-nothings/yAojakXKkiauKCAzsf4WAL/story.html>; Mulkern 7–27.
- 4 Mulkern, 7–27.
- 5 Mulkern, 13.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Mulkern, 7–27.
- 8 Haynes, 69; Mulkern, 7–27.
- 9 Mulkern, 13.
- 10 Haynes, 75; Mulkern, 7–27.
- 11 Mulkern, 20, 22.
- 12 Haynes, 81–82.
- 13 Haynes, 80; Mulkern, 29–59.
- 14 Mulkern, 61–86.
- 15 Haynes, 73.
- 16 Haynes, 75–76.

- 17 Haynes, 74–75.
- 18 Haynes, 80.
- 19 Haynes, 78–79.
- 20 William Leonard, “Black and Irish Relations in 19th Century Boston: The Interesting Case Lawyer Robert Morris,” *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 37, no. 1 (2009): 77.
- 21 Ronald P. Formisano, *For the People: American Populist Movements from the Revolution to the 1850s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 199.
- 22 Haynes, 67–82; Mulkern, 61–86.
- 23 “Alien and Sedition Acts,” Library of Congress, accessed March 14, 2017, <https://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Alien.html>.
- 24 “From Alexander Hamilton to Timothy Pickering, [7 June 1798],” National Archives, accessed March 14, 2017, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Hamilton/01-21-02-0276>.
- 25 Ron Chernow, *Alexander Hamilton* (NY: Penguin Books, 2004), 572.
- 26 Woodrow Wilson, *A History of the American People*, 1903, 212–13, accessed June 4, 2016, https://books.google.com/books?id=L4QUAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA212&lpq=PA212&dq=Now%20there%20came%20multitudes%20of%20men%20of%20the%20lowest%20class%20%20history%20of%20the%20american%20people%20by%20wilson&source=bl&ots=PqAUWVv3_g&sig=RKDgrj1H8wSk7mIQ_vFR eQSpXl0&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjH4c2m-OfRAhVCj1QKHTTJDZsQ6AEIHDA#v=onepage&q=Now%20there%20came%20multitudes%20of%20men%20of%20the%20lowest%20class%20%20history%20of%20the%20american%20people%20by%20wilson&f=false%5D.
- 27 “Here's Donald Trump's Presidential Announcement Speech,” *Time Magazine*, June 16, 2015, accessed March 14, 2017, <http://time.com/3923128/donald-trump-announcement-speech/>.
- 28 “Nativism Yesterday and Today—The Case of the Irish,” *In the Past Lane*, accessed March 14, 2017, <http://inthepastlane.com/category/quotes-histquote/>.
- 29 Formisano, 212.
- 30 “Foreign-Born Population and Percentage of Total Population, for the United States: 1850 to 2010,” from “The Foreign-Born Population in the United States,” United States Census Bureau, 3, accessed March 14, 2017, https://www.census.gov/newsroom/pdf/cspan_fb_slides.pdf.
- 31 Formisano, 202.
- 32 “Ursuline Convent Destruction,” *Celebrate Boston*, accessed March 14, 2017, <http://www.celebrateboston.com/crime/ursuline-convent-destruction.htm>.

- 33 “When Fear and Hatred of Irish Catholics Set Fire to an American City,” [thejournal.ie](http://www.thejournal.ie/1844-bible-riots-nativists-philadelphia-irish-catholic-religion-immigration-donald-trump-2434867-Jan2016/), January 3, 2016, accessed March 14, 2017, <http://www.thejournal.ie/1844-bible-riots-nativists-philadelphia-irish-catholic-religion-immigration-donald-trump-2434867-Jan2016/>.
- 34 Haynes, 70.
- 35 Charles Mann, 1493: Uncovering the New World Columbus Created (NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011), 211.
- 36 Mann, 212–15.
- 37 Mann, 220–23.
- 38 Mann, 223.
- 39 Mann, 223–24.
- 40 “The Irish Famine: Opening Old Wounds,” *The Economist*, December 12, 2012, accessed March 14, 2017, <https://www.economist.com/blogs/prospero/2012/12/irish-famine>.
- 41 Mulkern, 13–14.
- 42 William E. Gienapp, “Nativism and the Creation of a Republican Majority in the North before the Civil War,” *The Journal of American History* 72, no. 3 (1985): 534.
- 43 *Ibid.*
- 44 Dale Baum, “Know-Nothingism and the Republican Majority in Massachusetts : The Political Realignment of the 1850s,” *The Journal of American History* 64, no. 4 (1978): 961.
- 45 Virginia Cardwell Purdy, *Portrait of a Know-Nothing Legislature: The Massachusetts General Court of 1855* (NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989), 12.
- 46 Mulkern, 32.
- 47 Tyler Anbinder, *Nativism & Slavery: The Northern Know Nothings & the Politics of the 1850s* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1992), 20–24.
- 48 Bruce Laurie, *Beyond Garrison: Antislavery and Social Reform* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 277.
- 49 Laurie, 276–77.
- 50 Haynes, 67–68.
- 51 Mulkern, 102.
- 52 Anbinder, 137.
- 53 Anbinder, 158–59.

54 Mulkern, 111.

55 Anbinder, 158–59

56 Anbinder, 136.

57 Purdy, 95.

58 Joseph Carvalho III, “Uncovering the Stories of Black Families in Springfield and Hampden County, Massachusetts: 1650–1865,” excerpted from *Black Families in Hampden County, Massachusetts 1650–1865*, 2nd edition, *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 40, no. (1/2) (Summer 2012): 79–82.

59 John Stauffer, “The Union of Abolitionists and Emancipationists in Civil War-Era Massachusetts,” in *Massachusetts and the Civil War: The Commonwealth and National Disunion*, eds. Matthew Mason, Katheryn P. Viens, and Conrad Edick Wright (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2015), 16.

60 Leonard, 70.

61 Louis Ruchames, “Race and Education in Massachusetts,” *Negro History Bulletin* (December 1949): 53; Dorothy Porter Wesley and Constance Porter Uzelac, eds., *William Cooper Nell: Nineteenth-Century African American Abolitionist, Historian, Integrationist: Selected Writings 1832–1874* (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 2002), 30.

62 Ruchames, 53.

63 “Presentation to William Cooper Nell for His Efforts in Behalf of Equal School Rights,” in Wesley and Uzelac, eds., *William Cooper Nell: Selected Writings*, 437; Carlton Mabee, “A Negro Boycott to Integrate Boston Schools,” *The New England Quarterly*. 861 (1968): 341, accessed March 14, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/363982>.

64 Mabee, 342.

65 Robert P. Smith, “William Cooper Nell: Crusading Black Abolitionist,” *The Journal of Negro History* 55, no. 3 (July 1970): 188, accessed August 1, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2716420>.

66 “An Interesting Record,” from *William Cooper Nell: Selected Writings*, 453.

67 Mabee, 342–43.

68 John T. Hilton, et al., A resolution appearing in *The Liberator*, June 28, 1844, reprinted as “Struggle Against Jim Crow Schools, 1844,” in *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*, ed. Herbert Aptheker (NY: The Citadel Press, 1951), 243–44.

69 Mabee, 344.

70 Leonard, 72.

71 Mabee, 344.

72 Mabee, 349–50.

73 Mabee, 350–52.

74 J. Morgan Kousser, “The Supremacy of Equal Rights: The Struggle Against Racial Discrimination in Antebellum Massachusetts and the Foundations of the Fourteenth Amendment,” *Northwestern University Law Review* 82, no. 4 (1988): 976, note 159.

75 Mabee, 353.

76 Mulkern, 104.

77 Mabee, 354–55.

78 Mabee, 356–57.

79 Mulkern, 111.

80 Mabee, 358.

81 Lance Morrow, “1968: Like a Knife Blade, the Year Severed Past from Future,” *Time Magazine*, Monday, January 11, 1988, accessed July 26, 2017, <http://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/articles/1968.pdf>.

82 See, for example: Tyler Durden, “I’m a Bernie Sanders Voter ... Here’s Why I’ll Vote Trump,” [zerohedge.com](http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2016-10-02/im-bernie-sanders-voter-heres-why-ill-vote-trump), October 2, 2016, accessed July 28, 2017, <http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2016-10-02/im-bernie-sanders-voter-heres-why-ill-vote-trump>.

83 Formisano, 199.

84 John Lockwood, “Springfield and the Know-Nothing Party,” *Catholic Journal*, November 16, 2015, accessed March 14, 2017, <http://www.catholicjournal.us/2015/11/16/springfield-and-the-know-nothing-party/>.

85 Kousser, 966.

86 Jessie Carney Smith, “African American Firsts,” *Highbeam Research*, January 1, 2008, accessed March 14, 2017, <https://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G2-2690000010.html>.

87 Matthew Delmont, “The Lasting Legacy of the Boston Busing Crisis,” *The Atlantic*, March 29, 2016, accessed August 10, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/03/the-boston-busing-crisis-was-never-intended-to-work/474264/>.

88 “John F. Kennedy and Religion,” *John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum*, accessed August 1, 2017, <https://www.jfklibrary.org/JFK/JFK-in-History/JFK-and-Religion.aspx>.

89 Uri Friedman, “What Is a Nativist? And Is Donald Trump One?” *The Atlantic*, April 11, 2017, accessed August 1, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/04/what-is-nativist-trump/521355/>.

A Petticoat Society

Melissa Sims

American Military University

ABSTRACT

The 1829 marriage of Margaret “Peggy” O’Neal to Secretary of War John Eaton caused a societal war in Washington between President Andrew Jackson and the wives of his cabinet members. Margaret was raised to be a genteel woman, yet refused to conform to society’s prescription that she be submissive, obedient, pious, and pure. Margaret shocked Washington society when she became involved with Eaton before her first husband’s, John Timberlake’s, death, causing a scandal. The cabinet wives, led by Floride Calhoun, wife to Vice President John C. Calhoun, and Jackson’s niece, Emily Donelson, considered Margaret’s behavior before and after her marriage to Eaton unacceptable, according to the etiquette guidelines of the day and tried to remove her from Washington. Despite Jackson’s defense of Margaret, who reminded him of his late wife, Rachel Donelson, she was ostracized and vilified by the elite wives of Washington society, who had been dictating the social manners of the capital since the founding of the country. The societal war eventually forced Jackson to remove Eaton as Secretary of War, thereby, eliminating Margaret and her unladylike behavior from Washington society.

Keywords: Margaret Eaton, Peggy Eaton, John Eaton, Andrew Jackson, Petticoat Affair, Washington, Jacksonian Era, etiquette, morality

Una Sociedad de Enagua

RESUMEN

El matrimonio de Margaret “Peggy” O’Neal de 1829 con el Secretario de Guerra John Eaton causó una guerra social en Washington entre el presidente Andrew Jackson y las esposas de los miembros de su gabinete. Margaret fue educada para ser una mujer gentil,

pero se negó a ajustarse a la prescripción de la sociedad de que ella era sumisa, obediente, piadosa y pura. Margaret sorprendió a la sociedad de Washington cuando se involucró con Eaton antes de la muerte de su primer marido, John Timberlake, causando un escándalo. Las esposas del gabinete, dirigidas por Floride Calhoun, esposa del vicepresidente John C. Calhoun, y la sobrina de Jackson, Emily Donelson, consideraron inaceptable el comportamiento de Margaret antes y después de su matrimonio con Eaton, según las directrices de etiqueta del día y trataron de eliminarla de Washington. A pesar de que Jackson defendió a Margaret, quien le recordó a su difunta esposa, Rachel Donelson, fue rechazada y vilipendiada por las esposas de élite de la sociedad de Washington, que habían dictado las normas sociales de la capital desde la fundación del país. La guerra social eventualmente obligó a Jackson a eliminar a Eaton como Secretario de Guerra, eliminando así a Margaret y su comportamiento anodino de la sociedad de Washington.

Palabras clave: Margaret Eaton, Peggy Eaton, John Eaton, Andrew Jackson, Petticoat Affair, Washington, Jacksonian Era, etiqueta, moralidad

衬裙社会

摘要

玛格丽特·佩吉·奥尼尔与战争部长约翰·伊顿于1829年成婚，此事在华盛顿地区引起了总统安德鲁·杰克逊和其内阁成员妻子之间的社交危机。玛格丽特被培养成为一名上流社会女性，然而却拒绝服从社会（对女性）的要求：顺从、服从、虔诚、纯粹。玛格丽特因其在第一任丈夫约翰·汀布莱克去世之前便与伊顿卷入桃色新闻一事震惊了整个华盛顿社会，造成丑闻。各内阁成员的妻子——由副总统约翰·C·卡尔霍恩的妻子弗洛丽德·卡尔霍恩和杰克逊总统的侄女艾米丽·多内尔森共同领导——依照当时的礼仪规范，认为玛格丽特在嫁给伊顿前后的行为不可接受，并试图将她驱逐出华盛顿。尽管杰克逊总统维护玛格丽特，后者让他想起其已故妻子雷切尔·多内尔森，但玛格丽特还是被华盛顿社会精英阶层的妻子所排斥和诽谤，她们自建国以来便一直掌管着华盛顿的社交礼仪。这场社交危机最终驱使杰克逊总统将战争部长伊顿革职，因此将玛格丽特和其有失贵妇风范的行为彻底消除在华盛顿社会之外。

关键词：玛格丽特·伊顿，佩吉·伊顿，约翰·伊顿，安德鲁·杰克逊，衬裙事件，华盛顿，杰克逊时代，礼仪，道德

What did it mean to be a genteel woman in Washington society in the Jacksonian Era? Polite women were supposed to be domestic, submissive, obedient, quiet, pious, pure, good. That was threatened when Margaret “Peggy” O’Neal Timberlake married John Eaton, the good friend and, biographer of 1828 presidential elect, Andrew Jackson. Margaret defied what it meant to be a woman of gentility in the nation’s capital. She was none of those things, despite being brought up to be a gentlewoman in the early nineteenth century. Her atypical behavior caused a societal war, called the Petticoat Affair, between the ladies of Washington and President Andrew Jackson that nearly led the government to fall. The primary reason for the Petticoat Affair, in which Margaret “Peggy” Eaton was publicly ostracized and treated like a villain by the elite wives of Washington society, was because her improper womanly behavior before and after her marriage to John Eaton threatened the morality of Washington.

Before Margaret Eaton entered the elite social circles in Washington, DC, in 1829 with her husband, rumors were circulating about her character among the wives of the politicians, members of Congress, and other prominent figures in society. Margaret Bayard Smith, daughter of a Continental

Congressman and wife of Samuel Harrison Smith, writer and, editor of the *The National Intelligencer*, wrote in a letter to Mrs. Andrew Kirkpatrick, wife of the Chief of Justice, in January 1829, about John Eaton’s marriage to Margaret O’Neal Timberlake earlier that month. Smith criticized Eaton’s new wife, “whose reputation, her previous connection with him before and after [Timberlake’s] death, has totally been destroyed.”¹ She explained further that “[Margaret] has never been admitted into good society, is very handsome and of not an inspiring character and violent temper.”² Even Andrew Jackson’s supporters and friends were “very much disturbed about [the marriage].”³ Why did she have such a bad reputation that the social and political spheres in Washington were disturbed by it? The answer can be found in Margaret’s past, beginning with her childhood.

Margaret O’Neal was born December 3, 1799, in Washington, DC, to Irishman William O’Neal and Rhoda Howell. “Born with a ready tongue and a brilliant beauty,” she became the pet of politicians and congressmen, who missed their children and grandchildren, while they stayed at her parents’ boarding house, Franklin House, and tavern.⁴ Famous boarders included the Marquis de Lafayette, Henry Clay, Post-Master General William Bar-

ry, two-times Vice President George Clinton, Revolutionary fighter Thomas Sumter, and Thomas Jefferson's son-in-law, Felix Grundy. As a young child, she was described as "a lively sprite" and having a "strong will," but that did not stop her male admirers from dotting on her, reading her bedtime stories, and spoiling her.⁵ It was even argued that her own father spoiled her so much with gifts fit for a duchess that he acted more like her lover than her father.⁶ Due to these affections at an early age, Margaret became "instinctively aware that she could not only command men's admiration by variable expressions," such as small kisses on the cheek or curtsying, "but control it also."⁷ She even remarked that "while ... still a girl in pantalets and rolling hoops with other girls, I had the attention of men, young and old, enough to turn a girl's head."⁸ According to the *Daily Alta California* in 1888, growing up in a boarding house and tavern "was about the worst possible place to bring up a virtuous girl in, for it was the special rendezvous of the gay and dissipated."⁹ Therefore, Margaret's parents thought it best to give her a genteel education to curb the character they saw forming in their daughter.

What was gentility? According to Margaret Bayard Smith's, *What is gentility?* A moral tale,

"gentility was independent of birth, wealth, or condition, but is derived from that cultivation of mind which imparts elevation to sentiment and refinement to manners in whatever situation of life they may be

found; knowledge acting upon character, as fire upon gold, purifying it from any base or gross admixture."¹⁰

In other words, gentility was learned. In the tale, a woman and her husband started in the lower class, but when their whiskey business took off, they became wealthy. Since the mother knew that riches could not make them genteel, she and her husband sent their children off to school, their object: to get them to become a lady and gentlemen. Although the sons made good progress in becoming gentlemen, the daughter did not. Despite being sent to the best schools, learning dance, music, and French, and dressing much smarter than the other girls at school, she was not accepted due to her habits and manners, because they were different from that of a well-educated polite society.¹¹ According to this tale, if gentility could be learned, then Margaret had a good chance of becoming a genteel woman at school.

Margaret was well educated beyond her social class, that of an inn-keeper's daughter, having gone to the same private schools as the children of the elite, but she did not behave in the manner expected of her education. In contrast to her genteel education, which included etiquette, piano, dance, and French lessons, Margaret lacked refinement and delicacy, had vulgar speech and frequently flirted with the male travelers staying at the boarding house. She was loud, and she injected herself in not only conversations between men at Franklin House and the

tavern, but into political ones. It would have been easy for her to do that since she grew up around politicians and listened to the best and worst news from Washington.¹² However, according to Queena Pollack, “men resented women’s intrusion in politics.”¹³ J. Kingston Pierce agreed with Pollack in that “women were expected to be submissive and demure, domestic and irreproachably virtuous and utterly uninterested in politics, much less be able to agree on governmental issues.”¹⁴ Margaret’s ability to easily converse with them on such topics made her a novelty, but it was not how a lady should have behaved, especially a genteel one.

How a young lady of genteel influence should behave in Jacksonian America could be found in etiquette manuals. According to Abel Bowen’s *The Young Lady’s Book*, a young lady was to exude piety; integrity; fortitude; charity; obedience; consideration; sincerity; prudence; these were the amiable qualities of a moral character.¹⁵ Bowen further illustrated that prejudice, bad habits and conduct, and faults in virtue would take “deep root” if not corrected early on.¹⁶ In Emily Thornwell’s *The Ladies Guide to Perfect Gentility*, young ladies should be amiable, have perfect manners, avoid ostentation, and “guard themselves against affectation” and converse with “dignified modesty and simplicity” when speaking with a gentleman.¹⁷ A young lady should also “never say or do anything that may lead [men] to suppose you [sic] are soliciting their notice.”¹⁸ Furthermore, it was encouraged that if a man showed interest, a young lady should refuse his

attention, only giving a small smile or nod. Better yet, Thornwell wrote, that the lady should pretend not to notice such flattery, not even dignify them with a response. She concluded by saying that a young lady should never address a gentleman she did not know and not talk excessively, for “the less you say the better ... even ... if you are gifted with the best powers of conversation, it would be wise for you to guard against excessive loquacity.”¹⁹ By refusing to conform to that prescription for gentlemanly behavior, Margaret committed her first cardinal sin and continued to turn heads well into her teens and adulthood.

At age 13, Margaret considered herself a full-fledged woman and ready for love. She found herself in fights of affection between several young men, even attempting an elopement with one of her young suitors until it was foiled by her father. She would descend the tavern staircase in Grecian gowns, hair done in the latest fashion, flirting with men with her voluptuous form. There was even a rumor that she had a tryst with Thomas Jefferson’s Secretary of Treasury, Albert Gallatin, and politician Richard Call. According to the genteel rules of Washington society, this was criminal; she was not genteel; she was a loose woman. Some could say that it was not her nonconformity to genteel rules that led her astray of proper behavior, however, but lack of being reared properly by her mother.

In Jacksonian America, mothers had the sole responsibility for the physical well-being of their children, as well

as their moral character; the home was where moral character began. Daniel Feller posited that a good moral upbringing would prevent children from growing up to be social deviants.²⁰ Moreover, it was a mother's job to imbue in their daughters a temperament for domesticity. The home was a woman's universe, where she was supposed to be obedient, submissive, pious, and pure, all the while ensuring that her children were morally good.²¹ Therefore, it could be argued that Margaret's mother failed to raise her according to the moral guidelines of the day and was ultimately to blame for her loose behavior. Whatever the reason, Margaret's troubles with her behavior had just begun.

In 1816, she met John Bowie Timberlake, a navy purser staying at Franklin House, whom she thought very attractive; she was determined to marry him. Later that year, at the age of 16, she and Timberlake were wed. Margaret became the mother to two daughters by 1818 before Timberlake was shipped abroad for four years with the navy. Meanwhile, Andrew Jackson and his military friend and biographer, John Eaton, had come to stay at Franklin House. This set off a chain of events that would cement Margaret's reputation among the elite wives of Washington, DC. The triangle between Jackson, John Eaton, and Margaret O'Neal Timberlake would become known in Washington as the Petticoat Affair, also referred to as the Eaton Affair.

When Jackson and Eaton came to stay at Franklin House in 1823, Margaret was no longer a girl but a wom-

an. She was helping her father run the boarding house and tavern and openly and frequently participated in the political debates between men, which was not the social norm for women.²² Nonetheless, Jackson and Eaton took a liking to her immediately and, they became friendly with the couple. Before Timberlake shipped off in 1824, he tasked Eaton to look after his wife and children, for they had become good friends. Therefore, with Timberlake away, Eaton began escorting Margaret to social functions; however, they were seen sitting together on the front porch at twilight, alone. As a married woman, this was considered inappropriate behavior, because a married, well-educated woman would not be alone in the company of a man without her husband or another person present.²³ This behavior did not bode well for Margaret in the coming year, considering she was already talked of being sexually improper.²⁴ Again, she did not conform to the rules of genteel society.

The friendship between Eaton and Margaret grew over the years while her husband was gone. Then, in April 1828, came the news that Timberlake had committed suicide while abroad. Rumors began circulating that Timberlake had learned of an affair between his wife and Eaton and rather than face the embarrassment; he killed himself in a drunken rage. John F. Marszalek argued that Timberlake most likely killed himself due to depression over recent financial difficulties and bad health as he suffered from severe asthma attacks.²⁵ However, even if that were true, the rumors had spread too quickly about his

sensational death. News of the affair reached Jackson during his 1828 presidential campaign. He did not believe the rumors about Margaret and Eaton; he believed her to be a respectable woman and him as a trusted advisor and friend. Had Jackson fallen under Margaret's spell? Having dealt recently with his wife's, Rachel Donelson's, death, Jackson most likely felt it was his patriarchal duty to come to Margaret's defense.

Jackson's wife, Rachel Donelson, was the daughter of John Donelson, a founder of Nashville, Tennessee. In 1785, Rachel first married Lewis Robards, who had a bad temper and was prone to jealousy. Having first met the Robards when he came to stay at their house, Jackson saw that Rachel was not happy with her husband and elected to escort her to Florida when her husband moved away from her. Jackson did not care how that looked to outsiders; he felt she needed his protection. Rachel believed that Lewis had granted her a divorce and married Jackson. However, that was not the case, and Rachel was labeled an adulterer and bigamist. Once the divorce from Robards was finalized a few years later, Jackson wed Rachel again to make their marriage legal, but the damage had been done, her status as an adulterer and bigamist was cemented and had been drawn into the press. Jackson's political opponents in 1827 used this to their advantage and vilified her. Although Jackson spared her most of the bad rumors, she found out and panicked. Just after her husband had won the 1828 presidential election, she suffered two heart attacks

and died. Jackson was "convinced that his political enemies had killed his wife with their slanderous attacks in order to get him."²⁶ No longer able to defend his wife against villainous rumors, he felt it was his patriarchal duty to come to the defense of Margaret, who he believed had been wronged, just like his wife.

Hoping to squash the rumors about Margaret as an adulterer and a loose woman, John Eaton professed his love for Margaret in December 1828 to Jackson. With Jackson's full support and encouragement, Eaton proposed to Margaret and she accepted; they married in January 1829, less than nine months after Timberlake had died. According to Marszalek, "marrying so quickly after the death of a husband violated one of the most serious proscriptions of genteel American society."²⁷ He further added that a "widow of gentility was to alter her life significantly for one to two years after her husband's death to indicate proper respect and grieving for him."²⁸ Widows were supposed to wear black, not leave the house except to go to church, nor attend social events, they were to display, publically, proper sorrow demanded by society. By getting married so soon after her late husband's death, Margaret committed yet another cardinal sin of genteel society; she violated the grieving ritual. Jackson and Eaton had hoped that all the gossip surrounding Margaret would cease after the marriage, but it only got worse.

Washington society was disgusted with Margaret, and Jackson's presidential win only aided in that disgust. Margaret Bayard Smith sensed a change

coming to their society, and not a good one. In a letter to Mrs. Kirkpatrick in January 1829, she dwelled upon the fact that the goodness and greatness of John Quincy Adams' presidency had fallen into a "cold and narrow grave" with Jackson's election.²⁹ She lamented on the fact that Jackson may not be able to be controlled once in the White House with the passing of his wife, for society believed that she "could control the violence of his temper, sooth the exacerbations of feelings always keenly sensitive and excessively irritable."³⁰ Smith feared that "not only the domestic circle but the public will suffer from this restraining and benign influence being withdrawn."³¹ There was much anxiety and impatience about the future. In a letter to her son, J. Bayard Smith, in February 1829, she said that the public would never be satisfied with any position given to Eaton "which would bring his wife into society. Everyone acknowledges Genl [sic] Eaton's talents and virtues, but his unfortunate connection is an obstacle to his receiving and place of honor"³² Later in the letter, she jokingly said how Eaton should be sent as the minister to "Hayti [sic]" because that was the "most proper court for [Margaret] to reside in."³³ The ladies of Washington did not want to accept Margaret into their folds. She was a "sexually loose, unchaste, unfaithful" woman, who defied "genteel convention" by being "too forward and outgoing for proper society."³⁴ Simply put, she was not one of them, and she was better off living in another country. Nevertheless, Margaret tried to fulfill her obligations to society as Eaton's wife.

John and Margaret wasted no time in fulfilling their new obligations to society like any other genteel person. After Jackson took office, The Eatons visited the Vice President, John C. Calhoun, and his wife, Floride, as was the rule in elite social circles.³⁵ However, due to Margaret's reputation, Floride decided to not to return the visit and led the assault of insults on Margaret to which other cabinet wives, Berrien, Branch, and Ingham, followed suit. The president's niece, Emily Donelson, was even against her. According to Marszalek, "to visit someone was a serious matter; it indicated acceptance of that individual into the genteel society of that community."³⁶ Therefore, by not returning the visit, it showed that Margaret was not an acceptable member of Washington society. Jackson, who saw his late wife in Margaret, exiled Emily back to Tennessee because she would not accept Margaret into society. He also tried to get the members of his cabinet to control their wives but to no avail. Margaret tried visiting other leading women of Washington society, but she was ignored. She was even ignored at a ball in which the "cabinet dames would float away and vanish into thin air upon [Margaret's] approach"³⁷ Margaret was officially shunned from Washington society. According to Nancy Morgan, "social networks provided a veneer of cordiality over the serious business of building alliances," and the wives of Washington clearly did not want an alliance with Margaret Eaton.³⁸ How dare she think that she could be accepted into society with all of those transgressions! By the spring, there

were reports of “a thousand rumors and much tittle-tattle and gossip [sic] and prophesying and apprehensions,” which continued to doom Margaret. The ladies of Washington started a war against a woman who had “left her strait [sic] and narrow path,”³⁹ and they were winning. Members of the clergy, like Presbyterian preacher Ezra Stiles Ely, also tried to oust Margaret from Washington because they also believed her to be a threat to Washington society.

In a letter to Andrew Jackson on March 18, 1829, Reverend Ezra Stiles Ely cataloged all of the indiscretions against Margaret thinking that Jackson had no prior knowledge about her reputation and that was why John Eaton was appointed to the cabinet. By disclosing the rumors, Ely hoped to have John Eaton ousted from the cabinet, thereby removing Margaret from Washington society. According to Ely, there were six transgressions committed by Margaret: she was a “lewd woman, ... excluded from society before her first and second marriage”; she slept with a man who frequented the tavern; was overheard telling a servant to call her two daughters by the last name of Eaton instead of Timberlake, because he was their real father; Mr. Timberlake said he would never return “on account of Eaton’s seduction of his wife”; a clergyman said she had a miscarriage when Mr. Timberlake had been away for more than a year; Mr. Eaton had plotted to free Margaret from Timberlake.⁴⁰ He concluded the letter by saying that he had “seen enough of Mrs. E to confirm these reports” and that if Jackson did not remove Eaton from the cabinet that

“she will do more to injure your peace and your administration than one-hundred Henry Clays.”⁴¹ In response to Ely, Jackson invoked his education as a lawyer and demanded Ely bring him proof of the slanderous accusations against Margaret, for he must have been badly advised. Innocent until proven guilty. Jackson fully believed that Clay and his “minions” were behind the destroying of her character “by the foulest and basest means, so that a deep and lasting wrong might be inflicted on her husband.”⁴² This would later change to him blaming Calhoun since his wife led the charge against Margaret. He wholeheartedly believed Margaret to be a virtuous woman. Jackson ended his tirade by saying that he has had and will never have anything to do with the ladies of Washington and that they should be shunned like a “pestilence of the worst and most dangerous kind” and hoped suspicion on her character would vanish upon proof.⁴³ Letters would be volleyed between Jackson and Ely until 1831 over the matter. Arguments with Ely over Margaret “helped turn Jackson against self-anointed guardians of Christian virtue,” leaving him no choice but to quit his church.⁴⁴ According to Daniel Feller, “Jackson saw his election in 1828 as a triumph of the plain people over the aristocrats. He came to Washington believing that a clique of insiders had leagued themselves against him and the common citizens of the country.”⁴⁵ The Petticoat Affair had proven that to be true; it was all anyone was talking about. It consumed him so much for the first two years of his presidency that he dismissed his

entire cabinet in 1831, and the political sphere held her responsible. Margaret herself even confronted her accusers, which was viewed as aggressive, man-like behavior: "I sprang to my feet and approached Dr. Ely in a menacing attitude for it was no time then to remember proprieties."⁴⁶ Although Jackson and Margaret had put up a good fight, Washington society had won their war against her. Eventually, Jackson had no other option but to appoint John Eaton as minister to Spain where he and Margaret lived for many years.

Another reason Margaret may have been shunned from Washington society was her heritage. She was the daughter of an Irish inn-keeper "at a time when to be an Irish servant girl meant being considered unsettled, reckless, slovenly, dishonest, [and] intemperate."⁴⁷ Although she was not purely Irish, it was too easy to "equate her with poor women who waited on and clean[ed] houses of the genteel middle class."⁴⁸ Consequently, since her family ran a boarding house, Margaret was seen as more of a servant girl, who was uncultured, and therefore, could never be a lady, let alone a lady in the capital. The capital of the country had a unique society, unlike that of any other in the nation; it was nearly a kingdom, in which the elite wives ruled like queens.

Washington society in the nineteenth century was unlike any other in the country. It began at the birth of the nation when George and Martha Washington instilled a set of rigid etiquette rules using Old World customs combined with New World titles and rank

for the governing class of the country. Then, in 1789, Martha Washington began having drawing room parties every Friday night. Those parties became so much like "monarchical ceremonies" that those who attended them referred to it as the Republican Court.⁴⁹ There, women dominated and, like queens, came up with new ideas of manners in society, because, according to them, manners equaled a civilized nation, not its laws or constitutions.⁵⁰ Despite a small break with the election of widower Thomas Jefferson in 1800, who hated "court" etiquette and had them banned, First Ladies and other elite wives dictated the social norms of Washington society for many years. That is until Andrew Jackson was elected president and brought with him vulgar and chaotic democratic values. Madeline Vinton Dahlgren alluded to that in her book on etiquette in Washington society in 1873. She wrote that Jackson "broke down the barriers of careful respect and received all comers without any formal or special rules; the consequence was that a disorder and rudeness characterized those receptions hitherto unknown and which no private gentleman in the country would have tolerated in his own home."⁵¹ Was she talking about how Jackson came to the defense of an immoral woman that nearly brought down an entire administration? It was likely the case.

As a result of the social norms dictated by the First Ladies and other elite wives since the founding of the country, Washington by the nineteenth century was "principally official, ... composed in so great a degree ... that the

social obligations [had] become about as complex as the constitutional laws," according to Dahlgren.⁵² On a visit to the capital city, Francis Trollope, an Englishwoman, concluded that Washington was where the "elite ... body of citizens" resided; it was the best place to live than any other city in the country.⁵³ Therefore, it could be seen why Margaret's nongentlewomanly behavior and entrance into Washington society after her marriage to John Eaton would have upset the women who controlled its social norms. Their ostracization and vilification of her was an attempt to push her out of Washington so that its morality would remain intact.

Unfortunately for Margaret, her reputation followed her throughout the rest of her life. At age 59, many years after John had died, she married one of her grandchildren's dance instructors, Antonio Buchignani, who was 40 years her junior. Once again, she was a pariah. Antonio eventually left Margaret to marry the granddaughter, taking all of her money with him to Italy. Margaret O'Neal Timberlake Eaton Buchignani died lonely and destitute on November 8, 1879. She was laid to rest next to John Eaton in the same cemetery as the men and women who barred her from entering genteel Washington society between 1829 and 1831. She was now their neighbor, equal in every way.

The gossip and tattling of the cabinet wives and other ladies of Washington could be seen as a violation of etiquette, too, however. Charles William Day wrote a manual which gave men and women a prescription on the

proper course of becoming a lady and a gentleman. In agreement with Margaret Bayard Smith that gentility was not a birthright and that it was a learned behavior, he said that conversations will happen

"in which opinions are given, and motives scrutinized, ... but there are none ... so despicable as those traitors to society who hurry from house to house, laden with remarks made by one party upon another; stirring up discord and strengthening hatred wheresoever they appear"⁵⁴

He concluded the section in saying that it was best not to say anything at all, only "fancy the result."⁵⁵ Therefore, if Washington society etiquette was more strictly observed than others, then it can be concluded that Floride Calhoun, Emily Donelson, and cabinet wives Berrien, Branch, and Ingham, as well as Margaret Bayard Smith and her letter recipients, committed an etiquette crime that was not befitting their station. According to Day, they were traitors to their society and no better than Margaret.

For two years, Margaret Eaton was the subject of disdain and ostracism in Washington society. Her reputation and character had been damned. Instead of being shamed by the attention of men, she welcomed it, almost thrived on it. She was labeled a sinful woman who did not conform to the rules of being a lady and as a woman who tried to claim a place among the ladies of Washington, to which she did not belong.

No matter the reason for her behavior, which caused her to be treated with such antipathy, whether it was her unconventional upbringing, a strong will, and bad habits that had taken deep root despite a genteel education, being Andrew Jackson's favorite, or being Irish, Margaret was not accepted "across the entire spectrum of womanhood."⁵⁶ Her open and aggressive behavior was more that of a man's and that was criminal in the eyes of the ladies of Washington; therefore, she was treated as such.

In sum, Margaret Eaton's non-conformity to genteel rules in Washington society during the Jacksonian Era, coupled with her a lack of moral guidance while growing up caused her to become a woman whose reputation was deemed sexually and immorally loose. This ultimately led to a petticoat war between her and the elite wives of Washington. No matter how much she tried to fit in after she married John Eaton, she was not accepted into society. Emily Thornwell said it best that "it is a rare instance ... that a young female, who's habitually accustomed to society of a rude ... character, ever becomes dignified or graceful in her own manners."⁵⁷ In the end, Margaret Eaton Timberlake Eaton Buchignani was not dignified or graceful enough to ever fit into genteel Washington society due to her un-gentlewomanly behavior.

Bibliography

Bowen, Abel. *The Young Lady's Book: A Manual of Elegant Recreations, Ex-*

ercises, and Pursuits. Boston: Carter and Hendee, 1830. Accessed October 10, 2017. <https://archive.org/details/youngladybookma00bostrich>.

Dahlgren, Madeline Vinton. *Etiquette of Social Life in Washington*. Lancaster: Inquirer Printing and Publishing Company, 1873. Accessed October 10, 2017. <https://archive.org/details/etiquetteofsocia00dah>.

Day, Charles William. *The American Ladies and Gentlemen's Manual of Elegance, Fashion, and True Politeness*. Auburn: Alden and Parsons, 1849. Accessed October 9, 2017. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31175031568887;view=1up;seq=1>.

Eaton, Peggy. *The Autobiography of Peggy Eaton*. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1932. Quoted in David Nevin. "To the President, Peggy Eaton Was Chaste Indeed." *Smithsonian* 23, no. 2 (May 1992): 84. Academic Search Premier.

Ely, Ezra Stiles, letter to Andrew Jackson. March 18, 1829. *The Papers of Andrew Jackson*, vol. 7, edited by Daniel Feller. <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/default.xqy?keys=JKSN-print-01-07-02-0072>.

Feller, Daniel. *The Jacksonian Promise: America, 1815-1840*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

Jackson, Andrew. letter to Ezra Stiles Ely. March 23, 1829. *The Papers of Andrew Jackson*, vol. 7, edited by Daniel Feller. <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/>

[founders/default.xqy?keys=JK-SN-print-01-07-02-0079](#).

Marszalek, John F. *Petticoat Affair: Manners, Mutiny, and Sex in Andrew Jackson's White House*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Morgan, Nancy. *A Companion to the Era of Andrew Jackson*. Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2013. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Peggy O'Neal. "A Young Woman Who Had Much to Do with American History." *Daily Alta California*, March 4, 1888. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=DAC18880304.2.78>.

Pierce J. Kingston. "Andrew Jackson and the Tavern Keeper's Daughter." *American History* 34, no. 2 (1999): 20–26. <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy1.apus.edu/docview/224076425?accountid=8289>.

Pollack, Queena. *Peggy Eaton, Democracy's Mistress*. New York: Minton, Balch and Company, 1931. Accessed October 11, 2017. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015068803686;view=1up;seq=25>.

Smith, Margaret Bayard, and Gaillard Hunt. *The First Fifty Years of Washington Society Portrayed by the Family Letters of Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith (Margaret Bayard) from the Collection of Her Grandson, J. Henley Smith*. New York: Scribner's Sons, 1906. Accessed October 12, 2017. <http://cdn.loc.gov/service/gdc/lhbc/40262/40262.pdf>.

Smith, Margaret Bayard. *What Is Gentility? A Moral Tale*. Washington: Pishey Thompson, 1828. Accessed October 11, 2017. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=wu.89104490727;view=1up;seq=5>.

Teute, Frederika, and David S. Shields. "Jefferson in Washington." *The Journal of the Early Republic* 35, no. 2 (2015): 237–59, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jer.2015.0024>.

Thornwell, Emily. *The Ladies Guide to Perfect Gentility, in Manners, Dress, and Conversation ...* New York: Derby and Jackson Company, 1857. Accessed October 10, 2017. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/music/musdi/text/241/pdf/241.pdf>.

Trollope, Frances. *Domestic Manners of the Americans*. London: Whittaker, Treacher and Co., 1832. Accessed October 10, 2017. <https://archive.org/details/domesticmannerso00troliala>.

Wharton, Anne Hollingsworth. *Social Life in the Early Republic*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1902. Accessed October 9, 2017. <https://www.loc.gov/resource/lhbc/29033/?sp=300>.

Notes

- 1 Margaret Bayard Smith and Gaillard Hunt, *The first fifty years of Washington society portrayed by the family letters of Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith (Margaret Bayard) from the collection of her grandson, J. Henley Smith* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1906), 215, online text, retrieved from <http://cdn.loc.gov/service/gdc/lhbc/40262/40262.pdf>, October 12, 2017.
- 2 Margaret Bayard Smith and Gaillard Hunt, *The first fifty years of Washington society portrayed by the family letters of Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith (Margaret Bayard) from the collection of her grandson, J. Henley Smith* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1906), 215, accessed October 12, 2017, <http://cdn.loc.gov/service/gdc/lhbc/40262/40262.pdf>.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Queena Pollack, *Peggy Eaton, Democracy's Mistress* (New York: Minton, Balch and Company, 1931), 7, accessed October 11, 2017, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015068803686;view=1up;seq=25>.
- 6 Ibid., 8, 10.
- 7 Ibid., 21.
- 8 Ibid., 11.
- 9 Peggy Eaton, *The Autobiography of Peggy Eaton* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1932), quoted in David Nevin, "To the President, Peggy Eaton Was Chaste Indeed," *Smithsonian* 23, no. 2 (May 1992): 84, Academic Search Premier.
- 10 Peggy O'Neal, "A Young Woman Who Had Much to Do with American History," *Daily Alta California*, March 4, 1888, 8, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=DAC18880304.2.78>.
- 11 Margaret Bayard Smith, *What Is Gentility? A Moral Tale* (Washington: Pishey Thompson, 1828), 3, accessed October 11, 2017, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=wu.89104490727;view=1up;seq=5>.
- 12 Ibid., 17.
- 13 J. Kingston Pierce, "Andrew Jackson and The Tavern Keeper's Daughter," *American History* 34, no. 2 (1999): 22.
- 14 Pollack, 15.
- 15 Pierce, 22.
- 16 Abel Bowen, *The Young Lady's Book: A Manual of Elegant Recreations, Exercises, and Pursuits* (Boston: Carter and Hendee, 1830), 24, accessed October 10, 2017, <https://archive.org/details/youngladybookma00bostrich>.

17 Ibid.

18 Emily Thornwell, *The Ladies Guide to Perfect Gentility, in Manners, Dress, and Conversation ...* (New York: Derby and Jackson Company, 1857), 50–53, 93, accessed October 10, 2017, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/music/musdi/text/241/pdf/241.pdf>.

19 Ibid., 93.

20 Ibid., 94.

21 Daniel Feller, *The Jacksonian Promise: America, 1815–1840* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 153.

22 John F. Marszalek, *Petticoat Affair: Manners, Mutiny, and Sex in Andrew Jackson's White House* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997), 51, ProQuest Ebook Central.

23 Marszalek, 39–40.

24 Thornwell, 54.

25 Marszalek, 40.

26 Ibid., 42.

27 Ibid., 24.

28 Ibid., 46.

29 Ibid.

30 Smith and Gaillard, 220.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid., 220–21.

33 Ibid., 228.

34 Ibid.

35 Marszalek, 8.

36 Charles William Day, *The American Ladies and Gentlemen's Manual of Elegance, Fashion, and True Politeness* (Auburn: Alden and Parsons, 1849), 105, accessed October 9, 2017, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31175031568887;view=1up;seq=1>.

37 Marszalek, 51.

38 Anne Hollingsworth Wharton, *Social Life in the Early Republic* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1902), 243, accessed October 9, 2017, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/lhbc.29033/?sp=300>.

- 39 Nancy Morgan, *A Companion to the Era of Andrew Jackson* (Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2013), 308, ProQuest Ebook Central.
- 40 Smith and Gaillard, 243.
- 41 Ezra Stiles Ely to Andrew Jackson, March 18, 1829, *The Papers of Andrew Jackson*, vol. 7, ed. Daniel Feller, <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/default.xqy?keys=JKSN-print-01-07-02-0072>.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Andrew Jackson to Ezra Stiles Ely, March 23, 1829, *The Papers of Andrew Jackson*, vol. 7, ed. Daniel Feller, <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/default.xqy?keys=JKSN-print-01-07-02-0079>.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Feller, 178.
- 46 Feller, 178.
- 47 Peggy Eaton, *An Autobiography of Peggy Eaton*, quoted in John Marszalek, 84.
- 48 Marszalek, 53.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 Frederika J. Teute and David S. Shields, "Jefferson in Washington," *The Journal of the Early Republic* 35, no.2 (2015): 239, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jer.2015.0024>.
- 51 Ibid., 240.
- 52 Madeline Vinton Dahlgren, *Etiquette of Social Life in Washington* (Lancaster: Inquirer Printing and Publishing Company, 1873), 4, accessed October 10, 2017, <https://archive.org/details/etiquetteofsocia00dah>.
- 53 Ibid.
- 54 Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (London: Whittaker, Treacher and Co., 1832), 177, accessed October 10, 2017, <https://archive.org/details/domesticmannerso00troliala>.
- 55 Day, 118.
- 56 Ibid., 119.
- 57 Marszalek, 8.

Across the Etowah and into the Hell-Hole: Johnston's Lost Chance for Victory in the Atlanta Campaign

Greg Drummond

American Military University

Previously published in *The Saber & Scroll Journal*, Volume 6, Number 1.

ABSTRACT

The Atlanta Campaign is often thought of as an inevitable victory for William T. Sherman with little to no chance of Joseph Johnston's Army of the Tennessee to stop the invasion of Georgia. A brief look at the timeline of the campaign seems to reinforce this view, with Sherman routinely turning Johnston out of strong positions, usually without even a fight. A closer look reveals that at one point, following Sherman's crossing of the Etowah, Johnston had a perfect opportunity to stop Sherman. To reach his target of Dallas Sherman had to leave the safety of his supply and communication lines along the Western & Atlantic Railroad and strike off across the Georgia wilderness. The fighting that ensued was described by some participants as the fiercest of the war, leading to the name "The Hell-Hole" being applied to the area by Union troops. This paper uses a mixture of primary source documents and secondary sources in order to determine why Johnston failed at his best chance to stop Sherman. The analysis concludes that while Johnston was able to effect a major change in the tempo and character of the campaign in the fighting around Dallas, his failure to contest Sherman's crossing of the Etowah River and inability to stop the Union general from reconnecting with an unbroken Western and & Atlantic Railroad insured that the Confederates lost their best chance at stopping Sherman's thrust toward Atlanta.

Keywords: Atlanta Campaign, Joseph Johnston, William T. Sherman, New Hope Church, Pickett's Mill

Al Otro Lado del Etowah y al Agujero del Infierno: La Oportunidad Perdida de Johnston para la Victoria en la Campaña de Atlanta

RESUMEN

La Campaña de Atlanta es a menudo considerada como una victoria inevitable para William T. Sherman con poca o ninguna posibilidad de que el Ejército de Tennessee de Joseph Johnston detenga la invasión de Georgia. Un breve vistazo a la línea de tiempo de la campaña parece reforzar este punto de vista, ya que Sherman rutinariamente le quita posiciones fuertes a Johnston, generalmente sin siquiera una pelea. Una mirada más cercana revela que, en un momento dado, tras el cruce de Etowah por parte de Sherman, Johnston tuvo la oportunidad perfecta de detener a Sherman. Para alcanzar a su objetivo en Dallas, Sherman tuvo que abandonar la seguridad de sus líneas de suministro y comunicación a lo largo del Ferrocarril Occidental y Atlántico y atacar a través del desierto de Georgia. La lucha que siguió fue descrita por algunos participantes como la más feroz de la guerra, lo que llevó a que las tropas de la Unión aplicaran el nombre “The Hell-Hole” al área. Este documento utiliza una mezcla de documentos de fuente primaria y fuentes secundarias para determinar por qué Johnston falló en su mejor oportunidad de detener a Sherman. El análisis concluye que, si bien Johnston pudo realizar un cambio importante en el ritmo y el carácter de la campaña en los combates en Dallas, su incapacidad para enfrentar el cruce del río Etowah por parte de Sherman y la incapacidad de impedir que el general de la Unión se volviera a conectar con un Western Atlantic Railroad ininterrumpido y aseguró que los Confederados perdieran su mejor oportunidad de detener el empuje de Sherman hacia Atlanta.

Palabras clave: Campaña de Atlanta, Joseph Johnston, William T. Sherman, Iglesia New Hope, Pickett’s Mill

横跨埃托瓦，进入“地狱”战场：约翰斯顿在亚特兰大战役中丢失的胜利机会

摘要

亚特兰大战役时常被视为威廉·T·谢尔曼将军不可避免的胜利，这场战役中约瑟夫·约翰斯顿率领的田纳西军队制止乔治亚洲被入侵的机率微乎其微。对这场战役的时间点进行简短回顾，似乎更能支持这一观点，因为谢尔曼按照计划将约翰斯顿的猛烈攻势进行转移，这一战术常常都不需要安排动兵。对这场战役进行仔细研究发现，在某一时刻，继谢尔曼军队横跨埃托瓦之后，约翰斯顿本可以拥有制止谢尔曼的绝佳机会。为到达目标地点达拉斯(乔治亚洲)，谢尔曼不得不离开其在沿着乔治亚州西部和大西洋铁路上的供给线和交流线，并进军跨越乔治亚洲荒野。之后引起的战争被某些参战士兵描述为最激烈的一次战役，美利坚合众国率领的军队将战场称之为“地狱”(The Hell-Hole)。本文通过结合使用一次文献和二次文献，以期确定约翰斯顿未能抓住最佳时机制止谢尔曼的原因。分析结果显示，尽管约翰斯顿能够在达拉斯一战中在很大程度上改变战争节奏和特征，但他却无法阻止谢尔曼横跨埃托瓦河，也无法阻止美利坚合众国将军重新连接其在乔治亚州西部和大西洋铁路处完整的军队补给。这些都决定了美利坚联盟国失去阻止谢尔曼突进亚特兰大的最佳时机。

关键词：亚特兰大战役，约瑟夫·约翰斯顿，威廉·T·谢尔曼，纽霍普教堂，皮克特磨坊

Despite being one of the more important campaigns of the American Civil War, the Atlanta Campaign has been somewhat underrepresented throughout the literature on the subject. While this oversight has been somewhat rectified in light of the sesquicentennial celebrations, most of these writings have focused on either

the major battles that happened from late June 1864 through the fall of Atlanta or on the various commanders of the campaign. Nearly forgotten among all of this is the fighting that took place on the country crossroads and in the deep forests near Dallas, Georgia, between May 25 and June 4. It was during this period of fighting that the Atlanta

Campaign went from a series of quick flanking maneuvers to a constant daily grind of skirmishes and entrenchment, with little respite from weather-induced misery and the constant fear of death from an enemy one could not see. It was during this time that Confederate commander Joseph Johnston had the best chance to turn back the invasion of Georgia headed by Union general William T. Sherman. Johnston was able to effect a major change in the tempo and character of the campaign in the fighting around Dallas. However, his failure to contest Sherman's crossing of the Etowah River and inability to stop the Union general from reconnecting with an unbroken Western & Atlantic Railroad insured that the Confederates lost their best chance at stopping the invasion of Georgia.

The Armies Face Off

Going into the Atlanta Campaign, both commanders knew they faced a herculean task. Johnston's challenge when he took over the Army of Tennessee in December 1863 was to stop the much stronger Union forces from passing into Georgia and taking Atlanta, a city of just over 22,000. Atlanta, an important rail hub for the South, and home to a number of mills and ammunition factories, as such, it was a vital strategic target.¹ However, following the disastrous battle at Missionary Ridge outside of Chattanooga, Tennessee, the previous year there was much work to do to ensure a strong fighting force for the Army of Tennessee. When Johnston took over,

he inherited a severely demoralized and weakened force which he immediately set about drilling and preparing for the coming campaign, but with a strength of around 38,000 men, he realized he had to find more men before a campaign could be launched. By the end of April, he had collected a force of nearly 60,000 effective men and 154 cannon. General Leonidas Polk reinforced him with an additional 15,000 at Resaca.² While not a match in size for their foe, it was still a formidable force.

The Confederate Army of Tennessee, as it stood on the eve of the campaign, was a quite capable military force. It consisted of three corps of infantry, Lieutenant General William J. Hardee with four divisions, Lieutenant General John B. Hood with three divisions, Lieutenant General Leonidas Polk with two divisions, and a caval-

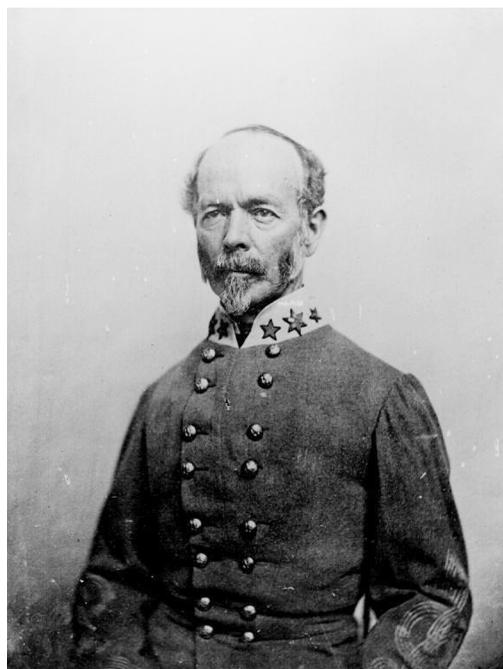


Figure 1

ry corps under Major General Joseph Wheeler with three divisions.³ Johnston's constant drilling in the winter after taking command had a noticeable effect on Confederate morale and the once demoralized forces were ready to fight once more (Figure 1).

Johnston knew, since he was facing a much larger force, that he would have to conserve his forces throughout the coming campaign. In order to combat the difference in manpower, he had to adopt a Fabian-like strategy in which he would pull back behind strong entrenchments and try to entice Sherman to attack on his terms, which when successful lead to impressive Confederate victories.⁴ Though Johnston was not averse to striking an isolated portion of the enemy lines, he preferred a defensive stance until Sherman could be defeated in battle and then chased back north. He flat out refused the urging of Jefferson Davis and Braxton Bragg to strike into Tennessee before Sherman could advance, knowing he needed every man he could get for the coming campaign into Georgia.⁵

After President Abraham Lincoln called Ulysses S. Grant east from Chattanooga, Sherman was left in command in the western theater. Sherman had two roles to fill, first as commander of the Military Division of the Mississippi and second as a field commander of three armies stationed at Chattanooga. Besides Sherman's previous command of the Army of the Tennessee, now commanded by Major General James McPherson and consisting of three corps, Sherman also had at his dispos-

al four corps in Major General George Thomas's Army of the Cumberland and the Army of the Ohio which consisted of one corps under Major General John Schofield, all told around 100,000 men.⁶ Sherman had a nearly two to one advantage in men and he planned to use that advantage to crush the enemy (Figure 2).

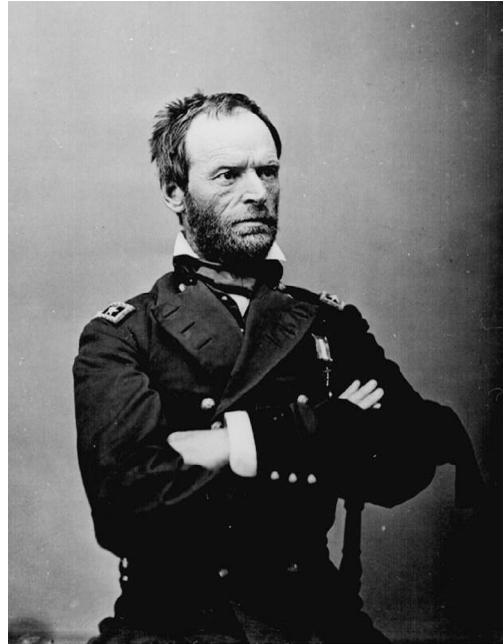


Figure 2

Sherman's campaign served two major purposes in the Union war effort. Not only was it meant to destroy the Army of Tennessee and end it as an effective fighting force, the offensive into the heart of Georgia was meant to take out as much of the South's ability to wage war as possible, weakening both Johnston's and Robert E. Lee's ability to continue fighting.⁷ Sherman knew that attacking Johnston in his fortified positions was a futile effort so from the beginning, he followed a strategy of flanking the Confederate forces and forcing them to pull back or risk being cut off

from their supply line. Sherman had one major weakness though; he was advancing into hostile territory with only a single supply line, the Western & Atlantic Railroad, of which he said after the war that the “Atlanta Campaign of 1864 would have been impossible without that road.”⁸ As future events would point out, Sherman needed the railroad, and when he was not able to pull back quickly to it after attempting a flanking maneuver, things would become a near disaster.

To the Etowah

It is safe to say that up to the point where Sherman crossed the Etowah River, the Atlanta Campaign had gone completely in his favor. Beginning on May 7, 1864, the three Union armies under Sherman’s command had forced Johnston out of several strongly entrenched positions with minimal casualties and at a frightening speed. Though initially Sherman’s plan was to have the Army of the Tennessee march on Rome, Georgia, while his other two armies held the Confederate forces at their heavily fortified positions outside the town of Dalton along Rocky Face Ridge, he instead sent this army through an undefended gap in the mountains of north Georgia, known as Snake Creek Gap. Had McPherson and his army gone through the gap to capture Resaca, Johnston would have been completely cut off from Atlanta. McPherson however felt he was in danger trying to go through the gap and stopped to fortify the entrance, alerting Johnston to his presence. This maneuver forced John-

ston to pull back from Dalton during the night of May 12 to protect the Western & Atlantic Rail Road, which served as Johnston’s lifeline just as much as it did Sherman’s.⁹ With this, Johnston began his backwards march through Georgia.

The town of Resaca was the next scene of conflict in the campaign. Johnston was able to once again create a strong fortified position here, especially with the arrival of Leonidas Polk’s men. On May 14, Sherman launched a strong attack at the Confederate center at Resaca, while sending Thomas Sweeney’s division from the XVI Corps to the south to flank Johnston’s army. The following day, he sent Joseph Hooker’s XX Corps to attack the Confederate right as Sweeney’s men crossed the Oostanaula River at Lay’s Ferry.¹⁰ The offensive action at Resaca was quite heavy. Johnston’s men were able to break up each attack, and even attempt to counterattack the Union left. According to historian Earl J. Hess, the fighting around Resaca turned into a “slugging match” between two entrenched armies. However, even with intense artillery fire throughout much of the battle, Sherman was able to slip men from a single division around the left flank of the Confederate forces. Once again, Johnston felt he had to withdraw from a strong position.¹¹ Without a decisive victory, Sherman had forced Johnston backwards (Figure 3).

Following Resaca, Johnston pulled back to the Cassville line. Johnston sent Hood and Polk directly to Cassville and sent Hardee and Wheeler’s cavalry to Cassville via Kingston, a

*Across the Etowah and into the Hell-Hole: Johnston's
Lost Chance for Victory in the Atlanta Campaign*

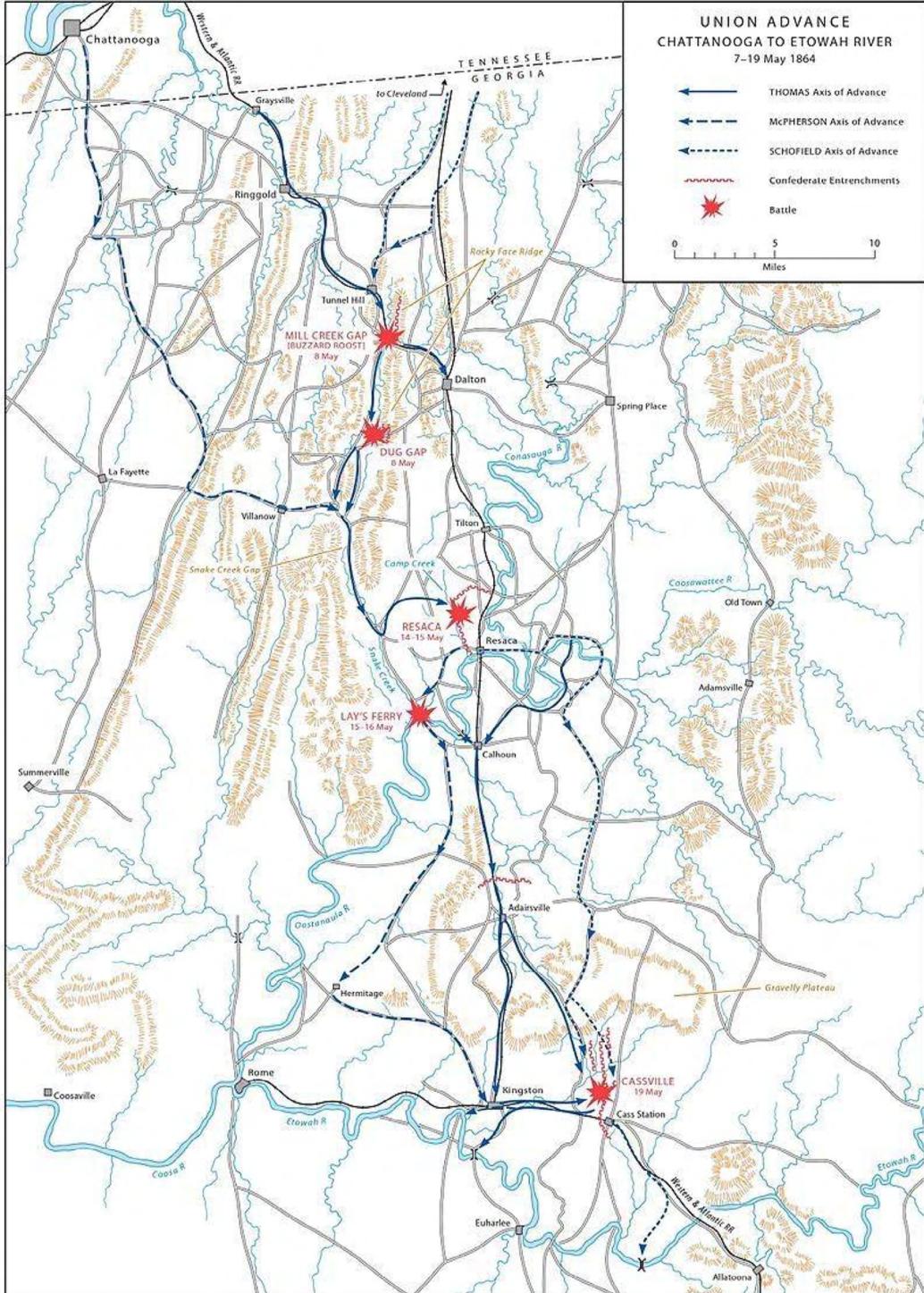


Figure 3. Union Advance from Chattanooga to the Etowah River.
Map by J. Britt McCarley, United States Army Center of Military History

move that forced Sherman to split his forces.¹² With Sherman's forces split, Johnston had a chance to strike out on the offensive himself. He planned for Hardee to quickly swing back to Cassville and with the Army of Tennessee reunited attack one part of the split Union army. Hood received faulty intelligence that foiled the plan, as it caused him to fall back at a critical moment.¹³ Johnston's chance to attack had passed, and as the Federal army moved in, he pulled back again, giving up even more territory.

Across the River

Johnston began to pull back again, leaving Cassville on the night of May 19, and burning the railroad and road bridges as he left the area.¹⁴ After crossing the river and leaving it undefended, Johnston made his way to a previously prepared position at Allatoona Pass, one of the strongest positions occupied by either side during the campaign. The state of Georgia created Allatoona Pass specifically for the Western & Atlantic Railroad, and Johnston felt that he had finally found a location that would force Sherman to attack him in a strong defensive position.¹⁵ Johnston's plan however did not work out as he wanted, with Sherman doing the unthinkable. Sherman had visited the area in 1844 and was familiar with its defensive capabilities.¹⁶ If Sherman was able to get behind the Confederate army, he could sever the Confederate supply line and take out Johnston's troops, but this would require leaving the protection of a long but stable supply line.

The rewards were potentially great, but the risk was too. By leaving his supply line, Sherman ensured that he only had a limited amount of time and resources to achieve his goals before he was stuck without food for his army.

Sherman took several days to prepare for his movement to flank Allatoona Pass. He arrived at his headquarters in Kingston on May 20 and began to prepare for the upcoming movement. Over the next couple of days, Sherman ordered that all sick and wounded men proceed to the rear. He required that the troops gather 20 days' worth of supplies, and that they forage fresh meat and vegetables; however, he did not allow indiscriminate pillaging of the populace.¹⁷ He then began deliberations on where his men would cross and how his supply line would remain properly defended from the constant threat of Confederate cavalry.

Sherman knew he needed to continue to protect his supply line, but also realized, he needed to find a replacement for the detachments of infantry necessary for this task. Leaving those already performing this task in place, he directed Brigadier General John E. Smith to move his division from Alabama toward Kingston, Georgia, via Rome.¹⁸ With his supply line protected from enemy cavalry, he then turned his attention on how he would get his large body of men across the Etowah River. Sherman, in the interest of ensuring that his armies kept out of each other's way on the march, had them stationed at three separate areas while preparing for the crossing. The Army of the Ohio,

along with Stoneman's cavalry, was encamped at Cassville Depot, the Army of the Cumberland was near Cassville, and the Army of the Tennessee was stationed in Kingston, with additional troops at Rome under Brigadier General Jefferson C. Davis.¹⁹ Sherman commanded that all the armies prepare to move out on May 23.

With this large number of men, Sherman had to devise a plan of action to cross the Etowah at a limited number of points against an unknown level of resistance from Johnston's forces. Sherman set the town of Dallas, Georgia, as the next target for his forces. Dallas was a crossroads town approximately 14 miles south of the Etowah and 16 miles to the west of the important town of Marietta, Georgia, the next target of the Union advance.²⁰ In a great stroke of luck, Sherman's men were able to save two bridges across the river from destruction at the hands of the retreating Confederates, bridges that would prove to be instrumental in allowing Federal forces to cross. McPherson took his men across one of these, Wooley's Bridge, and proceeded on the longest march of Sherman's troops, moving southwest through Van Wert and then approaching Dallas from the west, bringing up Sherman's right. Thomas, minus Hooker's XX corps and occupying the center of Sherman's march, used Gillem's Bridge and a nearby ford to cross, moving south to Dallas through Euharlee and Stilesboro. On the left of Sherman's army was Schofield's Army of the Ohio and Stoneman's cavalry, with instructions to cross a pontoon bridge near one of

the bridges destroyed by Johnston and protect the flank of the army closest to the Confederate positions at Allatoona, though Hooker's corps delayed their crossing. Hooker made the decision that Sherman must have wanted him to get across as fast as possible, so since the pontoon bridge was empty, when he saw it he took it, leaving Schofield hours behind schedule.²¹

Most of these groups were across the river by the evening of May 23 and on their way toward Dallas. Sherman was quite sure of his success after finding the river crossing generally uncontested. On May 23, he sent several pieces of correspondence in which he mentioned the expectations of a quick and successful movement. To Major General Francis P. Blair in Huntsville, he mentioned that all of his forces were in motion toward Marietta, which he felt would force Johnston back to the Chattahoochee River just outside of Atlanta.²² He would not reach Marietta until he forced Johnston from the slopes of Kennesaw Mountain in early July. In a ciphered message sent the same day, Sherman called the Etowah the "Rubicon of Georgia" and let it be known the Union forces would "swarm along the Chattahoochee in five days," a goal he would not reach for another six weeks.²³ Obviously, Sherman felt he had gotten the jump on Johnston, who had so far shown a habit of being able to pull out of a compromised position and reinsert the Confederate forces between Atlanta and the invaders. Sherman could not have been more wrong.

Though the crossing had been mostly uncontested, that does not mean

that Johnston did not have eyes along the river reporting on Union movement. While he would later mention in his official report of the campaign that crossing the Etowah and letting the enemy cross unmolested was a major regret, it did allow him to move quickly to block Sherman's advance toward Dallas.²⁴ Johnston used his cavalry to keep watch, and by the time, the first units began to move on May 23, they had informed him of the movement. The Confederate commander was able to ascertain easily that the only place for Sherman to head was Dallas and immediately began preparing troops to move out. By the evening of May 23, Johnston had sent out both Hardee and Polk's corps, leaving Hood to protect Allatoona in case Sherman had used some of his men to feint to the west while then moving for the strong position on the rail line.²⁵

Johnston also decided to make aggressive use of his cavalry forces. He sent Wheeler's corps back across the river to harass the Federal rear at Cartersville and used William Jackson's division to skirmish with the advancing Union troops. While Wheeler was unable to destroy enough rail to compromise Union supply lines, he was able to capture or destroy 100 supply wagons and beat up the regiment guarding them. Jackson on the other hand retreated from a confrontation at Burnt Hickory with Union troops under Thomas, who was able to capture a letter from Johnston stating he was moving to block Sherman's advance.²⁶ Sherman disregarded the letter as a bluff, something he would later come to regret.

With Johnston pulling troops out of Allatoona Pass, Sherman had once again forced the southern army out of a strong position, but because Johnston was operating on interior lines while Sherman swung out wide through the countryside, the Confederate commander was able to react quickly to the Union advance. Johnston gained a good bit of help from the terrain of the area as well. After leaving the mountains in the first days of the campaign, the two armies had moved into an area that had decent roads and hilly but easily navigable terrain but once across the Etowah, this changed greatly. By May 24, the Union forces had entered densely wooded terrain of which Sherman later recalled as "difficult" and barren of forage and useable roads.²⁷ This worked to the advantage of the Confederates as the roads they were using were in much better shape.

On May 24, Johnston realized the logical place for Sherman's forces to rendezvous was Dallas and made a catastrophic error. Instead of leaving at least a small garrison force at Allatoona, he ordered all of Hood's corps to the west behind the rest of the Confederate forces.²⁸ About this time, Sherman was working to reconnect all of his forces together to push eastward from the Dallas area toward Marietta and the Western & Atlantic. Things began to shape up for a clash in the woods, one that those who fought through it remembered for its ferocity.

Fighting in the Hell-Hole

Upon arriving in Dallas, Johnston began situating his forces to block Sherman's advance. Hood took up position on the Confederate left at New Hope Church, Polk took the center position, and Hardee held down the right, just east of Dallas.²⁹ Once in place the Confederates furiously began digging in for the attack they knew was on the way. Early that afternoon, just hours after Hood took up position, Hooker, as the lead element of the Army of the Cumberland, led his troops in fighting that was so severe that one Federal division commander later said his whole division went through their allotment of 60 rounds of ammunition during the fight.³⁰ Despite a strong showing by the Union forces, Hood's corps was able to repulse the enemy with heavy losses. Hooker's men had suffered 1,500 casualties to Hood's 500, with the Union forces falling back as a thunderstorm set in over the battlefield.³¹ While both armies spent the following day building trenches, Sherman was on the verge of unleashing a full attack on Confederate positions.

Sherman was quite frustrated by this point. Not only had the Confederates blocked the way toward the Chattahoochee River and the city of Atlanta once again but also Sherman had left his supply line to move across country and was beginning to feel the pinch. On May 27, Sherman decided he would make one last attempt to push around the right flank of the rebel army and that afternoon began the battle of Pick-

ett's Mill. Sherman sent two divisions well to the right of what he thought was Johnston's flank and got a rude surprise in the form of Major General Patrick Cleburne's division.³² In the midst of the Georgia wilderness, heavy fighting broke out, as well as another thunderstorm. As the initial attack broke down, reinforcements rushed in to help the faltering Union advance, but to no avail. The Confederates badly bloodied the Union forces, costing them around 1,600 men that day. The loss so upset Sherman that he never mentioned the battle in his official reports nor in his memoirs after the war.³³ Sherman was ready to pull back to his supply lines, but there would be one more action before he could, and this time, it was the Confederate's turn to blunder.

Johnston had finally stymied Sherman in the Georgian wilderness and felt the time was right to attempt an offensive maneuver of his own. Johnston had figured out that Sherman would be attempting to move back toward his supply lines and ordered Hardee to attack McPherson's Army of the Tennessee at the first sign of movement from the Federal troops. On the afternoon of May 28, Hardee ordered three divisions to charge the Federal works in a disastrous attack that cost Johnston between 1,000 and 1,500 men for no real gain.³⁴ While this attack cost the rebels about as many men as the Federals had lost days before at Pickett's Mill, the effect was much greater on the smaller force. One brigade, known as the "Kentucky Orphan Brigade," lost so many men in this attack that the unit disbanded following the campaign.³⁵

This attack would have one slightly positive effect for the southern army though. It forced Sherman to hold his position for another couple of days due to the threat of further Confederate attack.³⁶ With his move away from the railroad to the west, Sherman had turned Johnston out of his strong position at Allatoona Pass, but Johnston had managed to wreak a couple of severe defeats on Sherman. As the war entered the month of June, the armies would slow even more and the fighting would come to a crescendo.

Sherman Moves to Acworth

Johnston had succeeded in stopping Sherman's easy advance on either Marietta or the Chattahoochee and inflicted a number of casualties on the Union forces, but in the end had not forced a decisive battle that would turn back the invasion of Georgia. With the inability of the Union forces to find a way to flank either side of the Confederate lines, Sherman began the painstaking task of working his way back to his supply line, and just in time. Though Sherman had brought enough supplies to last him for 20 days with allowances made for foraged material, the difficulty of travelling across the backcountry roads and lack of inhabitants in the area meant that those supplies had begun to run out by the first of June. As early as May 27, just four days after crossing the Etowah, soldiers were reduced to half rations and livestock, including horses, were dangerously low on fodder.³⁷ It would still be eight days before Sherman's army would reconnect with the rail line at Acworth.

The attack of May 28 compelled the Union forces to hold their lines in case an all-out Confederate assault came as they were pulling out for their move back toward the railroad. To accomplish this movement, Sherman began slowly moving his men to the northeast by extending entrenchments. The Confederates followed closely along and continued the constant skirmishing that had come to define this part of the campaign. Johnston noticed the beginning of this movement on the 27th, but it was not long before the manpower of the Union began to make itself felt. Unknown to Johnston, Federal cavalry took Allatoona Pass unopposed on May 31, opening Sherman's supply line, and the Union commander would make the former Confederate stronghold into a supply depot to help fuel his march on Atlanta.³⁸

On June 1, it became apparent that Union troops were beginning to outpace Confederate efforts. By June 4, Johnston had settled into his next defensive position on a line running from Lost Mountain on the left, across Pine Mountain, and ending on Brush Mountain to the right. Johnston once again pulled back from the enemy.³⁹ This ended the fighting during this portion of the campaign, allowing Sherman to consolidate control over an area south of the Etowah and set up his next movements toward Atlanta.

The fighting along the Dallas line was some of the fiercest fighting seen by many of these soldiers. While there were some discernable battles, such as the actions at New Hope Church and Pickett's Mill, there was constant skir-

*Across the Etowah and into the Hell-Hole: Johnston's
Lost Chance for Victory in the Atlanta Campaign*

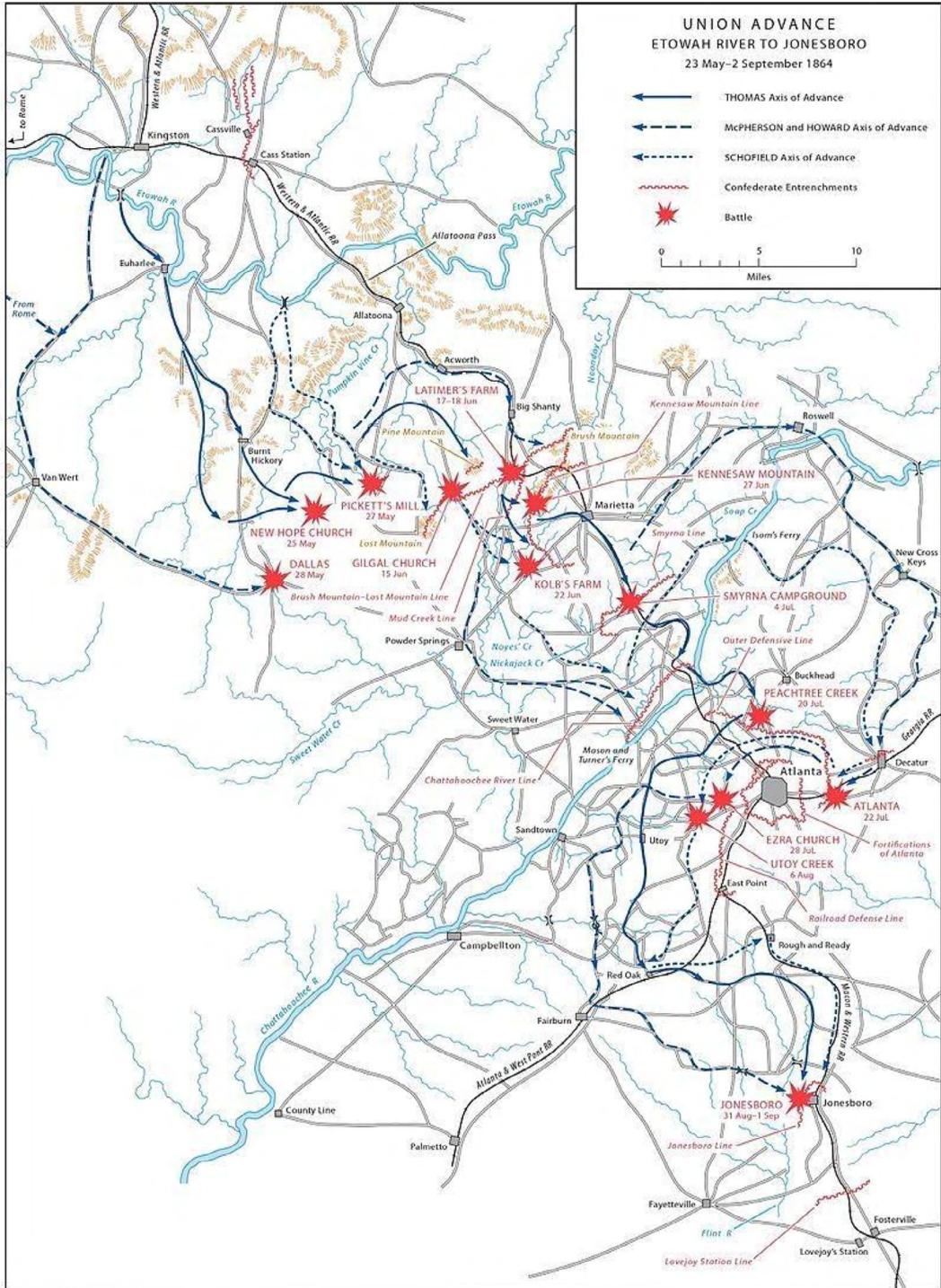


Figure 4. Union Advance Etowah River to Jonesboro. Map by J. Britt McCarley, United States Center of Military History

mishing up and down the line. Troops on both sides of the fighting found the fighting around Dallas to be taxing, with one Union soldier describing it as “probably the most wretched week” of the Atlanta Campaign.⁴⁰ With such terrible conditions, it is no wonder the soldiers, especially those of the Union forces, gave the area the nickname the “Hell Hole” (Figure 4).

Several factors combined to create this horrendous atmosphere. The first was the previously mentioned challenging terrain. Nearly every account of this portion of the campaign mentioned how hard it was to travel through this area, and even see the enemy. Reports from Oliver O. Howard after the action at Pickett’s Mill described the terrain as “dense forests and thicket jungles, over country scarred by deep ravines,” with visibility reduced to no more than a few yards on either side.⁴¹ It is little wonder that in attempting to outflank the Confederate forces that day the Union troops instead ran into a bloodbath. Sherman also noted the difficulty of the terrain on more than one occasion. In his memoirs, he said the area around Dallas was “very obscure” and “mostly in a state of nature” and noted that although he visited every sector of the Union line during this part of the campaign, he rarely saw more than a handful of Confederate troops.⁴² In addition to not being able to see the enemy, it was also quite easy to get lost. Artillerymen from one Union battery recall getting so mixed up on their march that they almost walked straight into Confederate lines with their guns and gear.⁴³

Challenging terrain as not the only issue facing both armies; they also had to contend with terrible weather. Beginning on May 24, it started raining nearly every day, with many days bringing the type of violent thunderstorms that frequently occur in the south during summer. One Union soldier described the storm following the battle at New Hope Church as “a furious storm, the rain came down in torrents, the lightning was blinding” and apparently, the rainwater was collecting so fast that one man mentioned to his officer, they could swim across the lines to fight the enemy.⁴⁴ With the addition of violent weather to the constant threat of bullets from a hidden enemy, it is not surprising that the name “Hell Hole” stuck. One Confederate surgeon mentioned in his diary that by June 2, the fighting had continued for a week straight through rain and thunder, and the fighting was so terrible that he discovered one Union corpse with 47 balls lodged in his body.⁴⁵

Johnston’s Last Chance

Many historians who have studied this part of the Atlanta Campaign tend to write it off as something of an aside, perhaps because there was no decisive battle fought or clear winner. Prior to the crossing of the Etowah, the sides clashed at the Battle of Resaca and engaged in clear and decisive movements. After Sherman resumed his southward march south, the Union and Confederates met at the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain and in the contest for Atlanta.

A closer look, however, reveals much more. From the start of the campaign, Sherman's armies vastly outnumbered Confederate forces. As the two armies approached Dallas, though the spread in numbers became much tighter. Conditions forced Sherman to leave detachments along the Western & Atlantic Railroad, as well as to garrison captured cities, while Johnston gathered those he had sent to guard the other end of the same rail line. This meant that as the two armies met along the Dallas line, Sherman had an effective strength of around 92,000 men and Johnston had 70,000, a ratio of 1.3 to 1 in favor of the Union.⁴⁶ At no other point in the Campaign were the numbers to be so close. According to Sherman, on June 5, the day after arriving at Acworth, he received a number of reinforcements which more than equaled the number of troops lost during the fighting in the Hell-Hole.⁴⁷ If any time had been right for a major battle in the open field, this would have been it.

Besides not bringing the campaign to a decisive battle, Johnston made a couple of mistakes that would prevent victory. One, as previously mentioned, was allowing Union troops to cross the Etowah River uncontested. While the high ground at Allatoona presented an excellent defensive position, Johnston should have realized from the tempo of the campaign up to that point that Sherman would be wary of attacking such a heavily fortified position. Had Johnston spread his army out and guarded the southern bank of the Etowah, there is a good chance that the action would have stalled Sherman for weeks with-

out being able to cross. The terrain to the Union's left was very mountainous and rough, making a full-scale flanking maneuver of a river position nearly impossible, especially since the Allatoona Mountains overlooked the river. Had Sherman swung out around the Confederate left, he would have had to go even further from his supply lines than he did going for Dallas.

Johnston made an even more egregious error by pulling all of Hood's corps out of Allatoona Pass and moving them to the Dallas line. Had he left even a single division at this location, it would have presented a serious challenge to Sherman's cavalry forces. This in turn would have forced the Union commander to either mount a full-scale assault on the fortified position, with the added danger of the rest of Johnston's army to the rear, or else pull back above the Etowah to regain his supply lines. Johnston however performed in his usual manner and pulled back in the face of a challenge, deciding that protecting Marietta and the approaches to Atlanta was a safer decision than forcing his opponent back.

Despite this, Johnston's efforts along the Dallas line did produce some major results. He was able to inflict a number of casualties on the Union forces, a number just north of 3,000. While these numbers do not approach the level of casualties inflicted by Lee during the campaign in Virginia, such as the two-week period at Cold Harbor where the Union forces under Grant suffered the loss of about 12,000 men, it reflects the much different nature of the

fighting in Georgia.⁴⁸ Johnston was also able to slow Sherman to a crawl. Where before the crossing Sherman was covering miles a day, the Confederate actions around Dallas forced him to hold the same positions for nearly a week before he could even consider moving back toward his supply lines. This injected some much-needed morale into the Southern army. A Confederate surgeon notes that during this period, the troops came to realize that Johnston's constant retreats had nothing to do with cowardice. When there was fighting the southern forces were dealing major blows, however, in their view, Sherman refused to fight.⁴⁹ Though the Confederate forces would have an impressive, though meaningless victory, at Kennesaw Mountain in late June, they lost their best chance of stopping Sherman when they allowed him to return to an unbroken rail line at Acworth. The rest of the campaign became a slow fade into defeat for the Army of Tennessee and the city of Atlanta.

Bibliography

Bauer, Jack K., ed. *Soldiering, the Civil War Diary of Rice C. Bull*. Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1995.

Brown, Thaddeus C., Samuel J. Murphy, and William G. Putney. *Behind the Guns: The History of Battery I, 2nd Regiment, Illinois Light Artillery*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000. Accessed September 28, 2016. ProQuest Ebrary.

Castel, Albert. *Decision in the West: The Atlanta Campaign of 1864*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992.

Cooke, Chauncey H. "Letters of a Badger Boy in Blue: The Atlanta Campaign." *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, September 1, 1921, 63–98. Accessed December 14, 2016. <https://archive.org/details/jstor-4630341>.

Dean, Jeffrey S. *The Hell-hole in Georgia: Sherman VS. Johnston*. Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, 2006.

Eicher, David J. *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War*. New York, NY: Touchstone, 2001.

Hess, Earl J. *Kennesaw Mountain: Sherman, Johnston, and the Atlanta Campaign*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2013.

Johnston, Joseph E. *Narrative of Military Operations: Directed, During the Late War Between the States*. New York, NY: D. Appleton and Co., 1874. Accessed December 12, 2016. <https://archive.org/details/narrativeofmilit00john>.

McMurry, Richard M. *The Road Past Kennesaw: The Atlanta Campaign of 1864*. Washington, DC: United States Department of the Interior, 1972. Accessed December 12, 2016. <https://archive.org/stream/roadpastkennesaw00mcmu#page/n3/mode/2up>.

Mitchell, Enoch L. "Letters of a Confederate Surgeon in the Army of Tennessee to His Wife." *Tennessee Historical Quar-*

terly 5, no. 2 (June 1946): 142–81. Accessed September 28, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42620894>.

National Park Service. “Cold Harbor.” Richmond National Battlefield Park. Accessed February 4, 2017. <https://www.nps.gov/rich/learn/historyculture/cold-harbor.htm>.

Secrist, Philip L. “Cobb County in the Atlanta Campaign.” Civil War Trust. Accessed January 25, 2017. <http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/kennesaw-mountain/kenesaw-mountain-history-articles/cobbcountysecrist.html>.

Sherman, William T. *The Memoirs of General W. T. Sherman*. New York, NY:

Library of America, 1990. *The Hocking Sentinel* (Logan, OH). “The Mountain Campaign in Georgia.” February 25, 1886. Accessed January 25, 2017. <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85038119/1886-02-25/ed-1/seq-2/>.

U.S. War Department. *The Official Record of the War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. 128 parts in 70 vols. and atlas. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880–901.

Vermilya, Daniel J. *The Battle of Kennesaw Mountain*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2014.

Notes

- 1 Bruce Catton, *The American Heritage Picture History of the Civil War* (New York, NY: Bonanza Books, 1982), 481.
- 2 Earl J. Hess, *Kennesaw Mountain: Sherman, Johnston, and the Atlanta Campaign* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 1.
- 3 David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2001), 496.
- 4 U.S. War Department, *Official Record of the War of the Rebellion*, Series 1, vol. 38, part III, 619. (hereafter cited as OR).
- 5 Daniel J. Vermilya, *The Battle of Kennesaw Mountain* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2014), 30.
- 6 Eicher, *The Longest Night*, 696–97.
- 7 OR, Series I, vol. 38, part 1, 3.
- 8 “The Mountain Campaign in Georgia,” *The Hocking Sentinel* (Logan, OH), February 25, 1886, accessed January 25, 2017, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85038119/1886-02-25/ed-1/seq-2/>.

- 9 Vermilya, *The Battle*, 34.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 38.
- 11 Hess, *Kennesaw Mountain*, 3.
- 12 Vermilya, *The Battle*, 39.
- 13 OR, Series I, vol. 38, part III, 616.
- 14 OR, Series I, vol. 38, part I, 65.
- 15 Vermilya, *The Battle of Kennesaw*, 41.
- 16 William T. Sherman, *The Memoirs of General W. T. Sherman* (New York, NY: Library of America, 1990), 511.
- 17 Albert Castel, *Decision in the West: The Atlanta Campaign of 1864* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 214–15.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 214–15.
- 19 Sherman, *The Memoirs*, 511.
- 20 Castel, *Decision in the West*, 218.
- 21 Jeffrey S. Dean, *The Hell-hole in Georgia: Sherman vs. Johnston* (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, 2006), 2–6 and Castel, *Decision in the West*, 217.
- 22 OR, Series I, vol. 38, part 4, 298.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 299
- 24 OR, Series I, vol. 38, part 3, 616.
- 25 Dean, *The Hell-hole*, 8.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 8.
- 27 OR, Series I, vol. 38, part 1, 60.
- 28 Dean, *The Hell-hole*, 8.
- 29 Castel, *Decision in the West*, 221.
- 30 Vermilya, *The Battle*, 42–43.
- 31 *Ibid.*, 43.
- 32 *Ibid.*, 46.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 47.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 48.

- 35 Philip L. Secrist, "Cobb County in the Atlanta Campaign," Civil War Trust, accessed January 25, 2017, <http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/kennesawmountain/kennesawmountain-history-articles/cobbcountysecrist.html>.
- 36 Vermilya, *The Battle of Kennesaw*, 48.
- 37 Ibid., 47 and Chauncey H. Cooke, "Letters of a Badger Boy in Blue: The Atlanta Campaign," *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, September 1, 1921, 21, accessed December 14, 2016, <https://archive.org/details/jstor-4630341>.
- 38 Castel, *Decision in the West*, 251
- 39 Joseph E. Johnston, *Narrative of Military Operations: Directed, During the Late War Between the State* (New York, NY: D. Appleton and Co., 1874), 335, accessed December 12, 2016, <https://archive.org/details/narrativeofmilit00john>.
- 40 Richard M. McMurry, *The Road Past Kennesaw: The Atlanta Campaign of 1864* (Washington, DC: United States Department of the Interior, 1972), 21, accessed December 12, 2016, <https://archive.org/stream/roadpastkennesaw00mcmu#page/n3/mode/2up>.
- 41 Castel, *Decision in the West*, 230.
- 42 Sherman, *The Memoirs*, 512–14
- 43 Thaddeus C. Brown, Samuel J. Murphy, and William G. Putney, *Behind the Guns: The History of Battery I, 2nd Regiment, Illinois Light Artillery* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 94, accessed September 28, 2016, <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/apus/detail.action?docID=10555641>.
- 44 Jack K. Bauer, ed., *Soldiering, the Civil War Diary of Rice C. Bull* (Novato: Presidio Press, 1995), 117–18.
- 45 Enoch L. Mitchell, "Letters of a Confederate Surgeon in the Army of Tennessee to His Wife," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 5, no. 2 (June 1946): 169, accessed September 28, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42620894>.
- 46 Dean, *The Hell-hole*, vi.
- 47 OR, Series I, vol. 38, part 1, 61.
- 48 National Park Service, "Cold Harbor," Richmond National Battlefield Park, accessed February 3, 2017, <https://www.nps.gov/rich/learn/historyculture/cold-harbor.htm>.
- 49 Mitchell, "Letters of a Confederate," 167.

Gettysburg Day One: Taking Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill

Douglas R. Kleinsmith

American Military University

ABSTRACT

On July 1, 1863, parts of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia had achieved a resounding tactical victory against the lead elements of the Union Army of the Potomac. Had the Confederates kept going, their next logical objective would have been the key tactical terrain features of Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill directly south and southeast of the town of Gettysburg. Instead, satisfied with their achievements, the Confederates ended the day's fighting, consolidated their gains, and waited for what the next day would bring. As it happened, both armies brought up the rest of their forces and the battle went on for two more days. Despite repeated attempts, the Confederates could not dislodge the Union forces from their defensive positions and in the end suffered, quite possibly, their most traumatic tactical and psychological defeat yet in the war.

Well after the battle and the war ended, and the full extent of the defeat realized, the debate started as to whether the Confederates could have or should have continued the fight on the first day to capture Cemetery Hill and/or Culp's Hill. Had this been achieved, the Confederates, most likely, would have won the battle and, as a result, significantly altered the trajectory of the war in their favor, or so the argument goes. To determine such an attack's practicality, this paper investigates several factors. These include the current state of the forces at hand, the known intelligence situation, and the time available at the end of the first day. Tying these all together, a coherent and detailed picture on the possibility of whether the Confederates really could have taken Cemetery Hill and/or Culp's Hill, on the first day of battle at Gettysburg, will be presented. In the end, it will show, given what the Confederates faced in the late afternoon of the first day, any attempt had little to no chance of succeeding.

Keywords: Cemetery Hill, Culp's Hill, Lee, Stuart, Ewell

Gettysburg el Primer Día: La Toma de Cemetery Hill y de Culp's Hill

RESUMEN

El 1 de julio de 1863, partes del Ejército Confederado del Norte de Virginia lograron una gran victoria táctica contra los elementos principales del Ejército de la Unión del Potomac. Si los Confederados hubieran seguido adelante, su siguiente objetivo lógico habría sido las características clave del terreno táctico de Cemetery Hill y Culp's Hill directamente al sur y sureste de la ciudad de Gettysburg. En cambio, satisfechos con sus logros, los Confederados terminaron los combates del día, consolidaron sus ganancias y esperaron lo que traería el día siguiente. Como sucedió, ambos ejércitos reunieron al resto de sus fuerzas y la batalla se prolongó durante dos días más. A pesar de los repetidos intentos, los Confederados no pudieron desalojar a las fuerzas de la Unión de sus posiciones defensivas y al final sufrieron, posiblemente, su derrota táctica y psicológica más traumática en la guerra.

Mucho después de que la batalla y la guerra terminaron, y en la medida en que se produjo la derrota, comenzó el debate sobre si los Confederados podrían o deberían haber continuado la lucha el primer día para capturar Cemetery Hill y / o Culp's Hill. Si esto se hubiera logrado, lo más probable es que los Confederados hubieran ganado la batalla y, como resultado, hubieran alterado significativamente la trayectoria de la guerra a su favor, o eso dice el argumento. Para determinar tal práctica de ataques, este artículo investiga varios factores. Estos incluyen el estado actual de las fuerzas en cuestión, la situación de inteligencia conocida y el tiempo disponible al final del primer día. Al unirlos todos, se presentará una imagen coherente y detallada sobre la posibilidad de que los Confederados realmente pudieran haber tomado Cemetery Hill y / o Culp's Hill, en el primer día de batalla en Gettysburg. Al final, demostrará, dado lo que enfrentaron los Confederados en la tarde del primer día, que cualquier intento tuvo poca o ninguna posibilidad de éxito.

Palabras clave: Cemetery Hill, Culp's Hill, Lee, Stuart, Ewell

葛底斯堡战役第一天：占领公墓山和卡尔普山

摘要

1863年7月1日，部分北弗吉尼亚联盟军已在与波多马克联邦军团的交战中取得巨大战略性胜利。如果联盟军继续采取攻势，那么其下一个目标则会是公墓山和卡尔普山的关键战略地势，它们分别位于葛底斯堡的正南部和东南部。然而，联盟军却满足于已取得的成就，放弃继续进攻，结束当日战役，巩固优势，等待第二天的到来。双方军队在接下来的两天里聚集剩余兵力继续交战。尽管联盟军不断试图进攻，但却无法将联邦军驱逐出其防御性战术，最终，联盟军在这场战役中遭受了最为惨痛的战略失败和精神重创。自此次战役和美国内战结束，联盟军战败的所有内容被剖析后，有关联盟军是否能够且本应该在战役第一天继续进攻拿下公墓山和/或卡尔普山的辩论便开始了。辩论认为，如果联盟军继续进攻一事取得成功，那么联盟军很有可能在此次战役中获胜，进而显著改变战役轨迹，使其朝着自身利益的方向发展。为确定该假设的现实性，本文调查了几个因素。因素包括：当前兵力状况、已知情报状态、和首日结束交战时可利用的时间。将这些因素串联在一起，则能连贯且详细地展现上述辩论主张的可能性。最后的结果则是，考虑到联盟军在交战首日傍晚面临的局势，任何继续进攻的战术几乎都没有获胜的可能性。

关键词：公墓山，卡尔普山，李将军，斯图尔特将军，尤厄尔将军，山

There is a debate as old as the Civil War, and ongoing even today, of whether the Confederates could have captured Cemetery Hill and/or Culp's Hill on the first day of battle at Gettysburg. Had this been achieved, the Confederates, most likely, would have won the battle and, as a result, significantly altered the trajectory of the war

in their favor. More than a few veterans and later historians have postulated this giant "what if" scenario. One famous example comes from Isaac Trimble, an unassigned Confederate general at the time of the battle, who made the spurious claim that he could have pulled it off if given only one *good regiment*.¹ However, by late afternoon of the first

day's fighting, given the condition of the Confederate forces on the battlefield at the time, the lack of intelligence they had on the enemy and the terrain, the time left in the day, and the strength of the Union position, the Confederates really had little to no chance of achieving this feat.

Entering the summer of 1863, after two years of warfare, the momentum of the overall war showed signs of turning against the Confederacy. In the Eastern Theatre of conflict, primarily confined to the state of Virginia, the Army of Northern Virginia (ANV), the main Confederate fighting force, time and time again bested their principal opponent, the Union Army of the Potomac (AOTP). Led by General Robert E. Lee since June 1862, the ANV turned back the AOTP threatening their capitol of Richmond during the Peninsula Campaign (March–July 1862), utterly defeated the Union Army of Virginia at Second Bull Run (August 28–30, 1862), fought the much larger AOTP to a bloody stalemate at Antietam (September 17, 1862), threw them back with heavy losses at Fredericksburg (December 11–15, 1862), and turned an apparent defeat into an astounding victory at Chancellorsville (April 30–May 6, 1863). Despite these achievements, in the Western Theatre, mainly consisting of the area west of the Appalachians, a string of victories gained the Union control of the Mississippi River except for the town of Vicksburg. In June 1863, this last Confederate Mississippi stronghold came under siege by Union forces under General Ulysses S. Grant, effectively severing everything west of

the river from the rest of the Confederacy. At the same time, around the seaboard from the Gulf of Mexico and up the Atlantic coast, Union naval forces were slowly but surely sealing off Confederate ports from the outside world. Lastly, in the Eastern Theatre, despite the overwhelming number of ANV major victories, the AOTP still remained a viable threat.

Knowing all this, Lee devised a bold plan to, once again, invade the North. By making this move, he hoped to draw the Union AOTP out from their defensive positions and deal them a decisive defeat. Lee later wrote, "It was thought that the corresponding movements on the part of the enemy to which those contemplated by us would probably give rise, might offer a fair opportunity to strike a blow at the army then commanded by General Hooker..."² Additionally, Lee hoped that the coming campaign would relieve war-ravaged Virginia of constantly supporting the opposing armies, and disrupt the Union summer campaign plans. After the dramatic victory for the Confederates at the Battle of Chancellorsville, Lee gained approval from Confederate President Jefferson Davis and began moving his army.³

On June 3, Lee stealthily withdrew the ANV from the Fredericksburg, Virginia area, and followed a route that took them west and north along the Rappahannock River, over to the Shenandoah Valley, and on up through Maryland into Pennsylvania. Initially slow to react, the AOTP, then under General Joseph Hooker, the fourth

successive Union army commander to face Lee, followed hard on the Confederate heels. President Abraham Lincoln made the objectives for the Union army very clear, "I think Lee's army, and not Richmond, is your sure objective point."⁴ With this in mind, Hooker directed the AOTP to roughly parallel the Confederate route of march, ever mindful of keeping themselves between the Confederates and the Union capitol of Washington, DC. However, during this move north, Hooker, already smarting from his ignominious defeat at Chancellorsville, and suffering the loss of confidence of the army and of the administration, threatened to resign after a squabble with the War Department over the disposition of some Union forces at Harpers Ferry. To his surprise, they readily accepted his resignation on June 28 and, once again, the President found himself appointing a new commanding general for the AOTP. This time it would be General George Meade.⁵

Initially stunned by this unexpected promotion, Meade quickly set to task and made his intent clear, "It was my firm determination, never for an instant deviate from, to give battle wherever and as soon as I could possibly find the enemy"⁶ Unfortunately for him, Meade had little intelligence passed on to him by his predecessor, as he later testified:

I had no information concerning the enemy beyond the fact that a large force under General Lee, estimated at about 110,000 men, had passed through Hagerstown, and had marched up the Cum-

berland valley ... I had reason to believe that one corps of the rebel army, under General Ewell, was occupying York and Carlisle ...⁷

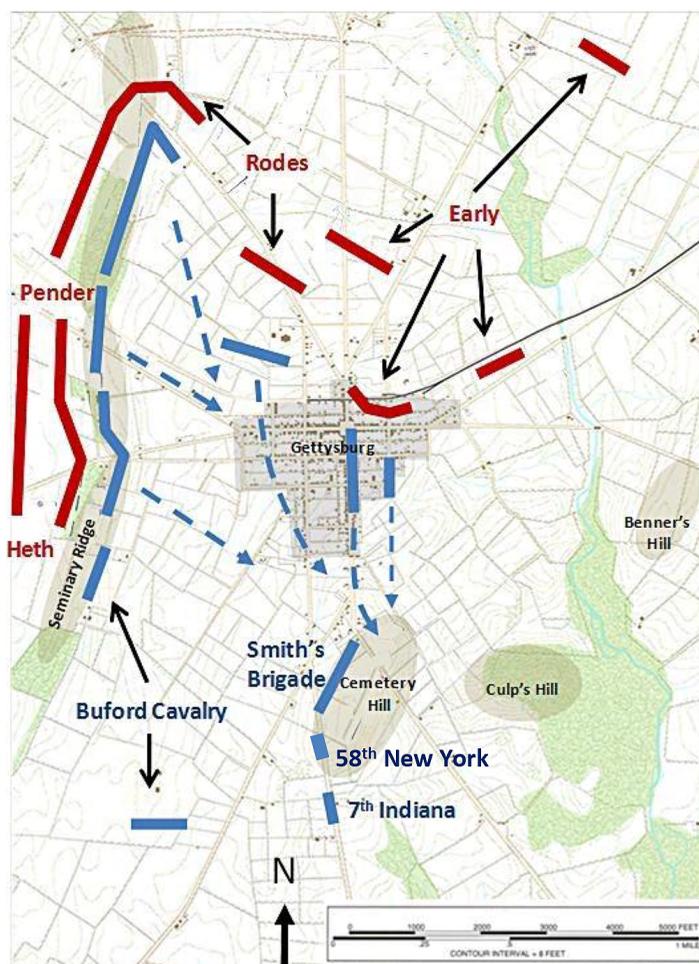
With most of the army concentrated around Fredrick Maryland, Meade decided to advance his seven infantry and one cavalry corps north along a 25 mile front in a wide arch covering the north and west approaches to Washington, DC, and Baltimore, in an attempt to locate and fix Lee's Army for battle.

Similarly, Lee had little knowledge of the Union Army's location. The primary responsibility for gathering information on enemy locations rested with the cavalry arm, and Lee had not heard from his cavalry commander, General J. E. B. Stuart, since June 24. Stuart, after effectively screening the ANV's movement up the Shenandoah Valley and on into Maryland, had taken three of his best brigades on a daring attempt to circle eastward around the Union army. Whether for fame, glory, or in Stuart's words, "...for some other point at which to direct an effective blow,"⁸ this action effectively took Stuart out of the picture until July 2nd, late into the second day of battle at Gettysburg. Lee was fully aware of Stuart's plan, and had thoroughly sanctioned it. He had not only issued orders to that effect but had also informed his corps commanders of Stuart's actions. These orders gave Stuart clear discretion to ride around the Union army, which later became a critical factor in the unfolding events of the first day's battle on July 1.⁹ Without Stuart near at hand, the first reliable report of the Union army's location ar-

rived the night of June 28 in the form of a spy. Henry Harrison, employed by Confederate I Corps commander General James Longstreet, brought word that the Union army had crossed into Maryland sooner and closer than the Confederates realized.¹⁰ Lee responded quickly by directing his far-flung units to immediately concentrate around the Gettysburg/Cashtown area.¹¹

With the two opposing armies in motion looking for each other, first contact occurred just outside the town

of Gettysburg on June 30 when General Henry Heth's Confederate Division of General Ambrose Hill's III Corps spotted elements of General John Buford's Union cavalry division. The next day, July 1, Heth's division proceeded at a deliberate pace toward Gettysburg to deal with the Union horse soldiers. Instead of just cavalry, to his surprise, Heth ran into the lead elements of the AOTP. Both sides then began to feed forces into the battle as they arrived throughout the day. By late afternoon, the battle had reached its most critical



Map 1. Situation on the First Day between 4:00 and 5:00 pm

point as the Union I and XI Corps forces tried to hold their positions west and north of Gettysburg. General Jubal Early's Division of General Richard Ewell's II Corps, advancing from the north and northeast, had successfully gained the right flank of the Union XI Corps forces, and caused them to retreat through the town of Gettysburg to Cemetery Hill with the Confederates following close behind. At the same time, the Union I Corps, holding the Seminary Ridge line, gave way. The weight of Ewell's other division under General Robert Rodes, in conjunction with Heth's Division and the added reinforcements of General Dorsey Pender's Division, forced the Union I Corps to conduct a contested retreat, joining the remnants of XI Corps on Cemetery Hill as shown in Map 1. In the ensuing fighting within the town, confusion reigned and the Confederates took many thousands of Union soldiers prisoner.

The Confederates had achieved a resounding tactical victory for the day, and the Union I and XI Corps suffered tremendous losses. Had the Confederates kept going, their next logical objective would have been the key tactical terrain features of Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill directly south and southeast of the town. Instead, satisfied with their achievements, they ended the day's fighting, consolidated their gains, and waited for what the next day would bring. Confederate casualties were also high, and most of their forces engaged had been severely degraded. As it happened, the battle went on for two more days. Despite repeated attempts, the ANV could not dislodge the AOTP from

their defensive positions and in the end suffered, quite possibly, their most traumatic tactical defeat yet in the war.¹²

Well after the battle and the war ended, and the full extent of the defeat realized, the debate started as to whether the Confederates could have or should have continued the fight on the first day to capture Cemetery Hill and/or Culp's Hill. The loudest criticism naturally came from the Confederates themselves. As mentioned in the beginning, Confederate General Trimble strongly advocated that the two hills, particularly Culp's Hill, were there for the taking, if only they made the effort. Others, such as the aide-de-camps for Confederate division commander General Edward Johnson, arriving late on the scene of the first day's battle, saw apparent inaction on the part of Ewell and lamented, "Oh, for the presence and inspiration of Old Jack for just one hour,"¹³ referring to the recently deceased General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. Similarly, Confederate brigade commander General John Gordon, having been in the thick of the first day's fighting, recorded long after the war ended that:

From the situation plainly to be seen on the first afternoon, and from facts that afterward came to light as to the position of the different corps of General Meade's army, it seems certain that if the Confederates had simply moved forward, following up the advantages gained and striking the separate Union commands in succession, the victory would have been Lee's instead of Meade's.¹⁴

Agreeing with this premise, Confederate division commander Early had urged an immediate advance “before the enemy should recover from his evident dismay.”¹⁵ Even Meade himself believed that had the Confederates immediately advanced and occupied Culp’s Hill, given the condition and numbers the Union had to oppose them at the time, the Union army would have been forced to evacuate the field.¹⁶ Sheer numbers were certainly in the Confederates favor. By late afternoon, they had brought into action 26,364 troops and suffered 4,844 casualties while the Union forces brought in a force of 20,617 troops and suffered 8,383 casualties.¹⁷ With perfect hindsight, and 100% intelligence, it’s easy to make claims on what should or could have been done. However, any fair examination must be made from the context of what was known at the time and the reality of the current situation.

Understanding the situation in the late afternoon of the first day begins with investigating whether the Confederates commanders even had the authority to take Cemetery Hill or Culp’s Hill. At the beginning of the battle, Lee had placed his commanders under discretionary orders to handle enemy forces if encountered, but not to bring on a general engagement.¹⁸ Heth did his level best to adhere to the intent of these orders when he first approached the town of Gettysburg early in the morning of the first day. After sending in only half his division, and receiving a severe drubbing by the lead elements of the Union army, he pulled back, deployed the rest of his division, and awaited further developments. As noted earlier,

Ewell, on the other hand, after learning of Heth’s encounter immediately changed his direction of march and headed for Gettysburg.¹⁹ Reaching the battlefield midday, he came upon Union I Corps forces positioned to his front and XI Corps forces emerging out from the north side of Gettysburg. Ewell’s forces easily swept the Union XI Corps aside owing mainly to the opportunistic arrival of Early’s Division square on their flank. The Union I Corps was an entirely different matter. Exercising his discretion to engage, Ewell deployed Rodes Division to attack in support of Heth. Seeing Ewell’s forces attacking, Hill and Heth convinced Lee (who had arrived on the scene) to also join Ewell in an effort to dislodge the Union forces facing them.²⁰ By 4:30 pm, after encountering determined opposition, the combined Confederate forces of Heth, Pender, and Rodes drove the Union I Corps forces from their positions, and sent them retreating to Cemetery Hill.²¹

Once the Union forces were swept from their forward positions and Gettysburg secured, corps commanders Ewell and Hill ended the discretionary part of their orders and reverted back to their previous instructions not to bring on a general engagement. Although they exceeded orders upon arriving at the battle, they now determined that there was no justification for continuing the fight once Gettysburg had been taken. Nevertheless, Lee, watching the retreat of the Union forces from his position on Seminary Ridge, thought it only necessary to press the enemy to secure Cemetery Hill and sent a change of orders to Ewell “... to carry the hill

occupied by the enemy, if he found it practicable ...”²²

With the idea of possibly continuing the attack cleared by the Commanding General, a number of factors had to be taken into consideration to determine the “practicability” of executing such a maneuver. These include the current state of the forces at hand, the known intelligence situation, and the time left in the day.

The first factor takes into account what forces the Confederates had available and their condition to make such an assault. Hill made the contention that none of his divisions, currently on the field in the late afternoon, were in any condition to make the effort. Hill believed the enemy defeated, and was content with the gains his men had made. In his official report, he stated, “Under the impression that the enemy were entirely routed, my own two divisions exhausted by some six hours’ hard fighting, prudence led me to be content with what had been gained, and not push forward troops exhausted and necessarily disordered, probably to encounter fresh troops of the enemy.”²³ Ewell made similar observations of his divisions stating, “On entering the town, I received a message from the commanding general to attack this hill, if I could do so to advantage. I could not bring artillery to bear on it, and all the troops with me were *jaded by twelve hours’ marching and fighting ...*”²⁴ Additionally, Ewell’s division commanders both presented reasons for not using their divisions. Although Early had urged an immediate advance, he com-

plained that his command had been doing all the hard marching and fighting and was not in condition to make such an assault.²⁵

The condition these commanders referred to was the state of disorganization and exhaustion their troops had incurred after marching and fighting since early morning. An analysis of their forces shows they, in fact, spoke accurately. This analysis takes into account two areas to assess the fighting condition of each Confederate brigade at the end of the first day; first, the hours each brigade spent marching and fighting, and second, the casualties they sustained.

The base tactical maneuver element for Civil War Armies was the infantry or cavalry brigade. Brigades had from three to five regiments, usually commanded by colonels for the Union, and brigadier generals for the Confederates. The average brigade strength coming into the Gettysburg battle had 1,421 men for the Union and 1,550 men for the Confederates. Two to three brigades for the Union, and four to five brigades for the Confederates made up a division, usually commanded by brigadier generals or major generals. Two to four divisions for the Union, and three divisions for the Confederates made up a corp. Major generals commanded corps for the Union, and lieutenant generals for the Confederates.

The problem with associating a condition level to a brigade based on a number of hours spent marching and fighting comes from the fact that no real scale of measure exists that says X hours of activity equals X level of exhaustion.

However, a reasonable comparison can be drawn from the experiences of participants in modern-day U.S. military training events. The U.S. Marine Corps requires infantry battalions to hump (road march) with full kit a distance of 25 miles regularly. This effort takes seven to eight hours to complete, at the end of which the unit has become extremely played out with generally little energy left to conduct activities of any major exertion. The debilitating effects of military road marches come from not just the distance traveled and equipment carried, but also from weather, and the development of an erratic pace that inevitably produces an accordion effect.²⁶ These conditions were prevalent, if not exacerbated, for the Civil War soldier as well. Writing after the war, Private Carlton McCarthy of the ANV, captured the conditions of a road march on a typical hot summer day:

In summer time, the dust, combined with the heat, caused great suffering. The nostrils of the men, filled with dust, became dry and feverish, and even the throat did not escape. The “grit” was felt between the teeth, and the eyes rendered almost useless. There was dust in eyes, mouth, ears, and hair. The shoes were full of sand, and the dust, penetrating the cloths, and getting at the neck, wrists, and ankles, mixed with perspiration, produced an irritant almost as active as cantharides.²⁷

When long lines of troops conduct road marches, an accordion effect

often times occurs. This happens when the front part of the column slows down and speeds up for whatever reason, sending a ripple down the line that causes other parts of the column to stop in place and then sprint to catch up. The longer the line, the more pronounced the effect. As McCarthy explains:

When large bodies of troops were moving on the road, the alternate “halt” and “forward” was very harassing. Every obstacle produced a halt, and caused the men at once to sit and lie on the roadside where shade or grass tempted them; about the time they got fixed they would hear the word “forward!” and then have to move at increased speed to close up the gap in the column.²⁸

Even pausing for a rest had its downside, “Sitting down for a few minutes on a long march is pleasant, but it does not pay; when the march is resumed the limbs are stiff and sore, and the man rather worsted by the halt.”²⁹ Now, as it was then, “As the men tired, there was less and less talking, until the whole mass became quiet and serious. Each man was occupied with his own thoughts. For miles nothing could be heard but the rattling and jingling of canteens and accoutrements, and the occasional “Close up, men—close up!” of the officers”³⁰

Marching and fighting are two very different activities, but participation in direct combat, while not necessarily the same exertion of physical

energy as a road march, does have a similar exhausting effect as marching when taking into account mental stress and anxiety. In combat, all five senses become acutely heightened, and actions become automated. Confederate soldier Sam Watkins describes one such encounter:

There was no excitement but we were moving along as if on review Soon we are thrown into line of battle A thug, thug, thug; the balls are decimating our men ... the two lines meet ... the deadly crash of battle ... the blaze of smoke and fire. The earth trembles The enemy is checked ... whipped and driven from the field ... 'Attention! By the right flank, file left, march! Double quick!' and we are double quickening, we knew not wither, but that always meant fight.³¹

Exhaustion from this experience does not become apparent until the first significant pause in action, at which point the accumulated effects of physical and mental exertion come crashing down all at once, much like after a long road march.³² Taking this into consideration,

marching hours and fighting hours can be equated on a one for one basis, and when combined together, give fairly accurate assessment on the state of condition of a particular force. Using this analogy, the condition of the Confederate forces can be gauged by looking at the number of hours each brigade spent marching and fighting calculated from the time the unit broke bivouac to the time it stopped fighting that day, not including any sort of down time.³³

For analyzing the effects of casualties sustained, we again have the benefit of modern U.S. military parameters. The U.S. military considers a unit neutralized (unit temporarily out of action) if it sustained 10% casualties, and destroyed (unit permanently out of action) if it sustained 30% casualties.³⁴ While these measures may not directly translate to Civil War experiences, it does provide a reasonable starting point to assess units.

Taking the number of active hours for each brigade that fought on the first day and the modern U.S. military casualty percentages as a base, we can assign a standard stop-light color code to illustrate a state of condition for each brigade as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Active Hours and Casualty Stop Light Color Code

Active Hours	Casualty Percent	Color Code	Condition
0-3	0-9	Green	Good
4-6	10-29	Yellow	Moderate
7+	30+	Red	Poor

Table 2. Status of Confederate Brigades Late Afternoon of the First Day

Division	Brigade	Start Strength ^a	First-Day Casualties	Active Hours ^b	Percent Casualties	Combat Ready Assessment
II Corps (Ewell)						
Early	Hays	1,292	67	9	5.2	Fair
Early	Smith	802	0	9	0.00	Fair
Early	Avery (Hoke)	1,242	182	9	14.7	Poor
Early	Gordon	1,807	532	9	29.4	Poor
Rodes	Daniel	2,157	579	9	26.3	Poor
Rodes	Iverson	1,380	903	9	65.4	Poor
Rodes	Doles	1,319	219	9	16.6	Poor
Rodes	Ramseur	1,023	139	9	13.5	Poor
Rodes	O'Neal	1,685	328	9	19.5	Poor
III Corps (Hill)						
Heth	Pettigrew	2,576	434	10	16.9	Poor
Heth	Brockenbrough	968	124	10	12.8	Poor
Heth	Archer	1,193	203	10	17.0	Poor
Heth	Davis	1,707	286	10	16.8	Poor
Pender	Perrin	1,512	265	8.5	17.5	Poor
Pender	Lane	1,730	301	8.5	17.4	Poor
Pender	Thomas	1,244	0	8.5	0.00	Fair
Pender	Scales	1,347	298	8.5	17.5	Poor

^a Petruzzi and Stanley, *The Gettysburg Campaign in Numbers and Losses*, 126–34.

^b Unit start times were derived from H. Pfanz, *Gettysburg: The First Day*, 149; and the reports of Ewell OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 444; Rodes OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 552; Early OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 468; Heth OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 637; Pender's Assistant Adjutant General OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 656 (Pender was mortally wounded in the battle).

^c Does not include the 11th Mississippi who joined the brigade in the late evening. OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 649.

^d Does not include the 1st SC Rifles who were assigned to guard the division wagon train. OR vol. 27, pt. 2, 661.

Taking the two assessment areas in combination, we can make a final assessment for each of the Confederate brigades as shown in Table 2.

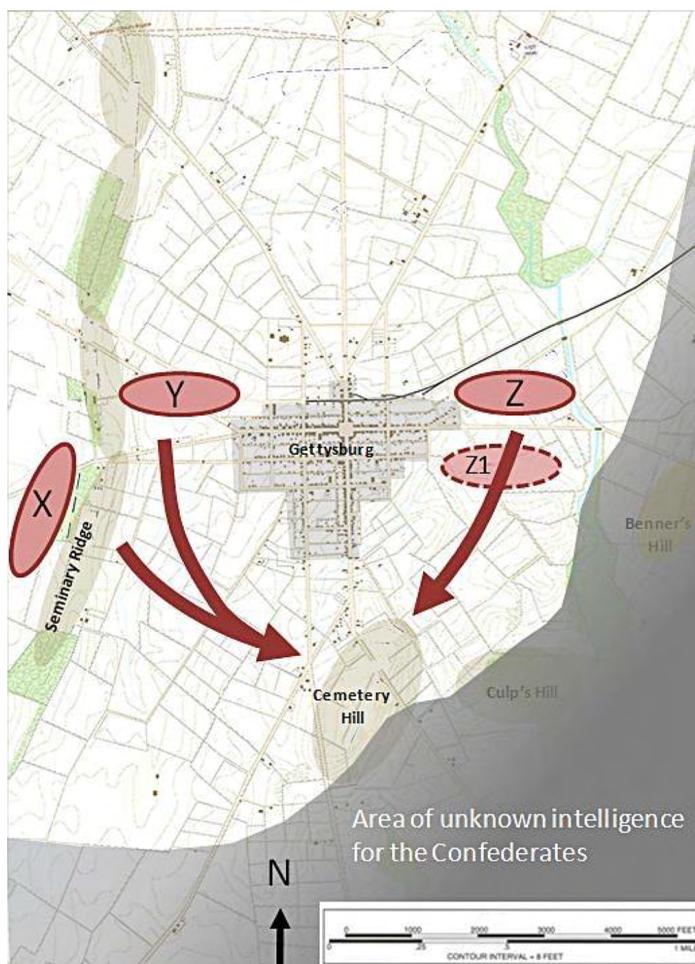
This shows that by late afternoon of the first day's battle, every Confederate brigade had enough active hours to put them in a red (poor condition) state, and the only brigades that sustained less than 10% casualties were two of Early's brigades and one of Pender's. Combining active hours and casualty percent together, the results show that of the units on the immediate battlefield, only the brigades of General Harry Hays, General William Smith, and General Edward Thomas, amounting to around 3,271 troops, were anywhere near in shape to execute another attack. Of these three, Smith's brigade was covering the York Road eastern approaches from suspected, but unconfirmed, Union reinforcements, and Thomas' brigade was held in reserve well west of Seminary Ridge. Only the brigades of Hays and Colonel Isaac Avery were close enough to continue attacking without pause on the Union forces assembling on Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill. All other brigades would have had to move from their current location to positions from which to launch a continuing attack. Ideally, these positions would be close by and have a direct line of approach to the objective. The selection of these positions would also be heavily influenced by the second factor of intelligence; what was known of the enemy and the suitability of the terrain.

Leading up to the battle, and throughout the first day, no Confederate

commander had any idea of the Union army whereabouts.³⁵ All day long, the unexpected appearance of Union infantry units continually surprised the Confederates. Without adequate reconnaissance, the Confederates really did not know what was on Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill, or what lay behind them. This lack of information resulted mainly from the Confederate's poor use of their cavalry arm. As mentioned earlier, Stuart, the main person in charge of Confederate cavalry operations, was busy with three cavalry brigades riding around the Union army, which took him away from his primary duties. Another brigade was operating well west of Gettysburg, and two others were three or four days ride away in Virginia covering the Confederate army's line of communications. Only one brigade (General Albert Jenkins commanding) rode in support of Ewell's Corps, but most of its regiments did not arrive on the battlefield until 5:00 pm, and then, for reasons not fully explained, was never employed in an active capacity.³⁶

Consequently, by late afternoon of the first day's battle, other than what they could directly observe, the Confederates were still largely ignorant of what they faced, both in terms of enemy and terrain, south and west of Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill (Map 2). This situation drove further doubt into the minds of Confederate commanders on whether they should or could attack. Hill would note, "The want of cavalry had been and was seriously felt."³⁷

East of Gettysburg, as alluded to earlier, the lack of enemy intelligence



Map 2. Potential Attack

would bleed off Confederate forces needed elsewhere. As Ewell discussed the situation with his commanders shortly after they entered the town, a report came from Smith's brigade of possible Union forces approaching on their extreme left flank. Although the report seemed doubtful, Ewell diverted both Smith's and Gordon's brigades to counter this perceived threat, essentially taking them out of supporting distance for any follow-on attack.³⁸ As shown in Table 2, Smith's brigade constituted one of the three fair condition Confederate

brigades remaining after the fighting on the first day.

On the Union side, their cavalry under Buford had good intelligence on the Confederates. Cavalry, in addition to locating and tracking enemy units, also performed the duties of screening their forces from the information collection activities of the enemy. Buford's cavalry division effectively screened likely approaches and presented a strong deterrent against Confederate reconnaissance or maneuver in these unknown areas as shown in Map 2.³⁹

By their actions, the Union cavalry prevented the Confederates from gaining knowledge on the exact nature of the AOTP forces and terrain they were facing.

The nature of the known terrain also influences the selection of any sort of possible attack position and avenue of approach to Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill. The town of Gettysburg alone presented the greatest obstacle to tactical movement. Gettysburg's built up areas, with constrictive alleys and streets, funnels troop movement into very lucrative kill zones, especially for artillery. The town buildings also obscure line of sight, which greatly hampers command and control. Furthermore, Culp's Hill presented its own challenges. Its north and northeast faces were, and still are, very wooded and rocky, and climb for 100 feet at an almost sheer angle (Figure 1), necessitating a move further around to the south and eastern sides to gain a position from which to assail the hill. The Confederates took this very approach when they eventually did attack Culp's Hill the evening of the second day, and early morning the third day of battle. This made Cemetery Hill a better objective to assault from a terrain perspective. Even so, from Gettysburg to Cemetery Hill, Early observed that the ground was rugged and crossed by stones and plank fences. Early assessed his brigades could not advance directly from the town to advantage⁴⁰ and, if they made an assault, they would have had to go in on the left of the town and strike the eastern face of Cemetery Hill with Gettysburg on the right and Culp's Hill on the left.⁴¹



Figure 1. View from the top of Culp's Hill looking north. The heavily wooded terrain falls almost straight down from here.

Factoring the conditions of enemy intelligence and terrain leaves three potential positions for launching an attack. The first two are Seminary Ridge, and an area directly west of Gettysburg (Positions X and Y in Map 2). An approach from these positions has the town on the left, an open field on the right flank, and strikes the west side of Cemetery Hill. The third position, just east of the town, turns west in front of Culp's Hill to strike the east side of Cemetery Hill (Positions Z and Z1⁴²), much like Early described above and how the Confederates eventually attacked Cemetery Hill the evening of the second day. Selecting positions any further from these runs up against unknown terrain and enemy, and would cause additional delay to start an attack not only because of the additional reconnaissance required, but also the necessity of moving to positions further away. This leads to our third factor: Time.

Night was fast approaching. The sun would set at 7:41 pm, and darkness (End of Evening Nautical Twilight or EENT) would fall at 8:55 pm.⁴³ Night fighting in the Civil War proved difficult and hazardous at best. Commanders commanded and controlled their maneuvering forces primarily by line of sight. With restricted visibility, they had a hard time seeing their units, and ran a high risk of mistaking friend for foe. The Confederates were only too aware of this problem having just lost one of their top commanders, “Stonewall” Jackson, to a night time friendly fire incident at the Battle of Chancellorsville.

To make an attack, the Confederates would first have to conduct a leader’s reconnaissance and issue new orders to subordinates. Lee did send new orders to attack Cemetery Hill, if practicable,⁴⁴ and Ewell promptly acted by conducting a quick reconnaissance. He determined he could make an attack if Hill supported him from the west, and sent off a messenger to Lee to request this support. Lee, after conferring with Hill, sent back that there would be no support from Hill, and urged Ewell to attack with II Corps alone.⁴⁵ This back and forth between Lee and Ewell illustrates the time involved just to initiate an attack, mainly because horseborne couriers were used as the primary mode of communication. Lee, in his position on Seminary Ridge, and Ewell, in the town of Gettysburg, were almost a mile apart. Composing each message, traveling the distance back and forth, and locating the principal recipient (or verbalizing it to the courier until he thoroughly understood it) took time. A

simple exchange of two or three messages could easily take an hour.

At the same time, units would have to reorganize, including disengaging from their current activities of resupply, prisoner processing, recovery of the wounded, and disentangling themselves from places like the town itself. They would then have to deploy to a suitable attack position, and finally traverse the actual approach route. Along with the message traffic described above, these pre-attack activities could take two or more hours to complete. As an example, the Confederate attacks throughout the first day’s battle all took around 2–3 hours to develop from the time they deployed their forces into attack formations, to the time they finally began engaging the enemy Union forces.⁴⁶ A theoretical best-case timeline for getting an attack off against Cemetery Hill or Culp’s Hill might look as illustrated in Figure 2. With this in mind, Ewell soon concluded that he could not carry off an attack on Cemetery Hill.

Other Confederate forces continued to arrive late on the scene, but again, running out of time plagued them. Ewell, after determining the unsailability of Cemetery Hill, sent off two of his aid-de-camps to scout Culp’s Hill. The two reported back that the hill was unoccupied. This seemed odd, given that Union commanders had posted the 7th Indiana on its summit not long after its arrival on the battlefield.⁴⁷ In any event, Ewell decided to occupy Culp’s Hill with his third division under Johnson just arriving onto the battlefield. However, running into traffic from oth-

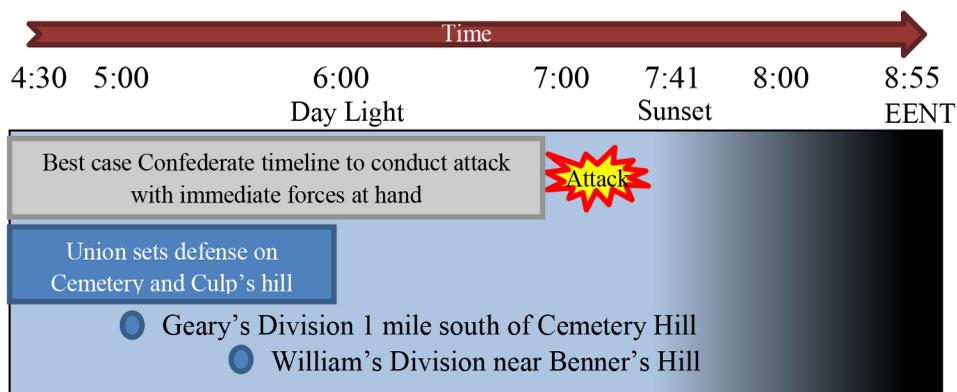


Figure 2. Timeline following the end of hostilities on the First Day's battle.

er units, Johnson's division only reached Gettysburg around 7:00 pm, which prevented him from reaching a position to make a move onto Culp's Hill until well past dark. When they finally did, their scouting parties ran into a Union ambush, signaling that Union forces had, in fact, secured Culp's Hill, thus prompting Johnson to suspend operations until the next day. Additionally, the division of General Richard Anderson of Hill's III Corps had also just come up, but was immediately placed in reserve owing to the uncertainty of the situation and the late hour.⁴⁸

Aside from time, and the practicality of executing such an attack, the Confederates also had to contend with the known Union forces themselves. The remnants of the Union I Corps and XI Corps had made their way to Cemetery Hill, and began to rally starting around 4:30 pm.⁴⁹ Both General Oliver Howard and the recently arrived General Winfield Hancock began sorting the units out, and placing them in defensive positions. Hancock would report that between 5:00 and 6:00 pm,

these defensive preparations were complete.⁵⁰ Using the same methodology to assess the condition of Confederate forces, Table 3 shows that most of the I Corps and XI Corps of the Union army were in poor shape. The exceptions were Colonel Orlando Smith's brigade left in reserve on Cemetery Hill, as well as the 7th Indiana Regiment⁵¹ of General Lysander Cutler's brigade and the 58th New York Regiment of Colonel Wladimir Krzyzanowski's brigade, both of whom came up late after conducting rear guard duties earlier in the day. All together they totaled of 2,273 infantry in **good** condition.

The presence of Buford's Division on the battlefield also has to be taken into consideration. In the first day's battle, Buford had already conducted a brilliant delaying action that allowed Union follow-on forces time to get on the battlefield, meet the Confederates, and effectively defend the terrain. Throughout the day, his cavalry also posed a threat to the Confederate flanks, at times forcing their infantry into defensive postures that slowed

Table 3. Status of Union Brigades Late Afternoon on the First Day

Division	Brigade/ Regiment	Start Strength ^a	First-Day Casualties	Active Hours ^b	Percent Casualties ^c	Effectiveness Assessment
I Corps (Reynolds)						
Wadsworth	Meredith	1,814	1,183	7	65.2	Poor
Wadsworth	Cutler ^d	1,566	964	7	61.6	Poor
Wadsworth	7 th Indiana Rgt	434	0	3	0.0	Good
Robinson	Paul	1,547	1,042	7	67.4	Poor
Robinson	Baxter	1,447	690	7	47.7	Poor
Rowley	Biddle (Rowley)	1,353	964	7	71.3	Poor
Rowley	Stone	1,315	855	7	65.0	Poor
XI Corps (Howard)						
Barlow	von Gilsa ^e	920	190	9	20.6	Poor
Barlow	Ames	1,333	324	9	24.3	Poor
Steinwher	Coster	1,215	562	8	46.3	Poor
Steinwher	Smith	1,644	0	4	0.0	Good
Schurz	Schimmelfennig	1,683	671	9	39.9	Poor
Schurz	Krzyzanowski ^f	1,229	646	9	52.6	Poor
Schurz	58 th New York Rgt	195	0	4	0.0	Good
First Cavalry Division (Buford)						
Buford	Gamble	1,596	102	7.5	6.4	Fair
Buford	Devin	1,108	25	3	2.3	Good

^a Petruzzi and Stanley, *The Gettysburg Campaign in Numbers and Losses*, 100–114.

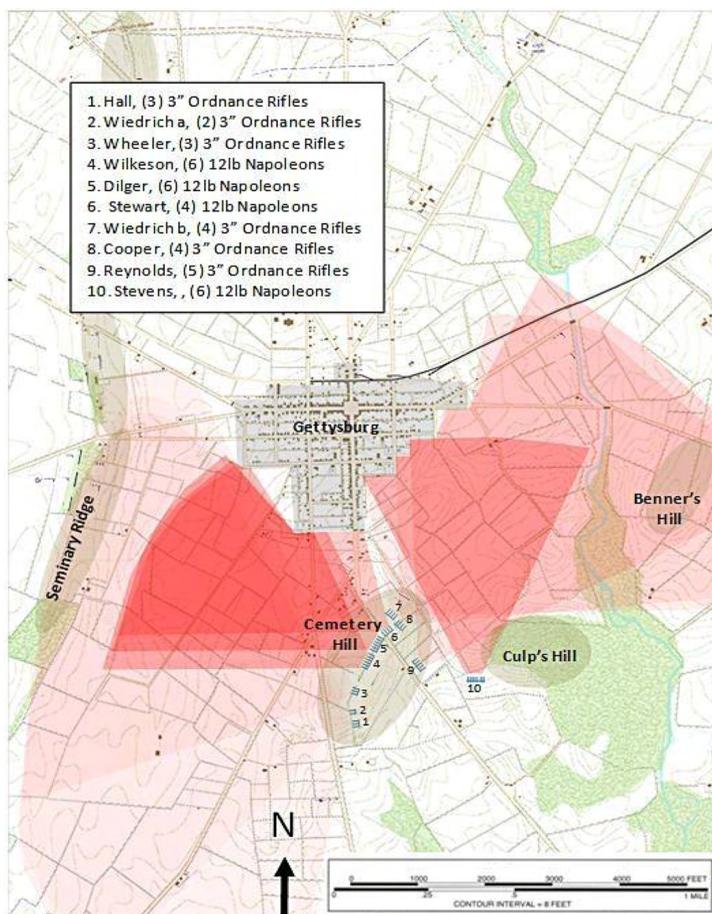
^b Unit start times were derived from H. Pfanz, *Gettysburg: The First Day*, 70; Coddington, *The Gettysburg Campaign*, 262; and the reports of Doubleday OR, vol. 27, pt. 1, 244; Wadsworth OR, vol. 27, pt. 1, 265; Howard OR, vol. 27, pt. 1, 701.

^c Day 1 casualties were determined by estimating the casualties sustained by the units on Days 2 and 3 through a comparative analysis of other units and subtracted from their reported total casualties.

^d Not including the 7th IA who joined the brigade later in the day.

^e Not including the 41st NY who joined the brigade in the late evening.

^f Not including the 58th NY who joined the brigade later in the day.



Map 3. Union Artillery Positions Late Afternoon of the First Day

their advance. As the Union I Corps and XI Corps retreated, they covered their withdrawal, and denied the Confederates any sort of information collection, or reconnaissance of terrain beyond what they could see from their main lines.⁵² Buford's two brigades were in fair to good shape and immediately available to meet any Confederate continuation of the attack.

While these Union units consolidated and recovered, Union reinforcements continued to rapidly close on the battlefield. After some initial confusion on when and where to proceed, General

Henry Slocum's XII Corps of two divisions approached the battlefield from Baltimore Pike, which led into Gettysburg from the southeast. One division, under General Alpheus Williams, had actually made it to Benner's Hill ready to attack it when they were called back to Baltimore Pike around 5:30 or 6:00 pm⁵³ (this force went undetected by the Confederates and did not cause the diversion of Ewell's two brigades mentioned earlier). The other division, under General John Geary, reported in place at 5:00 pm about one mile south of Cemetery Hill.⁵⁴ Contrasting these re-

inforcements against the timeline illustrated in Figure 2, by the time the Confederates could strike Cemetery Hill or Culp's Hill (between 7:00 and 7:30 pm), the AOTP had 19,295 men in place, or within easy supporting distance as early as 5:00 or 6:00 pm. This included 2,273 I Corps and XI Corps good condition infantry immediately on Cemetery Hill and Culp's hill, Geary's 3,948 infantry in close proximity, William's 3,415 infantry looming off to their left flank, and Buford's 2,646 cavalry division close at hand off their right flank, notwithstanding 7,013 survivors of the I Corps and XI Corps. Additionally, the longer the Confederates took to get their forces in motion, the longer the Union forces had to recover from their day's exertion, gradually mitigating the impact of hours spent marching and fighting.

Lastly, and most apparent to the Confederates, was the array of Union artillery ready on Cemetery Hill. They had the better part of nine batteries, the base maneuver element for artillery, resupplied and set up covering the approaches to the hill from the east, the west, and from the town, and one mobile battery with Buford. The Union batteries had fought throughout the day and had lost 12 guns out of 60, either from capture, breakdown, or sent to the rear.⁵⁵ Decisions made by Howard and Hancock had the 48 remaining (26—3" Ordnance and 22—12lb Napoleons) well manned and expertly sighted by their respective battery commanders.⁵⁶ Map 3 graphically illustrates the area covered by these guns had the Confederates continued their attack. The darker shades represent a



Figure 3. Union 3" Ordnance Rifle. Artillery Position 8 (Map 3) on Cemetery Hill Looking East

greater number and heavier caliber of guns able to fire into those areas, and the ranges equate to the distances the type of gun could reach owing to its design and the terrain.⁵⁷ The Union forces on Cemetery Hill had 19 guns (13—3" Ordnance and 6—12lb Napoleons) covering the eastern approaches (Figure 3), and 24 guns (eight—3" Ordnance and 16—12lb Napoleons) covering the western approaches. Buford had five guns (all 3" Ordnance) with him as he screened the area south and west of Cemetery Hill.

The best means to counter enemy artillery is with your own friendly artillery. Unfortunately, for the Confederates, their artillery arm had many disadvantages compared to their Union counterpart, particularly when it came to organization and ammunition quality. Generally, Union batteries had six guns, and Confederates had four guns. Union batteries usually had all the same



Figure 4. Ranges of Civil War Artillery Firing Shell Ammunition at 5° Elevation

gun type, whereas Confederates had a mix with many batteries having two to four different gun types in them; a readymade logistics headache. Ewell, on the east side of Gettysburg, had 32 guns of which four (one 12lb Napoleon and three 3'' Ordnance Rifles) had been put out of action by the day's fighting. Hill, on the west side, had 67 guns with one (one 3'' Ordnance Rifle) out of action.⁵⁸ However, of Ewell's remaining guns, only 11 were long-range shooting 3'' Ordnance, 10lb Parrot. Hill, likewise, had 27 long-range shooters, including 2—12lb Whitworth Rifles.⁵⁹ The rest were medium-range 12lb Napoleons (18 for Ewell and 29 for Hill), or short-range 12lb Howitzers (10 for Hill). To bring all their guns to bear would have required more than half of their guns to ride in and set up under the plunging fire effects from the Union batteries set up at higher elevations. Plunging fire essentially reduces range probable error of a projectile into a smaller pattern, thereby increasing the chances for inflicting greater casualties. The rifled guns could keep their distance, but their affect at long range (1,500–2,000 yards) would be greatly diminished (Figure 4), particularly if they had to fire at a target on a higher elevation such as on Cemetery Hill. Conversely, the height advantage of the Union batteries gave them added range in comparison to the

Confederate batteries setting up in lower elevations.

Ewell understood this, and assessed that he did not have good artillery positions to bear on Cemetery Hill from his side, other than from Benner Hill, which offered limited space to set up and too long of a range from which to shoot.⁶⁰ Lee saw this problem as well from his vantage point, and directed his artillery commander to take several artillery batteries south and west of Cemetery Hill to set up and gain enfilading fire on the Union artillery positions. This proved fruitless as he had no infantry available to protect the guns from the aggressive stance Buford's cavalry presented in that area.⁶¹ Without adequate artillery support, making an attack on Cemetery Hill would be very costly for the attacker, thus adding one more deterrent to making such an attack.

Taking all these factors together, possibly, an immediate recognition and an extraordinary effort fueled by desperation on the part of the Confederates, as well as uncharacteristic inaction on the part of the Union forces, could have given the Confederates a chance of achieving a successful attack on Cemetery Hill or Culp's Hill on the first day of the Battle of Gettysburg. This desperate urgency really only became apparent well after the battle. Even so, given

what the Confederates faced in the late afternoon of the first day, any attempt had little to no chance of succeeding. First, of the 21,518 infantry available to the Confederates, they only had three brigades totaling 3,271 anywhere near in shape to make an attack, and two of these were grossly out of position. Second, because of inadequate cavalry support, they had no intelligence on what they would face in terms of both enemy and terrain, other than what they could directly see. Third, they had less than 3 hours before sunset and less than 4 hours before darkness to decide, reorganize, deploy, and conduct an attack. Last, the Union had 19,295 forces near at hand to seriously contest any attempt made, of which 12,282 were in good to fair condition.

Perhaps, the greatest cause for Confederates inaction at the end of the first day was their attitude and over-confidence. Confederate morale entering into the battle that summer peaked at an all-time high. Coming off a series of spectacular wins against a much larger and better supplied opponent, Confederate ANV soldiers put on an air of superiority that knew no bounds. General Edward P. Alexander later wrote,

... like the rest of the army generally, nothing gave me much concern so long as I knew that Gen. Lee was in command. I am sure there can never have been an army with more supreme confidence in its commander than that army had in Gen. Lee. We looked forward to victory under him as confidently as to successive sunrises.⁶²

Even Union commanders, such as General Henry J. Hunt, sensed their hubris:

The battles of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville raised the confidence of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia to such a height as to cause its subordinate officers and soldiers to believe that, as opposed to the Army of the Potomac, they were equal to any demand that could be made upon them. Their belief in superiority of the Southern to the Northerner as a fighter was now supported by signal success in the field.⁶³

Lieutenant Colonel James Arthur Fremantle, a British Officer attached to the Confederates during the battle, captured it the best. While sitting with a number of Confederate officers after the first day, he recorded that, "The staff officers spoke of the battle as a certainty, and the universal feeling in the army was one of profound contempt for an enemy they have beaten so constantly, and under so many disadvantages."⁶⁴

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Alexander, Edward Porter. *Fighting for the Confederacy: The Personal Recollections of General Edward Porter Alexander*, edited by Gary W. Gallagher. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989.

Astronomical Applications Department, U.S. Naval Observatory, Wash-

- ington, DC. Accessed February 1, 2018. <http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/index.php>.
- Department of the Army. *FM 6-30: Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Observed Fire*. Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, 1991.
- Department of the Army. *FM 6-40: Field Artillery Manual Cannon Gunnery*. Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, 1996.
- Douglas, Henry Kyd. *I Rode with Stonewall*. Marietta: R. Bemis Publishing, 1995.
- Fremantle, James. *The Fremantle Diary: A Journey of the Confederacy*, edited by Walter Lord. Short Hills: Buford Books, 1954.
- Hunt, Henry J. "The First Day at Gettysburg." In *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War. Vol. 3, The Tide Shifts*. Edison: Castle, 1995: 255–84.
- Lockard, Terry M., Colonel USMC Retired and Frank R. Boynton, Colonel USMC Retired interviewed on August 31st, 2014.
- Longstreet, James. *From Manassas to Appomattox*. New York: Mallard Press, 1991.
- Meade, George Gordon. "Letter to Colonel G.G. Benedict." In *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War. Vol. 3, The Tide Shifts*. Edison: Castle, 1995: 413–14.
- Testimony of General George Gordon Meade before the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, March 5, March 11, and April 4, 1864*, Washington D.C. Gettysburg: Gettysburg National Military Park Library copied in 2007.
- The Ordnance Bureau. *The Field Manual for the Use of the Officers on Ordnance Duty*. Richmond: Ritchie & Dunnivant, 1862.
- United States War Department. *The 1864 Field Artillery Tactics*. New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1864.
- United States War Department. *The War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 128 vols. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1881–1901.
- Watkins, Sam R. "Co Aytch": *A Confederate Soldier's Memoirs*. New York: Collier Books, 1962.

Secondary Sources

- Barnett, Bert. "Confederate Artillery Operations on the First Day of Gettysburg." In *The Gettysburg Campaign and First Day of Battle, Papers of the Tenth Gettysburg National Military Park Seminar*. Gettysburg: Gettysburg National Military Park, 2005: 197–244.
- Coddington, Edwin B. *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command*. New York: Touchstone, 1968.
- Desjardin, Thomas A. *The Battlefield of Gettysburg*. Gettysburg: Desjardin, 1998.

- Freeman, Douglas Southall. *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*. Vol. 3, *Gettysburg to Appomattox*. New York: Charles Scribner Sons, 1944.
- Harmon, Troy D. "In Defense of Henry Slocum on July 1." In *Leadership in the Campaign and Battle of Gettysburg, Papers of the Ninth Gettysburg National Military Park Seminar*. Gettysburg: Gettysburg National Military Park, 2002: 65–80.
- Hassler, Warren W. *Crisis at the Crossroads: The First Day at Gettysburg*. Gettysburg: Stan Clark Military Classics, 1991.
- Petruzzi, David J., and Steven A. Stanley. *The Gettysburg Campaign in Numbers and Losses*. El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie LLC, 2012.
- Pfanz, Donald C. *Richard S. Ewell: A Soldier's Life*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
- Pfanz, Harry W. *Gettysburg: The First Day*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001.
- Stewart, George R. *Pickett's Charge: A Microhistory of the Final Attack at Gettysburg, July 3, 1863*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.
- Trudeau, Noah Andre. *Gettysburg: A Testing of Courage*. New York: Harper Collins, 2002.
- Wittenberg, Eric J., and J. David Petruzzi. *Plenty of Blame to go Around: JEB Stuart's Controversial Ride to Gettysburg*. New York: Savas Beatie, 2011.

Notes

- 1 Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, Vol. 3, *Gettysburg to Appomattox* (New York: Charles Scribner Sons, 1944), 94–95.
- 2 United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 128 vols. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1881–1901), vol. 27, pt. 1, 305. (Hereinafter cited as OR; except as otherwise noted, all references are to Series I.)
- 3 Lee's first attempt in September 1862 ended in a tactical draw at the Battle of Antietam.
- 4 OR, vol. 27, pt. 1, 35.
- 5 OR, vol. 27, pt. 1, 60–61.
- 6 Testimony of General George Gordon Meade before the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, March 5, March 11, and April 4, 1864 (Gettysburg National Military Park Library). Here after referred to as Meade Testimony.

- 7 Meade Testimony.
- 8 OR. vol. 27, pt. 2, 692.
- 9 Eric J. Wittenberg and Petruzzi, J. David, *Plenty of Blame to go Around: JEB Stuart's Controversial Ride to Gettysburg* (New York: Sava Beatie, 2011), 281–88.
- 10 James Longstreet, *From Manassas to Appomattox* (New York: Mallard Press, 1991), 346–47.
- 11 OR. vol. 27, pt. 2, 307.
- 12 Synopsis of the first day's battle derived from Edwin B. Coddington, *The Gettysburg Campaign* (New York: Touchstone, 1997); Harry W. Panfz, *Gettysburg: The First Day* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001); and Noah Andre Trudeau, *Gettysburg: A testing of Courage* (New York: HarperCollins, 2002).
- 13 In reference to their former, now deceased, commander, General "Stonewall" Jackson. Henry Kyd Douglas, *I Rode with Stonewall* (Marietta: R. Bemis Publishing, 1995), 239.
- 14 John Brown Gordon, *Reminiscences of the Civil War* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), 155.
- 15 H. Pfanz, *Gettysburg: The First Day*, 343.
- 16 George Gordon Meade, "Letter from General Meade to Colonel G.G. Benedict," in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3, *The Tide Shifts* (Edison: Castle, 1995), 413–14.
- 17 First day's battle strengths and casualties were derived from J. David Petruzzi and Steven A. Stanley, *The Gettysburg Campaign in Numbers and Losses* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie LLC, 2012), 100–14, 126–34, and 137.
- 18 OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 444.
- 19 Donald C. Pfanz, *Richard S. Ewell: A Soldier's Life* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 304.
- 20 Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants*, Vol. 3, *Gettysburg to Appomattox*, 87–88.
- 21 Henry J. Hunt, "The First Day at Gettysburg," in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3, *The Tide Shifts* (Edison: Castle, 1995), 282–84.
- 22 OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 318.
- 23 OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 607.
- 24 Author's emphasis added. OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 445.
- 25 Trudeau, *Gettysburg*, 257.
- 26 Personal observation from and participation experience of the author as a career Marine Officer, and interviews with Colonel Terry M. Lockard USMC retired, and Colonel Frank R. Boynton USMC retired, on August 31, 2014.

- 27 Carlton McCarthy, *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life in the Army of Northern Virginia 1861–1865* (Richmond: Carlton McCarthy and Company, 1882), 45.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 47.
- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 *Ibid.*, 52.
- 31 Sam R. Watkins, “Co Aytch”: *A Confederate Soldier’s Memoirs* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 147.
- 32 Drawn from the author’s personal direct combat experiences, and interviews with Lockard and Boynton.
- 33 A general pause in the fighting occurred between 11:30 am and 2:00 pm. H. Pfanz, *Gettysburg: The First Day*, 115–30.
- 34 Department of the Army, FM 6-30: *Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Observed Fire* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, 1991), 4–9, and Department of the Army, FM 6-40: *Field Artillery Manual Cannon Gunnery* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, 1996), C-4.
- 35 H. Pfanz, *Gettysburg: The First Day*, 342.
- 36 Wittenberg and Petrucci, *Plenty of Blame to go Around*, 281–82, 293.
- 37 OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 607.
- 38 D. Pfanz, Richard S. Ewell, 311, and Freeman, *Lee’s Lieutenants*, vol. 3, *Gettysburg to Appomattox*, 97.
- 39 D. Pfanz, Richard S. Ewell, 309–10.
- 40 H Pfanz, *Gettysburg: The First Day*, 343; and Freeman, *Lee’s Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, vol. 3, *Gettysburg to Appomattox*, 101.
- 41 D. Pfanz, Richard S. Ewell, 310, and Trudeau, *Gettysburg: A testing of Courage*, 261.
- 42 One of Early’s brigades (Avery) succeeded in gaining cover from a low ridge in this area. OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 469.
- 43 Sunset and EENT obtained from Astronomical Applications Dept., U.S. Naval Observatory, Washington, DC. <http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/index.php>.
- 44 OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 445.
- 45 D. Pfanz, Richard S. Ewell, 309–10, and Trudeau, *Gettysburg: A testing of Courage*, 251–56.
- 46 First day attack timelines were deduced from various OR reports, as well as from events described in Coddington, *The Gettysburg Campaign*, H. Panfz, *Gettysburg: The First Day* and Noah Andre Trudeau, *Gettysburg: A testing of Courage*.

- 47 H. Pfanz, *Gettysburg: The First Day*, 349
- 48 Trudeau, *Gettysburg: A Testing of Courage*, 247.
- 49 OR, vol. 27, pt. 1, 704.
- 50 OR, vol. 27, pt. 1, 368.
- 51 OR, vol. 27, pt. 1, 383.
- 52 H. Pfanz, *Gettysburg: The First Day*, 51–68, 318.
- 53 Troy D. Harmon, “In Defense of Henry Slocum on July 1,” in *Leadership in the Campaign and Battle of Gettysburg*, Papers of the Ninth Gettysburg National Military Park Seminar (Gettysburg: Gettysburg National Military Park, 2002), 73.
- 54 *Ibid*, 71.
- 55 H. Pfanz, *Gettysburg: The First Day*, 333.
- 56 Hunt, “The First Day at Gettysburg,” 283.
- 57 Ranges were taken from the U.S. War Department, *The 1864 Field Artillery Tactics* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1864), 29–32, and *The Ordnance Bureau, The Field Manual for the use of the Officers on Ordnance Duty* (Richmond: Ritchie & Dunnavant, 1862), 114, 115, and 122. Battery composition taken from Petruzzi, and Stanley, *The Gettysburg Campaign in Numbers and Losses*, 100–114. Battery locations taken from H. Pfanz, *Gettysburg: The First Day*, 334, and from the personal investigation of the battlefield by the author.
- 58 Bert Barnett, “Confederate Artillery Operations on the First Day of Gettysburg,” *The Gettysburg Campaign and First Day of Battle*, Papers of the Tenth Gettysburg National Military Park Seminar (Gettysburg: Gettysburg National Military Park, 2005): 203, 211.
- 59 Whitworth Rifles had a range out to 2,800 yards but were not capable of firing shell ammunition.
- 60 OR, vol. 27, pt. 2, 445.
- 61 Barnett, “Confederate Artillery Operations on the First Day of Gettysburg,” 211.
- 62 Edward Porter Alexander, *Fighting for the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill: the University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 222.
- 63 Hunt, “The First Day at Gettysburg,” 255.
- 64 James Arthur Fremantle, *The Fremantle Diary: A Journey of the Confederacy* (Short Hills: Buford Books, 1954), 205.

This publication is available open access at:
<http://www.ipsonet.org/publications/open-access>

Thanks to the generosity of the American Public University System



