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Southern Pride and Yankee Presence: The Limits of Confederate Loyalty in Civil War Mississippi, 1860-1865

Ruminski, Jarret

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Southern Pride and Yankee Presence: The Limits of Confederate Loyalty in Civil War

Mississippi, 1860-1865

by

Jarret Ruminski

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Abstract

This study uses Mississippi from 1860 to 1865 as a case-study of Confederate nationalism. It employs interdisciplinary literature on the concept of loyalty to explore how multiple allegiances influenced people during the Civil War. Historians have generally viewed Confederate nationalism as weak or strong, with white southerners either united or divided in their desire for Confederate independence. This study breaks this impasse by viewing Mississippians through the lens of different, co-existing loyalties that in specific circumstances indicated neither popular support for nor rejection of the Confederacy. It focuses on wartime activities like swearing the Federal oath, illicit trade with the Union army, and Confederate desertion to show how Mississippians acted on co-existent loyalty layers to self, family, and friend-networks that were distinct from national allegiances. Although the Confederate government espoused an all-consuming nationalism, the evidence presented in this study demonstrates the limited control that the Confederacy, the Union, and, by implication, most modern nation states, exerted over their subjects. This study also explores the relationship between race and loyalty. It demonstrates how an internal war between slaveholders, who expected slaves to only express servile loyalty to their masters, and slaves, who resisted white authority by acting on loyalties to self, family, neighborhood, and nation, revealed a struggle over the racial hierarchy that demonstrated continuity between the antebellum, Civil War, and Reconstruction eras.

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“Loyalty wants the cause in its unity; it seeks, therefore, something essentially superhuman.”

Josiah Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty*

Introduction

At noon on December 26, 1862, an overflow crowd packed into the legislative house in downtown Jackson, Mississippi to hear a speech by native son Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederate States of America. Davis took the opportunity to assure the crowd that the recently enacted, and unpopular, Conscription and Exemption acts were both necessary to ensure the Confederacy's survival against an unrelenting northern foe. Omitting mention of the May and October battles at Corinth, Davis stated that "you in Mississippi, have but little experienced as yet the horrors of the war. You have seen but little of the savage manner in which it is waged by your barbarous enemies." He emphasized that "the great aim of the government is to make our struggle successful," and then laid out the costs of Confederate defeat. "Will you be slaves; will you consent to be robbed of your property; to be reduced to provincial dependence; will you renounce the exercise of those rights with which you were born and which were transmitted to you by your fathers?" Davis asked. "I feel that in addressing Mississippians the answer will be that their interests, even life itself, should be willingly laid down on the altar of their country," he concluded.¹ As Davis earlier noted, Mississippi in general had yet to experience war's worst hardships, but in suggesting that Mississippians should willingly sacrifice everything, even their lives, to the goal of Confederate independence, he fused their interests with those of the nation. In doing so, he tried to instill in them the devotion needed to ensure southern victory.

How Mississippians responded to this exhortation is the subject of this study. It uses Mississippi from 1860 to 1865 as a case-study of Confederate loyalty during the Civil War. This Deep South state should have been rabidly pro-Confederate: in 1860 slaves represented fifty-five percent of its population, and their labor made it the country's leading cotton exporter. It was

¹ Jefferson Davis, Speech at Jackson, Mississippi, December 26, 1862, in Lynda Laswell Crist, Mary Seaton Dix, Kenneth H. Williams, eds., *The Papers of Jefferson Davis, Vol. 8, 1862* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 565-579 (quotes on 567, 574).

also a hotbed of secession that became the second state to leave the Union.² Yet, Mississippi was also an early militarily divided state that faced the Union army's presence through most of the conflict, making it fertile ground for exploring the influence of different allegiances.

Rather than trying to discern whether Mississippians' allegiance to the Confederacy was weak or strong, this study enters the scholarly debate over the nature of Confederate nationalism by viewing Mississippians through the lens of different, co-existing loyalties that, according to circumstances, indicated neither popular support for, nor rejection of, the Confederacy. This approach suggests that the often contradictory evidence regarding Confederate allegiance in Mississippi can better explain the limitations of modern nationalism in terms of the state's influence on its subjects. Take one example. Confederate nationalists labeled Mississippians who traded across Union lines, in defiance of Confederate law prohibiting such exchanges, as treasonous, claiming that trade fed cotton and other commodities to the Union war effort and undermined Confederate economic independence. Yet, many citizens stated that they traded to procure goods for themselves and their families with little regard for nationalist stances, while others claimed that they traded in order to smuggle goods to Confederate soldiers, insisting that their patriotic intentions overrode their illegal actions.

These competing interpretations of trade between the lines raise broader questions about what types of obligations modern nationalism placed on citizens via their relationship to the state, and what citizens expected from the state in return. Paul Quigley defines nationalism as "the conviction that each nation – a group of people with a distinctive identity, typically based on some combination of language, descent, history, cultural values, or interest – ought to be aligned with an independent unit of governance in the modern institution of a *nation-state*." The central component of modern nationalism is its totality, that it is "the supreme form of legal allegiance

² Ben Wynne, *Mississippi's Civil War: A Narrative History* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2006), 12.

and cultural identity in the modern world,” and is both “unitary and indivisible.”³ This totality was particularly salient for Confederate nationalists seeking to define and preserve their nation-state while simultaneously warring for its very survival.

Faced with a northern government that denied the legitimacy of the Confederacy’s existence, Confederate boosters sought to define and shape their southern nation in order to legitimize it to the North and to the world. To achieve this goal, they promoted what scholars have termed protective nationalism, in which the Confederacy would be economically self-sufficient and its citizens would work towards the singular goal of winning independence from the North. Achieving economic self-sufficiency entailed the promotion of southern industry, a national currency, and prohibition of trade with the North in favor of homespun and domestic production. Because Confederate nationalists forged their nation in war, in which defeat meant the nation’s death, they argued that citizens should be willing to endure any amount of suffering, even if it meant sacrificing their lives, to achieve Confederate victory. The war, however, created an environment ill-suited to protective nationalists’ ideals. In different circumstances, Mississippians acted on multiple, co-existent loyalties that influenced their actions in ways that did not always correspond to national allegiance. In doing so, they demonstrated that the reach of the nineteenth century nation-state was more limited than historians have concluded.

This study, then, is not a complete, chronological history of Mississippi during the Civil War. Recent works by Ben Wynne, Timothy Smith, and Michael Ballard are excellent examples of the former.⁴ Instead, it focuses on the relationship between Mississippians and the rival Union and Confederate governments, both of which adopted protective nationalism, and therefore made

³ Paul Quigley, *Shifting Grounds: Nationalism and The American South, 1848-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 11, 5-6.

⁴ See Wynne, *Mississippi’s Civil War*; Timothy B. Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War: The Home Front* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010); Michael B. Ballard, *The Civil War in Mississippi: Major Campaigns and Battles* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2011).

demands on citizens' daily lives in order to elicit their total national allegiance. Both governments required citizens to swear oaths of allegiance, restricted commerce with the other side, intervened in the relationship between masters and slaves, encouraged espionage, forbade desertion, and approved of military exemptions only in cases where doing so was deemed to be of equal or more national benefit than soldiering. These impositions by the two warring states demanded that individuals abandon established habits shaped by multiple loyalties to self, family, neighborhood, and nation, and instead tailor their actions to reflect total fidelity to one nation or the other. As Andre Fleche notes, patriotic thinkers of the Civil War era judged governments "by their ability to command the allegiance of their citizens and marshal the resources of the entire state." They considered the ability to do this as the hallmarks of the "modern, unified state."⁵ By attempting to use every facet of day-to-day behavior as a gauge of national allegiance, both states disrupted the interplay of Mississippians' loyalty layers. In the process, they tested the limits of protective nationalism, and exposed the importance of multiple allegiances in guiding human actions.

The problem of multiple allegiances complicates scholarship on Confederate nationalism, which attempts to measure the extent of southerners' commitment to the nascent slaveholding republic. Some historians who argue for strong Confederate loyalty emphasize how white supremacy, conflation of home with nation, and the construction of a separate, functioning government with new national borders united southerners across class lines to fight for the Confederacy.⁶ Others contend that martial pride fueled Confederate nationalism, as civilians

⁵ Andre Fleche, *The Revolution of 1861: The American Civil War in the Age of Nationalist Conflict* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 70.

⁶ Mark V. Wetherington, *Plain Folks' Fight: The Civil War and Reconstruction in Piney Woods Georgia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 1-9; Andrew F. Lang, "'Upon the Alter of Our Country:,' Confederate Identity, Nationalism, and Morale in Harrison County, Texas, 1860-1865," *Civil War History* 55 (Sept. 2009): 281-82; Brian S. Wills, "Shades of Nation: Confederate Loyalties in Southeastern Virginia," in *Inside the Confederate Nation: Essays in Honor of Emory Thomas*, Gordon, Leslie and John C. Inscoe, eds. (Baton Rouge:

rallied around the military, and soldiers' forged comradeship that fueled their desire to keep fighting.⁷ Looking beyond the army, some scholars invoke Benedict Anderson's concept of nationalism, arguing that a common print culture promoted southern values and created a united Confederate identity among white southerners.⁸ While these historians identify different motives for white allegiance to the Confederacy, they are nonetheless in agreement that such support was real and widespread.

In contrast, other historians emphasize the South's regional, political and economic divisions, especially class conflict between slaveholders and non-slaveholders, which carried into the war and internally crippled the Confederate effort.⁹ Historians of southern Unionism and of

Louisiana State University Press, 2005), 60-61; Jacqueline Glass-Campbell, *When Sherman Marched North from the Sea: Resistance on the Confederate Home Front* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 69-74; William Blair, *Virginia's Private War: Feeding Body and Soul in the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 144-146; Aaron Sheehan-Dean, *Why Confederates Fought: Family and Nation in Civil War Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 146-47.

⁷ Gary W. Gallagher, *The Confederate War: How Popular Will, Nationalism, and Military Strategy Could not Stave off Defeat* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 5-13; Joseph T. Glatthaar, *General Lee's Army: From Victory to Collapse* (New York: Free Press, 2008), 316-317, 456; Keith S. Bohannon, "Witness the Redemption of the Army": Reenlistments in the Confederate Army of Tennessee, January-March 1864," in Gordon and Inscoe, eds., 11-114; Lisa Laskin, "The Army is not Near so Much Demoralized as the Country is:" Soldiers in the Army of Northern Virginia and the Confederate Home Front," in *The View from the Ground: Experiences of Civil War Soldiers*, Dean, Aaron-Sheehan, ed. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2007), 91-92; Stephen V. Ash, *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South, 1861-1865* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 72-75; Jason Phillips, *Diehard Rebels: The Confederate Culture of Invincibility* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007), 2-5, 88; Peter S. Carmichael, *The Last Generation: Young Virginians in Peace, War and Reunion* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 13-14; Bradley R. Clampitt, *The Confederate Heartland: Military and Civilian Morale in the Western Confederacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 7-10, 13.

⁸ Michael T. Bernath, *Confederate Minds: The Struggle for Intellectual Independence in the Civil War South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 1-2, 290; Robert E. Bonner, *Colors and Blood: Flag Passions of the Confederate South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 3-4; Anne S. Rubin, *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 12; Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 6-10.

⁹ William W. Freehling, *The South Vs. The South: How Anti-Confederate Southerners Shaped the Course of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 17-33, 47-85; Margaret Storey, *Loyalty and Loss: Alabama's Unionists in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 20-26; Paul D. Escott, *After Secession: Jefferson Davis and the Failure of Confederate Nationalism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), 94-135; Georgia Lee Tatum, *Disloyalty in the Confederacy* (New York: Ams Press, 1934, 1970), 3-23; Victoria E. Bynum, *The Free State of Jones: Mississippi's Longest Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 98-104; William C. Davis, *Look Away!: A History of the Confederate States of America* (New York: Press Press, 2002), 367; Mark A. Weitz, *More Damning than Slaughter: Desertion in*

the Border and Mountain South acknowledge southerners' multiple allegiances, but view them as derivative of national loyalties that determined wartime behavior. Thomas Dyer notes that while Civil War Atlantians held many allegiances that "competed with or complimented national loyalty," nationalism was still "paramount" and remained "unifying and vigorous." Jonathan Sarris writes that local, regional, and national issues "combined to influence the [national] allegiances of people in north Georgia." Judkin Browning contends that people in Union-occupied North Carolina "could have multiple loyalties with varying degrees of attachment to each, depending on his or her circumstances and agenda." Like Dyer and Sarris, however, Browning views other allegiances as subservient to nationalism, writing that North Carolinians "were liable to be more pro-Union or pro-Confederate at any given time, depending on their individual circumstances." He concludes that North Carolinians shifted their national loyalties instead of acting on unrelated attachments. Although they highlight the complexity of wartime allegiances, these studies still emphasize an either/or spectrum of weak to strong Confederates at the margins with a larger group in the middle whose national allegiance waxed and waned, rather than demonstrating how nationalism could be unconnected to other allegiances that exercised a significant influence.¹⁰

the Confederate Army (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), vii-xix, 16-34; David Williams, *Bitterly Divided: The South's Inner Civil War* (New York: The New Press, 2008), 1-8; 109-171.

¹⁰ Thomas G. Dyer, *Secret Yankees: The Union Circle in Confederate Atlanta* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 4; Jonathon Dean-Sarris, *A Separate Civil War: Communities in Conflict in the Mountain South* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 3; Judkin Browning, *Shifting Loyalties: The Union Occupation of Eastern North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 4; For other studies of the Border and Mountain South that emphasize how local attachments influenced national loyalty, see Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 47-65; Noel C. Fisher, *War at Every Door: Partisan Politics and Guerrilla Violence in East Tennessee, 1860-1869* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 62-63, 142-143; Martin Crawford, *Ashe County's Civil War: Community and Society in the Appalachian South* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2001) 14, 52, 130; Robert Tracy McKenzie, *Lincolmites and Rebels: A Divided Town in the American Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 124-140; Barton Myers, *Executing Daniel Bright: Race, Loyalty, and Guerrilla Violence in a Coastal Carolina Community, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009), 80, 127.

The debate over the strength and weakness of Confederate loyalty among white southerners has made valuable insights into the Confederacy. Nonetheless, this scholarship's tendency to dichotomize white southerners as either "weak" or "strong" supporters of the Confederacy, thereby making it a united or a divided nation, loses sight of how multiple loyalties could influence southerners' behavior in ways unconnected to national allegiance. Gary Gallagher recently has called for historians of Confederate nationalism to "move beyond a binary approach to questions of disaffection, commitment to the nascent nation, and the like."¹¹ Understanding how Mississippians acted on allegiances beyond just nationalism can explain why the Confederacy can seem both united and divided, why some historians think it should have lasted longer, and why others marvel that it lasted so long against such steep odds.

Loyalty is an influence on human action, prone to varying levels of intensity and directed at multiple targets. I emphasize "loyalty" over "nationalism" because, as the historian David Potter noted, nationalism is a particular kind of fidelity to a political state and it co-exists with other allegiances. Eric Hobsbawm echoes this point, writing that nationalism "is always combined with identifications of another kind, even when it is felt to be superior to them." Philosopher Simon Keller defines loyalty as "the attitude and associated pattern of conduct that is constituted by an individual's taking something's side, and doing so with a certain sort of motive." Keller further asserts that loyalty is "tied in with the contingent psychologies, needs and interests of humans." Humans can, in turn, express loyalty to multiple things. Sociologist James Connor argues that people express loyalty towards different "micro" and "macro" targets. Connor calls this phenomenon "loyalty layers," referring to the "multiple targets of loyalty that operate on individuals, spanning the micro to the macro levels of social structure." Macro

¹¹ Gary W. Gallagher, "Disaffection, Persistence, and Nation: Some Directions in Recent Scholarship on the Confederacy." *Civil War History* 55 (Sept., 2009): 352.

loyalties are allegiances an individual has in association with a very large group of people towards broader spatial collectives like religion, ethnicity and nation. However, while an individual may be loyal to these macro targets, their abstract nature and the larger spatial geography they encompass means that they do not always directly affect a person's life at the micro level. For example, a person may be loyal to a particular religion without applying that religion's every stringent rule to their daily life, especially if those rules create uncomfortable monetary or familial problems. Yet that person would scarcely deny their still firm religious beliefs.¹²

Micro loyalties are the fidelities people hold towards smaller, more localized individuals and groupings like self, family, friends, and neighborhood, which exist in more compact spatial geographies within the macro space. Micro loyalties often have a greater influence on an individual's actions and, therefore, more commonly guide a person's daily life. For example, a person may hold strong macro loyalty to a national political party, but their micro loyalties to self and family may lead them to vote against that party's local candidates or policies, which a person may view as harmful to his or her personal interests. Such an action does not prevent that person from retaining their allegiance to the national party. Connor explains that the existence of loyalty layers means that "there are multiple loyalty influences being placed upon the actor," and that these layers "interact and overlap, they are not exclusive." This fluctuating hierarchy of human fidelities ensures that in general, no single loyalty can exclusively shape a person's identity and, therefore, have total influence over their actions. Those who express a seemingly

¹² David M. Potter "The Historian's Use of Nationalism and Vice-Versa," *American Historical Review* 67 (Jul., 1962): 924-26; Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 11; also see Stephen Nathanson, *Patriotism, Morality, and Peace* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1993), 105-16; Simon Keller, *The Limits of Loyalty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 21-22, 146 (quotes on 21, 146); James Connor, *The Sociology of Loyalty* (New York: Springer, 2007), 47.

unconditional loyalty to a single cause, individual, or institution at the expense of all other allegiances, sometimes to the point of causing harm to themselves or others, are often derisively labeled fanatics, zealots, or fundamentalists precisely because they are the rare exceptions to the former rule.¹³

In light of circumstances, an individual can and will act on one particular loyalty without abandoning other ones. Social Psychologists call this phenomenon “loyalty without conformity,” in which loyalty “might occasionally require people to place the interests of the group ahead of their self-interest,” but in contrast to conformity, does not require them to abandon their independence in favor of total allegiance to a group. This phenomenon is especially true in highly individualistic societies like the United States, where the socio-political culture allows for people to hold micro and macro loyalties simultaneously. In specific instances a person deems one loyalty to be temporarily more influential than another. Multiple loyalties therefore, are fluid and exist concurrently within the human actor.¹⁴

Loyalties are also the building blocks of identity. Scholars in the various fields of the social sciences have struggled to precisely define “identity,” leading one sociologist to conclude that it is impossible to arrive at a single definition of the concept.¹⁵ Nevertheless, other scholars have provided definitions which, despite their differences, tend to focus on the idea of identity as a marker of self, particularly in relation to others. Sociologists Peter Burke and Jan Stets define an identity as “the set of meanings that define who one is when one is an occupant of a particular role in society, a member of a particular group, or claims particular characteristics that identify

¹³ Connor, *The Sociology of Loyalty*, 47-49 (Quotes on 47); Keller, *The Limits of Loyalty*, 13.

¹⁴ Matthew J. Hornsey and Jolanda Jetten, “Loyalty Without Conformity: Tailoring Self-Perception as a Means of Balancing Belonging and Differentiation,” *Self and Identity* 4 (Jan.-Mar., 2005): 83.

¹⁵ For a recap of the sociological literature on identity, see Karen A. Cerulo, “Identity Construction: New Issues, New Directions,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 23 (1997): 385-409; Stephanie Lawler, *Identity: Sociological Perspectives* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), 2.

him or her as a unique person.” Individuals’ roles in society as neighbors, friends, spouses, siblings, parents, citizens, politicians, or soldiers, cannot be separated from the person, institution, group, or ideal to which they profess allegiance. George Fletcher writes that the conception of “self” that constitutes identity “generates duties of loyalty toward the families, groups, and nations that enter into our self-definition.” Thus, identity is contingent upon loyalty: to identify with something or someone, a person must be loyal by siding with and supporting that thing, person, or cause.¹⁶ During the Civil War, if Mississippians were not on some level loyal to the Confederacy, then they could not identify as Confederates. Exactly *how much* loyalty Mississippians should profess to the Confederacy, and what they should *do* to demonstrate their allegiance, however, proved a major point of contention between citizens and the Confederate state.

Specific circumstances motivated Mississippians to act in ways that others considered disloyal based on the notion that such acts betrayed citizens’ supposed identity as Confederates. These acts included swearing the Union oath, allegedly spying for the Union army, illegally trading at Federal lines, deserting from the Confederate army, claiming exemption from military service, and other actions that made them vulnerable to charges of disloyalty. Mississippi’s wartime and post-war histories, however, belie the existence of a large, anti-Confederate faction. While the state did have unionists, there was no large unionist uprising akin to the situation in East Tennessee. Furthermore, Mississippians accused of treason that left first-hand accounts rarely professed loyalty to the Union, to the Republican Party, or support for Federal war goals

¹⁶ Peter J. Burke and Jan E. Stets, *Identity Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3; George P. Fletcher, *Loyalty: An Essay on the Morality of Relationships* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 17.

like emancipation. Finally, the existence of many apostate Mississippians does not correlate with their hostility to occupying Federal forces throughout the Reconstruction period.¹⁷

By considering what national allegiance meant to Mississippians inclined towards behavior that onlookers considered disloyal, the concept of multiple loyalties addresses the gap between secondhand sources that charged Mississippians with disloyalty despite an absence of corroborating proof. To get at their motivations, historians can look at what people did in addition to what others said. They can read against the grain of secondhand accounts to consider how the “hidden transcripts” in peoples’ daily actions might contradict the “public transcripts” of second-hand reports. These hidden transcripts suggest that contrary to those reports, Confederate patriotism was one component in Mississippians’ social interactions in which other allegiances also guided their behavior.¹⁸

Recognizing the role of multiple loyalties in driving human behavior in Civil War Mississippi also sheds light on the nature of the nineteenth-century nation state and the impact it had on its subjects. Confederate partisans promoted what Nicholas and Peter Onuf call protective nationalism, which viewed the nation as “a corporate entity, with a life that transcended the lives of its present citizens and a purpose that transcended their purposes.” For protective nationalists, “the nation existed both in history, in the chronicle of sacrifices by founders and patriots, and in the people’s expectations of a glorious future.” The Onufs write that since secessionists espoused the vision of a politically and economically independent South, achieving a southern

¹⁷ Wynne, *Mississippi’s Civil War*, 181-195; Mary Bobbitt Townsend, *Yankee Warhorse: A Biography of Major General Peter Osterhaus* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2010), 190-198.

¹⁸ James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 1-5.

nation “depended on domesticating national power” by “aligning economy and society with a legitimate government capable of vindicating Southern independence on the battlefield.”¹⁹

For ardent Confederates, protective nationalism was both a means to achieving independence and an end in itself. Certainly, the Confederacy was a full-fledged state, defined by Ernest Gellner as “the institution or set of institutions specifically concerned with the enforcement of order,” which exist “where specialized order-enforcing agencies, such as police forces and courts, have separated out from the rest of social life.” States maintain order by exerting power over their citizens through the imposition and collection of taxes, establishing, and therefore constraining, citizens’ rights and duties towards the state and each other, and by categorizing citizens on the basis of age, sex, religion, productivity, and health status, a power that only increased within states during the twentieth century. The Confederacy possessed and acted on all of these powers, solidifying its status as a state, but there was much debate within its borders over whether or not it was a nation, what Gellner terms “the artifacts of men’s convictions and loyalties and solidarities” which coalesce into a shared culture by way of “a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating.”²⁰ For protective nationalists, the construction of the Confederate state was merely the means by which they would create a nation that united southerners’ convictions and loyalties not through laws, but through an intangible shared culture.

To make the Confederate nation a reality, to forge a nation whose life transcended the lives of its citizens, they melded citizens’ interests with the nation’s interests, viewing them as cogs moving the gears of the greater national machine. They advocated a total devotion to the

¹⁹ Nicholas and Peter Onuf, *Nations, Markets and War: Modern History and the American Civil War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 282, 318, 325.

²⁰ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 4, 6; Montserrat Guibernau, *Nationalisms: The Nation-State and Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 58.

state by its component parts through the mustering of all human and material resources to work towards the singular goal of achieving Confederate economic, social, and cultural independence. This idea in part stemmed from the French republican writer Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès, who emphasized that a nation's human parts played a role in maintaining the health of the national body, an idea that became a core feature of modern nationalism. As Gellner notes, categories of persons in any given territory become a nation "if and when the members of the category firmly recognize certain natural rights and duties to each other in virtue of their shared membership in it" as "mutually substitutable atomized individuals."²¹ For Confederate nationalists, southerners' "rights and duties" entailed total dedication to the virtuous goal of Confederate independence.

Achieving total dedication to the cause meant making the protective nationalist ideal a reality through concrete actions, which involved Mississippians making material sacrifices for the greater national good. The Confederacy's birth in war only further legitimized the need for sacrifice in the eyes of protective nationalists. As Quigley observes, throughout the modern world, war has been a force for transforming the relationships between nation-states and their citizens. The demands of wartime mobilization, he writes, "have caused national governments to demand even greater commitment from their citizens – in the form of money, loyalty, and life." In the Confederacy, war-induced suffering "helped define Confederates' conceptions of national responsibility" by injecting the "ideal of national sacrifice" into all aspects of daily life.²² Thus, planters should prioritize staples over commercial crops to feed the army and civilians. Civilians should wear homespun rather than purchase clothing and other goods from the North because doing so funded the Union war machine and undermined Confederate economic self-sufficiency. Merchants should renounce profits and instead sell to the government and civilians for fixed

²¹ Onuf and Onuf, *Nations, Markets and War*, 311, 331, 144-149; Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 6-7, 56.

²² Quigley, *Shifting Grounds*, 173, 200, 213.

prices in order to keep the war effort going. Southerners must use only Confederate legal tender in order to maintain the national currency's value, and they should never swear the Union Oath of Allegiance. In the most solemn of sacrifices, Confederate soldiers had to be willing to die for their country's independence. In a very real sense, total dedication to the cause meant what Jefferson Davis said that it meant: that Mississippians should be "willing to sacrifice everything, even their lives, to the goal of Confederate independence."²³

When the Union army brought war directly to the state in 1862, however, it also brought with it all of the hardships that Davis noted Mississippi had not yet faced. In light of wartime circumstances, many Confederate civilian and military authorities believed that Mississippians' wavered in their dedication to the Confederacy, and in response, they expanded the state's police powers in order to enforce loyalty to the cause. The United States government also desired a total commitment to its cause, and similarly expanded its state apparatuses to enforce it. These wartime attempts to weld the people to the nation, often through coercive means like conscription and arrest, have led historians to conclude that the Civil War effectively created the modern American nation-state.²⁴ Scholars view the Confederate state as especially strong. Stephanie McCurry, for example, writes that "in terms of central state structure and policies, and especially the mobilization of national material and human resources, the C.S.A. was far more statist and modern than their counterpart in the Union."²⁵

²³ Jefferson Davis, Speech at Jackson, Mississippi, December 26, 1862, in Crist, et al. eds., *Papers of Jefferson Davis*, Vol. 8, 567.

²⁴ For studies that argue that the Civil War created the modern American nation-state, see Emory Thomas, *The Confederacy as a Revolutionary Experience* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971); Richard Franklin Bensel, *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859-1877* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Onuf and Onuf, *Nations, Markets and War*; Melinda Lawson, *Patriot Fires: Forging a New American Nationalism in the Civil War North* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002); Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010); David Goldfield, *America Aflame: How the Civil War Created a Nation* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2011).

²⁵ McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*, 153.

Although it may have been the case that in the Confederacy, “the state was not simply out there, it was inside every household,” that it achieved the capacity to maintain a nearly ubiquitous presence did not mean that it succeeded in the goal that legitimized such omnipresence.²⁶ Citing sociologist Michael Mann, William Novak lists two forms of state power. The first, despotic power, “refers to the organizational capacity of state elites to rule unchecked by other centers of power or by civil society.” The second, infrastructural power, is “the positive capacity of the state to ‘penetrate civil society’ and implement policies throughout a given territory.” Novak argues that although the despotic power of the United States has been historically very limited, its infrastructural power, evidenced in the major roles the national and state governments’ have played in land acquisition, creating public infrastructure, building up national defense, the increased regulation of economic activity, and the increased ability to police its citizenry, has always been strong, rendering untenable claims of a “weak” American state. Civil War historians have reached similar conclusions regarding the wartime Confederate state, arguing that its infrastructural capacity allowed it to be “inside every household.” Such a conclusion, however, does not distinguish means from ends. Although the Confederacy did have an impressive infrastructural capacity, historians should ask what goals motivated such an expansion of state powers, and they should further ask whether such an expansion allowed the state to achieve its goals.²⁷

The justification for the expanded state was to enforce national loyalty, because only a fully-dedicated population willing to sacrifice everything to the cause could win a war that, in the minds of protective nationalists, required such a total sacrifice. As fire-eating Mississippi senator Albert Gallatin Brown stated before congress in 1863, “when the States, composing this

²⁶ McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*, 156.

²⁷ William J. Novak, “The Myth of the ‘Weak’ American State,” *American Historical Review* 113 (June 2008): 763.

Confederacy, delegated to this central government the exclusive right and power to make war, they necessarily gave with it all the rights and powers incidentally necessary to make the war grant efficient and effective.”²⁸ For the Confederate government, enforcement of total national loyalty was both the means and the end. The government’s clear end goal was to win the war, and by extension, independence. But to do this, the population needed to be totally loyal, and the only way to do this was to enforce allegiance. For protective nationalists like Brown, enforcing allegiance necessitated an expansion of the state’s police powers in order to make its war-making capacity “efficient and effective.” In Mississippi, however, the influence of citizens’ multiple loyalties stymied the Confederate state’s attempts to enforce total loyalty in its subjects. The state’s failure in this attempt revealed that, in a crucial sense, the strong infrastructural nation state was not that strong, because it could not achieve the paramount goal of loyalty enforcement that was the very justification for its expanded powers.

This study, then, is less concerned with the war’s outcome than by the process by which it unfolded. Rather than attempt to discern why the Confederacy lost the war, it instead emphasizes what the experiences of its participants reveal about the influence of the nation-state in the era of nationalism that was the nineteenth century, and how this influence shaped the development of the twentieth century American state.²⁹ It argues that in order to better understand how the Civil War impacted those who experienced it, as well to gain a clearer picture of how the war shaped the trajectory of American history, historians would do well to reject nineteenth century nationalists’ claims that nationalism is “the supreme form of legal

²⁸ Albert Gallatin Brown, December 24, 1863, “State of the Country Speech in the Confederate Senate,” *Documenting the American South*. Electronic Edition. Southern Historical Collection. University Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999 <http://docsouth.unc.edu/impls/cotton/cotton.html>. (Accessed September 24, 2009).

²⁹ For studies that cast the Civil War as fitting within the greater nineteenth-century era of nationalist revolutions, see Fleche, *The Revolution of 1861*, and Quigley, *Shifting Grounds*.

allegiance and cultural identity in the modern world.” Scholars have tacitly assumed that nationalism was the paramount motivator of people during the Civil War, even when they highlight the complicated influence of other loyalties on human behavior. This stance is, in part, informed by hindsight – the knowledge that the war was a monumental historical event with profound future implications. Therefore, those who lived through it must have weighed their daily behavior according to its implications for one side or the other. Americans North and South were well-aware of the war’s historical significance, but they also lived it on a day-to-day basis. Unsure of it how it would ultimately progress and end, they could not necessarily conceive of how their every thought and action could be used to assess the war’s ultimate meaning. For them, even the lived experience of wartime did not color all of their actions with nationalist hues, as multiple loyalties that were separate from nationalism continued to guide their behavior. Understanding the influence of loyalty layers allows for a more skeptical approach to nineteenth century claims of nationalist supremacy which, in turn, explains the wartime nation-state’s limited ability to command total allegiance from its citizens.

Gaining a better understanding of nationalism’s influence, or lack thereof, on Mississippians specifically and southerners in general during the Civil War also allows historians to make better sense of the often perplexing mix of change and continuity that defined the war and its long, contentious aftermath. This approach to nationalism explains why the war created two political nation-states but could not sever established socio-economic ties. It makes sense of how it spawned new national armies whose members were still susceptible to the influence of localized allegiances. Finally, an approach that considers nationalism as one among many co-existing loyalties further illuminates why the war could abolish slavery, but could not extinguish

the racial conflict that continued to rage in its aftermath and eventually shaped the course of Reconstruction.

Each chapter highlights a different way that Mississippians' multiple loyalties complicated protective nationalists' attempts to foster and enforce total allegiance to the Confederacy during the Civil War. Chapter 1 focuses on Mississippians' reaction to Abraham Lincoln's election and the idea of protective nationalism that fuelled the state's enthusiastic mobilization for war in 1860 and 1861. Promoted by fire-eating leaders like Senator Albert Gallatin Brown and Governor John Pettus, a pro-secession atmosphere gripped the populace and rendered treasonous any kind of suspected dissent. Rather than argue that Mississippians were overwhelmingly supportive of secession and the Confederacy, this chapter contends that secession and the prospect of war with the North created a heightened patriotic environment that made many Mississippians temporarily embrace protective nationalism. Its influence on Mississippians, however, was ultimately fleeting: as war became reality, other loyalties re-asserted their influence alongside a nationalism that could not totally overtake them.

Looking at the years 1862-1865, Chapter 2 explores how the war and Union occupation led Mississippians to act on multiple loyalties even as Confederate partisans in both the military, and the state and federal governments, used nationalist language to judge people's behavior, potentially turning everyday actions into tests of an individual's allegiance to one side or the other. The chapter examines situations such as swearing the Union oath, life under Union military rule, and the conflict between securing personal property and donating it to the Confederate war effort, especially among planters. Confederate authorities further complicated civilians' relationship to Union occupiers by accusing citizens of treason and espionage. These

day-to-day conflicts over national allegiance show that the ideals of protective nationalism proved difficult to enforce on the ground, where multiple loyalties also drove peoples' behavior.

Chapter 3 focuses on the contraband trade between Mississippians and the Union army from 1862-1865 and the effect that it had on conceptions of national loyalty. Initially, the Confederate government banned trade with the North, claiming that it stifled southern economic independence. Yet, when key southern commercial cities like Memphis and Vicksburg fell to the Union, Mississippians immediately began exchanging cotton and other goods at Union lines for manufactured articles and raw commodities. Confederate civil and military authorities debated amongst themselves over whether the trade was treasonous and to be squelched, or whether it could be beneficial by supplying Mississippians with much-needed goods. Far from simply denoting treason or loyalty, the contraband trade demonstrated how multiple allegiances informed Mississippians behavior, and it also revealed a crucial thread of continuity during the Civil War through the maintaining of long-established market ties between North and South.

Chapter 4 examines deserters and absentees who unleashed waves of crime and violence in Mississippi, and soldiers and civilians who requested military exemptions, claiming they could better serve the Confederacy at home than in the army. Both situations reveal that Mississippians distinguished home from nation. Despite scholarly claims that Confederates deserted to protect hearth and home, this chapter connects desertion to banditry that harked back to the Revolutionary War, when wartime chaos drove detached military units to commit criminal acts. The collapse of Mississippi's social order spurred Confederate deserters to engage in opportunistic collective violence. Pre-war group loyalties influenced deserters during the conflict and sustained their destructive behavior, but the war also created new gang loyalties, which expanded outside of partisan boxes. Besides desertion, soldiers also demonstrated the continued

importance of pre-war attachments through shirking, absenteeism and exemptions, actions which civilians encouraged and supported, thereby distinguishing the local from the national.

Differing notions of loyalty among slaves and slaveholders from 1860-1865 are the subject of Chapter 5. This chapter highlights how the internal war between Mississippi slaves and slaveholders, which had simmered during the antebellum era, was escalated by the Union army's arrival in the state in 1862. Slaveholders insisted that their slaves only express an unconditional servile loyalty to their masters, which was the basis of the master-slave relationship. Slaves, however, rejected this forced servility and embraced multiple conceptions of freedom by acting on loyalties to self, family, neighborhood, and nation that they had forged while in bondage, and which enabled them to envision what constituted freedom as a lived experience during and after the war. As the Union army marched through the state, many slaves ran to their lines, demonstrating how freedom for them meant physical separation from their masters. Others remained on their plantations and farms, where they contested white authority by refusing to work, claiming white-dominated spaces for themselves, and in some cases, attacking their owners. Still other slaves rejected slaveholders' power by actively spying for and fighting for the Union. Although blacks shared a collective desire to escape from the forced servility of white mastery, once emancipated they embraced different views that associated with freedom with land ownership, property rights, and wage labor. In these cases, their different antebellum experiences as slaves shaped their visions of what constituted post-war freedom. In response to slaves' mass rejection of white authority, slaveholders intensified their attempts to hold blacks in bondage. They continued to insist that African Americans could only be loyal to the white master class, and even after the war ended, they vowed to continue to enforce black servility.

The Epilogue concludes the study by discussing Mississippi's immediate post-war period of mid to late 1865, focusing on the Christmas rebellion of that year in order to demonstrate how white Mississippians continued their attempts to uphold the racial hierarchy and how blacks continued to reject white dominance, a struggle which continued to dominate Mississippi's socio-political landscape through Reconstruction and beyond. As Union victory became associated with the specter of equal rights for African-Americans, white Mississippians continually acted on racial loyalties, fed by the pre-war desire to maintain local control of freed blacks. In Mississippi, Union forces won the war but could not suppress this loyalty, which exerted a powerful influence over defeated Confederate soldiers and southern civilians.

This study begins with the fever of secession that spread across Mississippi in the aftermath of Abraham Lincoln's election in November, 1860. Many in the state called for the formation of a new, independent southern Confederacy that would fulfill the dreams of the American Founding Fathers, and take its rightful place among the great powers in world history. The task of building such a nation amidst a civil war would have greater implications not only for Mississippi, but for the broader course of American history.

Chapter One: “It Seems to me a Contest of Passion, not Reason:” Secession, War and the Roots of Protective Nationalism

In December 1860, West Point, Mississippi resident Roxana Gerdine told her sister, Emily, about the excitement regarding her state’s possible withdrawal from the Union. “The people in this section of country are all of one idea. Secession is the talk in the streets, houses, pulpits, and everywhere, and I have not the least doubt but the time will do it,” she wrote. By May of 1861, Mississippi Governor John Pettus requested that President Jefferson Davis send Federal payments to fund Mississippi troops’ demand for camp supplies, which had already drained the state’s treasury. “Suffice it to say,” Pettus wrote, “all Mississippi is in a fever to get to the field, and hail an order to march as the greatest favor you can bestow on them, and if you take the field they could not be restrained.”¹ Both Gerdine, a civilian, and Pettus, a state official, recognized how Mississippians were swept up in a protective nationalist atmosphere, fostered by secession and war, which advocated a total collective devotion of resources and energy towards the new Confederacy’s bid for independence from the Union. This all-consuming nationalism left little space for other loyalties, and its goal of molding citizens into wholly dedicated patriots defined Mississippi’s Civil War.

This chapter focuses on Mississippians’ reaction to Abraham Lincoln’s election and how the idea of protective nationalism fuelled the state’s enthusiastic mobilization for war from 1860 to early 1862. Promoted by fire-eaters like Albert Gallatin Brown and John Pettus, a pro-secession atmosphere gripped the populace and equated dissent from secession with treason.

¹ Roxana Chapin Gerdine to Emily McKinstry Chapin, December 16, 1860, Roxana Chapin Gerdine Collection, Digital Collections, Civil War Archive, J.D. Williams Library, University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi http://clio.lib.olemiss.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/civil_war&CISOPTR=1654&REC=12 (Accessed December 5, 2011. Hereafter cited as UMDC); United States War Department, comp., *The War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 130 vols. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), ser. 4, vol. 1, pg. 277 (hereafter cited as *OR*).

Residents who questioned the economic and political wisdom of immediate secession found themselves in the minority. Voting booths became sites of pro-secessionist intimidation, and secessionist vigilance committees patrolled counties intimidating Unionists and conservatives. Mississippians, however, were not so much overwhelmingly supportive of secession and the Confederacy as they were swept up in a heightened nationalist atmosphere. Independence and the prospect of war led them to temporarily embrace a new national loyalty above other allegiances, especially when the enemy army had yet to cross onto Mississippi soil and the deprivations of war had yet to be experienced. Even before hostilities broke out, the prospect of civil war demanded this new and total dedication to the state, the ideal of which, however unrealistic, became a hallmark of modern American wars. This nationalist fervor, however, did not last. By mid-1862 the Union army had invaded and war became a reality. In light of war-induced hardships, micro loyalties re-asserted their influence. Mississippians continued to act on pre-war attachments that were often unrelated to national loyalties, but which protective nationalist civilians and government officials, who wanted to impose on the public an unrealistic ideal of total national devotion to the cause, interpreted as treasonous behavior.

Admitted to the Union as a slave state in 1817, Mississippi's frontier beginnings spawned a political culture characterized by a preference for individual independence, upholding personal honor within tight-knit communities, and reactionary stances towards outside threats. Following the United States' southwestern victories during the War of 1812 and the guaranteed free navigation of the lower Mississippi River, a flood of new migrants came to the territory. Most of the population centered in the southwestern Natchez District along the Mississippi River, where wealthy planters dominated state politics and expanded their trade connections with the north. The acquisition of millions of acres of Indian lands in the 1820s through the 1830s added

thousands more migrants from other southern states and the Atlantic seaboard. These migrants settled in newly-formed counties throughout the state, and brought with them the Jeffersonian ideal of the independent yeoman. Responding to this shift in population, in 1832 the state adopted a more democratic constitution, embracing the Jacksonian concept of universal white male suffrage, even as planters continued to control state politics. At the same time, the Second Party System took hold on the heels of rapid immigration and economic development. The large population of small farmers and laborers continued to identify as Jacksonian Democrats, while many bankers, merchants, and planters sided with the Whig Party, supporting Henry Clay's American System of Federally-subsidized internal improvements, a national bank, and the promotion of American industry.²

Slavery was woven into the fabric of Mississippi's foundation as a state. Indeed, the territory out of which the state emerged had been essentially donated to planters through the promotion of the Jeffersonian Land System, which encouraged the rapid cultivation of western lands into commercial agricultural property tilled by virtuous yeomen. The Land Ordinance of 1785, however, set the stage for the transformation of the Deep South into a region dominated by slaveholding planters. Enacted by the Continental Congress, the ordinance imposed a rectangular survey of valuable western lands to be divided for purchase and settlement by private citizens. By 1812, the Federal government had sold nearly a half a million acres of public land in the Mississippi Territory, mostly to wealthy planters who could afford to place money on land before actual settlement. Thus, as Adam Rothman writes, the Public Land System "facilitated the spread of the plantation system in the Deep South just as a burgeoning cotton economy increased

² Westley F. Busbee Jr., *Mississippi: A History* (Wheeling, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, 2005), 89-90; Christopher J. Olsen, *Political Culture and Secession in Mississippi: Masculinity, Honor, and the Antiparty Tradition, 1830-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 17; Ben Wynne, *Mississippi's Civil War: A Narrative History* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2006), 3-7.

the value of the land and the profits to be earned from slave labor.” At Mississippi’s 1817 Constitutional Convention, wealthy representatives from the established plantation districts held sway over the proceedings, enacting a state constitution that firmly protected slavery, a measure upheld by the more democratizing Constitution of 1832. Cotton emerged as Mississippi’s major crop by the early nineteenth century, and its growth and influence in turn increased white farmers’ reliance on slave labor to harvest the valuable crop.³

Slavery became intimately entwined within state politics, as politicians asserted the right to own slaves as central to their state’s economic and social fabric. Within the general consensus of pro-slavery politics emerged a vocal minority of extreme state’s rights proponents, or fire-eaters. These radicals flexed their political muscles during the Nullification Crisis of 1832-1833, during which South Carolina’s political leaders protested several national tariffs that they believed were excessive. Led by U.S. Senator John C. Calhoun, South Carolina’s legislature claimed the right to nullify any federal law it deemed unconstitutional or harmful to the state’s interests. Should the federal government not accept this stance, Calhoun argued that a state had the right to secede from the Union. Even as many Mississippians sympathized with Calhoun’s position, they admired president Andrew Jackson, who opposed nullification, as a rugged frontiersman who had cleared the state’s Indian lands for white settlement and stood for the common man’s democracy. Thus, Mississippi, along with the rest of the South, backed the federal government over South Carolina, but a loud minority within Mississippi politics supported Calhoun, denouncing the tariff as an affront to southern interests and asserting the inalienable right of secession. These Mississippi nullifiers, led by two-term governor and states’

³ Adam Rothman, *Slave Country: American Expansion and the Origins of the Deep South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 38-45, 174, quote on 45; Busbee Jr., *Mississippi: A History*, 74, 85.

rights ideologue, John Quitman, specialized in using slavery as a wedge issue, claiming that any outside influences threatened the South's peculiar institution.⁴

The supposed threats to slavery proved an effective political tool for states' rights radicals to unite white Mississippians through a common interest. Liberty in the antebellum South was built on slavery through the concept of "herrenvolk democracy," which held that despite their inequality in property and status, all white men were equal in their shared domination over blacks. This concept offered a clear contrast between the free and un-free, as slaveholding and non-slaveholding whites alike measured their liberty against the millions of slaves that surrounded them. Poor and Yeomen whites recognized a common kinship with Mississippi's planters and feared competing with blacks for land and labor in the event of slavery's abolition. Thus, herrenvolk democracy made white Mississippians susceptible to "us vs. them" styles of political demagoguery. By 1850, Mississippi had more enslaved blacks than it did whites, an imbalance that remained on the eve of the Civil War. State's rights radicals exploited the fear of slavery's imperiled status to rally Mississippians around their goal of securing protection for, and expansion of, the institution even if doing so meant disunion.⁵

Mississippi first flirted with secession in 1850, following U.S. victory in the Mexican War. In 1846, Pennsylvania congressman David Wilmot introduced an amendment to an appropriations bill banning slavery from territories won from Mexico. Mississippi governor Joseph Matthews labeled the so-called Wilmot Proviso, and any other attempts to ban slavery from new states or territories, as unconstitutional and possible grounds for secession. The

⁴ Busbee Jr., *Mississippi: A History*, 90-91; Wynne, *Mississippi's Civil War*, 6-9. All factions in southern politics used slavery as a political wedge issue, though the nullifiers exploited it to an exceptional degree. See William J. Cooper, *The South and the Politics of Slavery, 1828-1856* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978).

⁵ William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion. Vol. II, Secessionists Triumphant, 1854-1861* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 16; William J. Cooper Jr., *Liberty and Slavery: Southern Politics to 1860* (1983, Repr., Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2000), 38, 179; In 1850, Mississippi's free population totaled 295,718 (48.8 percent) to a slave population of 309,874 (51.2 percent). In 1860, the free population was 353,899 (44.8 percent) compared to 436,631 (55.2) enslaved, Wynne, *Mississippi's Civil War*, 13.

Wilmot Proviso never became law, but in conjunction with the Compromise of 1850, which admitted California to the Union as a free state, it emboldened southern state's rights extremists like Calhoun, who called for a united southern resistance to northern threats to slavery's expansion. In May 1849, the Mississippi legislature responded to Calhoun's call by sending delegates to a slave-state convention in Nashville, Tennessee, held in June 1850, to frame a united response to northern belligerence. In the meantime, sectional issues dominated Mississippi's 1849 elections: state's rights Democrat John Quitman sailed to the governorship, replacing the retiring Matthews, and Democrats won control of both state houses. The new legislature enacted resolutions opposing congressional antislavery bills and appropriated \$200,000 for additional domestic defense. When the Nashville Convention convened in June 1850, however, moderates led by Mississippi judge William Sharkey outnumbered fire-eaters and rejected secession. Following the Nashville decision, Quitman organized a state convention to vote on secession in the fall of 1851, only to be defeated by a Unionist coalition led by Democratic U.S. Senator Henry Foote. When Quitman withdrew from the gubernatorial race, state's rights Democrats replaced him with Jefferson Davis, also a federal senator, who lost to Foote by a slim margin. Unionists also won control of the state legislatures. In November, at the request of Governor-elect Foote, the state convention rejected calls for secession.⁶

Despite the Unionist victory in the 1850 secession crisis, the events of the decade continued to fuel Mississippi fire-eaters' claims that abolitionist conspirators were working tirelessly to eradicate slavery. James Buchanan's narrow victory in the 1856 presidential election was little solace to radicals who viewed the new Republican Party's strong performance as further evidence of slavery's imperiled status in the old Union. Mississippi's radicals also

⁶ Busbee Jr., *Mississippi: A History*, 120-125; Bradley G. Bond, *Political Culture in the Nineteenth Century South: Mississippi, 1830-1900* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 104-108.

pointed to the bloody clashes between pro and anti-slavery forces in Kansas between 1854 and 1858 as proof of the supposed determination of abolitionists to destroy the institution with either the saber or the ballot. In 1859, John Brown, one of the anti-slavery Kansas fighters, raided Harper's Ferry, Virginia in an attempt to incite a slave insurrection. His raid terrified whites across the South, helped Mississippi's states' rights Democrats consolidate their hold on the state party, and swept uncompromising fire eater John Pettus to the governorship.⁷

Mississippi entered 1860 steeped in a climate of fear and paranoia. With Pettus' full support, State's Rights Democrats rallied behind John Breckenridge, riling up large crowds by stoking fears of abolitionist infiltration, slave insurrection conspiracies, and the supposed destruction of southern culture that would follow Black Republican rule. These radicals embraced the ideological underpinnings of what soon became Confederate protective nationalism. They insisted on total devotion to one party or group as the vehicle for promoting the South's perceived best interests, and they fostered fear, intimidation and group-think to achieve and enforce this goal. The vehicle shifted rapidly, transitioning from the southern wing of the Democratic Party, which was staunchly pro-slavery, to the fire-eaters, who were pro-slavery and secessionists, to finally the new southern Confederacy, but the goal of uniting all Mississippians indefatigably behind supposed southern interests remained the same.⁸

Breckinridge supporters, and then, secessionists, relied on self-organized Minute Men and vigilance committees that traversed the state pressuring citizens, often through threats of violence, to vote for the Democracy's candidate and then to support immediate secession. In September 1860, while canvassing for Breckinridge in Corinth, Mississippi, Jefferson Davis

⁷ Percy Lee Rainwater, *Mississippi: Storm Center of Secession, 1856-1861* (Baton Rouge, LA: Otto Claitor, 1938), 42-47; Wynne, *Mississippi's Civil War*, 15-20.

⁸ William L. Barney, *The Secessionist Impulse: Alabama and Mississippi in 1860* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1974), 153, 174-177.

described what this type of total devotion to the party line meant for ordinary citizens. When a spectator inquired if a state's secession rendered treasonous any continued fealty to the Union, Davis answered that "the neck of the author of such an inquiry was in danger of hemp," and that respecting federal law after secession would be "treason against the sovereignty to whom he owned his first allegiance." Davis further reminded the questioner that the Democratic Party creed espoused "the right of a State to judge in the last resort of its wrongs and the remedies to be applied," and those who disagreed not only repudiated that creed but also the very notion of state sovereignty.⁹ Although the vehicle soon shifted from the Democratic Party to the Confederacy, Davis nonetheless described what eventually became the *modus operandi* of protective nationalism: a total dedication to the state and by extension its goals, to be authoritatively enforced if necessary. This vision of national loyalty left no room for other allegiances and aimed to squelch any perceived dissent.

Breckenridge won Mississippi handily, but Lincoln's victory in the 1860 presidential election was the last straw for the fire eaters, who called for the immediate withdrawal of the state from the Union. "If we falter now," Pettus warned the state legislature, "we and our sons must pay the penalty in future years, of bloody, if not fruitless efforts to retrieve the fallen fortunes of the state," which would be "cursed with Black Republican politics and free negro morals." The legislature printed over ten-thousand copies of Pettus' address and distributed them throughout the state. Pettus and other radicals successfully infused a sense of urgency into the populace, and Mississippians felt in the atmosphere the crackling excitement of the birth of a new nation. The *Daily Evening Citizen* noted "a general commotion throughout the land," and

⁹ *Semi-Weekly Mississippian* (Jackson, MS), October 5, 1860, quoted in Lynda Laswell Crist, Mary Seaton Dix, eds., *The Papers of Jefferson Davis, Vol. 6, 1856-1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 364-366.

told citizens that “we of Mississippi have a great...state to defend, and now is the time to defend it...a disruption of the Union is inevitable.” Madison County resident Edward Terry wrote his sister that “there has been and is still a great deal of excitement in this part of the country on count of the election of Lincoln,” he wrote, “I voted for Breckinridge & am a strong disunionist. There is no doubt but Mississippi will go out of the Union & I hope she may.” Thomas Baily of Columbus told his mother in North Carolina, “we are in the midst of great excitement – the State will secede and unless you all go with us we will belong to different nations in a short time.” Greenville, Mississippi resident William Nugent informed his wife that there was “a decided tendency to Secession everywhere. Almost everyone I meet has come to the determination to vindicate the rights of our outraged section if need be at the point of bayonet.” From Lauderdale County, A.F. Burton told his North Carolina relatives that “the secession movement is all the go in this country...separate state secession is the only mode.” For many Mississippians, Lincoln’s election signaled the beginning of an exciting, if uncertain new era of independence. They felt in the political atmosphere the thrill that came from living in a clearly historical moment.¹⁰

Just as some Mississippians caught secession fever, however, others questioned the wisdom of such excitement. Natchez planter George Sargent despaired that “a very large number in even this, the most conservative county in the state advocate immediate, unconditional secession.” Sargent voted for John Bell in the presidential election and was a conditional unionist

¹⁰John J. Pettus, Address to the State Legislature, Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Mississippi, Called Session, November, 1860, in *Mississippi in the Confederacy: As They Saw It, Vols. 1 and 2*, ed. John K. Bettersworth (1961, Repr., New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1970), 22; “Nullification,” *Daily Evening Citizen* (Vicksburg, MS), December 12, 1860; Edward Terry to Sister, December 15, 1860, Bullock and Hamilton Family Papers, 1757-1971, folder 32, 00101, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (hereafter cited as SHC); Thomas Baily to Mother, November 18, 1860, John Lancaster Baily Papers, 1785-1874, folder 11, 00039, Ibid; William L. Nugent to Nellie Smith Nugent, November 26, 1860, in William M. Cash and Lucy Somerville Howorth, Eds., *My Dear Nellie: The Civil War Letters of William L. Nugent to Eleanor Smith Nugent* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1977), 136-39; A.F. Burton to Family, January 14, 1861, Thomas B. Burton Papers, 1809-1921, fol. 1, 04217-z, SHC.

who feared that rushing to secession would lead to bloodshed and chaos. “As for this state there is no hope for moderation on her part,” he wrote, “we the moderate try to hold her back but one might as well with a twine string toy [try] to hold an enraged elephant.” He blamed political radicals for prioritizing passion over reasoned judgment. “Politicians have aroused the worst passions of the human beast at both ends of the land,” he wrote, “the people naturally are slow of comprehension, and the leaders are taking care not to give them time for reflection.” Washington County resident L.L. Walton also chastised rash politicians. “The young men of the present day deem themselves wiser than our forefathers; our proud country is now disgraced,” he wrote, “party feelings & politics have done this.” Jackson, Mississippi native Ruffin Thomson also criticized the mass excitement and failure of political moderation. “I suppose the people know what they are doing,” he told his father, “but it seems to me as if the masses were half mad everywhere, and no body of persons can act with prudence and discretion when laboring under intense excitement.” “Those virtues are needed now more than ever before,” he warned, “it seems to me a contest of passion, not reason.”¹¹ Thomson and other Mississippians thought that the pro-secessionist atmosphere thrived on inflamed passions, while relegating reasonable discussion to the sidelines.

The abandonment of moderation and reason, some cautious Mississippians argued, fueled bloodlust and made war imminent. A letter to the editor of the conservative *Daily Vicksburg Whig* described a speech by Attorney General Thomas Wharton, a “Disunionist to the bloody end,” as epitomizing secessionists’ foolish rush into war. “He unsheathed his sword, threw away

¹¹ George Washington Sargent to George Sargent, December 5, 1860, George Washington Sargent to George Sargent, December 15, 1860, George Washington Sargent to William Duncan, December 30, 1860, all in George Washington Sargent Papers, 1840-1900, folder 11, volume 11, 04025, SHC; L.L. Walton to Granddaughter, November 21, 1860, James L. Alcorn and Family Papers, folder 1, #Z/0317.00, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi (hereafter cited as MDAH); Ruffin Thomson to William H. Thomson, Undated, 1861, Ruffin Thomson Papers, folder 3, 03315, SHC.

the scabbard and like the panting of a war steed...he snuffed the smell of battle afar off and was eager for the fray.” “Did it enter the hearts of the good law-abiding Democrats of Mississippi when they cast their votes, that they would have to...leave all that claimed their personal protection?” the writer asked, noting that war would leave fields untilled and family members at the mercy of slaves. A few days later the *Whig* reported on a pro-secession rally in Jackson at which fire-eating senator Albert Gallatin Brown proclaimed the Union “dead” and “in a process of mortification.” The editorial decried Brown and other “would-be leaders of the public sentiment,” as advocates of “extreme measures” who were driven by “fanaticism.” Mississippians skeptical of hastily embracing immediate secession believed that fire-eaters were driven by passion over reason, and that their feverish desire for independence had blinded them to the potentially dire consequences of such an action.¹²

In the midst of this heated environment, the state legislature called for a secession convention to be held in January 1861, with delegates to be elected from each county according to the number of representatives it had in the lower state legislature. Although the candidates did not run on uniform platforms, they generally cast themselves as either secessionists or cooperationists. These titles were somewhat misleading, however, since both groups generally believed in the constitutional right of secession. Therefore, the real debate centered not on *if*, but *when* and *how*, the state should secede. Secessionists favored immediate, separate state separation with no prerequisite agreement between other states on the matter. Cooperationists were conditional Unionists who believed that secession should happen only in conjunction with other southern states, since they faced a uniform threat. They argued that Lincoln’s election was not in itself grounds for secession, and that all alternatives within the Union should first be

¹² “Correspondence of the Whig,” *Daily Vicksburg Whig* (Vicksburg, MS), November 24, 1860; “Disunion Carnival at Jackson,” *Ibid*, November 28, 1860, in Percy Lee Rainwater Collection, 1929-1969, box 1, folder 18, Z/1112.000/S, MDAH.

exhausted. Proponents of both views canvassed the state. Prominent conservatives like planter/politician James Lusk Alcorn and attorney William Sharkey campaigned for the preservation of the Union under the cooperationist banner, but their efforts met with little enthusiasm. “I am beginning to believe this ‘Co operation Party’ a sham & that our only salvation is in separate-state action & then cooperation,” wrote Vicksburg resident T.W. Compton.¹³ Certainly, the fire-eaters advocated the more succinct and proactive message: secession versus the Cooperationists’ indeterminate delay. They also propelled their campaign in the state with an intense combination of fear-stoking urgency and peer pressure in an effort to garner total dedication to “southern interests” from the populace.

Those interests were, of course, slavery. The central goal of the southern Democratic Party and then secessionists was securing protection for slavery in the South. Conditional Unionists shared this goal, but claimed that slavery was still safer in the Union. Lincoln, they noted, vowed to not interfere with the institution in states where it already existed. The secessionists, then, held the more radical stance, and to advance it they relied on time-tested methods of intimidation. Rooting out real and imagined threats to slavery by keeping slaves, and wayward whites who might question the institution, in line had long been a focus of the Deep South’s violence-prone political and social landscape. Southern mob violence was a tool for enforcing the ideal of mastery, the by-product of a slave society which dictated that whites who owned slaves held absolute authority over them at the most personal, domestic level. Because southern mastery stemmed from a racial hierarchy, it also presupposed that each and every

¹³ Wynne, *Mississippi’s Civil War*, 24-26; Barney, *The Secessionist Impulse*, 198-201; T.W. Compton to Alonzo Snyder, December 23, 1860, Alonzo Snyder Papers, Box 11, Folder 44, Mss. 655, *Civil War: Context and Conflict*, Digital Collections, Louisiana State University Special Collections, Louisiana State University Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
<http://www.louisianadigitallibrary.org/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/p15140coll10&CISOPTR=646>
(Accessed December 20, 2011. Hereafter cited as *Civil War: Context and Conflict*).

southern white, regardless of whether they personally owned slaves, nonetheless held the right to mastery over blacks through their shared white racial solidarity and thus, superiority. Southern mastery, then, gave one group of people total dominance over another, and so great was the need to uphold this dominance, that it sanctioned mastery's would-be enforcers with the right to attack and silence anyone, black or white, who might be critical of slavery and the racial hierarchy that bolstered it.¹⁴

Extralegal violence flowed out of the perceived need to stifle anyone who questioned the slave system, and by extension, the ideal of mastery upon which it rested, and was symptomatic of what William Freehling calls the "dictatorship" of herrenvolk democracy. Slaveholders could easily label any dissenting opinions incendiary. They accused poor whites, northerners, and foreigners believed to harbor anti-slavery feelings of inciting slave insurrection and threatening the southern social order. The planters' social influence within communities ensured that a steady supply of southern whites, slaveholding or not, were willing to physically defend the slave system against internal or external threats. Neighborhood slave patrols marauded to keep an eye on unruly slaves and hunt down runaways, and they also tried to root out whites suspected of aiding slave resistance. Thus, the cultural and institutional apparatuses through which to coerce and threaten perceived dissidents already existed in the South. In a natural extension of slave patrols, pro-secessionist vigilance committees intimidated all possible "incendiary" people who might thwart immediate secession and thereby threaten what disunionists considered the South's

¹⁴ David Grimsted, *American Mobbing, 1828-1861: Toward Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 100-113, see also 114-178; On urban mobbing during the secession crisis, see Frank Towers, *The Urban South and the Coming of the Civil War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004).

best interests. They created a hyper-nationalist atmosphere that swept up much of the state's population into an independence-minded fury.¹⁵

Mississippi in particular had a history of extralegal mob violence that coexisted with formal law. In the antebellum era the majority of the state consisted of countryside dotted with small towns and neighborhoods dominated by slaveholding planter families. Law-enforcement was available in the form of the sheriff or justice of the peace, but was usually a second resort in the fundamental exercise of justice that was disciplining slaves. The centrality of slavery within the state's social and economic structures drove Mississippians to embrace extralegal violence as a necessary means of upholding white mastery, a process that legitimized vigilantism as a means of intimidation and law enforcement.¹⁶

British-born storekeeper Betty Beaumont faced this intimidation in Woodville, Wilkinson County, Mississippi. Though she and her husband had no opinions either way on slavery, locals took their indifference as evidence of secret abolitionism. Especially among planters, Beaumont noted that "there seemed to be a strong prejudice...against those who did not own slaves...and a disposition to persecute and prosecute them on every occasion." She described the 1860 presidential election as "a season of special political excitement" during which "being foreigners and non-slaveholders, we were watched unceasingly; spies were placed on our most trivial moments," which made their "most innocent words and actions subject to misconstruction."

¹⁵ William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion: Secessionists at Bay, 1776-1854* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 99; Barney, *The Secessionist Impulse*, 177; On violence in the Antebellum South, see Clement Eaton, "Mob Violence in the Old South," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 29 (Dec., 1942): 351-370; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986) and Edward L. Ayers, *Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the Nineteenth-Century American South*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 9-33; On the connection between slave patrols and political intimidation in the South, see Sally E. Hadden, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 1-5, 167-200; Grimsted, *American Mobbing*, 85-135; John Hope Franklin, *The Militant South, 1800-1861* (1956, repr., Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 72-76 and Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence*, 154-187.

¹⁶ Christopher Waldrep, *Roots of Disorder: Race and Criminal Justice in the American South, 1817-80* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 14-15, 21-22.

Town officials forbade Beaumont from selling to or interacting with slaves without a permit. Other foreigners, northerners, and anyone else deemed suspicious endured insults and occasionally physical attacks. In one instance, a group of mechanics left their plantation jobs to escape the abuse.¹⁷

Similar incidents occurred around the state. In December 1860, a local committee charged Batesville resident Tom West with selling whiskey to slaves and sharing his “filthy abolitionist sentiment.” As punishment, they “administered to him a severe flagellation,” scrawled the words “nigger worshipper” alongside a north-pointing hand on his back, and shipped him north via an express company. The mob then ran two “suspicious” northern-born mechanics out of the county. That same month, the Newton County vigilance committee arrested long-time resident John Blissett, an English-born schoolteacher, on charges of “expressing abolition sentiments,” and “being too familiar with slaves.” The committee decided against hanging Blissett “in consideration of his infirmities” and instead drove him out of the state. In Jefferson County, locals arrested an Ohio-born “lady Abolitionist” teacher for supposedly meeting with slaves, “haranguing them upon Lincoln’s election” and “telling them that they would soon all be free.” The mob forced the women onto a river steamer headed north. In Coahoma County, along the Mississippi River, a Friar’s Point planter reported that eighty armed men waited along the river’s edge, determined to “sink every Abolition city boat that floated by the banks of the great Southern river.” While the planter noted that “a few, a very few, Union men may be seen in the cities of the State,” he assured that “the session excitement is intensely raging throughout the country parts.” Mississippi secessionists employed the tactics of the slave patrol as a means of identifying alleged abolitionists subversives. In doing so they operated

¹⁷ Betty Bentley Beaumont, *Twelve Years of my Life: An Autobiography* (Philadelphia: T.B. Peterson & Brothers, 1887), 105-106, 136, 157.

under what became the framework of Confederate protective nationalism: the requirement of total dedication to the advancement of southern interests. When those interests became, in fire-eaters' eyes, synonymous with secession, pro-secessionist vigilance committees and mobs enforced, often violently, allegiance to those interests.¹⁸

Vigilance Committees or Minute Men, as the labels were often used interchangeably, were private citizens who formed volunteer groups in order to squelch any perceived threats to "southern interests," namely, slavery. These groups played a major role in securing support for immediate secession in South Carolina. In addition to inflicting waves of pro-slavery vigilantism on accused abolitionists, the South Carolina Minute Men served as armed visual reminders of the supposed immanent northern threat on the South. Stephen West notes how they "contributed to a political climate in which dissent constituted not a difference of opinion but an act of treason." These actions successfully persuaded opponents of secession to disengage from the debate, and often kept them away from the ballot box. Breckinridge supporters, with the help of the states' rights press, called for vigilance committees to be formed in every southern community.¹⁹

Mississippi vigilance committees worked tirelessly to promote secession. The Jackson, Mississippi Minute Men, organized on November 13, 1860, distributed 10,000 copies of an abolitionist article printed in the *Chicago Democrat* as a means of alerting the populace to the threats such ideas posed to the South. Two members of the Jackson committee, Wiley P. Harris and W.P. Anderson, became candidates for the separate state secessionist ticket, chosen by their fellow members who controlled the committee on resolutions at the Hinds County nominating

¹⁸ *Daily Evening Citizen* (Vicksburg, MS), December 20, 1860; "A Female Abolitionist," Ibid, December 18, 1860; "A Natural Result of Abolition Aggression," Ibid, December 20, 1860.

¹⁹ Stephen A. West, "Minute Men, Yeomen, and the Mobilization for Secession in the South Carolina Upcountry," *Journal of Southern History* 71 (Feb., 2005): 75-104. Quote on 91. Barney, *The Secessionist Impulse*, 207-219. On South Carolina vigilance committees, see also Steven A. Channing, *Crisis of Fear: Secession in South Carolina* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1974); for vigilance committees in Georgia, see Ayers, *Vengeance and Justice*, 141-150.

convention. Attala County secession convention delegate John W. Wood, one of the few to ultimately cast a Unionist vote, noted how immediately following Lincoln's election, secessionists "went to work calling county meetings, haranguing the people, forming companies of 'minute men,' and using all of those artful appliances...to get up a great political excitement." Part of the process of ginning up "political excitement" involved intimidation through violent threats, sometimes followed by violent acts.²⁰

John Aughey, an Evangelical minister and unconditional Unionist from central Mississippi, witnessed the intimidation wrought by pro-secessionist groups. Days before Lincoln's election, Aughey heard a secessionist speaker intone that "Compromise with the Yankees, after the election of Lincoln, is treason against the South." The speaker then bragged about vigilance committees hanging seven "tory-submissionists" in North Mississippi near the Tallahatchie River. Following this execution, the local Unionist candidates, "having the wholesome dread of hemp before their eyes," stopped canvassing the county. Beaumont reported similar intimidation in Wilkinson County. "Some few people among us were opposed to secession," she wrote, "a number of these, knowing their danger, hurried away; those who remained were closely watched and even accused of thinking much more than they expressed or even felt." Her family were among the suspected, and secessionists hoped that they would be intimidated enough to "sacrifice our property and go away." Randolph Roth notes that, "vigilante violence effectively and emphatically marked the bounds of dissent." These groups "were not particular about whom they killed, and this indiscriminate fanaticism intimidated racial moderates and antisecessionists and gave militant whites the upper hand in shaping the

²⁰ Barney, *The Secessionist Impulse*, 208-209; John W. Wood, *Union and Secession in Mississippi* (Memphis: Saunders, Parish and Whitmore, 1863), 9.

Confederacy.”²¹ These groups’ presence during Mississippi’s campaign for delegates to the secession convention helped foster peer pressure and made the general atmosphere deeply hostile to those against immediate secession.

In addition to the proliferation of violent threats as a voter deterrent during the secession campaign, voting itself proved logistically problematic and necessitated fortitude in the face of hostility. The logistical problem arose because few counties even had a Unionist candidate as a choice on their ballots, forcing voters of that inclination to instead back “cooperationist” tickets offering fusion candidates with no clear stances on secession. As a result, many voters simply stayed home. Indeed, 40 percent of Mississippi’s eligible-voters did not vote in the secession convention election, about 38,000 compared to the 60 percent, or 68,000, who voted in the presidential election. Such low turnout unquestionably benefitted the secessionists, as those counties with the sharpest decline in voter participation also went solidly for secession. Many polling places did not even stock cooperationist ballots. The *Vicksburg Whig* noted that despite indications of secessionist triumph, “we hardly think more than two-thirds of the vote of the State has been cast in this election,” pointing out that “in a majority of the counties but one ticket was in running,” while in others, the candidates’ positions were “jumbled up,” thereby skewing the results in the radicals’ favor.²²

Beyond logistical issues, peer pressure was deeply intimidating, especially given the localized and public nature of southern elections in which everyone knew everyone else at the polls. As Christopher Olsen writes, neighborhoods were the “sine qua non of Mississippi politics,” making elections highly ritualized social and cultural events in which individuals, in

²¹ John Hill Aughey, *Tupelo* (Lincoln, NB: State Journal Company, 1888), 30-31; Beaumont, *Twelve Years of my Life*, 168; Randolph Roth, *American Homicide* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 331.

²² Charles C. Bolton, *Poor Whites of the Antebellum South: Tenants and Laborers in Central North Carolina and Northeast Mississippi* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 125, 164; Barney, *The Secessionist Impulse*, 268-269; Wynne, *Mississippi’s Civil War*, 27; *Daily Vicksburg Whig* (Vicksburg, MS), December 25, 1860.

keeping with the southern desire for community-validated honor, submitted their reputations to peer approval. Wood noted regarding southern elections, “a very few individuals are often enabled to control the people of a State.” Party leaders in the state capital kept county leaders “posted,” and never missed the chance to harangue people at court days, barbecues and other occasions where they could be “conveniently assembled together.” Such environments encouraged conformity to the dominant group.²³

Pontotoc County resident R.F. Crenshaw witnessed this conformity, telling his cousin that “we are so convulsed here now in Miss. With Secession, that the man who does not give, not only one day but all his time to his Country is regarded at best but a lukewarm patriot.” The Vicksburg *Daily Whig* described such haranguing in Rankin County. “You never saw such means used as were employed by the seceders of this county...” the paper noted, “whiskey was freely given; promises of corn and meat made. Threats were made; in fact, all means used, and the lowest, meanest and dirtiest tricks resorted to.” Although Rankin went cooperationist by a 119 vote margin, the secessionists created a hostile environment and nearly won a conservative county. When Aughey found that there were the no Unionist ballots in his precinct, he wrote out a Union ticket and deposited it “amidst the frowns, murmurs, and threats of the judges and bystanders.” He claimed that many other pro-Unionist residents “were intimidated by threats, and the odium attending it, from voting at all.”²⁴ Although secessionists used a number of tactics to browbeat voters into their column, violence or the threat of violence proved especially effective.

²³ Christopher J. Olsen, *Political Culture and Secession in Mississippi: Masculinity, Honor, and the Antiparty Tradition, 1830-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 121-126; Wood, *Union and Secession in Mississippi*, 40.

²⁴ R.F. Crenshaw to Ella Austin, December 13, 1860, R.F. Crenshaw Letter, #MUM01341, Box 1997.1, Folder 97-1, Archives and Special Collections, J.D. Williams Library, University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi, (hereafter cited as UMASC); “Glorious Result in Rankin,” *Vicksburg Daily Whig* (Vicksburg, MS), December 27, 1860; Aughey, *Tupelo*, 46.

Ohio-born John Goss told fellow Attala County resident Jason Niles that during the vote “drunken rowdies” had whipped several men in his neighborhood on account of their “unsoundness on the secession question.” Noting that “party feeling” was “very high” in Adams County, George Sargent advised a fellow cooperationist to vote as clandestinely as possible given the heated atmosphere. “By all means give your vote and try and get back as soon as you can,” he wrote, “there is no need of anyone knowing who you vote for.”²⁵ By enforcing conformity to disunion, secessionists created a fear-laden atmosphere that discouraged any deviations from their party line. Such tactics proved successful in roping some of the state’s fence-riders into the disunionist fold, but those who abstained from voting further aided the radicals’ goal. Ultimately, these tactics, driven by a desire to achieve dedication to a singular cause, undergirded Confederate protective nationalism after Mississippi seceded from the Union.

When the state convention assembled on January 7, 1861, the fire eaters had the wind at their backs. Yet, even as the majority of counties sent secessionist delegates, the few cooperationists argued against the rush to disunion. John Wood warned the delegates that secession meant war. “Let us pause and reflect, before we plunge into the dark abyss now opening at our feet...” he pleaded, “if Secession is carried out, there will be nothing but ruin and desolation follow in its course...war, pestilence and famine will spread over the land.” Other conservatives proposed amendments to at least stave off the disunionist fury. Washington County delegate J. Shall Yerger proposed that Mississippi continue to seek redress for grievances within the Union. James Alcorn advanced an amendment permitting secession only in concert with other states, while Warren County delegate Walter Brooke proposed that an ordinance of

²⁵ Diary of Jason Niles, January 2, 1862, Transcript of manuscript # 950, *Documenting the American South*, Electronic Edition. Southern Historical Collection. University Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/niles/niles.html> (Accessed August 5, 2009. Hereafter cited as *Documenting the American South*); George Washington Sargent to Mr. Hethery, January 7, 1860, George Washington Sargent Papers, SHC.

secession be submitted to a state-wide popular vote before its passage. The delegation soundly rejected these proposals.²⁶

Ultimately, recognizing the futility of further resistance, much of the Union minority voted with the radicals to secede. Calhoun County delegate M.D.L. Stephens described how the secessionist tide was too strong to resist. “I was elected to this Convention as a co-operationist,” he noted, “every vote I have cast...has been cast, to carry out, in good faith, the wishes of a majority of my constituents.” Nonetheless, Stephens eventually voted for immediate secession, stating how “amendment after [cooperationist] amendment” had been proposed to no avail, until the vote had finally been narrowed down to “submission or secession.” Between the two, Stephens added, “I am for secession.” On January 9, 1861, the convention passed Mississippi’s Ordinance of Secession with eighty-four votes in favor and fifteen dissenting. Following the vote, the state’s congressional delegation in Washington resigned and headed home. A month later, Jefferson Davis was sworn in as the first and only Confederate president. The secession convention also published a document outlining the reasons for their decision. As if there were any lingering doubts regarding the motivating issue, the document stated that “our position is thoroughly identified with the institution of slavery – the greatest material interest of the world...there was no choice left to us but submission to the mandates of abolition, or a dissolution of the Union, whose principles had been subverted to work out our ruin.”²⁷ The declaration’s insistence that there was “no choice left” but to form a new republic heralded the

²⁶ Wood, *Union and Secession in Mississippi*, 27, 30; Wynne, *Mississippi’s Civil War*, 28-31.

²⁷ *Proceedings of the Mississippi State Convention, Held January 7th to 26th, A. D. 1861* (Jackson, MS: Power & Cadwallader, Book and Job Printers, 1861), 15, *Documenting the American South*, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/missconv/missconv.html> (Accessed January 23, 2012); “A Declaration of the Immediate Causes Which Induce and Justify the Secession of the State of Mississippi from the Federal Union, 1861,” *Ibid*, 47.

coming arguments by Confederate boosters that there was now only one nation to which southerners owed their allegiance.

In the wake of secession, Pettus immediately placed the state on a war-time footing even before the firing on Fort Sumter, sending canon and a militia to guard the Vicksburg bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River. The militia ended up firing on an innocent commercial vessel, though no one was injured. In addition to fortifying Vicksburg, seven volunteer companies went to reinforce Fort Pickens, Florida, and a militia unit planted the state flag on tiny Ship Island, off Mississippi's Gulf Coast. By late January, the convention authorized the formation of a volunteer infantry division, to be mustered for one year of service and managed by a Military Board led by the governor and major-general of the militia. Pettus also ordered seven Mississippi companies to assist Alabama and Florida troops in securing the navy yards at Pensacola, Florida, and on January 23, the convention organized the new state regiments into the formal Army of Mississippi, commanded by Jefferson Davis until he formally took the oath of the presidency. By March 1861, General Charles Clark mustered out Mississippi companies from Pensacola and had them inducted into the Army of Mississippi. In April, President Davis called for 30,000 Mississippi troops to be mustered as a reserve corps at Corinth, a crucial railroad junction in northwest Mississippi that could transport troops to Virginia.²⁸

To fund this military buildup, the convention issued a military tax of fifty percent on state taxes and point three percent on capital invested out of state. Further, in a controversial move, prominent politician James Z. George proposed that taxes on slaves be increased from seventy-five cents per slave to \$1.25, while another delegate, S.J. Gholson, raised the proposal to two dollars. Outraged slaveholding delegates moved to stifle this proposal, offering instead an ad

²⁸ John K. Bettersworth, *Confederate Mississippi: The People and Policies of a Cotton State in Wartime* (1943, Repr., Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1978), 11; Michael B. Ballard, *The Civil War in Mississippi: Major Campaigns and Battles* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2011), 4, 6.

valorem amendment, taxing slaves on total value rather than on quantity. Although this offered a loophole to undervalue, the slaveholders won out, indicating a concern for property that would become an issue later in the war. Yet, despite some controversies over funding, by late-1861 Mississippi was armed for war. Pettus reported to the legislature that the state had 23,000 troops, including infantry, cavalry and artillery companies, plus an additional 12,000 that had already been sent west to Albert Sidney Johnston's army. The buildup to war in turn encouraged a heightened nationalist excitement within the state's populace, as many welcomed the coming conflict.²⁹

Through 1861 and early 1862, Mississippians reacted enthusiastically to their state's secession from the Union, even though the Jackson delegation never submitted the issue to a state-wide referendum. Many, including a number of former cooperationists and conditional Unionists, embraced protective nationalism, and claimed they were ready to sacrifice all to the new cause. They began the war confident that Mississippi could sustain itself, by force if necessary, and thrive in the Confederacy more than it ever could in the old Union.

In February 1861, Columbus resident Thomas Bailey told his mother in North Carolina that her state would be better off joining the young Confederacy. "How can you hesitate?" he asked, "we offer all that the old government did, & more besides – protection to your greatest interest and dearest right." Bailey's confidence only grew with the passing months, telling his mother that upon North Carolina's secession, she would find "the gallant sons of Mississippi rushing to your assistance." Natchez planter's wife Louisa Lovell assured her husband that Mississippi would survive any turmoil unscathed. "When things are a little calmer and more settled," she wrote, "our property will be more valuable than ever, and there will never be anything like the suffering here, that there will be in the North." John Kirkland of Attala County

²⁹ Bettersworth, *Confederate Mississippi*, 11-12; Ballard, *The Civil War in Mississippi*, 4, 10-11.

echoed Lovell's assertion that the North would suffer deeply from any conflict. "Our subjugation seems to be determined by the north," he wrote, "and the south will never submit, of course it must be a war of extermination of one party or the other." Indeed, many Mississippians outright embraced the prospect of a "war of extermination," and they were confident that the South would win.³⁰

War talk often dominated conversations in the months after secession. Writing to his cousin from Jackson, N.H. Boyd described how after having "broke the tie which bound us," Mississippi was now "one of the nations of the earth," and that in the midst of "exciting times...every appearance of war surrounds us." By April, he noted, citizens continued to rejoice over "every prospect of war" as the firing on Fort Sumter sent Mississippi military companies en masse to Pensacola. Eliza Patterson of Tunica County also noted the militarized environment. "All we hear is War! War!! War!!! But if we southerners can only subdue those villainous republicans 'all will be well,'" she wrote. University of Mississippi law student Henry Garrett seconded Patterson, noting how Oxford, Mississippi's normally calm streets were "filled with men in whose mein we read 'war, war, war!!'" Garrett hoped that Lincoln would head "the calm dictates of reason" and not bring the country to ruin. "If one blow is struck or one drop of Southern blood spilled, we may look for dreadful consequences," he wrote, "we all know the Southern heart and how it rebels at anything like oppression." In May 1861, William Nelson expressed similarly enthusiastic sentiments and chided his sister for wavering on the issue of secession. "You say that your sympathies are with the South, although you doubt the judiciousness of the move she has taken," he wrote from Warrenton, "we now number thirteen

³⁰ Thomas Bailey to Mother, February 16, April 28, 1861, John Lancaster Bailey Papers, 1785-1874, fol. 11, 00039; Louisa T. Lovell to Joseph Lovell, January 27, 1861, Quitman Family Papers, 1784-1978, fol. 105, ser. 1.2, 00616; John Kirkland to William Otey, May 22, 1861, Wyche and Otey Family Papers, 1824-1936, fol. 15, ser. 1.3, 01608, all in SHC.

states, teeming with a population composed of the bravest and truest men the world ever saw, and such men armed in the holy cause of liberty are invincible against any force the enemy may send against them.”³¹ Mississippians’ embracing of such bravado characterized the wave of nationalist sentiment that swept the state in the months after secession. In the early phase of the war, national allegiance often eclipsed, but did not dispel, other loyalties in a highly militarized environment.

Because the Confederacy was born in the midst of war against the North, its nationalist boosters framed their declarations of independence in terms of separation from it. Such nationalistic fervor, therefore, brought about an enthusiasm for self-sufficiency, as Mississippians expressed the need to devote all human and material resources to the state in an effort to achieve independence. Early on, many boosters promoted Confederate self-sufficiency through the severing of all economic ties from the North, which would open the Confederacy to the rest of the world as an independent nation. Even before the vote to secede, some Mississippians embraced this protective nationalist stance.

In November 1860, the *Vicksburg Sun* declared the South “a separate nationality” and proclaimed that king cotton would ensure southern self-sufficiency. “The civilized world depends on the cotton of the South,” the editor stated, “in case of secession we shall have more than half the crop on hand, and all the world clamoring for it. Again we say we are independent

³¹ N.H. Boyd to Eudora Hobbs, January 13, 1861, April 18, 1861, Hobbs Family Papers, *Intellectual Underpinnings of the American Civil War*, Digital Collections, Manuscripts Division, Special Collections Department, Mississippi State University Libraries, Mississippi State, Mississippi.
<http://digital.library.msstate.edu/collections/document.php?CISOROOT=/ASERL&CISOPTR=83&REC=5> (Accessed January 22, 2012. Hereafter cited as *Underpinnings of the American Civil War*); Eliza Patterson to Anne Boyd Green, September 1, 1861, Hays-Ray-Webb Collection, *Underpinnings of the American Civil War*, <http://digital.library.msstate.edu/collections/document.php?CISOROOT=/ASERL&CISOPTR=69&REC=2>. (Accessed December 10, 2011); Diary of Henry A. Garrett, March 25, 1861, in Bettersworth, ed., *Mississippi in the Confederacy*, Vol. 1, 46-47; William C. Nelson to Elizabeth L. Cage, May 21, 1861, William Cowper Nelson Collection, UMD, http://clio.lib.olemiss.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/civil_war&CISOPTR=314&REC=3 (Accessed December 10, 2011).

of the world and can take care of ourselves.” The *Natchez Daily Free Trader* similarly recommended urgent secession to create a self-sustaining southern republic. The cotton states, it noted, had “a vast territory, rich in natural wealth.” A southern nation, the *Trader* opined, “might rival Rome in its palmy days.” In October 1860, Will Kirkland of Attala County suggested that the South should “cut short the cotton crop for one year” so that the north would recognize its dependence on the southern commodity. Should the north still fail to “come to their senses,” Kirkland believed that the South should “just raise enough for our own use, raise everything we need in the way of living except what we can get from the West [I]ndies. Improve the farm stock and the south can live better and happier.” Some, however, questioned such optimistic visions. An editorial in the *Vicksburg Whig* reminded readers that “the South, through its merchants, is largely indebted to the North.” Mississippi gambled in choosing “to rely upon our own resources,” the writer noted, adding that while such resources were “abundant in some respects...we should remember we have never stood alone, and will be in a condition of infancy when called upon to help ourselves.”³² After secession, however, the calls for national independence drowned out the already minority appeals to caution, as Mississippians pledged total devotion to the Confederate cause.

In January 1861, the *Weekly Panola Star* noted that in light of the coming war, the duty to raise funds through more taxation for “the defense of the State” was imperative. Although it admitted that additional taxation would “fall heavily on the people,” the *Star* believed that most would pay “without grumbling” in light of “the necessity of providing all the necessities of war.” In late January 1861, Wiley Harris described the new interconnectedness of citizens and

³² *Vicksburg Sun* (Vicksburg, MS), November 12, 1860, quoted in Rainwater, *Storm Center of Secession*, 164; “The Possible Future of the South,” *Natchez Daily Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), November 24, 1860, in Percy Lee Rainwater Collection, box 1, fol. 18; William Kirkland to Children, October 17, 1860, Wyche and Otey Family Papers, fol. 14; “January 1861,” *Daily Vicksburg Whig* (Vicksburg, MS), December 28, 1860.

their state. “The public mind may and ought to repose in the conviction that the existing State government stands today unshaken in its authority,” he stated, “and that in making it independent, so far from weakening it we have made it stronger...because it is now the object of our undivided devotion.” That same month, Jackson resident Howel Hobbs echoed Harris’ sentiments, touting to his daughter the need for total devotion to the state. As an “Independent Republic,” Mississippi was “determined not to submit to Lincoln’s Administration on any terms,” he wrote, but “war or no war, we all will have to be Taxed high to raise money to Arm the State & pay the ordinary expenses of the government.” He even intended to cancel his subscription to the northern-published *Lady’s Home Journal*. “As we have seceded,” he stated, “I would not subscribe to any of their ‘Papers or Books.’” Hobbs embraced Confederate self-sufficiency on a personal level to the point of rejecting northern periodicals. By doing so, he tried to demonstrate, per Harris’ statement, that the state was now the focus of his “undivided devotion.”³³

Other Mississippians made similar calls for citizens to sacrifice to the cause. Tippah County planter Francis Leak bought state bonds, donated cotton to the new government, and encouraged others to do the same. He believed that “resting upon Mississippians” was a duty “to sustain the State with all of their means,” or “even more if needed, at the service of his governments.” Louisa Lovell believed victory in the war required only unity to the cause. “If the South will unite, be true, firm and brave and act nobly, we will succeed and be more prosperous than ever before,” she wrote to her husband. Similarly, Albert H. Clark, of the 42 Mississippi Infantry, contended that it was “the firm resolution of every true Southerner never to be

³³ “The Secession of the State,” *Weekly Panola Star* (Panola, MS), January 17, 1861; “Remarks of W.P. Harris, of Hinds,” *Proceedings of the Mississippi State Convention, Documenting the American South*; W.H. Hobbs and Howel Hobbs to Eudora Hobbs, January 13, 1861, Howel Hobbs to Eudora Hobbs, January 23, February 8, 1861, in Hobbs Family Papers, *Intellectual Underpinnings of the American Civil War*, <http://digital.library.msstate.edu/collections/document.php?CISOROOT=/ASERL&CISOPTR=83&REC=5>.

whipped.” As long as southerners united in their resolve, he believed, they could “never be conquered,” since it was “the duty of everyone to encourage each other.” Thomas Burton of Kemper County informed his brother that “our people are all ready to fight old & young...and the women say they will fight to [sic]. Burton added that “if Linkin’s [sic] boys ever gets on the soil of Mississippi they will have hot work as every man & boy is ready to fight them.”³⁴ Early in the war, proponents of protective nationalism enthusiastically rallied to the Confederacy’s defense, and many of them were certain that maintaining this enthusiasm would bring about southern victory.

Nationalist-minded Mississippians especially emphasized that suffering of any kind should not be an impediment to sacrificing for the Confederacy. In doing so, they underlined a key component of protective nationalism: that other loyalties, including self-interest, should be subservient to the national goal. Davis expressed this view in his Inaugural Address. “To increase the power, develop the resources, and promote the happiness of a Confederacy,” he stated, “it is requisite that there should be so much of homogeneity that the welfare of every portion shall be the aim of the whole.” Here, Davis elucidated a key protective nationalist point, that citizens should express a “homogeneity” of devotion to benefit the “aim of the whole,” the nation. The potential for suffering, then, was to be expected and embraced by every truly loyal southerner. In August 1861, Okolona, Mississippi resident C.W. Howe explained to his daughter how only a total abdication of self-interest would bring southern independence. “Individual suffering must not be considered for a moment when such vast interests are at stake,” he wrote,

³⁴ Francis Terry Leak Diary, January 27, March 7, February 26, March 28, 1861, Francis Terry Leak Papers, 1839-1865, fol. 12, vol. 6, 01095, SHC; Louisa T. Lovell to Joseph Lovell, January 27, 1861, Quitman Family Papers; Albert H. Clark to William C. McDonald, April 27, 1862, Clark Family Letters, UMD, http://clio.lib.olemiss.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/civil_war&CISOPTR=22&REC=6 (Accessed December 10, 2011); Thomas F. Burton to Brother, August 12, 1861, Bullock and Hamilton Family Papers, 1757-1971, fol. 32, 00101, SHC.

“the contest is inevitable and we must do all that man can do to conquer, for defeat is death.”

Robert and Willie Hughes, of Pike County, similarly invoked corporeal sacrifice, telling their cousin that while “the war with all its horrors is upon us,” the South’s “one resolve” should be “a perfect willingness, to give all, & our lives too, to secure our independence.”³⁵ Even if giving all to the Confederacy necessitated a loss of personal property or suffering physical deprivations, many Mississippians argued that this was the required price of independence.

This price was acceptable to Betty Beaumont’s secessionist neighbors, whom she described as “eager to do everything possible for the cause, willing to sacrifice property and ready to send their sons to fight and to die...in defense of Southern institutions.” In August 1861, William Nugent told his wife that “a man must do something, in such times as we are having, for his country & state, and if he doesn’t fight he ought to work in other ways.” Nugent believed that suffering should not impede support for the cause. “The people at home must not complain, if they are called upon to suffer inconveniences,” he wrote, “privations are ennobling to any people if willingly endured for the sake of the public good.” He concluded that “eternal shame” would come to anyone whose arm was not “raised in defense of his Country.” Copiah County native J.J. Little, writing to his parents from Fort McRee, Florida, agreed with Nugent. “Man, Woman & Child should be armed and equipped with the implements of warfare,” he wrote, “every ten year old Boy should belong to a Military Company.” In another letter, Little warned that “such things as the people have been in the habit of buying they must now learn to do without and the sooner we learn this lesson the better for us.” Little then added that if killed in battle he hoped “to fall at

³⁵ “Inaugural Address of President Davis, February 18, 1861,” *Proceedings of the Mississippi State Convention*, 120, *Documenting the American South*; C.A. Howe to Daughter, August 2, 1861, Chiliab Smith Howe Papers, 1814-1899, fol. 53, ser. 1.6, 03092, SHC; Robert and Willie Hughes to Mary Adams, November 24, 1861, Hughes Family Papers, 1790-1910, fol. 17, 02779, SHC; On the relationship between suffering and Confederate loyalty, see Quigley, *Shifting Grounds*, 171-213;

the post of duty, in the service of my country.”³⁶ Many Mississippians embraced protective nationalism as the only means of winning southern independence. In the process, they downgraded citizens’ individuality, relegating them as mere component parts in service to the greater whole of the nation. Such an all-consuming approach to nationalism left no room for dissent.

The hyper-nationalist climate that characterized the secession campaign continued after the state legislature voted to secede. The vigilance committees and local mobs, operating on the paranoia that drove them to intimidate Unionist and cooperations voters, now intensified their efforts to root out any perceived traitors who threatened to destroy the new Confederacy from within. Because protective nationalism required unbending national loyalty, any perceived wavering from such a stance constituted treason. Extremes begat extremes, and under such either-or circumstances, any alleged slight against the state, real or imaginary, had to be suppressed, and total loyalty enforced. The vigilance committees, then, attempted to enforce, through threats and physical intimidation, Confederate nationalism as the most paramount of all loyalties. The existence of men like John Wood and John Aughey proved that dissenters lurked in Mississippi, and their very existence threatened the implementation of the protective nationalist ideal. Whatever the dissenters’ actual numbers, the fury with which the vigilance committees sought to root them out demonstrated that, to achieve total devotion to the Confederacy, protective nationalists needed to enforce that devotion with the same measure of totality. These de-centralized attempts at organized loyalty enforcement foreshadowed the

³⁶ Beaumont, *Twelve Years of my Life*, 169; William L. Nugent to Nellie Smith Nugent, August 10, 1861, May 26, 1862, in Cash and Howorth, Eds., *My Dear Nellie*, 45, 77; J.J. Little to Parents, June 28, August 9, 1861, J.J. Little Collection, UMDC, http://clio.lib.olemiss.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/civil_war&CISOPTR=2183&REC=3 (Accessed December 10, 2011).

Confederacy's more centralized attempts at policing allegiance that came into full effect in Mississippi by 1862.

Mississippi's nationalist vigilantes targeted any supposedly seditious behavior as grounds for punishment. In April 1861, Bunker Hill resident B.A. Terry informed Pettus that he and some locals had formed a band "for the purpose of repelling insurrections among the negroes" and for "keeping down Toryism among the people." Terry sought to bypass local peace officers by gaining the authority to indefinitely detain anyone found "hostile to the institutions, and the interests of our common country." In July 1861, Louisa Lovell detailed rumors that her neighbor, Mr. Marshal, had returned from a northern trip where he supposedly took "the Black Republican oath." When word spread of this "cowardly submission," locals chased him and his family out of Natchez. Marshal fled to Vicksburg "to save his life," only to be met by a "furious mob" brandishing a noose. He survived because friends intervened and placed him on a steam boat. In May 1861, John Dickerson, leader of a Fair River, Mississippi vigilance committee "determined to ferret out all disloyal persons in our bounds," asked Pettus what should be done with Jasper Coon, a neighbor whom Dickerson labeled as "dangerous" and "opposed to our southern movement." Coon allegedly identified as a "Free Soiler" and openly praised Lincoln. Dickerson considered him "an enemy to our Country" who would "injure our Cause in any way that he could," and inquired as to "what course we must take with him."³⁷ The vigilance committees and makeshift mobs believed that all subversives who threatened "the interests of our common country," had to be captured. For these early Confederate protective nationalists, the actual number of supposed "disloyal persons" mattered little, because the existence of even one

³⁷ B.A. Terry to John J. Pettus, April 30, 1861, John J. Pettus Correspondence, Roll 1812, Volume 36, Record Group 27, MDAH; *Daily Evening Citizen* (Vicksburg, MS), January 15, 1861; Louisa T. Lovell to Joseph Lovell, July 9, 1861, Quitman Family Papers, fol. 106; John Dickerson to John J. Pettus, May 18, 1861, Pettus Correspondence, roll 2776, vol. 37.

implicitly impeded their goal of ensuring that all Mississippians were totally loyal to the Confederate cause.

With this protective nationalist goal in mind, the vigilance committees fervently targeted alleged traitors for conspiring against the new southern nation. Such was the intensity with which protective nationalists sought to enforce loyalty to a country still in its infancy. Writing to his friend Julia Southall, Columbus native and Union sympathizer, Henry Barnes, described how the hyper-nationalist atmosphere in Mississippi was pervasive to the point of rendering speech against the Confederacy treasonous, and contrasted it with that of the northern states, where he was visiting friends. “I stopped at Chicago over Sunday,” he wrote, “in that church I prayed for the President of the U.S. in public for the first time in months and it gladdened my heart to be able to do so.” Barnes believed that the southern people were “laboring under a grievous mistake,” having been “precipitated into revolution” by “designing men,” a process that turned public speech into a treasonable offence. In January 1862, John Goss, the Ohio native who escaped a whipping by secessionists in Attala County a year earlier, ran afoul of the local vigilance committee when they discovered a letter Goss wrote to his brother in Ohio, describing “the troubled state of the times” in Mississippi. The committee arraigned Goss, but he escaped physical punishment through a friend’s intervention. Goss then moved to Holmes County, but when another individual got wind of his political views, Goss again “deemed it prudent to migrate.”³⁸ Whether or not vigilance groups’ targets were true abolitionists and/or Unionists was less important than the fact that the hyper-nationalist climate rendered any behavior, including mere speech, grounds for suspicion. Those looking for subversives were bound to find them.

³⁸ Henry Barnes to Julia Southall, May 20, 1861, Sowthall and Bowen Family Papers, 1833-1959, Folder 6, 04135, SHC; Jason Niles Diary, January 2, 1862, *Documenting the American South*.

Treasonous speech alone could even be grounds for execution, as Chickasaw County planter Levi Naron, who eventually worked as a spy for the Union army under the name “Chickasaw,” soon discovered. In 1861 the vigilance committee admonished him to “desist from speaking against the Confederacy.” They had severely beaten one local Union man and hung two others, and Naron’s Unionist sentiments were well known. A few weeks later, armed men ambushed him at dusk and took him to a tree where they interrogated him and threatened the noose. When Naron refused to join the Confederate army, the men prepared to hang him, arguing that “we have all got to fight, and he who will not fight is against us.” Naron escaped by eliciting the sympathies of some clergymen in the committee, but the threats eventually became too much, and he fled the county. Like Naron, Aughey avoided being lynched when a sympathetic layperson argued that he had uttered treasonous words, but had not committed treasonous actions, and that the committee was not operating with the proper civil or military authority. Others were not as lucky. A mob hung a Presbyterian Unionist pastor from Macon, murdered a friend of Aughey, and two friends of his former pupils simply disappeared. Aughey himself spent the rest of the war on the run and endured time in a Confederate prison before finally reaching Union lines.³⁹ Naron’s and Aughey’s experiences underscored how even public speech could be interpreted as dissent in an atmosphere where the Confederacy’s unquestioned authority had already been established by mob rule.

The fact that the vigilance committees deemed many suspicious persons “abolitionists,” or at least suggested that their alleged dissent against the Confederacy stemmed from their sympathizing with anti-slavery views, was no coincidence. These vigilance mobs owed much in terms of tactics and ideology to the antebellum slave patrols. Although the slave patrol existed

³⁹ Thomas D. Cockrell and Michael B. Ballard, eds., *Chickasaw, a Mississippi Scout for the Union: The Civil War Memoir of Levi H. Naron* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), 8-9, 12-21. Quotes on 8, 18; Aughey, *Tupelo*, 46-59, 65, 72-75. Quotes on 46-47.

before the Confederacy, vigilance committees patterned themselves after slave patrols because they too sought to counter threats to slavery, though in a different form. Slave patrols worked not only to control the behavior of seditious slaves but also that of suspicious whites who might aid slaves. Whereas in the antebellum period, supposed abolitionist infiltrators threatened slavery as an institution, the birth of the Confederacy, via its separation from the North, meant that abolitionists now threatened the Southern nation itself, because that nation was founded on the preservation of slavery. Nationalist-minded Confederates insisted that abolitionists had seized power in the North through the election of Lincoln and his horde of “black Republicans.” Therefore, by threatening slavery, abolitionists now threatened the Confederacy itself.⁴⁰

In mid-January 1861, the Woodville Vigilance Committee drove two men out of town, one for using two names, the other for being an Illinois-born “suspected” abolitionist. A few months later, John Simmons wrote Pettus from Pike County wondering if the Home Guards had permission to detain “suspicious characters.” Simmons claimed there were individuals found “instructing Negroes in military discipline and claiming themselves as abolitionists,” while also boasting that if drafted into the army, they would “take their first shot at Jef. Davis.” He was especially concerned about “characters that slip into neighborhoods,” who were alien to the locals. Such suspicion proved especially insidious in the context of close-knit neighborhoods where everyone knew everyone else. In June 1861, Greene County resident O.J. Hood complained to Pettus about four members of the McLeod family, who had for years been “using abolition sentiments.” In response, the vigilance committee arraigned them and held a public trial. Allen McCleod allegedly called Jefferson Davis a “Murderer, Scamp and Traitor,” while his brother, Peter, compared the slaves to the “children of Iseral [sic]” who would soon be freed. The committee gave Peter a choice between swearing the Confederate oath and leaving the

⁴⁰ Hadden, *Slave Patrols*, 4, 167-203.

county. When he refused to do either, Hood confessed to “feeling a *little* delicacy in resorting to extreme measures however great the crime might be without some higher authority.”⁴¹ That Hood even viewed anti-slavery speech as worthy of “extreme measures” on men from his own neighborhood demonstrated the desire among Confederate nationalists for everyone to tow the party line.

Confederate nationalists viewed any supposed threat to slavery as worthy of immediate suppression. Suspicious persons did not have to be labeled “Abolitionists” to be considered a threat. In early 1862, Roxana Gerdine told her sister that “the country here has a patrol every night to see that no suspicious person is around to incite the negroes,” adding that “a suspicious looking woman” had recently been hanged in nearby Columbus. The woman’s executioners found Strychnine, along with “papers” and “books” on her person. “Have to look out these days what they do,” Gerdine cautioned. Later that summer, a Jefferson County Provost Marshal jailed an Ohio-born man for labeling Mississippi’s planters “a set of G D thieves,” wishing that the Union gun boats would “shell every God Dam plantation on the river,” and calling for a slave insurrection.⁴² In these incidents, perceived threats to slavery became threats to the nation. In the wake of Mississippi’s session and the formation of the Confederacy, the fact that slaves might be incited to insurrection by individuals within Mississippi itself immediately designated them enemies of the Confederate cause, which was based on the protection of slavery. Rooting out alleged dissidents who threatened slavery was the only way for protective nationalists to ensure that every Mississippi was loyal to the nation and the institution that bolstered it.

⁴¹ *Daily Evening Citizen* (Vicksburg, MS), January 15, 1861; John T. Simmons to John J. Pettus, September 25, 1861, in Bettersworth, ed., *Mississippi in the Confederacy*, Vol. 1, 294; O.J. Hood to John J. Pettus, June 19, 1861, in *Ibid*, 293-294.

⁴² Roxana Chapin Gerdine to Emily McKinstry Chapin, March 21, 1862, Gerdine Collection, UMD, http://clio.lib.olemiss.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/civil_war&CISOPTR=1654&REC=12 (Accessed December 6, 2011); How Hines to John J. Pettus, June 5, 1862, in Bettersworth, ed., *Mississippi in the Confederacy*, Vol. 1, 295.

In 1860 and 1861 the methods for enforcing protective nationalism in Mississippi were already in place. This type of nationalism envisioned individual citizens as component parts in service to the greater nation, and it demanded a total devotion of bodies and resources to achieving the goal of Confederate independence. Relying on a long tradition of public and institutional acquiescence to extralegal mob violence, Secessionists and then Confederates created a deeply partisan atmosphere hostile to any possible dissenters who might question the wisdom of disunion or the authority of the new Confederacy. They threatened violence against Unionist and cooperationist voters during the secession campaign, and left few options on the ballot for those wishing to support anything but immediate disunion. Following Mississippi's vote to secede, these same hyper-nationalist groups continued their campaign of rooting out and containing or exiling supposed abolitionists and Union sympathizers. In 1861, however, these attempts at organized loyalty enforcement were still de-centralized. The fact that many vigilance committee members questioned Pettus about what to do with captured alleged dissidents reveals that although they were extensions of Mississippi's extralegal mobs, they lacked the more exact and centralized system for policing loyalty that the Confederate government would enact by mid-1862. This more centralized system was, in turn, a product of the new, expanded nation state that emerged in both the North and South during the Civil War.

The vigilance committees and other extralegal groups, however, did not emerge in a vacuum, nor did they by force alone compel Mississippians into disunion. Rather, these groups were the extreme product of the already extreme concept: protective nationalism. They did not create this nationalist fervor, they embodied it, and they flourished in the wake of Lincoln's election with the support of a majority of Mississippians. Across the state, people rejoiced at the idea of an independent Confederacy, and vowed to devote all of their resources to its cause.

Mississippians were temporarily overtaken by militaristic fervor, as circumstances made it easier for them to embrace protective nationalism when it did not require much material sacrifice. In these circumstances, declarations of loyalty, and the prioritization of micro and macro allegiances, were more clear-cut. This all-consuming nationalism, however, was built on sandy foundations that ultimately made it difficult to uphold. Its attempts to completely negate the influence of other loyalties proved unworkable in practice.

The vigilance committees' and later the Confederate government's attempts to use force as a means of squelching out all perceived dissent revealed the impossibility of enacting a concept at odds with the reality of human loyalty layers. Protective nationalism seemed realistic in the war's early months, but when the Union army entered the state in the summer of 1862, its presence, and the shifting circumstances of the war, forced Mississippians to reexamine what Confederate loyalty meant in light of other attachments. They did not abandon the Confederate cause in the wake of war-induced hardships, nor did they suddenly embrace the Union cause. Rather, wartime hardships were the catalysts that lessened protective nationalism's appeal. These hardships served as a trenchant reminder to Mississippians that living up to the protective nationalist ideal of total devotion to the nation meant neglecting their other, multiple loyalties, which did not cease to influence human behavior merely to accommodate the demands of wartime hyper-nationalists.

Chapter Two: “Well Calculated to Test the Loyalty of her Citizens:” Property, Principle, and the Oath of Allegiance

In August of 1862, the Canton *American Citizen* published an editorial proclaiming the indefatigable resolve of Mississippi in the face of a Union army onslaught. “So far as Mississippi is concerned,” it boasted, “the Yankees will have bitter and unrelenting foes to fight for one hundred years, if they choose to continue the contest so long.” The paper described the state’s soldiers as “furious devils in battle,” and assured that its women “offered everything upon the shrine of liberty” much like “the Queen Mother of the Gracchi,” Cornelia, of Ancient Rome, whose steadfast devotion to her sons Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, the “Gracchi,” and tireless commitment to the Roman republic made her the model matron in classical literature. “Even our slaves despise the Yankees,” the *Citizen* claimed, confident that the servants would aid their masters in driving the invaders from the state.¹

In a stark contrast to the *Citizen*’s confidence, however, the June 1863 issue of the Macon *Beacon* cast doubt on Mississippians’ commitment to Confederate independence. As General Ulysses S. Grant’s troops marched towards Vicksburg, the *Beacon* warned that if the city fell, “the whole State will be subjected to hostile institutions, and then the spirit of our people will be subjected to a test of fidelity to principle for which they have been ill prepared.” The paper claimed that Mississippians would “disgrace themselves” by caving to Federal rule “when the love of property and of principle operate in different directions,” and disparaged “the base wretch who swears a lie, to save his property” by taking the Union oath. The *Beacon* found this behavior especially galling in the face of a hostile foe, asserting that only “unwavering courage

¹ “Mississippi and the War,” *American Citizen* (Canton, MS), August 29, 1862; “Cornelia” *The Concise Oxford Companion to Classical Literature*. Eds. M.C. Howatson and Ian Chilvers. Oxford University Press, 1996. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. University of Calgary. Accessed February 14, 2011. <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t9.e737>.

and unyielding resistance under all circumstances” would ensure Confederate victory.² In encouraging resistance to Union invasion, the *Beacon* hoped to make Mississippians live up to the nationalist ideal that the *American Citizen* promoted a year earlier.

By suggesting that white southerners should be, per the *Citizen's* description, resolutely patriotic, and decrying them as traitors when they fell short, the *Beacon* and other proponents of total nationalism did not consider how individuals negotiated between multiple loyalties.

Consider the case of Tishomingo County resident James B. Wells. In November 1863, the Federal army arrested Wells for bushwhacking in north Mississippi, but released him after he swore the Union oath. Soon after, Confederate officials charged him with treason. He claimed to be a poor wagon maker who was exempted from Confederate service due to “rheumatisms” and “that he might work on his trade.” He said that he took the Federal oath out of a desire to “go back to his family, who were in danger of starvation,” and insisted that he was “a true southern man” who “bitterly regretted the necessity laid on him to take this oath.” Wells offered to join the Confederate army if so required, but preferred to be detailed to tend to work and family. Ultimately, the Confederates deemed him “honest & truthful” and recommended that the conscript bureau release him.³

When considering people like Wells, historians often ask whether they were loyal Confederates, but this question rests on the assumption that national allegiance guided their actions, which can lead to differing conclusions. Depending on the proclivities of the observer, the Confederates’ judgment of Wells as “honest & truthful” might render him one of the

² *Beacon* (Macon, MS), June 10, 1863.

³ Statement of James H. Harrington regarding James B. Wells, November 26, 1863; Arrest Papers of James B. Wells, November 26, 1863, Nos. C 871-1071, Roll 88, Letters Received by the Confederate Secretary of War (Hereafter cited as LRSCW), M-437, War Department Collection of Confederate Records, Record Group 109, National Archives and Records Administration (Hereafter cited as NARA).

Citizen's patriots of "brilliant colors." On the other hand, his oath-swearing might relegate him to the *Beacon's* definition of a "base wretch" who swore a lie to protect his self interests. Wells' assertion that he swore the oath out of concerns for self and family suggests that, patriotic feelings aside, these micro loyalties were on his mind. Whether Wells was a "strong" or "weak" Confederate cannot be known. In such instances, rather than ask how loyal a Confederate he was, historians should ask what other fidelities beyond nationalism motivated him. Doing so leads to a clearer understanding of how multiple loyalties guided southerners' behavior during the Civil War. The influence of these different allegiances, in turn, reveals that the reach and impact of the nineteenth century nation-state was more limited than historians have concluded, despite the Civil War's imbuing it with expanded apparatuses for loyalty enforcement.

This chapter examines how Confederate and Union forces tried to police and enforce total national loyalty among Mississippians by judging them according to the new standard of protective nationalism. Although Mississippians had largely embraced a protective nationalist fervor during the buildup to secession and throughout the first year of the war, such enthusiasm came easy when the conflict's hardships had yet to come to their doorsteps. As the second year of the war arrived, however, military events tested Mississippians' ability to suppress their still influential loyalty layers in the name of total nationalist devotion. Indeed, their multiple allegiances made loyalty enforcement problematic for two warring national governments seeking to put all citizens into dichotomized "loyal" and "disloyal" camps. The ideals of protective nationalism proved elusive when faced with the harsh reality of its practical implication on the ground.

When Union forces entered the state in the summer of 1862, they attempted to enforce Mississippians' allegiance to the United States through mechanisms like the oath. Confederate

forces responded by enforcing the protective nationalist model that emerged during the secession crisis, labeling treasonous any citizens who showed perceived deference to the Federals. As Elizabeth Duquette notes, the Civil War's two factions believed that security was only guaranteed "if friend was systematically and reliably distinguished from foe." With this point in mind, "war takes what has been argued as an element of the political...the opposition of friend and enemy, and, stripping away all potential nuance, demands the clear categorization of all persons and actions."⁴ In Mississippi, Confederate forces' rejection of the nuances of human loyalty layers, via their need to distinguish friend from enemy, resulted in an attempt at total loyalty enforcement. This attempt contributed to an already heated climate that turned everyday actions into potential tests of an individual's fealty to one side or the other. Union forces operated under the same concept.

Many Mississippians, however, acted on allegiances separate from nationalism, even as Confederate partisans used nationalist language to judge people's behavior. Others embraced a national vision that conflicted with the government's ideal of dedicating all human and material resources to the goal of achieving Confederate independence. In these situations, the model of protective nationalism led civil and military authorities to further extend the state's apparatuses into people's lives in an effort to enforce allegiance, an effort stymied by Mississippians' multiple loyalties. Thus, Mississippi's experience demonstrates how the newly-empowered modern nation-state emerged during the Civil War, a model that subsequently arose during succeeding American conflicts.⁵ Paradoxically, however, the war created a strong state that was,

⁴ Elizabeth Duquette, *Loyal Subjects: Bonds of Nation, Race and Allegiance in Nineteenth-Century America* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 42.

⁵ For studies that argue that the Civil War created the modern American nation-state, see Richard Franklin Bensel, *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859-1877* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Peter and Nicholas Onuf, *Nations, Markets and War: Modern History and the American Civil War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006); Melinda Lawson, *Patriot Fires: Forging a New*

in the most crucial aspect, not that strong. Despite its expanded powers, it could not enforce total loyalty among its subjects, which was the very justification for its increased powers in the first place.

Mississippi was the site of several major campaigns in the Civil War's western theater, which ensured that Mississippians would be in close contact with the Union army through most of the conflict. Following the defeat at the Battle of Shiloh, Tennessee, fought on April 6-7, 1862, Confederate forces retreated south to Corinth, Mississippi, with the bloody and battered Union forces in slow pursuit. In the meantime, the Confederates realized their untenable position against a numerically superior foe and evacuated the city. The Federals marched into Corinth unopposed on May 30, establishing a foothold in Mississippi that, when combined with Union operations on the Mississippi River, they retained from that point on. The Union thrust into the state culminated on July 4, 1863, when General John Pemberton's Army of Vicksburg surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant after a three month siege. Confederate military fortunes in Mississippi never recovered after the Vicksburg campaign. Capturing the city gave the Federals a base from which they could raid throughout the state for the remainder of the war. In mid-July 1863, Pontotoc County resident M.J. Blackwell recognized this fact immediately, telling his sister-in-law that "since the fall of Vicksburg I suppose we may look for the whole state to be overrun."⁶ Union occupation posed numerous challenges for Mississippians, especially in regards to the ethical quandaries around swearing the oath of allegiance.

American Nationalism in the Civil War North (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002); Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

⁶ Ben Wynne, *Mississippi's Civil War: A Narrative History* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2006), 63-71; Michael B. Ballard, *Vicksburg: The Campaign that Opened the Mississippi* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 422-431; Timothy B. Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War: The Home Front* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010), 3, 120; M.J. Blackwell to Margaret E. Blackwell, July 17, 1863, Margaret E. Blackwell Papers, folder 1, 04790-z, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (hereafter cited as SHC).

Historian Anne Rubin notes that many Confederates considered an oath taken under coercion inherently non-binding. They therefore swore it pragmatically, allowing them to violate it with a clean conscience as a means to achieving other ends like securing housing, food and protection, while still remaining loyal Confederates.⁷ However, the line between “practical” and “ideological” behavior is often blurry. Although Rubin concedes that oath-swearing was not always an indication of disloyalty, her assertion that oath-takers were *de-facto* Confederates implies that nationalism remained the bedrock standard by which southerners judged their actions. This assumption fails to consider the constrained circumstances under which people swore oaths. Mississippians took the oath as a means to get something they wanted, such as trading passes, protection from Confederate conscription agents, or permission to visit relations behind the lines. In order to achieve these desired ends, they had to profess Union loyalty to Federal authorities. They thereby took part in the wartime nationalist discourse in which partisans tried to ascertain peoples’ loyalties to one side or the other, an environment that rendered all claims of allegiance inherently suspect. To explain how oath-taking undermined the effectiveness of protective nationalism during the Civil War, this chapter examines the reasons some Mississippians gave for criticizing oath-takers, and how oath-takers defended their actions. Critics considered the oath a reliable mechanism for determining a person’s loyalty. By contrast, rather than demonstrating pragmatism, oath-takers invoked multiple loyalties to self and family that had little to do with separate nationalist feelings.

America’s less structured and less hierarchical society, combined with a Protestant suspicion of ritualistic pomp and circumstance, meant that oaths never entailed the same level of ceremonial reverence there that they did in other societies. Nevertheless, the use of oaths as a

⁷ Anne Sarah Rubin, *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 95-97.

mechanism for identifying allegiance had been established in the United States well before the outbreak of the Civil War. Upon their arrival in New England, the Puritans instituted an oath to identify those loyal to the new commonwealth. The first item produced by the English colonies' new printing press in 1639 was the loyalty oath. Americans during the Revolutionary era also embraced the oath, and George Washington viewed it as a reliable "test act" for distinguishing friends from enemies. Thus, oaths played an important role in affirming human relationships and in demonstrating honor in eighteenth and nineteenth century America, especially in the South. In many aspects of southern life, including gentlemanly agreements, university formalities, and demonstrations of honor and integrity between political rivals, the oath served as a binding contract to be respected by those within the circle of honor who swore it. Moreover, southern honor served both individual and communal functions. A person's individual worth was in part measured by their status within the community, and southerners looked to peer-approval on public and private matters.⁸

From 1861 through the end of Reconstruction, the northern government relied on the oath as the chief mechanism for enforcing loyalty and for bringing the South back into the Union. The Federal army in Mississippi made the otherwise voluntary oath a prerequisite for Mississippians wishing to travel through the state or trade at Union lines. Moreover, Federal authorities' conception of loyalty to the Union specifically referred to the Union that formed as the war progressed, embracing emancipation and reconstruction of the seceded states. This new conception contrasted with many conservative Mississippians' vision of the Union as

⁸ Duquette, *Loyal Subjects*, 46; Stephen V. Ash, *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South, 1861-1865* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 44-45, 60-61; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 33-34, 55-57

constituting the old antebellum political order with slavery intact.⁹ Mississippians, then, held varying opinions about taking the oath. Some wrestled over the serious ethical dilemmas the oath presented, but others viewed oath swearing and its attendant implications about loyalty as irrelevant because they took the oath out of allegiances altogether distinct from nationalism.

One Mississippian who considered the oath a serious matter was Vicksburg-based Episcopal minister William Wilberforce Lord. In a lengthy 1863 treatise, Lord ruminated over “whether a man owing true allegiance to one government” could in good faith “take an insincere oath to support a hostile government.” An oath taken under any kind of duress, Lord reasoned, was void by law since the nature of its administering was itself a breach of law. Nonetheless, Lord viewed the oath as still morally-binding, especially when one’s life did not hang in the balance. Distressed that many Mississippians evidenced a “strong temptation” to take the oath, Lord insisted that they refrain from doing so, even if the alternative involved “serious loss and detriment to personal interests.” He maintained that any Mississippian who swore it was “governed by no higher motive than self-interest.”¹⁰ Lord’s view of oath-swearing fit squarely within the protective nationalist model. For him there could be no compromise between loyalty to the state and personal interests. Mississippians should be wholly devoted to the Confederacy, and any deviations from this all-or-nothing approach to nationalism were unacceptable.

Other Mississippians agreed with Lord that oath-swearing resulted from the moral weakness of insufficient patriotism by those who placed themselves over the Confederacy. Writing to his son in the army in April 1863, Jackson, Mississippi resident William Thompson noted that in Lauderdale County, “all within their [Union] lines have taken the oath of

⁹ Duquette, *Loyal Subjects*, 47; Harold Melvin Hyman, *Era of the Oath: Northern Loyalty Tests During the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1954), 35; Richard Franklin Bensel, *The American Ballot Box in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 225-226.

¹⁰ “Conscience and the Confederacy, Or ‘The Oath,’ Morally and Practically Considered. A Sermon by the Rev. W.W. Lord.” *Daily Southern Crisis* (Jackson, MS), January 3, 1863.

allegiance.” Calling the Federals a “fiendish” and “hellish...horde,” Thompson condemned “those who are willing to go back into a union with them. Such creatures are more abhorrent to me than the vile Yankees themselves.” Hinds County resident Eliza Sively echoed Thomson’s sentiment, telling her daughter, “I am sorry to say many of the citizens of Hinds are very much demoralized and have taken the oath,” including one individual who had been a “hot secesh.” In February 1863, a Hinds County police board member complained to the governor that nearly all other board members had “taken the Oath of Allegiance to the Lincoln Government.” William Dameron, writing to his wife from Meridian in November 1863, commented that a friend “had gotten a pass to go to Memphis” and returned “without being compelled to take the oath,” but added that “Kershaw also went, but he took the oath – money, money, money, what will it not make a man do & become.”¹¹ Oath-takers often elicited criticisms from fellow citizens. Indeed, a great many Mississippians considered taking it to be a treasonous offence.

Mississippi soldier Edwin Miller, for example, writing to his mother from Virginia in March 1863, bristled at the “wretches in North Mississippi...who have taken the oath of allegiance to support our enemies,” promising that they would pay for their treason. “[T]hey will reap the harvest which they are now sowing when the war is over, and the Mississippians who are now serving their country return home,” he warned, “it is my most devout wish that they should have their heads shaved on one side and be branded, as deserters are, with a red hot iron, as traitors, and then banished forever from our country.” W.C. Taylor, of Panola County, also considered oath-takers to be traitors, and chafed at rumors that he was among them. Following

¹¹ William H. Thomson to Ruffin Thomson, April, No Date, 1863, Ruffin Thomson Papers, 1822-1889, folder 6, 03315, SHC; Eliza H.B. Sively to Jane Sivley, Undated, Jane Sively Letters, 1862-1867, folder 4, 01891-z, Ibid; R.C. Webb to John J. Pettus, February 28, 1863, John J. Pettus Correspondence, Roll 1446, Volume 51, Record Group 27, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi (Hereafter cited as MDAH); William Dameron to Wife, November 15, 1863, Norton, Chilton and Dameron Family Papers, 1760-1926, folder 8, ser. 1, 03264, SHC.

the Union occupation of Oxford, Mississippi in March 1863, a local doctor accused Taylor, along with Taylor's acquaintances Thomas Wendal and Peter Slate, of appearing in a Chicago newspaper's list of oath-swearing Mississippians. Whether or not Taylor's name was in the paper is unknown, but he denied this accusation in a letter to Wendal, insisting that Phipps "knowingly and consciously utters a falsehood." Upon inquiring about the oath-takers' names, Taylor assured Wendal that "neither your name or that of Mr. Slate's were ever alluded to other than as true & loyal southerners," and asserted that "highway robbery & assassination are respectable crimes compared to these malicious assaults against the integrity of a man's honor and integrity of southern principle." Like Miller, Taylor embraced the protective nationalist stance that loyalty to country should be paramount. In keeping with the southern tradition that linked patriotism to the upholding of personal and communal honor, he believed that those who violated this ideal had committed a dishonorable offense equal to other disloyal acts like desertion.¹²

Oath-swearing was of such concern that Governor John Pettus spoke to the Mississippi legislature about it in November 1863. Though he admitted that the war in his state had been "well calculated to test the loyalty of her citizens," Pettus downplayed talk of mass oath-taking. He conceded that "it is perhaps true that some individuals, taking council of their fears, have taken the oath of allegiance to and sought the protection of the Government of the United States," but insisted that "the great heart of the people of Mississippi remains as true to the cause...as when the contest first began."¹³ In claiming that most remained "true" to the cause, Pettus implied that oath-takers by contrast *did not* remain true. He believed that Mississippians

¹² Edwin Miller to Mrs. H.R. Miller, March 29, 1863, Miller Family Papers, 1830-1864, #MUM00297, Folder 51, Archives and Special Collections, J.D. Williams Library, University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi, (hereafter cited as UMASC); W.C. Taylor to Thomas N. Wendal, March 4, 1863, Longstreet-Hinton Collection, 1841-1954, #MUM00276, Folder 4, Ibid; Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 112.

¹³ United States War Department, comp., *The War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 130 vols. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901) ser. 4, vol. 2, p. 919. (Hereafter cited as *OR*).

could not swear the Union oath *and* be loyal Confederates at the same time, because the protective nationalist ideal made the two actions incompatible. Despite the limits that such an ideal placed on human behavior, some Mississippians nonetheless struggled to live up to it by remaining “true to the cause” and refusing to take the oath.

In October 1862, a *Chicago Times* report from Grant’s headquarters in Oxford, Mississippi, noted that while “a considerable number” who desired “protection in person and property” took the oath, “many go away, silently refusing to take it.” In Warren County, Jane Gibson, the widowed owner of Deer Creek plantation, told Davis that while her neighbor took the oath in order to sell cotton to the Federals at Vicksburg, she steadfastly refused “to swallow there [sic] oath...I can’t do it unless starvation drives me to it, our situation here is a bad one.” Another Warren County resident, Emilie Riley McKinley, also would not swear the oath even as she endured Union occupation from 1863 until the end of the war. Oath-taking was a controversial matter in her neighborhood. Local physician Daniel Nailor adamantly refused to swear it, exclaiming that his bones would “bleach on this hill before I take it.” Two of McKinley’s Confederate friends were furious to hear that plantation owners on the Big Black River had taken the oath claiming the need for protection. McKinley herself refused to swear it, even when the Federals made it harder to procure supplies without doing so.¹⁴ Other Mississippians, however, did take the oath, often under the premise that doing so secured protection for their property or permission to travel, excuses that infuriated nationalist-minded critics.

¹⁴ “Oxford, Mississippi Report from General Grant’s Army Camp,” #MUM01249, Box 1995.3, Folder 95.2, UMASC; Jane Gibson to Jefferson Davis, November 9, 1864. In *The Papers of Jefferson Davis, Vol. 11, September 1864-May 1865*. Lynda Laswell Crist, Barbara J. Rosek, Kenneth H. Williams, eds., (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 150; Gordon A. Cotton, ed. *From the Pen of a She-Rebel: The Civil War Diary of Emilie Riley McKinley* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 26, 37, 64-65.

In August 1863, Caroline Seabury, a northern-born schoolteacher living in Columbus, Mississippi, criticized Delta planters “whose only ambition” was to “‘make a big crop’ – no matter by what means.” The planters sported “‘protection papers,’ [they] got in Memphis by taking the oath,” she added. Seabury found this behavior hypocritical. “I soon saw that there was very little devotion to the Confederacy,” she wrote, “perhaps because a Yankee market was too accessible.” In May 1865, Wayne County resident Anna Pickens complained to a relative that locals had become “‘dear lovers of the Union and haters of secession and secessionists” after the fall of Mobile. A local planter epitomized such treason for Pickens. “Mr. Goodman has hurried off to take the oath of allegiance for the purpose of saving his property in Mobile,” she noted, “he intends moving back to the city as soon as he possibly can and is going to leave his plantation to the tender mercies of the negroes.” In August 1863, Amite County, Mississippi native Samuel Moore told his wife that a neighbor “signed so the Yankees would not bother him any more...I thought he would be the last man that would take the oath.” That same month, former state representative James Alcorn informed his wife that “none are permitted to visit Helena without taking ‘the oath,’ I regret that many of our people have done this.”¹⁵ These critics believed that swearing the oath to safeguard property was treasonous, because doing so put self-interest above Confederate independence.

Other Mississippians, however, demonstrated that this conclusion was too simplistic. Some touted their Confederate loyalty, but still indicated that micro loyalties had to be considered as legitimate motivations behind taking the oath. Their actions revealed how multiple allegiances undermined protective nationalists’ attempts to interpret wartime behavior on its face

¹⁵ Suzanne L. Bunkers, ed. *The Diary of Caroline Seabury, 1854-1863* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 103; Anna Pickens to Josie Howe, May 4, 1865, Chiliab Smith Howe Papers, 1814-1899, folder 53, ser. 1.6, 03092, Ibid; Samuel Moore to Mary Moore, August 20, 1863, Samuel Blanche Moore Letters, Z/1800.000/F, MDAH; James Lusk Alcorn to Wife, August 29, 1863, James Lusk Alcorn Papers, 1850-1949, folder 4, 00005-z, SHC.

as evidence of national loyalty or the lack thereof. This, in turn, displayed the inherent difficulty of trying to enforce a simplistic ideal in the complicated real world. The presence of so many critics of oath-taking indicates that protective nationalism functioned as an ideal for people to strive towards. Yet, even though the Confederate nation had the backing of plenty of Mississippians, who recognized the presence of “treasonous” oath-takers, no mechanism, oaths or otherwise, could be devised to aid the state in compelling total allegiance among all of its subjects.

Take, for example, the experience of Natchez planter’s wife and daughter of former Mississippi governor John Quitman, Louisa Lovell. Amidst rumors of Yankee invasion in May of 1862, she wrote to her husband Joseph that “my only fears are that they may take our servants and try to compel us to take the oath, which I will never do.” By February 1864, with the Federals well-established in Natchez, Lovell told Joseph that “unless we acceded to some requirements of the Yankees, they intended to seize Palmyra [her plantation]...of course first & foremost is that horrible oath.” She continued:

“What to do I do not know. I feel as if I would submit to every privation rather than go against my conscience & yet here is the fearful alternative of that or starvation & begging. I believe that should we persist in our present feeling as regards this diabolical oath, that the next move would be to order us out of the lines & away from our home. Would not this be awful!”

Still, Lovell refused to submit, complaining that “none but a base, groveling, covetous Yankee” would “place helpless women” in such a position. “Many advise taking the oath as one would submit to the torture of the rack,” she noted, “such indeed it would be to me. I don’t believe I could ever do it.” In March 1864, however, after nearly two years of resisting, Lovell acquiesced. “I will tell we were compelled to take the oath. Think of that, Joe!” she exclaimed. “However it

is the oath of amnesty,” she added, “it was this or starvation & beggary.”¹⁶ Self-interest, driven by the fear of material discomfort, led Lovell to swear the oath. These separate attachments came into conflict with her national feelings. Had the influence of protective nationalism won out in this instance, Lovell would have risked losing her home and endured banishment from the lines. In refusing to do so she demonstrated the limited influence of protective nationalism on even self-proclaimed Confederates.

Like Lovell, many other Mississippians claimed that taking the oath out of self-interest did not reflect their true national feelings. In June 1862, Chickasaw County Unionist Levi Naron was initially surprised to see Mississippians “flock” to swear the amnesty oath at Union-occupied Corinth. He soon discovered, however, that the citizens had done so “not out of any pure motive, but for the purpose of selling their cotton.” Indeed, these oath-takers “all had arms, which they kept concealed,” waiting to help the Confederates “clean out” the Yankees from the area. Even Confederates charged with punishing oath-takers were not immune to the influence of other loyalties in the matter. Addressing the wave of oath-swearing after Vicksburg’s fall, Confederate cavalry scout Charles Allen told his parents that “nearly all here have taken it...it would be easier to name the true ones to you.” In response, his company was going to “take every horse from the spotted men of Warren & turn them over to the government.” Yet, while he went about seizing oath-takers’ property, Allen noted that his cousin, Will, had sworn the oath after the Federals threatened to arrest him and confiscate his property. “As he could not leave his children he told them he would take the oath but would not consider it still binding, as it was a forced oath,” Allen wrote. In this case, he acknowledged that his cousin’s attachments to property and family were separate from national feelings, and therefore exempted him from

¹⁶ Louisa T. Lovell to Joseph Lovell, December 5, 1862, February 7, 1864, March 8, 1864, Quitman Family Papers, 1784-1978, folders 110, 111, 112, ser. 1.2, 00616, SHC.

punishment. Allen did not, however, extend this courtesy to other oath-takers whom he deemed traitors.¹⁷

Other Mississippians faced the same dilemma when the oath pitted national against personal interests. In early June 1863, Claiborne County resident Elizabeth Ingraham, the Confederate sister of Union General George Meade, criticized neighbors who took the oath from Federal raiders. One in particular, she noted, “calls himself a ‘Union man;’ property saved; only still point.” Although Ingraham chided her neighbors, she and her husband, Alfred, wrestled with the same conflicts. “I do pray to God he [Alfred] will withstand the oath,” she wrote, “we can’t lose much more, in a worldly view.” She prayed for the strength to “resist that despotism...until the whole country succumbs, and there is no Confederate government.”¹⁸ The willingness to sacrifice all material possessions for the good of the cause was an ideal that Ingraham struggled to live up to, but self-interest was a constant motivator. Her determination to “resist” the “despotism” imposed by the Union oath suggests that even as she remained resolutely patriotic, the mere thought of committing what others might construe as a treasonous act wracked her conscience. Such fear resulted from the unrealistic model of devotion that protective nationalism wrought on even self-identified loyal Mississippians.

Warren County planter James Dick Hill faced accusations of treason when, due to his oath-swearing, the army denied him the return of slaves sent to Alabama in 1863. Describing the charge as “an infamous falsehood,” Hill protested to Davis that “we were all compelled to apply for protection and there is no one in this place who did not do it.” Indeed, Hill was not alone in

¹⁷ Thomas D. Cockrell and Michael B. Ballard, eds., *Chickasaw, A Mississippi Scout for the Union: The Civil War Memoir of Levi H. Naron* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005) 53, 55; Charles B. Allen to Parents, September 14, October 4, August 25, 1863, James Allen and Charles B. Allen Papers, 1788-1869, microfilm, 01697, roll 1, SHC.

¹⁸ W. Maury Darst, ed., “The Vicksburg Diary of Mrs. Alfred Ingraham, May 2-June 13, 1863,” *Journal of Mississippi History* 44 (Feb.-Nov., 1982): 174.

taking the oath to get something in return. In September 1863, a north-Mississippi cavalryman informed Pettus that people “all along the Rail Road, had taken the ‘oath,’” to trade at Union lines. “The scarcity of salt & meat is the alleged excuse for this illicit trade,” the officer noted. Following a Union raid through Attala County, Will Kirkland told his cousin, Bettie that with few exceptions, “nearly all the men in the neighborhood” had taken the oath at Federal camps, but assured Bettie that “the sympathies of nearly all are with the south, they took the oath to get pay for property which the Yanks had taken and in most instances it was needed to buy supplies for their families.” A group of Yazoo County planters and one laborer may have had similar incentives for swearing the oath in July 1863. The oath served as a “safeguard,” and although their oaths included no personal statements, all save the laborer, H.B. Watson, had substantial holdings in property and real-estate liable to be exposed to Federal raids. Watson likely worked on local plantations and therefore also had an interest in protecting planters’ property.¹⁹ These examples indicate that even as Confederate nationalists conflated oath-swearing with treason, such a charge was not enough to prevent Mississippians from swearing it out of micro loyalties unrelated to nationalism. The Confederate state simply did not have the power to make the protective nationalist ideal into a reality when it came to oaths.

In addition to securing protection for property, other Mississippians swore the oath to avoid Confederate conscription, continue commercial activity, and visit family and friends living beyond Confederate lines. Relying on the oath as a mechanism for gauging allegiance, Federal

¹⁹ James Dick Hill to Jefferson Davis, March 23, 24, 1865, in Crist, Rosek, Williams Eds., *The Papers of Jefferson Davis*, Vol. 11, 150; W.L. Nugent to John J. Pettus, September 29, 1863, Pettus Correspondence, Reel 1446, Volume 51, MDAH; Will Kirkland to Bettie Howard, December 12, 1864, Juanita Brown Collection, 1861-1864, #MUM00048, box 1.18, folder 77-3, UMASC; Oaths and Safeguards of John Isenhood, John Herod, Henry Stam, H.B. Watson, July 17, 1863, in Records of the Provost Marshal General (Hereafter cited as RPMG), U.S. Army Commands, Military Division of the Mississippi, Letters Recorded, Statements of Scouts, Misc. Papers, 1864-65, RG 393, Entry 2521, NARA; 1860 U.S. Census, Yazoo County, Mississippi, John Herod, Henry Stam, H.B. Watson, J.M. Isenhood, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed April 7, 2011).

officials often judged these individuals as loyal to the Union. Examining the reasons why these Mississippians claimed Union allegiance, however, sheds light on how the complexity of human loyalty layers renders such judgments suspect. These Mississippians swore the oath under constrained circumstances, in which pledging Union allegiance was a necessary means for achieving their desired ends. This fact suggests that historians should be wary, Federal officials' conclusions notwithstanding, in saying with certitude that they were "loyal" to the Union. Such a conclusion conflates their ends with their means, shifting the focus away from the micro loyalties which they indicated were important influences on their behavior. This is not to deny the possibility that some Mississippians who took the oath were Unionists, but it is to say that the oath was not a reliable tool with which to make such a judgment.

In December 1863, Rankin County farmer and Vicksburg parolee Archibald St. Clair "escaped into Union lines" at New Orleans and "fearing to be again forced into Rebel service," was "desirous to take [the] oath of allegiance" and move to New York. Similarly, Jasper County natives Joseph Byrd and Marion, Martin, and Obadiah Parker came to New Orleans claiming that they had "always been loyal." After being conscripted in 1862, they absconded to the woods before escaping to Union lines, where they desired to take the oath. The Federal commission judged the men to be "honest and sincerely loyal," having deserted "from aversion to fight against the government and flag of the United States." Franklin County, Mississippi residents Beer Gardner and Barnet Brodnintza fled to Federal lines "to escape conscription in rebel service." Both were "willing to take the oath," and the Federals deemed them "not suspicious persons." In October 1863, Biloxi natives George Andrews and William Norberg came to Ship Island "to avoid conscription" and were then sent to New Orleans as prisoners, where they wanted to take the oath and "go to work in the city." New Orleans resident Louisa Frederick

vouched for the men, noting that both had relatives in the Union army, reinforcing their standing as “good Union Men.” Taking Federal officials’ word that these Mississippians were loyal Unionists neglects the fact that they all swore the oath to avoid Confederate conscription. They may or may not have been loyal, but the oath could not prove this, since they swore it for reasons beyond the mere desire to publically avow their patriotism.²⁰

The case of Pontotoc County native Thomas Sheppard further illustrates this point. Sheppard was working as a U.S. government clerk in Kansas before the war, but came to Holly Springs, Mississippi, in late 1862. Soon, he was arrested by Confederate forces and shuffled between prisons, where he gave conflicting loyalty statements. Initially, Sheppard said that he returned to Mississippi “determined to seek his relatives in the south and join the Conf. Army,” and swore that he had never fought for the U.S. nor taken the Union oath. When moved to Columbus, Mississippi, Sheppard explained that after leaving Holly Springs, he went to Illinois to continue working for the U.S. government, but reiterated that he came back to Mississippi “to seek his relatives South, and join the Confederate service.” In a third statement however, Sheppard contradicted his previous testimonies, claiming that he could not join the Confederate army due to a “case of the kidneys.” He also said that he had “taken the oath of allegiance to the U.S. govt.” and was “unwilling to violate it” by fighting for the Confederacy, preferring instead to remain in prison. Ultimately, the Confederate authorities recommended that Sheppard be sent to the Salisbury prison in North Carolina “to be confined as an alien enemy.”²¹ Sheppard’s emphasis on visiting family within Confederate lines, and his desire to avoid military service,

²⁰ “Archibald St. Clair, Joseph Byrd, Marion, Martin, Obadiah Parker, Barnet Brodnintza, Beer Gardner,” in Lists of Persons Sent Before the Union Provost Marshall at New Orleans, December 9, 22, 26, 1863, Nos. 7207-7576, Roll 26, Union Provost Marshal’s File of Papers Relating to Two or More Civilians, (Hereafter cited as UPMF) M-416, War Department Collection of Confederate Records, Record Group 109, NARA; Statements Regarding W.H. Norberg and G.W. Andrews, October 21, 1863, roll 24, Ibid.

²¹ First, Second, and Third Statements of Thomas M. Sheppard, August 13, October 9, November 26, 1863, roll 88, LRCSW.

suggests that these issues, rather than nationalism, guided his behavior. This may explain why he gave otherwise contradictory loyalty statements: he used nationalist language as the means to other ends.

Perhaps the nationalist claims of Sheppard and others who swore the Union oath to avoid Confederate military service were sincere, but they also had personal motives for doing so. Thus, their oath-taking should be viewed as part of the greater nationalist discourse within Civil War Mississippi, a response to partisans who demanded that people take sides, rather than as statements of absolute truth. Their desire to avoid service reflected self-interest that was distinct from patriotism, and this micro loyalty clearly drove them at least in part to swear the oath. Federal authorities in Mississippi were aware of the unreliability of oaths. Union General Order No. 6 from Vicksburg stated that “in deciding upon the class of persons who are to be assessed, it should not be forgotten that the oath of allegiance is not an infallible test of loyalty...men must be judged by their acts and not by the oaths they have taken.”²² This realization did not stop Union and Confederate officials, however, from continuing to use the oath to elicit declarations of loyalty from Mississippians. The binary framework of protective nationalism demanded that friend and foe be clearly defined, and the oath, though flawed, was the major historical mechanism available for this task.

Both sides’ continued use of the oath underlined an essential goal of the modern nation-state: to elicit the allegiance of its citizens. Driven by this end-goal, Union and Confederate authorities continued to require Mississippians whose motives seemed unrelated to patriotism to nonetheless affirm their allegiance through oath-taking. For some Mississippians, close proximity to Federal lines ensured relatively smooth traveling per their willingness to swear it. Those living on the Gulf Coast and river waterways had easier access to these lines than those in

²² *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 39, pt. 2, pg. 32.

the state's interior. In April 1862, the Union navy captured Biloxi and Pass Christian, the Gulf region's two major cities, and established a Confederate prisoner of war camp on Ship Island, off the coast of Pascagoula. In addition to housing prisoners, Ship Island became a location where Mississippi civilians went to get passage beyond Confederate lines. The Union's capturing of New Orleans, Natchez, Vicksburg, and Memphis gave them control of the Mississippi and all of its ports.²³

In February 1865, eight Mississippians took the Federal oath on steamers off of landings at Vicksburg, Olive Branch, Natchez, Eggspoint, Hannet, and Skepwith. In November 1863, eleven more, most from the Gulf, took the oath at Ship Island, citing the scarcity of provisions and fear of conscription as their reasons for doing so. Of the eleven, three Pascagoula residents refused to take it, having already sworn the Confederate oath, but still wanted to stay in Union lines. When Federal boats prevented Jackson County timber mill operator Henry Kirkwood from shipping turpentine from Mobile to Pascagoula, he told Union authorities that he had "always been loyal" and been called "an abolitionist," and wanted to take the oath "to obtain [a] permit to bring in turpentine again." Judging Kirkwood to be "a loyal man," Federal authorities acquiesced. Harrison County business-owners Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gumbell took the oath and received a pass to travel along the Gulf to visit friends and to run their Pascagoula hotel. In December 1863, Biloxi resident Camelia Gerard arrived in New Orleans where, after Union authorities deemed her "not a suspicious person," she swore the oath in order to "visit relatives." Likewise, Biloxi native Louisa Lafaure, along with several family members, came to New Orleans and swore the oath to "reside with relatives." The Federal Provost Marshal considered

²³ John K. Bettersworth, *Confederate Mississippi: The People and Politics of a Cotton State in Wartime* (1943; repr., Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1978), 241-243; Westley F. Busbee Jr., *Mississippi: A History* (Wheeling, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, 2005), 133-134.

them to be an “inoffensive creole family” and allowed them to stay in Union lines even though they “had a friend in rebel service.”²⁴

Mississippi’s Gulf Coast contained a large number of foreign-born residents, and ethnicity was one of many factors that informed non-native born Americans’ decisions to support either side during the war. In general however, foreign-born whites were no more or less inclined to support the Confederacy than native-born whites.²⁵ These Gulf Coast residents cited self-interest in the form of avoiding conscription and privation, maintaining commercial activity, and the desire to visit friends and relatives beyond Confederate lines as undergirding their decision to take the oath. These allegiances were powerful motivators regardless of peoples’ national sympathies, and they revealed that the U.S. government, which used its expanded wartime resources and manpower to gauge the loyalty of southerners, was weak where it mattered most: in obtaining Mississippians’ unquestioned allegiance. Its resources were still insufficient in light of the influence of human loyalty layers.

Just as Union forces relied on the oath to measure Mississippians’ allegiance, Confederates continued to view actions like oath-swearing as evidence of citizens’ supposedly faltering patriotism. While the ideal of protective nationalism loomed large over controversies regarding oath-swearing, the Civil War in Mississippi created other instances that, according to ardent Confederate nationalists, challenged Mississippians’ devotion to the cause. Although their multiple loyalties revealed the inherent difficulty in trying to enforce protective nationalism among the state’s populace, Confederates responded by doubling down on their attempts to do

²⁴ List of Civilians who Took Federal Oath on Steamers, February, 1865, roll 52; List of Civilians on Ship Island, November 26, 1863, roll 25; “Henry Kirkwood, Mrs. Charles L. Gumbell,” in Lists of Persons Sent Before the Union Provost Marshall at New Orleans, December 9, 22, 1863, roll 26; List of Refugees at New Orleans, December 24, 1863, Ibid, all in UPMF.

²⁵ Bettersworth, *Confederate Mississippi*, 241-242; Ella Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy* (1940; repr., Victor A. Lonn, 1968); Anne J. Bailey, *Invisible Southerners: Ethnicity in the Civil War* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006), 1-10; Susannah J. Ural, ed., *Civil War Citizens: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity in America’s Bloodiest Conflict* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 2-9.

so. This was the logical next step in trying to make an unrealistic nationalist ideal into a reality. If Confederate victory required total and unyielding loyalty, then the promotion and enforcement of it had to be total and unyielding as well. This circular logic ultimately contributed to the modern wartime state's embracing of loyalty enforcement as an end unto itself.

Those within the government and military who believed that only a total dedication to the war effort could win southern independence continued to balk at any perceived departure from the total loyalist model. Fire-eating Mississippi senator Albert Gallatin Brown epitomized this stance in a blustery Christmas Eve 1863 congressional speech, and his nationalist model is worth quoting in full:

If I were asked, Mr. President, what the country most needs in this hour of peril, I would say patriotism; an all pervading and universal patriotism; not the babbling, noisy patriotism, that prates of what it is about to do or has done, but the earnest, heartfelt, quiet, but bounding, patriotism that does all things and dares all things, and wholly [sic] oblivious as to self, lives only for the cause. Such patriotism will strengthen our army and improve our currency. Will fill up the ranks, convert paper into gold, put shoes on the feet of our soldiers and shirts on their backs. It will nerve the arms and quiet the hearts of, husbands and fathers in the field, by feeding and clothing their loved ones at home. Then, Mr. President, let us all, high and low, rich and poor, from this day forth cultivate a more earnest and ardent patriotism.

Here Brown encapsulated the essence of protective nationalism, defined by “an all pervading and universal patriotism” that was “wholly [sic] oblivious to self” within citizens who lived “only for the cause.” This type of nationalism had no room for dissent, real or perceived. Echoing Brown, in 1862 the *Panola Star* stated that all those who “either directly or indirectly” expressed Union sentiments were “enemies of the South” who were “daily trying to injure our cause.” Many other Mississippians seized upon Brown's and the *Star's* vision of total dedication to the state as the only viable path to Confederate victory.²⁶

²⁶ Albert Gallatin Brown, December 24, 1863, “State of the Country Speech in the Confederate Senate,” *Documenting the American South*. Electronic Edition. Southern Historical Collection. University Library, University

In late 1862, Carroll County native W. Cothran told Pettus that in light of Union invasion of the country, “it is the duty of every citizen to contribute all he possesses, of mind, body and muscle, as well as property, to its defense.” But Cothran was dismayed when he saw citizens, including “strong, able bodied men” leaving the state with their property, and reiterated that “if every man” would stand and fight, the state could “drive out the invaders far hence.” That same month, Kemper County citizens complained to Pettus that people were fleeing in order to save their property “from the Clutches of the Yankees,” and demanded that the state legislature pass laws to prevent such behavior. In early 1863, a recruiting officer in Greenwood, Mississippi told Pettus that the “principal cause” of men shirking military duty was “the lack of patriotism” among the formerly “loudest mouthed Secessionists” who preferred that others “do the work while they recline at home...careless of what the result of this war may be providing that they are left unmolested.” In February 1864, a Mississippi cavalry officer wrote that citizens must “consecrate everything to their country,” adding that “until a people...determine to make all considerations subservient to the grand end in view, but little hope can be entertained for their success.” He noted that each Mississippian was “a component part of the people, and that his actions, good, bad, or indifferent, tend to govern the final results.”²⁷ Protective nationalists believed that Confederate victory could only be achieved if Mississippians acted as “component” parts in service to the greater collective cause. Any deviation, like favoring self-interest at the nation’s expense, would stymie this goal. With this in mind, ardent Confederates reserved a

of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999 <http://docsouth.unc.edu/impls/cotton/cotton.html>. (Accessed September 24, 2009); “Enemies to the Southern Cause, From the Mississippian,” *Weekly Panola Star* (Panola, MS), July 9, 1862.

²⁷ W. Cothran to John J. Pettus, November 15, 1862, Pettus Correspondence, roll 2812, vol. 50; Resolution by Citizens of Preston to John J. Pettus, November 20, 1862, Ibid; John McAutis to John J. Pettus, April 10, 1863, Ibid, roll 1446, vol. 51; Statement of “Rebel Dragoon,” February 23, 1864, Harry St. John Dixon Papers, 1855-1904, folder 5, 02375, SHC.

particular ire for alleged speculators and extortionists, whom they believed epitomized the triumph of self over country.

In December 1862, the *Weekly Mississippian* exonerated speculators. “Mississippians!” it proclaimed, “why are so many men left in our cities, who, like vultures, feed on the vitals of the country...?” Similarly, in March 1863, the Natchez *Weekly Courier* complained of skyrocketing prices for basics like butter. “What can we do, with such extortion bringing us to ruin, and our households to distress?” it wondered. A Monroe County resident told Pettus that “all along the railroad you can see men Speculating in everything that will sell,” while an ordinance officer informed the governor that lead for ammunition was abundant in the state, but the “traitorous, cowardly, yankee spirited note-shaving, money grasping” holders of the lead “ask prices which the state cannot afford to pay.” The *Eastern Clarion* accused merchants of reducing the population “to the condition of paupers,” by overcharging for necessities. The situation became so dire that the Confederate Commissary Office in Mississippi issued a September 1864 circular ordering state commissioners to arrest any exempted persons caught speculating in army subsistence. “They have no right to *barter* their produce, but all of it which is not necessary for the support of their families must be sold to the Government or soldiers’ families” at fixed prices, it stated. Any exempted man found engaging in “business prejudicial to the interests of the Government,” was to be reported at once.²⁸ The message was straightforward: those who did not sacrifice everything possible to the cause would be punished.

Critics targeted planters in particular for growing commodity crops when the population needed food. “The *American Citizen* called extortionist planters, “the main...cause of the high

²⁸ “An Appeal from the Ladies of Mississippi,” *Weekly Mississippian* (Jackson, MS), December 3, 1862; “What Shall we do?” *Weekly Courier* (Natchez, MS), March 4, 1863; Samuel Ward to John J. Pettus, November 23, 1862, Pettus Correspondence, roll 1446, vol. 50; Edward Fontaine to John J. Pettus, January 11, 1862, Ibid, roll 1218, vol. 48; “Bread - Extortion,” *Eastern Clarion* (Paulding, MS), May 2, 1862; “Chief Commissary Office for Mississippi Circular,” September 2, 1864, Norton, Chilton and Dameron Family Papers.

prices now crossing the country, demoralizing the consciences of our citizens and paralyzing the arms and the hearts of our gallant soldiers.” In May 1862, Tippah County resident Francis Leak informed Pettus that north Mississippi planters, who had “heretofore done least for the cause of Independence,” were pursuing “so unpatriotic a course” by planting cotton instead of food for the army. As punishment, Leak thought that they should endure “heavy taxes” to fund the war debt and support soldiers’ families. The *Weekly Mississippian* sarcastically noted how planters “have often declared their readiness to ‘sacrifice the last dollar’ for honor and independence,” adding that “when they have sacrificed the *first* dollar, we will listen to them.” Similarly, a *Beacon* editorial stated that collusion between planters and speculators in disregarding “the wants and necessities of others...almost partakes of the nature of a conspiracy.” A Mississippi militiaman believed that greed had overtaken the state, telling Pettus that “we cannot depend upon our neighbors...the calamities of the war have developed every selfish feeling – men now only do for themselves.” A Pontotoc County woman echoed this sentiment, noting that “a spirit of selfishness & greed pervades the whole country & there are but few that are honest.”²⁹ These critics thought that those who allegedly profited at the Confederacy’s expense were traitors. In a war for independence, they believed that victory required a total mental and material sacrifice from citizens.

Some Mississippians, however, defended the profit motive and balked at accusations of disloyalty. An editorial in the *American Citizen*, for example, asserted that the simple laws of supply and demand drove market sales based on the scarcity of goods and currency depreciation. “All who trade are speculators; - every one who has any article to sell, will take the biggest

²⁹ “An Appeal to the Planters of the Country,” *American Citizen* (Canton, MS), October 10, 1863; Francis Terry Leak Journal, May 5, 1862, Francis Terry Leak Papers, 1839-1865, fol. 13, vol. 7, 01095, SHC; “Submissionists,” *Weekly Mississippian* (Jackson, MS), April 8, 1863; *Macon Beacon* (Macon, MS), November 4, 1863; Benjamin King to John J. Pettus, December 17, 1862, Pettus Correspondence; S.G. Miller to George Miller, October 31, 1862, Miller Family Papers, fol. 40.

market price,” it proclaimed. The *Citizen* asserted that individuals had a right to consider their own personal interests, and claimed that the government made matters worse by trying to eliminate self-interest through regulation of trade rather than by protecting it as a basic right. Adams County planter Charles Whitmore shared this feeling, claiming that it was the nation’s duty to protect citizens’ personal interests, not the other way around. The English-born Whitmore came to the United States in 1822 and gained citizenship ten years later, but as the war drained his slave property, he wanted to regain British citizenship. “During the late troubles I have not personally borne arms against the U.S. government but considered that that party are not actively protecting my interest,” he wrote to an English friend in 1864, “I am disposed to solve back to my original birthright.” Whitmore felt that a nation, whether Union or Confederate, that failed to create secure conditions for his personal property did not deserve his allegiance.³⁰

At the heart of the controversy over speculation, extortion, and property rights was a basic question with no easy answer, which presupposed conflict between macro and micro loyalties: how much should Mississippians do for themselves and how much should they do for their country? This controversy was one facet of a much broader debate within the Confederacy’s borders over the meaning of nationalism itself and how far the state could, and should go in trying to make protective nationalism a reality. In addition to its role in the argument over the right to have free markets in wartime, this issue also emerged when Mississippians protested the military’s authority to impress personal property in the name of the national cause. Some contended that such a justification directly conflicted with *their* concept of nationalism, based on a state that respected individual freedom by defending property rights

³⁰ “Speculators and Extortioners,” *American Citizen* (Canton, MS), December 5, 1862; Charles Whitmore to Joseph Lyon, February 15, 1864, Charles Whitmore Plantation Journal, microfilm, 02406, roll 1, SHC.

against what they perceived to be a warped form of patriotism that made the nation's existence an end unto itself.

In late 1862, Arnoldus Brumby of Holmes County complained to his sister about Confederate authorities violating individual rights by impressing leather makers into government service. Calling this policy a “high handed usurpation of power,” he lamented that citizens were “being denied the privilege of controlling their own private property,” and warned that “such military necessities as they are egregiously called will crush the spirit upon which the foundation of all republics are built – namely good will.” In late 1863, speaking for “a number of prominent citizens,” Oxford resident William Delay complained to Governor Charles Clark that Confederate troops were confiscating citizens’ wagons and salt. He added that civil process had been “issued by the citizens to recover the property,” but were “in every instance overruled and disregarded by the military authority.” In another 1863 letter to Clark, state agent I.W. Watson conceded that impressment was to some extent “necessary,” but wondered “by what authority is confiscation of...property added to the penalty of the statute, and enforced against citizens by a military ex-parte tribunal?” He believed that this policy had “become odious,” and that the “numerous evils” attending its enforcement were “demoralizing” the citizenry. Brumby and Watson were not alone in their critiques of excessive state power as a means of ensuring Confederate victory. The excuse of military necessity, and its attendant vision of total nationalism as a justification for the impressments of private property, was a contentious issue in the Confederacy throughout the war.³¹

³¹ Arnoldus Brumby to Sarah C. Simpson, December 7, 1862, Simpson and Brumby Family Papers, 1847-1945, folder 2, subseries 1.1, 01408-z, SHC; William Delay to Charles Clark, November 27, 1863, Charles Clark, December 21, 1863, Charles Clark Correspondence, Series 768, Box 949, Volume 56, Record Group 27, MDAH; I.W.C. Watson to Charles Clark, December 21, 1863, Ibid; On Military confiscation, see Paul D. Escott, *Military Necessity: Civil-Military Relations in the Confederacy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), 25, 174 and Mark E. Neely Jr., *Southern Rights: Political Prisoners and the Myth of Confederate Constitutionalism* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1999), 163-167.

In July 1862, for example, Joshua and Thomas Green, bankers who also owned the Pearl River Mills in Jackson, Mississippi, protested military necessity in a memorial to Davis. Since the start of the war, the Confederate quartermaster had required the Greens to manufacture clothing for the government, which they did willingly, and in the process neglected private customers in order to sell to the state at fixed rates below the market price. The Green's objected, however, when in May the Confederate Provost Marshal, under orders from General Earl Van Dorn, took possession of the mill and demanded that the Greens and their employees work for the state "on penalty of being regarded as 'disloyal to the government' & 'treated accordingly.'" The Greens considered Van Dorn's invocation of martial law to justify the seizure unconstitutional since it infringed on their right to use their property as they saw fit. They demanded recompense for all losses incurred, claiming that there is no just reason on which "it [the government] can claim to take private property for less than other purchasers are willing to pay for it." They touted their patriotism, reminding Davis that they had "always been willing to supply the government with goods," but argued that their opposition to martial law stemmed from a desire to conform to "a free government, founded on written constitutions & written laws." The Greens invoked constitutionalism to defend a nationalist vision based on respect for self-interest via private property and limits on military authority. This vision stood in contrast to the kind of protective nationalism that authorized the army to sacrifice citizen's personal rights to the needs of the state.³²

That summer, martial law was also at the center of the case of Yalobusha County lawyer Samuel Hawkins. Provost Marshal R.H. Forrester arrested Hawkins and fined him fifty dollars after Hawkins refused to accept Confederate notes as payment for hired-out slaves. Forrester called Hawkins traitorous for denying the money, citing "the dangerous influence" he might

³² Memorial of Joshua and Thomas Green to Jefferson Davis, July 26, 1862, roll 48, LRCSW.

exert in “destroying the credit of Confederate money.” He warned Brigadier General John Villepigue that Hawkins’ and other “selfish and unpatriotic men” were doing so, thereby justifying a “stern check upon the further progress of the evil.” Villepigue agreed, telling Secretary of War George Randolph that Van Dorn’s General Order to sustain government credit justified Hawkins’ arrest. Enforcing the order had to be done “at some personal and pecuniary inconvenience to a few citizens,” he added, “but that regret is generally lessened by the conviction that those citizens are at least indifferent to the success of the Confederacy’s fighting men, if not positively disloyal to their Government.” In his own defense, Hawkins claimed that his arrest was unconstitutional, and invoked patriotism founded on a nation that respected individual rights. “I love my country,” he wrote, “...and I would ask what guarantee have the citizens of their rights, what barriers exist against the worst of tyranny, if Marshal Law... without any rules or limitations, [is] to be carried into effect in Mississippi.” Former state judge E.S. Fisher seconded Hawkins, arguing that army regulations did not apply to civilians, and that the constitution should protect them against “acts of tyranny.” War Department clerk Robert G.H. Kean conceded that “the law is with Hawkins,” and that protecting government credit was beyond the Provost Marshal’s duty, leaving “no other grounds to question Hawkins’ loyalty.”³³ As Hawkins’ case demonstrated, protective nationalism turned mundane acts like refusing currency into sedition against the state and stirred controversy between different branches of the Confederate government.

Protective nationalists, like Van Dorn, Forrester, and Villepigue believed that the Confederacy could not be self-sufficient without its own currency, the bedrock of economic

³³ R.L. Forrester to John B. Villepigue, July 30, 1862, John B. Villepigue to George Randolph, August 21, 1862, Samuel M. Hawkins to R.L. Forrester, June 28, 1862, Samuel M. Hawkins to George W. Randolph, August 9, 1862, Statement of E.S. Fisher, July 15, 1862, R.G.H. Kean to George Randolph, September 1, 1862, Arrest Papers of Samuel M. Hawkins, roll 52, LRCSW.

independence. Their position was not without support. An 1863 *Weekly Mississippian* editorial stated that anyone with a “heart truly in the Confederate cause...will be conscious of...the duty to uphold the credit of the currency which is the life-blood of that cause.” A letter to the editor of the *American Citizen* stated that those refusing Confederate money were bringing “discredit on our Government.” “How small must be the spark of patriotism in that man’s breast who would not do all in his power to save and help his country in this her hour of greatest peril?” the writer asked.³⁴ Hawkins, Fisher, and others did not agree with such all-or-nothing assessments. They rejected a nationalism that advocated the sacrifice of personal interests to the whim of the state, and saw the pursuit of a nation concerned only with its own perpetuation as both unworkable and undesirable. For its part, the Confederate government demonstrated how, even with expanded powers that enabled a Provost Marshal to judge the nationalist implications of a personal loan, it could not circumvent the influence of other allegiances in citizens like Hawkins.

The debate over the state’s needs versus personal interests also pitted Confederate officials against planters in a dispute over the state’s right to appropriate slaves for the war effort.³⁵ Historians Lawrence Powell and Michael Wayne view this conflict as evidence of “the realignment of the planter’s political allegiances due to changes in their perceived self-interest,” and “the detachment of that perceived self-interest from *all* sense of national loyalty.” Similarly, Stephanie McCurry argues that planters “were more concerned with property than nation,” because they would not sacrifice their slaves for a war that they started.³⁶ This interpretation assumes that total nationalism could be, and *should* be embraced by Confederate citizens, and

³⁴ “Confederate Currency,” *Weekly Mississippian* (Jackson, MS), April 22, 1863; “Refusing Confederate Money,” *American Citizen* (Canton, MS), July 3, 1863.

³⁵ Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 264, 276.

³⁶ Lawrence N. Powell and Michael S. Wayne, “Self-Interest and the Decline of Confederate Nationalism,” in *The Old South in the Crucible of War*, Harry P. Owens and James J. Cooke, eds., (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1983), 30; McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*, 285.

that the influence of other attachments necessarily indicated disloyalty. Further, the issue of slave impressments put the newly-empowered state in the ironic position of seizing slave property, the protection of which being the Confederacy's *raison d'être*, to help perpetuate its own existence.

Mississippi planters, however, claimed that concern for property did not indicate a lack of patriotism. Many willingly leased slaves to work on fortifications but opposed further impressments when they deemed their contributions sufficient. Mississippi offered slave owners thirty-dollars per month compensation plus rations and clothing for leased hands. Planters sending over thirty slaves could provide their own overseer, with the state paying his salary. Congress passed a general slave impressment act in March 1863, empowering the military to impress in accordance with state laws. In 1864, a second act authorized the collection of twenty-thousand more slaves. Many planters donated hands, but protested when the state failed to uphold its promise to maintain slaves' health and when they perceived it as having not impressed equally among slaveholders.³⁷

In early 1863, several Holmes County planters voluntarily sent slaves to work on the Vicksburg fortifications, but were dismayed to learn that the slaves were "put under Military overseers," who "treated them badly & roughly using cuggels [sic] or sticks in chastisement." When several slaves fled, the planters demanded compensation and exemption from further impressment. "We think we have patriotism enough to send all our hands" they wrote, but contended that "this extra & continued" impressment had "retarded" their planting. The same issues concerned Gallatin resident Benjamin King, who told Pettus that slaves taken for fortification work were poorly-sheltered, neglected when sick, and not permitted to go

³⁷ Bernard H. Nelson, "Confederate Slave Impressment Legislation, 1861-1865," *Journal of Negro History* 31 (Oct., 1946): 396, 400, 402-403. On planters' response to slave impressment, see Harrison A. Trexler, "The Opposition of Planters to the Employment of Slaves as Laborers by the Confederacy," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 27 (Sept., 1940): 211-224.

home. “The people,” he wrote, were “willing to send their negroes if they are treated as human beings and worked for the public good,” but noted that planters would not suffer their slaves “to be treated and neglected as they have been.”³⁸ While slave owners voluntarily contributed hands to the war effort, they demanded that the state uphold its end of the bargain by maintaining their property’s value.

Issues regarding equal contribution also irked planters who felt that the number of slaves whom an individual sent to the fortifications should be in proportion to the number owned. In March 1863, for example, Colonel John Humphreys endeavored “to take from those owning the largest number of able bodied men...discriminating in favor of those who had sent freely and liberally.” Indeed, planters protested deviations from this policy. State judge Robert Hudson was among Mississippi’s most blustery Confederates, but chafed at further impressments of his slaves after he had voluntarily sent some to Vicksburg. “I have ever responded to all calls for such help and stood ready to do so still...but they choose to impress and did impress, and I know of no authority they had for doing so,” he told Pettus. Copiah County planter F. Dillard owned twenty-eight slaves and sent several to work at Vicksburg, but complained of “great injustice” by singling out three fellow planters who owned between forty and fifty slaves but only sent one or two to the fortifications. “[We] don’t complain at sending our Negroes to Vicksburg but we do complain at injustice,” he wrote. Dillard’s reasoning was straightforward, if arbitrary: those who owned more slaves should contribute more slaves. Yet, his arbitrariness reflected that of the Confederate government, which did not give specific numbers regarding slave impressment

³⁸ Richland Planters’ Petition to John J. Pettus, March 23, 1863, Pettus Correspondence, roll 1446, vol. 51; Benjamin King to John J. Pettus, April 13, 1863, *Ibid*.

beyond prohibiting it on premises with less than four slaves eighteen or older and setting a five percent quota of slaves per county.³⁹

Planters decided when they had given enough hands. In March, 1863, for example, Adams County resident Thomas McCowen rejected calls for more of his slaves. “I had already sent some men to Port Hudson,” he told Pettus, “please direct [the] Sherriff to exempt my force from impressment.” That McCowen had already sent “some men” was sufficient for him. Rather than prioritize self over country, planters invoked micro and macro loyalties in an attempt to serve both. They cited their willingness to supply slave laborers to the army as evidence of their patriotism, but complained when slaves were mistreated, or when the state threatened to impress more than their preferred amount. Planters argued that self-interest necessitated limiting property confiscation in the name of the cause. In doing so, they demonstrated how self and national interest need not conflict, at least to a point. The fact that micro loyalties influenced their behavior did not necessarily evidence a weakened devotion to a total nationalist model that many Mississippians found undesirable. Although the state had the power to impress slaves, it could not enforce total compliance among planters.⁴⁰

If businessmen and planters could object to being labeled traitors by critics who believed they should subordinate profits to the greater Confederate cause, there were other Mississippians for whom Confederates’ accusation of treason was justified. These were the state’s minority number of Unionists, those who openly expressed Union sentiments or actively resisted

³⁹ John C. Humphreys to John J. Pettus, March 4, 1863, Robert S. Hudson to John J. Pettus, March 1, 1863, F. Dillard to John J. Pettus, February 18, 1863, Pettus Correspondence; 1860 U.S. Census and Slave Schedules, Copiah County, Mississippi, F. Dillard, E.R. Brown, R.H. Taliaferro, B.K. Hawkins, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed May 17, 2011); Nelson, “Confederate Slave Impressment Legislation,” 398, 400.

⁴⁰ Thomas McCowen to John J. Pettus, March 4, 1863, Pettus Correspondence.

Confederate authority and worked to sabotage the southern war effort. Their existence only fueled many Confederate partisans' zeal to identify traitors at every turn.⁴¹

One such individual was Columbus-based Presbyterian minister James Lyon, whose anti-slavery views were a rarity among even Mississippi Unionists. In his journal, Lyon described secession as “a great political heresy,” and considered war “an egregious blunder” that would bring “ruin upon the land.” He also criticized proponents of a total Confederate nationalism who “commenced the thousand efforts & appeals and devises...to... create the war spirit and keep it up.” Lyon thought that protective nationalism stifled individual rights in the name of exultation of the state, in the process forming an “absolute despotism” that extended “not only to the persons and property of the people, but to their words, their speech, their very thoughts and emotions!” He eventually ran afoul of the state in 1863, when a friend asked Lyon to endorse a circulating letter naming him as the head of a pro-Union “Reconstruction party.” Citing ministerial non-partisanship, Lyon declined to sign it, but his son, Theodric, a Confederate soldier who nonetheless shared his father's politics, answered the letter, which was soon read publically and printed in a local newspaper. The provost marshal deemed the letter a “disloyal treasonable document,” and arrested the Lyons. Theodric was court-marshaled, relived of his

⁴¹ Historians have identified Mississippi Unionists according to variables of class, political preference, and geography. Opposition to secession and the Confederacy came from wealthy Delta slaveholders whose conservative Whig leanings precluded them from embracing a war that would stifle river trade and threaten destruction of their plantations. Scholars also identify clusters of Unionism in the southeast Piney Woods, in the state's central region and in the hilly, northeastern counties. There were relatively poor areas with low slaveholding density whose residents had little to gain from fighting a slaveholders' war. See Bettersworth, *Confederate Mississippi*, 8-9, 189-191; Mary Floyd Sumners, “Politics in Tishomingo County, 1836-1860,” *Journal of Mississippi History* 2 (May, 1966): 149-151; William L. Barney, *The Secessionist Impulse: Alabama and Mississippi in 1860* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1974, 2004), 77-78; William T. Blain, “‘Banner’ Unionism in Mississippi: Choctaw County: 1861-1869,” *Mississippi Quarterly* 2 (Spring, 1976): 207-220; Charles C. Bolton, *Poor Whites of the Antebellum South: Tenants and Laborers in Central North Carolina and Northeast Mississippi* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 85-119; Michael Shannon Mallard, “Faithful Found Among the Faithless: Popular Opposition to the Confederacy in Civil War Mississippi,” (master's thesis, Mississippi State University, 2002); Bynum, *The Free State of Jones*, 47-69, 117-118 and *The Long Shadow of the Civil War: Southern Dissent and its Legacies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 1-5, 23, 31-32; Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War*, 127.

command and banished to Virginia. The authorities released Lyon but Confederate partisans continued to hound him, as he remained a staunch Unionist until the war's end.⁴²

Lyon's case was similar to that of other Unionists whom Confederates targeted for treason. In April 1864, the Macon *Beacon* reported that Confederate soldiers arrested Ben Hawkins, who had gone to Illinois in 1861 to be honored as "a Union man from Mississippi." Confederates confiscated a "United States flag" from his house, and, when William T. Sherman's troops marched through Mississippi in 1863, Hawkins allegedly "spoke to Union meetings," and told citizens to "fight the rebel soldiers like the devil." His four sons also deserted from the 6th, 16th and 37th Mississippi infantries. In an October 1863 incident, the *Beacon* reported on a Reconstruction meeting in Canton that nominated planter Moses Jordon to run for the governorship on a Union platform. Davis received a report in September 1863, describing other Mississippi "traitors" who plotted reconstruction. They included Vicksburg attorney James Shirley, who communicated with Federal officers during the Vicksburg siege and whose son, Quincy, even joined the Union army. The report also named Sunflower County physician and state senator W.Q. Poindexter, and former state congressman and state Supreme Court judge William L. Sharkey, a longtime Whig who opposed secession and became Mississippi's first Reconstruction governor in June 1865. The presence of a small number of Unionists in the state confirmed Confederates' suspicion that traitors in their midst had to be rooted out, and that the state should use all of its power to do so before these enemies subverted the cause from within.⁴³

⁴² John K. Bettersworth, ed., "Mississippi Unionism: The Case of the Reverend James A. Lyon," *Journal of Mississippi History* 1 (Jan.,-Oct., 1939): 40, 41-46, 49. Quotes found on 40, 42, 49.

⁴³ "The Deserters," *Beacon* (Macon, MS), April 13, 1864; "From Noxubee Riflemen," *Ibid*, April 20, 1864; 1860 U.S. Census and U.S. Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, Smith County, Mississippi, John, Pleasant Q., William E. and A.E. Hawkins, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed September 15, 2009); "Camp 20th Miss. Reg't. Near Canton, Miss., Oct. 20. 1863," *Beacon* (Macon, MS), November 11, 1863; 1860 U.S. Census, Lowndes County, Mississippi, Moses Jordon, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed May 17, 2011); David C. Glenn to Jefferson Davis, September 1, 1863, in Lynda Laswell Crist, Mary Seaton Dix, Kenneth H. Williams, eds., *The Papers of Jefferson Davis, Vol. 9, January-*

Confederates' fears about internal enemies corroding the South were not completely unfounded. There were some Mississippians who actively colluded with the Union army, though Confederates exaggerated their strength and numbers. Perhaps the state's most well-known Unionist spy was Chickasaw County planter Levi Naron, known as "Chickasaw." When the Federals reached Mississippi, he spied for them in the northern part of the state, even establishing a clandestine newspaper service through which other Mississippi Unionists supplied information to the Federals. Two other Mississippi Federal spies were John F. Riley and J.J. Williams. Being "well acquainted with the country," in north Mississippi, they rooted out Confederate guerillas and smugglers. On one mission, they arrested a citizen who harbored guerillas. In another instance, they led Union troops to a Confederate smuggling party's stash of stolen goods outside of Holly Springs, which included "silk, calicos, hats, socks, boots shoes, thread, sardines & varieties hid in a pit beneath the floor." Riley and Williams wore Confederate uniforms in order to move freely through hostile territory. While some acted as Federal spies, an additional 500 to 900 white Mississippians fought in the Union army as members of the First Battalion, Mississippi Mounted Rifles and the First Alabama Cavalry Regiment, known as the Alabama Tories.⁴⁴

In addition to those who colluded with Union forces, a number of Mississippians fled as refugees to Federal lines, and there were likely Union sympathizers among them. In September 1863, for example, the Federals arrested fourteen citizens outside Corinth who eventually took the oath and went north. Twenty-three Mississippi refugees came to Union lines at Jackson,

September (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997), 364-365; Wynne, *Mississippi's Civil War*, 125-126; Marry Bobbitt Townsend, *Yankee Warhorse: A Biography of Major General Peter Osterhaus* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2010), 194; Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War*, 47.

⁴⁴ Cockrell and Ballard, eds., *Chickasaw*, 8-9, 101, 105-106; W.W. Jackson to Maj. Gen. C.C. Washburn, July 6, 1864, roll 39, UPMF, Quotes found in J.F. Riley and J.J. Williams to W.W. Jackson, May 5, 1864, Ibid; Michael B. Ballard, *The Civil War in Mississippi: Major Campaigns and Battles* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2011), 276; Richard Nelson Current, *Lincoln's Loyalists: Union Soldiers from the Confederacy* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992), 103-106.

Tennessee in March and May of 1863, while others entered the lines at Ship Island, Natchez, Vicksburg, Pass Christian, New Orleans, and at points along the Mississippi River between 1863 and 1864. Amallus Douthet, of Tishomingo County, arrived at Union lines without her husband, Corinth-based school teacher William Douthet, who had enlisted in Company C of the Alabama Tories in 1863. Historians, however, should exercise caution when too closely associating southern refugees with Unionism. In one instance, Federal authorities reported that a group of Pascagoula and Biloxi refugees were living in the “most desperate condition imaginable” and “being conscripted without regard to age or nationality.” Some deserters among them were “being hunted with hounds and shot down or torn to pieces like wild beasts.” Self-preservation clearly influenced their flight to Ship Island, whatever their patriotic inclinations. Poor whites in particular came to Union lines to procure food and supplies or to find work, suggesting that personal motivations often guided their actions.⁴⁵

The fact that Mississippians might act on multiple allegiances, however, did not stop Confederate partisans from judging any behavior as possible evidence of treason. Operating on a nationalist model that consigned individuals to one side or the other, Confederates dealt with allegedly suspicious people in the same way they dealt with the state’s minority of Unionists. They therefore pushed charges of “Unionism” on people whose national sympathies were often unclear, and possibly even irrelevant to, the situations at hand. Confederates justified the state’s

⁴⁵ List of Prisoners and Refugees Arrested at Corinth, September 1, 1863, roll 23; Tri-Monthly Report of Union Refugees of Post of Jackson, TN, May 9, May 20, 1863, roll 17; Tri-Monthly Report of Union Refugees of Post of Jackson, TN, March 28, 1863, roll 15; List of Mississippians who Came into Union Lines at New Orleans, December 1, 5, 26, 1863, roll 26; List of Mississippi Refugees at New Orleans, July 26, 1864, roll 39; List of Refugees at Fort Pike from Perry County, MS, May 12, 1864, roll 34; List of Oaths of Allegiances Administered to Persons Arriving at New Orleans by Way of Mississippi River, May 1865, roll 61, all in UPMF; 1860 U.S. Census and U.S. Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, Tishomingo County, Mississippi, William G. Douthet, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed July 22, 2010); List of Refugees from Ship Island, September 8, 1863, roll 24, UPMF; Stephen V. Ash, “Poor Whites in the Occupied South, 1861-1865,” *Journal of Southern History* 57 (Feb., 1991): 47-48.

increased policing of the citizenry by invoking the threat supposedly posed by seditious Mississippians who colluded with the Federals against the South.

In November 1863, Confederates arrested Tishomingo County Baptist preacher W. Cranford Whooten on charges that he was a “Union man” and a “fanatic” who spied for the Federals and encouraged Confederate desertion. Whooten confessed to taking the Union oath out of “destitute circumstances,” but hoped that Confederate authorities would not force him to “violate said oath by taking it again to your Confederacy.” He requested release from Richmond’s Castle Thunder prison, stating that he had lost property to both armies even though he had sheltered Confederate soldiers. Several Tishomingo residents vouched for his loyalty, claiming that he had a family to support and posed no danger to the Confederacy. That same month, Confederates charged Pontotoc County farmer Eli Botts with being a “Tory.” Botts’ arrest papers stated that he “was a Union man as long as it existed, but is now a southern man.” He admitted that he was “with the enemy,” but “was forced to go,” yet he would not take the Confederate oath of allegiance “because he has taken it to the U States.” While Botts and Whooten were imprisoned, William Morris, of Holmes County, fared better when arrested on charges that he aided deserters. Morris claimed ignorance regarding his arrest, and Confederate officials concluded that he was “not a Union man,” discharging him after he swore the Confederate oath. Morris may have won release after claiming, truthfully, that he had a son in the 44th Mississippi regiment, which perhaps convinced Confederates that he showed sufficient patriotism.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ First Statement of James H. Carrington regarding W. Cranford Whooten, November 25, 1863, Statement of B.F. Haller regarding W. Cranford Whooten, Undated, Second Statement of James H. Carrington regarding W. Cranford Whooten, November 25, 1863, W. Cranford Whooten to Jefferson Davis, November 10, 1863, Petition of Tishomingo County Citizens on Behalf of W. Cranford Whooten, November 28, 1863, Arrest Papers of W. Cranford Whooten, November 25, 1863; Statement of James H. Carrington regarding Eli Botts, November 25, 1863, Statement of B.F. Haller regarding Eli Botts, Undated, Statement of W. McGill regarding Eli Botts, Undated, L. Brown to S.H. Pope, July 12, 1863, Arrest Papers of Eli C. Botts, November 27, 1863; Statement of James H.

Confederates labeled Whooten and Botts Unionists, despite the men's contradictory testimonies. Whooten claimed to have sworn the Union oath out of destitution, but would not take the Confederate oath. He said that he aided Confederate soldiers, but also invoked concern for property and family to explain his behavior. Botts' testimony described a Union man turned pro-southern, who was forced to associate with the Federals but refused to swear loyalty to the Confederacy. Finally, Morris, despite being arrested, like Whooten and Botts, on mere accusations, was, unlike them, deemed loyal and released. Historians trying to ascertain these men's loyalty based on their often conflicting nationalist statements risk arbitrarily judging them loyal or disloyal according to the idea that people had to be one or the other, just as Confederates did. These men's true national sympathies cannot be known, but the ideology of protective nationalism demanded the identification of friend and foe, justifying the state's policing and judging citizens at will, even when such judgments appeared dubious. Citizens' loyalty layers only further demonstrated the shortcomings of this dualistic conception of national allegiance.

Such was the case with Jackson businessman Solomon Tift, whom Confederates arrested in 1863 after witnesses testified that he called secession a "damned farce," waved a U.S. flag, and colluded with Federal troops. Based on these statements, Confederate General W.H. Jackson concluded that Tift was a "secret agent for several northern causes." Tift's personal letters purportedly revealed his Unionism, but actually told a more nuanced story. He wanted to "see the Federals enter this place," and complained that a "Secesh" had taken his property. Yet, he noted how both armies had ruined him and that General Sherman deemed him "worse than a secesh," after refusing him protection, leading Tift to conclude, "I have no friends on either

Carrington regarding William Morris, November 25, 1863, Arrest Papers of William Morris, November 25, 1863, all in roll 88, LRCSW; 1860 U.S. Census, Holmes County, Mississippi, William L. Morris, digital image, *Ancestry.com*, <http://www.ancestry.com/> (accessed April 5, 2011); U.S. Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, B.F. Morris, *Ibid*.

side.” Tift promised to flee north if released, but he feared that Confederates would “disturb” his slaves, and, after telling a friend to rent out his house, said he would soon return to Jackson.

Paradoxically, Tift was also “determined” to “stand strictly to the promise made” and “not forfeit my word” to flee north. Regarding these contradictory claims, the Confederate provost marshal stated that “the two statements are so inconsistent, as to warrant the conclusion that he intends to evade his promise,” and recommended that Tift be imprisoned “as a traitorous Mississippian.”⁴⁷

Confederates bent on identifying traitors considered people like Tift guilty until proven innocent. Tift indicated some Union sympathies, as his name appears on a list of Unionists kept by the Federals in Vicksburg, but whereas Confederates viewed his meeting with Sherman as evidence of treason, he seemed more concerned about saving his property, suggesting that self interest motivated him. Nonetheless, Confederate nationalists sought to put individuals with complicated motives into simplistic partisan boxes. People like Tift, who acted on multiple loyalties and whose national allegiances were unclear at best, revealed the state’s inability, despite its empowered military apparatuses, to accomplish this goal. But the state never stopped trying.⁴⁸

As Michael Fellman notes, during the Civil War a refusal to demonstrate loyalty could lead to presumptions of disloyalty.⁴⁹ Relying on this dualistic conception of allegiance, Confederate forces inevitably punished likely innocent Mississippians. This was the case in May

⁴⁷ Statement of W.L. Poindexter, October 28, 1863, C.H. Manship to General W.H. Jackson, August 13, 1863, Statement of W.H. Jackson, August 14, 1863, Solomon Tift to Brother, July 28, 1863, J.J. Fitzpatrick to Lt. Col. L.W. Beasley, August 11, 1863, Statement of Solomon Tift, October 8, 1863, Solomon Tift to Mr. Hays, October 10, 1863, Statement of James H. Carrington, November 20, 1863, Arrest Papers of Solomon Tift, roll 88, LRCSW; 1860 U.S. Census, Hinds County, Mississippi, S. Tift, digital image, *Ancestry.com*, <http://www.ancestry.com/> (accessed April 6, 2011).

⁴⁸ “Solomon Tift,” in Lists of Union or Loyal Men in and Around Vicksburg, Entry 370, Box 3, Record Group 366, Records of Civil War Special Agencies of the Treasury Department, Second Special Agency Records, Vicksburg District (Hereafter cited as RCWSAT), NARA.

⁴⁹ Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 52.

1863, when Confederates in Tishomingo County charged Martha Emmaline Maness with spying for the Union and imprisoned her without trial in Castle Thunder, even though a friend contended that she had been arrested while merely visiting family. Brigadier General Daniel Ruggles claimed to have “no doubt” that she was a spy, but admitted to lacking “direct evidence” for this assertion. By contrast, Brigadier General W.M. Pardner admitted that there were “no definite charges” against her and “no prospect of a prosecution.” In prison, Maness complained of “awful conditions,” but did not mention her charges. The Confederates released her in July 1864. That same summer, Confederates arrested Kemper County native July Clark, for trying to “pass through” the Mobile lines with “dangerous documents upon her person,” but soon paroled her as well. These cases demonstrate how Confederates accused as treasonous people who appeared to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. They were the collateral damage of a hyper-nationalist atmosphere in which Confederate authorities demanded that everyone take sides. Yet, even when they admitted to mistakenly arresting some people, authorities did not cease their attempt to rigidly enforce Confederate allegiance.⁵⁰

Even when suspected spies’ actions seems to be guided by nationalism *and* self-interest, Confederates described them as switching sides, as opposed to acting on co-existing loyalties. In September 1864, a scout in Charles Allen’s company questioned a traveling black man wearing a Federal uniform about his status and destination. The man claimed to have left Union lines to work for a Dr. Jones of Holmes County. When Jones refused to surrender the man, a gunfight erupted, killing the scout. “Jones was a Yankee spy and as was his wife,” Allen wrote, adding that the couple had “made largest fortune down here” by trading cotton in Vicksburg. Despite

⁵⁰L. Welsh to Jefferson Davis, June 22, 1864, Statement of Daniel Ruggles, October 6, 1864, Statement of W.M. Pardner, July 6, 1864, Statement of Martha Emmaline Maness, January 4, 1864, Arrest Papers of Martha Emmaline Maness, May, 1863 through July, 1864, roll 123, LRCSW; “Letter from Canton,” *Daily Clarion* (Meridian, MS), June 9, 1864; 1860 U.S. Census, Kemper County, Mississippi, July A. Clark, digital image, *Ancestry.com*, <http://www.ancestry.com/> (accessed April 6, 2011).

this behavior, Allen revealed that Mrs. Jones had sent the scout, stating “she is a good secesh here and a good Yankee over there.” What Allen described as switching sides was more likely the influence of micro and macro loyalties. If Dr. Jones was indeed a “Yankee spy,” then he may have given information to Federal troops while also trading cotton for a profit. What Allen identified as Mrs. Jones’ dual Union/Confederate allegiances was more likely a combination of self-interest, via her trading, and Confederate loyalty, which led her to betray her husband. The Joneses appeared to act on different, but concurrent loyalties to self and country. Allen, however, judging people according to nationalism alone, viewed this behavior through the binary lenses of “secesh” and “Yankee.”⁵¹

Just as Mississippi’s Confederate forces tried to ascertain allegiances in accordance to this dualistic framework, so too did Union authorities. Like their Confederate counterparts, the Union military tried to use its expanded power and reach to enforce Mississippians’ loyalty to their side. Union forces relied on flawed mechanisms like the oath to do so, but individuals’ multiple loyalties rendered this attempt futile. Though the Federal military eventually succeeded in subduing Confederate forces, controlling Mississippians’ hearts and minds was beyond its otherwise substantial powers.

In December 1863, for example, Captain Franklin Fisk of the 4th Illinois Cavalry ran into planter W.B. Partee and two associates, all carrying Union passes permitting them to carry out goods from Vicksburg. The men denied knowing the whereabouts of Confederate scouts, and the Union officers relied on their passes as “assurance of their good character.” However, the cavalrymen later captured two Rebel scouts who admitted that Partee had been sheltering Confederates, leading Fisk to conclude that Partee and his acquaintances had “received permits and protection papers through false statements.” In November 1864, Union authorities at

⁵¹ Charles Allen to Parents, September 22, 1864, James Allen and Charles B. Allen Papers.

Vicksburg expelled Elizabeth Eggleston from the city on charges of being “a general busybody with rebel interests.” Her daughter, Mahala Roach, insisted that Eggleston “gave no ‘aid or comfort’ to the rebels.” This claim notwithstanding, the women ran a hospital and smuggled supplies to Confederate soldiers during the Vicksburg siege. Eggleston’s soldier nephew, O.S. Holland, thanked his aunt for her service but warned her to “husband your commissariat closely...don’t let your noble patriotism and sympathy for soldiers cause you to lavish too freely your supplies of provisions.”⁵² Partee and his cohorts claimed Union loyalty as a means of aiding Confederate soldiers, taking advantage of Federal rules that allowed residents of the surrounding areas to sell excess produce in Vicksburg. Eggleston likewise declared Union loyalty in order to aid Confederate troops. In these cases, Union authorities found that oath-swearing was a poor indication of peoples’ allegiance.

Federal authorities in Mississippi’s garrisoned districts attempted the difficult task of identifying clandestine Confederates from all manner of individuals, including Unionists, criminals, ne’er-do-wells, and business people. A September 1863 Union list of civilian prisoners in Natchez, for example, detailed a range of charges, including “selling contraband goods...Entering lines...disloyalty...Selling whiskey,” while a similar 1864 sheet from Vicksburg included charges of “swindling soldiers...Forgery...Theft...Rebel Spy.” Lodged between petty crimes were charges of “disloyalty” and spying, demonstrating how protective nationalism facilitated surveillance state. Union forces had to be alert in a wartime environment where any behavior could potentially mask treasonous intent, and they also extended this

⁵² Franklin Fisk to C.D. Townsend, Statement Concerning the Disloyalty of W.B. Partee, Pfeifer, Hegewish and Russel, December 5, 1863, roll 26, UPMF; General N.J.T. Dana, General Orders No. 82, November 22, 1864, Mahala P. Roach to Maj. General Dana, January 11, 1865, Papers Relating to the Banishment of Mrs. Eggleston, by General Dana, 1864, Eggleston-Roach Papers, 1792-1905, Series 1, 832, Louisiana State University Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, (hereafter cited as LSU); Letters from Confederate Soldiers in Vicksburg to Elizabeth Eggleston and Mahala P. Roach, 1862-1863, O.S. Holland to Elizabeth Eggleston, June 8, 1863, Roach and Eggleston Family Papers, 1825-1905, fols. 2-3, ser. 1, 02614, SHC.

alertness to Mississippians who declared loyalty as a prerequisite to do legitimate business in occupied areas.⁵³

Such individuals had ulterior motives for declaring loyalty, whether they were sympathetic to the Union or not. In August 1864, for example, Tippah County mechanic W.E. Rogers told Federal officials that he had been forced into the Confederate army to avoid losing his “political status & influential friends.” After being mustered out of service, he insisted that he came to Memphis “willing to cast my lot with the Union until the last,” and that he would be “pleased to do business in Memphis” if permitted to do so. In January 1864, a prominent Natchez resident lobbied Treasury Agent R.S. Hart to approve local widow Mina Concke’s trade store permit applications. He described Concke as a struggling widow with children, with a son working for the Union army in New Orleans. “It would be very hard if her little store should be closed, she...has been always a loyal Union familie [sic],” he wrote. But for Federal authorities, weeding out the loyal from the disloyal was difficult when such individuals had personal interests that informed their declarations of allegiance.⁵⁴

This was especially true in Vicksburg, a major commercial hub strategically located on high bluffs overlooking a Mississippi River bend, which the Union army occupied from July 1863 to the war’s end. By the 1850s the city had attracted Americans from all over the country and European immigrants, who gave the city economic diversity and a cosmopolitan air. Conservative Whigs had long maintained a majority in city politics, and this influence continued during the secession crisis of 1860-61 even after the Whig Party’s collapse. The city’s merchants

⁵³ List of Civilian Prisoners in Natchez Military Prison, September 1-20, 1863, roll 23, UPMF; List of Citizen Prisoners Confined at Vicksburg, Mississippi, January 1-26, 1864, RG 393, entry 2521, RPMG; Ash, *When the Yankees Came*, 59-60, 82-83.

⁵⁴ W.E. Rogers to Major Tommey, August 30, 1864, Correspondence Received by the Assistant Special Agent, Memphis, January-December 1864, entry 223, box 1, RCWSAT; Trade Store Permit Applications of Mina Concke, April 5, June 8, 1864, Charles Westel to R.S. Hart, January 13, 1864, Authority to Establish Trade Store Permits, Natchez, entries 291, 292, box 5, RCWSAT.

feared that secession and war would disrupt business transactions, and pro-Union voters beat out secessionists 561 to 173. After Mississippi's secession, however, Vicksburg cautiously went with the Confederate tide, but Grant's capturing of the city forced residents to reckon with an occupying force that demanded allegiance in exchange for permission to go about day-to-day business.⁵⁵

The city's merchant and business classes knew that war threatened their livelihoods. Watchmaker Edwin Sabin recalled "the utter ruination brought upon us Southern businessmen," as the war left him with just \$1,220 out of a \$56,000 fortune. Sabin received Grant's permission to open another shop to try and recuperate financially. Other Vicksburg residents did the same. Federal forces outlawed commercial activity by avowed Confederates, so individuals wishing to do business had to swear the oath and promise not to sell to or aid known Rebels. Use of the military courts also incentivized individuals like Cornelius Ryan, Thomas Purcell, Alexander Jeffrey, and other Vicksburg residents who identified as "a loyal citizen of the United States" in order to resolve common property and land disputes.⁵⁶

With these incentives in mind, 230 Vicksburg residents added their names to a list of "Union men in and around Vicksburg believed to be undoubted!" kept by Federal forces. The occupations of the 152 listed men (see Appendix A for the list) who appear in the census included professionals, proprietors, artisans, and unskilled laborers consistent with the general

⁵⁵ Ballard, *Vicksburg*, 1-8; Christopher Morris, *Becoming Southern: The Evolution of a Way of Life, Warren County and Vicksburg, Mississippi, 1770-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 115-117.

⁵⁶ Edwin L. Sabin, "Vicksburg, and After: Being the Experience of a Southern Merchant and Non-Combatant during the Sixties," *Sewanee Review* 15 (Oct., 1907): quote on 485, 491-492; Salmon P. Chase, *United States Treasury Department Rules Concerning Commercial Intercourse with and in States Declared in Insurrection, and the Collection of Abandoned and Captured Property* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1863), 16; James T. Currie, *Enclave: Vicksburg and her Surrounding Plantations, 1863-1870* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1980), 25-26; Vicksburg Court Cases of Cornelius Ryan, March 19, Thomas Purcell, March 25, Alexander Jeffrey, March 30, 1864, roll 30, UPMF.

makeup of nineteenth century American cities.⁵⁷ Profession of Union loyalty, as represented on the list, was not limited to a specific occupational group. All but nine were Vicksburg residents. The rest lived in other parts of Mississippi, while one merchant came from Texas. Finally, the men represented the city's diverse backgrounds: thirty-nine were born in Cotton and Border South states, thirty-five were born in northern non-slaveholding states and seventy-eight were born in Europe, Canada, or unknown.⁵⁸ In 1863 and 1864 at least twenty-four of these men paid a fee and applied to Federal Treasury Agents for permission to establish trade stores in Vicksburg. Their applications were among hundreds that Mississippians submitted to Union authorities from 1863 onward, when pre-war trade patterns on the Mississippi River, no longer hindered by Confederate blockades, picked up again. In addition to giving out trade store permits, Union authorities issued permits to Mississippians wishing to open supply stores and ship products from within Union lines to northern markets, and kept track of vessels coming to and departing from river ports.⁵⁹

Federal authorities, demanding that friend and foe be identified, remained suspicious of even professed Unionists. A Union officer noted on the list of Vicksburg loyalists that some were "pretty good Union Men," others were "somewhat compromised," though not "to any extent

⁵⁷ Occupational categorizations are derived from Theodore Hershberg, Michael Katz, Stuart Blumin, Laurence Glasco, and Clyde Griffin, "Occupation and Ethnicity in Five Nineteenth-Century Cities: A Collaborative Inquiry," *Historical Methods Newsletter* 7 (June, 1974): 179-187.

⁵⁸ Lists of Union or Loyal Men in and Around Vicksburg; 1860 U.S. Census, Warren, Hinds, Claiborne Counties, Mississippi, Sabine County, Texas, digital images, *Ancestry.com*, <http://www.ancestry.com/> (accessed July 15-20, 2010).

⁵⁹ Currie, *Enclave*, 15-18; In the RCWSAT see Trade Store Permits, 1863-1864, Vicksburg District, entry 369, box 3, RG 366; Trade Store Permits, 1864, Natchez District, entries 291, 292, box 5; Authorities Granted for Trade Stores, Vicksburg, Mississippi, January 1864, Transcript of Record of Fees Received, January, February 1864, in Correspondence Received by the Assistant Treasury Agent, Vicksburg District, entry 360, box 2; Authorities Granted for the Purchase and Transport of Products, Vicksburg, Mississippi, November, January 1864, March, April 1865, Record of Authorities to Establish Supply Stores, Vicksburg, Mississippi, December 1864, March, April 1865, Record of Fees Received, Supply Stores, September 1864, Report of Clearances Given at the U.S. Custom House, Vicksburg, Mississippi, November, December 1864, January, March 1865, all in Applications, Bonds & Authorities to Purchase & Transport Products, Districts in Mississippi, entry 382, box 5, RG 366, Ibid; No. 2 List of Union or Loyal Men in and Around Vicksburg.

criminal,” and still others would “not take the oath up to the present time.” This officer’s doubts regarding some of the men’s loyalty indicated the cautious approach Union authorities took towards declarations of allegiance made in conjunction with business interests. In a petition to Treasury Agent William Mellen, one of the listed men, recently naturalized merchant Solomon Rothchild, boasted that he risked “life and liberty” by refusing to fight against the U.S which “he had but recently before sworn allegiance.” When the Federals captured Vicksburg, Rothchild “cheerfully” took the Union oath and wanted to continue the proprietorship that was his family’s “mode of obtaining subsistence.” In 1864, another listed man, clergyman Alston Mygatt, applied to open a trade store and won permission to lease an abandoned Warren County plantation. He and Rothchild may well have been honest in their loyalty declarations, but the fact that they in part made such statements in the pursuit of monetary gain meant that for Union authorities, such statements were not above suspicion.⁶⁰

Vicksburg jeweler Max Kuner demonstrated why this suspicion lingered. Kuner applied for a trade store permit in 1863, swore the oath, served as a surety on a plantation lease, and was among the listed Vicksburg loyalists. Nonetheless, his former apprentice, Valentine Vogh, claimed that in 1861 Kuner raised a Rebel company, flew a Confederate flag and housed Rebel soldiers. Another person on the list, self-described “truly loyal Union man” Charles Francis, called Kuner, “one of the leading rebels of Vicksburg.” Kuner denied most of the charges but admitted to housing Rebel soldiers out of sympathy for their hunger. He dismissed Vogh as a

⁶⁰ No. 2 List of Union or Loyal Men in and Around Vicksburg, RCWSAT; “Solomon Rothchild,” in List of Union or Loyal Men in and Around Vicksburg; Petition of Solomon Rothchild, September 14, 1864, Contracts and Affidavits to Establish Supply Stores, Etc. 1864, Office of the General Agent, entry 849, box 25, RCWSAT; “Alston Mygatt,” in List of Union or Loyal Men in and Around Vicksburg; Trade Store Permit Application of Alston Mygatt, December 18, 1863, Trade Store Permits, Vicksburg District, 1863-1864, Ibid; Plantation Lease of Alston Mygatt, November 24, 1864, Records on Renting and Leasing of Abandoned Property, 1864-1865, Records of the Mississippi Freedmen’s Department (“Pre-Bureau Records”) Office of the Assistant Commissioner, Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1863-1865, (Hereafter cited as RMFD) Roll 3, M-1914, Record Group 105, NARA.

disgruntled former employee, and contended that a dispute with former business partner-turned Confederate captain, D.N. Moody, led Moody to raise the Rebel flag over Kuner's store, making the incident "A declaration of the Dissolution of Partnership," not an indication of Kuner's Confederate sympathies. In light of these allegations, the Treasury Agent inquired from district commander Napoleon Dana "whether... Max Kuner is disloyal," and threatened to close his supply store if this was the case. Kuner's accusers knew that Union authorities were scouting for traitors, and perhaps he was truthful in claiming that their charges stemmed from personal grievances. Owning \$50,000 in real estate and a \$5,000 dollar home, he had much to lose from not cooperating with the Federals. Yet, additional motives by Kuner and his accusers mattered little to Union officials whose job was to enforce loyalty. When presented with claims that Kuner's case involved more than just Union or Confederate stances, they were still only concerned with his national sympathies.⁶¹

Kuner's case demonstrated how Mississippians could use charges of disloyalty to gain the upper hand in personal disputes that might be only tangentially related to nationalism. Nonetheless, in these cases they still used nationalist discourse because doing so was the only way to appeal to Federal authorities primarily concerned with policing allegiance. In June of 1864, Murray Carter and M. Levy appeared before Union authorities in Vicksburg to dispute the ownership of six bales of cotton. Both produced witnesses supporting their loyalty, and both accused each other of disloyalty. Carter claimed that Levy stole the cotton, and dismissed Levy's

⁶¹ "Max Kuner," in List of Union or Loyal Men in and Around Vicksburg; Trade Store Permit Application of Max Kuner, January 18, 1864, Trade Store Permits, Vicksburg District, 1863-1864, Ibid; Plantation Lease of Julia Glass, Max Kuner, Surety, December 27, 1864, roll 3, RMFD; Valentine Vogh to Vicksburg Provost Marshal, September 6, 1864, Correspondence Received by the Assistant Treasury Agent, Vicksburg District, Box 2, Entry 360, RCWSAT; 1860 U.S. Census, Warren County, Mississippi, Charles Francis, pg. 923, digital image, *Ancestry.com*, <http://www.ancestry.com/> (accessed August 12, 2010); Charles Francis to Vicksburg Provost Marshal, September 7, 1864, A. Myggat, John Bland, W.J. Shuler and Duff Green to J.A. McCowell, December 26, 1863, Max Kuner to C.F. Calliot, September 8, 1864, T.C. Gatticut to Major General N.J.T. Dana, September 11, 1864, all in Correspondence Received by the Assistant Special Treasury Agent; Morris, *Becoming Southern*, 118.

oath-swearing, noting that “the Oath of Allegiance is not always a test of loyalty.” In his own defense, Levy assured the probate court that he was “a loyal citizen” with “well known Union Sentiments,” and called Carter a “cotton speculator.” The court ultimately ruled in Carter’s favor, noting that Levy’s witness brother-in-law, E. Unger, resided “outside of our lines,” and that “his loyalty ought not be above suspicion.” Even if Unger took the oath, the court reasoned, such an action would “complicate him with his Confederate friends & allies.”⁶² The national sympathies of both men are unclear and were, from their angle, beside the point: they argued over property, using patriotic language in the service of self-interest. To the Federal court, however, nationalism trumped lawful issues pertaining to property theft. Its singular focus on policing allegiance led it to judge Levy guilty not because it believed him guilty of theft, but because it considered him disloyal, which in turn rendered all of his behavior suspicious.

The nation-state’s need to compel total allegiance from its citizens survived the war and became the central factor in the United States’ government’s decisions to reject Reconstruction-era property claims by residents of former Confederate Mississippi. During the war, planter John Vick appeared on the Vicksburg Unionist list and swore the Amnesty Oath. In 1872, he filed with the Southern Claims Commission to get back \$4,550 in confiscated property. When receipts revealed that he had sold supplies to the Confederate army, however, he admitted to doing so “for the sole and only purpose” of supporting his family. Yet, Vick also admitted to being unable to “consciously declare” that he “constantly” backed the Union. Vick believed that the Emancipation Proclamation betrayed southern Unionists who had been promised that “rights of property should not be disturbed.” His vision of an effective nation was one predicated on protection for these rights. Fearing that he might be “reduced from wealth to penury,” Vick

⁶² Statement of Murray Carter, June 13, 1864, Exhibit “B,” Statement of M. Levy, May 19, 1864, Court Opinion, David Streat and C.C. Marsh, Signatories, Undated, Vicksburg Court Case of M. Levy and Murray Carter, June 13, 1864, roll 35, UPMF.

“ceased to sympathize with the Union cause” since doing so entailed him losing \$200,000 worth of “slave property.” The Commission rejected Vick’s claim, unconvinced that he had been a “loyal adherent” to the Union cause and deemed his business dealing with the Confederates “not a loyal act.”⁶³ Vick’s Union loyalty was predicated on the U.S. government’s protecting slave property, but during and after the war, the Federal government deemed citizens loyal only if they placed allegiance to the nation above all other concerns. In this respect, the commission found Vick lacking.

The Federal government denied claims by other listed Vicksburg Unionists because their required unconditional loyalty allegedly wavered during the war. Planter James Cathell submitted a claim for \$6,550, but the Commission denied it when witnesses testified that Cathell publically favored the South and receipts showed that he sold the Confederates fodder in 1862. Stating that he had “always been a truly loyal man,” farmer Aquilla Bowie filed an 1871 claim for \$489, which the commission barred without explanation.⁶⁴ The U.S. government doubted Vick, Cathell and Bowie’s declarations of wartime loyalty because in each case economic self-interest in part drove these professions. The Federal state emerged from the war with expanded powers and the bureaucratic capacity to gauge Mississippians’ allegiance when assessing their property claims. The government was convinced it could do so effectively, but in fact, it could only claim this ability by defining national allegiance in a way that left no room for individuals to act on multiple loyalties. The actual nature of these men’s allegiances notwithstanding, when

⁶³ “John W. Vick,” in List of Union or Loyal Men in and Around Vicksburg; Examination of John W. Vick, Claim of John W. Vick, May 31, 1872, Commission Remarks on Claim of John W. Vick, Southern Claims Commission (hereafter cited as SCC), Warren County, Mississippi, Claim 14279, Roll 21, digital images, *Fold3.com*, <http://www.fold3.com/> (accessed November 29, 2011).

⁶⁴ “James Cathell,” in List of Union or Loyal Men in and Around Vicksburg Statement of John W. Taylor, Claim of James Cathell, May 28, 1872, February 26, 1876, SCC, Warren County, Mississippi, claim 14197, roll 44, SCC; “Aquila Bowie,” in List of Union or Loyal Men in and Around Vicksburg; Claim of Aquila Bowie, June 17, 1871, claim 2602, roll 44, SCC.

their personal interests appeared to contradict their declared loyalty, Union partisans cut them little slack.

This was also the case regarding claimants from Natchez. During the war, druggist George Fox swore the Union oath and told the Treasury Agent that he would be subject to “considerable loss & inconvenience” if not permitted to keep his store open. In 1871, however, Fox found his loyalty questioned when he filed a claim for \$900. He stated that he had always been a Unionist and that had “circumstances” been more favorable, he would have aided the U.S. “by all means in my power.” Two witnesses described Fox as a “Union man” and one of them, William Henderson, Fox’s former slave who in 1863 joined the Federal army, said that Fox did not directly aid the Union but did give Henderson free supplies from his store. The Commission rejected Fox’s claim, noting that his Unionism “does not amount to much,” and “rather proves...neutrality than loyalty.” In a similar case, Natchez merchant Matthias Marks applied for trade store permits in April and June 1864, and in 1872, filed a claim for \$370, arguing that he was a Mexican War veteran who would not “do anything against a government for which I had fought.” A friend testified that Marks “would have gone into the Union Army” if forced, though he suggested that Marks remained functionally neutral. Unconvinced about Marks’ loyalty, the Commission rejected his claim.⁶⁵ To a northern government that demanded an all-or-nothing show of allegiance from Mississippians, neutrality was tantamount to disloyalty. To *be* loyal meant to *act* loyal by aiding the Union cause. The Federal government had the power to decide, however arbitrarily, what types of actions sufficed in aiding the cause, and the men’s refusal to

⁶⁵ George W. Fox to R.S. Hart, February 6, 1864, Oath of Allegiance of George W. Fox, February 19, 1864, Authority to Establish Trade Store Permits, Natchez; Statement of George W. Fox, Statement of Robert E. McClure, Statement of William Henderson, Claim of George W. Fox, June 21, 1871, SCC, Adams County, Mississippi, claim 2883, roll 003, SCC; Trade Store Permit Applications of Matthias D. Marks, April 7, June 9, 1864, Authority to Establish Trade Store Permits, Natchez; Statement of Matthias D. Marks, Statement of Richard Sullivan, December 6, 1872, Claim of Matthias D. Marks, July 1, 1872, claim 14870, publication 1407, SCC.

participate as component parts in service of the greater national goal rendered their declarations of allegiance insufficient in its estimation.

This unbending conception of national allegiance, however, proved problematic when individuals acted in ways that could appear to be loyal and disloyal at different times. Such was the case with Natchez merchant Casey Mallory, a self-described “bone fide Union man” who swore the oath in January 1864, applied for a trade store permit, and, in 1872, claimed \$7950 worth of confiscated bricks. Witness Abraham Scofield considered Mallory “disloyal,” but admitted that others did not. His former slave said that Mallory started as a “Union man” but “changed soon after the war commenced.” Another witnesses similarly claimed that Mallory was a former “Union man” who turned Confederate when “things did not blow right” financially. Yet another witness said that Mallory voiced both Union and Confederate sympathies, while another considered him “rather neutral.” On his own behalf, Mallory touted his Massachusetts birth, noted his thrice swearing the Union oath, claimed that he threatened to disown his Confederate soldier son, and added that he boarded and supplied Union soldiers. Nonetheless, he admitted to being initially “hot” for Union victory, but that he leaned Confederate “towards the last” after Federal troops took his bricks, though he denied directly aiding the Confederacy beyond paying taxes. The Commission rejected Mallory’s claim, citing his admission of Rebel sympathy and his inflating the number of stolen bricks as evidence of his unreliability.⁶⁶

As with other Mississippi claimants, interested partisans using the wartime nationalist discourse interpreted Mallory’s concerns over property as evidence of his “support” for one side

⁶⁶ Oath of Allegiance of Casey Mallory, January 30, 1864, Trade Store Permit Application of Casey Mallory, February 3, 1864, Casey Mallory to Judge Hart, January 30, 1864, Authority to Establish Trade Store Permits, Natchez; Statements of Abraham Scofield, William Shaw, R.E. McClure, William McGilvary, Cyrus Marsh, Statements of Casey Mallory, May 16, 1876, April 4, 1874, Report of Enos Richmond on the Claim of Casey Mallory, May 15, 1876, Summary Report on the Claim of Casey Mallory, December 5, 1877, Claim of Casey Mallory, October 21, 1872, claim 17132, roll 25, SCC.

or the other. Mallory himself used this nationalist language even when discussing a separate issue, describing anger over the Federals' confiscating his bricks as equivalent to desiring Confederate victory. Seeking to distinguish the loyal from the treasonous, even when someone like Mallory at different times appeared to act as both, the Federal government took his "admission" of Confederate sympathy as reason to reject his claim. That Mallory appeared to be more concerned with his property than in choosing sides did not matter to northern partisans. Although the Federal government had the infrastructural capacity to police southerners' loyalty even after the war, Mississippians' loyalty layers rendered it incapable of compelling the desired total allegiance in them.

When the Federal army invaded Mississippi in 1862, Confederate and Union partisans operated according to a protective nationalist ideal that made devotion to one side or the other necessary to achieving victory. In the process they turned everyday actions into suspicious acts, resulting in a heightened climate of surveillance and mistrust in which both sides attempted to categorize Mississippians' every move as potential indicators of their national sympathies. Yet, the implementation of protective nationalism on the ground proved to be impossible. The Union army tried to elicit proof of loyalty via the oath of allegiance. Mississippians, however, swore the oath under constrained circumstances as a prerequisite for getting protection for property, avoiding Confederate conscription, doing business under Federal occupation and traveling beyond Union lines. Rather than being *de-facto* loyal Confederates who pragmatically swore what they considered to be a non-binding, forced oath in order to secure, food, housing and protection, Mississippians acted on separate micro loyalties to self and family. In some instances oath-takers privately professed Confederate loyalty, but in other instances, their national

allegiances were unclear because they swore the Union oath as a means to ends that were distinct from nationalism.

Confederate partisans, on the other hand, tended to view such actions as evidence of Mississippians' capitulation to the northern foe, and they extended this impression beyond self-professed Unionists and onto the entire civilian population. In the process they turned perceived failures to donate all blood and treasure to the Confederate cause as evidence of selfishness and disloyalty. Ardent Confederates charged alleged speculators and extortionists with hindering the quest for southern independence, and they arrested individuals for colluding with the Union regardless of the validity of such charges. Many Mississippians, however, continued to act on multiple loyalties that had no place in the protective nationalist ideal. Others envisioned a Confederate state defined by a respect for individual and property rights. This idea of the Confederate nation contrasted with that of protective nationalists who made southern independence an end unto itself to which citizens should devote all of their resources. Thus, defining Confederate nationalism was a contested and fluid process that was shaped by, and reflective of, the war's ever-shifting exigencies and informed by Mississippians' loyalty layers. This process, in turn, revealed that while the Civil War created a more powerful southern nation-state, armed with the bureaucratic apparatuses with which it attempted to rigidly police and enforce loyalty in all aspects of its citizens' daily lives, it was ironically not strong enough to succeed in this, the singular justification for its expanded powers.

Like its Confederate counterpart, the northern nation-state's infrastructural reach grew during the Civil War, but failed in its attempt to use this expanded power to compel total loyalty to its cause. Union authorities struggled to enforce Mississippians' allegiance to the United States, especially in occupied cities like Vicksburg and Natchez, where multiple loyalties

informed individuals' declarations of Unionism. In requesting to do business in occupied areas during the war and in claims submitted to the Southern Claims Commission in the post-war period, Mississippians indicated that the desire for monetary gain in part influenced their professions of loyalty. With this fact in mind, Federal authorities viewed such statements as inherently suspicious because they indicated a concern for personal well-being in addition to an alleged active dedication to the Union cause. Union and Confederate authorities further confronted the inherent difficulty of trying to gauge the national loyalties of those involved in wartime commerce via their attempts to quell, or at least regulate, the extensive contraband trade between Mississippians and the Union army. Trade between the lines began as soon as Federal forces arrived in the state and increased in volume as the war progressed, dashing protective nationalists' dreams of creating a self-sustained Confederate nation whose citizens lived only to serve its cause.

Chapter Three: “Tradyville:” The Contraband Trade and the Problem of Loyalty

In 1863, an un-named Confederate officer castigated ostensibly loyal Confederates who traded with Union forces in Natchez, Mississippi, a key commercial-port north of the officer’s base of operations in southeastern Louisiana. A year earlier, Confederate field commanders had ordered planters to burn their cotton to keep it out of Federal hands. “[Y]et strange to say,” the officer wrote, “some 6,000 bales were kept not long distance from the city. Was it supineness on the part of the planter or was it saved in order to present to the enemy and thereby assist in subjugating the southern people?” This trade with Union-occupied Natchez prompted the officer to criticize the “out-and-out immeasurable, uncompromising secessionists...who in ’61 were for ‘War to the Knife’ and ‘Knife to the hilt,’” who now “gave and drank the toast at ‘Tradyville;’ in the presence of Federal Officers.”¹ Confederate and Federal officers alike called Natchez “Tradyville,” recognizing its role as a center of commerce in “contraband” goods. While better known as a term for fugitive slaves, contraband in this case referred to the goods that Mississippians illegally exchanged across Union lines. The officer commenting on Natchez viewed the trade as a test of citizens’ Confederate loyalty, labeling those engaged in it as traitors.

Not all Confederates went this far. Writing from Oxford, Mississippi in 1863, Inspector General Jacob Thompson explained to Confederate President Jefferson Davis that the government’s policy of forbidding trade with the Union was a “cause of exasperation” because it prevented residents of the state’s northern region from procuring supplies at Union-held Memphis. “In this state of things,” he argued, “you cannot consider it strange or peculiar or disloyal that the distressed people should endeavor to procure...actual necessities which could be obtained in no other way than from those who resided near Memphis where their location, of

¹ “Natchez Under Yankee Rule!” in Confederate Post Commissary Invoice and Discharge Book, 1862, Z/1661.000/F, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi (Hereafter cited as MDAH).

course, facilitates their trade with the enemy.” Unlike the Natchez observer, who regarded contraband trade as treasonous, Thompson thought that trade with the Union benefited the southern war effort. “To admit the people to buy in way of barter and exchange what is absolutely necessary, will enliven our people and greatly aid our army,” he argued, “[m]ore than half of what is brought in, finds its way to the army in one way or another.”²

Central to these conflicting interpretations of the trade was an important question: could Mississippians be loyal Confederates while trading with the enemy? This bartering across the lines was epidemic. Indeed, while the term “Tradenville” referred specifically to Natchez, it accurately describes the trade’s impact throughout Mississippi. The Confederate government officially prohibited citizens from trading all privately-held goods at Federal-occupied territories. Nonetheless, Mississippians, many of whom were women, continually swapped cotton and Federal greenback notes at Union lines in exchange for an abundance of goods normally sold in the regular marketplace, but made scarce by the Union blockade and general wartime privation. These included raw commodities like tobacco, sugar, rice, foodstuffs, molasses and especially cotton, as well as other supplies like clothing, guns and ammunition, cotton and wool cards, whiskey, wines and brandies, calico, coffee, shoes and medical supplies.³ Trade helped the Confederacy by supplying southern troops and bolstering local economies, but it also undermined the war effort by depreciating Confederate currency, funneling valuable cotton to the Union and compromising many Confederate nationalists’ ideal of self-sufficiency.

² Jacob Thompson to Jefferson Davis, December 23, 1863, In Lynda Laswell Crist, Peggy L. Dillard, Kenneth H. Williams, eds., *The Papers of Jefferson Davis, Vol. 10, October 1863-August 1864* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999), 123-124.

³ Ludwell H. Johnson, “Trading with the Union: The Evolution of Confederate Policy,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 78 (Jul., 1970): 310; Walter E. Pittman, Jr. “Trading with the Devil: The Cotton Trade in Civil War Mississippi,” *Journal of Confederate History* 2: 11 (1989): 140; Timothy B. Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War: The Home Front* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010), 134; United States War Department, comp., *The War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 130 vols. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), ser. 4, vol. 3, pgs. 282-83, 688; ser. 4, vol. 2, pg. 585 (hereafter cited as *OR*).

The contraband trade, then, holds wider implications for understanding Confederate nationalism because it reveals how Mississippians negotiated among multiple loyalties to self, family, neighborhood, and nation. In these cases, acting on ties other than patriotism did not necessarily mean that a person was a disloyal Confederate, even if by trading they might appear to be acting against the Confederacy. This chapter focuses on white Mississippians because they were the core constituency from which the Confederate government sought support and many contemporary observers believed that white Mississippians' engagement in the trade reflected the influence of Confederate allegiance in the state.⁴

The problem of multiple allegiances also adds new dimensions to the scholarship on the contraband trade and women's wartime experiences. Despite the trade's implications for expanding the historical understanding of how Confederate nationalism influenced people on the ground, historians of the topic have approached it as a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of each side's war effort. Like the weak-strong debate over Confederate nationalism, these scholars have been more concerned with outcome rather than process. They apply to both sides a cost-benefit analysis of the trade, concluding that it aided the Confederacy more than the Union. When Confederates' belief in "King Cotton" diplomacy proved unfounded, the trade provided an outlet for cotton sales to the North and brought food and supplies to southern civilians and soldiers, helping the Confederacy prolong its war effort.⁵ Historians studying the North write that the influence of northern textile owners and the threat of European

⁴ Black Mississippians also traded with Union forces, and in the early part of the war were "contrabands" themselves. However, the Confederacy did not consider blacks, slave or free, to be citizens, and expected them to serve the cause as servants, not as members of the body politic. See Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 20-24 and William C. Davis, *Look Away!: A History of the Confederate States of America* (New York: Free Press, 2002), 130-162.

⁵ E. Merton Coulter, "Commercial Intercourse with the Confederacy in the Mississippi Valley, 1861-1865," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 5 (Mar., 1919): 391-395; A. Sellev Roberts, "The Federal Government and Confederate Cotton," *American Historical Review* 32 (Jan., 1927): 262, 274-275; Ludwell H. Johnson, "Contraband Trade during the last Year of the Civil War," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 49 (Mar., 1963): 639-642 and "Trading with the Union," 308-310; Pittman, "Trading with the Devil," 139-142.

intervention on the Confederacy's behalf led Lincoln to retain the trade to the Confederacy's advantage. The Union blockade boosted cotton prices and goods exchanged between the lines negated the blockade's effects.⁶ Thus, these historians have emphasized how the trade affected the war's outcome rather than how it impacted citizens' allegiances during the war's unfolding.

Examining women's participation in the trade also adds to the historical understanding of their wartime experiences by emphasizing the continuity of those experiences. This approach contrasts with scholarship that casts the Civil War as an entrance point for women's participation in the public spheres of politics and the marketplace, making it a departure from the past in which they were primarily relegated to the private household.⁷ The contraband trade, however, demonstrates how Mississippi women continued antebellum commercial activity during the war. Their trading revealed a familiarity with the marketplace that differs from scholarly claims that the Civil War itself brought women into traditionally male-dominated public arenas.

Because trading with the Union did not necessarily indicate disloyalty to the Confederacy, examining the contraband trade offers a way of getting around dichotomized approaches to Confederate nationalism, women's experiences and the war's outcome. In Civil War Mississippi, as was the case with oath-swearing and the debate over government confiscation of private property, specific circumstances motivated Mississippians to trade with the Union according to their loyalty layers. In some circumstances, micro loyalties to self or family fulfilled needs and assumed precedence over, but did not necessarily dispel, macro devotion to the Confederacy. Different allegiances constantly overlapped and trading could serve

⁶ Thomas H. O'Connor, "Lincoln and the Cotton Trade," *Civil War History* 7 (Mar., 1961): 21-25; David G. Surdam, "Traders or Traitors: Northern Cotton Trading During the Civil War," *Business and Economic History* 28 (Winter, 1999): 303, 310-311.

⁷ George C. Rable, *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 45, 50-51; LeeAnn Whites, *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender, 1860-1890* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 12-13; Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 81-82; Victoria E. Ott, *Confederate Daughters: Coming of Age During the Civil War* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008), 6, 37.

each of them, which were frequently directed at different targets. In such instances, labeling a trader a “strong” or “weak” Confederate does not address these complex motivations.

Confederate patriotism was one component in Mississippi traders’ social interactions in which more immediate ties also informed their behavior. Considering the influence of multiple loyalties helps explain why different groups of Mississippians viewed the trade as either treasonous, patriotic, or of little nationalist consequence altogether.

The divide over traders’ motivations also further illuminates the internal political debate about the nature of Confederate nationalism in Mississippi. Although there was no consistent pattern regarding what types of goods came through the lines over time, critics tended to accuse traders of purchasing “luxuries” over “necessities,” thereby putting their own prosperity above the Confederacy’s.⁸ Yet, what constituted a “luxury” and a “necessity” was often a matter of perception. Whiskey for example, could be seen as the latter when used to calm patients before surgery in a field hospital, the former when consumed by an army shirker. Contained within the language of “luxury” and “necessity” then, were larger debates between those who favored protective nationalism, characterized by a self-sufficient Confederate state, and the traders, whose actions suggested the untenability of that stance. Proponents of protective nationalism eschewed free trade policies – at least in terms of trade with the North, against which they constantly asserted their national independence – in favor of an activist Confederate government that would promote domestic manufacturing and agricultural diversification in order to supply Confederate armies and lessen economic dependence on the North.⁹

⁸ Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 41-49.

⁹ On the economic aspects of protective nationalism as applied to the Confederacy, see Peter and Nicholas Onuf, *Nations, Markets and War: Modern History and the American Civil War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006) 324-333; John Majewski, *Modernizing a Slave Economy: The Economic Vision of the Confederate Nation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 3, 140-163.

The contraband trade however, followed antebellum commercial routes and culminated at established trade centers like Memphis, Vicksburg, New Orleans, and Natchez that fell under Union control. It demonstrated that while the Civil War created two theoretically separate political states, severing a historically tightly-connected economic unit was another matter entirely. The Confederate government maintained stronger control of its territories in the east, but Union occupation in western states such as Mississippi fostered a continued economic exchange despite the altered political circumstances. This pattern fits with James Cobb's critique of "change" as a theme in southern history. Cobb argues that "[t]he history of southern identity is not a story of continuity *versus* change but continuity *within* it." Those who criticized traders for purchasing "luxuries" from the Union by extension denounced this pattern of continued economic relations as contradicting their ideal of an autonomous Confederacy. Thus, the contraband trade complicates efforts to define the Confederacy either as a "revolutionary experience" or as the South's attempt to continue its pursuit of pro-slavery "Americanism."¹⁰

The presence of continuity within change helps explain the contraband trade's inherent contradictions. In Mississippi, where both governments controlled territory, the process by which different fidelities motivated human actions helps explain why the Confederacy can seem both united and divided, why some historians think it should have lasted longer, and why others marvel that it lasted so long against such steep odds. While the Confederacy represented a sharp break from antebellum political connections, secession and war could not destroy stronger regional connections. The contraband trade demonstrated a form of continuity amid the changes caused by the Civil War.

¹⁰ James C. Cobb, *Away Down South: A History of Southern Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 7; Emory Thomas, *The Confederacy as a Revolutionary Experience* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971); Robert E. Bonner, *Mastering America: Southern Slaveholders and the Crisis of the American Nation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 217-218.

The difficulty of stopping interregional trade bothered policymakers in both the Union and Confederate governments, who wanted to prohibit trade between the lines but could not ignore its practical benefits. With this in mind they settled on policies of regulation, not prohibition, the enforcement of which changed frequently as different officials weighed in on the issue. In August of 1861, U.S. President Abraham Lincoln banned all commerce with the seceded states unless it was done with special executive permission through the Secretary of the Treasury. Total prohibition did not last, however, as Lincoln and his advisors came to recognize the trade's benefits in supplying cotton to New England textile mills, and in encouraging latent Unionism in the seceded states through economic ties. In 1862, Lincoln authorized trade with inhabitants of Confederate territory that fell under Union control, to be conducted under the authority of Treasury agents, but forbade trade with southern states still in Confederate hands. Thus, he permitted a regulated trade while trying to maintain the inherent illegality of commerce with the enemy. In addition to allowing trade by authorized Union treasury and military personnel, Lincoln also permitted all loyal citizens, north or south, to trade on condition that Federal authorities validate an individual's Union loyalty and claims to southern cotton.¹¹

The contraband trade in Mississippi began shortly after the Federals captured Memphis, Tennessee in June 1862, and gradually increased in volume as the Union army advanced southward. The Mississippi trade increased when Vicksburg fell, and the Federals gained a major base in the state, a fact that is reflected in the primary sources that describe the trade, written largely from late 1863 through the end of the war. Union Control of Memphis and Vicksburg, combined with the capture of New Orleans, meant that Mississippians wishing to transact business at these major Mississippi river commercial hubs had to deal with Union authorities.

¹¹ Coulter, "Commercial Intercourse with the Confederacy," 377-395; Surdam, "Traders or Traitors," 302-303; O'Connor, "Lincoln and the Cotton Trade," 20-29.

Despite government rules, Union field commanders had the power to regulate the trade. With a few exceptions, they generally remained hostile to a trade that fueled corruption and supplied Confederate armies, especially since a loophole in the law allowed treasury agents to prevent the transfer of goods outside of Union lines, but not to stop goods from coming into the lines from Confederate territory.¹²

Reflecting the Lincoln government's policies, Confederate national and state governments essentially decreed the trade simultaneously legal and illegal. As in the North, the Confederate stance grew out of an initial distaste for trading with the enemy that was soon tempered by reality. Although worried about undermining public confidence in southern financial independence, Confederate officials facilitated a regular trade across the lines because Union occupation of southern lands, destruction of Confederate railroads, and the Federal coastal blockade stymied other means for moving domestic and foreign supplies. In addition to supplying Confederate soldiers and civilians, the trade also brought in higher-valued U.S. currency.¹³

Congressional acts in May and August 1861 confined the export of raw materials like cotton to Confederate seaports and Mexican Territory. Congress prohibited exports to Union-blockaded ports, but was unwilling to prohibit northern imports, which continued to flow south. Beyond congressional measures, President Davis paid little attention to the trade, delegating the matter to the War Department and commanding generals in the field, whose policies varied from total prohibition to outright facilitation. Secretary of War James Seddon permitted trade by licensed private contractors and government agents to supply Confederate troops and civilians,

¹² Coulter, "Commercial Intercourse with the Confederacy," 388; Johnson, "Contraband Trade," 637-638; John K. Bettersworth, *Confederate Mississippi: The People and Policies of a Cotton State in Wartime* (1943, Repr., Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1978), 180.

¹³ Johnson, "Trading with the Union," 308-311.

but prohibited it among all private citizens. Aware of the futility of stopping all private trade, however, Seddon limited arrests of traders to those suspected of espionage and restricted impressments of their goods to supplies deemed of military necessity. Thus, despite the restrictive laws, the War Department tacitly made itself a partner in an officially illegal trade.¹⁴

Nonetheless, even limited restrictions irked Mississippi lawyer E.S. Fisher, who thought they unduly punished citizens who traded only to procure “articles of prime necessity.”¹⁵ Fisher directed his frustrations at state, as well as national, policy. Like Richmond’s approach, the Mississippi state government practiced a confusing combination of official prohibition and tacit permission. At first, the task of stopping the trade fell to military commanders, who initially responded with harsh punishments, including the destruction or confiscation of goods, imprisonment, and the occasional execution of traders. These penalties notwithstanding, Mississippi civil and military authorities could not quell the trade, and they soon realized that it could benefit the Confederacy. Acting on Seddon’s recommendations, Department of Mississippi and Louisiana commanders James Chalmers and John Pemberton confiscated traders’ goods that were useful to the army, and returned the rest to their owners. In late 1863, however, state judge Alexander Clayton ordered that confiscating authority be transferred from the military to state civil officers, and soon declared private trade legal in all districts exposed to the Union army, since the government could not stop it anyway. Yet, army confiscations did not stop, resulting in claim disputes over confiscated goods between civil and military authorities. Mississippi Governor Charles Clark sided with the civil courts, and denounced what he thought to be Richmond’s overly-prohibitive policy. He permitted the state and licensed private contractors to

¹⁴ E. Merton Coulter, “Effects of Secession Upon the Commerce of the Mississippi Valley,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 3 (Dec., 1916): 281-282; Johnson, “Trading with the Union,” 310-317, 320-322; *OR*, ser.1, vol. 17, pt. 2, pgs. 839-40.

¹⁵ E.S. Fisher to Charles Clark, February 14, 1865, Charles Clark Correspondence, ser. 768, box 950, vol. 56, Record Group (hereafter RG) 27, MDAH.

exchange cotton at Union lines for supplies like wool cards and medicine that could aid his war-torn state.¹⁶

These contradictory policies on the trade created consistent confusion, prompting one Union officer in Mississippi to exclaim, “War and commerce with the same people! What a Utopian dream!”¹⁷ Such sentiments echoed those of policy-makers in both governments who tried, but could never justify, viewing the trade as wholly treasonous. Instead, they wanted to have it both ways, and therefore, could neither fully outlaw it nor fully embrace it. Such wavering tacitly acknowledged the inherent contradiction of both trading with and fighting against the enemy.

Despite the national and state governments’ wavering policies, many Confederates on the ground in Mississippi criticized the trade, claiming that it corrupted the citizenry and made the Confederacy dependent on the Yankee enemy. In February 1863, a scout in north Mississippi told General Daniel Ruggles that “our own currency in this portion of Miss....is being rapidly supplanted by U.S. Treasury notes, mostly I suppose the proceeds of the sale of cotton.” The scout wanted to know “whether parties having U.S. money obtained from the enemy as pay for cotton shall be allowed to retain and circulate it,” since the effect of this trade was “the depreciation of our own currency and premium on that of the enemy which of course alienates the people from our Government and binds them to the enemy.” In October 1862, Robert Read, a resident of Holly Springs, the center of north Mississippi’s cotton economy due to its Memphis railroad connection, griped to Confederate Secretary of War George Randolph about the “unrestrained intercourse with Memphis.” He blamed Memphis’ Union commander William T. Sherman for using commerce to lure Mississippians back into the Union. “Sherman,” Read

¹⁶ Bettersworth, *Confederate Mississippi*, 174-178; Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War*, 134.

¹⁷ *OR*, ser.1, vol. 17, pt. 1, pg. 532.

fumed, “could not desire a more potent agency in our midst for the benefit of the Federal cause than this rapidly increasing seduction of this entire range of country from the loyalty due to our government.” According to Read, the Memphis trade was “seducing...the citizens of this country to a disgraceful complicity with those who avow our ruin.” In a letter to Governor Clark, Judge Robert Hudson echoed Read’s sentiments. “The idea of any of our people trading with the Yankees, while they are waging this unholy war, slaying our best & dearest flesh & blood, destroying our property, burning our homes, violating the persons of our women, [and] setting our negroes up in arms...is at once disgraceful and unpardonable,” he wrote. Hudson demanded that traders suffer the “rigid and prompt infliction” of “the severest penalties.”¹⁸ Such criticism framed the trade as a phenomenon that undermined Confederate independence and ingratiated Mississippians to Union authority.

Mississippi Confederates frequently asserted that the contraband trade corrupted individuals into a treasonous submission to the Federals. Commenting on traders in southwestern Mississippi in early January 1863, a Confederate officer charged that “disloyal persons...in conjunction with abolition speculators are actively engaged in endeavoring to supply the Federals with cotton contrary to the avowed policy of our Government.” The officer ordered all commanders to prevent such “nefarious” and “treasonable” traffic. In July 1862, when Confederate soldiers caught two Mississippians smuggling cotton to the Mississippi river and selling it at Memphis, the *Panola Star* opined that “our military authorities cannot be too rigid with the black-hearted and avaricious traitors engaged in the base work of selling their country.”

¹⁸ C.R. Barteau to Daniel Ruggles, February 12, 1863, John C. Pemberton Papers, MLR PI101, box 2, entry 131, War Department Collection of Confederate Records, RG 109, National Archives and Records Administration (Hereafter cited as NARA); *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 52, pt. 2, pgs. 370-71; Robert S. Hudson to Charles Clark, June 13, 1864, in James W. Silver, Ed., “The Breakdown of Morale in Central Mississippi in 1864: Letters of Judge Robert S. Hudson,” *Journal of Mississippi History* 16 (April, 1964): 110; On Holly Springs see Ben Wynne, *Mississippi’s Civil War: A Narrative History* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2006), 83-84.

The Meridian *Daily Clarion* proclaimed in 1864 that “the cravings of the ‘trading traitors’ are rapidly on the increase,” and berated traders for “besoiling their souls with Yankee oaths, bedizening their bodies with Yankee gew-gaws, gratifying their palates with Yankee viands, and destroying their senses with Yankee whiskey.” The *Clarion*’s editorial voiced a common complaint that traders bought personal luxury items at Union lines, and thereby put self interest above their Confederate allegiance.¹⁹

The *Daily Mississippian* similarly decried the “petty contrabandist and smuggler” involved in the “illicit, clandestine trade with the enemy” who “takes all chances and runs all risks, with no other object in view but the making of money.”²⁰ Such charges accused traders of treason because, in trading with the enemy, they appeared to value the acquisition of money and luxuries over the Confederacy’s needs. This charge underlay an 1863 poem by Holly Springs resident P.A. Willis, who echoed the *Mississippians*’ claims that traders elevated the pursuit of profits over the Confederate war effort:

*Veal, beef, pork, and sheep
Wheat more plenty, corn more cheap
Men more honest, true, and bold
Less inclined to lie for gold
More disposed our cause to aid
By cutting short this Yankee trade
Feed the widow and the wife
Of him who daily risks his life
In battle, or in the tented field
And from all harm his children shield
When this is done, the war will cease
And heaven help a prosperous peace
- “Cokespeare”*

Like many Mississippians, Willis decried contraband traders’ supposed greed, which made them “inclined to lie for gold,” thereby contributing to the speculation that kept food out of the hands

¹⁹ R.M. Hool to L.D Sandidge, January 20, 1863, Pemberton Papers; “Caught at Their Tricks,” *Weekly Panola Star* (Panola, MS), July 30, 1862; “A Crying Evil,” *Daily Clarion* (Meridian, MS), June 9, 1864.

²⁰ “Blockade Running” *Daily Mississippian, Evening Edition* (Jackson, MS), April 22, 1863.

of the wives and children of Confederate soldiers. By valuing profits and failing to make sacrifices for soldiers' families, Willis claimed that traders were working against the Confederate cause.²¹

Other Confederates extended these criticisms to soldiers, ostensibly the embodiments of Confederate loyalty, who succumbed to the trade. In November 1863, Colonel Frank Powers reported from Columbus, Mississippi on "the regular system of trade carried on between citizens, Confederate soldiers, and the enemy. Large quantities of cotton have found their way into the enemy's lines, guarded by Confederate soldiers." Brigadier General George Hodge similarly complained about having to punish officers "for taking bribes to pass cotton at the very points I had placed them to guard," he told Davis, adding that "you will perhaps agree with me that it was not all accidental." Stationed in Jackson in late 1864, Captain Sam Harris lamented to General Braxton Bragg that because "there are few persons along our military frontier who have not sold cotton to the enemy...the disgraceful fact of subjugation is almost complete." Harris disparaged government-sanctioned traders for depositing cotton at pre-arranged Union raiding points, and he singled out Confederate cavalry for taking bribes to ignore such collusion. These men, Harris noted, "have their price, and the blockade runners know well how to pay it. 'A pair of boots and a bottle of whiskey' will scarcely ever fail...to secure a passage for a load of cotton through the lines." In light of these facts, Harris wanted to completely prohibit the trade. "We would have been far better off today if all the cotton in this department had been destroyed two years ago," he concluded. These officers considered the trade to be exceptionally demoralizing, because it

²¹ P.A. Willis to Sam Carey, December 3, 1863, Charles Nunnally Dean, Jr. Memorial Collection, #MUM00103, box 1, Archives and Special Collections, J.D. Williams Library, University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi, (hereafter cited as UMASC).

corrupted Confederate soldiers, who should have been unwaveringly devoted to the southern cause.²²

In March 1863, cavalry scout R.H. Bowers blamed corrupt soldiers who refused to burn cotton for in turn corrupting the citizenry, explaining that “at first citizens are afraid to engage in the trade except within the lines, thinking it would be burnt, but after some of our soldiers got to buying & selling cotton many of the citizens engaged in it also.” In 1863, teacher Caroline Seabury described the trade and its effects on Confederate soldiers on a trip through the state’s north tier. “All along the roadside were stray fleeces of cotton – the remains of what had been sent clandestinely to Memphis – generally under the cover of the night...then carried to the Yankee boats in small quantities,” she wrote. “Even some [Confederate] army officers,” Seabury continued, “who in the beginning of the war, ‘would give their last dollar on the altar of their country,’ had it was said received gold from the hands of the detested Yankees – though their touch was thought such defilement – except through that incorruptible medium.”²³ Such reports led many Confederate officials to demand that the trade be squelched because it corrupted soldiers and civilians alike into placing self over country, and it made Mississippi dependent on the Union.

Like newspaper editorials that pointed to contraband traders’ supposed lust for luxuries as proof of their valuing of self over nation, these officers implied a vision of complete nationalist devotion, predicated on the idea that an independent Confederacy should be economically self-sufficient. Captain W.E. Montgomery, stationed along the Mississippi River in 1863, suggested this ideal by arguing that the only way to stop the trade was by “burning all the cotton in the country except enough for spinning purposes.” Montgomery thought trade with the Union

²² *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 31, pt. 3, pg. 673, vol. 45, pt. 1, pg. 9, ser. 4, vol. 3, pgs. 646-648.

²³ R.H. Bowers to Thomas Henderson, March 25, 1863, Pemberton Papers; Suzanne L. Bunkers, ed. *The Diary of Caroline Seabury, 1854-1863* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 100.

undermined an autonomous Confederacy that should subsist on homespun. Governor Charles Clark echoed this view in his 1863 Inaugural Address, describing how, among the most loyal Mississippi women, “the spinning wheel is preferred to the harp, and the loom makes a music of loftier patriotism and inspiration than the keys of the piano.”²⁴ Clark emphasized that physically *living* loyalty on a daily basis, through the wearing of homespun, was superior to merely *voicing* loyalty through patriotic songs. He and other Confederate officials believed that patriotic Mississippians should embrace homespun in the name of southern independence, and that contraband traders, in purchasing alleged luxuries like whiskey and “gew-gaws” at Union lines that did not aid the southern war effort, placed self-interest above what should be a resolute devotion to the Confederacy. These protective nationalists believed that only prohibiting illicit trade would preserve the Confederacy’s independence.

Other Confederates couched criticisms of the trade in more qualified terms. They were willing to tolerate it to the extent that it allowed Mississippians to acquire perceived basic necessities, but decried as disloyal those who traded for supposed luxuries. One such instance involved Holly Springs resident William Crump, who regularly sent trainloads of cotton to Federal lines at Memphis and, in turn, imported what Inspector General Harvey Walter called “luxuries not essential to the public welfare,” including large shipments of whiskey. Walter accused Crump of making “merchandise of treason,” distinguishing what he perceived to be Crump’s disloyal profiteering from other Holly Springs residents “whose wants compel him to

²⁴ Capt. W.E. Montgomery to Charles Clark, November 25, 1863, Clark Correspondence, box 949; Inaugural Address of Governor Charles Clark, Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Mississippi, December Secession of 1862, and November Secession of 1863, pg. 160. *Documenting the American South*, Electronic Edition. Southern Historical Collection. University Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/msdec62/msdec62.html> (Accessed April 26, 2012. Hereafter cited as *Documenting the American South*).

send his bale of cotton to Memphis to procure the food necessary for existence.”²⁵ Walter tried to distinguish the greedy Crump from others who frequented Union lines in the name of survival, but Mississippians often complicated such distinctions by trading under the mantle of necessity.

An observer in Brandon Mississippi noted as much. “I am not opposed to people being permitted to haul cotton to Tennse. [sic] and exchanging it for needed supplies,” he told Clark, “but there is a regular traffic of speculation going on... If they per chance to have anything of use, they will not sell it for money, but will exchange it for more cotton.” Another Mississippian echoed this point, stating that “the excuse for this traffic with the enemy was the necessity for procuring food and clothing for family use and for relatives in the Confederate army.” While conceding that “it some instances it was true,” he added that “in very many cases it was for the purpose of speculation and extortion, and to carry into Memphis such information as would be of use to the Yankees in their future raids.” The Reverend Samuel Agnew noted that while many traders bought corn, a scarcity in north Mississippi, he added that “cotton seemed to be in considerable demand by persons who wish to go to Memphis to get groceries and finery.” Another concerned citizen informed Secretary Seddon that traders exchanged cotton for “brandies, wines, and flimsy gewgaws that bring exorbitant prices,” but brought back “little in articles that produce substantial good.”²⁶ In many cases, ardent Confederates struggled to differentiate between traders whom they believed operated out of pure self-interest, and others who seemed to be loyal Confederates, but for whom ties to self and family needed addressing through permission to trade.

²⁵ *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 49, pt. 1, pg. 950.

²⁶ T.G. Braskings to Charles Clark, September 28, 1864, Clark Correspondence, box 950; *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 32, pt. 3, pg. 634; Diary of Samuel Andrew Agnew, November 26, 1863, *Documenting the American South*, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/agnew/agnew.html>. (accessed August 20, 2009); *OR*, ser. 4, vol. 2, pg. 585.

Whether or not to accommodate peoples' multiple loyalties by permitting some form of limited trade proved exceedingly difficult for Confederate officials. "Trade with the enemy is universal. The temptations to fraud are overwhelming," stated an 1864 Confederate Treasury report from Columbus, Mississippi. "Do you have any blockade runners in your county?" North Mississippi resident M. Hairston asked her niece. "There is a good deal of it done in this [region] & occasionally they get caught," she added, describing a Dr. Means who "started with a load of cotton toward Memphis" but who "was stopped at Oxford, team and wagon confiscated & himself ordered to the army."²⁷ There was indeed "a good deal" of trading among Mississippi civilians, despite Confederate officials' threats to arrest such transgressors.

Occasionally traders were caught in the act, but enforcement was never sufficient to stop it. Some Confederate officials thought the temptation to trade corrupted individuals like Lowndes County minister, T.C. Teasdale. According to General Ruggles, Teasdale went to Memphis in late 1862, "preached there, brought articles through our lines, and sold them without the cognizance of the proper authorities." In addition, the reverend also obtained a trading pass for Lowndes County merchant Lewis Rawitch, for which Rawitch paid Teasdale \$1,000. "This clergyman," Ruggles noted, "is reported employed as a traveling missionary...having access to headquarters of our armies and moving to and fro, while circumstances indicate his doubtful loyalty." In a similar incident, Confederate scouts caught Carroll County physician H.P. Atkins at a Bolivar County river point exchanging seventy-five bales of cotton for gold and greenbacks with suspected forged government papers. "I am almost satisfied that his papers are not

²⁷ J. D. B. DeBow to C.G. Memminger, April 9, 1864, "Report on the Condition of Government Cotton, Contiguous to the Mississippi and its Tributaries," *Documenting the American South*, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/cotton/cotton.html>. (Accessed September 18, 2009); M. Hairston to Niece, April 18, 1864, Wilson and Hairston Family Papers, 1751-1928, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (hereafter cited as SHC).

genuine,” the scout leader reported, “and I most respectfully ask to be informed whether he is in fact authorized to do such things as are here reported.” Laws permitting a regulated, government-approved trade attempted to benefit the Confederacy while hedging against supposed personal enrichment. Judge Advocate R.J. Morgan reiterated this point to General Leonidas Polk in 1864. “This permission [to trade] is to be granted for the benefit of the army and not for personal advantage or private speculation and can not therefore be given to individuals for procuring their own or neighborhood supplies,” he noted.²⁸ In restricting the trade for military purposes, Morgan wrestled with a variation of the same necessity argument that challenged commanders on the ground. Demarcating local loyalties from national ones was as difficult as banning the trade altogether.

Local loyalties often drove Mississippi’s planters, especially those living in the delta region with easy access to the Mississippi River, to trade with the Federals. Most were wealthy men who in theory could not believably claim the mantle of necessity, and their behavior irked Confederate military authorities, who accused them of profiteering at their country’s expense. In April 1862, General Dabney Maury told a Confederate captain in Memphis to inform planters along the Mississippi River banks that “the river is now open to the enemy, and that the interests of our country demand that they shall at once destroy all of their cotton.” Those who failed to comply were to have their cotton confiscated and burnt. Despite this policy, a pair of 1862 reports stated that “planters along the Mississippi hesitate to burn cotton,” and that the Federals were “sugar-coating the planters, offering them ample protection to all private property.” In February 1863, a partisan ranger stationed in Panola County reported that “several citizens in this vicinity have sent and continue to send cotton to the enemy,” while Lieutenant Colonel S.W.

²⁸ *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 31, pt. 3, pgs. 693-694; vol. 39, pgs. 231-232; 1860 U.S. Census, Lowndes and Carroll Counties, Mississippi, T.C. Teasdale, Lewis Rawitch, H.P. Atkins, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed July 8, 2011); R.J. Morgan to Lt. Gen. Polk, April 30, 1864, Clark Correspondence, box 949, MDAH.

Ferguson reported that “almost the whole community in the northern portion of Bolivar and the whole of Coahoma is engaged in this disgraceful traffic.” That same month, troops confiscated wagons and mules hauling cotton to the Mississippi River, which they deemed “an act that cannot be interpreted otherwise than for trade with the Yankee boats.” The wagons belonged to Bolivar County planter Reuben Starke, who, previous to this incident, “had already sent off one boat load of cotton.” Military authorities issued a warrant for Starke’s arrest but were unable to locate him. Starke also traded alongside fellow Bolivar county residents D.W. Davis and a Mr. Hammond. In late February 1863, Confederate military personnel found “four mule wagons and teams loaded with 12 bales of cotton” at Bolivar County’s Concordia Bayou landing, which they quickly learned belonged to the three men.²⁹

Through trading with the Union, many Mississippi planters protested the Confederate government’s policies of burning cotton and thus, its policy of protective nationalism. In late 1863, after observing planter activity in the Delta, quartermaster A.M. Paxton told Davis that “the citizens of this section of country,” fed up with the government’s “extortion and inhospitality” regarding private property, planned to “raise cotton and open a trade with the enemy along the river.” The planters’ reasons for this were straightforward. In exchange for keeping guerillas at bay, Union forces gave them “written protection for their persons and property” and allowed them to “exchange goods for cotton on the river-bank.”³⁰ These planters were concerned about their property and financial well-being, and wanted to keep business going even if doing so meant associating with the enemy.

²⁹ *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 10, pt. 2, pgs. 451, 455, 515-516; W.C. Haywell to T.C. Tusser, February 9, 1863, S.W. Ferguson to J.J. Rund, February 15, 1863; S.W. Ferguson to J.J. Rund, February 17, 1863, all in Pemberton Papers; 1860 U.S. Census and Slave Schedules, Bolivar County, Mississippi, R.O. Starke, D.W. Davis, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed July 25, 2011); James Lewis to S.W. Tingman, February 19, 1863, Pemberton Papers.

³⁰ *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 31, pt. 3, pg. 690.

Planter-politician James Lusk Alcorn, who had never warmed to the idea of the Confederacy, led as it was by his political enemy, Jefferson Davis, openly refused to give up “every comfort at home,” and minced no words about his desire to reap personal profits by trading at Union lines. An active Whig in antebellum politics, Alcorn fought to preserve the Union during the 1850 secession crisis, a position he maintained during the crisis of 1860-61 until the futility of further resistance drove him to cast a secession vote. Afterwards, he was elected a brigadier general of Mississippi state troops, whom he led into Kentucky in 1862 without seeing action. When state troops became part of the Confederate army, however, Davis, doubting Alcorn’s loyalty, revoked his generalship. Alcorn spent much of the war trading with the Union on his Coahoma County plantation.³¹

In November 1862, Alcorn told his wife that he “became so flush of funds” by selling eighty bales of cotton and netting over \$12,000. He hoped to sell “a hundred bales more,” adding that “I sell my cotton at 35 cents per pound and am paid in ‘greenbacks’ such as I send you and with this I can buy in Memphis, Confederate money by the sacks full at from thirty to forty cents in the dollar.” Alcorn smuggled his cotton primarily at night, waiting on the river shores for the Yankees to arrive with payment. And he was not alone. “The smuggling business has now become popular and people are beginning openly to trade,” he wrote, noting that Company B of the 18th Mississippi Cavalry Partisan Rangers temporarily disbanded for two weeks and “went into a regular trade with the Yankees” to get salt. “I was at Delta a few nights since when near four hundred bales of cotton were openly sold and full fifty men were on the bank participating. There is scarcely an exception in the county,” he continued. Among these men were Coahoma County residents James Pettit, B.A. Simms, Isaac Hull, John Miller, John Jones and William Atkinson, all of whom were planters with extensive land and slaveholdings except Pettit, a

³¹ Percy L. Rainwater, ed., “Letters of James Lusk Alcorn,” *Journal of Southern History* 3 (May, 1937): 196-197.

farmer who owned four slaves. “You remember how they once talked,” Alcorn exclaimed, referencing the planters’ former secessionist sentiment, “It would astonish you to witness the reaction. The [Confederate] authorities out on the hills, I am told, are furious.”³²

Alcorn himself made no such reversals of opinion, and blamed his political enemies for bringing destruction to the South. “I sought to avoid this terrible war, but the wild mania had seized upon the passions of the southern people, when I would point them to the coming danger they would laugh in derision,” he wrote in his diary. He had stronger words for Davis and other Democrats who became Confederates. “Oh, curse the democratic party for the ruin they have brought me,” he wrote, calling Davis the Democrats’ “demigod,” and a “miserable, stupid, one-eyed, dyspeptic, arrogant tyrant” who “draws his twenty five thousand a year, and boasts of the future grandeur of the country which he has ruined...let me live to see him damned! and sunk into the lowest hell.” Nonetheless, Alcorn had little love for the invading Federals. He wanted to preserve the Old South’s social order, including his personal wealth and his family’s well-being that war and Union invasion threatened. Doing so meant keeping business going, war or not.³³

When contemplating whether or not to leave Mississippi for Alabama to join his wife, Alcorn told her that “I cannot think of it; that would be to abandon all our home estate. I think I can save many thousands by remaining. Duty to yourself and to our children requires that I should save from the wreck what I can.” He avoided a wreck and more, increasing the price paid for his cotton and procuring fineries for his daughters. In 1864, his two older daughters shopped for themselves in occupied Memphis. “I will send you everything I can and should I dispose of

³² James L. Alcorn to Wife, November 25, 1862, in Rainwater, ed., “Letters of James Lusk Alcorn,” 199-200; 1860 U.S. Census and Slave Schedules, Coahoma County, Mississippi, J.T. Pettit, B.A. Sims, Isaac Hull, John Miller, John Jones, W.H. Atkinson, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed July 26, 2011).

³³ James Lusk Alcorn Diary, March 5, 1863, in James Lusk Alcorn and Family Papers, Z/0317.000, ser. 1, box 1, MDAH; For more on Alcorn’s politics, see Lilian A. Pereyra, *James Lusk Alcorn: Persistent Whig* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1966).

my cotton in time will come myself,” he told his wife, “I wish, however, to fill my pocket – and should the war continue, we will spend our summer in New York – and leave them to fight who made the fight.”³⁴ Alcorn’s disdain for the Confederacy left him no qualms about trading with the Federals, but personal and family interests primarily motivated him to keep the cotton business going. To Confederates, Alcorn’s actions fell under the definition of treason, but Alcorn himself traded with a clear conscience, refusing to follow the laws of what he considered to be an illegitimate government.

Trading was justifiable to individuals like Alcorn who held no loyalty to the Confederacy, but self-proclaimed Confederate citizens such as Samuel Agnew struggled to maintain a pure, nationalist devotion amid the trade’s temptations. In 1863, Agnew criticized his neighbor, Martha Hannah, for trading in Federal lines at Corinth and Memphis. To get through the lines, Hannah swore she was from Tennessee rather than Mississippi, prompting Agnew to scoff, “I do not know that much dependence is to be placed in her statements, for anybody who would go to Memphis and swear a lie will with as little compunction come home and tell a lie.” Notwithstanding his disapproval over Hannah’s actions, Agnew noted at one point that she “gave me some items from the Federal lines.” Indeed, Agnew and his relatives visited the Hannahs on more than one occasion “to see if they could not get anything or rather something out their Memphis stocks which they needed.” On another occasion, he had a neighbor bring him sugar, coffee, and French calico from Memphis.³⁵ The conflict between Agnew’s patriotism and his desire to get goods from Union lines reveals how loyalties to self and family were strong motivators even among nationalist-minded Mississippians.

³⁴ James L. Alcorn to Wife, March 16, 1863, December 18, 1862, May 3, 1864, in Rainwater, ed., “Letters of James Lusk Alcorn,” 202, 204, 205.

³⁵ Samuel Agnew Diary, October 21, November 12, 13 1863, May 28, 1864, *Documenting the American South*.

This was also the case with Augustus Vaughn, a pro-Confederate resident of Goodman, Holmes County, Mississippi, who called the Federals “scoundrels,” yet still wanted to shop at their lines. In September 1864, Vaughn wrote to his brother-in-law, Louisiana businessman Richard Simpson, instructing him to buy a host of items in Federally-occupied New Orleans. These included “a nice suit of dark Cassimere clothes, a dark heavy frock overcoat...[a] doz. fine white shirts” and three dresses “of dark Calico” for his daughter. To smuggle these items, Vaughn told Simpson to “get a permit from the Provost Marshal at Amite City – taking up those goods to exchange for flour for your own family use. Also bring your exemption papers as mail Contractor and you will have no trouble.” Vaughn bluntly admitted why he wanted articles from Union lines, despite his Confederate sympathies. “Remember, my taste is fastidious. I want nice goods,” he told Simpson.³⁶ The war’s circumstances drove people like Agnew and Vaughn to engage in what they understood as disloyal behavior in order to continue participating in the market economy.

Other Mississippians displayed the same contradictions when it came to the trade. Eliza Sively of Raymond, Mississippi, complained about contraband traders to her daughter, Jane, a schoolgirl in Alabama. In 1864 a local girl failed to procure a new wedding dress from Vicksburg in order to marry a man whom Sivley considered a “dissipated scamp.” “Poor girl,” she wrote, “it appears that [marriage] is all the girls think of (and fine dresses). They are as crazy about Yankee goods as they are to marry, [they] don’t appear to think of their Brothers that are enduring all kinds of hardships, nor the condition of the country.” Sively invoked protective nationalism to criticize women who sacrificed Confederate independence by trading with the

³⁶ Augustus Vaughn to Sallie Simpson, August 11, 1864; Augustus Vaughn to Richard Simpson, September 18, 1864, Simpson and Brumby Family Papers, 1847-1945, folder 2, subseries 1.1, 01408-z, SHC.

Union. By refusing to disavow ill begotten market goods, she believed that they failed to match the sacrifices of soldiers like her son, William.³⁷

Despite her criticisms of others, however, Sively also traded with the Federals. In a January 1864 letter to Jane, she explained, “we can’t get anything from Memphis now, I will try and get some greenbacks and get you some muslins from Vicksburg, you ought not to wear all your clothes and have them all ruined.” Her refusal to let her daughter go without nice clothes contrasted sharply with her chiding of other women who traded for the same reason. In April 1864, Sively’s sister brought her “two calico dress patterns, two pair shoes, two corsets, and the bulk goods for the [horse] riding suit” from Memphis. Later that month, Sively’s neighbor, Sallie, seeking flour and other supplies for the Sively household, was part of the large crowd that was “going in every day” to Vicksburg, “a great many” of whom “sold their cotton to the Yankees.” In May 1864, Sively told her daughter that “Sallie got you a rite pretty pink muslin when she went to the Yankee City, [and] decked herself out in grand stile [sic], had her a beautiful dress made there.”³⁸ Her Confederate loyalty notwithstanding, Sively’s desire for fine goods led her to engage in what she considered to be treasonous activity when done by other people.

Like Sively, plenty of other Mississippians were lured by the contraband trade even as they espoused Confederate sympathies. In early 1863, in response to several pro-Union northern newspaper editorials, Amanda Worthington, a Washington County planter’s wife, invoked an extreme protective nationalist position. “Rather than go back into a union with such people I would have every man, woman and child in the Confederacy killed,” she wrote. In this passionate moment, Worthington preferred death over a loss of independence, but such rhetoric

³⁷ Eliza H.B. Sively to Jane Sivley, April 30, 1864, Jane Sively Letters, 1862-1867, folder 3, 01891-z, SHC.

³⁸ Eliza H.B. Sively to Jane Sivley, January 21, April 10, April 19, May 16, 1864, Ibid, folders 2 and 3.

had little sway in reality. In January 1865, Worthington was enthralled when her sister brought her a copy of *David Copperfield*, photographs, linen dresses, two pairs of shoes, handkerchiefs, stockings, perfume, jewelry, fancy hats, and two custom-made silk dresses from Union-occupied New Orleans. Worthington's sister also bought "the same number of things for herself," as well as items for her brother, William, a Confederate soldier. "She just spent 1,000 dollars, got everything we wanted and didn't have to take the oath!"³⁹ Although Worthington at one point claimed to prefer death to reunion with the Yankees, she still traded with them.

Louisa Lovell, resident of Monmouth Plantation outside of Natchez, also engaged in what she knew to be the illegal trade. "All day long miscellaneous trains of wagons...have been passing by this place," she wrote in August 1863 to her husband, Joseph, "I saw about 50 return a short time ago loaded with cotton & fodder. Why don't the people burn the cotton? It seems as if cowardice has taken possession of the whole state." Yet in the same letter, Lovell admitted, "I have been seriously thinking of selling some of that linen for greenbacks & also sending what few vegetables we have left to the Yankee camp to sell." Her thoughts turned to action in March 1864. "Doubtless you will wonder what I am doing at Vicksburg, will you not?" she wrote to her sister-in-law, explaining that "Joe has told you I expect of the cotton business. Well, dear Paris [a friend] and myself are now up here to barter with the hated Yankees." In July of 1864, Lovell similarly found herself in New Orleans ostensibly to see a doctor, but during her visit she admitted that "we did a good deal of shopping as our wardrobes needed replacing very badly."⁴⁰

Each of these individuals continued to champion Confederate allegiance even while trading at Union lines, behavior they understood to be technically disloyal because they singled

³⁹ Amanda Dougherty Worthington Diary, April 28, 1863, January 11-13, 1865, Amanda Dougherty Worthington Papers, 1819-1878, microfilm, 01931, SHC.

⁴⁰ Louisa T. Lovell to Joseph Lovell, August 17, 1863, Louisa T. Lovell to W.S. Lovell, March 12, 1864, Louisa T. Lovell to Joseph Lovell, July 29, 1864, Quitman Family Papers, 1784-1978, folders 111, 112, ser. 1.2, 00616, SHC.

out others for the same actions. Nonetheless, self-interest via the desire for market goods led them to trade. This micro loyalty was likely separate in their minds from the protective nationalism on which the Confederate government, and on some occasions, they themselves, expected them to act. Their trading revealed how protective nationalism could not be sustained on a practical level in the wartime environment.

Numerous Mississippi contraband traders faced similar circumstances and, unlike outspoken Confederates who appeared hypocritical for willingly participating in the trade, many of them kept silent, suggesting that the question of macro national allegiance was a secondary concern. Their own experiences reveal the influence of multiple loyalties that belied contemporaries' charges that trading at Union lines indicated treasonous motives. Narcissa Black, a planter's wife living just outside of Corinth, Mississippi in McNairy County, Tennessee, traded to meet economic needs and satisfy local ties. Black's diary contains several instances when "northern gentlemen" stayed overnight, and she often sold butter, onions and cotton to Union soldiers.⁴¹ When the Federals reached Corinth in 1862, Black and a bevy of her neighbors repeatedly visited Union lines to buy and sell. "Took the wagon in the morning and went to the northern camps and got a good many things...I sold one bushel of onions, three pots of eggs and two pounds of butter," read a typical entry. Confederate law forbade this kind of commercial exchange with the Union, but Black's actions suggested no particular national favoritism. Although she traded with the Federals, she also on more than one occasion fed and housed Confederate soldiers who came through the area.⁴² Further, nowhere in her over one-hundred

⁴¹ Narcissa L. Black Diaries, May 12, 24 and 26, 1862, microfilm, #Z/1211, roll 36149, MDAH.

⁴² Ibid, June 4, 1862, December 15 1863, February 14 1864, March 5 1864, April 12, 1864; For more on Black's wartime activities, see Mary Lohrenz, "Two Lives Intertwined on a Tennessee Plantation: Textile Production as Recorded in the Diary of Narcissa L. Erwin Black." *Southern Quarterly* 27 (Fall 1988): 72-93.

page diary did Black express support for either government; instead she focused on local duties like tending to crops and purchasing plantation supplies. Her diary's matter-of-fact tone, its uninterrupted detailing of daily routines, and her lack of commentary about national loyalties suggest that the needs of her family and plantation were Black's top priorities.

In contrast to Black, other female traders made more explicit connections between micro loyalties and their commerce at Union lines. English-born Betty Beaumont, the wife of a railroad engineer and a resident of Woodville, Mississippi, exchanged cotton and other goods for supplies at Union lines in nearby Natchez and more distant New Orleans and then re-sold these supplies at her Woodville store. Although to some contemporary observers Beaumont might have appeared to demonstrate Confederate allegiance by making caps to sell to Confederate soldiers and naming her tenth child "Jefferson Davis," in an 1887 memoir she claimed to not understand why the war came and consequently "cared nothing about it."⁴³ Devotion to self and family drove most of Beaumont's actions, including her trading at Union lines. Her ultimate goal during the war was "to preserve the means of life and to procure a way of providing for the education of my family." Rather than align with one side over the other, she sold supplies to Confederate soldiers and traded with the Federals because both acts earned income. "My little store of goods bought at such risk were of great profit," she wrote of trading at Union lines, adding "I found I could arrive at pecuniary gain in this way, I gladly seized the opportunity."⁴⁴ Although Confederate loyalty seemed to affect Beaumont on some level, it was less important than self and family interests, which is why she held no qualms about trading with the Union and ultimately claimed to not care about the war.

⁴³ Betty Bentley Beaumont, *Twelve Years of my Life: An Autobiography* (Philadelphia: T.B. Peterson & Brothers, 1887), 178, 183, quote found on 167.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 233, 234.

Writing from England in 1887 allowed Beaumont to be frank about prioritizing local over national loyalties without fear of reprisal from the Confederacy. Such openness was rarer among women caught trading during the war who, faced with legal pressures, had to disavow treasonous intent. When Confederate authorities confiscated widow Martha Craigin's wagons bound for Yankee lines, she explained to Governor Clark that "I never would have attempted it if necessity had not have drove me to it." Craigin claimed that she traded in order to care for "a large and helpless family of girls with no husband or son to assist in making them a support."⁴⁵ Echoing Craigin, Harriet Spencer, a Pontotoc County, Mississippi native caught returning from Union lines with contraband goods, convinced Colonel William Falkner to petition Governor John Pettus on her behalf. "She is the daughter of a widow woman, in very indignant circumstances, with no male persons connected with the family. She has been to Memphis, and purchased a few necessary articles all for family use," Falkner explained. He concluded that "although no man is more opposed to a traffic with the enemy than I am... I feel it is my duty to ask your Excellency to order her goods returned to her."⁴⁶ Spencer could also claim that her trading actually helped the war effort. While in Memphis she bought shoe pegs for her neighbor, William Bell, who vouched for Spencer when he explained to Pettus that the shoe pegs were "necessary to carrying on my trade as I am a shoe & boot maker by trade and have been very hard pressed to keep the soldiers shoed."⁴⁷ Like Black's private diary and Beaumont's post-war memoir, Craigin's and Spencer's letters to Confederate officials indicate that self and family fidelities drove them to trade. They invoked necessity to dispel possible treasonous charges laid at them by Confederate

⁴⁵ Martha Craigin to Charles Clark, November 28, 1863, Clark Correspondence, box 949.

⁴⁶ W.C. Falkner to John J. Pettus, February 13, 1863, John J. Pettus Correspondence, Roll 1446, Volume. 51, Record Group 27, MDAH.

⁴⁷ W.W. Bell to John J. Pettus, February 12, 1863, Pettus Correspondence.

officials who often prioritized nationalism without considering how multiple fidelities could influence people.

Despite providing different justifications, the experiences of Black, Beaumont, Craigin and Spencer share a key commonality: they were continuing their antebellum sectional commerce into the war. Commenting on the trade from Corinth after the fall of Memphis, Sherman told Maj. General Henry Halleck to “assure all country people that they will be permitted to take their cotton freely to market and that the ordinary channels of trade will be immediately reopened.”⁴⁸ This connection to pre-war market activity, through the “ordinary channels of trade,” helps explain women’s prominent role in the contraband trade beyond the obvious loss of men to the armies. Staunch Confederates who criticized female contraband traders failed to see this continuity. Instead they criticized female traders as disloyal.

In June 1864 Judge Hudson stated that “our women are the chief instruments and agents in this business” of “running the blockade and trading with the Yankees at Natches [sic], Vicksburg, Memphis & other points.” In a scathing 1864 critique of the trade, the *Meridian Daily Clarion* declared that “amongst the women – we say it with shame – are the greatest transgressors, our worst enemies in every respect.” These women, the *Clarion* noted, “have husbands with the enemy, while they remain in the Confederacy...for the sole object of saving their, or rather their husband’s property, making frequent visits to Vicksburg or Memphis – the Meccas of their degradation” from which they returned with “quantities of everything calculated to demoralize the neighborhoods in which they live – including the political opinions of the Yankees.” A Jackson-based Confederate colonel complained that “the women are losing their real faith and patriotism through this intercourse and traffic with the enemy.” After the fall of Vicksburg, the *Clarion* warned of “the female cotton speculators from Vicksburg and Warren

⁴⁸ *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 10, pt. 2, pg. 279.

County” who had “cotton on the brain,” and traded so often that they became omens of Federal presence. “Whenever you see ladies coming from the enemy’s lines to buy cotton,” the *Clarion* warned, “commence moving your valuables away to a place of safety, for the Yankees will soon be along.” By 1864 Mississippi women had made a regular business out of the trade. A.M. Paxton, stationed two counties west of the Federals’ Vicksburg base, reported that “ladies residing in this region, eminent for wealth, respectability, intelligence and beauty, make nothing of taking government cotton without authority and traveling in the night to the enemy’s lines.” These women bribed Confederate pickets and smuggled out goods like whiskey and calico, which they sold to other Mississippians for a profit.⁴⁹

Confederate observers took particular offense at these female traders, who, they believed, sacrificed their patriotism in exchange for what these observers viewed as material luxuries. “She is liable to perjure herself by taking the oath,” a *Daily Clarion* editorial said of female traders, emphasizing how failure to swear the oath prevented the acquisition of goods. “How many come home without the much courted goods?” the editorial asked, “Let the rustling of fresh silk, the snowy handkerchiefs, the love of a bonnet, the light tap of prunella boot heels on our pavements, answer.”⁵⁰ In November 1863, Julia Bowman of Columbus, Mississippi complained to her sister about the trade’s popularity among local ladies. “The Memphis fever is still raging,” she wrote. “Numbers of ladies from this place and Aberdeen are risking dangers and insults for a little finery. To our shame be it said...I would rather wrap in bear skin then sacrifice independence at this rate. They are the people that are going to have nothing to do with the Yankees when the war

⁴⁹ Robert S. Hudson to Charles Clark, June 13, 1864, in Silver, ed., “The Breakdown of Morale,” 110; “A Crying Evil,” *Daily Clarion* (Meridian, MS), June 9, 1864; *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 39, pt. 1, pg. 729; *Daily Clarion* (Meridian, MS), July 6, 1864; *OR*, ser. 4, vol. 3, pgs. 282-83.

⁵⁰ “Blockade Running,” *Daily Clarion* (Meridian, MS), June 14, 1864.

is over.”⁵¹ Staunch Confederates levied such criticisms at male and female traders alike, accusing them of abdicating their Confederate duties in their selfish quest for “finery.” By claiming to prefer “bear skin” to clothing bought at Union lines, Bowman voiced a preference for homespun, thereby invoking the protective nationalist ideal that the Confederacy should be economically independent from the North. Traders who purchased goods from Union lines allegedly violated this ideal by demonstrating an unwillingness to sacrifice all material comforts in the name of national loyalty, thereby thwarting many Mississippians’ goal of creating a self-sustained Confederacy.

Critics who labeled female traders as apostates usually did not recognize how other loyalties could co-exist with patriotism. Instead, they treated women’s patriotism as their most important allegiance and measured women’s actions as reflecting their level of support for the Confederate cause. Historians have taken a similar approach by tending to view Confederate women’s actions through the lens of devotion to the nation. This approach correlates with the rhetoric of paternalism that secessionists and later Confederate officials used to theorize women’s relationship to the state. Southern paternalism emphasized a system of male-dominated household governance in which women and other dependents accepted their subordinated status in exchange for protection from outside threats. Paternalism accorded social and financial privileges to white women of slaveholding households, elevated them above dependent slaves, and praised them as the keepers of the natural virtue associated with the nineteenth century’s cult of domesticity. In associating the home with femininity however, southern paternalism frowned

⁵¹ Julia Southall to Emily Southall, November 5, 1863, Southall and Bowen Family Papers, 1833-1959, folder 10, 04135, SHC.

on women's participation in the supposed masculine public spheres of politics and the marketplace.⁵²

During the Civil War, Confederate officials appealed to this paternalism by suggesting that in exchange for women's support for the southern war effort the Confederacy was to protect and preserve women's dependent yet privileged status. Consequently, historians argue that women either withdrew their support for the Confederacy based on its failure to preserve their privileged status, or that they steadfastly supported the breakaway nation, fearing the loss of privilege that would follow Confederate defeat.⁵³ Despite their differing conclusions, these historians tend to measure women's wartime actions as indicative of their degree of support for the Confederacy.

In addition, much of this scholarship has focused on elite plantation mistresses and, as a result, historians have tended to associate the elites' wartime experiences, defined by a sharp break from antebellum social patterns, with that of the mass of women from yeomen and non-slaveholding households. Recently, Stephanie McCurry has made important distinctions between elite and plain women's wartime politics, arguing that the Civil War spurred plain women's entrance into the political sphere as a constituency of "soldiers' wives" who demanded that the Confederate state afford them protection and alleviate their material hardships as recompense for their husband's military service. In contrast to planter women, who invoked the traditional

⁵² Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 100-102, 194-195; Rable, *Civil Wars*, 2-8, 30-32; Brenda E. Stevenson, *Life in Black and White: Family and Community in the Slave South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 38; Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 32; Nancy Bercaw, *Gendered Freedoms: Race, Rights, and the Politics of Household in the Delta, 1861-1875* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 60-61.

⁵³ Rable, *Civil Wars*, 50-78; Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 238-247; Laura F. Edwards, *Scarlett Doesn't Live here Anymore: Southern Women in the Civil War Era* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 82-86; Jean V. Berlin, "Did Confederate Women Lose the War? Deprivation, Destruction, and Despair on the Home Front," in *The Collapse of the Confederacy*, Mark Grimsley and Brooks D. Simpson, eds. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 173; Jacqueline Glass-Campbell, *When Sherman Marched North from the Sea*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 71; Ott, *Confederate Daughters*, 3-4, 6.

paternalist language of protection in their pleas to state officials, poor and yeomen women approached the state as a new and distinct political group.⁵⁴ Though they differ in emphasizing women's motivations and methods for approaching the state, historians of elite and plain southern women share in common an interpretation that casts the Civil War as a starting point when white southern women entered the political sphere as claimants to the state's protective power. This emphasis on a break from the past tends to overlook important elements of continuity that shaped how Mississippi's female contraband traders reacted to the war. Understanding the influence of pre-war habits on these women puts their political relationship to the state in a different light. Rather than demand its protection, they wanted the state to leave them alone.

Many traders were poor and yeomen women who owned few to no slaves. Their participation in the trade indicates a familiarity with market commerce forged in the pre-war years. Federal Treasury Department reports listing the names of hundreds of southerners who traded at Memphis between 1863 and 1864 included at least thirty Mississippi women, many of whom traded on multiple occasions. In 1863, Adams County planter Charles Whitmore described how "the [Union run] supply stores are full everyday by country ladies and by getting permits they buy at reasonable rates." In early 1864, speaking on behalf of five widows who came to the city to trade, a Memphis businessman told a Federal officer that "these poor women" were "very much in need of the small parcels of goods for which they ask permits," and "belong to that humble class of poor people in Mississippi, whose hearts have never been in the Rebel cause." Of the two women in the group who appear in the census, Lafayette County native Tabitha Ward had ten children and was married to a non-slaveholding farmer who owned

⁵⁴ McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*, 134-136, 148. For an earlier study of poor and yeomen women before and during the war, see Victoria E. Bynum, *Unruly Women: The Politics of Social and Sexual Control in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

\$10,000 in personal property, \$6,000 in real-estate, and may have died by 1864. Susan Ward, also from Lafayette, was unmarried with two young children, owned no property, and lived with another family. Although only Susan Ward could be considered poor, neither of the two women came from the planter class.⁵⁵

In May 1864, Eliza Sivley described two Hinds County women, S. Simons and M. Florin, who were “bringing out a good many goods from Vicksburg” to “sell them very high and for Greenbacks or gold.” They were opportunistic capitalists who also took different currencies, as Sivley noted that “they have goods in Jackson now, for Confederate money.” Simons was married to a non-slaveholding brick mason who owned only \$200 in real-estate. Florin was the wife of a shoemaker who owned \$200 in real-estate and two slaves. Like the female Memphis traders, these women were far removed from the planter elite and demonstrated a clear knowledge of market relations.⁵⁶

Like Simons and Florin, Mississippian Eliza Herbert also did business at Union lines. In May 1863, Federal officials at Memphis arrested Herbert for “smuggling contraband goods over the lines” in three large trunks labeled with seals on which she allegedly forged the signature of Federal Provost Marshal A.J. Enlow and adopted the alias “Mrs. Steele.” According to the military commission, Herbert admitted that she “lives in Mississippi, that her husband is a merchant there, and that she was taking these goods to Mississippi for his benefit,” but claimed

⁵⁵ Monthly Report of Authorities Issued to Bring Products from Insurrectionary States, Etc., by Thos. H. Yeatman, Assistant Special Agent Treasury Department, December, 1863-July, 1864, Monthly Reports, Estimates, Returns, Etc. of the Assistant Special Agent, Memphis, 1863-65, Entry 226, Box 1, RG 366, 2nd Special Agency Records, Treasury Papers, (Hereafter cited as SARTP), Entry 226, Box 1, RG 366, NARA; Charles Whitmore to Cousin Mary, January 29, 1864, Charles Whitmore Plantation Journal, microfilm, 02406, roll 1, SHC; John W. Wood to J.M. Lowery, March 18, 1864, Correspondence Received by the Assistant Special Agent, Memphis, 1864-65, entry 223, box 1, SARTP; 1860 U.S. Census, Lafayette County, Mississippi, Tabitha Ward, Susan Ward, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed December 1, 2011).

⁵⁶ Eliza H.B. Sivley to Jane Sivley, May 28, 1864, Jane Sivley Letters, SHC; 1860 U.S. Census and Slave Schedules, Hinds County, Mississippi, S. Simons, J. Simons, H. Floren, M. Floren, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed September 11, 2011).

that someone else had forged the seals and affixed them to her trunks. The commission eventually found her not guilty, asserting that her husband had paid a Mr. P.P. Schlicher \$500 to obtain the forged passes for her. Herbert's husband could not be located, but Schlicher agreed to pay a \$500 fine and leave Memphis for his actions. Federal authorities suspected Herbert of being disloyal in asserting that she attempted to bypass legal U.S. trade regulations by forging passes in order to smuggle unspecified "contraband" goods into Mississippi, but made no issue of the fact that she was a woman who traded with her merchant husband.⁵⁷ Like their Confederate counterparts, Union officials were concerned with women's national allegiance, not their engagement in the marketplace. Such omissions suggest that they were familiar with the sight of women involved in commercial activity.

As many historians have noted, poor and yeomen women often sold household-produced foods and goods in public marketplaces throughout the South from Appalachia to the Carolinas to Mississippi.⁵⁸ During the Civil War, Mississippi's female contraband traders maintained old commercial patterns, adjusted to the war's circumstances, echoing similar conditions during the American Revolution when women engaged in illicit trade across army lines to get desired goods.⁵⁹ Betty Beaumont, for example, opened her Woodville, Mississippi general store six years

⁵⁷ Arrest Papers of Eliza Agnes Herbert, March-May, 1863, Nos. 4622-4799, Roll 17, Union Provost Marshal's File of Papers Relating to Two or More Civilians, (Hereafter cited as UPMF) M-416, War Department Collection of Confederate Records, Record Group 109, NARA.

⁵⁸ Bill Cecil-Fronsman, *Common Whites: Class and Culture in Antebellum North Carolina* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1992), 144-145; Bynum, *Free State of Jones*, 56-59; Edwards, *Scarlett Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, 37-39; Carl R. Osthaus, "The Work Ethic of the Plain Folk: Labor and Religion in the Old South," *Journal of Southern History* 70 (Nov., 2004): 756; Jeff Forret, *Race Relations at the Margins: Slaves and Poor Whites in the Antebellum Southern Countryside* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006), 42; Wilma A. Dunaway, *Women, Work, and Family in the Antebellum Mountain South* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 188-189, 195; Jeff Robert Bremer, "Frontier Capitalism: The Market Revolution in the Antebellum Lower Missouri River Valley, 1803-1860," (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 2006), 225-243.

⁵⁹ Judith L. Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 110-11, 121-122.

before the war began.⁶⁰ These women did not demand that the Confederate state provide for them, rather, they requested that it not interfere with their providing for themselves. Micro, as opposed to macro allegiances, motivated many Mississippi women to trade at Union lines and, through their actions they demonstrated the difficulty of maintaining many Confederates' ideal of a protective nationalism.

Particular silences in the sources from critics of female traders suggest that these detractors were most concerned with women violating the protective nationalist ideal, not paternalist gender conventions. Contemporaries called female traders "unpatriotic," "Female cotton speculators," and "glittering snakes" in the Confederacy's bosom, accusing women who bought so-called "luxuries" of treason since these women seemed to put their own comforts over the Confederacy's needs. Yet, women were no more likely to be accused of buying "luxuries" than were men, and critics did not mention or express concern for the fact that these women were operating outside of the domestic sphere.⁶¹

Confederate observers also framed their criticisms of female trader in class terms, often suggesting that poor white women were more prone to disloyalty. In an 1863 letter to his wife, Cavalry Captain William Nugent described a group of poor Mississippi women who traded with the Federals at Memphis. "We had up yesterday some half-dozen trading wagons and a whole batch of women, whose goods had been confiscated," he wrote, [s]ome of these women had traveled one hundred miles to trade, carrying a bale of cotton with them." To Nugent, these women's uncouth behavior comported with the stereotype of "white trash" used to denote class boundaries in the Old South. "They all brought back a full supply of *Scotch Snuff* and were as

⁶⁰ Beaumont, *Twelve Years of my Life*, 110-116.

⁶¹ *Daily Clarion* (Meridian, MS), June 14, 1864; July 6, 1864; June 9, 1864.

busy as bees with their rubbers,” he told his wife, and went on to describe the women’s less-than elegant appearance:

“Think of a female with the dirty colored tobacco streak around her mouth & on her lips, squirting discolored spittle all around her, and you have a fair sample of the ‘Buncombe Gals’ – You must, though, add to the pitiable picture, a *tousled* head, unwashed face, drabbed dress, (no corsets), heavy shoes, a guffaw laugh and a sidelong leer. A dirty baby, too, is no unfrequent [sic] addition to the scene.”

Despite his disgust with the female traders’ unpolished appearances, Nugent did not criticize them for acting outside of the home sphere, to the contrary, he casually described how they engaged in commerce. “These women will take up their line of march hence to Memphis, preceeded [sic] by a small wagon drawn by a pair of mules in reference to whom there are several Bills of foreclosure filed by the undisciplined flocks of Buzzards hereabouts, with as much nonchalance as they would to go to the Cross-roads Meeting House,” he noted. Despite his class contempt, Nugent’s real ire stemmed from the women’s supposed disloyalty. “We have two of these women in the Guard House for practicing their tory principles and keeping our people in dread,” he concluded. Nugent found the women’s alleged “tory” principles, embodied by their trading with the Yankees, offensive, not their engagement in the marketplace.⁶²

Nevertheless, Nugent discovered that his own sister, Evie, had traded at Memphis, and worried that it was “very ‘demoralizing’ for gentle girls to be brought into Contact with the traffickers in Memphis & elsewhere.” He told his wife that “while I have every confidence in Evie’s purity and modesty, I should dislike to see her thrown among them too much.” Referring to the often seedy behavior that accompanied river traffic, he opined that “southern ladies are not regarded very highly by the miserable stuff that...floats up and down the Mississippi,” and worried that trading had driven “our best & most polished girls...from the high ground of modest

⁶² William L. Nugent to Nellie Smith Nugent, September 25, 1863, in William M. Cash and Lucy Somerville Howorth, Eds., *My Dear Nellie: The Civil War Letters of William L. Nugent to Eleanor Smith Nugent* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1977), 136-138.

demeanor.” Nugent thought that “polished” women’s trading was a threat to moral character. “I have known nice ladies to travel in a two horse wagon over a hundred miles to Memphis without a male attendant and with no one in the city to whom they could confidently look for protection,” he wrote, fearing that the “bestial soldiery” in Memphis threatened such “nice” ladies. Nugent claimed that there were “numerous cases of illegitimacy” among soldiers’ wives in northeast Mississippi, a phenomenon which demonstrated “the extent of the demoralizing influence” of traffic with the Yankees. Nugent seemed unconcerned, however, about how trade might have morally bankrupted the poorer, allegedly treasonous “Buncombe Gals.”⁶³

In April, 1864, Mississippi Attorney General Thomas Wharton made similar remarks about female traders in Hinds County. “I am afraid that, in the district between Raymond and Utica, women (I cannot call them *ladies*, however respectable they may have been before) mount their horses, and ride over the neighborhood, buying up cotton, to sell to the Yankees, & invest the proceeds in merchandize, such as coffee, clothing, &, in some instances, in any kind of luxuries,” he told Davis. Like Nugent, who warned of “gentle” and “polished” girls being corrupted by treasonous commerce, Wharton used nationalistic language to demote former “ladies” into mere “women,” castigating them not for trading in general, but for trading with the enemy, using the common refrain that they bought “luxuries” as evidence of their supposed disloyalty and corruption.⁶⁴

Both men framed their criticisms of “polished” female traders around what Barbara Cutter calls the idea of “redemptive womanhood,” characterized by female espousals of morality, selflessness, and love in the midst of a nineteenth century economic expansion that engulfed

⁶³ William L. Nugent to Nellie Smith Nugent, March 27, 1864, in Cash and Howorth, eds., *My Dear Nellie*, 163-166.

⁶⁴ T.J. Wharton to Jefferson Davis, April 16, 1864, in *Mississippi in the Confederacy: As They Saw It, Vols. 1 and 2*, ed. John K. Bettersworth (1961, Repr., New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1970), 307.

more people, including women, into a public marketplace rife with greed, competition, and vice. This immoral marketplace particularly threatened middle class women, viewed as the keepers of moral virtue. Unable to be kept out of the increasingly public marketplace, they were expected to use redemptive womanhood to fight sin and evil therein. Those “fallen women” who succumbed to the market’s vices lost their sexual purity and moral character. Nugent and Wharton recognized that the wartime marketplace added treason to the vices with which women had to contend. They expected such corruption from the poor “Buncombe Gals,” but worried when the contraband trade threatened to turn middleclass “ladies” like Nugent’s sister into fallen women. For these men, collusion with the Union was a particular vice born out of a wartime environment during which commerce remained constant. While the trade made poor women treasonous, it also threatened the sexual purity and moral selflessness of middle-class Mississippi women.⁶⁵

Nugent and Wharton might have considered their accusations of corrupted women supported by the fact that many female traders were wives of Confederate soldiers. Federal picket reports from outside of Memphis listed over a hundred traders who came into the city during the winter of 1863-1864, roughly twenty of whom were women. While the reports often lacked full names, at least nine of the women matched individuals who lived in north Mississippi but not Tennessee. They included Nancy Wiggins of Lafayette County, who made two trips to Memphis in December 1863, Martha Griffis of Desoto County, Lucinda Herring and Mary Bailly of Itawamba County, and Sarah Gossett and Sarah Boyd of Tippah County. Also on the list was Sallie Winn, a single woman from Panola County, and Susie Duke, the daughter of a Pontotoc County planter woman. Four of these women were soldiers’ wives. Sarah Gossett’s husband, John, and Mary Bartlett’s husband, James, served in Companies B and L of the 2nd Mississippi

⁶⁵ Barbara Cutter, *Domestic Devils, Battlefield Angels: The Radicalism of American Womanhood, 1830-1865* (Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003), 8-10, 42. Quotes on 9 and 42.

Infantry. Lucinda Herring's husband, Alexander, served in Company I, 1st Mississippi Infantry, while Nancy Wiggins' husband, William, served in Company A, 29th Mississippi Infantry. The Federal picket guards included these women's names alongside the male traders, and most of them had Memphis-based co-signers for their bales of cotton. These women's actions, however, need not imply, per Nugent's and Wharton's suggestions, that women traded out of moral weakness and its attendant treasonous baggage.⁶⁶

Female traders claimed "necessity" to deflect protective nationalist critics' treasonous charges and these claims, in turn, helped mask women's desire to access a variety of goods at established trade centers for themselves and their families. By trading at Union-occupied depots like Memphis and Vicksburg, Mississippi women reacted to familiar market incentives like consumer choice and product availability that alongside domestic production, defined even rural non-slaveholding household organization by the 1860s. Vicksburg resident Sara Couper, like many others, casually took advantage of this product availability, telling her soldier husband how her friend, Mollie, "had an opportunity to send to Memphis for her trousseau by a lady friend. I sent with her \$30.00 to get a mantle, shoes & gloves."⁶⁷ Through their trading, women demonstrated an unwillingness to endure an arduous, wartime-induced state of pure domestic production that market capitalism had already alleviated. For all of its breaks with the past, the Civil War in Mississippi could not sever established market relations, and the Confederate state was not strong enough to make protective nationalism a reality by stopping the contraband trade.

⁶⁶ Federal Picket Reports on Cotton, Memphis, 1863-64, December 16, 17, 22, 30, 31, 1863, January 2, 8, 1864, entry 260, box 43, RG 366, SARTP; 1860 U.S. Census and U.S. Civil War Soldiers Records and Profiles, Lafayette, Desoto, Itawamba, Tippah, Panola, Pontotoc Counties, Mississippi, Nancy Wiggins, Martha Griffis, Lucinda Herring, Mary Baily, Sarah J. Gossett, Sarah J. Boyd, Sallie A. Winn, Susie C. Duke, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed July 22, 2011).

⁶⁷ Sara Couper to James Maxwell Couper, October 30, 1862, Couper Family Papers, 1827-1955, microfilm, ser. 3, 00186-z, SHC.

So intact were these pre-war commercial ties that, contrary to their critics, some Mississippians claimed that trading with the Union could help the Confederacy by supplying their state with provisions in addition to aiding themselves. Citizens flooded the Governor's office with conditional offers to furnish Mississippi with supplies obtained at Union lines.

Typical were proposals like that of W.M. Deason, who promised Governor Clark that he would distribute goods from Union lines to Mississippians. "I am poor and would like to do something for myself and also for my state," he wrote. Following his discharge from the 15th Mississippi Infantry, private Simon Hartley similarly proposed to Clark a plan for "procuring supplies from the enemy's lines for the use and consumption of the people," but he also noted that he was "compelled to earn a living." Upon hearing about Clark's attempts at "procuring supplies for the Government," Holly springs resident F.L. Martin informed Clark that "if you will give me a permit to carry the cotton through our lines, I will furnish my own cotton to buy the supplies with." Macon, Mississippi resident Dr. J.R. Christian similarly promised, "I will turn over to the state of Miss. one half of the proceeds of any cotton you may allow me to transport into a Federal market, in such army supplies as I may be able to get out." Another Macon resident, Charles Newman, told Clark that he could supply Mississippi with much-needed cotton cards on the condition that "for every (1000) thousand pairs which I deliver I am to be allowed to purchase and ship beyond our lines (150)...bales of cotton...which I propose to purchase in that section of the state which is the most liable to the raids of the enemy."⁶⁸

Those Mississippians with established business connections in Memphis were particularly apt to trade there. Writing from Grenada, Mississippi in November 1862, Captain J.S. Reid described the volume of "illicit trade now being carried out between this place and the

⁶⁸ W.M. Deason to Charles Clark, January 6, 1864, S.M. Hartley to Charles Clark, July 13, 1864, F.L. Martin to Charles Clark, July 15, 1864, Dr. J.R. Christian to Charles Clark, March 28, 1864, Charles Newman to Charles Clark, January 15, 1864, all in Clark Correspondence, box 949, MDAH.

City of Memphis” as being “entirely too great,” adding that “merchants are almost daily offering new goods...such as are not manufactured in the South at this time.” Desoto County farmer F.T. Paine claimed that his “old Merchants in Memphis” could supply Mississippi with 10,000 pairs of cotton cards under condition that he be allowed to “take cotton to any market I may find most convenient to pay for them.” Conveniently, Paine lived “near the [Federal] lines,” though he swore he would only patronize the enemy in exchange for supplies beneficial to Mississippians. Similar to Paine, B.B. Wilkinson recommended himself as an agent to “proceed at once to the vicinity of Memphis and open a correspondence with parties there” with whose help Wilkinson would furnish cotton cards and other supplies to Mississippi. In December 1862, from Grenada, Mississippi, E.C. Cabell told Secretary Seddon that “many of the supplies now so much needed by the Army can be obtained from Memphis, if the government will authorize it.” Cabell was acquainted with Memphis businessmen who would “furnish supplies” for “either a percentage in the cost, or a stipulated sum.” William A. Strong, Mayor of Greenwood, Mississippi, boasted that he had “seen a gentlemen...who...knows a man in Memphis, who can get a boat to anywhere he desires, and to be laden with whatever he may wish,” from the city. Strong’s connection was Choctaw County, Mississippi resident Robert Kirk, who wrote to Governor Clark from Mobile, proposing at Strong’s suggestion to furnish cotton and wool cards to Mississippi in exchange for permission to ship “beyond our lines one thousand Bales of Cotton.” As the conduit for goods Kirk shipped from Memphis, Strong stood to gain a cut of the profits.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ J.S. Reid to Unidentified Major, November 14, 1862, Pemberton Papers, folder 7, box 1, NARA; F.T. Paine to Charles Clark, January 16, 1864, Clark Correspondence, box 949; B.B. Wilkinson to Charles Clark, December 12, 1863, Ibid; E.C. Cabell to James A. Seddon, December 24, 1862, Nos. B 776-903, Roll 84, Letters Received by the Confederate Secretary of War, (Hereafter cited as LRCSW) M-437, War Department Collection of Confederate Records, RG 109, NARA; W.A. Strong to Charles Clark, December 12, 1864, Clark Correspondence, box 950; Robert L. Kirk to Charles Clark, January 12, 1864, Ibid, box 949; 1860 U.S. Census, Carroll and Chocktaw Counties, Mississippi, William A. Strong, Robert Kirk, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>: accessed June 10, 2010).

Each of these prospective traders acted on multiple loyalties, trying to make a profit for themselves while also helping their country. Following his 1864 parole from a Mississippi cavalry company, Albert Q. Withers proposed that Clark appoint him “your agent to controll [sic] the cotton trade to Memphis.” Withers had “many true friends in the city” that predated the war, and suggested reestablishing these connections, with himself as the goods’ conduit from Memphis into Mississippi. Former Mississippi resident and Memphis-based cotton broker, W.L. Dogan, likewise touted his commercial prowess. In February 1863, he told Pettus that Pontotoc County citizens had “solicited” him to supply them with articles to be obtained in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, claiming that he could “supply the wants of the country” in “60 or 90 days.” While Dogan knew of other Mississippians trading with the Union “in opposition to the wishes of all true Southerners,” he pledged his “word of honor” to “avoid all trade and intercourse with the enemy.” Yet Dogan’s honor seemed less binding a year earlier when he asked Davis for permission to trade cotton at Memphis in exchange for “necessities.” “I feel that I could make... favorable terms with the authorities at Memphis,” he argued, “understanding as I do...the channels through which favors are obtained.”⁷⁰ Such skills would be expected from a cotton broker who worked in the city, and given Dogan’s willingness to trade with the Federals in 1862, it seems unlikely that, his promise notwithstanding, he would harbor any qualms about continuing such business in 1863.

Dogan’s and other merchants’ actions, however, were not unprecedented: they paralleled those of merchants during the French and Indian War and the American Revolution who traded

⁷⁰ A.Q. Withers to Charles Clark, 28 October, 1864, Clark Correspondence, box 950, MDAH; “Capt. Albert Q. Withers,” in *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Mississippi, Volume II*: (1891; repr., Spartanburg, South Carolina: Reprint Co., 1978); 1066-1067; W.L. Dogan to John J. Pettus, February 11, 1863, Pettus Correspondence, roll 2812, vol. 50, MDAH; W.L. Dogan to Jefferson Davis, November 17, 1862, roll 89, LRCSW, NARA; 1860 U.S. Census, Shelby County, Tennessee, W.L. Dogan, digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed July 6, 2011).

with their ostensible enemies in the name of continuing commerce.⁷¹ Even in war some Mississippians found old habits hard to break. It mattered little that their trade connections were now the common enemy in Yankee blue, because they operated out of the same places, especially Memphis, that hosted such exchanges before 1861.⁷² Traders denied conflict between their different fidelities. After all, commerce with the enemy was legal if done under Confederate government contract. It made sense to look out for one's self *and* one's country, especially when both actions could be done together.

In 1864, J.D. Burch and other residents of Bolivar County admitted as much to Governor Clark when they disputed charges that they traded with Memphis "for the main purpose of gain." "Necessity is said to have no law, we were compelled to save life," Burch wrote. "We all have large families white and black to support," he continued, "any other course...would have brought destitution." M.D. Shelly, a co-signer of Burch's petition, defended commerce with the Union as a patriotic act. Cotton was the only source of income, cash or otherwise, he said, and that income came from the Yankees. "How are we to pay our taxes – we can't do it unless we are permitted to sell cotton to the enemy," Shelly argued, justifying what some Confederates thought was a disloyal act if the end goal was to support the Confederacy. "We are willing and anxious to pay our taxes," he stated, "and do all we can to assist both State & Confederate govts." Living south of Federally-occupied Natchez, planter J. Alexander Ventress similarly defended the trade as patriotic. "National wealth," he wrote to Clark, "is naught else than the sum of the wealth of the individual citizens of the nation – In a word, destroy our cotton and you stress the tendon Achilles of the war." Like other traders, Ventress claimed the trade would allow "some of the

⁷¹ Thomas M. Truxes, *Defying Empire: Trading with the Enemy in Colonial New York* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 1-8; Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 107-113.

⁷² See Joseph H. Parks, "A Confederate Trade Center under Federal Occupation: Memphis, 1862 to 1865," *Journal of Southern History* 7 (Aug., 1941): 289-314 and Robert A. Sigafos, *Cotton Row to Beale Street: A Business History of Memphis* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1979), 27-28, 40-44.

most needful necessities of life [to be] brought within our lines.”⁷³ Like Burch and Shelly, Ventress argued that in embracing a protective nationalism by preventing trade with the Federals, the Confederacy neglected its citizens’ multiple loyalties and harmed its own cause.

State officials like Governor Clark eventually came to the same conclusion and supported a limited trade with the Union. Drawing on appeals from citizens, Clark permitted trade by state government-sanctioned individuals, citing the need to bring goods “of prime and immediate necessity” into his state. By invoking necessity, Clark embraced trade as a way of strengthening the Confederacy by materially strengthening its people. Other Confederate officials agreed. Responding to complaints by Vicksburg commander Pemberton, Secretary of War Seddon explained that while the trade may have produced “a consequent demoralization of the people in your department,” the War Department sanctioned trade contracts out of a “strong conviction” to adequately supply the citizens and soldiers. Seddon found it impracticable for Pemberton to oppose a trade that people were bound to “indulge in to a considerable extent.”⁷⁴ Seddon’s admission that Mississippians were “bound” to trade despite the government’s best attempts to stop them underscored that despite the state’s expanded wartime infrastructural power, it could neither stop individuals from *wanting* to trade nor stop them from *acting* on such desires.

Recognizing that the government was not strong enough to stop the trade, some insisted that trading might as well be used as a means of fighting *against* the Federals. In an appeal to the Confederate Congress in October 1863, Louisianan F.D. Conrad argued that although Mississippi’s and Louisiana’s trading with the Yankees might appear treasonous to some, wartime circumstances demanded more nuanced approaches. “Can the introduction through the

⁷³ Bolivar County Citizens to Charles Clark, February 20, 1864, Clark Correspondence, box 949; M.D. Shelly to Charles Clark, September 28, 1864, Ibid, box 950; J. Alexander Ventress to Charles Clark, February 6, 1864, Ibid, box 949.

⁷⁴ Charles Clark to Major Saunders, October 24, 1864, Clark Correspondence, box 950; *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 17, pt. 2, pgs. 839-840.

enemy's lines (in spite of their vigilance) of these necessities...be injurious to the Confederacy?" Conrad asked. "If so," he continued, "it is strange that the enemy has deemed it so important to prevent their introduction, so important as to consider the prohibition of their introduction one of their most reliable means for our destruction and subjugation." If the Federals believed that the trade hurt their cause, Conrad reasoned, the Confederacy should embrace it.⁷⁵

None other than Brigadier General James Chalmers eventually came to this same conclusion. Initially, he opposed the trade, but by late 1863 had a change of heart. "When I came to this district I thought any man was a traitor who would sell cotton to the enemy for any purpose," he explained to Jacob Thompson from Oxford. "I now believe," he continued, "that our people on the border who have been compelled to trade with the enemy for subsistence are more patriotic and more liberal to our soldiers than those in the interior, and that they have been greatly misrepresented by those who did not understand their condition." Chalmers' offered a straightforward reasoning for his turnaround. Since the fall of Memphis, he stated, the people in north Mississippi had been left "to live within themselves," and "under these circumstances they traded with the enemy, and the husbands, sons and fathers in our army of the women in North Mississippi were supplied with many articles of clothing and comfort that came from the enemy's lines." The trade's benefits, Chalmers believed, outweighed its downsides, and he felt that history justified this conclusion. "Frederick the great was the wisest of military rulers, and he did not hesitate to trade with his enemy...[and] British gold was one of England's most effective weapons in Revolutionary days and came near taking West Point, and I believe that southern cotton could have saved Vicksburg when southern arms were powerless to do so."⁷⁶

⁷⁵ *OR*, ser. 4, vol. 2, pgs. 854-856.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, ser. 1, vol. 31, pt. 3, pgs. 833-835.

Some Union officers shared Chalmers' assessment the trade benefitted the Confederate cause. In early July 1864, native Mississippian and Federal scout John Riley got word that "a certain widow Hildebrand "had been keeping "smuggled goods for sale" on the Hernando Road outside of Holly Springs. Riley went to Hildebrand's residence and found goods "to the amount or worth of about \$2,000." He noted that "there were many Confederate soldiers on the premises" but he went unrecognized due to his Rebel uniform. Hildebrand was not on the premises, but she was likely the same "Mrs. E.J. Hildebrand" whom Federal picket reports documented as having made at least four trips to Memphis to trade cotton in the winter of 1863-1864. Trading helped her funnel goods to Confederate soldiers. In the spring of 1864 Major General Dan Sickles complained to Lincoln that "in the way it has been conducted immense supplies go to the enemy," concluding that the trade was a "concession which benefits a hundred rebels where it relieves one Union man." Another Memphis-based Federal officer noted that "the practical operation of commercial intercourse from this city with the States in Rebellion has been to help largely to feed, clothe, arm and equip our enemies."⁷⁷

Brigadier General Alfred Ellet found what he considered to be material proof of this fact in June 1863, following a skirmish with Confederate cavalry and an ensuing raid on the town of Austin, in Tunica County, Mississippi. "I had the houses all searched, and found ample evidence that a large smuggling trade has been successfully carried on at this point," he wrote. Ellet found barrels stuffed with "molasses and sugar, salt, whiskey, fish, pieces of dry goods, and large quantities of medicines in the original packages, all more unmistakable evidence of the occupation the people engaged in." After burning the town, Ellet met two trading boats that

⁷⁷ J.F. Riley and J.J. Williams to W.W. Jackson, May 5, 1864, roll 39, UPMF; Federal Picket Reports on Cotton, Memphis, 1863-64, December 31, 1863, January 8, 15, 16, 1864, SARTP; *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 39, pt. 1, pgs. 60-61; *Ibid*, 22-23.

arrived at the river bank from Memphis, showing permits to bring out hefty amounts of cotton. “They had no goods save some bagging and rope on board, yet there were many suspicious circumstances that induced the impression upon my mind that the arrival of these boats and this command of the enemy so near the same time was occasioned by pre-concerted arrangement,” Ellet noted. The Federals often found Mississippi civilians to be less than trustworthy when it came to their engagement in the trade.⁷⁸

Indeed, just as Union forces found it difficult to tell if Mississippians who swore the oath were truly “loyal,” they also could never be sure if traders were merely buying necessities for themselves or their families, or smuggling goods to Confederate troops. Such was the case when Union officers learned from a female spy that Hinds County dentist A.H. Hardenstein, sporting a permit from General M.L. Smith, was working with other secret Confederates to smuggle “arms, boots, shoes, and other contraband goods marked as something else,” out of the Vicksburg lines to Rebel troops on the Big Black River. “Under the guise of a trader, Dr. Hardenstein was also acting the spy for the Confederates, being thoroughly in their confidence,” wrote Union Major A.M. Jackson.⁷⁹

Hardenstein was not alone in using the veneer of trade to act as a Confederate spy. After being captured in north Mississippi by Federal troops in October 1863, Confederate Corporal Thomas Swan revealed the names of several traders who had been assisting Rebel troops. According to Swan’s statement, Desoto County resident George Barley, acting in concert with his mother, had been exchanging cotton at Memphis for supplies that “he sells to citizens or soldiers.” Marshall County native John Williams, a soldier in the 3rd Mississippi Cavalry

⁷⁸ *OR, Naval Records*, ser. 1, vol. 25, pg. 128.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, ser. 1, vol. 49, pt. 2, pg. 179; 1860 U.S. Census, Hinds County, Mississippi, A.H. Hardenstein, digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed September 22, 2010).

Battalion, “regularly” engaged in bringing cotton to Memphis, “sometimes twice a week.” Williams, the report noted, “does Chalmers more good than harm by bringing cotton in. [He] has often been arrested & taken before Chalmers who always releases him.” Williams also apparently operated as Chalmers’ spy. J.A. Blair, another Marshall County resident who lived near Holly Springs, traded cotton at Memphis for goods like boots and calico that he sold to Confederate soldiers. Marshall County civilian William Wonson had evidently “passed into Memphis nearly every week during the last summer.” Although he denied selling goods to Rebel troops, he would not “hesitate to do so if he had time to spare.” Such individuals were problematic for the Federals because their national loyalties were always under suspicion, and many seemed to be actively working for the Confederates. “These men all profess to be loyal to the South with their neighbors and profess loyalty to the Federal Government when in the presence of our troops,” a Federal officer concluded about the individuals Swan identified as contraband traders.⁸⁰ The Union government, like its Confederate counterpart, lacked the power to prevent Mississippians from trading. Even when Federal authorities tried to limit trading only to “loyal” Mississippians, verifying that loyalty was a task simply beyond the government’s infrastructural capacity.

Well aware that they could feign loyalty to Union forces, some Mississippians traded as a way to resist the Federal occupation of the South. Yet even for them, the trade elicited conflicting emotions. One such individual was Mississippi native Belle Edmondson, who spent most of the war on a farm in Shelby County, Tennessee. From this location she funneled supplies and funds from Memphis to Confederate soldiers and friends back in Mississippi, gaining such notoriety that Union commander Stephen Hurlbut issued a warrant for her arrest in 1864. In her

⁸⁰ Arrest Statement of Thomas B. Swan, October 4, 1863, roll 19, UPMF; 1860 U.S. Census, Desoto, Marshall Counties, Mississippi, George Barley, H.L. Barley, John D. Williams, J.A. Blair, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed August 28, 2010).

diary, Edmondson detailed how she would “fix my articles for smuggling.” “We made a balmoral of the Grey cloth for uniform, pin’d the Hats to the inside of my hoops, tied the boots with a strong list, letting them fall directly in front, the cloth having monopolized the back & the Hats the side. All my letters, brass buttons, money, &c in my bosom,” she wrote. Edmondson justified trading with the enemy by invoking her patriotic duty. “God bless the Rebels,” she wrote, “I would risk my life a dozen times a day to serve them.” On one trip however, Federal pickets confiscated three hats she intended as gifts. “Oh! how I hate them,” she fumed, resenting having to deal with the Union on a daily basis. When Edmondson went back to Mississippi to collect cotton in October 1863, Cavalry Captain Thomas Henderson assured her not to feel guilty taking cotton to Federal lines. “The proceeds of the cotton will surely do us more good than the cotton will do them,” he told her.⁸¹

Loyalty issues nagged at other ardent Confederates who dreamed of an independent Confederacy but knew that trading meant dependence on the Union, thereby displaying, if not admitting subjugation. Such an arrangement inevitably spawned confusion over who was trading for what purpose. Depending on the observer, a trader might be a true Confederate or a loathsome speculator. Mississippi Partisan Ranger C. Shermin ran into this problem when Confederate troops arrested Patrick Doyle, whom Shermin had contracted to exchange cotton at Memphis for clothes and boots. Petitioning General Earl Van Dorn for Doyle’s release, Shermin insisted that Doyle was “a good citizen and was not speculating, for he was under the contract with me, and [I] think that his service has been for the good of the [Confederate] service.”⁸² Shermin’s case demonstrates the confusion that trading created. Doyle’s actions could be interpreted as loyal or treasonous depending on the observer.

⁸¹ Loretta and William Galbraith, Eds. *A Lost Heroine of the Confederacy: The Diaries and Letters of Belle Edmondson* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1990), xiii-xxxi, 69-70, 82-83, 97, 113.

⁸² C. Shermin to Maj. Gen. Earl Van Dorn, October 30, 1862, roll 73, LRCSW.

The experiences of Warren County cavalry scout Charles Allen, stationed around Vicksburg and its surrounding counties, revealed similar problems. Allen traded at Union lines to supply his unit and get goods like coffee for his family. “If you all want anything out of V.B. send or come over to Jackson or down here & I can get you anything you want,” he wrote his parents in October 1863. Exclaiming that he had “a good mind to go to work running the blockade,” he detailed how his slave, Lige, went to Vicksburg, “buys the goods & puts them in his rations of rice & passes the pickets in that way.” In 1864, Allen told his parents that he had “some greenbacks to send to V.B. for some coffee for you the first chance I get.” Yet Allen’s scouting activity cast a cloak of irony over his trading. In October 1864, one of his company’s major duties involved “picketing all the fords and crossings on Big Black trying to keep people from crossing cotton and trading with the Yankees.” If the irony of this situation was lost on Allen, it was not lost on his Colonel, who arrested Allen’s fellow cavalryman, Henry Hyland, for buying salt at Union lines. “Col. Wood intends to confiscate the salt for illegal trade with the enemy,” Allen wrote, “I tried to get Col. Wood to let him have the salt – but he refused.”⁸³

Thus, Allen was a Confederate soldier who, along with others in his unit, traded with the Union, an act that his superiors deemed treasonous and ordered him to prevent other Mississippians from doing. This contradiction eventually led Allen to defend a fellow soldier when his own Colonel reprimanded that soldier for trading with the enemy. The issue of trading was always cloudy for nationalist-minded Confederates because of this contradiction: dependence on the Union in the name of Confederate independence. The war’s circumstances challenged binary concepts of allegiance, and some Mississippians adopted an unpalatable means to serve desirable ends.

⁸³ Charles B. Allen to Parents, October 4, 1863, September 11, 1864, October 15, Undated, James Allen and Charles B. Allen Papers, 1788-1869, microfilm, 01697, roll 1, SHC.

The contraband trade in Mississippi reveals how the Civil War's circumstances drove Mississippians to negotiate between loyalties to self, family, community, and nation. Proponents of a self-sufficient Confederacy viewed trading with the Federals as a disloyal act because it made the Confederacy dependent on the Union. It also depreciated Confederate currency, boosted Federal greenbacks and supplied cotton that funded the Union's production of war materials. Still, others considered it a patriotic act because it brought food and supplies to Mississippi civilians and soldiers. Advocates of the latter position implicitly preferred free trade with the Union in place of an impracticable protective nationalism. Thus, viewing contraband traders as "weak" or "strong" Confederates does not recognize that Mississippians themselves disputed the trade's impact on the slave-holding republic, nor does it consider how multiple allegiances influenced their behavior. Acting on circumstances, contraband traders accommodated different loyalties, at the micro and macro level. Confederate patriotism existed alongside other more immediate attachments to self, family and community which did not and could not simply vanish when the war came. Mississippians traded to benefit themselves while simultaneously helping or hindering the Confederate cause.

In addition, the contraband trade reveals that despite its many transformational aspects, the Civil War did not destroy established antebellum economic patterns. Mississippi traders shuffled their goods along traditional commercial routes and traded at established depots like Memphis, Vicksburg and Natchez, from which goods went to ports in St. Louis and New Orleans, then to New York and eventually Europe. In this sense, Mississippians continued their relationship with the North even as they fought to sever themselves from it politically. The Confederate state's inability to stop the trade between the lines underscored the concrete limitations of its expanded infrastructural powers, which were justified by the need to make

protective nationalism a reality. Although historians have viewed the wartime Confederate state as exceedingly strong, to the point where it reached up to citizens' very doorsteps, the state was not strong enough to stop those citizens from acting on their loyalty layers in order to continue commercial activity in wartime.

Recognizing how multiple loyalties drove Mississippians to trade with the Union, and understanding how the trade reinforced established antebellum ties between North and South even amid conflict helps explain why the Civil War seems so transformational and yet so continuous, why Confederates can seem concurrently loyal and disloyal. Human loyalties are multi-directed, multi-layered and influenced by circumstances. These circumstances drove Mississippi contraband traders to act on different allegiances, which at different times and for different reasons could both help and hinder the Confederate war effort.

Although Confederate protective nationalists were frustrated at how Mississippians' pre-war loyalties stymied their attempts to establish southern economic independence, they did not stop trying to weld Mississippians' interests to those of the Confederacy in their bid for southern victory. To many ardent Confederates, the military stood as the preeminent nationalist institution through which southerners should literally give their lives to their country on the battlefield. Yet, even when it came to army service, Mississippians' multiple loyalties continued to influence how they viewed their relationship to the state. In addition, the war's circumstances imbued old allegiances with new meanings, as Confederate deserters broke free from the war's partisan confines and took wartime conflict into illicit new directions.

Chapter Four: “This County is a Prey to Thieves and Robbers...:” Desertion, Exemption, and the Military’s Limited Nationalizing Power

In June of 1863, Claiborne County planter Richard Archer begged Governor John Pettus to send reinforcements into the northern Delta region to apprehend a gang of ruffians wreaking havoc in the area. “Sir, this county is a prey to thieves and robbers as infamous as the ‘Cowboys’ and ‘Skinners’ of the Revolutionary war,” he told Pettus. Archer’s invoking of “Cowboys” and “Skinners” referred to roaming groups of bandits during the American Revolution that claimed Patriot or Loyalist allegiances but stole goods from citizens on both sides and sold them for a profit. Such was the case, Archer claimed, with the “armed organizations of men...and individuals alike” who had been stealing Claiborne residents’ mules, horse and oxen after Federal raiders had turned the animals loose. “This country is full of deserters from our army, most of them it is believed [are] officers and many of them engaged in these robberies,” Archer explained. He thought that the deserters’ indiscriminate pillaging made them worse than the Union army. “The difference between the Federals and our own citizens is that the latter if they had the courage to do so would possibly robb [sic] both enemies and friends, but [the Federals] really robb our people only,” he concluded. The deserters’ actions also affected civilian morale. “The demoralization is so great that no power can arrest it unless the executioner can do so,” Archer noted.¹ Civilians understood Yankee pillaging, but when such abuse came from former Confederate soldiers, the supposed defenders of southern hearths and homes, it was hard to take.

Two months earlier, in February 1863, Confederate militia general Absolom West informed Pettus about the antics of Tillman Lomax, a Holmes County farmer and former army

¹ 1860 U.S. Census, Claiborne County, Mississippi, R.T. Archer, digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed October 26, 2010); Richard T. Archer to John J. Pettus, June 17, 1863, John J. Pettus Correspondence, Roll 1333, Volume 51, Record Group 27, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS (Hereafter cited as MDAH); Harry M. Ward, *Between the Lines: Banditti of the American Revolution* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 19-20.

conscript. Lomax claimed to have Pettus' authority to impress wagons and animals from his neighbors under the pretense of using them to collect salt. This was apparently a scam. West noted that Lomax was "a man devoid of moral principle, not possessing in any degree the confidence of the people," who "from the beginning of the war shirked responsibilities." West and Lomax were both Holmes County natives and knew each other before the war. Upon being conscripted Lomax tried to join West's brigade hoping to become a field officer. When this failed, he faked illness and convinced a Confederate surgeon to give him a discharge certificate, but he was soon put back into service. Finally, Lomax asked West for a discharge, citing his support for West's past state senate campaign as grounds for favoritism. "Lomax is ignorant, vicious and utterly wanting in those attributes necessary to constitute an honorable man," West wrote, "he will never serve his country as a soldier, if fraud or deception will enable him to avoid it." While it is unclear why Lomax dodged military service, he did own \$2,500 in real estate and \$2,140 in personal property, including sixteen slaves. Such ample holdings might be threatened were he to remain in the army. In addition to shirking duty, Lomax also took advantage of wartime conditions by impressing property from his neighbors under false authority.²

Tillman Lomax's draft-dodging and the Claiborne County deserters' plundering do not fit easily within the scholarly paradigms that identify military service and protection of hearth and home as foundations of Confederate nationalism. Many historians argue that because Confederate soldiers tended to fight near their homes, they conflated home and nation into a single entity which they defended from Federal intrusion. James McPherson, for example, writes

² A.M. West to John J. Pettus, February 10, 1863, Pettus Correspondence, roll 2812, vol. 50, MDAH; 1860 U.S. Census, Slave Schedules and U.S. Civil War Soldiers Records and Profiles, Holmes County, Mississippi, Tillman Lomax, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed May 25, 2011); Bruce S. Allardice, *More Generals in Gray* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 233-34.

that Confederates “reconciled their dual responsibilities to country and family by the conviction that in fighting for the one they were protecting the other,” and that “the urge to defend hearth and home...took on greater urgency when large-scale invasions became a reality in 1862.”

Echoing McPherson, Aaron Sheehan-Dean contends that “because Confederate soldiers participated fully in both the battlefield and the home front, they did not distinguish the political nation from the domestic nation.” While conceding that “at times obligations of family and nation conflicted,” Sheehan-Dean ultimately concludes that “Virginians increasingly saw a harmony of interests between their dual responsibilities, and this perception inspired a determined pursuit of Confederate independence.”³

Although some scholars contend that the Confederate defense of hearth and home bolstered the southern cause, other historians claim that this type of localized nationalism fractured Confederate unity and hindered the South’s ability to win the war. In his study of Confederate desertion, Mark Weitz argues that most Confederate soldiers saw the South less as a unified nation than as a patchwork of localities. They deserted to defend their homes, which they prioritized over a young, abstract nation. Paul Escott attributes a steady decline in support for the Confederacy to the Davis government’s failure to respond to soldiers’ complaints over

³James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 95; Aaron Sheehan-Dean, *Why Confederates Fought: Family and Nation in Civil War Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 1-2, quotes on pg. 2. See also Joseph T. Glatthaar, *General Lee’s Army: From Victory to Collapse* (New York: Free Press, 2008), 33; Jason Phillips, *Diehard Rebels: The Confederate Culture of Invincibility* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007), 43; Chandra Manning, *What this Cruel War was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2007), 138-139; William Blair, *Virginia’s Private War: Feeding Body and Soul in the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 146.

exemption and impressments laws that seemed to favor the rich and caused men to give “higher priority to the needs of their families than to the requirements of Confederate nationalism.”⁴

Connected to the hearth and home thesis within the scholarship is an emphasis on the military as another source of loyalty to the slaveholding republic. Gary Gallagher contends that Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia “served as an engine propelling national loyalty among civilians and soldiers throughout the Confederacy,” and cites the Confederacy’s mobilization of 75 to 80 percent of its available draft-age white male population as evidence of white southerners’ high level of Confederate devotion. Sheehan-Dean likewise notes that nearly 90 percent of military-age men in Confederate-controlled Virginia served in the army, in large measure to defend their homes from Union threats. In the same vein, Joseph Glatthaar states that “the Confederate constitution created a government; Lee’s army built a nation.”⁵ Bradley Clampitt similarly argues that Army of the Tennessee served as a nationalizing symbol for western Confederates, and other scholars emphasize the military’s centrality in forging Confederate nationalism in the Deep South.⁶

Claiborne County’s marauding deserters and Tillman Lomax’s draft-evading, however, reveal key limitations of the hearth and home thesis and of the military as a nationalist symbol.

⁴ Mark A. Weitz, *More Damning than Slaughter: Desertion in the Confederate Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 5, xix, 210; Paul D. Escott, *After Secession: Jefferson Davis and the Failure of Confederate Nationalism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), xi, 140.

⁵ Gary W. Gallagher, *The Confederate War: How Popular Will, Nationalism, and Military Strategy Could not Stave off Defeat* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 63, 65, 28-29; Sheehan-Dean, *Why Confederates Fought*, 3, 6-7; Glatthaar, *General Lee’s Army*, xv, 464; Also see Phillips, *Diehard Rebels*, 2-3, 77, 88; Peter S. Carmichael, *The Last Generation: Young Virginians in Peace, War, and Reunion* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 13-14, and Stephen V. Ash, *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South, 1861-1865* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 72-75.

⁶ Bradley M. Clampitt, *The Confederate Heartland: Military and Civilian Morale in the Western Confederacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 9-13; On the Deep South, also see Jacqueline Glass-Campbell, *When Sherman Marched North from the Sea: Resistance on the Confederate Home Front* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 69, 72; Rod Andrew Jr., “The Essential Nationalism of the People: Georgia’s Confederate Congressional Election of 1863,” in *Inside the Confederate Nation: Essays in Honor of Emory M. Thomas*, Lesly J. Gordon and John C. Inscoe, eds. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), 131, 143.

The Claiborne deserters were among thousands that robbed and murdered their fellow citizens throughout Civil War Mississippi. Their antisocial behavior indicated little reverence for the home front as sacred or symbolic of the nation as a whole. Lomax also served in the army as a conscript, and according to West, Lomax's military stint did not make him a loyal Confederate. Further, he seemed concerned with self-enrichment, not national allegiance. Such cases involving rampaging deserters and army shirkers were numerous in Mississippi, requiring explanations that do not fit neatly into established scholarly explanations.

Each Confederate state experienced the war in different ways, and historians should be cautious when attempting to universalize these disparate experiences. Scholars who link the army to a strong Confederate nationalism have largely focused on Virginia, which informs their conclusion about the nationalizing influence of Lee's army, since Lee's army won a lot of victories. While there is truth to this conclusion, it runs the risk of inflating the influence of Lee's army in particular and the Confederate military in general. Far from the Virginia front, loyalties separate from nationalism influenced Mississippians' behavior. Their cases are important not only because they reveal important geographical distinctions in the Confederate war, but also because they demonstrate how the war affected military and domestic spheres beyond national issues. The collapse of Mississippi's social order fueled an explosion of opportunistic collective violence among Confederate deserters. Group loyalties that preceded the war continued to influence these men during the conflict and sustained their destructive behavior, which expanded beyond Union or Confederate affiliation. Even those soldiers who did not desert demonstrated the continued importance of pre-war attachments through shirking, absenteeism and exemptions, actions which civilians encouraged and supported. Soldiers and civilians clearly distinguished the local from the national, but nonetheless used nationalist language to equate the two spheres in

order to appeal to authorities who expected citizens to embrace protective nationalism. While multiple loyalties that pre-dated the war influenced Mississippians, wartime conditions shaped how they acted on these allegiances in ways that did not always reflect nationalist feelings. This process, in turn, reveals the limited reach and influence of the nineteenth century nation state on people who were paradoxically caught up in a war to define that state's very existence.

The scholarship on desertion has attempted to assess its impact on the war's outcome, but has not considered what desertion reveals about the goals and influence of the Confederate state's conception of nationalism. Ella Lonn noted that Confederates deserted for numerous reasons that when combined demonstrated "the ultimate failure of the effort at disunion." Similarly, recent studies by Mark Weitz and Robert Sandow emphasize how local loyalties combined with opposition to Union and Confederate policies to fuel desertion and weaken both sides' war efforts.⁷ This chapter, however, examines desertion as a process, rather than focusing on its outcome in order to explain why deserters' behavior did not always correspond to national allegiances but was instead often driven by wartime circumstances in tandem with established local ties.

Mississippians began deserting as early as 1862, but the bulk of the source dating indicates that desertion reached its highest levels from late 1863 through the end of the war, coinciding with the general socio/economic collapse of Mississippi. The Union army gained a foothold in north Mississippi in 1862 following the battles at Corinth, and soon began its destruction of the state's infrastructure and agricultural production. The loss of the railroad

⁷ Ella Lonn, *Desertion During the Civil War* (Gloucester, MA: American Historical Association, 1928), 3; Weitz, *More Damning than Slaughter*, xviii; Robert M. Sandow, *Deserter Country: Civil War Opposition in the Pennsylvania Appalachians* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), 1-2, 8, quote on pg. 8. Also see Peter S. Bearman, "Desertion as Localism: Army Unit Solidarity and Group Norms in the U.S. Civil War," *Social Forces* 70 (Dec., 1991): 321-42, and Aaron W. Marrs, "Desertion and Loyalty in South Carolina, 1861-1865," *Civil War History* 50 (March, 2004): 47-65.

limited the state government's ability to transport needed supplies to both the Confederate armies and civilians. Upon capturing Memphis in June 1862, the Federals also gained a key port from which to raid plantations and farms via the Mississippi's tributaries. These raids, in tandem with the two armies' destruction of land, crops, and supply-trains put the state in dire straits. The 1861 Federal blockade closed seaports, leaving the state's planters unable to sell their cotton abroad and merchants unable to import European goods. In addition, destruction from the two armies left the state's already limited domestic production facilities for clothing and war materials in ruins. The result was a shortage of supplies for soldiers and civilians.⁸

The food situation was no better. With thousands of yeoman farmers in the army or dead, crops went unharvested and soldiers' families suffered. Slaves also fled to Union lines, depriving the Confederacy of labor. Efforts to diversify the state's agriculture to include more food production were successful at first but fell prey to a series of droughts and floods in 1861, 1862, and 1864. The presence of two armies on Mississippi soil further depleted crop and livestock surpluses, and salt shortages stalled meat production. Even when the state managed to successfully collect food, the destruction of the railroads inhibited its transport. These circumstances brought on economic collapse. Shortages in every type of goods fueled speculation, and the state legislature's printing of notes and bonds spurred inflation. Compounding an already bad situation, the government impressed civilians' supplies and compensated them in worthless Confederate currency. In light of food scarcity and high prices, Mississippians all over the state who lived outside of the occupied cities faced destitution.⁹

⁸ Timothy B. Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War: The Home Front* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010), 70-73, 90; William C. Davis, *Look Away!: A History of the Confederate States of America* (New York: Free Press, 2002), 285.

⁹ Ben Wynne, *Mississippi's Civil War: A Narrative History* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2006), 139-141; Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War*, 115.

The Mississippi state government evacuated the capital of Jackson two weeks before it fell to General Ulysses S. Grant's Union army on May 14, 1863, and, aside from a brief return, evacuated permanently in July 1863 when the Federals came back through the city. The capping of this downward spiral came with the fall of the river fortress city of Vicksburg on July 4, 1863, which effectively ended major military operations in Mississippi. The city's capture gave the Federals complete control of the Mississippi river and provided another base from which to march through the state at will. Vicksburg's fall accelerated the process of economic collapse, social dissolution, and military defeat that began in 1862. Fleeing the Federal army, the Confederate state government established temporary capitals in Enterprise, Meridian and ultimately Macon. While in exile, it passed, but could not carry out, relief legislations for civilians and soldiers. In 1863 the state judiciary began to break down and civil courts largely came to a standstill by 1864. Under Union control and with an exiled state government, conditions in Mississippi outside of the occupied cities teetered on the brink of anarchy.¹⁰

Much of the chaos spurred by the Civil War in Mississippi came from Confederate deserters. Grant's 1863 decision to parole the 29,000 rank-and-file soldiers that made up General John Pemberton's Army of Vicksburg significantly added to the problem. While some of these men, especially those from outside of Mississippi, did return to military service into the Army of Tennessee, thousands of Mississippi deserters scattered throughout their state, augmenting an already significant amount of former soldiers roaming the countryside. In July 1863, for example, Attala County resident Jason Niles witnessed "[a] crowd of 29 soldiers, with guns, passed through town, deserters from Gen. Jo Johnston's army." By 1864, Colonel R. Taylor informed Secretary of War James Seddon that "the highest military crime, desertion, is committed almost with impunity. There does not appear on the part of a deserter to be any

¹⁰ Wynne, *Mississippi's Civil War*, 137-139; Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War*, 38-49, 119.

difficulty in obtaining shelter in any section of the country.” Taylor concluded that “such a condition of disorganization and derangement cannot long exist without producing the most mischievous consequences.” He was right. In his August 1864 address, after approving the hiring of more sheriffs throughout the state, Governor Charles Clark noted that “life and property in many parts of the State were insecure. The courts were seldom holden [sic], and the civil law was almost a dead letter. Deserters, thieves and robbers, banded together, overawed the citizens.” Spurred on by Mississippi’s precarious conditions, deserters unleashed waves of crime and violence in their home state with seemingly little regard for national feelings.¹¹

Focusing primarily on the Border and Mountain South, historians have highlighted the Civil War’s anarchic underbelly of lawlessness, and have generally linked it to the broader guerrilla war between irregular Union and Confederate partisans that raged in tandem with the war between the formal national armies.¹² Noel Fisher demarks East Tennessee’s partisan conflict into military, political and criminal spheres, identifying a post-1862 “epidemic of crime”

¹¹ Terry Whittington, “In the Shadow of Defeat: Tracking the Vicksburg Parolees,” *Journal of Mississippi History* 4 (Winter, 2002): 308-309, 311-313, 328; Diary of Jason Niles, July 21, 1863, Transcript of manuscript # 950, *Documenting the American South*, Electronic Edition. Southern Historical Collection. University Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999 (Hereafter cited as *Documenting the American South*).

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/niles/niles.html> (Accessed August 10, 2009); United States War Department, comp., *The War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 130 vols. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901) ser. 4, vol. 3, pg. 690. (Hereafter cited as *OR*); Charles Clark Message to the State Legislature, August 3, 1864, pg. 9, *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Mississippi, Called Session, at Macon, August, 1864* (Meridian, Mississippi: J. J. Shannon & Co., State Printers, 1864), *Documenting the American South*, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/msaug64/msaug64.html>. (Accessed April 26, 2012).

¹² Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 47-65; Noel C. Fisher, *War at Every Door: Partisan Politics and Guerrilla Violence in East Tennessee, 1860-1869* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 62-63, 142-143; Sean Michael O’Brian, *Mountain Partisans: Guerilla Warfare in the Southern Appalachians, 1861-1865* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999), xiii-xxiv; Daniel E. Sutherland, ed. *Guerrillas, Unionists, and Violence on the Confederate Home Front* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1999); John C. Inscoe and Gordon B. McKinney, *The Heart of Confederate Appalachia: Western North Carolina in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 105-138; Kenneth W. Noe, “Who Were the Bushwhackers? Age, Class, Kin, and Western Virginia’s Confederate Guerrillas, 1861-1862,” *Civil War History* 49 (March, 2003): 5-26; Robert R. Mackey, *The Uncivil War: Irregular Warfare in the Upper South, 1861-1865* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 3-23; Robert Tracy McKenzie, *Lincolmites and Rebels: A Divided Town in the American Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 124-140; Jonathon Dean-Sarris, *A Separate Civil War: Communities in Conflict in the Mountain South* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 2-5, 69-80.

fueled by social dissolution and only sporadically partisan in nature. Daniel Sutherland covers the whole Confederacy, arguing that crime and violence was an outgrowth of the internal guerrilla war in which “[c]ommon outlaws, deserters and other misfits were exploiting the chaos of war for personal gain.”¹³ This scholarship has helped advance historical understanding of the interrelation between the battlefields and the home front during the Civil War. Yet the carnage caused by deserters in Deep South Mississippi was less an outgrowth of guerrilla conflict than it was the result of organized collective violence spurred by social collapse.

A breakdown in social order is a key element in the development of violence. Social order results from “the way societies craft institutions that support the existence of specific forms of human organization,” and these characteristics are “intimately related to how societies limit and control violence.”¹⁴ Warfare can disrupt the social order by severely limiting the functional capacity of institutions like state government, courts, militia and police. Such was the case in wartime Mississippi. While the Federal army occupied major garrison towns, vast areas beyond these points and the Confederate frontier became what Stephen Ash calls “no-man’s land,” territory that existed in a “vacuum of authority, a twilight zone neither Union nor Confederate” where violence and criminality flourished. Under these conditions, Confederate deserters engaged in “opportunistic collective violence.” According to Charles Tilly, this form of deviance “occurs when, as a consequence of shielding from routine surveillance and repression, individuals or clusters of individuals use immediately damaging means to pursue ends that would be unavailable or forbidden to them under other circumstances,” and includes “violent interactions that often take place during or in the immediate aftermath of major conflicts.” Such

¹³ Fisher, *War at Every Door*, 61-62, 87-88; Daniel E. Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict: The Decisive Role of Guerrillas in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), x, 125-126, 261.

¹⁴ Douglass C. North, John Joseph Wallis and Barry R. Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1-2.

violent reactions to conflict are, as Michael Fellman writes, integral parts of the human cultural process that occur when “the normal routes by which people solved problems and channeled behavior had been destroyed.” Historian Randolph Roth argues that violent crime increases during civil wars because in such conflicts, governments’ abilities to compel law and order over populations substantially weaken, causing crimes like homicides directed at political rivals to occur alongside other homicides that appear apolitical but “correlate just as strongly with the lack of political stability.” In such conditions, Roth writes, “some men become predatory killers, raping, robbing, and murdering as individuals or members of gangs,” and although they may initially act as political partisans, when they end up on the losing side in opposition to a new political order, they turn to preying indiscriminately on allies and noncombatants alike.¹⁵

Wartime conditions in Mississippi fostered such deviant behavior.

Confederate protective nationalists interpreted human actions as reflections of either Union or Confederate allegiance, and judged marauding deserters according to this paradigm. This labeling also stemmed from a tendency to imbue positive attributes to the concept of loyalty. Yet deserters who wrecked havoc in Mississippi acted on micro loyalties to self and gang that emphasized self-interest via material rewards and freedom from social restraints. As Simon Keller notes, “loyalty is not an intrinsically evaluative concept. Without some substantive argument, there is no guarantee that if something counts as loyal then it counts as something good.” Pillaging is fueled by the ties that bind criminal gangs, which derive mutual benefit from activity that outsiders may deem immoral and deviant. Indeed, deserters’ destructive behavior likely had an antecedent in the antebellum culture of “jolly fellowship,” in which men

¹⁵ Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 131; Ash, *When the Yankees Came*, 99; Fellman, *Inside War*, xvi; Randolph Roth, *American Homicide* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 19; For more on the connection between civil wars and crime, see Lisa Hultman, “Attacks on Civilians in Civil War: Targeting the Achilles Heel of Democratic Governments,” *International Interactions* 38 (Issue 2, 2012): 164-181.

collectively engaged in borderline deviant, and sometimes illegal, public behavior like drinking, fighting, and gambling in order to gain validation of manliness from their peers. The line between jolly fellowship and gang criminality could be thin, as the former could easily lead to the latter, especially in wartime conditions that fostered both.¹⁶

Just as Confederate partisans connected deserters' deviant behavior to their supposed disloyalty, historians have to an extent followed suit by categorizing crime and violence in the Confederacy as an offshoot of the guerrilla war and evidence of anti-Confederate sentiment. This judgment is more applicable to the Border and Mountain South that were fiercely divided over secession and war. In Deep South Mississippi, however, where Unionism was less prevalent, conditions caused by the war, but not entirely resulting from either Union or Confederate stances, nurtured collective violence.

Historian Harry Ward notes that this phenomenon had precedents in the American Revolution, when banditti separate from partisan warfare units, like the aforementioned Cowboys and Skinners, operated "between the lines" of the war's patriot and loyalist sides and pillaged civilians. Much like the occupied South's "no-man's land," the Revolution's contested spaces experienced anarchic conditions that fostered criminality. Despite the banditti's partisan claims, their activities were often driven by self-interest and group loyalties that fed their desire to loot. Quoting Eric Hobsbawm, Ward says "Banditry is freedom." Hobsbawm explains that bandits are "symptoms of crisis and tension in their society – of famine, pestilence, war or anything else that disrupts it," and for this reason such groups "abounded in periods of disorder, war or its aftermath." Revolutionary War soldiers were attracted to banditry because it appealed to unsettled young men as well as to men disillusioned with regimented army life. Mississippi

¹⁶ Simon Keller, *The Limits of Loyalty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 22; Richard Stott, *Jolly Fellows: Male Milieus in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 1, 57, 222-24.

already had a history of criminal gangs and highwaymen in its territorial days, especially along the storied Natchez Trace. The Civil War, however, saw an explosion of banditry among deserters. As Armstead Robinson writes of deserters, “many now moved the short step from armed disaffection to social banditry,” waging “random violence associated with the loss of social order” in their own home regions.¹⁷ Their actions reveal the limits of the hearth and home thesis as applied to Confederate soldiers.

Deserters in Mississippi terrorized citizens throughout the state during the war. An August 1863 report claimed that “the number of absentees, stragglers, and deserters from our army scattered over the State is...alarmingly great.” A May 1864 description of the Confederacy’s western department found “many thousands of deserters, and absentees from the army banded together throughout Mississippi perpetrating outrages.” Mississippi Senator James Phelan told Jefferson Davis from Jackson that “our state literally swarms with deserters. In my own county...they appeared at the polls in the late election in armed bodies and defied arrest.” In August 1864, North Mississippi native Harvey Walter stated that “the country is swarming with deserters, and without a force of regular troops I fear little can be done to break up these clans of tories.” Walter observed that “the number of deserters is alarmingly large,” and estimated their number to be “not less than 7,000.” In 1864, General Leonidas Polk detached companies throughout Mississippi to “recover this department from the evils to which it was subjected in consequence of the presence of a very large number of deserters from all the armies of the

¹⁷ Ward, *Between the Lines*, ix-xi. Quotes on x and xi; Eric Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, rev. ed. (1969, Repr., New York: New Press, 2000), 24, 40; William C. Davis, *A Way Through the Wilderness: The Natchez Trace and the Civilization of the Southern Frontier* (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), 272-279; Armstead L. Robinson, *Bitter Fruits of Bondage: The Demise of Slavery and the Collapse of the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005), 195, 198, Robinson highlights the outbreak of social banditry in several Confederate states, see pgs. 195-99, 225-28, 233-35; For an account of Civil War banditry in Louisiana, see Alexandre Barde, *The Vigilante Committees of the Attakapas: An Eyewitness Account of Banditry and Backlash in Southwestern Louisiana*, eds. David C. Edmonds and Dennis A. Gibson, trans. Henrietta Guilbeau Rogers (Lafayette, LA: The Acadiana Press, 1981).

Confederacy,” who organized into “Formidable bands” and declared open “hostility to the Government.” By the winter of 1865, Mississippi had become a “- deserters home,”- and one Confederate colonel noted that men were caught “roaming the country as jayhawkers, cotton-stealers and runners, [and] marauders, jeopardizing alike the discipline of the army and the safety of the citizen.”¹⁸

Quantifying the exact number of deserters in the Confederacy is a near impossible task due to the incomplete nature of Confederate records. The most recent scholarly estimate puts the total number of white Mississippians who served in the Confederate armies at 94,414. The only official number of deserters in Mississippi comes from an 1870 report submitted to Congress that estimated them at 11,660, or 12 percent of the total number of Mississippians who fought in Confederate armies. Certainly, this number was a small percentage of the larger whole, and has led historians like Timothy Smith to assert that the marauding Mississippi deserters were “a small minority” who “received the most attention” among men who otherwise deserted to protect their homes. Yet as Weitz notes, amidst chaotic wartime conditions this group had real power beyond their numbers, as contemporaries consistently remarked on the negative effects desertion had on wartime morale.¹⁹ The actual number of deserters in Mississippi is less important than the psychological effect they had on the state’s population.

In February 1864, Perry County Sherriff G.W. Bradley told Governor Clark that “the conditions of things in this county” necessitated “some relief.” Bradley reported that deserters swarmed through the southeastern Piney Woods area, threatening the Sherriff’s life and

¹⁸ *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 24. pt. 3, pg. 1044; ser. 1, vol. 39. pt. 2, p. 568; ser. 4, vol. 3, p. 707; ser. 1, vol. 39, pt. 1, p. 400; ser. 4, vol. 3, p. 976; ser. 1, vol. 32, pt. 3, pgs. 855-856; ser. 1, vol. 49, pt. 1, pg. 944.

¹⁹ Weitz, *More Damning than Slaughter*, xvi-xvii; Michael B. Ballard, *The Civil War in Mississippi: Major Campaigns and Battles* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2011), 11; John K. Bettersworth, *Confederate Mississippi: The People and Politics of a Cotton State in Wartime* (1943, Repr., Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1978), 211-212; Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War*, 137; see also Wynne, *Mississippi’s Civil War*, 138; Lonn, *Desertion*, 75.

hindering his ability to collect taxes. The deserters were “in formidable gangs [and] doing mischief...burning & destroying the property of all loyal citizens such as will not sympathize with them.” Confederate cavalry had been detailed to Perry County to apprehend the deserters, but the cavalry, Bradley wrote, “prowl through the county frolicking and stealing too much,” and proved mostly ineffectual at rounding up the deserters. “I will venture to say that there are more deserters in this county today than was here when the Cavalry came here,” Bradley noted, concluding that “if there is not a change soon the deserters will kill & burn many loyal citizens in this country. They have already killed several citizens for piloting the cavalry.”²⁰ Other Piney Woods counties faced similar problems. In January 1864, residents of Smith, Jones, and Jasper counties demanded that Clark stop what they suspected were over three-thousand deserters running wild in the vicinity. “There is reason to believe,” they wrote, “that they get ammunition on the Coast of this state; that they are compelling good & true men to leave Jones County.” The deserters also stole from citizens at will. “Unless a strong force is soon sent for our protection many or all of us will be plundered of our moveable property,” the petitioners concluded. Smith County was similarly “infested with deserters of the worst class” who regularly held “Union or peace meetings” and made “Union speeches.” The deserters threatened to kill anyone “who dares speak out against them.”²¹

The deserters in the Piney Woods area defy easy categorization. Were they “disloyal” Confederates? Did they desert to defend hearth and home? The answer to the former is debatable while the answer to the latter in many cases seems to be “no.” Regardless of the deserters’ motivation, witnesses described their behavior in nationalist terms. The Piney Woods deserters

²⁰ Sheriff G.W. Bradley to Charles Clark, February 8, 1864, Charles Clark Correspondence, Series 768, Box 949, Volume 56, Record Group 27, MDAH.

²¹ Issac Anderson, et., al. to Charles Clark, January 28, 1864 and W.H. Quarles to Charles Clark, March 28, 1864, Clark Correspondence.

destroyed the property of “loyal citizens” who would not “sympathize with them,” and made “Union speeches,” and negatively-influenced “good and true men,” likely referring to Confederate sympathizers. Such accusations were born out of the same circulating nationalist discourse that led other Mississippians to swear the Union oath as a means to other ends, whatever their actual national feelings. Protective nationalists fostered this wartime environment by judging all behavior through a nationalist lens, and this approach led them to make no distinctions between objective Unionism, behavior that harmed the Confederacy and, by extension, aided the Union, but which its perpetrators never actually said stemmed from Union sympathies, and subjective Unionism, in which Mississippians publically expressed Unionism as motivating their anti-Confederate behavior. If historians embrace all vaguely anti-Confederate behavior as objective Unionism, concluding that because someone harmed the Confederacy they were therefore a “Unionist,” they risk inflating the number of actual subjective Unionists. This approach places them back into the “weak” or “strong” Confederate camps and obscures a wider range of loyalties that likely influenced deserters’ actions. Such an approach also risks over-emphasizing the power and reach of the Confederate state by assuming that Mississippians consistently tailored their behavior to reflect the influence of that state and its protective nationalist goals, a conclusion not always supported by the evidence.

In the cases of Mississippi deserters, the language of nationalism may conceal as much as it exposes. The most famous of the Piney woods deserters were the Jones County-based Knight Company, led by Newton Knight and part of the “Free State of Jones” that was falsely rumored to have seceded from the Confederacy. The Knight Company operated out of an anti-Confederate ideology born out of a pre-war opposition to secession and resentment over the conscription act. Researcher Ed Payne has also discovered that 201 Mississippians from the

Piney Woods region enlisted in the Union 1st and 2nd New Orleans Infantry. Still, the majority of the Piney Woods' military-age men did not join the Union army, and the famous Knight Company remained in Jones County where they clashed with Confederate cavalry in what Victoria Bynum calls an "inner civil war."²²

Although Unionist sympathies clearly motivated some Piney Woods deserters, especially those from Jones County, Confederate officials nonetheless equated them with common criminals who broke standard criminal laws, rather than labeling them solely as traitors to the Confederacy. General Leonidas Polk, for example, claimed that "these men have become a lawless banditti, having murdered a conscripting officer and several of the peaceable citizens and plundered them, as well as burned their houses," and had to be "dealt with in the most summary manner." Colonel Henry Maury, assigned to root out the Jones deserters, deemed them "outlaws." Despite this rhetoric, Confederates knew of the Jones deserters' Unionist leanings, and called them outlaws and Unionists interchangeably because they resisted Confederate law and supposedly pillaged and murdered Confederate civilians.²³ Yet beyond the Jones County Unionists, Confederates often used the "Unionist" charge to disparage marauding deserters throughout the state. These injections of multiple meanings into the outlaw label, however, may have obscured the very real and widespread existence of war-induced banditry that had less to do with national affiliations and more to do with opportunism.

This trend prevailed throughout the war, as deserters plundered and citizens accused them of treason. In December 1863, "an organized band of bold thieves consisting chiefly of deserters

²² Victoria E. Bynum, *The Free State of Jones: Mississippi's Longest Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 99-101, 111 and *The Long Shadow of the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 31-36; Ed Payne, "Crossing the Rubicon of Loyalties: Piney Woods Enlistees in the Union 1st and 2nd New Orleans Infantry," *Renegade South: Histories of Unconventional Southerners* (blog), May 26, 2011, <http://renegadesouth.wordpress.com/2011/05/26/crossing-the-rubicon-of-loyalties-piney-woods-enlistees-in-the-union-1st-and-2nd-north-orleans-infantry/> (accessed August 17, 2012).

²³ *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 32, pt. 2, pgs. 688-689; ser. 1, vol. 32, pt. 3, pg. 633.

from the army” stole some thirty to forty thousand dollars worth of freight from Mobile and Ohio Railroad cars in north Mississippi. Earlier that spring, deserters in Choctaw County were “executing their malignant designs on good and loyal citizens” in the neighborhood of Bankston. The deserters burnt houses, destroyed corn cribs and cotton bins and attacked and robbed “loyal citizens” in their homes and along public highways. The *Macon Beacon* reported in April 1864 that Smith and its adjacent counties were “crowded with deserters and disaffected persons,” who were “deserting and banding together for the purpose of thieving and pillaging the loyal citizens of the country.” They forced citizens who failed to endorse their “many acts of villainy” to choose either exile or assassination.²⁴ Witnesses claimed that the deserters made “loyal” citizens targets of their outrages, and by extension suggested that deserters were “disloyal” Confederates.

In Decatur, Newton County, a man who claimed to have “made a good soldier,” but was upset over the army’s confiscation of his horse, led a band of deserters who took control of the neighborhood. The group included men that had apparently “made faithful soldiers for three years.” They hid out in the swamps to avoid capture by the militia, and many local women aided these renegades by blowing trumpets to alert them of danger. The deserters killed one local man and savagely beat five others. A witness to the mayhem claimed the army should “send them to Vicksburg for they are all Union and oppose the Confederate Government and all that are in favor of it.” Simpson County experienced similar problems in 1863, when deserters “burned up two gin houses & one bridge across the river.” By early 1865 “deserters and lawless men” gained control of the Simpson County courts and vowed revenge after the provost guard shot fifty-six year-old farmer James Rogers. Two of Rogers’ sons, one of whom was likely Abel A. Rogers, a former colonel in Company A of the 39th Infantry Simpson County Greys, were among the

²⁴ Milton Brown to Charles Clark, December 11, 1864, M.J. Wesson Bush to Charles Clark, March 26, 1864, Clark Correspondence; *Macon Beacon* (Macon, MS), April 13, 1864.

deserters who threatened to kill any Confederate soldiers that dared enter the county. According to Simpson resident Richard Cooper, Confederate army personnel could not trust many people in the neighborhood who, “on account of their relationship to deserters were of questionable loyalty.”²⁵ The distinction between anti-Confederate behavior, however, and opportunistic collective violence, could blur in wartime conditions that fostered the latter.

The fact that Newton and Simpson county civilians aided deserters in their resistance to conscripting Confederate soldiers does suggest that opposition to Confederate policies, if not outright Unionism, influenced such behavior. This collusion between deserters and civilians, however, led one witness to conflate the two motivations by claiming that “they are all Union and oppose the Confederate Government.” Yet, the breakdown of law enforcement and social order further encouraged deserters’ pillaging and violence, which in turn accelerated the collapse of civil authority. This phenomenon was especially evident in Simpson County, where deserters gained control of the courts. In the Simpson case, the killing of James Rogers appeared to have aroused family allegiances, as opposed to national ones, that resulted in retaliatory threats against intruding Confederate soldiers. Nonetheless, witness Richard Cooper stated that the deserters’ civilian accomplices were of “questionable loyalty,” suggesting that they were disloyal by association. That another witness noted that the courts had been taken over by “deserters and lawless men,” however, suggests that some civilians recognized that the line between destructive behavior motivated by Union or anti-Confederate partisanship, and behavior by men who, in

²⁵ Hamilton Cooper to Charles Clark, December 26, 1864, Richard Cooper to Charles Clark, March 25, 1865, Clark Correspondence, box 950; 1860 U.S. Census, Simpson County, Mississippi, James Rogers, Abel A. Rogers and U.S. Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, A.A. Rogers, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed June 2, 2011).

Tilly's words, used "damaging means to pursue ends that would be unavailable or forbidden to them under other circumstances," was blurring.

Circuit court judge Robert Hudson, who witnessed the social breakdown of Mississippi's interior during the war, understood how the distinction between "deserters and lawless men" was perhaps too fine. Although he concluded that Mississippi was rife with disloyal people, especially after the fall of Vicksburg, he connected this alleged treason to the collapse of civil authority in the sections of the state constituting "no-man's land." Hudson's complaints about deserters echoed reports of other witnesses. "The state is now under the tacit rule of deserters, thieves, and disloyal men and women," he warned Davis in March 1864. "Open-day and midnight robbery is practiced every day and night...by deserters, pretended soldiers, and soldiers with their commands," Hudson complained, "privates steal and officers refuse to give the property when identified by the citizens and even punish the citizens for making claim to it." He claimed that many men had deserted up to six times without punishment, and spent their time engaging in deviant activity that included "gaming parties, drunkenness, marrying [sic], horse-racing, and stealing." Rather than claiming that these men deserted to protect hearth and home, Hudson observed that "they are not only absent from the army, but are *a great curse to home and the communities where they prowl* [emphasis mine] – and should the Yankees visit the interior, they will be joined as guides, informants & plunderers by the last one of them." While he assured Davis that "I am no alarmist," he nonetheless warned that "Mississippi is almost a Sodom and Gomorrah...and the day of our salvation, if neglected for a day, is forever gone."²⁶

Hudson made similar reports to Clark in May 1864, and although he continued to use the language of nationalism to call deserters "disloyal," he also connected the collapse of civil law to

²⁶ Robert S. Hudson to Jefferson Davis, March 14, Robert S. Hudson to Charles Clark, October 26, 1864, in James W. Silver, Ed., "The Breakdown of Morale in Central Mississippi in 1864: Letters of Judge Robert S. Hudson," *Journal of Mississippi History* 16, (April, 1964): 102, 116.

the explosion of violent and criminal behavior among deserters who became a “great curse to home.” “By the laws of this state it is made the imperative duty of all sheriffs, members of Boards of Police, Justices of the Peace and all other County officers to arrest and send to the army all deserters & evading conscripts in their respective counties,” he told Clark. “The fact is,” he continued, “that not one of these civil officers is attempting to discharge that duty,” despite the counties being “full of deserters” who were “killing or outraging the persons & property of good citizens.” Hudson observed how the breakdown of effective law enforcement enabled deserters to commit opportunistic collective violence, with little regard for the sanctity of hearth and home. He also understood how kin networks and local ties supported the collective aspect of their behavior. The root of the problem regarding “the remissness” of civil county officers was that “their nearest neighbors, and often their own sons are deserters, with whom they meet, and sometimes feed & entertain without attempting to arrest, or even to reprimand them,”²⁷ he wrote. Yet, even as Hudson recognized how micro loyalties and social dissolution enabled deserters to wreak havoc, he also viewed their behavior as stemming from disloyalty to the Confederacy by equating objective with subjective Unionism, and warned that the problem was spreading.

Hudson believed that the natural inclination for deserters was to join up with the occupying Yankees. In late May 1864, he heard from Yazoo County Sheriff William Manguam that the miscreants had spread from the interior to the Union-occupied northern Delta. “I am truly sorry to know that the counties of Leake, Attala, Neshoba, Winston & other counties are now and have been for the last six months emptying their filthy, base, disloyal, deserting, stealing, murdering population into Yazoo,” Hudson told Manguam. He characterized the deserters’ motivations as stemming from a rough mixture of delinquency and disloyalty. “They pretend to go there [at Union lines] to get corn to live on, but their real object is to avoid our

²⁷ Robert S. Hudson to Charles Clarke, May 2, 16, 1864, in Silver, ed., “Breakdown of Morale,” 103-04.

army, steal, plunder, and be with the Yankees,” Hudson warned, adding that “I know many of them, and know them to be a base, vile & worthless set, who never made a good or honest living anywhere.”²⁸ Hudson identified some of the men by name, revealing how kin ties could become gang loyalties in the right conditions.

The deserters whom Hudson identified ran in family and neighborhood groups. Thomas, Reuban, and William Barrett of Neshoba County, and John and Samuel Adcock of Leake County, deserted from Mississippi regiments raised in their neighborhoods. Members of the Waller, Breazeale, Mooney and Scott families of Neshoba and Leake Counties were also among the group. Amidst the precarious wartime conditions, these family and neighborhood bonds became gang loyalties that enabled collective violence. Hudson recognized this but also put a nationalist spin on their criminality. “They are abolitionists, spies, deserters, liars, thieves, murderers and every thing foul & damnable,” he wrote.²⁹ While likely unconscious on Hudson’s part, his comment nonetheless encapsulated how a nationalist war degraded the social order and caused ostensibly partisan actors to act violently without necessarily nationalist designs. The deserters went from “abolitionists,” “spies” and “deserters,” all terms indicating disloyalty to the Confederacy, and shifted into the criminal realm of “liars,” “thieves” and “murderers.” Hudson recognized how criminal behavior flourished in the right conditions, and equated common criminality with treasonous behavior.

Much like Hudson, Captain Wirt Thompson of the 24th Mississippi Infantry recognized deserters’ overt criminality but still framed their behavior in nationalist terms. Following an 1864 leave of absence spent in southeastern Greene County, Thompson wrote:

²⁸ Robert S. Hudson to William H. Mangum, May 24, 1864, in Silver, ed., “Breakdown of Morale,” 106-107.

²⁹ Ibid., 106-107; 1860 U.S. Census, Neshoba and Leake Counties, Mississippi, Thomas, Reuban, William G. Barrett, Samuel and John W. Adcock, William R. and Charles R. Waller, Jackson Breazeale, C.W. Mooney, Emmet R. Scott and U.S. Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed September 18, 2009).

“Previous to starting to Mississippi I was aware of the presence of large numbers of deserters and conscripts in that section of the State, but until I arrived in the country I did not know that they were in organized bodies and committing depredations and deeds of violence, bloodshed, and outlawry, and that there was no force in the country to contend against them or to defend the loyal portion of the citizens from their savage caprices and brutal whims.”

By 1864 the deserters controlled several swaths of southeastern Mississippi. Civilians lived in fear of the “outlaws”’ wrath: the gangs exiled some dissenters and murdered other citizens in their own homes. The deserters also targeted conscription officers like Captain John Bradford, whom they spared from the noose but banished from Greene County. On the same day, the deserters also captured the area’s tax-in-kind funds, and forced a local resident to distribute the money to local families. “I was told that they boast of fighting for the Union,” Thompson wrote, claiming that they had “frequent and uninterrupted communication” with the Yankees on Ship Island.³⁰ Although they terrorized many residents, the deserters’ distributing of money to local families suggests collusion between some civilians and the renegades. Yet, even if divisions between local families had nationalist origins, the deserters’ behavior indicated that gang loyalties, exacerbated by the chaotic circumstances, had pushed Green County’s war beyond partisan boundaries. Civilians likely chose to side with, or resisted, the deserters in a battle for wartime spoils. This internal battle eclipsed a conflict that may have originated in divisions between pro-and anti-Confederate sympathizers. Thompson, thinking in a purely nationalist paradigm, thought that Unionism motivated the deserters, but their actions suggest banditry fueled by opportunistic conditions.

Greene County became a bandit-ruled surveillance state that pitted neighbor against neighbor. Residents feared leaving their homes. Civilians eavesdropped on citizens’ houses by night and reported to the outlaws by day. The deserters burned bridges and ferry boats, and

³⁰ *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 32, pt. 3, pgs. 711-712.

attacked passersby from swamps and roadside thickets. They also pillaged horses, wagons, guns, and whiskey from civilians, and beat, murdered or exiled those who resisted. The deserters' collective discipline amazed Thompson, who described how "deserters from every army and from every State" had "colonels, majors, captains, and lieutenants" and claimed to be "not less than a thousand strong in organized bodies, besides what others are outsiders and disloyal citizens."³¹ Amidst the vacuum of lawlessness, the deserters' group loyalties allowed them to commit organized banditry. Whatever their reasons for abandoning the army, their actions suggest the influence of self-interest inflamed by the possible spoils of war, rather than a desire to protect hearth and home.

Like other parts of the state, Mississippi's Gulf Coast suffered from war-induced privations. The Confederate government saw little strategic value in the state's coastline, and abandoned it to the Federals by 1862. Gulf Coast Mississippians protested this abandonment. Hancock County resident Freeman Jones warned Pettus that removal of home guards from the coast "will lead to open rebellion at home." By the end of 1862, eight months after the Union captured New Orleans, scarcities of corn and bread drove citizens to travel to far-off Mobile to buy high-priced goods. In January 1863, a Pascagoula resident told Pettus that "famine is inevitable and will drive the poor people to the Yankees & invite them to come and protect them from starvation." That spring, the *Mississippian* alerted the governor that coastal residents faced "the giant skeleton of Famine." Desperate conditions combined with the absence of civil and military authority to spur banditry in coastal counties. An 1863 report noted that deserters "infest the coast." A year later, one Confederate officer stated that "the Sea Coast from Pascagoula to Shieldsboro is constructively within the lines of the enemy," and that Confederate sympathizers were "being murdered and driven from the country by deserters from our army" who held

³¹ *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 32, pt. 3, pg. 712.

“communication with the enemy off of Ship Island.”³² The Confederate government’s abandoning of the Gulf Coast resulted in a worsening of the region’s social conditions that, when combined with the Union presence, fueled Confederate deserters’ destructive behavior.

By 1863, however, witnesses’ tendency to associate deserters’ pillaging with either objective or subjective Unionism waned. Mississippians became more inclined to view these ex-soldiers as a criminal element which needed to be squelched. The Confederate government, for its part, proved largely unable to apprehend or stop the outlaws, revealing the limitations of its nonetheless expanded infrastructural powers.

As the war reached its midpoint, witnesses across the state increasingly commented on deserters’ criminality, but eschewed connecting such behavior to alleged anti-Confederate feelings. In March 1863, for example, Pettus authorized Lieutenant-Colonel W.L. Lowry to round up “certain marauding bands now infesting the counties of Tishomingo, Tippah and Marshall,” who had organized “for the purpose of seizing and confiscating...the goods...of the citizens of said counties.” In 1864, witness H. Winslow reported that “the counties west and north of Columbus are filled with deserters and robbers, who are devastating the country of horses and mules.” Particularly onerous was a gang led by a Captain Bobo, who claimed war department authority to plunder citizens. “In many cases, these men of Bobo’s have taken the cotton and supplies of people, and themselves sold it upon the lines for their own uses and benefit,” Winslow noted. Another gang, led by a Monroe County farmer and former Sergeant in the 14th Mississippi Infantry named W.F. English, stole \$900 from a citizen and generally preyed

³² Betterworth, *Confederate Mississippi*, 241-143; Freeman Jones to John J. Pettus, December 24, E. Lewis to John J. Pettus, December 5, 1862, A.E. Lewis to Pettus, January 18, 1863, Pettus Correspondence, roll 2812, vol. 50; “Suffering on the Sea Coast of Mississippi,” *Weekly Mississippian* (Jackson, MS), April 8, 1863; *OR*, series 4, vol. 2, pg. 782; Officers of Third Mississippi Regiment to James A. Seddon, March 29, 1864, Nos. H 151-350, Roll 129, Letters Received by the Confederate Secretary of War (Hereafter cited as LRSCW), M-437, War Department Collection of Confederate Records, RG 109, NARA (Hereafter cited as NARA).

upon “the unprotected families of soldiers.” Calhoun County farm laborer James Cartright, “a notorious robber and spy” formerly of the 4th Mississippi Infantry, commanded another gang of thieves. In Yazoo County, a partisan ranger described Conscript Commander Samuel Dyer’s regiment as “mostly deserters from other companies...and conscripts that have been laying out since the war began,” many of whom were “professional thieves and robbers” and “a terror to the citizens and a disgrace to the Confederate army.” In north Mississippi, Colonel George Hodge explained that after deserting with a portion of his command, a Captain Reson, “had established himself and inaugurated a system of private plunder ostensibly against the common enemy, but too often without regard to the sentiments of the owners of property.” Further, Reson consistently urged friends still in the army to join his band, “luring them by promises of brigandage and free quarters.”³³ Witnesses variously described these gangs as “marauding,” a “terror,” “robbers,” and “thieves” who were attracted to “brigandage.” Although deserters never entirely escaped the “disloyal” tag, civilians and military authorities more often emphasized their criminality, and that they posed a direct threat to Mississippi neighborhoods.

These outlaws terrified civilians. Tishomingo County residents complained to Clark that “we are surrounded on two sides at least by a population in part disloyal & mixed with Bushwhackers & deserters, ready at any time...to pounce upon us & commit the worst acts of depredation & violence.” Likewise, in late 1864 a Franklin County resident told Clark of “deserters from this section who have committed many depredations in this county from their familiar acquaintance with the roads and paths so as to escape the vigilance of the regular pickets and scouts.” Betty Beaumont observed “much lawlessness” in the state, noting that “nothing was

³³ John J. Pettus to W.L. Lowry, March 17, 1863, Pettus Correspondence, roll 1446; *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 32, pt. 3, pg. 635; 1860 U.S. Census, Monroe and Calhoun Counties, Mississippi, W.F. English, James Cartright, and U.S. Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, digital images, *Ancestry.com* <http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed June 8, 2011); H.W. Thompson to Charles Clark, January 21, 1864, Clark Correspondence, box 949; *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 39, pt. 2, pg. 570.

safe, and people lived in constant fear of losing their little possessions.” She feared traveling the Natchez countryside, which crawled with “lawless bands, calling themselves soldiers, prowling around ready to rob and even murder.” These “bushwhackers or pretended Confederate soldiers,” Beaumont noted, “infested all the roads and made everything unsafe.” In early 1864, Louisa Lovell contemplated shipping her valuables out of Natchez, which was beset with arsonists and thieves. “Everybody is robbed and plundered without mercy,” she told her husband, “some desperados set fire to Melrose [plantation] about a week ago.”³⁴ Such roving “desperadoes” were more often than not former Confederate soldiers who took advantage of the breakdown of law enforcement to engage in opportunistic collective violence, especially armed robbery.

In July 1864, for example, Confederate cavalry in Covington County arrested “quite a number of deserters & outlaws who had banded together & pretended to organize for the service, but as its generally believed really for bad purposes,” that included taking “revenge on all good & loyal citizens.” Eliza Sivley reported from Hinds County that army authorities had arrested one Bob Carpender “for stealing Mrs. Washington’s cotton and selling it to the Yanks.” Carpender was also charged with “desertion and highway robbery” before he escaped by bribing a guard. On her way to Memphis in August 1863, Caroline Seabury met a Mississippi family hiding on a river island who, ten days earlier, had been plundered by “a band of Southern guerillas,” deserters from Chalmers’ army, who “robbed them in broad daylight of all the money & clothing they could find.” The robbers had been “rather well known” to the family for “years,” and were outraged to find a Union oath among the family’s possessions. That the two parties

³⁴ Tishomingo Residents to Charles Clark, Undated, Clark Correspondence, box 950; N. Cassedy to Charles Clark, September 12, 1864, Ibid; Betty Bentley Beaumont, *Twelve Years of my Life: An Autobiography* (Philadelphia: T.B. Peterson & Brothers, 1887), 182, 208, 244; Louisa T. Lovell to Joseph Lovell, February 26, 1864, Quitman Family Papers, 1784-1978, folder 112, ser. 1.2, 00616, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (hereafter cited as SHC).

knew each other suggests that pre-war antagonisms, not merely Union and Confederate divisions, may have spurred the deserters' raid. Indeed, whatever the two parties' national loyalties, the gang took advantage of the chaotic wartime conditions to steal for themselves, not to act on the Confederacy's behalf. The family's alleged Unionism provided an easy excuse to target them for theft, but soldiers-turned-bandits hardly needed such an excuse. Samuel Agnew recognized how the wartime conditions turned former soldiers into criminals. When two soldiers robbed a neighbor walking home at night, Agnew remarked that "a good many of our soldiers are becoming lawless. Some of them are to be almost as much feared as the Yankees."³⁵ Yet, even as deserters embraced banditry, they often used nationalist justifications for their behavior, thereby revealing the military's limited ability to inspire national devotion.

Deserters invoked Confederate military authority in the service of gang-interests that bore little tangible connections to nationalist stances. Beaumont's observation that these men were "pretend Confederate soldiers" was quite apt, since they used military authority as a means to advance criminal ends. During the winter of 1864, for example, Bolivar County citizens complained to Clark about deserter gangs, 'knives all,' who invaded citizens' homes brandishing falsified papers supposedly signed by Confederate General Stephen D. Lee. "Their game is robbery," the citizens wrote, "they take mules – horses – provisions – anything they lay their hands on, robbing everybody of any money they can find." In one particular incident, acting like "anything else but the soldier," the gang, led by a Captain Price, arrested and handcuffed local men and ransacked their houses while insulting on-looking women. The citizens' noted that "if they were in their places in the ranks, the army would be greatly strengthened." "Somebody is to

³⁵H.S. Van Eaton to Charles Clark, July 12, 1864, Clark Correspondence, box 949; Eliza H.B. Sively to Jane Sively, Undated, Jane Sively Letters, 1862-1867, folder 4, 01891-z, SHC; Suzanne L. Bunkers, ed. *The Diary of Caroline Seabury, 1854-1863* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 105-06; Diary of Samuel Andrew Agnew, January 21, 1864, *Documenting the American South*. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/imps/agnew/agnew.html>. (Accessed September 13, 2009).

blame,” they fumed, “we don’t think this the way to conquer a place, on the contrary, we believe it to be the opposite.”³⁶ By claiming military authority to rob for their own personal gain, the deserters threatened civilians who believed that such abuse of military authority was “no way to conquer” the hearts and minds of those on the home front. It was difficult to whole-heartedly accept the military as a force for the greater national good when former soldiers invoked it to terrorize hearths and homes.

Marauding deserters in other parts of the states similarly cloaked their behavior with military authority. In March 1863, cavalry scout R.H. Bowers complained to Captain Thomas Henderson about deserters in Marshall County, “stragglers from almost every cavalry command we have, who profess to be scouts, but who rob persons, steal horses, trade in cotton & do everything else except what duty requires & what a true Confederate soldier would do.” Carrying confiscation papers forged with Pemberton’s signature, the deserters robbed civilians and Federal cotton buyers then sold the stolen cotton at Memphis, pocketing the profits. They also stole horses from civilians, and on one occasion even took Bowers’ own mount. In another instance, they threatened to torch a woman’s house if she did not give up her cash. “Is there no way to protect the citizens from such lawless bands?” Bowers asked Henderson, “they should be made to suffer for their acts but I have no way of bringing them to justice.” Henderson told Pemberton that “the high-way robbers of whom Bowers writes, are mostly deserters from our army & pretend to act under your authority,” and begged the General to authorize partisan rangers to snuff out the “terrible annoyance.”³⁷ These deserters’ criminal behavior earned them tags like “knaves,” “lawless bands,” and “high-way robbers.” Bowers’ inability to “protect the citizens

³⁶ Bolivar County Citizens to Charles Clark, February 20, 1864, Clark Correspondence, box 949.

³⁷ R.H. Bowers to Thomas Henderson, March 15, 1863, John C. Pemberton Papers, MLR PI101, Folder 6, Box 2, Entry 131, War Department Collection of Confederate Records, RG 109, NARA; Captain Henderson to John Pemberton, February 25, 1863, Ibid, folder 3.

from such lawless bands” spoke to a major weakness in the state’s capacity to enforce national loyalty in its soldiery and defend civilians within its borders. The army was not sufficient enough a nationalist symbol to overcome the deserters’ gang-loyalties and their self-interested drive to plunder.

Gang loyalties were precisely the kind of micro allegiances that influenced a group of deserters/horse thieves near Pontotoc County. In March 1864, Samuel Agnew attended the magistrate trial of one of the alleged thieves, Pontotoc native Napoleon Bonaparte Bolen. One day in March a group of men that included John Chisholm and John Watkins confronted a traveling minister named Randall and searched him under suspicion that he was a spy. While the men soon let Randall go, his horse went missing. A search crew eventually found the horse, and Bolen, concealed in a thicket on the property of one Harrison Gober. When arrested, Bolen initially identified himself as “Armstrong,” and denied stealing the horse. Later, when threatened with the noose, he admitted to obtaining it from a group of thieves that included John Watkins of Chickasaw County and John Chisholm of Itawamaba County, the two men who initially harassed Randall, as well as Luther Privet of Pontotoc County, William Harrison Gober and Littleton Wages of Tippah County, and Lafayette Bolen, a native of St. Clair County, Alabama and likely a relative of Napoleon’s since both men were Alabama-born. While the coerced nature of Napoleon Bolen’s testimony cautions against taking it as irrefutable evidence of his guilt, the circumstances of his arrest, combined with the horse thieves’ local connections, suggest that he was either a member of the gang or at least associated with them.³⁸

³⁸ Samuel Agnew Diary, March 13 and 14, 1864, *Documenting the American South*; 1860 U.S. Census, Pontotoc, Chickasaw, Itawamba and Tippah Counties, Mississippi, St. Clair County, Alabama, Napoleon B. Bolen, John Watkins, John Chisolm, Luther A. Privet, William H. Gober, Littleton Wages, Lafayette Bolen, digital images, *Ancestry.com* <http://www.ancestry.com/>; (accessed September 20, 2010).

Besides being caught with the horse, Agnew noted that Bolen “did not feel safe” in jail without a guard, suggesting he may have feared the gang’s reprisal for his fingering them in the theft. Bolen’s initial assuming of a false identity also indicated that he may have had something to hide. In addition to these circumstances, Bolen and the horse thieves shared local connections. Exempting Lafayette Bolen, they all lived in the cluster of northeastern counties near the Tennessee border, and they all served in the following Mississippi regiments: the 31st Infantry, 12th Cavalry, 7th Cavalry, 18th Cavalry, and the 1st Infantry. Lafayette Bolen served in the 51st Alabama Cavalry. Each of these regiments mustered out in or near their home counties. The men also came from similar socio-economic backgrounds, either as small farmers or farm laborers who owned little to no property, and none of them were slaveholders save John Watkins, whose father owned fourteen slaves. Given these local connections, the men almost certainly associated with each other before the war, and these same ties likely persisted as they deserted and operated as a criminal gang. For his part, Napoleon Bolen may have betrayed the gang when threatened with hanging, but self-interest need not dispel the previous influence of group allegiances.³⁹

So who were Mississippi’s deserters? A chart demonstrating the socio-economic and county-level data of Mississippi deserters (located in Appendix B), reveals that they differed little in background from average Confederate soldiers. Out of 177 known Mississippi deserters, 123 appear in the 1860 census. Fourteen of the 123, 11.4 percent, owned slaves or came from slave-holding families. Twelve of the fourteen slave owners, 86 percent, owned ten or fewer. One-hundred and nine deserters, 89 percent, did not own slaves at all. In addition, out of the sample of 123, thirty-five of them, 28.5 percent, owned less than \$1,000 worth of real-estate. Sixty-one, or 49.6 percent, owned no real-estate. Only twenty-seven deserters, 22 percent, owned

³⁹Agnew Diary, March 13 and 14, 1864; U.S. Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, Napoleon B. Bolen, John Watkins, John Chisolm, Luther A. Privet, William H. Gober, Littleton Wages, Lafayette Bolen, digital images, *Ancestry.com* <http://www.ancestry.com/>; (accessed September 20, 2010).

or came from families that owned \$1,000 or more in real-estate. The value of deserters' personal estates was slightly more spread out. Sixty-six deserters, 54 percent, owned personal estates worth less than \$1,000, while thirty-one deserters, 25 percent, held no personal estate at all. Twenty-six deserters, 21 percent, had personal estate valued at \$1,000 or more. The majority of deserters, 89.4 percent, were either farmers or farm laborers. Thirty of them, 24 percent, were poor whites. Fifty-nine of the 123, 48 percent, were plain folk. A single deserter fell into the category of a middling or large farmer, and a mere four of them were planters or from planter families. Thus, the majority of the Mississippi deserters were either poor whites or plain folk who worked in agriculture.⁴⁰

These deserters were, in fact, quite normal, and representative of the average Mississippi soldier, a fact reflected in their social and economic backgrounds. A majority of them were family men, and their average age was twenty-six. Seventy-six of the 123, 62 percent, were married. Seventy-five, 61 percent, were heads of households, and sixty-eight, 55 percent, had children. These figures correspond with conclusions reached by Larry Logue in his random sampling of 1,010 Mississippi soldiers. He finds that 77 percent were either farmers or other agricultural workers, compared to 89.4 percent of my sampled deserters. The average soldier's age in Logue's sample was 25.6, matching the deserters' average age of twenty-six. Furthermore, 61.2 percent were household heads, equaling the 61 percent of deserters who were heads of households. Logue includes slaves with Mississippi soldiers' personal property, thus, his sample does not specify the percentage of slaveholders vs. non-slaveholders. Aaron Marrs, however, finds that most South Carolina deserters, like those in Mississippi, were non-slaveholders. Joseph

⁴⁰ My occupational classifications draw from Samuel C. Hyde Jr.'s definitions. Poor whites consisted of landless laborers and non-property-holding farmers. Plain folk were non-slaveholding farmers with land, as well as farmers owning 1-5 working slaves. Middling or larger farmers owned land and 6-9 working slaves. Planters owned land and 10 or more slaves. See Samuel C. Hyde Jr., "Plain Folk Reconsidered: Historiographical Ambiguity in Search of Definition," *Journal of Southern History* 71 (Nov., 2005): 819.

Glatthaar shows that the majority of men in the Army of Northern Virginia, 62.8 percent, did not own slaves. The percentage of Mississippi deserters who were non-slaveholders was higher at 89 percent, revealing that deserters represented the average Confederate soldier in most respects, but they did have a lower percentage of slave ownership.⁴¹

Mississippi deserters reflected the socio-economic status of the average Confederate soldier, and were also a microcosm of antebellum southern society in general.⁴² Although most were poor, suggesting they may have been inclined to pillage when circumstances allowed, they were also mostly married men with children. They were therefore fully enmeshed in the normal social order before the war, which suggests that it was the war-induced breakdown of that order that drove them to banditry. Why then, did these normal Confederate soldiers resort to collective violence when many others did not? Tilly notes that there is no explanation for why some people perform “self-serving damage,” since such motivations reside in the individual psyche. Nonetheless, it is possible to identify the conditions that fuel opportunism, which include the combination of interpersonal relations like group loyalties in conjunction with pertinent environmental conditions.⁴³

Beyond the deserters’ shared socio/economic backgrounds, the census information, presented in the chart (see Appendix B), also reveals geographical links that further indicate the presence of pre-war local attachments. First, they rarely deserted alone. Sources providing

⁴¹ Larry M. Logue, “Who Joined the Confederate Army? Soldiers, Civilians, and Communities in Mississippi,” *Journal of Social History* 26 (Spring, 1993): 614; Marrs, “Desertion and Loyalty in South Carolina,” 53; Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Soldiering in the Army of Northern Virginia: A Statistical Portrait of the Troops Who Served under Robert E. Lee* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 5-6.

⁴² Glatthaar, *Soldiering in the Army of Northern Virginia*, 5-6; James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Ballantine, 1988), 614-615; Frank I. Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South* (1949, Repr., Chicago: Quadrangle, 1961), 7-10; For a review of the historiographical literature on common southern whites, see Samuel C. Hyde Jr., “Plain Folk Yeomanry in the Antebellum South,” in *A Companion to the American South*, ed. John B. Boles (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 139-155.

⁴³ Tilly, *Collective Violence*, 132, 7; Kenneth Noe identifies a similar thread of normalcy altered by wartime conditions in his study of Confederate bushwhackers in West Virginia, revealing that several bushwhackers were not society’s dregs but “older and propertied men” who were “stable landowners” and therefore did not fit traditional assumptions about outlaws’ backgrounds. See Noe, “Who Were the Bushwhackers?,” 5-6.

deserters' names almost always listed two or more men at one time, often those who hailed from the same county, the same neighborhoods, and served in the same company or regiment mustered out of those counties and neighborhoods. The Appendix B chart has been organized alphabetically by county to show these connections. Sociologist Peter Bearman finds that "solidarity in homogenous companies," combined with "local county society" created a "localist identity" that influenced Confederate soldiers to desert. He shows that men who deserted in clusters all came from the same neighborhoods, in communities with spatially-close households. Bearman concludes that "old localisms" that were "nurtured within the Confederate army" influenced deserters more than their collective identity as soldiers, causing them to pursue ends like desertion that were different from expectations of soldiers as dedicated to military cause and comrades.⁴⁴ Although I argue that Bearman's conclusion, that localism was stronger than Confederate nationalism, is incorrect and beside the point, the importance he places on local attachments is illuminating and is reflected in the data on Mississippi deserters, for it underscores why their decisions were not necessarily connected to nationalism at all.

The prevalence of these local attachments helps in part to explain deserters' ability to commit organized collective violence under wartime conditions. These group associations were already in place, but the war's circumstances severed them from their traditional social moorings, thereby rendering them vulnerable to thriving in conditions suitable to group activity but bereft of the normal constraints that limited the collective propensity towards violent, deviant behavior.

Desertion, however, was not the only conduit through which banditry flourished in Civil War Mississippi. Joining partisan ranger units, officially-sanctioned guerillas that the

⁴⁴ Bearman, "Desertion as Localism," 337, 323, 340; Marrs finds similar neighborhood and household connections among South Carolina deserters, though, like Bearman, he concludes that local attachments were stronger than Confederate nationalism. See Marrs, "Desertion and Loyalty in South Carolina," 60-1.

Confederate government commissioned to operate near their homes and to turn over captured weapons and other goods to army quartermasters in exchange for payment, allowed men to operate in their home territory while still ostensibly serving the Confederacy. As the Confederate army contracted towards Vicksburg in 1863 with the Federals in pursuit, Mississippians flocked to these companies, claiming they could better defend their state if free to navigate the back roads and swamps and ambush Union soldiers. As army-sanctioned guerillas, partisan rangers played a role in the larger guerrilla conflict that wracked the Confederate home front. Quite often, however, the independence of partisan service, coupled with conditions in the state, drove ranger groups to banditry.⁴⁵

Reporting from Grenada, Mississippi, Brigadier General M. Jeff. Thompson recognized how the partisan ranger policy facilitated criminality. Persons raising partisan ranger corps “do not understand the true object of the act of Congress or the true material with which success is to be gained,” he told Davis. According to Thompson, Effective partisan rangers were guided by a pioneer spirit to “brave the hardships and dangers of the frontier to better their condition.” “The bravery, endurance, and object of the gold digger, the mountaineer and the explorer” should motivate partisan rangers, he wrote, “not the bravery that dares the halter to steal a horse, or your knife, to rob your pocket.” He concluded that those “most anxious to join” ranger outfits “have been induced to believe that they are to be a band of licensed robbers, and are not the men to care whether it be friend or foe they rob.”⁴⁶ As Thompson recognized, much like the roving deserter bands, some partisan rangers operated as organized banditti, and were a direct threat to Mississippians on the home front. They chose their targets indiscriminately: whether their victims held Union or Confederate loyalties did not factor into rangers’ decisions to rob these

⁴⁵ Margaret E. Wagner, Gary W. Gallagher, and Paul Finkelman, eds., *The Library of Congress Civil War Desk Reference* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 2009), 447-449; Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict*, 209-210.

⁴⁶ *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 52, pt 2, p. 325.

people. National allegiances likewise had little bearing on the rangers' personal decisions to rob. Banditry, not nationalism, motivated these looters.

Partisan units sometimes exploited civilians' trust in them as home protectors in order to rob those civilians. Betty Beaumont described how groups of men "professing to be home guards" entered civilians' homes on "familiar footing" by promising the residents protection. Entering peoples' dwellings, however, allowed these "pretend patriots" to discreetly steal jewelry and other items "whenever a convenient opportunity occurred." In one instance a "general" came into Beaumont's house and asked her husband to see one of her rings for "close inspection." After a lengthy conversation, the general discretely departed with the ring. Beaumont angrily remarked that "while conversing with their entertainers about the outrages of the Federals and condemning the rapacity of the speculators...these home protectors were constantly on the alert to take every advantage possible in the way of enriching themselves."⁴⁷ Her language was telling: she used the phrase "home protectors" ironically to protest the actions of partisan units who invoked military authority to pilfer, rather than protect, southern homes.

Other reports echoed Beaumont's claims of partisan ranger depredations. In early 1863, a Hancock County resident complained to Pettus that "three to four hundred... conscripts and deserters," most of whom "were members of [Major Abner C.] Steed's Partisan Rangers," had disbanded in the area. Although some fled to Union lines, others emptied into nearby Marion County's swamps, from which they launched raids into Hancock County "in small parties, pillaging and plundering private property." During the summer of 1864, Monroe County resident M.A. Banks told Clark that while he disliked speaking of soldiers "in any other way than in their praise," there were some troops "organized under orders from your Excellency," who were "playing but a small part of the true and gentlemanly soldier." A ranger company under a

⁴⁷ Beaumont, *Twelve Years of my Life*, 292-3.

Captain Little had ransacked Banks' home multiple times and stole whiskey from his young son. Claiming the authority to destroy illegal distilleries, the men instead spared only those distilleries whose owners gave the rangers a sufficient amount of spirits. Banks implored Clark to "disband them and let them go into the regular service," a move he thought would "make the army more efficient." Echoing Banks, Colonel William Falkner described ranger companies who added deserters to their ranks and plundered civilians as a "great nuisance to the service" who "refuse to be governed by orders of any kind." "These independent squads are not serving their country," he wrote, "but are making fortunes for themselves by taking property from what they call Tories." The bands may have claimed to rob from "Tories," a common name for Unionists and others who appeared to be disloyal Confederates, but as other witnesses observed, roving gangs seldom pillaged along partisan lines. More than likely, describing their victims as "Tories" was a rhetorical strategy employed to give the impression that they operated in Confederate service when, in fact, self-interest drove them to plunder.⁴⁸

These partisan ranger groups, like roving deserter gangs, pillaged, rather than protected the home front. Group loyalties fueled individual self-interests in men who took advantage of wartime conditions in a distinctly non-partisan manner. As Falkner recognized, these men were certainly not "serving their country," even when in army units ostensibly formed to do so. The Hancock County witness' observation that Steed's Partisan Rangers contained many deserters reveals an overlap between the two groups, suggesting that ranger service allowed deserters to continue their looting of the home front under the veneer of military service, while still avoiding service in the regular army. Confederate authorities' inability to stop such behavior attests to the state's infrastructural weaknesses regarding enforcement of national loyalty via army service.

⁴⁸ Howard W. Wilkinson to John J. Pettus, January 1, 1863, Pettus Correspondence, roll 2812; M.A. Banks to Charles Clark, June 15, 1864, Clark Correspondence, box 949; W.C. Falkner to John J. Pettus, March 13, 1863, Pettus Correspondence, roll 1446, vol. 51; Davis, *Look Away!*, 259-263.

Although the Civil War in Mississippi offered deserters and detached military companies the opportunity to plunder, not all soldiers resorted to opportunistic collective violence. Some, through desertion, shirking, absenteeism, and transfer requests revealed the other ways in which multiple loyalties carried on into the war and continued to motivate individuals. By negotiating their loyalty layers amidst expectations from Confederate partisans that they demonstrate a total protective nationalist devotion to the southern war effort, white Mississippians sometimes used the military as a conduit through which they expressed loyalties other than nationalism.

Not all deserters, for example, turned to pillaging. Thomas Harris joined Louisiana and Mississippi companies, got the soldier's bounty and then deserted, "attaching himself to another regiment, again securing bounty." Harris had evidently "practiced this trick several times" before getting caught and executed by firing squad. Harris used military service as an opportunity for self-enrichment, though at an obviously high cost. Four self-proclaimed Mississippi Union men from the state's northern counties, who associated with well-known Unionist John Aughey, ended up in the Tupelo prison for refusing to swear the Confederate oath and enlist. After being tried by court-marshal and condemned to death, they finally took the oath and enlisted in order to "desert the first favorable opportunity and escape to the Federal lines." One of the men, Monroe County farmer Delevan Morgan, deserted from the 1st Mississippi Infantry and, along with the others, reached Union lines at Memphis.⁴⁹ For these men, Union allegiances ironically drove them to enlist in the Confederate army. Their circumstances underscore the need for caution when considering army service as evidence of Confederate loyalty.

⁴⁹ "Shooting a Deserter," *Weekly Courier* (Natchez, MS), May 14, 1862; 1860 U.S. Census, Monroe County, Mississippi, Delevan H. Morgan and U.S. Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed September 18, 2010); John H. Aughey, *Tupelo* (Lincoln, Nebraska: State Journal Company, 1888), 289-294, quote on 289.

Soldiers, however, could cause trouble even when they did not formally desert. Confederate observers thought that shirking and absenteeism, problems in large part facilitated by soldiers' close proximity to their homes, were detrimental to the war effort. In December 1862, Colonel James George, commanding state troops at Grenada, warned Pettus that "desertions, or getting home without leave are of almost daily occurrence." That same month, Colonel Richard Harrison informed Pettus that "it is a fact, well known in Military Circles, that at least one half the fighting strength of that portion of the Army under Gen. Pemberton, composed of troops from this State, is now, and have been for months, at home." Harrison urged the state legislature to delegate county sheriffs with the power to arrest absentees and return them to their commands. "Nothing is wanting to strengthen this corps, to double its present force but to get these stragglers into the ranks," Harrison concluded, "it is not too late to save the country." Similar statements came from a Copiah County citizen whose neighborhood was full of "several stragglers from the army that ought to be in their country's service." Many of these men were on expired furloughs or had not returned to service after being hospitalized after the Battle of Corinth. Like Harrison, this observer implored Pettus to address this "evil" which robbed the army of precious manpower. "The more that remain in this state & the longer they stay the more the army becomes demoralized," he wrote.⁵⁰ According to these Confederates, soldiers' proximity to their homes tempted them to neglect their duty to country. Such sentiments reflected their recognition that home and nation were separate sectors, and that national service should be men's top priority.

⁵⁰ J.Z. George to John J. Pettus, December 27, 1862; Richard Harrison to John J. Pettus, December 19, 1862; E.R. Brown to John J. Pettus, November 11, 1862, all in Pettus Correspondence, roll 2812.

Confederate officials ran into similar problems with Mississippians who served in partisan ranger units, state troops, and militia units.⁵¹ Many Confederate officers believed men who joined these organizations were at least objectively, if not subjectively, harmful to the Confederate cause because they joined these close-to-home outfits in order to avoid serving in the regular army. Colonel Isham Harris believed as much, telling Davis that parties in north Mississippi claimed the War Department's authority to raise commands, but instead "raise little squads, report to no general, do no good, yet keep the men they claim out of the regular service." General Joseph Johnson similarly told Davis that "many persons in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi are recruiting for cavalry, ostensibly under authority of the War Department," but many "never completed their companies, having no other object than to keep themselves and a few friends out of service." Johnson noted that these groups depleted the ranks of the regular army "by keeping men from entering it, enticing soldiers to desert, and harboring deserters."⁵² Military officers recognized that men who enlisted in these outfits often did so to remain at home while ostensibly serving the nation.

In southwest Mississippi, men organized state commands near Union-occupied areas. Responding to the War Department's sanctioning of these units on the grounds that there was "no other way of securing to the country the service of these men living in the enemy's lines," Colonel Andrew Kellar complained that these companies were often "a refuge to deserters" and thus a major irritation to regular soldiers and civilians. "I know not a single organization of this kind which is reliable or which is attached to regular service," he wrote to General Braxton Bragg, "Is there no way to secure their service to the country under Confederate authority?" When conscripts responded enthusiastically to governor Clark's November 1864 call for six-

⁵¹ Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War*, 59-62.

⁵² *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 32, pt. 2, pgs. 602, 604.

month state volunteers, General W.L. Brandon warned Davis that “this organization will undoubtedly be a weak one, for the reason that the men who were rushing into it were those who had skulked the service from the beginning of the war,” and used state service to continuing shirking duty.⁵³ Many Mississippians joined state units to fulfill the Confederate government’s demands that they fight for the nation, but doing so allowed them to remain at home, which they viewed as distinct from the nation and the regular army that served it.

In January 1864, Brigadier General James A. Chalmers reiterated this point, telling Clark that he would no longer accept conscripts in state companies. He acknowledged that there were “some good men among these companies,” but thought that “the great majority are simply seeking some hiding place from conscription, and never will do any service as cavalry, or while they remain so close to their homes.” Chalmers concluded that “the best interest of the service requires that they should be conscripted and put in the infantry.” A year earlier, Colonel James Drane made a similar point. “I find many able bodied men loitering about under the pretense of raising Cavalry Companies,” he told Pettus, “there are probably 12 dozen attempted to be raised where one exceeds and the conscript law is evaded by young men attaching themselves to these half formed and never to be finished Companies.” Furthermore, Drane believed that the existence of these companies did not benefit the southern war effort. “There are now in this county several hundred able bodied men subject to conscription,” he wrote, “our cavalry is less inefficient [sic] for the very reason that men go into it to evade hard service and danger and half their time are at home.”⁵⁴

While generally stopping short of calling them disloyal, Confederate military authorities viewed shirkers as neglecting their duties to the national war effort, and identified the source of

⁵³ *OR*, ser. 2, vol. 39, pt. 1, pgs. 728-729; ser. 4, vol. 3, pgs. 823-824.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, ser. 4, vol. 3, pgs. 8-9; James Drane to John J. Pettus, August 21, 1863, Pettus Correspondence, roll 133, vol. 50.

this behavior as the men's proximity to home. In this way, authorities suggested that home and nation were distinct units and that shirkers cared more about staying at the former than serving the latter. This may have been the case with conscripts in particular. Kenneth Noe finds that later-enlisting Confederates, many of whom were conscripts, were less ideologically motivated by nationalism than 1861 volunteers, but proved effective soldiers once they did enter the service.⁵⁵ Although this point may seem contradictory, many Mississippians who evaded regular military service did not do so out of disloyalty to the Confederacy, rather, they voiced concerns unrelated to nationalism. Local allegiances that pre-dated the war motivated them to seek service in home units or to request discharge from the army, but they couched these requests in nationalist language in order to sway Confederate authorities who demanded unflinching devotion to the war effort.

Stephanie McCurry identifies a version of this rhetorical strategy, which she calls "a circulating currency in a new discursive economy," in which men wishing to guard slaves and other personal property often masked their intentions by voicing a desire to protect soldiers' wives.⁵⁶ This rhetoric allowed citizens to negotiate what the state expected from them in terms of national sacrifice, and Mississippians used it to balance the state's new wartime demands with pre-war attachments that continued to influence their behavior. The state wanted Mississippians to subordinate all other loyalties to nationalism as a means of achieving Confederate independence. Thus, those citizens who petitioned the state to be relieved from military service in order to address local allegiances had to couch their claims in nationalist rhetoric. They therefore paid lip service to the state's demands for total national devotion, often by claiming that they could better serve the nation at home than in the army. This is not to say that they

⁵⁵ Kenneth W. Noe, *Reluctant Rebels: The Confederates who Joined the Army after 1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 9-10, 208.

⁵⁶ McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*, 138-140. Quote on 139.

simply lied about their desire to defend the national interest. Instead, they used national sacrifice as a medium of rhetorical exchange. Whether or not and to what extent they prioritized nationalism over other loyalties is impossible to deduct. Rather than providing evidence of weak or strong Confederate nationalism, this nationalist rhetoric shows how Mississippians accommodated multiple loyalties, and how they dissociated home from nation. This rhetoric also reveals the limited powers of the Confederate state: although it could make Mississippians use the *language* of loyalty, it could not make them *act* totally loyal, at least in accordance with protective nationalism. The use of nationalism as rhetorical exchange revealed the perception of state power, rather than state power itself.

Early on in the war, some Mississippians distinguished home from nation. In May 1861, a group of Yalobusha County men stated their willingness to form a military company provided they could remain at home, claiming that they could not, “without serious detriment to their private affairs, leave home.” They also qualified that the company “will not be composed of those who are desirous of skulking from their public duty, but who have private, and local duty, which they are unwilling to forego, unless public necessity require it.” Save the major caveat of remaining homebound, the men claimed that they were otherwise “entirely willing” to serve where needed. A year later, D.J. Jernigan of Panola County wanted to raise a partisan ranger company to operate on his home turf. “I think I can be of more service to my country in the capacity of a Partisan Ranger than any other,” he stated, claiming that he would fight for up to three years if allowed “to return home at such times as we could be of no service to the government.” The Yalobusha men separated “private” from “public” duties, emphasizing how local attachments were distinct from national issues. Nonetheless, they vowed to serve the “public necessity” if the state honored their private duties. Jernigan was a farmer who owned

\$5,000 in real estate and \$30,000 in personal property.⁵⁷ He therefore had concrete material reasons for wanting to stay home. Nevertheless, Jernigan used a rhetorical strategy that became common among Mississippians seeking exemptions and deferrals by claiming he could be “more of service to my country” at home.

Implicit in Jernigan’s statement was that home and nation were not one-in-the-same, a sentiment echoed by other Mississippians. C.W. Shiel of Lafayette County wanted transferred from the 18th Mississippi Regiment, stationed at Fredericksburg, Virginia, to work at his family’s grist and saw mill in Oxford, Mississippi, which the Confederate government had pressed into its service. He claimed to the Secretary of War that since his elderly father-in-law was too old and infirm to work the mill, “it would be to my interest and also to that of the government’s to have one [an engineer] there - moreover I would be with my family.” Like Shiel, Dr. J.M. Greene of the 17th Mississippi Regiment wanted transferred back to his home in Chickasaw County to look after his widowed mother, who lived near an army hospital. “If I had a position there...she could live with me,” Greene wrote, adding that “I am fully aware that this is no time for the obtrusion of individual hopes or the gratification of individual wishes. I am not unmindful of what we owe our country.” “But,” he qualified, “if that service can be made compatible with the discharge of sacred obligations to our aged parent, is it unreasonable that I should wish to associate the two?” Greene’s desire to “associate” loyalty to his mother with loyalty to the state reveals how multiple allegiances shaped his wartime decision-making. He looked for common ground from which he could serve home and nation, different spheres that normally required separate duties. Shiel similarly looked for a way to “be with my family” while also serving a national cause that

⁵⁷ P. Randolph to Leroy Pope Walker, May 13, 1861, Roll 2, LRCSW; D.J. Jernigan to George W. Randolph, June 28, 1862, roll 55, Ibid; 1860 U.S. Census, Panola County, Mississippi, D.J. Jernigan, digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed June 20, 2011).

otherwise interfered with home attachments. Thus, both Shiel and Greene used nationalist language to defend local concerns.⁵⁸

Such distinctions are important because they point to a broader trend among Mississippians who sought military exemptions. In the primary source material, they did not say that home equaled the nation, and their attempts to convince the state that by going home they were not shirking national duty reveals that Confederate authorities agreed with them that the two spheres were distinct. As in the cases of oath-swearing and the contraband trade, Mississippians who wished to act on multiple loyalties had to convince Confederate authorities operating under protective nationalist ideals that their behavior either did not conflict with their national loyalty, or that it actually served the Confederate cause.

The 5th Regiment, Mississippi State Troops tried to make this case when they requested “a release from service indefinitely,” citing the Union army’s “brooding destruction” of the state as the reason they should be “returned...to our homes” to harvest crops. They assured Pettus that their military service “could without endangering the Holy Cause in which we are engaged be relieved,” and that “our service at home...would...be of far greater advantage...to our country than the duty we now perform.” Mississippians fighting out of state made similar points. Joseph Jayne, serving in the 48th Mississippi regiment in Lee’s army, asked Davis for a leave of absence or an assignment near his Washington County, Mississippi home in order to look after family and finances. “I have hazarded all...and am willing to lose all if necessary,” he wrote, “but I see no imminent danger impending over this army.” Davis thought that Jayne, being “extensively and favorably known in the region where he resides,” might help conscript men into the regular army. “Few men would more attract recruits and I fear unless some influence is brought to bear,

⁵⁸ C.W. Shiel to James A. Seddon, December 3, 1862, roll 73, LRCSW; J.M. Greene to George W. Randolph, July 14, 1862, roll 48, Ibid.

that the new conscripts will join almost exclusively the Companies serving near to their homes,” Davis told Lee.⁵⁹ Davis supported Jayne’s transfer not because he believed that Jayne could better defend the nation back in Mississippi, rather, he ironically thought that Jayne could conscript men into the national army who, like him, preferred to stay at home.

In February 1864, Isaac Jordan of the 40th Mississippi Infantry asked Secretary Seddon for a transfer from Mobile back to his home in Leake County, Mississippi, claiming that the Federals were “laying devastation” to “my country.” If transferred to Mississippi, Jordan insisted that he could “render service more destructive to the Cause of the enemy in that position than the one I now hold, and [be] equally beneficial to the Cause of my own Country.” While Jordan targeted the “Cause of the enemy,” in his letter, he also likely wanted to protect his large family whose \$1,500 in real-estate and \$5,000 in property stood in the Federals’ path. A month earlier, officers of the 12th Mississippi Regiment, who hailed from the Mississippi Delta counties, asked Governor Clark to be transferred to that region. “In lieu of the fact that those Counties are now suffering from the depredations of the enemy...we think we could render efficient service to the State if we were converted into a Cavalry Regiment,” they wrote. Two of these men, Robert Patterson and J. Lewis Vaughan, lived and owned property in Lawrence and Claiborne Counties respectively, which by 1864 Union troops could easily raid via the Big Black and Pearl Rivers.⁶⁰ Their claims of being able to render “efficient service to the State” draped worries about their property’s safety in patriotic rhetoric. Jordan and the 12th Regiment officers claimed that in their

⁵⁹ Petition by 5th Regiment, 4th Brigade, State Troops to John J. Pettus, February 21, 1863, Pettus Correspondence, roll 1446; Joseph M. Jayne to Jefferson Davis, August 7, 1863, Jefferson Davis to Robert E. Lee, August 13, 1863, In Lynda Laswell Crist, Peggy L. Dillard, Kenneth H. Williams, eds., *The Papers of Jefferson Davis, Vol. 9, January-September, 1863* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997), 342.

⁶⁰ I.H.C. Jordan to James A. Seddon, February 15, 1864, roll 131, LRCSW; Officers of 12th Mississippi Infantry to Charles Clark, January 31, 1864, roll 129, Ibid; 1860 U.S. Census, Leake and Lawrence County, Mississippi, Isaac H.C. Jordan, Robert Patterson and J. Lewis Vaughan, and U.S. Civil War Soldiers Records and Profiles, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed January 10, 2010); Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War*, 78-79.

cases, national and local interests coincided. That the interests of home and nation could occasionally coincide, however, was not the same thing as them being synonymous with each other. Indeed, Jordan and the officers never claimed as much. Instead, they demonstrated how national allegiance always existed in tandem with other loyalties. In claiming that they could serve the nation better at home, they tried to harmonize what they and Confederate authorities considered to be otherwise separate sectors.

Mississippi civilians, just like soldiers, used national sacrifice as a form of rhetorical exchange in their appeals to Confederate authorities to release men from military duty in the name of local interests. In October 1862, a group of Panola County citizens petitioned the Secretary of War for the release of Dr. James Leach from the 1st Mississippi Cavalry, “our only chance for a physician,” whose services were “very much needed here.” They ended the petition with nationalistic language. “In the din of passing events we would arrest your attention and ask your sympathies for the suffering families of those who are sacrificing their lives upon their country’s alter,” they concluded. Women in Neshoba County, who claimed to be suffering from “sickness without the least hope of getting a physician or even a dose of medicine,” used similar language to appeal for Dr. James Abercrombie’s release. They assured Randolph that Abercrombie would “attend to his profession for the good of his neighbors,” and “practice gratis for the familys [sic] of poor volunteers that are not able to pay.” Carroll County citizens who wanted Dr. L.N. Ely spared from conscription told the Secretary that Ely was “the only Physician in a densely pop – area...and the only one to whom the poor & needy can apply for medical aid.”

They also employed patriotic rhetoric, asserting that Ely was “capable of doing much more good in this present sphere than performing the active duties of the soldier.”⁶¹

These petitioners chose their language carefully, claiming that doctors could better aid the families of “poor volunteers,” who defended the nation, “in the present sphere,” the home front, rather than in the army. Whether or not these petitioners believed that doctors could serve the nation better at home is unclear, but trying to ascertain the veracity of such statements misses their broader significance. These petitioners distinguished the home sphere from the national one, but used nationalistic language as a medium through which to accommodate local and national loyalties in their negotiations with a state that made nationalism paramount.

In addition to physicians, Mississippi civilians requested the discharge of other skilled tradesmen such as blacksmiths, teachers, overseers, shoemakers, and tanners. All of these men could be exempted following an October 11, 1862 amendment to the original Exemption Act passed in April of that year, though physicians had to have been practicing for more than five years.⁶² Civilians took advantage of the Exemption Act to bring men back to their neighborhoods that provided what they deemed essential services while asserting that those men could serve their country better at home. Historians have debated over whether military exemption helped or hindered the Confederate war effort.⁶³ I am less concerned with taking sides in that debate than I am with identifying what the language citizens used to justify exemption reveals about the

⁶¹ Panola County Citizens to George W. Randolph, October 9, 1862, roll 47, LRCSW; Neshoba County Women to George W. Randolph, August 24, 1862, roll 30, Ibid; Carroll County Citizens to George W. Randolph, August 25, 1862, roll 45, Ibid.

⁶² William L. Shaw, “The Confederate Conscription and Exemption Acts,” *American Journal of Legal History* 6 (Oct., 1962): 13.

⁶³ See David Herbert Donald, “Died of Democracy,” in David Herbert Donald, ed., *Why the North Won the Civil War* (1960, Repr., New York: Touchstone, 1996), 81-93; Richard E. Beringer, Herman Hattaway, Archer Jones, and William N. Still Jr., *Why the South Lost the Civil War* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 203-36; Reid Mitchell, “The Perseverance of the Soldiers,” in Gabor S. Borit, ed., *Why the Confederacy Lost* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 109-33; Gallagher, *The Confederate War*, 31-6; Paul D. Escott, *The Confederacy: The Slaveholders’ Failed Venture* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2010), 43-65.

influence of multiple loyalties in Civil War Mississippi. Whether or not exemptions hurt the war effort, a good many Confederate authorities certainly *thought* that they did, and this fact had important implications for how citizens petitioned the state in wartime.

In January 1864, Newton County citizens wanted shoemaker S.R. Castles out of the 56th Mississippi Regiment, claiming that their community had “no public shoemaker where one is very much needed.” The petitioners assured Secretary Seddon that they would “rather add ten thousand to, than diminish one single individual from, the army,” and therefore “weaken the army by this detail.” Thus, they argued that Castles was “unfit for Military service due to a foot wound and a “severe cut” on his arm “which prevents his handling his gun as he should.” A month later, Neshoba County civilians claimed that while they were “deeply impressed with a sense of the necessity of Augmenting the Confederate Army and placing in the Army every available soldier,” they nonetheless wanted shoemaker Joseph Ingram released from the 26th Mississippi Regiment because he would be “greatly useful” to his community. For added effect, the petitioners noted that Ingram had a sick father at home and had lost five brothers to the war, whose families were now “greatly destitute and dependent and without his aid and assistance must suffer intolerably.” Finally, while observing that Ingram was a “constant and faithful soldier” who was “still is devoted to our cause,” they insisted that Ingram’s health had “rapidly declined and is still declining with consumption,” and that “he cannot long make a soldier and if kept in the army cannot long survive.”⁶⁴ These citizens were aware of Confederate officials’ belief that exempting men from military service harmed the war effort, so they claimed that Castles and Ingram could serve the nation better at home. To further justify their concern for local attachments, they added that Castles was too injured and Ingram was too sick to fight,

⁶⁴ Newton County Citizens to James A. Seddon, January, 1864, roll 47, LRCSW; Neshoba County Citizens to James A. Seddon, February 2, 1864, roll 131, Ibid.

points that allegedly neutralized any damage their removal from the army might cause. The sincerity of their statements notwithstanding, these petitioners' use of nationalist discourse underscores how they tried to justify their local concerns to Confederate officials who thought that such concerns should be subordinated to the greater war effort.

A host of similar letters from Mississippi flooded the Secretary of War's office. Their authors attempted to justify local allegiances with nationalist rhetoric in hopes of securing soldiers' release. In the winter of 1863, James Duff of Pontotoc County tried to get his son, John, a tanner by trade, discharged from the 23rd Mississippi Regiment. Duff explained to General Reuben Davis that Pontotoc County needed tanned leather "either for our families or to make shoes for our soldier friends in the war," and that if John were released from the army, he would "do more good for his country in the tan yard than in the war." Duff also added that John's leg had been crippled from birth, and that consequently he could only perform "the active duties of a soldier" with "great pane [sic]." Residents of Monroe County made a similar pitch to secure shoemaker Francis Isaiah's discharge from the 24th Mississippi Regiment, claiming that Isaiah's skills were "much and greatly needed both by the citizens and soldiers not only of his specific locality but in the surrounding county generally." Isaiah was on furlough, and the petitioners insisted that he "was not yet sufficiently restored physically to return to his command, perhaps never will be." With this in mind, they concluded that "Isaiah will be of infinitely more service and benefit to the Confederacy if permitted to remain at home and follow his occupation as shoe & boot maker than he possibly can be to retain him in the army as a soldier."⁶⁵ By claiming that removing men from the army would not hurt, and indeed, that it would actually help, the

⁶⁵ James Duff to Reuben Davis, February 11, 1863, roll 89, LRCSW; Monroe County Citizens to James A. Seddon, February 9, 1864, roll 131, Ibid.

Confederate war effort, citizens tried to assuage Confederate officials' possible suspicions that Mississippians were not giving their all to ensure national victory.

Government officials and Confederate nationalists alike did indeed hold such suspicions. Civilians' consistent claim that men were better able to serve the nation at home rather than in the army suggests that there was no assumption on behalf of Confederate officials that home was synonymous with nation. Higher-ups expected men to serve in the military first, because the armies were fighting for national independence. While home front issues were important, some suspected rampant abuse of the exemption laws. Judge Hudson complained about exempted men, especially artisans, using "their freedom from the service to speculate" on "articles of prime necessity" and making "themselves and their trades engines of oppression to all classes, especially to the poor." He suggested ending or curtailing the exemption laws, arguing that "there are plenty of old men and women to teach our schools... plenty of old physicians to do our practice... plenty of old men and negroes to do our tanning, shoemaking, blacksmithing, &c." Richard Archer echoed Hudson's concerns, telling Pettus that artisans "are exempted... because it is supposed they will not be needed," but claimed that "all men are now needed." "Behind this shield of age and exemption for useful trade," he wrote, "nearly all tanners, mechanics etc. are extortioners to a grievous extent."⁶⁶

No Mississippian raged against exemption more than arch-protective nationalist Albert Gallatin Brown. In his December 1863 speech to Congress, Brown proposed repealing the exemption laws altogether, which he claimed were "the fruitful source of untold mischief to the army" that "decimated the ranks, bestowed favors on thousands and tens of thousands of the least meritorious, and sowed the seeds of discontent... among the brave men who... have stood by their

⁶⁶ *OR*, ser. 4, vol. 2, pg. 857; Richard T. Archer to John J. Pettus, December 10, 1862, Pettus Correspondence, roll 2812.

country.” Brown scoffed at the claims of the laws’ supposed benefits. “The plausible pretexts under which these laws were passed, and by which it is now proposed to maintain them, is that the exempts and persons furnishing substitutes would be profitably employed in producing food, clothing, and other necessary supplies for the army, and for home consumption,” he stated. Yet he saw no evidence to back up these assertions. “They have reaped when they have not sown, consumed when they have not produced,” he stated, railing against the “able-bodied men, capable of bearing arms” who instead loitered in the streets, hotels, theaters and railroad cars.⁶⁷ Much like the internal debate within Confederate Mississippi over the swearing of loyalty oaths and trading with the Union, acts which could be described as either loyal or disloyal depending on the proclivities of different observers, debates over whether military exemptions benefitted or hurt the Confederate war effort hinged on whether or not individuals embraced protective nationalism. Brown certainly did, and his frustration over what he thought was Mississippians’ failure to demonstrate unwavering national loyalty reflected a larger anger among protective nationalists over the Confederate state’s inability to instill and enforce total national loyalty in its citizens, despite its expanded wartime powers.

Many Mississippians thwarted protective nationalists’ goal of instilling unwavering national devotion through their continued concerns with local attachments. Nonetheless, that civilians consistently claimed that releasing men from service would have at best a positive, at worst a neutral, effect on the war effort highlights their awareness of the need to feign observance of protective nationalist ideals. Wilkinson County residents, for example, argued that tailor John Duncan should be spared from conscription because he was “a very poor man” with a “helpless family,” but also claimed that he was “indispensable to carrying out the manufacturing

⁶⁷ Albert Gallatin Brown, December 24, 1863, “State of the Country Speech in the Confederate Senate,” *Documenting the American South*. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/impls/cotton/cotton.html>. (Accessed September 24, 2009).

of clothing by the Ladies for the Companies from this county.” Widow Eliza Scott, of Franklin County, appealed for her son Rutilius’ release from the army, claiming that the “calamities” of the “horrible war” had rendered her “almost childless and disconsolate,” and left her without overseers or an estate administrator. Yet, she reassured Secretary Randolph that she felt “the deepest interest in the Cause,” and claimed that Rutilius “can better serve his country at home...on the unattended farms & in the management of business now...than he possibly can...in camp.” That same year, residents of Jefferson County petitioned for the release Dr. H. Loomis on the basis that he “cant [sic] be as useful placed in any post in the army as he can be useful if left at home to take care of the familys [sic] of those absent.”⁶⁸

These petitioners’ letters to Confederate officials underscore the importance they placed on loyalties distinct from nationalism. Through their attempts to cancel out perceived negative consequences of soldiers’ exemptions, by claiming that men could serve the nation better at home than in the army, they also tried to placate protective nationalists’ expectations of total national devotion. The continued influence of micro loyalties on citizens’ actions, as revealed in these petitions, shows that for all of its expanded infrastructural strength, the Confederate nation-state was not strong enough to achieve its major goal of enforcing total national loyalty in its citizens. The state could make people use the language of nationalism, but it could not always translate that rhetoric into action.

The case of Madison County native Benjamin Gafford shows just how far citizens were willing to go to justify a soldier’s release from the army despite Confederate authorities’ beliefs that exemptions hurt the war effort. On Christmas Eve 1862, Madison County citizens wrote to

⁶⁸ George H. Gordon to Jefferson Davis, January 27, 1863, roll 92; Eliza Scott to George W. Randolph, November 6, 1862, roll 109; William J. Gibson et al. to Jefferson Davis, May 20, 1862, roll 48, all in LRCSW.

General Earl Van Dorn requesting that the furloughed Gafford be permanently released from service because he was “of quite a delicate constitution,” and would “not be able long to stand the exposure of a military campaign.” Two doctors asserted that Gafford had a “chronic” and “permanent” case of tonsillitis, while a group of women attested that Gafford was “quite infirm,” and “often for weeks unable to work at his trade.” Despite these health issues, the petitioners claimed that Gafford was a skilled coffin maker and mechanic, the only one “left within our reach that can make a decent coffin,” and he also joined a “company of Guerrillas.” After the War Department denied the initial requests for Gafford’s release, Madison County resident W. Davis Jr. insisted that because he was sick on furlough, Gafford could not return to the army because “his health is so precarious.” Yet, Davis also claimed that Gafford was a skilled blacksmith, wagon maker, and grist mill operator, whose services were in demand at home. For good measure, Davis also reminded military authorities that Gafford’s family was “entirely dependent on him for support.” Thus, Madison County petitioners claimed that a man too sick for the army, whose illness kept him from working for weeks at a time, was nonetheless an able member of a guerrilla company whose skills as a coffin maker, mechanic, blacksmith, wagon maker, grist mill operator, and family provider made him an indispensable neighborhood asset.⁶⁹

Gafford doubtless had some mechanical ability, as the 1860 census lists him as a carriage maker. Further, as a middle class owner of \$2,000 worth of real estate and \$4,500 of personal property with one slave, Gafford may have had some local influence that drove his neighbors to offer an impressive number of excuses to absolve him from service.⁷⁰ That said, it is impossible to know for sure why so many Madison County citizens wanted him kept out of the army. Their

⁶⁹ Madison County residents to Earl Van Dorn, December 24, 1862, roll 45; Madison County Women to Earl Van Dorn, December 24, 1862; W. Davis Jr. to O.R. Singleton, January 27, 1863, roll 89, all in LRCSW.

⁷⁰ 1860 U.S. census and slave schedules, Madison County, Mississippi, B.S.W. Gafford; digital image, *Ancestry.com*, (<http://www.ancestry.com/>; accessed December 13, 2010).

petitioning does, however, reveal crucial points about the Confederate state's effectiveness at enforcing national loyalty in its subjects. If Gafford truly was skilled in so many trades, and therefore so essential to his community in wartime, then Madison County citizens' concerns with local attachments guaranteed their inability to live up to protective nationalist ideals. Nevertheless, even if they were lying in their claims about Gafford, and whatever their reasons were for doing so, their willingness to lie would demonstrate how they viewed protective nationalism not as an ideal to strive towards, but as an impractical demand to be avoided at all costs. If they lied, they did so in order to get a man out of the army, knowing full well that Confederate officials believed that such an action hurt the war effort. Either way, the demands of protective nationalism proved difficult to enact in any concrete way in Mississippi.

The Civil War in Mississippi created new conditions that shaped people's reactions according to established loyalties, and even the Confederate military as a nationalizing symbol was not strong enough to supersede the influence of these other attachments. Confederate military defeat, Union occupation, economic collapse, and the breakdown of law and order facilitated mass opportunistic collective violence among Confederate deserters whose pre-war, localized group attachments enabled their indiscriminate pillaging of the Mississippi home front. These soldiers' socio-economic backgrounds reflected that of the average Confederate soldier. Most were poor, and a majority were married heads of households, suggesting that their anti-social behavior was a product of altered wartime conditions. This behavior suggests clear limits to the scholarship that contends that Confederate soldiers fought or deserted for the same reason: to defend hearth and home from Union invasion and war-induced privations. In Mississippi, thousands of deserters pillaged rather than protected the home front, thereby becoming a major element in the *cause* of, rather than the *solution* to, wartime deprivations. Their banditry suggests

that for them the local was no more sacred than the national. Although these deserters were a small percentage of the Mississippi soldiers who fought in the Confederate armies, their negative impact was real and widespread. Further, as former Confederate soldiers, their actions also demonstrate the limited capacity of the army to serve as a nationalizing institution.

The army's limitations in this regard are further revealed in the actions of Mississippi soldiers who viewed military service as a means to address loyalties distinct from nationalism. Shirking and absenteeism, and Confederate observers' subsequent attribution of men's proximity to home as the root of those problems, reveals that soldiers and authorities alike often did not necessarily view home interests as synonymous with national ones. This point is also born out in soldiers' requests to serve in home guards and partisan ranger units out of a desire to address local concerns. Their conflation of home and nation in letters to Confederate authorities was a rhetorical strategy aimed at assuaging the worries of higher-ups, who were inclined to think that citizens prioritized local allegiances at the nation's expense. Mississippi civilians similarly invoked nationalist rhetoric to attend to local interests. They assured authorities that soldiers could "serve the nation better at home" because the exigencies of the home front led them to make choices according to personal, familial and neighborhood loyalties. In many instances, soldiers and civilians alike revealed that the army, as a national institution, and the Confederate nation-state in general, did not necessarily temper the influence of other allegiances even in a wartime atmosphere.

Just as the Civil War transformed the pre-war loyalties of Mississippi deserters by creating new gang affiliations that expanded beyond Union or Confederate partisanship, the war's exigencies also had a major impact on another group of loyalties. At the outbreak of hostilities, Mississippi's slaves and slaveholders learned that the traditional notions of loyalty

that long-undergirded the vastly unequal relationship between master and servant would forever be altered by the war. How the conflict changed the master-slave relationship had profound consequences that shaped the state's socio-political trajectory well into the twentieth century.

Chapter Five: "I Believe that 'the Institution' is Extinct:" Notions of Loyalty among Slaves and Slaveholders

In late October 1860, just days before Abraham Lincoln's election, Natchez planter George Sargent told his son that, "the negroes are prophesying freedom for themselves from his Election," adding that, "my own servants have asked me about it as having been told so by others." In January 1861, a week after Mississippi's secession, this sentiment had not abated. "The Slaves have in many places been persuaded that they are to obtain their Freedom when Lincoln is elected," he told a friend, "there has been no outbreak anywhere but the news has spread among them over the whole Country." Sargent noted that preventing any possible slave "outbreak" required a "Master's presence" to "reduce them to subjection." Recalling her childhood as a Mississippi slave, Susan Snow described a wartime incident when she sang a song to her mistress that she had heard the older slaves sing only in private. She sang about how Union General John Pope, "Called a Union band, [To] Make de Rebels un'erstan,' To leave de lan,' Submit to Abraham.'" In response, Snow stated, her mistress "grabbed up de broom an' laid it on me. She made me submit." Snow did not think that singing the song was wrong, but she had heard from her mother that Lincoln "was a' tryin to free de niggers an' my mammy says she want to be free."¹

Sargent's insisting that his slaves required a "Master's presence" to subject them for believing that a national political event directly affected their lives, and Snow's description of how her mistress violently "made me submit" underscored how the Civil War in Mississippi broadened the long-simmering conflict between slaves and slaveholders over the master-slave

¹ George Washington Sargent to George Sargent, October 30, 1860, George Washington Sargent to Mary Duncan, January 15, 1861, George Washington Sargent Papers, 1840-1900, folder 11, volume 11, 04025, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (hereafter cited as SHC); Susan Snow, Mississippi Narratives, Vol. 9, pgs. 139-140, *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938*, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C., http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=mesn&fileName=090/mesn090.db&recNum=138&itemLink=D?mesnbib:29:/temp/~ammem_1ajQ:, (accessed June 6, 2012) hereafter cited as *Mississippi Narratives*.

relationship, based as it was on the reinforcement of black servile loyalty. Slaveholders insisted that because slaves were property, not citizens, they could be loyal only to their masters. To Sargent, the idea that blacks desired freedom after Lincoln's election meant that they would no longer be under white control, and by extension, would no longer show unconditional fealty to the master class. They therefore had to be reduced to "subjection." The ideology of white racial mastery also led Snow's mistress to insist that she submit not to Jefferson Davis, Lincoln's presidential rival, but that Snow should submit to *her*. This was a crucial distinction. The Civil War in Mississippi unleashed a new front in the internal conflict between masters who fought to enforce black servile loyalty, and slaves who fought to separate themselves from their masters' authority.

This chapter focuses on the internal war between Mississippi slaves and slaveholders that had simmered during the antebellum era, but was stoked by the secession crisis and the Union army's arrival in the state in 1862. Confronted with slave escapes to Union lines, many Mississippi slaveholders tried to mask the obvious disloyalty to them as masters by attributing flight to the deluded beliefs of the enslaved that the Federals cared for their well-being. Slaves took advantage of the Union army's arrival to resist slaveholders' authority and act on loyalties to self, family, neighborhood and nation. In doing so, they embraced multiple conceptions of freedom. Those who did not flee nonetheless contested white dominance from within households. Other slaves aided and joined the Union army as part of their more personal struggle against the established racial order. Black visions of freedom were intrinsically tied to a negative concept: their desire to escape white racial authority. Beyond this broader goal, however, freedom as a lived experience meant different things to different black Mississippians, depending on their own individual proclivities.

Slaves' chattel status before the war constrained how they could act on different loyalties. As Stephanie McCurry writes, the Confederacy excluded blacks from citizenship and participation in the political community, expecting them to serve the cause out of racially-based subservience, not out of patriotic fidelity. Slaves were to be loyal not to the government, but to their owners who were citizens of that government. In a March 1861 description of the war's stakes, A.F. Burton of Lauderdale County explained this point to his brother. "The people of the South do not consider negroes their equals as do the Black Republicans of the North," he wrote. "That is the only question now to be considered, is negro equality." Burton may have been wrong about most Republicans' commitment to black equality, but his thoughts on the issue within the South underscored how white Mississippians refused to sanction any allegiances in blacks beyond loyalty to the master class. If blacks were equal to whites, then they could not be perpetually loyal slaves, and they would thereby undermine the ideological foundation of the Confederacy.²

This view was a continuation from antebellum southern law that regarded masters as the "absolute others" to whom slaves were "bound...by ties of subjection to a particular master, owing obedience and allegiance exclusively to him." The Confederacy was an attempt to found an independent nation based on slaveholders' rights to maintain that relationship free of northern interference. Elizabeth Duquette notes that the trope of the "loyal slave" symbolized "a fundamental commitment to an organization of power" that was "predicated on racial hierarchies and principles," which discriminated loyalty along racial lines. Most crucially, those hierarchies existed between individuals, between slaves and slaveholders. In this racialized demarcation of

² Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 20-24, 304; William C. Davis, *Look Away!: A History of the Confederate States of America* (New York: Free Press, 2002), 130-162; A.F. Burton to Thomas W. Burton, March 30, 1861, Thomas W. Burton Papers, 1809-1921, fol. 1, 04217-z, SHC.

allegiances, white loyalty was never servile, because it was “predicated on an attachment to an abstraction, like a cause or an ideal, not a person.” Black loyalty, by contrast, was entirely servile: it could *only* be defined as loyalty to a person, the slaveholder. Whereas white Mississippians could espouse allegiance to a cause like nationalism, the concept of the loyal slave “metonymically situated black Americans within the nation, figuring black equality as continued servility.” Thus, Burton’s disgust at the idea of Republicans unleashing “negro equality” upon Mississippi was rooted not just in the thought of slavery’s abolition, but also in the fear of the abolishment of continued black servility, in which blacks would no longer be “within the nation” as servile subjects, but instead would become equal citizens who would shape the nation’s social and political trajectory. With this fear in mind, white Mississippians intended to enforce black servility even after emancipation.³

The threat of continued servility was precisely what black Mississippians resisted during the Civil War and its immediate aftermath. Their behavior, however, was not always political in terms of explicit, targeted rebellion against a political state, defined as institutions that “claim absolute authority within their borders” and have “a monopoly on legitimate violence, the definition of right and wrong, control of the distribution of resources, and...power over life and death.” McCurry argues that by resisting the Confederacy and aiding the Union, slaves engaged in political acts despite their exclusion from the official polity, and that these acts forced the Confederate state to “concede slave men’s membership in the body politic” in order to “establish accountability, to counter slaves’ treasonous activity with state violence.” This conclusion

³ Eugene and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Fatal Self-Deception: Slaveholding Paternalism in the Old South* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 86; McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*, 304; For more on the absolute authority of slaveholders, see James Oakes, *Slavery and Freedom: An Interpretation of the Old South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), 4-8, and Peter Kolchin, *American Slavery: 1619-1877* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 111-27; Elizabeth Duquette, *Loyal Subjects: Bonds of Nation, Race and Allegiance in Nineteenth-Century America* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 141-142, quotes on 142.

reveals how the Confederate government came to view slaves as threats to the state, but says less about what slaves thought about nationalism, and how they viewed their relationship to the state.⁴ Along with exploring slaves' own actions, comparing how different groups of southern whites interpreted blacks' wartime behavior allows historians to better illuminate slaves' views on these matters. Doing so highlights how whites upheld the ideal of black servile loyalty, and how blacks tried to escape from it. Examining whites' attitudes about blacks' actions also underscores that many white southerners did not, even after Confederate defeat, come to recognize slaves as political agents in the way whites understood the concept. Indeed, losing sight of the ways white southerners strove to maintain the racial hierarchy during, and after, the war runs the risk of severing the Confederacy from its historical moorings, thereby underemphasizing the threads of continuity that connected it both to the antebellum and the post-war South.

Agents of the Confederate government, using nationalist language while fighting a war against another political state, eventually interpreted slaves' behavior as disloyal to the nation. Mississippi slaveholders, however, labeled slaves as disloyal to their masters. Slaveholders therefore fought to maintain the racial hegemony that undergirded the Confederate cause, but the enforcement of which began at the local level.⁵ This distinction is critical because it reveals the internal war in which slaves resisted masters' roles as intermediaries between them and the state, and masters defined slaves not as enemies of the state, but as enemies of the racial hierarchy. Slaveholders' insistence that slaves owed allegiance solely to their masters often put the

⁴ Paul Quigley, *Shifting Grounds: Nationalism and the American South, 1848-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 5-6; McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*, 306-309, quotes on 308; on slaves' behavior hampering the Confederate war effort, also see Armstead L. Robinson, *Bitter Fruits of Bondage: The Demise of Slavery and the Collapse of the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005), 37-58, 163-89, 272-83, and Joseph T. Glatthaar, "Black Glory: The African-American Role in Union Victory," in Gabor S. Boritt, ed., *Why the Confederacy Lost* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 133-63.

⁵ Christopher Waldrep, *Roots of Disorder: Race and Criminal Justice in the American South, 1817-80* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 21-25.

Confederate government in conflict with planters when the latter groups argued that the state should limit its impressment of slave labor based on respect for private property rights. Indeed, so crucial was the concept of black servile loyalty to Mississippi's white master class, that their struggle to maintain it outlasted the Confederacy upon which it was founded. After the Civil War ended, white Mississippians, faced with the specter of racial equality and fed by the pre-war desire to maintain local control, intimidated freed people in an attempt to reassert white racial mastery over blacks even with slavery abolished. In this respect, the brief period historians refer to as "Presidential Reconstruction" saw a continuation of the internal war that blacks and whites waged concurrently before, and during, Mississippi's Civil War between the Union and the Confederacy. Although the Confederacy lost its bid for national independence, the war between blacks and whites over African-American servility continued, and directly shaped the trajectory of Mississippi's socio-economic and political culture well into the twentieth century.⁶

In light of slaveholders' attempts to uphold the racial hierarchy, black Mississippians' saw freedom in terms that went beyond mere loyalty or disloyalty to a political state. In addition to macro loyalty to a nation, freedom for blacks meant the ability to openly and without coercion act on micro loyalties to self, family and community, thereby constructing lives as autonomous individuals unmolested by white authority, regardless of whether or not their behavior was sanctioned or condemned by a state. This is not to say that black Mississippians did not

⁶ On the importance whites continued to place on black submission after the Civil War in Mississippi and the South in general, see Vernon Lane Wharton, *The Negro in Mississippi, 1865-1890* (1947, Repr., New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 80-96, 140-142; William C. Harris, *Presidential Reconstruction in Mississippi* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), 79-140; Michael Perman, *Reunion Without Compromise: The South and Reconstruction, 1865-1868* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 77-80, 90-94; James T. Currie, "From Slavery to Freedom in Mississippi's Legal System," *Journal of Negro History* 2 (Spring, 1980): 112-125; Ronald L.F. Davis, *Good and Faithful Labor: From Slavery to Sharecropping in the Natchez District, 1860-1890* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 1-19; Edward J. Blum, *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), 3-7; Bruce Levine, *Confederate Emancipation: Southern Plans to Free and Arm Slaves during the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 155-164.

understand the connection between their freedom and the nation-state. Even before the Union army entered Mississippi, as George Sargent discovered, slaves knew of Lincoln and believed that his election portended their liberation. They viewed Union invasion as an attack on slavery, and believed the Federal presence legitimized the claiming of their own freedom. Yet, their conceptions of freedom did not always reflect a distinctly nationalist inclination to ingratiate themselves to a U.S. government that often refused to fully acknowledge their desires. Nor did black Mississippians embrace a singular, broad collective goal in terms of what they expected to gain from being free.

Identifying what southern blacks wanted from their lived experience of freedom after emancipation has been a major focus of Civil War and Reconstruction scholarship. Historians like Steven Hahn, Enrico dal Lago, Julie Saville, and others view southern slaves as the most consistent members of America's working class. They argue that through their rebellion during the Civil War, slaves began developing a corporate identity as a landless peasantry. After emancipation, this collective identity coalesced into a shared vision of blacks as a rural proletariat, for whom freedom was tied to the right to own and work their land. This collective working class peasant identity, Hahn writes, facilitated blacks' "political redefinition," through which they sought to forge a black nation within the United States through "emigrationism, separatism, self-help, and racial solidarity" while also embracing liberal ideas of civic and social equality.⁷ These and other scholars emphasize in post-emancipation southern blacks a shared

⁷ Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 10, 33, 41-26, 61, 47, 64, 114, 6, quotes on 114, 6; *The Political Worlds of Slavery and Freedom* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 55-115; Enrico dal Lago, "States of Rebellion": Civil War, Rural Unrest, and the Agrarian Question in the American South and the Italian Mezzogiorno, 1861-1865," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 47 (April, 2005): 404, 412-13, 420; Julie Saville, *The Work of Reconstruction: From Slave to Wage Laborer in South Carolina, 1860-1870* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 4; other scholars who identify post-Civil War blacks as a rural proletariat include W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880* (1935, Repr., New York: Frank Cass & Co., 1966), 381-487; Barbara J. Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground: Maryland During the Nineteenth*

class consciousness as a rural proletariat, which informed their conceptions that freedom meant the right to own and collectively work southern lands. In tying freedom to land ownership, however, rural slaves ensured that even when emancipated, they could not achieve the status of free landed peasantry unless the Union government redistributed planters' lands, a step that government was not prepared to take.

Other scholars accept the existence of a collective, African-American working class identity, but also identify a parallel goal that blacks embraced within the realm of formal politics, in which they demanded equal citizenship rights in exchange for their loyalty to the American nation. Eric Foner writes that "having received their freedom through an unparalleled exercise of national power...African-Americans identified fully with the new nation-state." Echoing Foner, Leon Litwack notes how participants at post-war southern black freedom conventions identified a "higher loyalty" to the American state, arguing that "the allegiance they professed to the nation, the Federal government, and the Constitution took precedence over any regional identification."⁸ Blacks' desire for land, however, went hand-in-hand with their desire for political equality, because both goals symbolized freedom. Thus, scholars like Joel Williamson and John Spiller assert that southern blacks wanted families, farms, schools, full citizenship, and equal rights.⁹ In other words, in emancipation's wake, blacks wanted multiple things, each of which reflected different aspects of freedom on a day-to-day basis. While often agreeing that

Century (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 190-91; Gerald David Jaynes, *Branches Without Roots: Genesis of the Black Working Class in the American South, 1862-1882* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 158-91; Joseph P. Reidy, *From Slavery to Agrarian Capitalism in the Cotton Plantation South: Central Georgia, 1800-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 13, 136-242; John C. Rodrigue, *Reconstruction in the Cane Fields: From Slavery to Free Labor in Louisiana's Sugar Parishes, 1862-1880* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001) 1-8.

⁸ Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998), 101-102, quote on 102; see also *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 102-119; Leon F. Litwack, *Been in the Storm so Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1979), 517.

⁹ Joel Williamson, *A Race for Order: Black-White Relations in the American South Since Emancipation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 44; John Spiller, "African Americans After the Civil War," *History Review* 65 (Dec., 2009): 38.

African Americans wanted land and political equality, different historians have emphasized one or the other, depending on whether they focus on rural blacks or property-holding, urban blacks. These differences in emphasis on what blacks wanted, however, indirectly reflect how they wanted many things, which scholars have overlooked in efforts to identify a collective African-American identity. Eschewing attempts to locate a collective slave identity allows historians to, per Alex Lichtenstein's suggestion, "link the particular experiences of the emancipated with the larger structural constraints that shaped the world in which they struggled to make freedom meaningful."¹⁰

The racial hierarchy was the largest of all these constraints. In Civil War Mississippi, slaves shared a mutual desire to escape white racial dominance. In this sense, race was a "unifying ideal" for slaves, the result of what Michael Gomez calls the earlier creation of a "collective self perception in the African-based community," in which slaves deemphasized the disparate cultures of their African ethnic backgrounds and embraced an African American identity. This transformation grew out of a process in which slaves, recognizing that whites viewed blacks as chattel, responded by constructing an identity based on their shared membership in a group whose black skin made their interests diametrically opposed to the interests of their white-skinned masters.¹¹ Although slaves embraced a collective identity in terms of their shared opposition to a racial hierarchy that equated blackness with servility, once they escaped white mastery, they embraced multiple conceptions of freedom as a lived experience. For black Mississippians, loyalty layers served as both the means and the ends in their quest to achieve and live out free existences. Because slaveholders forced servile loyalty

¹⁰ Alex Lichtenstein, "Was the Emancipated Slave a Proletarian?" *Reviews in American History* 26, The Challenge of American History (Mar., 1998): 135.

¹¹ Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 219-20.

onto blacks during slavery, the ability to openly hold other allegiances, to self, family, community, and nation held a special significance for them, since, unlike whites, their existence as chattel in theory meant that they could hold no allegiances other than to their masters.

Blacks' multiple allegiances were forged in slavery and carried forward through secession and war to influence how they envisioned freedom. Enslaved African Americans developed domestic arrangements and kin networks that "nurtured a new Afro-American culture" and "formed the social basis of developing Afro-American communities, which prepared slaves to deal with legal freedom." Family networks provided slaves with companionship, and functioned as a survival mechanism through the forging of personal attachments that bound individuals together, creating strong identities through shared loyalties. Beyond the family, slave neighborhoods, encompassing the terrain of adjoining plantations, gave slaves the opportunity to develop inter personal relations at communal functions. The very existence of these micro loyalties to self, family, and acquaintances undermined whites' claims that, as servants, blacks were to be loyal to their masters alone. Family and neighborhood networks created not one black identity, but multiple individual identities, forged through interpersonal relations among individual people. During the Civil War, Mississippi's slaves used the lines of communication and personal relationships formed in neighborhoods to discern the war's aims and prospect, contest white authority, and chart paths to freedom.¹²

Recognizing why slaves in Civil War Mississippi sought to act on multiple loyalties allows historians to, per Walter Johnson's suggestion, move beyond viewing everyday slave

¹² Herbert Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925* (New York: Pantheon, 1976), 3, 8; John Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South* (1972, Repr., New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 149-191; Anthony E. Kay, *Joining Places: Slave Neighborhoods in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 4, 179.

agency as “the antidote to the indignities of exploitation.”¹³ This is not to deny the tradition of slave resistance, which historians have exhaustively documented.¹⁴ Johnson, however, cautions against equating every aspect of slaves’ lives, such as family formations, with resistance to slavery itself, because doing so reduces them to mere reflections of their servile condition. Instead, he suggests that historians view slaves’ ideas and actions as “hedged in, limited, and shaped by the material conditions of their enslavement,” but also “insistently transcendent – productive of new, creative, vibrant, and sustaining forms of human being, commonality, and, ultimately, solidarity.” Taking Johnson’s suggestions into account helps explain how slaves’ forging of micro loyalties in the antebellum period motivated them to resist the master class’ authority during the Civil War. Black Mississippians resisted based on the premise that these bonds would undergird lives in freedom, unfettered from the racial hierarchy that had previously “hedged in, limited, and shaped” their lives as slaves. Slaves’ loyalty layers, then, did not

¹³ Walter Johnson, “Agency: A Ghost Story,” in Richard Follett, Eric Foner, and Walter Johnson, *Slavery’s Ghost: The Problem of Freedom in the Age of Emancipation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 28.

¹⁴ On slave resistance in the South, see Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts* (1943, repr., New York: International Publishers, 1993); Gerald W. Mullin, *Flight and Rebellion: Slave Resistance in Eighteenth-Century Virginia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974); Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 Through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1974); Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon, 1974); Leslie Howard Owens, *This Species of Property: Slave Life and Culture in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976); Vincent Harding, *There is A River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1981); Deborah Gray White, *Ar’n’t I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1985); James Oakes, “The Political Significance of Slave Resistance,” *History Workshop* 22, Special American Issue (Autumn, 1986):89-107; Sylvia R. Frey, *Water from the Rock: Black Resistance in a Revolutionary Age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Michael Mullin, *Africa in America: Slave Acculturation and Resistance in the American South and the British Caribbean, 1736-1831* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992); Phillip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake and Lowcountry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); William A. Link, *Roots of Secession: Slavery and Politics in Antebellum Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Stephanie M.H. Camp, *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women & Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The “Invisible Institution” in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Jason R. Young, *Rituals of Resistance: African Atlantic Religion in Kongo and the Lowcountry South in the Era of Slavery* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007); Gabor S. Boritt and Scott Hancock, eds., *Slavery, Resistance, Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Peter Charles Hoffer, *Cry Liberty: The Great Stono River Slave Rebellion of 1739* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Larry Eugene Rivers, *Rebels and Runaways: Slave Resistance in Nineteenth-Century Florida* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012).

intrinsically constitute resistance, rather, they facilitated it. These attachments sustained black identities under slavery, and enabled blacks to envision the different ways they would experience freedom during the war and its aftermath.¹⁵

Understanding how multiple allegiances drove blacks to resist white authority during the Civil War requires an awareness of how the master-slave relationship facilitated such attachments among slaves, while simultaneously reinforcing masters' supremacy. Christopher Morris recommends studying this relationship through the lens of articulation theory, in which a dominant group with specific interests (slaveholders), tries to make another group (slaves) carry out those interests. Through the articulation process, separate interests indirectly converged, resulting in benefits to masters and servants, but without overturning the dominance of the master class. Although slaves gained mutual support and love from marriage, masters sanctioned slave marriages on the basis that they mitigated temptations to abscond and encouraged steady work and discipline through mutual company. Slaveholders' permitting slaves to keep personal garden plots provided slaves with a measure of independence, but masters viewed garden plots as a cost-neutral way of supplementing slave diets. Masters' sanctioning of slave property ownership gave slaves a measure of autonomy, but also fostered discipline, lessening slaves' penchant for rebellion. Slaveholders allowed slaves to hire themselves out, providing servants with a form of semi-freedom via property-ownership and distance from their owners, but they also pocketed a portion of slaves' earnings.¹⁶ Thus, slaves derived some benefits from masters' actions, but this resulted from the slaveholders' acting in their own self-interest. Likewise,

¹⁵ Walter Johnson, "On Agency," *Journal of Social History* 37, Special Issue (Autumn, 2003): 115-16.

¹⁶ Christopher Morris, "The Articulation of Two Worlds: The Master-Slave Relationship Reconsidered," *Journal of American History* 85 (Dec., 1998): 982-85; Kay, *Slave Neighborhoods*, 62, 136; Blassingmane, *The Slave Community*, 151-53; Loren Schweninger, *Black Property Owners in the South, 1790-1915* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 31-2, 54-6, 36; Jonathan D. Martin, *Divided Mastery: Slave Hiring in the American South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 72-138; L. Diane Barnes, *Artisan Workers in the Upper South: Petersburg, Virginia, 1820-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009), 4-5.

masters benefitted from slaves' responses to their granting of circumscribed freedoms, but this was because slaves acted in *their* interests, not because they acquiesced to the master's desire to maintain dominance.

Articulation, then, necessarily fostered personal attachments within slave families and communities, but because these loyalties emerged in part through slaveholders' desire to uphold the racial hierarchy, the articulation process within the master-slave relationship often resulted in conflict between the two parties. Both achieved a measure of control over slaves' lives, but both wanted total control. Morris notes, however, that total control eluded both parties because the "periodic conflict between individual masters and slaves" attacked the power of individual masters, but the personal nature of such conflict prevented it from escalating into the kind of organized uprisings that would have struck at the system of slavery itself, which bolstered articulation.¹⁷ In Mississippi, the Civil War changed this status quo by providing the means through which slaves contested the racial hierarchy in numerous individual ways that taken together, constituted a broader collective assault on the slave system. Faced with escaping the ideology of forced servile loyalty that underlay slavery, slaves did not try to reverse the racial hierarchy, rather, they tried to escape from it. They took advantage of the wartime circumstances to undermine the master class' authority, and the micro loyalties they had forged under slavery nurtured and shaped the multiple conceptions of freedom that they formulated. Mississippi's slaves, therefore, demonstrated solidarity in their resistance to servile loyalty, but multiplicity in their preferred ways of experiencing the freedom that such resistance brought.

When secession and then war erupted in Mississippi, whites' fears of servile disloyalty heightened. The state had seceded and joined the Confederacy to protect slavery from perceived Northern threats, but white Mississippians understood that slaves themselves posed an internal

¹⁷ Morris, "The Articulation of Two Worlds," 1003.

threat to the institution and the racial hierarchy that bolstered it. Fears of slave insurrections, a perennial concern of white Mississippians, spiked during the secession crisis. Confederate authorities identified several planned rebellions, but none materialized on the scale whites alleged. Cautioning scholars against accepting such claims at face value, Phillip Morgan notes that insurrection panics “point more to severe strains in the white community than to incipient black rebellions, thereby revealing as much – if not more – about white perceptions as black behavior.” Walter Johnson notes that the “imagery of domination” that whites so often invoked when discussing possible slave revolts revealed the “sense of their own vulnerability” as the dominant party in the master-slave relationship. Indeed, for white Mississippians, fears of slave uprisings not only threatened physical danger, but also reversal of the racial hierarchy, wherein slaves appropriated physical coercion to dominate their masters.¹⁸

The most well known cases of alleged insurrection occurred in Adams County in 1861. That summer, white vigilance committees arrested, tortured, and executed dozens of slaves in Natchez and the nearby Second Creek plantations for supposedly plotting to burn the city down, murder white men, and ravage white women. In late September 1861, Adams County resident Louisa Lovell described how vigilance committees and home guards were “constantly on the alert arresting and confining suspected individuals – many around us have been found guilty and hung.” Lovell even had sentinels posted around her home. “It is indeed a tumultuous time,” she concluded, “no one is safe.” By October, news of the plot had spread south to Wilkinson County.

¹⁸ George M. Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914* (1971, Repr., Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1987), 52-53; Franklin and Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves*, 11-15; Laurence Shore, “Making Mississippi Safe for Slavery: The Insurrectionary Panic of 1835,” in Orville Burton and Robert McMath, Jr. eds., *Class, Conflict and Consensus: Antebellum Southern Community Studies* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 96-127; Herbert Aptheker, “Notes on Slave Conspiracies in Confederate Mississippi,” *Journal of Negro History* 29 (Jan., 1944): 75-79; Phillip D. Morgan, “Conspiracy Scares,” *William And Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 59 (Jan., 2002): 166; Donald E. Reynolds, *Texas Terror: The Slave Insurrection Panic of 1860 and the Secession of the Lower South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), 1-28; Walter Johnson, “The Future Store,” in Walter Johnson, ed., *The Chattel Principle: Internal Slave Trades in the Americas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 6-7.

Woodville resident Sophia Hunt Hughes told her sister that “they have been threatened with quite a formidable insurrection in Adams County, near Natchez, 40 miles from here, 27 have been hung...it is kept very still not to be in the papers, the investigation is still going on.” That the investigations resulted in confessions elicited through torture, combined with the already limited evidence for these “plots,” which came from white inquisitors’ recordings of the events, has led historians to debate whether the Adams County conspiracies were real, or products of white delusions.¹⁹

Even though insurrection panics likely reflected white fears as opposed to black actions, they continued to erupt throughout the course of the Civil War in Mississippi. In January 1861, Jackson resident H.N. Boyd informed her cousin that “there were 2 negroes to be hung here Friday,” one for killing his overseer, and one for stealing. Many came to “witness the execution.” In early August of that year, with most of the white men gone into the army, Ophelia Howe of Harrison County feared an uprising by unguarded slaves. “I think a home guard is just as essential as a foreign one,” she wrote to her sister, “there is an immense number of negroes in Harrison county and this parish and I think for the safety of the country, their masters should by all means stay with them.” In late April of that month, a Tippah County resident warned Pettus of “the possibility of an insurrection of the black population” who planned to poison and attack local whites. In June 1861, John Kirkland told his daughter that the slaves were working “smoothly,” and that he had “never seen negroes more obedient” or “better satisfied.” He attributed this supposed harmony to local whites who treated slaves as mildly “as can be done

¹⁹ Louisa T. Lovell to Joseph Lovell, September 29, 1861, Quitman Family Papers, 1784-1978, folder 107, ser. 1.2, 00616, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (hereafter cited as SHC); Sophia Hughes Hunt to Jennie Hughes, October 15, 1861, Hughes Family Papers, 1790-1910, folder 17, 02779, SHC; For differing interpretations of the Adams County conspiracies, see Winthrop D. Jordan, *Tumult and Silence at Second Creek: An Inquiry into a Civil War Slave Conspiracy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993) and Justin Behrend, “Rebellious Talk and Conspiratorial Plots: The Making of a Slave Insurrection in Civil War Natchez,” *Journal of Southern History* 77 (Feb., 2011): 17-52.

consistent with their conditions of master and slave.” Nonetheless, Kirkland revealed the underlying fear inherent in such a relationship by adding that, “the patroll [sic] are very strict and are out 2 or 3 times a week.” Whites could not afford to be too careful even when slaves appeared to be “satisfied.”²⁰

In July 1861, General C.H. Dahlgren reported that “the wildest state of confusion” existed in Yazoo and Holmes County “relative to the negro population,” and that “the white populations fear an insurrection.” Dahlgren warned that “vigilance should characterize the people at home, otherwise the negroes will go to the Yankees, and perhaps do damage at home.”²¹ In these cases, the “damage” that slaves might do specifically referred to personal, bodily attacks against whites. Such attacks epitomized the direct reversal of the master-slave relationship, since maintaining the racial hierarchy rested on the threat of coercive violence through the lash or other means. Violent resistance by slaves was the ultimate form of servile disloyalty.

The state’s authorities also made it clear that slave revolts signaled the reversal of the racial hierarchy. In his November 3, 1863, address to the state legislature, Governor John Pettus warned that the Union army was using enlisting slaves as “tools of our subjugation,” and described how “marauding bands of these freed negroes” were “desolating” Mississippi neighborhoods and murdering white citizens “at their homes.” Pettus’ successor, Charles Clark,

²⁰ N.H. Boyd to Edora Hobbs, January 13, 1861, Hobbs Family Papers, *Intellectual Underpinnings of the American Civil War*, Digital Collections, Manuscripts Division, Special Collections Department, Mississippi State University Libraries, Mississippi State, Mississippi. <http://digital.library.msstate.edu/collections/document.php?CISOROOT=/ASERL&CISOPTR=83&REC=5> (Accessed January 22, 2012. Hereafter cited as *Underpinnings of the American Civil War*); Ophelia Howe to Ellen Howe, August 6, 1861, Chiliab Smith Howe Papers, 1814-1899, folder 53, series 1.6, 03092, SHC; D.D. Ranch to John J. Pettus, April 30, 1861, John J. Pettus Correspondence, Roll 1812, Volume 36, Record Group 27, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS (Hereafter cited as MDAH); John Kirkland to Octavia Otey, June 16, 1861, Wyche and Otey Family Papers, 1824-1926, fol. 15, ser. 1.3, 01608, SHC.

²¹ C.J. Dahlgren to Absalom West, July 16, 1861, Absalom West Collection, 1853-1870, #MUM00782, Box 1976.10, Archives and Special Collections, J.D. Williams Library, University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi, (hereafter cited as UMASC).

reiterated these themes later that month. “We are invaded...by a vindictive foe, who is...inciting our slaves to insurrection,” he stated, “regiments of the latter have already been embodied and armed to fight against their masters.” Like Pettus, Clark described slaves as disloyal servants by emphasizing that they were incited to fight against their masters, not the Confederate state, even as members of the Union army. He cautioned that Union victory would bring “the immediate emancipation of your slaves and the elevation of the black race to a position of equality, aye, of superiority, that will make them your masters and rulers,” thereby reversing the southern racial hierarchy and putting whites in the servile position. Both governors used the language of submission to indicate how slave revolts threatened not just whites’ physical safety, but also their status as the master class.²²

Whites’ ability to maintain effective physical control over blacks was central to upholding the veneer of slave “loyalty” that undergirded the racial hierarchy in Mississippi. During the war, the Confederacy’s need to fill its armies left whites on the home front, especially women, open to what they thought were vengeful slaves who would refuse to work or, worse, attack their owners.²³ In September 1862, an amendment to the original April 1862, Conscription Act raised the draft age from thirty-five to forty-five, drawing even more white men into the

²² John J. Pettus Address to Mississippi State Legislature, November 3, 1863, *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Mississippi, December Secession of 1862, and November Secession of 1863*, (Jackson: Cooper and Kimble Steam Printers and Binders, 1864), 93. Electronic Edition. *Documenting the American South*. Southern Historical Collection. University Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/jmls/msdec62/msdec62.html> (Accessed April 26, 2012. Hereafter cited as *Documenting the American South*); Charles Clark Inaugural Address, November 16, 1863, 158-159, *Ibid*.

²³ Expectations of slave loyalty were central to white plantation mistress’s identity as household dependents. See Nancy Bercaw, *Gendered Freedoms: Race, Rights, and the Politics of Household in the Delta, 1861-1875* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 51-74, and Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 53-79.

ranks.²⁴ In response, whites implored Confederate officials to release relatives and overseers from the army to remedy the problem of slave control.

For whites left on the home front, the lack of overseers aroused fears of slave revolts. In October 1862, Macon, Mississippi resident E.A. Dowling wanted Secretary of War Randolph to release her son Joseph from the army to oversee over eighty neighborhood slaves. That same month, Socky Davis, of Lowndes County, pleaded for her son's release because she was unable to "manage her negroes and give direction to their labor." Neshoba County residents Clary and Sarah Donald, who owned twenty slaves, wanted their overseer, David Copeland, discharged "to take charge and manage said negroes." In February 1863, Columbus resident Julia Cox asked Jefferson Davis to release her son to manage her "large and very unruly family of servants" who had become "uncontrollable and unprofitable," adding that "there are not [white] men remaining in this neighborhood for protection." Abigail Jones, of Jasper County, similarly appealed to Davis for her son's discharge so that "myself and daughters may have a safe protector at home" and someone to "govern, direct and control the thirty five negroes upon our plantation." These petitioners were among scores of others that concerned Mississippians wrote to Confederate authorities. They revealed a widespread concern that without proper enforcement of black servility, slaves were an inherent threat to the whites in their midst. These particular letters did not detail what slaves had *done*, but the absence of overseers justified, in slaveholders' minds, concerns that slaves *would do* something.²⁵

²⁴ William L. Shaw, "The Confederate Conscription and Exemption Acts," *American Journal of Legal History* 6 (Oct., 1962): 376.

²⁵ E.A. Dowling to George Randolph, October 19, 1862; Socky Davis Petition to George Randolph, October 19, 1862; Clary and Sarah Donald to George Randolph, October 19, 1862, all in Roll 44, Letters Received by the Confederate Secretary of War, (Hereafter cited as LRCSW) M-437, War Department Collection of Confederate Records, RG 109, NARA; Julia A. Cox to Jefferson Davis, February 13, 1863, April 18, 1864, rolls 87, 123, Ibid; Abigail Jones to Jefferson Davis, October 25, 1862, roll 55, Ibid.

A large number of these petitions followed the enactment of the infamous “Twenty Negro Law” of the October 11, 1862, which authorized owners of twenty or more slaves, or one white man per plantation, to be exempted from military service for the purpose of slave control. The law was controversial throughout the Confederacy, as it appeared to favor wealthy planters at the expense of poorer soldiers. Nonetheless, the law attempted to address what slaveholders’ felt were legitimate fears of slave revolts.²⁶

Calls to draw overseers from the army stemmed from concerns that slaves would attack whites, especially women, who remained on the plantations. In early 1863, Claiborne County resident Lititia Adams implored Pettus to “consider also the helpless women and children...deprived of their natural protector, and left wholly at the mercy of the blacks.” Bolivar County native Frank Yaden similarly feared slave attacks, and asked to be discharged from the 1st Mississippi Cavalry to prevent them. “The Hydra head of insurrection has already made its appearance,” he told Randolph, “but was met promptly by the few citizens who were left to contend with it.” Nonetheless, he was concerned that his family was “exposed to the insults of our slaves,” and noted that a neighbor had several slaves “severely punished” for making “gross propositions to her.” As Yaden noted, fears that slaves would assault white women were especially potent. In November 1863, Chickasaw County residents Charity and Rachel Buchanan implored Secretary Seddon to release Rachel’s husband from the army to control over forty slaves on two plantations who “have lately manifested a disposition to commit acts of insubordination.” The petitioners feared that without “the services of a suitable white man” to

²⁶ William C. Davis, *Look Away!: A History of the Confederate States of America* (New York: Free Press, 2002), 235-236.

“control said negroes some great bodily injury will be inflicted upon them by said negroes.”²⁷

Mississippi’s slaveholders strove to maintain mastery over their servants, believing that failure to do so presented very real mortal threats.

To whites, fear of slave violence was very real. In September 1864, a Franklin county resident warned Clark that further conscription of white men would “increase the temptation to the slaves, and the danger to the families left at home.” A month earlier, O.J.M. Holladay of Lauderdale County claimed that several slaves “made a plot to arm themselves and steal all the horses they could and fight their way to Vicksburg.” Holladay also noted that a slave “laid his hands” on two sleeping white women and claimed that such incidents were “common,” having heard of “six or eight cases of it.” In September 1863, Lettie Vick Downs reported that after “another raid from the negroes...one of them had committed rape on a young lady near the ferry.” Historians, however, should use caution when interpreting such reports. Emancipation unleashed a fear of the supposed sexual threat that black males, free from white male control, posed to white women’s virtue. Nonetheless, these reports do reveal that Mississippi slaveholders interpreted black freedom in terms of the reversal of the master-slave relationship. In their minds, disloyal slaves did not just want freedom for themselves, they wanted the freedom to dominate their masters. The absence of any non-military organized incidents of black retaliatory violence against whites in Mississippi, however, suggests that such fears were products of white paranoia. Yet, if slaves did not want to reverse the racial hierarchy, they nevertheless wanted to escape from it.²⁸

²⁷ Lititia A. Adams to John J. Pettus, March 28, 1863, Pettus Correspondence, roll 1446; Frank A. Yaden to George Randolph, April 23, 1862, roll 48; Charity and Rachel Buchanan to James A. Seddon, November 6, 1863, roll 84, both in LRCSW.

²⁸ N. Cassedy to Charles Clark, September 12, 1864, Charles Clark Correspondence, Series 768, Box 950, Volume 56, Record Group 27, MDAH; O.J.M. Holladay to Charles Clark, August 19, 1864, Ibid, box 949; Journal of Lettie Vick Downs, September 7, 1863, Lettie Downs Collection, 1859, 1862-66, 1972, Z1497, folder 1, MDAH; Hannah

One of the ways they did this was by running away to Union lines in large numbers, thereby physically separating themselves from their owners. In doing so, they continued a long antebellum tradition in which slaves fled plantations and farms, either temporarily by lying out for days, weeks, or even months, or by going north to permanently escape their bondage.²⁹ Antebellum slave flight both facilitated and strengthened micro loyalties among individuals. Often, runaway slaves lay out in their own neighborhoods, or moved between adjoining plantations to visit kin. They also absconded back to neighborhoods where they had previously resided to reunite with friends and family. Beyond kin ties, runaways forged networks with people they met in their journeys, using any information gleaned from these meetings to aid their goals as fugitives. Runaway slaves also acted on self-loyalty. As one historian notes, planters recognized that “the runaway slave epitomized alienation from bondage” because “the slave’s theft was of his person.” John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger note that runaway slaves shared personality traits like “self-confidence, self-assurance, self-possession, determination, and self-reliance.” The key word in these traits was “self.” Mack Henderson, a former Warren County slave who ran away in 1863 and then joined the Union army, put it succinctly when he stated, “the reason I ran away to the Yankees...is because I wanted to be free.”³⁰ By effectively stealing themselves, runaways asserted their own interests and rejected the servile deference that masters expected from them. By running off, slaves both acted on, and continually forged, micro

Rosen, *Terror in the Heart of Freedom: Citizenship, Sexual Violence, and the Meaning of Race in the Postemancipation South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009) 6-9, 44-49.

²⁹ Franklin and Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves*, 97-296; Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 648-57; Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), 109-24; Robinson, *Bitter Fruits of Bondage*, 178-80, 194-5; Timothy B. Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War: The Home Front* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010), 147-8

³⁰ Mack Henderson, *Mississippi Narratives*, MSGenWeb Special Projects, <http://msgw.org/slaves/henderson-xslave.htm>, (accessed August 12, 2012).

loyalties. Collectively, these attachments made running off a significant form of slave resistance to white authority that carried into the Civil War.³¹

From the moment the Union army crossed into the state, white Mississippians reported slaves' flights to their lines. In July 1862, the Confederate Provost Marshal at Natchez observed "a great disposition among the Negroes to be insubordinate, and to run away and go to the Federals." In the late summer of 1862, a Panola County resident observed that slaves near the Union's Memphis lines and along the Mississippi River "have in great numbers run off." He believed that "there is danger of the whole negro population of the South becoming greatly demoralized if the war continues another year, certainly wherever their army goes." After the Second Battle of Corinth, a partisan ranger noted that "negroes from the South part of the state" were "making their way to the Federal lines." John Miller, of Pontotoc County, found it difficult to move slaves from the Yankees' path because "many of them run away." He added that "all the negroes are waiting for the arrival of the Yankees & will leave en masse," and that "hundreds have gone from Tippah & all from Tishomingo." By early January 1863, an Okolana-based Confederate cavalryman observed that the number of slaves running to Union lines was "increasing beyond convenience." Warren County planter Charles Whitmore noted that on the day Vicksburg fell to the Union, "nearly all negroes [are] missing. They have left without cause in a regular stampede."³² As the war progressed and the Federals overran the state, slaves' flight to their lines only accelerated.

³¹ Kaye, *Joining Places*, 129-35; Calvin Schermerhorn, *Money over Mastery, Family over Freedom: Slavery in the Antebellum Upper South* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 45-8; Owens, *This Species of Property*, 81; Franklin and Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves*, 224.

³² A.K. Farrar to John J. Pettus, July 17, 1862, in *Mississippi in the Confederacy: As They Saw It, Vols. 1 and 2*, ed. John K. Bettersworth (1961, Repr., New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1970), 235-236; P.B. Barringer to Brother, August 19, 1862, Daniel Moreau Barringer Papers, 1797-1873, folder 42, 03359, SHC; W.A. Hewitt to William L. Moses, John C. Pemberton Papers, MLR PI101, Folder 7, Box 1, Entry 131, War Department Collection of Confederate Records, Record Group 109, NARA; John Miller to H.R. Miller, November 14, 1862, Miller Family Papers, 1830-1864, #MUM00297, Folder 45, UMASC; Pleasant Smith to J. Thompson, January 8, 1862, in Ira

Mississippi slaves used their feet to resist slaveholders' authority by removing themselves from their masters' presence. In September 1863, with Federal occupation established at Vicksburg, Jackson resident William Thomson thought that "probably nine-tenths of the negroes between Big Black and Pearl river have been run off, sold, or gone to the Yankees." Washington County Planter Jona Pearce told Secretary Seddon that Confederate attempts to steer slaves from the Union path would cause "a stampede of all the balance, who would take every mule with them to the Yankees." Stationed in Meridian in early 1864, William Sively informed his mother that "a great many negroes" there fled to Union lines, adding that "it is thought that ten thousand is a low estimate." A month later, Sophia Hughes complained to her brother that "so many negroes ran off to the Yanks, and each one takes a mule or horse that they are very scarce & very high [priced]," In July 1864, the *Canton American Citizen* described how black Union cavalymen convinced the local slaves to "bid farewell to Dixie, and accept Yankee freedom." The paper estimated the "nine-tenths" of the city's slaves went off with the black troops. After a visit from Union soldiers, Claiborne County planter James Maury proclaimed that "it is amazing with what intuitive familiarity the negroes recognized the moment of deliverance." Nearly all of his slaves left, and the few that stayed were "much demoralized."³³ For Mississippi's slaves, the arrival of the Union army was the catalyst through which "deliverance" came via the chance to flee their owner's authority. Slaveholders, in turn, reacted with, anger, exasperation, and betrayal at what they considered slaves' brazen displays of disloyalty.

Berlin, Barbara J. Fields, Thavolia Glymph, Joseph P. Reidy, and Leslie S. Rowland, eds., *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867, Series 1, Volume 1, The Destruction of Slavery* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 300; Charles Whitmore Diary, July 4, 1863, Charles Whitmore Plantation Journal, microfilm, 02406, roll 1, SHC.

³³ William Thomson to Ruffin Thomson, September 10, 1863, Ruffin Thomson Papers, folder 3, 03315, SHC; Jon'a Pearce to James Seddon, November 3, 1863, in Berlin, et. al., eds., *The Destruction of Slavery*, 775-776; William Sively to Jane Sively, March 18, 1864, Jane Sively Letters, 1862-1867, fol. 2, 01891-z, SHC; Sophia Hughes Hunt to Brother, April 8, 1864, Hughes Family Papers, fol. 21a; James H. Maury to James J. Maury, September 28, 1863, in Rainwater, ed., *Mississippi in the Confederacy*, 241.

In November 1863, for example, William Dameron told his wife that his brother's slaves had planned "for a general stampede," and that they became "more trouble than they are worth, all of them." Dameron voiced a common refrain among white Mississippians that disloyal slaves were too troublesome to deal with. A nervous Eliza Sively claimed that her slaves were "very well satisfied, though they all may go," and insisted that when the war ended "I would be willing to give them all up." A week later, she again wrote that her slaves were still "very well satisfied though they may leave at any time." In the late summer of 1861, Louisa Lovell told her husband that "those miserable abolitionists" would be shocked at "such manifestations of devotion and affection on the part of the poor maltreated slave, whose heart, according to them, is only the abode of hatred and revenge against their masters." Northerners, she insisted, "know nothing of the bond that unites the master & servant, of its tenderness and love on the one side, and its pride of duty and attachment on the other." By August 1863, however, Lovell felt betrayed when some of her slaves fled to Union lines, and others planned to follow suit. "I never want to live in the South anymore & call upon a darky again," she fumed, "I have been cured lately of all love for that race, in most of cases they have displayed such want of affection, such ingratitude...I suppose we must prepare to become our own servants."³⁴

Lovell felt betrayed by servants who did not display the expected "duty and attachment" to their masters. She and other slaveholders voiced a genuine sense of betrayal over their slaves' flight to Union lines. Their anger, in turn, reveals how they considered the servile loyalty that bonded master and slave to be essential to the maintenance of slavery as an institution. By running off, slaves, by contrast, demonstrated how freedom for themselves necessitated resistance to white expectations of servility. Whites' demands of servile loyalty directly

³⁴ William Dameron to Wife, November 6, 1862, Norton, Chilton and Dameron Family Papers, 1760-1926, 1995, fol. 8, ser. 1, 03264, SHC; Eliza H.B. Sively to Jane Sively, February 14, 26, 1864, Jane Sively Letters, fol. 2; Louisa Lovell to Joseph Lovell, July 28, 1861, August 17, 1863, Quitman Family Papers, fols. 106, 111.

influenced slaves' decisions to act on self loyalty by fleeing their masters. They understood that masters expected their unquestioned devotion, and therefore feigned it as part of a general preparation to run off when the moment was right.

Mississippi slaveholders repeatedly interpreted slaves' decisions to stay or run off as evidence of either servile loyalty or betrayal. Panola County Planter Everard Baker noted in December 1862 that while many slaves had run off, "mine so far have showed their good sense & stood true to mine & their interests." Given the paternalism of the master-slave relationship, Baker thought that obedient slaves recognized the reciprocal interests of both. Holly Springs planter, and Confederate officer, Harvey Walter, suspected that his slaves might flee, but still felt betrayed when they did. "They talked against the Yankees & I never suspected any of them going away so soon," he told his sister. Despite his slaves' assurance that they would stay, "they all deceived me very well for I was shocked," he wrote. "I have learned a great deal about my servants since they left," Walter concluded, "I will never trust another darkie." Living near the Vicksburg lines, Elizabeth Ingraham had "reason to think that hands will all leave." She described a still-remaining slave named Elsie as "still true" and "faithful," while Nancy, who fled, was "not true." Adams County resident Kate Foster noted how slaves were "flocking to the enemy in town," though none of hers had gone. "I hope they will all prove faithful to the end," she wrote.³⁵

In addition to viewing runaway slaves as disloyal, whites often claimed that their misguided desires for freedom actually fueled disloyalty to their masters. They demonstrated what Eugene and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese call the "fatal self deception" of slaveholding

³⁵ Everard Green Baker Diary, December 26, 1862, Everard Green Baker Papers, 1848-1876, fol. 5, 00041, SHC; Harvey W. Walter to Sister, January 1, 1863, H.W. Walter Papers, box 2, fol. 9, #MUM0013, UMASC; W. Maury Darst, ed., "The Vicksburg Diary of Mrs. Alfred Ingraham, May 2-June 13, 1863," *Journal of Mississippi History* 44 (Feb.,-Nov., 1982): 165, 167; Kate Foster Diary, July 16, 1863, Catherine (Kate) Foster Diary, 1863-1872, Z/0869.000, MDAH.

paternalism, which stemmed from masters' attempts to morally justify the exploitations inherent in human bondage.³⁶ In the fall of 1862, for example, Pontotoc County resident Susan Miller believed that her deluded slaves had forgotten their subservient place when Union troops marched through northern Mississippi. "They seem to be intoxicated with the idea of careless freedom held out to them," she told her son. Miller insisted that slaves did not know where their interest lay, writing that:

"The negroes generally are in exuberant spirits, & my private opinion is that the most of them will be ready to go [with Union troops] without compulsion. There is something so alluring in the idea of freedom & equality with their masters. Many of them will go from curiosity & a desire to attest the novelty of change. As I look at ours singing, dancing, & whistling, so free from the heart-ache & hardship of us who own them, I can but pity them, for the unhappy charge that will so soon come over them, when they forsake the home God has so kindly given them. But let them go."

For Miller, slaves had to be "intoxicated" in order to want "equality with their masters." She believed that rather than desiring to escape white authority, curious slaves merely wanted "the novelty of change." Such delusions would backfire, she insisted, because in betraying their masters, they forsook the benevolence of white protection.³⁷

Other slaveholders similarly concluded that slaves were delusional, if not stupid, to forsake their masters' benevolence in pursuit of the chimera of freedom. Exasperated over her fleeing slaves' "bad conduct," Emile McKinley, of Warren County, proclaimed that "negroes are creatures you cannot convince but in some ways like children. It is useless to argue with them." In early 1863, William Nelson told his mother that slaves in Holly Springs only ran because "the Yankees resorted to the artifice of lying to them, to frighten them away, when all other efforts had failed." Kate Foster called runaway slaves "poor deluded creatures" who would "find out too late who are their best friends, Master or Massa." Natchez resident Elizabeth Brown likewise

³⁶ Genovese and Fox-Genovese, *Fatal Self Deception*, 1-6; Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 3-7.

³⁷ S.G. Miller to George Miller, October 31, 1862, S.G. Miller to H.R. Miller, September 29 1862, Miller Family Papers, fols. 38, 40.

derided runaways as “poor deluded fellows” who “ought to have known better than to leave home.” Many white Mississippians believed that runaway slaves had foolishly betrayed their masters. As Foster demonstrated, slaveholders intent on upholding the racial hierarchy believed that slaves desired the authority of one “Master,” the Federals, or another “Massa,” the slaveholder. They loathed the idea that slaves might show fealty to neither and actually desired autonomy. For runaway slaves, freedom, just as it did in antebellum times, constituted physical separation from the authority of the master class.³⁸

Whereas slaveholders expressed outrage over the disloyalty of slaves who ran to Union lines, they also feared that slaves would physically assault their masters within the household. Whites well understood that bodily attacks by slaves symbolized blacks’ rejection of white mastery at the most visceral level. In late 1863, Eliza Sively’s slave, Bill, whom she considered capable of violently assaulting her and her family, escaped before she could sell him off to Texas. “No doubt Bill will do us all the injury he can if he gets out here, which he will be certain [sic] to do,” she wrote, looking upon his visit “with fear and trembling.” That summer, Yazoo County planter Robert Shotwell noted that several of his slaves “would not be controlled” and “would no doubt shoulder the musket [for the Union] willingly and be dangerous negroes in that capacity” if Vicksburg fell. Especially worrisome for Shotwell was his slave blacksmith, whom he described as “a dangerous negro if he should rebel & I understand swears he will not be taken off.” Shotwell emphasized these slaves’ “dangerous” proclivities, believing that they were

³⁸ Gordon A. Cotton, ed. *From the Pen of a She-Rebel: The Civil War Diary of Emilie Riley McKinley* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 23-24; William C. Nelson to Maria C. Nelson, February 22, 1863, William Cowper Nelson Collection, Digital Collections, Civil War Archive, J.D. Williams Library, University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi, http://clio.lib.olemiss.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/civil_war&CISOPTR=483&REC=2 (Accessed December 10, 2011. Hereafter cited as UMD); Kate Foster Diary, July 25, 1863; Elizabeth Christie Brown Diary, May 4, 1863, box 1996.1, #MUM01330, UMASC.

already inclined towards violence against whites. Putting them in the Union army, therefore, would only further license, in their eyes, these violent tendencies.³⁹

In another incident of suspected slave violence, Warren County resident Mrs. Tully Gibson left for Virginia accompanied by her young son and two “demoralized” slaves. Shortly after her departure, Gibson’s correspondence with friends ceased, leading her neighbor Emilie McKinley to suspect that “her servants may have murdered her for her money.” In August 1863, Leticia Downs, also of Warren County, claimed that “a negro raid were on their way up the creek killing every white person as they came.” She believed that the “lawless creatures” were mere tools of the Union army. “How can a Union with a people who instigate a race that have been raised and cared for as children to rise and slay their owners in cold blood, ever be tolerated?” she asked. Downs attributed the slaves’ behavior to servile disloyalty. Whether or not the events occurred as she claimed, her choice of language, stating that slaves rose up against their “owners,” not against the Confederacy, indicates how slaveholders, even in the midst of a war between nation-states, first and foremost feared an internal war, in which servants violently betrayed their masters. In the eyes of Mississippi’s master class, such a reversal of the racial hierarchy would transform their daily lives in the worst possible way, by turning masters into slaves and vice versa.⁴⁰

Slaveholders’ fears of slave assaults were not entirely unwarranted. The antebellum period saw a “persistence of violence on the plantation,” which was “spontaneous” and primarily directed against whites, including owners, their family members, and overseers. Indeed, year after year in nearly every southern state, slaves were indicted for assaulting and sometimes

³⁹ Eliza H.B. Sively to Jane Sivley, November 4, 27, 1863, January 1, 1864, Jane Sively Letters, 1862-1867, folders 1 and 2, 01891-z, SHC; Robert Shotwell to T.B. Lamar, July 5, 1863, in Berlin, et. al., eds., *The Destruction of Slavery*, 800-02.

⁴⁰ Cotton, ed. *From the Pen of a She-Rebel*, 29; Journal of Lettie Vick Downs, August 28, 1863.

killing whites. The particular restraints of American slavery, especially the swift and merciless white responses to perceived organized slave revolts, facilitated individual slave resistance against masters even as it discouraged collective revolts. Occasionally, individual Mississippi slaves attacked their masters during the war. They appropriated violence, the method the master class used to enforce servile loyalty in slaves, to reject that servility.⁴¹

In May 1863, Kezziah, the slave of Emilie McKinley's friend, Ellen Batchelor, "attacked her mistress," stating that, "You have had me beat enough." When Batchelor's neighbor tried to intervene, Kezziah "raised her shovel on them and told them to leave." Yet, she also refused to run to Union lines, saying "she wasn't going to leave her property." In attacking Batchelor, Kezziah took part in the wartime phenomenon in which, as Thavolia Glymph writes, mistresses and slaves fought over slaves' right to "be free and live fuller lives" within plantation households. In assaulting her mistress, Kezziah rejected the servile allegiance that was expected of slaves. Freedom for Kezziah meant the ability to act on self-loyalty, by owning property and staying at her home while living free of Batchelor's authority. A month later, McKinley wrote that after her neighbor, Mr. McGaughey, left his wife alone in the house, "his negroes came to the house to whip Mrs. McG." A white boarder tried to fight them off to no avail, and plead for help from Federal soldiers who captured the slaves but then quickly released them. The slaves then returned and "whipped him and made him call them Master and Mistress." These slaves appropriated the master's lash to demonstrate their rejection of white authority. The day after Christmas 1864, Winona resident William Sykes told his brother that "the other day a neighbour undertook to correct a negroe [sic], was knocked down with an axe and nearly killed. The negroe

⁴¹ Franklin and Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves*, 77-8, quotes on 77; Kolchin, *American Slavery*, 159-64; V.P. Franklin, *Black Self-Determination: A Cultural History of African-American Resistance* (Brooklyn: Lawrence Hill Books, 1984), 75.

mounted his horse and left.”⁴² Slaves who physically assaulted their owners rejected the master-slave relationship and its underlying premise that blacks owed allegiance only to their masters. Instead, they acted on self-loyalty by literally using their bodies to assert their freedom from white dominance.

Mississippi slaves, however, did not have to run away or attack their owners in order for slaveholders to accuse them of disloyalty. Masters’ expectations of servile loyalty shaped the creation of slaves’ micro allegiances through the articulation process, thus, many slaves acted in their own interests by staying behind and appropriating spaces for themselves within the confines of ostensibly white control, actions that slaveholders’ denounced as indicating servant betrayal. Slaves had long attempted to make the homes and spaces where they lived in bondage their own, as these places held deep emotional attachments. In doing so they acted on a fundamental human need to experience a sense of territory and place, in which, according to Yi-Fu Tuan, “spaces are marked off and defended against intruders,” and are transformed into places that are “centers of felt value” in which the feeling of security facilitates the lived experience of freedom on an individual’s own terms. Places, then, are characterized by the “meaning and experience” through which individuals seek to define their world. During the war, black Mississippians appropriated spaces in the midst of white control and infused them with personal meaning.⁴³

⁴² Cotton, ed., *From the Pen of a She-Rebel*, 12; Thavolia Glymph, *Out of the House of Bondage: The Transformation of the Plantation Household* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 99-100; also see Renee K. Harrison, *Enslaved Women and the Art of Resistance in Antebellum America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 86-93; Cotton, ed. *From the Pen of a She-Rebel*, 24; William Sykes to James Sykes, December 26, 1864, Rufus Ward Collection, UMD, <http://digital.library.msstate.edu/collections/document.php?CISOROOT=/ASERL&CISOPTR=455&REC=13> (Accessed December 5, 2011).

⁴³ Noralee Frankel, *Freedom’s Women: Black Women and Families in Civil War Era Mississippi* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 19-20; Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 3-4, quotes on 4; Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 11.

In the spring of 1863, for example, a *Daily Mississippian* correspondent in Jackson chafed at the sight of “well dressed negroes...striding along the pavement, smoking cigars, talking and swearing, loud and deep, and perfectly oblivious of the proximity of Caucasian [sic] blood.” The writer believed that freed slaves’ refusal to observe the racial hierarchy through public deference necessitated “personal chastisement” from whites to keep servants “under proper restraint.” In July 1863, “a negro man in...Sunday clothes” walked into an Adams County church and wanted to be seated with the white congregants. The congregation was “astounded” by the “impudent scamp” and demanded that he sit in the servants’ section. In the fall of 1864, Louisa Lovell fumed at the sight of “well dressed troupes of little proud niggers...going to school,” and “the noisy, insolent, black girls & women” who dressed “so gaily & fashionably,” thereby making Natchez a “disgusting Yankee & negro town.” “How disgruntled it makes one feel, to see these creatures, as set up, out of their place,” she wrote, “I believe that ‘the institution’ is extinct.”⁴⁴ For Lovell, slavery’s extinction was not just a product of Lincoln’s legal decree: it was also defined by blacks appropriating white spaces as their own, thereby defying their expected roles as loyal servants by acting “out of their place” in the masters’ realms.⁴⁵

In addition to occupying white dominated spaces, slaves asserted their rights in the face of white dominance by refusing to work. Work was central to the lives of Deep South slaves. While enduring working lives that were constantly subject to the authority of masters and overseers, they attempted to exert some control over their work through day-to-day acts of resistance. They feigned illness, pretended to misunderstand orders, slowed their pace, and

⁴⁴ *Daily Mississippian* (Jackson, MS), April 15, 1863, in Rainwater ed., *Mississippi in the Confederacy*, Vol. 1, 238-239; Kate Foster Diary, July 28, 1863; Louisa Lovell to Joseph Lovell, February 26, October 20, 1864, Quitman Family papers, fols. 112, 113.

⁴⁵ For more discussion on how blacks in Mississippi continued to contest public and private spaces during and after the Civil War, see Justin J. Behrend, “Freedpeople’s Democracy: African-American Politics and Community in the Postemancipation Natchez District,” (PhD diss., Northwestern University, 2006) and “Black Political Mobilization and the Spatial Transformation of Natchez,” (paper presented at “The American Civil War and the Cities of the Slave South,” workshop held in Calgary and Banff, Alberta, May 25-26, 2012).

“accidentally” broke tools. These forms of “silent sabotage” allowed slaves to act on self-loyalty, even if in highly circumscribed ways. As Steven Hahn writes, slaves’ labor “represented an accommodation to the coercive power of their owners,” which slaves tried to limit drawing distinctions “between the time and services they ‘owed’ the master and the time and rewards they could claim for themselves.” Stephanie Camp similarly notes that within the “daily tug-of-war” between slaves and slaveholders over labor, “power and its assumptions were contested from below” in a process that was “the result and expression of the dialogic of power relations between owner and owned.” Prior to the Civil War, white southerners acting with the support of the federal government, managed to maintain the slave system despite slaves’ day-to-day resistance. Once the war began, however, those same everyday actions against slavery combined with pressure of Union arms to bring down the system. With so many white men fighting in the Confederate armies, whites left on the home front could not easily enforce slave discipline. In this context, slaves could more effectively refuse to work and otherwise demonstrate to whites that they had lost mastery over blacks.⁴⁶

In early 1863, a concerned citizen informed Pettus that, due to conscription in north Mississippi, there were “not a sufficient number of men left to enforce negro labor.” He noted that “the negroes are poor managers and naturally indolent at best.” Later that year, former governor William McWillie petitioned Secretary of War Seddon for the release of overseers from the army to aid in “holding the negroes in subjection.” He warned Seddon that “we have great apprehension that unless details are made for some overseers...our whole system of slave

⁴⁶ Kolchin, *American Slavery*, 157; Owens, *This Species of Property*, 79; Hahn, *A Nation Under our Feet*, 19-20; Mark Smith employs the term “Colored Peoples’ Time” (CPT) to describe how blacks eschewed the authority of the clock and adopted “presentist and naturally defined notions of time” in order to repudiate the time-based labor demands of southern agrarian capitalists. Through their consciously slowed work pace, black laborers “resisted planter-defined time during and after slavery.” See Mark M. Smith, *Mastered by the Clock: Time, Slavery, and Freedom in the American South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 130-52, quotes on 130; Camp, *Closer to Freedom*, 2-3.

labor will be a failure.” McWillie also appealed for the release of his own overseer, stating that his slaves had “thus far generally behaved pretty well,” but added that “now that the [white] men are all gone it is very doubtful how long they will continue in a state of subordination.” In a letter to Confederate General Reuban Davis, A.M. Alexander, of Monroe City, wanted her son’s release from military service, because after two years without an overseer, her farm was “very much out of repair.” Of course, her farm was “out of repair” because her slaves refused to work. In October 1862, residents of Yalobusha County petitioned Randolph on behalf of a planter who wanted his son out of the army to control “a quantity of slaves doing nothing for the want of an overseer.” These slaveholders emphasized the need for overseers to “enforce” slave labor by keeping slaves in “subjection.” By refusing to work, slaves took advantage of a wartime environment that limited whites’ ability to enforce black servility. They therefore rejected their masters’ authority and, by extension, as McWillie recognized, attacked the “whole system of slave labor.”⁴⁷

The war’s disruptions gave slaves the opportunity to stop working without fear of white retaliation. Planter Charles Whitmore noted that after Vicksburg fell, a few of his slaves remained, but were “of no use.” In November 1863, he had “six or seven ‘servants’ with me yet, who do a dogged & unwilling graceless service... they have not earned their meat & bread since July.” Whitmore hoped to convince his remaining slaves that “freedom does not consist in lazy, idle imprudence, but in stout attention to the duties of life.” That spring, Loulie Feemster of Monroe County told her husband that “the negroes are as free as the white people, if you want

⁴⁷ “A Well Wisher to the Confederacy” to John J. Pettus, April 2, 1863, Pettus Correspondence, roll 1446, vol. 51; William McWillie to James Seddon, October 12, 1863, roll 83, LRCSW; William McWillie to Jefferson Davis, October 18, 1863, in Crist, Lynda Laswell, Peggy L. Dillard, Kenneth H. Williams, eds., *The Papers of Jefferson Davis, Vol. 10, October 1863-August, 1864* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999), 29; A.M. Alexander to Reuben Davis, January 15, 1863, roll 89, LRCSW; Petition of Yalobusha County Citizens to George Randolph, October 9, 1862, roll 73, Ibid.

one to do anything you have to ask them very kindly.” William Nelson feared that with slaves not working, “the fatigue of household work” would tax his mother and brother’s “health and Patience,” but nonetheless joked that “I hardly know whether to sigh or smile when I think of you doing your own cooking,” and laughed at the thought of his brother milking his own cows. Aside from being angry over the loss of slave labor, slaveholders’ were angry over their inability to *enforce* that labor. For them, the inability to command servile loyalty in slaves signaled the collapse of the racial hierarchy itself, hence Feemster’s angry observation that “the negroes are as free as the white people.”⁴⁸

It was not so much the loss of slave labor as it was the loss of total control over that labor and by extension, the loss of white mastery that aroused slaveholders’ ire. When Elizabeth Brown awoke on a mid-January morning in 1863, she “found the servants had not done their work, and that did not preserve the equanimity of my temper.” In May of that year, Elizabeth Ingraham complained that “the negroes are as idle as darkies only can be; nearly four weeks since ‘their vacation began,’ as Elsie calls it, and not a stroke of work.” One slave wet nurse refused to work without pay, while others only milked cows for themselves. “They...go when they please, and do as they please; no one interferes,” she griped. In June 1864, Molly Vaughn of Coffeeville, Mississippi told her sister that her “impudent” slave, Sam, did not want to hire out, and threatened to run to the Yankees if forced to do so. That September, Louisa Lovell complained to her husband that “the darkies do no work nowadays, except for themselves.” After her cook ran off, she was forced to employ a neighbor’s servant, and one of her slaves was

⁴⁸ Charles Whitmore Plantation Journal, July 4, November 25, 1863; Loulie Feemster to Alex W. Feemster, March 10, 1863, Oakley Papers, *Intellectual Underpinnings of the American Civil War*, Digital Collections, Manuscripts Division, Special Collections Department, Mississippi State University Libraries, Mississippi State, Mississippi. <http://digital.library.msstate.edu/collections/document.php?CISOROOT=/ASERL&CISOPTR=194&REC=5> (Accessed January 23, 2012. Hereafter cited as *Underpinnings of the American Civil War*); William C. Nelson to Maria C. Nelson, March 12, 1863, William Cowper Nelson Collection, UMD, http://clio.lib.olemiss.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/civil_war&CISOPTR=488&REC=1 (Accessed December 10, 2011).

“making money” in town. “The scamp always waves to me whenever I meet him,” Lovell fumed, “the nigger is decidedly all bon ton now.”⁴⁹ During the war, slaves refused to work for their masters, knowing full well that in many cases, masters could no longer compel them to work. Slaveholders feared that if they lost control over the terms of black work, the racial hierarchy would become obsolete. Even if they could get negotiate terms of work with slaves, such negotiation gave blacks a measure of say in their work matters, and therefore contradicted the ideal of white racial mastery.

Sometimes, slaveholders found it difficult to acknowledge their loss of mastery. In 1864, for example, Madison County civil authorities threatened widow, Sarah Garrett, with jail time and a \$1500 fine for allowing three of her slaves, a barber and two draymen, “to go at large and trade as freemen.” Petitioners supporting Garrett claimed that she “was, of necessity, to make them at all profitable, compelled to permit them to hire themselves.” Because “the slave population” had become “demoralized & difficult of management,” Garrett, in her “helpless state,” chose to let them hire out rather than “permit them to go at large...without any restraint or control being exercised over them.” Such language assumed Garrett’s authority to “permit” her slaves to hire out, but her acquiescence to their demands suggests that she actually contracted with them. Garret’s slaves asserted their freedom, threatening to flee unless she “permitted” them to “hire...to themselves.” They therefore undermined the master-slave relationship by invoking their rights to negotiate for compensated labor. Because work had for so long defined slaves

⁴⁹ Elizabeth Christie Brown Diary, January 19, 1863; Darst, ed., “The Vicksburg Diary of Mrs. Alfred Ingraham,” 172; Molly Vaughn to Sister, June 15, 1864, Wilson and Hairston Family Papers, 1751-1928, fol. 10, 04134, SHC; Louisa Lovell to Joseph Lovell, September 26, 1864, Quitman Family Papers, fol. 113.

lives, being able to control their work schedule, as in the case with Garret's slaves, signaled a new and very real daily freedom.⁵⁰

For Garret's slaves, freedom meant the right to negotiate their work, thereby acting in their own self-interests rather than on a forced loyalty to their masters. Elizabeth Ingraham's slave, Elsie, similarly negotiated her work with her mistress, and Ingraham, like Garret, found it hard to accept her loss of mastery. Elsie had consistently resisted her husband, Jack's, requests to leave with him and their children, which Ingraham construed as Elsie's being "strictly honest and true, a rare thing in a black." In fact, Elsie began working on her own time and split the housework between herself and Ingraham, who began paying Elsie a twelve-dollar monthly wage plus food for her and her children. Moreover, Elsie told Jack that if he would "get her a home and a way of getting her a living" she would leave Ingraham, but until then, she did not want to associate with runaways, who were often field hands and therefore "only niggers" and "the commonest set of people."⁵¹

Ingraham's claim notwithstanding, Elsie stayed out of self-loyalty and family ties forged in bondage, not out of loyalty to her mistress. Like Garret's slaves, she could have run away like many others did. But her vision of freedom differed from those who fled. Indeed, Elsie did not share a collective identity with runaway field hands, whom she dismissed as stemming from a lower class than herself. For runaways, freedom meant literal separation from their masters, but Elise, like Garret's slaves, envisioned freedom as control of her own labor, and in the right to have a "home" and a "way of getting...a living." In her examination of Elsie's case, Noralee Frankel notes that because "their accommodations were often roomier and better furnished with more cast-off pieces from whites," domestic slaves like Elsie faced greater material losses by

⁵⁰ Rankin County Citizens to Charles Clark, October 6, 1864, Robert S. Hudson to Charles Clark, October 6, 1864, Clark Correspondence, box 950.

⁵¹ Darst, ed., "The Vicksburg Diary of Mrs. Alfred Ingraham," 173-174.

running off than did field hands. These distinctions reinforce how, beyond the common goal of escaping racially-based servile loyalty, freedom meant different things for different Mississippi slaves under different conditions.⁵²

In addition to demanding the right to work on their own terms, slaves continued the antebellum act of stealing from whites. Because whites' earned their wealth through slave labor, slaves had long believed that they shared in the ownership of whites' property, and for them, "stealing was not considered theft, merely appropriating their due." Alex Lichtenstein similarly observes that because theft "represented the slave's insistence on receiving his or her due from the master" in terms of the "the right to products of labor," theft by slaves was "part of the sustained struggle between master and slave to define the perimeters of power." When slaves stole from whites, they did not just take material goods, they also flouted slaveholders' claims to the right to control every aspect of slaves' lives, and in the process undermined slaveholders' perceived authority.⁵³

As wartime circumstances eroded slaveholders' control, slaves took advantage of their expanded freedom to openly steal from whites. In 1864, Samuel Agnew described slaves holding "big parties" where each attendant paid "a hank of thread" to participate. "These parties explain the stolen thread, wheat and chickens which have been missed in the neighborhood," Agnew wrote, calling the slaves "verily great rascals." Elizabeth Brown berated "impudent niggers" who stole her wood, calling them "vile creatures who think themselves equal to whites." In one incident, she scolded an "impudent colored lady" for stealing, but "got insolence in return, &

⁵² Frankel, *Freedom's Women*, 21-22; On the importance of mother-child family relations among slaves see Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom*, and Lynn Kennedy, *Born Southern: Childhood, Motherhood, and Social Networks in the Old South* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010).

⁵³ Franklin and Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves*, 80; Alex Lichtenstein, "'That Disposition to Theft, with Which They Have been Branded': Moral Economy, Slave Management, and the Law," *Journal of Social History* 21 (Spring, 1988): 16, 14.

afterwards had more impudence from others.” Warren County resident Ellen Batchelor accused her slave, Mary, of stealing clothing and jewelry. Mary admitted to taking the items but refused to return them because Batchelor “abused her.” In May 1863, Ingraham complained that her and other women’s fineries went missing to the slave cabins by servants who had “stolen to their very hearts [sic] content,” and were therefore “well supplied” with muslin shirts, gold watches, and other like items. State judge Robert Hudson complained that “Lincoln’s negro equality scheme” would only fuel blacks’ “thieving propensities,” and griped that there were “not...enough penitentiaries made to hold the convicted negro thieves.” By taking slaveholders’ property, slaves by extension undermined white claims to mastery over blacks. As a Union official noted after talking to runaway slaves at the Holly Springs contraband camp, “they do not consider it dishonest to take from their masters.”⁵⁴ By irately accusing thieving slaves of thinking themselves “equal to whites,” slaveholders like Elizabeth Brown recognized that the act of stealing from masters, especially in the context of wartime conditions that already limited slaveholders’ ability to enforce black servility, served to undermine racial hierarchy by signaling the loss of white mastery.

Property rights were especially crucial in terms of how urban slaves viewed freedom as a daily lived experience. As previously noted, historians have argued that rural slaves shared a collective, peasant class-consciousness forged through their common field work, which in turn led them to embrace freedom as the right to own and work southern lands. Because the majority

⁵⁴ Diary of Samuel Andrew Agnew, March 4, 1864, Transcript of manuscript # 923, *Documenting the American South*, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/impls/agnew/agnew.html>. (Accessed August 20, 2009); Elizabeth Christie Brown Diary, August 9, 15, 1863; Cotton, ed., *From the Pen of a She Rebel*, 42; Darst, ed., “The Vicksburg Diary of Mrs. Alfred Ingraham,” 168, 172, 177; Diary of Jason Niles, January 2, 1862, Transcript of manuscript # 950, *Documenting the American South*, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/impls/niles/niles.html> (Accessed August 5, 2009); Testimony of John Eaton, General Superintendent of the Freedmen, Department of the Tennessee, April 29, 1863, pg. 15, Letters Received by the Office of the Adjunct General, 1861-1870, (hereafter cited as LROAD) Preliminary and Final Reports, Transcripts of Proceedings and of Testimony Taken, and Other Records of the American Freedmen’s Inquiry Commission, 1863-1864, roll 200, O-328, Record Group 94, NARA.

of southern slaves worked in rural, rather than urban environments, scholars have tended to associate a rural proletariat identity with the general pre and post-emancipation black experience.⁵⁵ Although I argue that there was no collective, working-class black identity among all Mississippi slaves, it is true that many rural slaves in the state envisioned freedom in the form of land ownership. Unlike urban slaves, rural slaves had primarily worked on farms and plantations, and this experience led them to associate freedom with the right to own and work the land on which they had for so long toiled. This was the case for freed people sent to work on the Davis Bend plantations, including those owned by Jefferson Davis and his brother Joseph, located thirty miles south of Vicksburg. In November 1864, Union officials designated Davis Bend a “home farm” where blacks could live and work the land. The government provided black workers with tools, animals, and seeds. By early 1865, roughly 1,750 former slaves worked the Bend in small collectives on separate plots.⁵⁶

Freed people at Davis Bend, however, did not just want to lease and work the land, they wanted to own it. Union military Chaplain James Hawley judged Davis Bend a “grand success,” in which blacks farmed, sold their products, and kept their money, none of which “passed through the hands of white people.” Col. Samuel Thomas, recognizing how blacks desired to own the Davis Bend lands where they worked “separate and apart from the white citizens of the state...where the colored people need not come in contact with their former owners,” recommended to Major General Oliver Howard that several of the plantations be set aside for at least three years for the freed people’s use.⁵⁷ Many newly-freed rural slaves did indeed view

⁵⁵ See footnotes on pgs. 8 and 9. Exceptions to this conclusion include Michael Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation: Popular Politics in Reconstruction Mobile, 1860-1890* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002) and Schermerhorn, *Money over Mastery*.

⁵⁶ Stephen V. Ash, *The Black Experience in the Civil War South* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2010), 78; James T. Currie, *Enclave: Vicksburg and her Plantations, 1863-1870* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1980), 83-95.

⁵⁷ James Hawley to Samuel Thomas, January 10, 1866, Samuel Thomas to O.O. Howard, September 19, 1865, in Steven Hahn, Steven F. Miller, Susan E. O'Donovan, John C. Rodrigue, and Leslie S. Rowland, eds., *Freedom: A*

freedom in terms of land ownership, but Mississippi's urban slaves had different conceptions of freedom, even as they shared with rural slaves a desire to escape white dominance and the servile loyalty it imposed.

Although both urban and rural Mississippi slaves owned personal property, private property that was movable, urban slaves more closely identified freedom in terms of personal property such as livestock, wagons, carriages, cash, produce, and prepared foods and goods rather than immovable land.⁵⁸ This association of freedom with personal property stemmed from the nature of urban slaves' work, which historians have argued placed these slaves in "a middle ground between slavery and freedom" by providing them the opportunities to hire out, as well as labor in workshops and factories in which they could earn wages and work for periods of time apart from their masters. In contrast to rural slaves, whose vision of freedom via land-ownership often tied them to a fixed location and made them reliant on subsistence agriculture, urban slaves were more mobile, working a variety of different jobs in cities and towns that were not tied to large tracts of land. These slaves' presence in urban commercial hubs also integrated them more fully into the marketplace, where they bought and sold goods on a daily basis. The combined mobility of their work and their daily experience with city commerce rather than land made urban slaves less attached to land as a symbol of freedom. After the war, urban slaves stood a

Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867, Series 3, Volume 1, Land and Labor, 1865 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 742-745, 989-990.

⁵⁸ The population of urban slaves represented a small 4.1 percent out of the total slave population of 3,953,760 living in the South in 1860, see Jane Riblett Wilkie, "The Black Urban Population of the Pre-Civil War South," *Phylon* 37 (3rd Qtr., 1976): 253 and Margaret E. Wagner, Gary W. Gallagher, and Paul Finkelman, eds., *The Library of Congress Civil War Desk Reference* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 2009), 70-71; On slave property-ownership, see Phillip D. Morgan, "The Ownership of Property by Slaves in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century Low Country," *Journal of Southern History* 49 (Aug., 1983): 399-420; Scweninger, *Black Property Owners*; Ira Berlin and Phillip D. Morgan, eds., *The Slaves' Economy: Independent Production by Slaves in the Americas* (London: Frank Cass, 1991); Betty Wood, *Women's Work, Men's Work: The Informal Slave Economies of Lowcountry Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995); Dylan Penningroth, *The Claims of Kinfolk: African American Property and Community in the Nineteenth Century South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

better chance of getting their property back from a Federal government that paid out claims to personal property while refusing to redistribute land.⁵⁹

Former Mississippi slaves emphasized their association of personal property with freedom in their post-war claims to the Southern Claims Commission. Nearly all of the former slaves who applied to the Commission to receive payment for property taken from them by the Union army had lived and worked in Mississippi's cities and towns. Like white Mississippians who filed claims, blacks had to sufficiently prove their loyalty to the Union during the war, and the language that they used to do so reveals how urban slaves associated freedom with personal property rights during and after the conflict.

In the post-war period, former slaves expressed Union loyalty because it was the Union that granted them legal freedom. Of course, post-war property claims were inextricably bound up with declarations of allegiance, as any claimant desiring compensation *had* to claim they were loyal, whether they were or not. Although assertions of loyalty in claims should not be taken at face value, they are important because they reveal how nationalism was always bound up with other allegiances. In this respect, former slave claimants were no different than white claimants, as both groups engaged in a process of affirming national loyalty in order to achieve other personal ends. This process began during the war itself: just as Mississippians swore the Union oath of allegiance in order to visit relations behind the lines, secure food and supplies, do

⁵⁹ Whittington B. Johnson, *Black Savannah, 1788-1864* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1996), 86; Bobby L. Lovett, *The African-American History of Nashville, Tennessee, 1780-1930* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1999), 54; Wilkie, "The Black Urban Population of the Pre-Civil War South," 262; The classic study of urban slavery and the quasi-freedom it provided is Richard C. Wade, *Slavery in the Cities: The South, 1820-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964); For studies focusing on slavery in specific southern cities, which build also emphasize the quasi-freedom of urban black life before, during, and after the Civil War, see John W. Blassingame, *Black New Orleans* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973); Wilbert L. Jenkins, *Seizing the New Day: African Americans in Post-Civil War Charleston* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998); Steven Elliot Tripp, *Yankee Town, Southern City: Race and Class Relations in Civil War Lynchburg* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); Midori Takagi, "Rearing Wolves to Our Own Destruction:" *Slavery in Richmond, Virginia, 1782-1865* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999); Richard Paul Fuke, *Imperfect Equality: African Americans and the Confines of White Racial Attitudes in Post-Emancipation Maryland* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1999).

business in Union-held areas, and avoid Confederate conscription, and just as contraband traders had to affirm Union loyalty to exchange goods at Federal lines, black and white Mississippians who submitted claims did so in part out of self-interest. Trying to gauge their “true” national feelings based on these claims misses the broader significance of how such constrained declarations of loyalty reveal the influence of multiple allegiances on individuals during and after the war.

Former urban slaves did not submit claims merely to voice their loyalty to the government: they made them because they wanted restitution for confiscated property. For them, freedom as a lived experience, as opposed to freedom as a legal abstract, meant the right to personal property ownership.⁶⁰ They had experienced this partial freedom before emancipation as property-owning slaves, but for them, true freedom only came when they could act in their own self-interests, by earning wages and owning property free from slaveholders’ authority. Many former urban slaves undoubtedly felt loyalty to the Federal government, but by couching their desires for property reparation in declarations of Union loyalty, they also acted on micro loyalties, because they made such statements as a means to personal ends.

George Winter, a former slave in Canton, Madison County, claimed twenty-four head of hogs and 500 bushels of corn. “My sympathies were on the side of Union because I believed if they whipped [the Confederates] I should be free,” he stated, although he had protested the army’s taking of his property in 1864. Before the war, Winter “made a good deal of money” working odd jobs in town and “was in the habit of having property of his own.” The commission’s report acknowledged that Canton slaves often owned property. Jackson slave Martha Patton claimed livestock taken by Sherman’s army. Patton’s mistress permitted her to

⁶⁰ On the importance slaves placed on personal property, see Dylan Penningroth, “Slavery, Freedom, and Social Claims to Property among African Americans in Liberty County, Georgia, 1850-1880,” *Journal of American History* 84 (Sept., 1997): 405-35.

hire herself out for washing and sewing, and during any “Fair or Festival or Big to do,” allowed her to “keep a table with Refreshments & Eatables.” Patton “made considerable money in that way,” and with obvious pride, stated that “I worked and made it myself...I made the property and controlled it and everybody knew it was mine.” Like Winter, she asked the army to spare her property, to no avail, and insisted that she “never assisted the Rebels in any way.” Another Jackson slave, Maria Carter, claimed two horses and two wagons. Like Patton, she hired herself as a washerwoman, and also “made some money” owning and operating an “eating stand” at the railroad depot, paying her mistress \$10 of her earnings every month. Carter said she “never lived much with my owners” and ran to Union lines to secure “the freedom of myself and my family,” fearing that if she stayed, the Confederates would send her off “in chains.”⁶¹ These former slaves associated personal property ownership with freedom because working and owning property before the war gave them tangible freedom in the form of limited independence from their masters’ authority. For Carter especially, the Union army enforced the freedom she had already claimed for herself by running off. But beyond being free in the legal sense, *living* free for Carter meant the right to get back the property she had amassed on her own.

The influence of former urban slaves’ loyalty layers ensured that their declarations of Union allegiance to the Claims Commission were always intertwined with self-interest. Indeed, some explicitly argued that, in exchange for their loyalty, the government should reciprocate with property compensation. Natchez slave Richard Dorsey, a drayman who had “hired his time for fifteen years of his master,” claimed over \$1200 in horses and riding supplies. During the

⁶¹ Statement of George Winter, July 23, 1873, Statement of Samuel Brown, July 26, 1873, Commissioner’s Remarks on George Winter, August 2, 1873, in Claim of George Winter, December 5, 1877, Southern Claims Commission (hereafter cited as SCC), Madison County, Mississippi, Claim 18415, RG 217, digital images, *Fold3.com*, <http://www.fold3.com/> (accessed May 26, 2012); Statement of Martha Patton, October 24, 1874, Claim of Martha Patton, December 20, 1875, claim 16720; Statement of Maria Carter, Statement of Louis Williams, March 9, 1875, Claim of Maria Carter, December 5, 1877, claim 11986, both in SCC.

war, he used his dray service to haul commissary stores and cotton for the Union army without pay, claiming that he was “glad of the chance to do something” because he “always sympathized with the Union cause.” Dorsey and other slaves were glad that the Federal presence in Natchez had negated slaveholders’ authority. “Colored men had no public reputation for loyalty – the white people knew that they all desired the success of the Union forces,” Dorsey’s friend James Hyman noted. But Dorsey also appreciated how Union occupation gave him the opportunity to get “all the business I wanted,” and he “made money right fast.” Nelson Findley, a slave blacksmith in Woodville, Wilkinson County, claimed \$355 in horses, which he had accumulated, alongside “a good deal of money & purchased stock” by purchasing and selling horses before “as if I was free.” Findley said he was “for the Union cause,” and followed the army hoping to get his horses back, only to end up working as a blacksmith and a fireman on Union transport boats. He deemed recompense for his lost property as just payment for his work for the Union cause during the war.⁶² Dorsey and Findley recognized that the Federal government made them legally free by undermining slaveholders’ authority, and willingly aided the Union cause. But in exchange for their service, they wanted payment for their impressed property. They thereby suggested that loyalty to the nation was contingent on that nation’s guaranteeing protection for certain individual rights, in these cases, the right to hold property. For Dorsey and Findley, self-interest defined freedom in tandem with macro loyalty to the Union.

Other urban Mississippi slaves echoed Dorsey and Findley’s positions, suggesting that their loyalty to the Union was, in part, contingent on the expectations that the Federal government would respect their rights to private property. In this respect, they ironically shared

⁶² Statement of Claims Commissioner for Richard Dorsey Claim, June 19, 1874, Statement of Richard Dorsey, Statement of James Hyman, September 25, 1873, Statement of James Hyman, September 25, 1873, Claim of Richard Dorsey, December, 1874, claim 4337; Statement of Nelson Findley, Claim of Nelson Findley, December 20, 1875, claim 16219, both in SCC.

similarities with Mississippi planters who protested Confederate impressments of their slaves based on the idea that a nation worthy of their loyalty should respect the rights of property owners. Henry Banks, a slave carriage and hack driver in Vicksburg, claimed \$1000 in a carriage and horses. He explained that while he “never had any land,” he had “for several years” hired himself out and “got up considerable property when the war came on.” When Federal soldiers confiscated his hack and horses, Banks protested “as a loyal man” and “said some bad words” to the soldiers. Nonetheless, Banks affirmed his Union loyalty because if the Yankees prevailed, “we [slaves] could go where, when, & how we pleased, and our children would no longer be sold.” Yet, it was precisely concerns about freedom of choice that lay behind Banks’ anger over the loss of his property. During the war, he claimed that he “could have made Twenty dollars a day clear of expense” because cotton buyers “spent money like water” and Union soldiers “would pay anything you asked, and we asked all we thought we could get.” Banks estimated that he “lost not less than Five Hundred Dollars before I got another hack & horses.”⁶³ He rooted his complaints about Federal impressments in the claim that without his hack and horse, he was losing money, and that as “a loyal man,” he deserved just compensation. Much like Mississippi planters who complained about Confederate impressments of slaves, Banks believed that in exchange for his loyalty, the Federal government should respect his property rights.

A nation that respected property rights was equally important to Severin Boudreaux of Pascagoula. He was atypical for a Mississippi slave, being a mixed-race member of the state’s small, French-descended, Gulf Coast Creole population.⁶⁴ Boudreaux was born of a free father

⁶³ Statement of Henry Banks, June 24, 1873, Claim of Henry Banks, December, 1874, claim 14443, SCC.

⁶⁴ Little has been written about Mississippi’s Gulf Coast black and white Creole populations. For a general history of the region, with some discussion of its ethnic groups, see Cyril Edward Cain, ed., *Four Centuries on the Pascagoula*, 2 vols. (Spartanburg, SC: Preprint Co., 1953, 1983); On French and Spanish settlement in Mississippi, see Celest Ray, “European Mississippians,” in Shana Walton, Barbara Carpenter, eds., *Ethnic Heritage in Mississippi: The Twentieth Century* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2012), 32-74; Another recent study that discusses the region’s ethnic background is Edmond Boudreaux, *The Seafood Capital of the World: Biloxi’s*

and a slave mother, and “was practically a free man” who “acted for himself, acquired property, and was to all intents and purposes his own master.” He claimed over \$6000 to replace nearly 200 head of cattle lost to Union forces. Boudreaux affirmed that while did not serve either side during the war but was “always in favor of the United States.” This sympathy notwithstanding, he angrily told the claims interviewer, “I want you to put down that since the war ended I have suffered a great deal till now; because the United States government took all I had.” One witness testified on Boudreaux’s behalf that creoles were “generally good Union people” with some “exceptions among the white creoles” but “hardly any among the colored,” while another seconded that colored creoles were pro-Union and white creoles pro-Confederate. After a long investigation, the commission approved his claim, concluding that coastal creole slaves often led “lives of independence” and pursued business “as they pleased.” Boudreaux, like, Henry Banks, supported the Union but resented its impressments of his property. He believed that a government bent on verifying his loyalty should in return respect his property rights. Although he was not typical of Mississippi slaves, Boudreaux shared with other urban slaves the view that alongside the legally-free status granted by the Federal government, self-interest via property-ownership was essential to how they experienced freedom on a daily basis.⁶⁵

The fact that Mississippi slaves acted on loyalty layers does not negate the fact that nationalism was one of the loyalties that drove their wartime behavior. Even Severin Boudreaux, who lived in relative independence due to an absent mistress, was still ineligible to vote and was considered racially inferior by whites creoles, underscoring how even the most “free” of

Maritime History (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2011); On black Creoles in neighboring Louisiana, see Carl A. Brasseaux, Keith P. Fontenot, and Claude F. Oubre, *Creoles of Color in the Bayou Country* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1994).

⁶⁵ Statement of Severin Boudreaux, Statement of Adolph Krebs, Statement of Alfred Henry, March 7, 1874, Claim Commissioner’s Remarks Regarding Claim of Severin Boudreaux, March, 1874, Claim of Severin Boudreaux, December, 1874, claim 8644, SCC.

Mississippi slaves were still under the heel of white authority. Many slaves therefore believed the Union nation to be a symbol of their newfound freedom because its armies undermined the authority of the slaveholders. Slaves aided the Union cause by hauling goods for Federal troops and working as laborers in Union capacity, while others worked to escape and undermine slaveholders' mastery by fighting for the Union as spies and soldiers.

Slaves throughout the state offered Union officials valuable intelligence on Confederate plans and troop movements. "I find the Yankees keep well-posted through negroes...who run as couriers to them, taking by-paths through the swamp," observed a Mississippi cavalry officer in late 1863. In 1862, a Union officer stationed in Corinth told a colonel to protect slaves who brought "important information concerning the enemy." During the Vicksburg campaign, an Iowa regiment colonel informed General John Rawlins that "bright and intelligent" contrabands that had come into Union lines provided "a great deal of information in regard to the Condition of affairs at Vicksburg." One of the slaves had worked on Confederate artillery, and knew "the position & numbers of almost every gun from Vicksburg down to Warrenton." In September 1864, Jack, a Hinds County slave, described how he went "thrgh [sic] the woods & cane brakes [and] swam Big Black River" to reach Union lines at Vicksburg, where he told the Federals that Forrest was stalking the Pearl River "with six (6) thousand cavly & right smart of artillery." Union officials recognized the military value of runaway slaves' local knowledge.⁶⁶

Mississippi slaveholders chafed at slaves' colluding with the Federals. "Oh! Deliver me from the 'citizens of African descent,'" Louisa Lovell wrote in 1864, "they are all alike ungrateful and treacherous, every servant is a spy upon us, & everything we do or say is reported

⁶⁶ United States War Department, comp., *The War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 130 vols. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), ser. 1, vol. 31, pt. 3, pg. 880; ser. 1, vol. 17, pt. 2, pg. 21 (hereafter cited as *OR*); Charles H. Abbott to John H. Rawlins, March 26, 1863, Affidavit of Jack, September 13, 1864, in Berlin, et al., eds. *The Destruction of Slavery*, 302-303, 325-326.

to the Yankees.” In late 1863, Pike County resident S.N. Gilman implored jailers in Jackson not to release his runaway slave, Henry Banks. Gilman claimed Banks had become “dangerous to the community” and that if released, would run to the enemy “to whom his services would at this time be invaluable” due to his “perfect knowledge of this part of the state.” In May 1863, Confederate spy M. Carrigan told General Pemberton that a friend had given him a slave woman who was “more trouble than all the rest of the negroes in the neighborhood. She is a spy for the Yankees.” Carrigan said that his friend “wanted me to bring her into the swamp and kill her,” noting that “he would have killed her himself but is so closely watched that no opportunity has presented itself.”⁶⁷ Slaves betrayed their expected servile loyalty to slaveholders by spying for the Federals, knowing full well that Union victory would undermine slaveholders’ authority. The master class, in turn, reacted with outrage at such servant betrayal. They understood that by aiding the Union, slaves were undermining the Confederate war effort, but, more importantly, they believed that slaves were also fighting to reverse the master-slave relationship.

Beyond merely spying for the Union, black Mississippians also fought in its armies. Most accounts credit Mississippi with providing roughly 17,000 troops, twenty-one percent of the state’s black men between the eligible fighting ages of 18 and 45. In his recent study of Civil War Mississippi, Timothy Smith liberally expands this estimate to 25,000 to 30,000 black Union troops by including regiments raised in Mississippi but credited to other states, and regiments raised outside of the state but consisting of black Mississippians. Most of these troops served garrison duty in the occupied parts of the state, though the regiment raised at the Corinth

⁶⁷ Louisa T. Lovell to Joseph Lovell, February 7, 1864, Quitman Family Papers, fol. 112; S.N. Gilman to Jailer at Jackson, December 29, 1863, Pettus Correspondence, roll 2812; M. Carrigan to John Pemberton, May 12, 1863, Pemberton Papers, fol. 2, box 6.

contraband camp took part in the Battle of Brices' Crossroads in June 1864, and the 54th U.S. Colored Infantry earned accolades for their fighting at Milliken's Bend in June 1863.⁶⁸

White Mississippians refused to accept the idea of black soldiers. In August 1863, Elizabeth Brown was "very much alarmed" when more Union cavalry marched through Natchez. "I thought they were armed men (I cannot call them Soldiers) of African descent," she wrote, but was relieved that "they were [white] Yankees, because of the two evils I think I would rather have the latter." Brown distinguished black soldiers from "Yankees," because if blacks were soldiers, they by extension expressed loyalty to the Union, and therefore were not unconditionally loyal to Mississippi whites, a true "evil" in Brown's eyes. In December 1863, when William Sively heard of Union raiders in Hinds and Madison counties composed of "principally negroes," he told his sister that "a negro will never get any quarter from me." The war's most infamous instance of "no quarter" came in April 1864, when Confederates under General Nathan Bedford Forrest massacred surrendered black troops at Fort Pillow, Tennessee. Referencing the massacre, black soldiers in north Mississippi "shook their fists" at white civilians and "told them they were going to show Forrest that they were his rulers." Samuel Agnew later described how Forrest returned to Mississippi with Union prisoners, including black soldiers. "The most of the negroes were shot, our men being so much incensed that they shoot them wherever they see them," he wrote, "it is certain that a great many negroes have been killed."⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Gary W. Gallagher, *The Union War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 146 fn; Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War*, 153-155.

⁶⁹ Elizabeth Christie Brown Diary, August 12, 1863; William R. Sively to Jane Sively, December 9, 1863, Jane Sively Letters, fol. 1; James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (1988, Repr., New York: Ballantine, 1989), 748; Agnew Diary, June 11, 13, 1864; On Confederates' "no quarter" approach to black Union troops, see George S. Burkhardt, *Confederate Rage, Yankee Wrath: No Quarter in the Civil War* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2007); Gregory J.W. Urwin, ed., *Black Flag Over Dixie: Racial Atrocities and Reprisals in the Civil War* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004); Richard Slotkin, *No Quarter: The*

White Mississippians' "no quarter" approach to black Union troops was merely one facet of the broader personal conflict in which they tried to reassert mastery over blacks, regardless of whether or not they were legally free. In 1863, Union General James Wadsworth toured the Mississippi Valley to assess the status of blacks in the region. Even though many slaves had become free by fleeing to Union lines, he expressed worry over "the efforts that are made to restore them to slavery," and predicted that post-war Mississippi would be host to "a sort of war between freedom and slavery." Wadsworth believed that if "the [white] people of Mississippi" accepted emancipation as "a fixed fact," the Federals could withdraw from the state. Yet, one planter told him that "we are ready to give up the name of 'slavery,' we care nothing about the name, but we must have a certain control over these people." In light of such sentiments from whites, Wadsworth advocated that the government divide plantations out among black families and arm blacks for protection, but admitted that such efforts required "very complicated machinery for the Govt. to manage it."⁷⁰ Wadsworth proved prophetic. Even after Confederate surrender, "a sort of war between freedom and slavery" waged on, but it was the same conflict between slaves and slaveholders that had flared during the antebellum period, and escalated during the Civil War. As blacks struggled to realize their visions of freedom in immediate post-war Mississippi, former slaveholders fought to maintain the racial hierarchy at all costs. The Federal army found itself the de-facto, if not entirely dedicated, mediator between these two factions.

In the waning months of the war, as the specter of defeat loomed over the Confederacy, former slaves found that despite their freed status, former slaveholders were determined to

Battle of the Crater, 1864 (New York: Random House, 2009); Kevin M. Levin, *Remembering the Battle of the Crater: War as Murder* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012).

⁷⁰ Testimony of General James Wadsworth, April, 1863, pgs. 57, 69-70, LROAD, roll 200.

maintain white racial dominance. Black Mississippians chose different paths to freedom, with some choosing to flee from, and others to work as paid laborers for, their old masters.

Nevertheless, they demanded that whites recognize that freedom signaled the end of the master-slave relationship and its attendant expectations of black servile loyalty. For former slaveholders, Confederate defeat eventually deprived them of a slaveholding republic, but black freedom threatened to divest them of the personal power they had long wielded over servants at the most intimate level, and which defined their lives on a daily basis. They therefore refused to drop the coercive methods used to enforce black servility and uphold the old racial hierarchy.

In October 1864, for example, Nat Green, the slave of Thomas Jones of DeSoto County, considered fleeing until Jones offered to pay him wages if he stayed to work. Green worked for Jones until May 1865 but “never received any pay whatsoever.” When Green demanded his wages, Jones threatened his life, after which Green fled to Federal lines. Betsey Robinson, of Panola County, testified that she had worked for her master well into 1865 because, “he never gave me any information in regard to My being free. I left him because My self and Children were suffering for food and clothing.” Before fleeing, Robinson demanded payment from her master for “part of the years labor,” which he refused. In a particularly violent incident, Harriet Kilgore stated that in December 1865, when she refused to work due to a backache, her master, Landon Kilgore, beat her because “I thought that I was free and would do nothing he told me too.” Kilgore stripped her and flogged her with “a stake used to hold up th [sic] side boards of a waggon Box,” and threatened death if she reported the beating. Harriet fled to Federal authorities the next day, claiming that “the white people in my neighborhood tell all the Colored ones that they are not free but are slaves and I did not know that I was free till you told me so today.” In these cases, slaveholders denied slaves the freedom that the law had granted to them, and used

the same coercive methods that characterized the master-slave relationship to enforce post-emancipation black servility. What mattered to them was not the semantics of racial control, but the ability to maintain it.⁷¹

Former slaves expected their ex-masters to honor their right to act on micro loyalties to self and family as freed people. When whites refused, some blacks protested with their feet. In July 1865, when Madison County planter A. Murdock contracted with two of his former slaves to leave their jobs in Vicksburg and work for him, the men instead took their families from his plantation and returned to the city. They encouraged others to take advantage of Vicksburg wages that paid \$60 per month. Murdock's former slaves told the Federals that he was "whipping them badly," to which Murdock claimed he only did so "when actually Necessary. To make them work. And enforce necessary obedience and discipline on the farm." Murdock's former slaves acted in their own and their family's interests by removing their kin from his authority and seeking their own employment in Vicksburg. In doing so they also rejected his demands for continued obedience. As Sharon Ann Holt writes, "because family loyalties survived despite the depredations of white hegemony, whenever African Americans displayed the power of their family ties, they were simultaneously mocking the vanity of white tyranny."⁷²

Later that summer, Dabney, a Marshal County freedman working for his former master, fled to Union authorities after the man's son and mother punched him the face and caned him over the head and shoulders, claiming that "no damned Yankees could set us free." Dabney believed his employer wanted to drive him from the premises "so as to keep the crop for his own

⁷¹ Affidavits of Nat Green, October 9, Betsey Robinson, August 3, Harriet Kilgore, December 4, 1865, in Hahn, et al., eds., *Land and Labor*, 326, 150, 168-69.

⁷² A. Murdock to Samuel Thomas, July 17, 1865, in Hahn, et al., eds., *Land and Labor*, 513-514; Sharon Ann Holt, "Symbol, Memory, and Service: Resistance and Family Formation in Nineteenth-Century African America," in Larry E. Hudson, ed., *Working Towards Freedom: Slave Society and Domestic Economy in the American South* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 1994), 195.

use and benefit.” Based on this testimony, Federal authorities fined Dabney’s employer and forced him to pay Dabney his share of wages. In November 1865, several of Carol County planter Joseph Stanley’s former slaves testified to Union authorities that after they refused to work in the afternoon, Stanley tried to whip them, beat one woman over the head with a hoe, and then shot at them when they fled the premises. A Federal peace officer informed Stanley that if he wanted the freedmen to work for him, “perhaps it will be best not to whip them.”⁷³ In these cases, freed people attempted to either separate themselves from their former owners, or invoked Federal authority to claim the wages owed them as free workers. Well aware of whites’ intentions to uphold the master-slave relationship, black Mississippians resisted this concerted effort by attempting to live out their conceptions of freedom and calling on Federal authorities to protect their new rights.

Federal authorities were certainly aware of the continuing racial conflict. In July 1865, Chaplain James Hawley observed that planters’ “common feeling” was that “the Freed men should remain on the plantations... ‘*as they always had done.*’” Planters, he noted, were most concerned with “1. How to control the negro. 2. How to work him hard enough. 3. How to pay him with the least possible expense... they could not endure the thot [sic] of giving up the blessed privilege of ‘licking a nigger.’” Black Mississippians recognized that whatever Federal law said, the first line of struggle continued to be with the former slaveholders. As Hawley recognized, “the rough barbarism of war has torn off the veil that covered the radical barbarism of Slavery.”⁷⁴ For Union officials, the war against the Confederacy had overshadowed the internal war between black and white Mississippians, a war that former slaves continued to wage against the “radical barbarism” that threatened to diminish their freedom.

⁷³ Affidavit of Dabney, August 12, Affidavit of Henry Morris, November 16, 1865, in Hahn, et al., eds., *Land and Labor*, 585-86, 756-57.

⁷⁴ James A. Hawley to Samuel Thomas, July 4, 1865, in *Ibid*, 110, 113, 119.

By mid-1865, many Federal authorities recognized that racial conflict in Mississippi was intensifying. They agreed that black rights needed to be enforced, but argued over what measures the government should take to do so. An August 1865 Freedmen's Bureau circular reminded whites that "Emancipation is a fact," and chastised them for "abuses of Freedmen of the gravest character." While it admitted that blacks were "universally suspicious of white men. and especially of former slave-holders," the circular warned that only "kindness and fair dealing" could minimize racial conflict. A month earlier, cavalry officer H.R. Brinkerhoff reported on planters' efforts to return freed people "peremptorily to their '*masters*'" by denying them fair treatment as workers. "There is already a secret, Rebel, anti-emigration Pro-slavery Party formed or forming in this State," he noted, who were laboring "for a restoration of the old system of slavery...or some manner of involuntary servitude." Brinkerhoff indicated a thread of continuity between the antebellum, wartime, and post-war periods. By using words like "masters," "slavery," and "Rebel," he detailed how Mississippi whites planned to bridge these periods through the continuation of the old racial hierarchy.⁷⁵

The Civil War in Mississippi escalated the internal conflict between slaves and slaveholders that had simmered during the antebellum era, but intensified when the Union army arrived in the state in 1862. Slaveholders insisted that their slaves only express an unconditional servile loyalty to their masters, which was the basis of the master-slave relationship. Slaves rejected this servility by acting on micro loyalties to self, family, and community. These loyalty layers, forged under slavery, were both the means and the ends in slaves' struggle for freedom. They enabled enslaved African-Americans to construct realized lives despite being under slaveholders' dominance, and informed the multiple conceptions of freedom that individual

⁷⁵ "Circular by the Mississippi Freedmen's Bureau Assistant Commissioner," August 4, H.R. Brinkerhoff to O.O. Howard, July 8, 1865, in Hahn, et al., eds., *Land and Labor*, 152-155, 617-619.

blacks formulated during and after the war. Rather than displaying a collective, proletarian identity that envisioned freedom within the constructs of a separate black nation, characterized by the right to own and work southern lands, Mississippi slaves instead had many different visions of what freedom entailed.

The various ways that slaves rejected their masters' authority during the war were all methods that they employed during the antebellum era, and reflected individual slaves' interpretations of freedom. Recognizing the opportunity provided by the encroachment of Union forces in Mississippi, many slaves ran off to Federal lines, demonstrating that for them, freedom from white mastery meant physical separation from their owners. Slaves who did not run off nonetheless appropriated spaces for themselves within the realm of white control. Some chose to work according to their own schedules, while others chose not to work at all. Because work had been so central to slaves' lives, many envisioned freedom as controlling their own labor. Some slaves even appropriated the violent coercion whites' used to enforce servility in blacks by physically attacking their owners, employing their bodies to assert their autonomy in their masters' presence. Because their work lives centered on agriculture, rural slaves saw freedom in land ownership. By contrast, Mississippi's urban slaves, whose masters frequently permitted them to hire out, hold property, and even run businesses, saw freedom in property rights and wage work. Some slaves experienced freedom by spying for, or fighting in, the Union army. By aiding the Union's fight against the Confederacy, slaves by extension rejected slaveholders' racially-based mastery, the ideology that the Confederacy was founded to protect. Although freedom meant different things for different black Mississippians, they shared a common desire to separate themselves from white dominance, thereby gaining the right to openly act on loyalties to self, family, community, and nation free from the racial hierarchy.

Mississippi slaveholders interpreted slaves' wartime behavior as disloyalty to the master class, not as treason against the Confederate government. As the intermediaries between slaves and the state, they understood that alongside the war between the Union and the Confederacy, slaves were waging an internal war against the racial hierarchy. As the primary enforcers of white mastery, slaveholders believed that if they lost the ability to enforce black servility, then the racial hierarchy would be reversed. This distinction matters because it reveals a critical continuity between the antebellum, wartime, and post-war eras. Because the vast majority of interactions between blacks and whites took place at the local level, the collapse of the Confederate government did not signal an end to the racial hierarchy that was its cornerstone. The right to exercise total dominance over blacks, justified by the idea that as slaves, they were to express unconditional servile loyalty to their masters, had been the underlying principle of southern race relations during the antebellum period. Protecting this right was the central goal of the Confederate cause, but the ideal of white mastery transcended the Confederacy and continued to guide white Mississippians' actions in the post-war period precisely because it was a consistent theme of southern history.

Epilogue: “Allegiance and Protection are and Must be Reciprocal:” The Aftermath of War in Mississippi

In an 1866 speech to a DeSoto County grand jury, Mississippi lawyer James Trotter reflected on the Civil War and what the South should expect now that it was over. “We made a sacrifice of upward of 4,000,000, slaves[,] a peace-offering upon the altar of the Union,” he stated, claiming that Mississippi now had “every motive to be true and loyal” to the Federal government. In return for this loyalty, Mississippians reserved the right to “assert the rightful jurisdiction of our State and enforce our own municipal codes.” Trotter added that although state laws regarding “the labor and the conduct of our late slaves” were not “entirely satisfactory” to Federal authorities, he hoped that they would allow Mississippi to “enjoy the protection which our allegiance challenges. For allegiance and protection are and must be reciprocal.” Writing to his wife in August 1865, James Alcorn similarly advocated southern loyalty in exchange for racial control. He advocated letting blacks testify in court and vote because “political equality does not imply by any means social equality.” Black political behavior, he wrote, could be circumscribed, noting that “his [the freedman’s] testimony may be made to go to his credibility, & his suffrage may be based upon his property.”¹

Trotter and Alcorn outlined how white Mississippians justified renouncing Confederate national loyalty for the right to control racial loyalties at the local level. In exchange for their re-declared allegiance to the Union they demanded that Washington grant them what Trotter called “protection,” or, more specifically, the right to “protect” white Mississippians from the specter of racial equality by regulating “the labor and the conduct of our late slaves.” Alcorn, Mississippi’s most prominent Old Whig scalawag, recognized that slavery had been abolished and that blacks

¹ James F. Trotter Paper, 1866, 00930-z, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (hereafter cited as SHC); James L. Alcorn to Wife, August 26, 1865, James Lusk Alcorn Papers, 1850-1949, fol. 4, 00005-z, Ibid.

would demand political rights. To deal with this reality, he proposed granting limited black suffrage while still quelling their vote numbers enough to keep whites in control of state government.² Thus, after the Civil War, white Mississippians were determined to uphold white racial dominance based on the underlying ideology of black servility. Their attempt to do so, and freed people's resistance to such as attempt, was the most significant of the continuities that linked Mississippi's antebellum, Civil War, and post-war periods.

By the spring of 1865, the Confederacy was nearing total collapse, and Mississippi in particular was in shambles. As civil law ceased to function, deserters infested nearly every county in the state, plundering indiscriminately and at will. The state's Confederate legislature had its last meetings in February and March, though it existed as a government in name only, being unable to aid and assist its citizenry nor pass any enforceable laws. Following Robert E. Lee's surrender to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865, and Joseph Johnson's surrender to William T. Sherman on April 26, Richard Taylor's forces at Mobile, Alabama remained the only significant Confederate army east of the Mississippi. When Taylor finally surrendered his command of the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana to Union General Richard Springs Canby on May 4, official Confederate military activities in Mississippi ended. Governor Charles Clark and the Mississippi state legislature made a final defiant stand in Jackson on May 20, authorizing themselves to negotiate post-war peace settlements with Federal authorities. A few days later, however, Union officials arrested Clark and sent him to Fort Pulaski, Georgia, where he remained until receiving pardon several weeks later.³

² Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 298.

³ Ben Wynne, *Mississippi's Civil War: A Narrative History* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2006), 169-77.

In June 1865, President Andrew Johnson appointed William L. Sharkey provisional governor of Mississippi. A long time admirer of Henry Clay, Sharkey was an old-line conservative Whig who had opposed secession in 1861, and had even conferred with Union officers during the war about plans for eventual Reconstruction. In August 1865, Sharkey called a constitutional convention in Jackson, which eventually voted to abolish slavery and establish a new constitution. It also scheduled elections for state and local officials for October. Despite his conservative Unionism, Sharkey balked at securing political rights for the freed people. He argued against Federal military intervention on behalf of freed people's rights, insisting that these issues should be tackled by the reconstruction convention and the state legislature. Federal military officials, however, disagreed. Although President Johnson had vaguely stated that the military was to "aid" but not "interfere" with the provisional government affairs, the 1865 act of Congress establishing the Freedmen's Bureau placed it under the control of the War Department, thereby empowering the military, in the eyes of many Federal officers, to help freed people in any way it saw fit.⁴

Federals' suspicion that the provisional government, and, indeed, that the whole native white population refused to accept the realities of emancipation were well-founded. In October 1865, voters elected former Confederate general Benjamin G. Humphreys governor and packed the state legislature with former Confederates. This body immediately passed a group of laws collectively known as the Black Code. As historian James Currie notes, "there is a quantum jump...between emancipation and equality," and Mississippi at that time was "unwilling to consider seriously any proposition by which black men and whites would legally become equals." The Black Code prevented most blacks from renting or leasing rural lands; denied them

⁴ Wynne, *Mississippi's Civil War*, 180; William C. Harris, *Presidential Reconstruction in Mississippi* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), 43, 61-2.

the right to own firearms; required that they display difficult to acquire licenses to hold a variety of jobs; and document that they were not vagrants by providing written evidence of having a home. The Code also contained vagrancy laws under which “suspicious” blacks could be arrested, fined, and “hired out” to their former masters if they could not pay the fine.⁵ Lest there be any confusion that the antebellum ideology of black servile loyalty underlay this Code, one of its provisions stated:

All the penal and criminal laws now in force in this State, defining offences and describing the mode of punishment for crimes and misdemeanors committed by slaves, free negroes, or mulattoes...are hereby re-enacted, and declared to be in full force and effect, against freedmen, free negroes and mulattoes, except so far as the mode and manner of trial and punishment have been changed or altered by law.⁶

The newly-elected state legislature demonstrated how the state’s white population continued its struggle to uphold the racial hierarchy. Not coincidentally, their resolve intensified amidst rumors throughout 1865 that armed blacks in the South would rebel against whites, and that white-owned land would either be confiscated by the Federal government or seized outright by the freed people. Many whites expected the insurrection to come to a head during the Christmas season. Stephen Nissenbaum notes that African Americans had long associated Christmas with “a symbolic inversion of the social hierarchy – with grand gestures of paternalist generosity by the white patrons who had always governed their lives.” Masters acted in their own self-interest by giving slaves gifts and leisure time during the holidays hoping that doing so would dissuade rebellious slave behavior in the coming year. Nonetheless, slaves took advantage of these paternalistically granted holiday “freedoms” by moving unconstrained around the planters’ homes and symbolically mocking white authority through popular revelry, which

⁵ Wynne, *Mississippi’s Civil War*, 180; Harris, *Presidential Reconstruction in Mississippi*, 121-40; James T. Currie, “From Slavery to Freedom in Mississippi’s Legal System,” *Journal of Negro History* 65 (Spring, 1980), 112-25, quote on 112.

⁶ Quoted in Currie, *Ibid*, “From Slavery to Freedom in Mississippi’s Legal System,” 119.

included dancing while dressed in the style of their gentry patrons. In 1865, however, white Mississippians feared that freed slaves had new white patrons, the Federal army, who would give them the ultimate Christmas gift: reversal of the racial hierarchy. Thus, the Christmas insurrection scare thrived on the same fears exhibited by white Mississippians during the war, the fears that newly-freed blacks would rise up in violent rebellion to reverse the racial hierarchy.⁷

In order to prevent this supposed Christmas rebellion, white Mississippians violently intensified their efforts to reassert dominance over blacks, part of a general pattern throughout the former Confederate South where, as Kidada Williams writes, “the violence that white southerners had used to subjugate enslaved and free blacks before and during the Civil War continued and intensified after emancipation.”⁸ White Mississippians believed that acknowledging the reality of emancipation did not entail accepting black social equality. Just as they had used coercive violence to enforce black servility under slavery, they also used it to control blacks’ access to land, employment, firearms, suffrage, the courts, and to restrict their freedoms of speech and assembly.

⁷ Steven Hahn, “‘Extravagant Expectations of Freedom:’ Rumour, Political Struggle, and the Christmas Insurrection Scare of 1865 in the American South,” *Past and Present* 157 (Nov., 1997): 122-23, 138-39; Stephen Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas: A Cultural History of America’s Most Cherished Holiday* (New York: Vintage, 1996), 268, 279-97, quote on 293.

⁸ Kidada E. Williams, *They Left Great Marks on Me: African American Testimonies of Racial Violence from Emancipation to World War I* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 19, 4-5; For more on the pervasiveness of white on black violence in the Reconstruction South, see Allen W. Trelease, *White Terror: The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971); Mary Ellison, *The Black Experience: American Blacks Since 1865* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1974); George Rable, *But There was no Peace: The Role of Violence in the Politics of Reconstruction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984); Robert Shapiro, *White Violence and Black Response: From Reconstruction to Montgomery* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988); Donald G. Nieman, ed., *Black Freedom, White Violence: 1865-1900* (New York: Garland, 1994); Stetson Kennedy, *After Appomattox: How the South Won the War* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995); John C. Willis, *Forgotten Time: The Yazoo-Mississippi Delta after the Civil War* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000); Hannah Rosen, *Terror in the Heart of Freedom: Citizenship, Sexual Violence, and the Meaning of Race in the Postemancipation South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

Whites used unsubstantiated fears of black uprisings to justify violence. White fears and paranoia of black revolts had thrived in the South before and during the war, but, as Mark Wahlgren Summers observes, “the war’s conclusion only intensified the tendency to accept misinformation.” He notes that “desperation breeds the most outlandish hopes,” and, for southerners bent on maintaining the racial hierarchy, “the wildest rumors were welcome, when they promised a revolution in events.” To white Mississippians, the maintenance of black servile loyalty constituted such a “revolution in events.” Rumors of a black Christmastime revolt were based on some facts. Desirous of economic independence, many freed people believed that a redistribution of land was coming at the end of the planting season, and held off from signing new work contracts until 1866. Further, blacks also gathered at night for fraternal assemblies and to discuss politics so as to accommodate daytime work schedules and to avoid white retaliation, but whites construed black night time gatherings as evidence of conspiracies. In the final months of 1865, Summers notes, “white southerners expected the worst, even without evidence,” then again, evidence for them was unnecessary anyway, since “only by the severest of subordination could one race keep the other from striving to dominate.” Rumors of a black Christmas uprising further justified, in whites’ eyes, the need for racial coercions.⁹

Fears of a coming holiday insurrection circulated throughout Mississippi early in the fall of 1865, and they were often stoked by state officials. In October, for example, Governor Sharkey warned Freedmen’s Bureau Commissioner Oliver Howard that blacks expected “a distribution of property this winter” and that “a general revolt is contemplated in case the property is not divided.” He wanted blacks disarmed to prevent this “diabolical scheme,” recommended that freed people be arrested for idleness, and that all black Federal troops be

⁹ Mark Wahlgren Summers, *A Dangerous Stir: Fear, Paranoia, and the Making of Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 49-68, quotes on 50, 55.

immediately removed from the state. Sharkey included a letter from a concerned Holmes County citizen who claimed that the freed people were planning to “rise and do a great deal of harm to the country.” Federal officials like Colonel Samuel Thomas were often skeptical of such claims. “People who talk so much of insurrection, and idleness, and vagrancy among the freedmen, have an ulterior motive,” he told Howard, “if they can once get free of all control, they know they can do as they please with the negro.” Thomas even noted that in private talks, Sharkey admitted that “all fears of an insurrection were unfounded.”¹⁰ By painting the freed people as a threat to white safety, Mississippi whites hoped to remove all Federal protection for blacks from the state, thereby making it easier for them to circumscribe black freedoms.

Rumors of an impending black insurrection continued to swirl around the state. In late October, Noxubee County citizens told President Johnson that the freed people expected to “get our lands Homes mules Horses Corn & &c &c by Christmas,” adding that if the government did not redistribute these things, blacks intended to “fight & kill off the white population & get what they want by force.” Natchez militia captain William Martin warned Sharkey that freed people insisted on “land of their own,” and would “never again work for white men.” Martin recommended disarming blacks, insisting that “Such a Servile population – So numerous so disaffected, So misinformed, so ignorant & withall so vicious Can not be held in check very Easily.”¹¹ Both of these reports claimed that blacks intended to revolt if they did not receive whites’ land and property. They believed that black freedom entailed the reversal of the racial hierarchy, symbolized in black appropriation of white property. Martin revealed that insurrection

¹⁰ William L. Sharkey to O. O. Howard, October 10, Samuel Thomas to O.O. Howard, November 2, 1865, in Steven Hahn, Steven F. Miller, Susan E. O'Donovan, John C. Rodrigue, and Leslie S. Rowland, eds., *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867, Series 3, Volume 1, Land and Labor, 1865* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 814-15, 816-19.

¹¹ F. Marion Shields to Andrew Johnson, October 25, William T. Martin to B.G. Humphreys, October 27, 1865, in Hahn, et al., eds., *Land and Labor*, 821-22, and 823-24.

rumors were a vehicle for re-asserting loyalty in a “Servile population” that was “ignorant,” and therefore belonged under the heel of white mastery.

Federal authorities recognized that the rumors of a black Christmas insurrection corresponded with increasing white violence against freed people. In late November, Pike County-based Captain James Mathews told Major George Reynolds that “daily murders” were being perpetrated by “Militia or black cavalry...who seem to have special fears of an insurrection” and were “particularly adapted to hunting, flogging and killing colored people.” Mathews believed that circulating reports of black insurrection was “a mere subterfuge by which to justify the most foul and bloody murders...upon a race that is unarmed and unable even to defend themselves.” He asked for more Federal troops, noting that whites were always the first aggressors and that blacks were “defenceless in the eyes of the law, and before tribunals whose prejudices are as old as the laws themselves.”¹² Mathews understood that whites spread rumors of a black uprising to justify violence against freed people, and recognized that the violence of 1865 was a continuation of the long-running racial struggle, in which whites, driven by old “prejudices,” tried to enforce servile loyalty in blacks.

In response to Mathews’ plea for more manpower to prevent the abuse of freed people, Captain Adam Kemper first advised him to allow the civil authorities to “show their hand,” in order to judge whether they showed “good faith” in restoring the functions of government, or whether they wanted to use “the reins of civil government...as an instrument for oppressing the Freedmen and reducing them to their old condition of slavery.” That Mississippi whites seemed intent on the latter was born out in the way planters continued to use coercive methods to dominate blacks.¹³ In late November, for example, freedman George Lanier agreed to work for a

¹² James H. Mathews to George D. Reynolds, November 27, 1865, in Hahn, et al., eds., *Land and Labor*, 850-52.

¹³ Adam Kemper to James H. Mathews, December 9, 1865, in *Ibid*, 852.

Mr. Russell, of Yalobusha County, in exchange for monthly bacon and pork. But after Russell refused to pay Lanier the pork, Lanier threatened to complain to the Freedmen's Bureau, to which Russell told him "the Buzzards would pick his Bones Yet." When Lanier refused to back down, Russell had him hunted down, arrested, and forced to sign a year's labor contract with his former master. That same month, freedmen William Head and Nelson Porter began building on land they had rented outside of Jackson, when several whites told them to leave lest there be "some shooting at their cabins." After Head and Porter ignored the threats, they found a card attached to a stake on their land that read, "I think you had better leave here." A few days later, the state legislature passed the law forbidding blacks to rent rural lands.¹⁴ Such instances of white abuse against freed people continued to erupt amidst rumors of the impending Christmas revolt, the supposed existence of which white Mississippians used to justify their violent reassertion of mastery over blacks.

Black Mississippians protested against this abuse, well aware that it stemmed from whites' desire to uphold the racial hierarchy. Yet, beyond their desires to be free from white dominance, freed people expressed different objectives for their post-emancipation lives depending on their particular circumstances. A November 1865 resolution passed by African Americans in Vicksburg, for example, demanded that whites allow blacks to vote, own property, and to be paid the fair wages that "few white men are willing to pay." "All we ask is justice," they stated, "remove legal disability, give us the rights of citizens in law, and then no special legislation is needed for the colored man more than the white. The only difficulty of the new order of things, arises from a desire to evade, rather than grant justice." These urban blacks called for equality with whites, including suffrage, equal access to the courts, and the right to

¹⁴ Adam Kemper to James H. Mathews, December 9, Affidavit of George Lanier, November 25, Statement of William Head, November 21, 1865, in Hahn, et al., eds., *Land and Labor*, 852, 936-37, 722-23.

hold property. Their post-war vision of freedom revolved around specific goals that together constituted equal citizenship under the law. They denounced whites' desire to keep them in a condition of servility by refusing to grant them the "justice" of equal rights, protesting that the same racial hierarchy which had defined the antebellum social order continued to define the "new order of things."¹⁵

In early December, a group of freed people from Port Gibson, Claiborne County, expressed similar sentiments to Governor Humphreys. "Mississippi has abolished – slavery," they wrote, "does She mean it or is it a policy for The present[?] we fear from the late acts of the legeslature that she will not treat us as free." They maintained that rumors of black insurrection were a "falsehood," and denied any desire to become masters over whites. "Now we are free [what] would we rise for...we do not want our rights by murdering," they stated. Although they did not want to reverse the racial hierarchy, these freed people emphatically wanted to escape from it. They cited the Black Code's provisions that gave white employers total control over black labor, including the right to hunt black workers if they fled, as slavery in all but name. "We are to well acquainted with the yelping of bloodhounds and the tareing of our fellow servents To pisces when we were slaves and now we are free...all we ask is justice and to be treated like humane beings," they wrote.¹⁶ In contrast to the Vicksburg petitioners, who advanced specific, institutional legal reforms geared towards achieving political and social equality with whites, the Port Gibson freed people demanded more general basic human rights, indicating that freed people held disparate visions of freedom based on their particular backgrounds. The Vicksburgers' specific, grammatical calls for legal reforms suggests that they were likely former

¹⁵ Resolutions of a Meeting of Colored Citizens of Vicksburg, October 30, 1865 in Hahn, et al., eds., *Land and Labor*, 817-18.

¹⁶ Claiborne County Mississippi Freed People to the Governor of Mississippi, December 3, 1865, in Hahn, et al., eds., *Land and Labor*, 856-57.

urban slaves or free blacks before the war, groups who displayed a greater level of education and formal political engagement in the antebellum period than rural slaves.¹⁷ By contrast, the Port Gibson petitioners' ungrammatical prose, and their complaints about how continued forced labor and pursuit by dogs resembled conditions of slavery, suggests that they were likely less-educated former field hands. Their immediate experiences as plantation slaves informed their vision of freedom as the right not to be treated as forced labor, whereas the Vicksburg petitioners viewed freedom in terms of specific legal rights. Although both groups denounced white racial dominance, they shared different visions of what constituted freedom in post-war Mississippi.

Recognizing the injustices being perpetrated against freed people, Federal authorities nonetheless found it difficult to prevent such abuse. In late November, Major Thomas Wood, Commander of the Department of Mississippi, flatly stated to Governor Humphreys that the Black Code was "enacted for the protection of slavery," and that any disarmament of blacks should be done "after the most thorough and full consultation and understanding between the civil and military authorities." Major George Reynolds agreed with this statement. "The old code of Miss made have made it unlawful for free negroes to carry arms but these laws were passed in the interests of slavery and its protection," he wrote, "such a thing as an 'insurrection' among the Freedmen is entirely improbable and could only be brought about by an attempt to reduce them to their former position." Governor Humphreys, however, refused to rescind the law disarming freed people, and told Wood that if blacks knew they could rely on Federal forces for protection, they would revolt.¹⁸ Wood nonetheless refused to abide by Humphreys' order, and requested

¹⁷ Paul D. Lack, "An Urban Slave Community: Little Rock, 1831-1862," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 41 (Autumn, 1982): 271-2; Whittington B. Johnson, *Black Savannah, 1788-1864* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1996), 6, 162-68; Midori Takagi, *'Rearing Wolves to our Own Destruction: Slavery in Richmond, Virginia, 1782-1875* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999), 2-6, 146.

¹⁸ Thomas J. Wood to B.G. Humphreys, November 28, George D. Reynolds to Charles A. Gilchrist, November 20, Benj G. Humphreys to Thomas J. Wood, December 2, 1865, in Hahn, et al., eds., *Land and Labor*, 825-26, 829, 826-28.

clarification from Washington as to whether blacks should be disarmed. Secretary of War Stanton eventually confirmed to Wood that decisions regarding disarmament of any persons in Mississippi fell to the military authorities in the state. Nevertheless, Wood never officially declared the black disarmament law null and void, and although one circuit court in the state found the law unconstitutional, enforcement of the court's decision was largely non-existent. Wood preferred to deal with cases of abuse towards blacks on an individual basis to avoid mass violence and promote good will between the races, but lacked the manpower to effectively curb abuses throughout the state.¹⁹

Despite the mass fear and calls to disarm Mississippi's freed people, Christmas Day came and went without incident. No property was re-distributed, and no blacks rose up against whites. The so-called Christmas rebellion had a very real significance, however, because it underscored how the struggle between blacks and whites over the racial hierarchy continued even after the Civil War ended and slavery had been abolished. This struggle continued via the competing micro loyalties of blacks and whites, as both groups sought opposing goals in their efforts to define what constituted black freedom. By spreading rumors of black rebellion, white Mississippians acted on a shared racial loyalty that reinforced their commitment to maintaining black servility, which drove their opposition to blacks' demands for social and political rights. Although black Mississippians did not violently revolt, they spread rumors of impending land redistribution in order to petition the government into action, demanding the rights to openly act in their own self-interests. Thus, the real conflict underlying the Christmas rebellion was not between blacks who wanted to revolt and whites who feared such a revolt, rather, the conflict stemmed from the long-simmering tension between whites who demanded that blacks express a

¹⁹ Thomas J. Wood to William D. Whipple, December 3, Edwin M. Stanton to George H. Thomas, December 13, 1865, in *Ibid*, 830-32; Harris, *Presidential Reconstruction in Mississippi*, 147-48.

servile loyalty to the old master class, and blacks who wanted the right to act on their own multiple loyalties. By calling for land redistribution, blacks by extension called for the ability to hold attachments to self, family, neighborhood, and nation on that land free from white dominance. This black political mobilization spurred a strong white backlash that undermined Presidential Reconstruction, challenged former slaveholders' authority, and brought to the forefront issues of equality that Republican congressional radicals would advocate in 1867.²⁰

The persistence of both white paranoia and black political mobilization underlines how the influence of multiple loyalties in Mississippi bridged the antebellum, Civil War, and post-war periods with threads of continuity despite the existence of very real changes. Long-standing racial loyalties united white Mississippians in a way Confederate protective nationalism never could, and the importance blacks placed on their own multiple allegiances drove their continued opposition to white resistance against black freedoms.²¹ That the stifling of black freedoms continued after the Christmas rebellion failed to materialize only validated freed peoples' belief that their struggle against the racial hierarchy did not end with emancipation and Confederate defeat. Their difficulties in this struggle were compounded by federal authorities who were sympathetic to blacks' plight, but lacked the manpower, and often the patience and will, to effectively curb abuse against the freedmen.

Freed people protested Federal refusal to protect their rights as "a desertion by the government," and argued that if left to the whims of "their old masters...to secure...their rights & privileges," they would "receive nothing but oppression and ill treatment," making their condition "worse than it was in the days of slavery." Although he recognized that the state was

²⁰ Dan T. Carter, "The Anatomy of Fear: The Christmas Day Insurrection Scare of 1865," *Journal of Southern History* 42 (Aug., 1976): 364; Summers, *A Dangerous Stir*, 59; Hahn, "'Extravagant Expectations of Freedom,'" 123-26, 132, 158.

²¹ Hahn, "'Extravagant Expectations of Freedom,'" 146; Summers, *A Dangerous Stir*, 61-2, 66.

coming under the control of “overpowered but not unconquered Rebels” who aimed to “drive out the thieving Yankees and shoot the niggers,” state Freedmen’s Bureau Commissioner Samuel Thomas chafed at blacks’ refusal “to settle down as contented laborers,” calling them “children” who “can appreciate nothing that does not secure for them some immediate advantage. The lessons we have been taking in political economy during the last year are lost upon them.”²²

Like Thomas, other Federal officials recognized how black Mississippians faced resistance from recalcitrant whites, but nonetheless expected them to work for their former masters. U.S. cavalry corps commander Edward Hatch lamented that freed people were “becoming more and more demoralized,” despite the army’s best efforts to “enjoin industry and quiet.” While he acknowledged some white abuse of black workers, Hatch complained that “the slightest friction of the home harness is enough to drive them into vagabondism,” and believed that blacks were “determined not to work.” Hatch thought the army incapable of remedying this problem. “As Federal Soldiers we can neither recognize Slavery nor its equivalent, and are left helpless lookers on while the broken ship and crazed crew are drifting on the rocks together,” he concluded.²³ Hatch’s statement summarized a general feeling among Federal officials that although they defeated the Confederacy, they were unable to quell the ongoing conflict between black and white Mississippians. The feeling that the military was a helpless onlooker to a racial struggle that threatened to crash the state into the rocky shore of social chaos underscored how local loyalties maintained a persistent influence on blacks and whites, and, how Union victory was unable to dispel these micro attachments.

²² Samuel Thomas to O.O. Howard, December 13, 1865, Letters Sent, Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Mississippi, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (hereafter cited as RACM), 1865-1869, roll 1, M-826, Record Group 105, National Archives and Records Administration.

²³ Edward Hatch to W.D. Whipple, June 22, 1865, in Hahn, et al., eds., *Land and Labor*, 225-28.

What emerged during Mississippi's post-war era was not, as some historians argue, merely a re-emergent Confederate nationalism in the form of the Lost Cause.²⁴ Such a conclusion conflates localized micro loyalties with macro national allegiance. Rather, racial loyalties, in the form of whites' desire to uphold black servility, and blacks' desire to reject that servility and assert their rights to act on multiple allegiances free from white control, continued to shape socio-political conflicts in the state. As Christopher Waldrep notes, the racial hierarchy defined how white Mississippians interpreted the legacy of the war. To them, he writes, "the Civil War...did not mean they could no longer whip blacks. Emancipation did not mean that whites could not force their former slaves to work." The fact that most of the post-war occupation troops in the state were black, and the virulence with which whites demanded their removal, only further highlighted how the internal racial war continued to rage. More than being mere Federal soldiers, whites viewed black troops as the embodiment of the racial hierarchy's reversal, in the specter of armed former servants now determined to dominate their old masters.²⁵ The Federal government's ultimate failure to understand the depth of this racial animosity and enforce black equal rights in the South, and the political triumph of the white "Redemption" movement in the late 1870s, has led scholars to describe Reconstruction as a "splendid failure" and an "unfinished revolution."²⁶

²⁴ See Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980); Anne Sarah Rubin, *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 141-201 and Anne Elizabeth Marshall, *Creating a Confederate Kentucky: The Lost Cause and Civil War Memory in a Border State* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

²⁵ Christopher Waldrep, *Vicksburg's Long Shadow: The Civil War Legacy of Race and Remembrance* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), 67; Mary Bobbitt Townsend, *Yankee Warhorse: A Biography of Major General Peter Osterhaus* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2010), 197-8. On differing interpretations of the Civil War's legacy, also see David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001) and Bruce E. Baker, *What Reconstruction Meant: Historical Memory in the American South* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007).

²⁶ See Michael W. Fitzgerald, *Splendid Failure: Postwar Reconstruction in the American South* (Chicago: Ivan L. Dee, 2007) and Foner, *Reconstruction*.

The failure of Reconstruction, however, reflected the failure of protective nationalism during and after the Civil War. Just as the Confederacy could not command total national loyalty from its subjects, the Federals could not command such total allegiance from white Mississippians because they were unable to dispel the localized racial loyalties that fueled their rejection of black freedom. Additionally, Federal authorities' insistence that freed people should work for their old masters in exchange for wages underscored their reluctance to recognize that for blacks, freedom above all else meant the right to escape from white dominance and act on their own multiple allegiances. If blacks believed that freedom entailed rejecting the Federal governments' demands that they submit to local white authority, then so be it. Although historians rightly point out that the Civil War created an expanded and powerful Federal state, like the similarly expanded wartime Confederate state, it was not powerful enough to dispel the influence of micro loyalties in either white or black Mississippians. Thus, Reconstruction's ultimate failure was also the failure of protective nationalism.

Conclusion

This study has used Mississippi from 1860 to 1865 as a case-study to re-examine Confederate loyalty during the Civil War. Rather than focusing on the war's outcome, it examines the war as a process during which multiple loyalties influenced peoples' wartime actions. Historians have viewed white southerners' wartime behavior in terms of their degree of national commitment to the Confederacy. Although such studies use impressive evidence and sophisticated methodologies, these competing arguments have nonetheless become deadlocked into viewing Confederate nationalism as weak or strong. To bypass this deadlock, this study examines the ways that multiple, co-existing loyalties influenced Mississippians' actions in ways that were often unrelated to their nationalist views. This approach, in turn, makes sense of how the mass accusations of disloyalty in wartime Mississippi were not evidence of widespread Unionism or eventual support for Republican Party policies. Rather, this alleged disloyalty revealed how the Confederate state, operating on the ideological framework of protective nationalism, was limited in its ability to directly influence the everyday behavior of its citizens.

Mississippi's Confederate boosters promoted a total protective nationalism in which the Confederacy would be economically self-sufficient and its citizens would work towards the goal of achieving national independence from the North. This nationalist vision fused citizens' interests with those of the state, viewing them as component parts working on behalf of the greater national machine. Yet, protective nationalist ideals could not be implemented in a wartime environment in which multiple, pre-war allegiances continued to guide Mississippians' behavior. Mississippi experienced much destruction, as the Union army occupied it from 1862 until the war's end, and this wartime environment limited citizens' ability to act as unflinching nationalists.

In order to better understand how different loyalties carried through from the antebellum period and influenced Mississippians, this study focuses on wartime activities that tested the limits of protective nationalism. They included behavior that many contemporary observers interpreted as disloyalty, like swearing the Union oath, illicit trading with the Union army, alleged espionage, and desertion and exemption from the Confederate army. Additionally, this study examines how the expectations of servile racial loyalty that underlie the master-slave relationship stoked a long-raging internal war within Civil War Mississippi between slaves who resisted servile loyalty, and sought different avenues of freedom, and the slaveholders who tried to maintain white dominance. These situations involved multiple loyalties and necessitate an approach that looks beyond attempts to merely measure such behavior as reflections of people's allegiance to a national state.

Rather than positing nationalism as the most influential guide over wartime behavior, this study argues that Mississippians acted on macro and micro loyalties. Macro loyalties are held in association with a very large group of people towards broader spatial collectives like religion, ethnicity and nation. People hold micro loyalties towards smaller, more localized individuals and groupings like self, family, friends and neighborhood, which exist in more compact areas within larger organizations like state and nation. When grouped in individuals, these allegiances constitute loyalty layers that interact, overlap, and exert multiple influences on a person. During the Civil War, different circumstances motivated Mississippians to act on their loyalty layers. Labeling these individuals as "strong" or "weak" Confederates does not address motivations that were distinct from nationalism and does not recognize nationalist positions that differed from the official government line. Protective nationalists interpreted any actions that appeared to deviate from devotion to the state as evidence of disloyalty. Yet, Mississippians made clear that they

acted on loyalty layers that were often distinct from national feelings. Although nationalism was indeed one loyalty among the many that guided Mississippians' behavior, it could not, per protective nationalists' desire, supersede other allegiances, and this fact undermined Confederate attempts to implement protective nationalism.

During the secession winter of 1860-61, the ideological underpinnings of what soon became protective nationalism fueled Mississippi's withdrawal from the Union and its subsequent buildup for war. Following Abraham Lincoln's election, fire-eaters stoked an atmosphere among the population that flatly questioned the loyalty of anyone who questioned the secessionist position. Drawing on a tradition of extralegal southern mob violence, especially the slave patrol, as a means to enforce conformity to disunion and the protection of slavery, secessionists formed vigilance committees throughout the state. These groups threatened voters into supporting secessionist candidates, largely culled from the extreme pro-slavery wing of the Democratic Party. This ideal of total dedication to a party or group, to be proactively enforced if necessary in order to protect southern interests, eventually became the basis for Confederate protective nationalism. Although the large majority of Mississippians enthusiastically embraced secession and then Confederate nationalist fervor, others worried that the rush towards secession and war blinded people to the possibly destructive consequences of such actions. These exceptions aside, in the first year of the war Mississippians overwhelmingly proclaimed their desire to devote themselves fully to the Confederacy by making all other interests subservient to that of the nation. Vigilance committees continued to root out supposed "abolitionists" and "disloyal" persons throughout the state, developing a pattern of organized loyalty enforcement that the Confederacy adopted in a more centralized fashion by 1862. Although Mississippians embraced protective nationalism when the war and its requisite sacrifices remained far from their

doorsteps, this patriotic fervor only temporarily supplanted other loyalties. When the Union army brought war to the state, Mississippians found it difficult to ignore long-held loyalties merely to acquiesce to protective nationalist demands for unyielding dedication to the state.

Between 1862 and 1865, the war and Union occupation led Mississippians to act on multiple loyalties, even as Confederate partisans in both the military and the state and federal governments used nationalist language to judge people's behavior, potentially turning everyday actions into tests of an individual's allegiance to one side or the other. This was especially true regarding swearing the Union oath. Protective nationalists thought that oath-taking undercut their vision of national loyalty as total commitment of self to country. Many Mississippians oath-takers, however, still claimed to be loyal Confederates. They swore the oath as a means to other ends, such as permission to trade across the lines, to get supplies, to escape conscription, and to visit friends and family behind Union lines. They therefore demonstrated how micro loyalties to self, family, and friends informed their behavior and contradicted protective nationalists' claims that national loyalty could be gauged by a formulaic act like oath-taking. The oath, however, was the principal historical instrument for measuring national allegiance. Thus, despite recognizing its limited capacity as a reliable gauge of loyalty, Union forces, like their Confederate counterparts, continued to use it to measure Mississippians' allegiance, especially since the war created an expanded Federal military apparatus through which to do so.

In addition to their anger over oath-taking, protective nationalists labeled treasonous Mississippians who appeared to place self-interest over the Confederacy by failing to donate their property, especially slaves, to the war effort. They also excoriated alleged speculators and extortionists for working to enrich themselves at the Confederacy's expense. Many Mississippians, however, claimed that concern for self-interest was separate from, and need not

conflict with, national feeling. Furthermore, they pushed back against protective nationalists' concept of the nation, viewing a national vision with no respect for property rights as a vision not worth pursuing. Nonetheless, Confederate attempts at loyalty enforcement only accelerated. The fear of internal enemies that so defined the buildup to secession and war continued to rage as Confederate forces arrested suspected spies. Mississippians accused of espionage protested such charges, as authorities treated them as guilty until proven innocent. Just as Confederate authorities remained suspicious of Mississippians' loyalties, so too did Union officials find it difficult to discern national allegiances from other motives. In cities like Vicksburg, where the Federals made declarations of loyalty a prerequisite for those Mississippians wishing to continue commerce, they recognized that such declarations were inherently suspicious because Mississippians made them in part with the goal of monetary gain. Yet, like Confederate officials, Federal authorities maintained a wartime protective nationalist vision that left no room for other loyalties, and they struggled to define individuals as simply loyal or treasonous, a process they continued after the war when assessing Mississippians' claims to the Southern Claims Commission.

Confederate and Union authorities' attempts to implement protective nationalism in Mississippi proved incompatible with the countervailing influence of human loyalty layers. These micro attachments had not changed since the pre-war period, even when the patriotic fervor of the war's first year seemed to mould Mississippians into wholly dedicated nationalists. What *did* change was protective nationalists' creation of a wartime atmosphere that infused partisan implications into previously non-political behavior. They therefore turned every facet of peoples' daily routines into possible gauges of their national loyalty. During the war both the Union and Confederate states expanded in terms of their infrastructural reach into citizens' lives,

but although the justifications for such expansion was to compel and enforce national allegiance among the populace, neither state fully succeeded in this goal, revealing the limits of their expanded powers. The conflict that arose from the Confederacy's attempts to end antebellum continuities in order to affect desired wartime changes was further exposed in its plans to maintain economic independence from the North. Mississippi's spectacular inability to prevent its citizens from trading with the Union demonstrated why this attempt failed.

From 1862 until the end of the war, Mississippians engaged in an extensive contraband trade with the Union army. The Confederate government banned intersectional trade with the goal of creating a self-sustained Confederate economy. Yet, when major southern commercial cities like New Orleans, Memphis, Natchez, and Vicksburg fell to the Union, Mississippians began trading cotton and other items at Union lines in exchange for a host of raw and manufactured goods. So extensive was the trade that Confederate civil and military authorities soon questioned the wisdom of prohibitive trade laws they could not enforce. Mississippi Governor Charles Clark, among other state officials, came to view the trade as beneficial because it funneled much-needed supplies to Mississippi civilians and soldiers. Despite protective nationalists' claims that Mississippians who traded with the Union were treasonous, traders themselves rejected such accusations, arguing that they traded according to a range of loyalties. Some traded to supply their families; others, especially women, did so to continue participating in the market economy, and some claimed Confederate patriotism by smuggling goods from Union lines to Confederate troops. Far from simply denoting treason or loyalty, the contraband trade demonstrated how multiple allegiances to self, family, and nation informed Mississippians behavior, and this fact revealed the untenability of protective nationalists' claims that only complete prohibition of the trade was befitting of loyal Mississippi Confederates.

The extensiveness of the trade demonstrated how even the Civil War could not sever long-established commercial ties between North and South. The behavior of Mississippi traders, who continued to follow what General Sherman called “the ordinary channels of trade” by exchanging goods at established commercial depots like Memphis, Vicksburg, and Natchez even after those cities fell under Union control, underscored how antebellum commercial patterns continued largely unabated into the war. Indeed, the lure of the market economy drove Mississippians to ignore protective nationalists’ exhortations to not trade with the enemy. Thus, their trading made it impossible for either the Union or Confederate governments to cut commercial ties between their respective nations. The participation of so many poor and yeomen women in the trade indicates another form of continuity. Scholars have argued that the Civil War brought significant changes to planter women’s lives by foisting on them responsibilities previously relegated to white men and slaves. Others note how the war changed poor and yeomen women’s lives by offering them avenues to political participation through making claims on the state. In a crucial respect, however, Mississippi’s poor and yeomen women had long been participating in the public sphere by selling and purchasing goods at public markets. The Civil War did not stop this trend, further spoiling the dreams of those nationalists who espoused Confederate economic independence.

Central to internal debates from within Confederate Mississippi over the contraband trade was the question that hovered over the entirety of the state’s Civil War experience: how far should Mississippians go in eschewing other attachments in order to ensure Confederate victory? This question was especially pertinent regarding the issue of military service. Many Mississippi Confederates considered soldiering to be the highest form of nationalist devotion. Scholars have embraced this point as well by arguing that the army, especially Robert E. Lee’s Army of

Northern Virginia, was the primary nationalizing symbol that inspired Confederates to persist through four years of war. A related argument emphasizes the importance of military defense in Confederates' most sacred conceptions of place. A number of historians contend that because many Confederate soldiers fought close to home, they associated home with nation, which in turn further motivated them to fight. Even those scholars who believe that Confederate nationalism was not sufficient enough to motivate southerners to fight until the end emphasize similar points, insisting that Confederates so associated home with nation that they deserted the latter to protect the former, all at the nation's expense.

Two key aspects of the Confederate military experience in Mississippi, however, reveal limitations to both the hearth and home thesis and the military's nationalizing influence. Confederate military defeat combined with the exigencies of war to collapse the state's social order, spurring an outbreak of opportunistic collective violence among deserters who took advantage of the rampant social dissolution to rob, pillage, and murder their fellow citizens. Far from deserting to protect hearth and home, these soldiers wreaked havoc on Mississippi neighborhoods. Pre-war micro loyalties continued to guide their behavior even as they turned to plundering. Many had similar socio-economic backgrounds, which they shared with most Confederate soldiers, and came from the same counties and neighborhoods from which they were mustered. Although these men were not exceptional, the wartime conditions that facilitated their criminal behavior were. After deserting, these men retained their group loyalties, but the wartime circumstances opened up new, socially deviant avenues through which these loyalties became gang ties that turned deserters into bandits. Banditry also flourished among partisan rangers who similarly took advantage of the degraded wartime conditions to pillage while ostensibly defending their home territory against Union threats. This phenomenon reveals how

the Civil War in Mississippi imbued pre-existing loyalties with new meanings, as local attachments shifted in focus to exploit a wartime environment that facilitated criminality, not merely simple Union or Confederate stances.

In addition to banditry among deserters and partisan rangers, shirking, absenteeism, and exemption-seeking by Mississippi soldiers demonstrated how they separated home from nation, and underscored how military service was not always a straightforward indicator of Confederate loyalty. Confederate officials complained that shirking and absenteeism, which occurred most often when men were stationed near their homes, damaged the war effort by depriving the army of valuable manpower. Army shirkers, they recognized, too often prioritized home over country. Such criticisms implied that shirkers distinguished, rather than conflated the two. Mississippians similarly joined partisan rangers and state troop units to avoid service in the Confederate army, which could entail transfer to other departments like Virginia. In order to get men excepted from the army, soldiers and citizens alike used nationalist language to claim that men could serve the nation better at home. They couched exemption requests in such terms to appease protective nationalist Confederate officials who expected them to place the nation above all other concerns, well-aware that not doing so they stood little chance of removing a soldier from the army that was fighting for that nation's existence. Mississippians used the army, considered by many contemporaries, as well as by later historians, to be the preeminent symbol of Confederate nationalism, as a vehicle through which to address micro loyalties to self, family, and neighborhood. In doing so, they demonstrated that military service did not necessarily inspire a total devotion to the cause. Although the Civil War created a vast national army to defend the newly-formed Confederate nation, that army was not a strong enough a symbol to suppress the continuing influence of Mississippians' local allegiances.

The Civil War in Mississippi also revealed the continued influence of other local allegiances when it expanded the long-raging antebellum struggle between slaves and slaveholders over the master-slave relationship. Even in the immediate days after Lincoln's election, slaves understood that the coming conflict portended their freedom by offering escape from white authority. Slaveholders insisted that slaves show unconditional servile loyalty to their masters, as this forced allegiance was at the heart of the master-slave relationship. During the antebellum period, however, the articulation process facilitated slaves' ability to forge multiple loyalties to self, family, kinfolk, and neighborhood. These allegiances not only undermined slaveholders' demands that slaves show fealty only to the white master class, but also formed the basis of slaves' individual identities, based around the idea that freedom meant the right to escape from white mastery. Although slaves shared a collective ideal of freedom as escaping from the racial hierarchy, they nonetheless embraced multiple conceptions of freedom as a lived experience.

Upon Union arrival in 1862, thousands of Mississippi slaves immediately showed their desire to physically separate from their masters by fleeing to Federal lines. Others stayed on their plantations and farms, but refused to work, appropriated white spaces for their own purposes, and, in some incidents, physically assaulted their owners. The Union army also provided a vehicle through which slaves rejected slaveholders' authority. Many acted as Federal spies and thousands more enlisted as soldiers. Historians have argued that slaves shared a collective identity as a rural proletariat who associated freedom with land ownership. Beyond a collective desire to escape racially-based servile loyalty, however, slaves had different conceptions of freedom that varied according to individual proclivities. This divide was especially evident in rural and urban slaves' contrasting visions of freedom, which were influenced by their respective

antebellum experiences. Rural slaves viewed freedom in terms of land ownership, while urban slaves, whose lives were more often defined by hiring out and wage labor than by agricultural work, identified freedom in the right to own property which they had earned themselves.

As slaves rejected their masters' authority throughout the course of the war, slaveholders responded by attempting to reassert mastery. They maintained that blacks could only be loyal to the master class, and their claims that slaves were being disloyal to their masters, not to the Confederate government, underscored how a separate, internal war between slaves and slaveholders raged amidst the larger war between the Union and the Confederacy. Even as emancipation became a fact mid-way through the conflict, whites only intensified their efforts to maintain racial control over blacks. The continuation of the internal war over the racial hierarchy provided a common link between the antebellum, wartime, and post-war periods. Although the Confederacy was founded on the right to southern white supremacy over a black servile class, the desire to uphold the racial hierarchy outlasted the Confederacy and defined socio-political relations in Reconstruction-era Mississippi precisely because it was a defining theme of southern history. The state legislature's passing of the Black Code and the paranoia over the alleged Christmas Rebellion demonstrated the persistence with which whites and blacks continued to struggle over the master-slave relationship, even when slavery had finally been abolished.

The Civil War in Mississippi saw much continuity, as pre-war micro loyalties influenced Mississippians' wartime behavior. Nevertheless, the war recontextualized these multiple loyalties, taking the influence of old attachments on individuals' actions and imbuing those actions with new meanings depending on how different observers interpreted them in the wartime context. Understanding the tension between the influence of pre-war allegiances, and the new meanings the war ascribed to them, is crucial to understanding why historians have

interpreted Confederate nationalism as both weak and strong. Furthermore, comprehending the process by which the war unfolded, rather than trying to access its outcome, and recognizing the influence of multiple human loyalties on that process, can help historians make better sense of the mix of continuity and change that characterized the conflict. The forces of change and continuity clashed when Confederate boosters in both the government and the military advocated a new protective nationalism, which conflicted with the still potent influence of Mississippians' long-held micro and macro loyalties. This conflict reveals much about the influence of the nation-state during the nineteenth century age of nationalism.

In their zeal to make protective nationalism a reality, civilian and military authorities greatly expanded the infrastructural capacity of the Confederate state with the goal of policing and enforcing citizens' total loyalty to the southern cause, which authorities believed was a prerequisite for Confederate victory. Historians have argued that the expanded powers of the Confederate, and Union, wartime states were proportional to the growth of their infrastructural apparatuses. Regarding the Confederacy, they point to conscription, impressment, the enacting of martial law, the suspension of habeas corpus, attempts to implement a single state currency and prohibit inter-sectional commerce, the enactment of state welfare, and the assuming of government authority over industries like salt production and railroads as evidence that the Confederacy was an exceedingly powerful state. Yet, the Confederacy's goal in expanding state power was to enforce national allegiance in its citizens in order to win the war. Thus, if men did not want to fight, the state would conscript them to fight, if citizens refused to give up supplies to the army, the army would take those supplies, if private industry would not devote its production to the Confederate cause, the government would force it to do so. Even in instances where the Confederacy could compel citizens to do these things, it could not make them *want* to do them.

All of these attempts at compelling citizens to make sacrifices for the war effort were done in the service of the underlying goal of enforcing Confederate protective nationalism. If the populace was not sufficiently loyal, the state would force them to be loyal, because according to protective nationalists, only unconditional national devotion could bring Confederate victory. It was in this most crucial respect that the Confederate state did not succeed according to its expectations in Mississippi. This is not to say that Confederate nationalism was “weak” or that it “failed:” surely the Confederacy’s impressive military mobilization and the ferocity with which its armies fought through four years of war indicates that loyalty to the Confederacy existed. Rather, this study has been concerned with how multiple human loyalties existed in tandem with nationalism, and how the Confederacy’s insistence on making protective nationalism a reality in Mississippi attempted to suppress the influence of these multiple allegiances.

Even in the fevered nationalist environment of the secessionist winter and the war’s first year, and despite secessionists’ and then Confederates’ attempts to cow citizens, violently if necessary, into supporting the Confederacy, there remained those who questioned the wisdom of secession and war. When the Union army entered Mississippi in 1862, Confederate and Union protective nationalists were unable to use the oath as an effective gauge of Mississippians’ national loyalty. Moreover, despite its expanded police powers, the Confederate state could not stop speculation and extortion, could not prove the guilt of all suspected spies, and its attempts to impress private property were always met with pushback. The Federals found it equally difficult to assess the allegiance of Mississippians who professed Union loyalty in exchange for monetary gain. On the military front, the Confederate army could not prevent desertion, and it could not effectively recapture all deserters. Nor did military service prevent soldiers and civilians from seeking exceptions from service to attend to local needs. Finally, the war between the Union and

Confederate states raged in tandem with an internal conflict between slaves and slaveholders, a conflict that both preceded and outlived the Confederacy. Studying the war with an overt emphasis on the nationalist inclinations of its many participants tends to underplay the significant ways that the war affected loyalties related to, but nonetheless distinct from, fealty to nation-states.

The Confederate and Union experiments with protective nationalism, however, provided a template for how the United States would prosecute wars well into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Far from disappearing at the end of the Civil War, the empowered state emerged during succeeding American conflicts, justifying its powers as necessary to ensuring that all within the nation's borders were loyal to that nation. The government continued to invoke Manifest Destiny as justification for the bloody wars it waged against western Indians who would not assimilate into American society during and after Civil War. The powerful United States military's violence against native peoples stemmed from its perception of them as racial and cultural outsiders who, despite their presence *within* the nation, had to willingly assimilate in order to become loyal citizens *of* the nation. No less a prominent Civil War veteran than William T. Sherman expressed the need for "hostile savages" to "feel the superior power of the government."¹

During the First World War, the Federal government again used its power, through the Selective Service Act of 1917, to enforce loyalty to the nation by compelling citizens to fight for it. White southerners' mass evasion of the draft pointed to the government's continued inability

¹ Jeffrey Ostler, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 13-243; Frederick E. Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 1-40; Rose Stremlau, "'To Domesticate and Civilize Wild Indians': Allotment and the Campaign to Reform Indian Families, 1875-1887," *Journal of Family History* 30 (July, 2005): 265-86; Quoted in John F. Marszalek, *Sherman: A Soldier's Passion for Order* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1993), 398.

to enforce its ideal of total national loyalty, despite its continued efforts to do so. Echoes of the Confederate experience also reverberated in the Espionage Act, the Sedition Act, and the Trading with the Enemy Act, all of which congress passed to criminalize anti-war speech and squelch perceived disloyal behavior. The Federal Bureau of Investigation's dispersal of agents throughout the South with the goal of suppressing alleged wartime dissenters further harked back to Confederate authorities' attempts to root out traitors in Civil War Mississippi.² The use of state power to identify perceived disloyal elements emerged again during the Second World War in the form of Japanese-American Internment. This program was initiated by several governmental agencies, including the Western Defense Command (WDC) and the War Relocation Authority (WRA) that together constituted a broader "loyalty bureaucracy" charged with determining the national allegiances of Japanese Americans.³

The loyalty bureaucracy survived World War II in the form of President Harry Truman's signing of Executive Order 9835 in March 1947, authorizing the investigation of over three million government employees in an effort to identify suspected communist subversives. These efforts intensified during the fevered communist witch hunts of the McCarthy era, when, at the behest of the state, loyalty oaths, just as they had been in Civil War Mississippi, once again emerged as a preferred tool among American hyper-nationalists for measuring citizens' allegiance, especially in California. Even with the end of the Cold War, the impulses of protective nationalism loom large in America's social and political culture. In the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, Congress unanimously passed the nationalistically-named Patriot Act, a controversial law that gave the government broader surveillance authority to

² Jeanette Keith, *Rich Man's War, Poor Man's Fight: Race, Class, and Power in the Rural South During the First World War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 1-12.

³ Eric L. Muller, *American Inquisition: The Hunt for Japanese American Disloyalty in World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 1-8.

identify and prosecute suspected Islamic terrorists operating within American borders. In the years since its passage, citizens, especially Arab-Americans, have expressed concerns that the Patriot Act violates civil liberties by over-empowering the state in the name of ferreting out disloyal subversives, just as many in Civil War Mississippi expressed similar qualms about national security as a justification for excessive state power.⁴

Whether or not these post-Civil War efforts succeeded in positively proving, or even compelling, the national loyalty of the state's targeted subjects is a question that remains debatable – Joseph McCarthy, for example, did not find a single communist government official – but this fact did not stop the state from using its expanded powers to achieve those goals. Protective nationalism never disappeared from the consciousness of the American landscape, and its tantalizing appeal eventually created one of the central characteristics of modern nationalism, as the state's quest to garner total allegiance from its subjects in times when it was threatened became an end unto itself. Mississippi's experience reveals the Civil War's darker legacy, one in which patriotism and undaunted self-sacrifice to a greater cause, often accepted as positive attributes in American society, could be used towards unintended, undesirable, and even sinister ends.

⁴ George Brown Tindall and David Emory Shi, *America: A Narrative History*, Seventh Edition (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 1166; Bob Blauner, *Resisting McCarthyism: To Sign or not to Sign California's Loyalty Oath* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); On the central influence of American nationalism during the Cold War, see John Fousek, *To Lead the Free World: American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Andrea Elliot, "After 9/11, Arab Americans Fear Police Acts, Study Finds," *New York Times*, June 12, 2006, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/12/us/12arabs.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all (accessed August 11, 2012); Carrie Johnson, "As it Turns 10, Patriot Act Remains Controversial," *NPR*, October 26, 2011, <http://www.npr.org/2011/10/26/141699537/as-it-turns-10-patriot-act-remains-controversial> (accessed August 10, 2012).

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Appendix A: List of Declared Vicksburg Unionists who appeared in 1860 census. Alphabetized by Name. Source: Lists of Union or Loyal Men in and Around Vicksburg, Entry 370, Box 3, Record Group 366, Records of Civil War Special Agencies of the Treasury Department, Second Special Agency Records, Vicksburg District, NARA.

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>
Ackerman, F.	Warren	Vicksburg	Butcher	30	None	None	Germany	None
Ball, Lewis	Pontotoc	New Albany	Brigman, MS Bottom	39	\$5,000	\$13,352	1821, SC	None
Baszinsky, Joseph	Warren	Vicksburg	Merchant	35	None	\$10,000	1825, Poland	None
Baum, Frederick	Warren	Vicksburg	Horticulture/Nursery	53	\$10,000	\$15,000	1807, Germany	None
Baum, J.F.	Warren	Vicksburg	Grocery (Fruit Store)	32	\$5,000	\$8,000	1828, Germany	None
Baum, Philip	Warren	Vicksburg	Horticulture/Nursery	19	None	None	1841, MS	None
Billgerry, Joseph	Warren	Vicksburg	Brewer (Beer)	33	None	None	1827, France	None
Bitterman, Jacob	Warren	Vicksburg	Engineer	40	None	None	1820, PA	1
Bland, John C.	Warren	Vicksburg	Sherriff	38	\$7,500	\$7,000	1822, VA	8
Botto, Joseph	Warren	Vicksburg	Merchant (Grocery)	36	None	None	1824, Italy	NA
Bowie, Aquilla	Warren	Vicksburg	Farmer	47	\$3,000	\$800	1813, MD	2
Brantley, William M.	Warren	Vicksburg	Shoemaker	38	\$800	None	1822, AL	None
Brening, L.	Warren	Vicksburg	Boarding	37	\$5,000	None	1823, Germany	None

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>
Brown, Michael	Warren	Vicksburg	Plasterer	40	\$2,500	\$1,000	1820, OH	1
Brown, S.B.	Warren	Vicksburg	Furniture	48	\$12,000	\$3,000	1812, NY	None
Brown, William J.P.	Warren	Vicksburg	Barkeeper	27	None	None	1833, Germany	None
Burwell, A.	Warren	Vicksburg	Lawyer	49	\$25,000	\$20,000	1811, VA	12
Butler, Joseph	Warren	Vicksburg	Butcher	42	\$2,000	\$10,000	1818, Nova Scotia	6
Camp, John (T.)	Tishomingo	Corinth	Wagon/Farm Laborer	39	None	\$100	1821, MS	None
Cathel, James	Warren	Vicksburg	Planter	62	\$5,000	\$25,000	1798, GA	20
Cathel, Jonathan	Warren	Vicksburg	Farmer	21	None	None	1839, MS	None
Chapin, James	Warren	Vicksburg	Merchant	35	\$9,000	\$35,000	1825, NY	None
Cohen, Moses	Warren	Vicksburg	Merchant	44	\$3,000	\$9,000	1816, Poland	None
Coker, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	27	None	\$135	1833, MS	None
Coleman, Julius	Milam, TX	Cameron	Merchant	31	None	\$10,000	1829, Germany	None
Curlee, William M.	Warren	Vicksburg	Stone Clerk	33	\$1,500	\$1,200	1827, SC	None
Dailey, William	Yazoo	Yazoo City	Laborer (Stone)	24	None	None	1836, Ireland	None
Deschinger, Godhard	Claiborne	Port Gibson	Shoemaker	24	None	None	1836, NY	None
Deschinger, Henry	Claiborne	Port Gibson	B.Smith	20	None	None	1840, MS	None

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>
Downing, Jacob	Warren	Vicksburg	Engineer	48	\$2,000	\$500	1812, PA	1
Ellis, Andrew	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	60	None	None	1800, Germany	None
Farmer, John W.	Warren	Vicksburg	Bricklayer	30	\$2,000	\$2,000	1830, OH	1
Finney, Thomas J.	Warren	Vicksburg	Merchant	48	\$50,000	\$50,000	1812, NC	45
Fisher, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Coffee House	28	\$2,000	None	1832, MD	None
Fletcher, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Carpenter	43	\$2,500	None	1817, TN	None
Flinn, Martin	Warren	Vicksburg	Watchman	50	None	None	1810, Ireland	None
Francis, Charles	Warren	Vicksburg	Shoemaker	40	\$1,000	\$8,000	1820, NY	None
Freeman, Lewis C.	Warren	Vicksburg	Merchant	28	None	\$8,000	1832, NY	None
Gallagher, James	Warren	Vicksburg	Coffee House	26	\$4,000	\$1,000	1834, Ireland	None
Geary, James	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	39	\$1,500	None	1821, Ireland	None
Gilman, Martin	Warren	Vicksburg	Physiciary	39	None	\$3,500	1821, NY	3
Gizell, Jacob	Warren	Vicksburg	Baker	25	None	None	1835, Germany	None
Gomez, (Gomes) M.	Warren	Vicksburg	Cabinet Maker	40	None	None	1820, Portugal	None
Green, Duff	Warren	Vicksburg	Corn Merchant	36	\$500	\$43,700	1824, VA	6
Hafer, Michael	Warren	Vicksburg	Farmer	29	\$600	None	1831, At Sea	None

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>
Hampsey, Patrick	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	30	None	None	1830, Ireland	None
Haney, Martin	Warren	Vicksburg	None	38	None	None	1822, OH	None
Hawkins, George	Warren	Vicksburg	Gunsmith	45	None	\$400	1815, IN	None
Henry, Robert W.	Warren	Vicksburg	Grocery	35	None	\$300	1825, Ireland	None
Hewitt, Lewis	Warren	Vicksburg	Carpenter	39	\$3,000	None	1821, PA	None
Hoag, Lewis	Warren	Vicksburg	Watchmaker	29	\$200	\$1,000	1821, Germany	None
Hoffman, Louis	Warren	Vicksburg	Gunsmith	37	None	\$4,000	1823, Germany	None
Hopkins, George F.	Warren	Vicksburg	None	27	None	None	1833, DE	None
Hopkins, William A.	Warren	Vicksburg	Preacher (Methodist)	52	\$800	\$700	1808, DE	None
Horrigan, Jeremiah	Warren	Vicksburg	Barkeeper	52	None	None	1808, Ireland	None
Horrigan, Michael	Warren	Vicksburg	Boarding	29	None	None	1831, Ireland	None
Hough, Robert	Warren	Vicksburg	Dairyman	40	\$8,000	\$500	1820, England	None
Houghton, L.S.	Warren	Vicksburg	Judge Probate	45	\$1,800	\$1,500	1815, NY	None
Jeter, John J.	Warren	Vicksburg	Horticulture/Nursery	35	\$2,000	\$2,000	1825, TN	1
Johnson, W.C.	Warren	Vicksburg	Shoemaker	42	None	\$3,000	1818, NY	None
Johnston, John	Hinds	Jackson	Engineer	26	None	None	1834, TN	None

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>
Jones, Walter,	Warren	Vicksburg	None	17	None	None	1843, MS	None
Just, George	Warren	Vicksburg	Coffee House	30	\$2,000	\$4,000	1830, Germany	None
Katzmeyer, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	39	None	None	1821, Germany	None
Katzmire, Jacob	Warren	Vicksburg	?	42	\$3,000	\$1,000	1818, Germany	None
Kearn, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	18	None	None	1842, Ireland	None
Keiser/Kiger Frederick	Warren	Vicksburg	Merchant	20	None	None	1840, Germany	None
King, James	Warren	Vicksburg	Shoe Store	34	None	\$25,000	1826, Ireland	None
Klein, J.A.	Warren	Vicksburg	Saw Mills	48	\$25,000	\$35,000	1812, VA	8
Krause, Charles	Warren	Vicksburg	Tailor	32	None	None	1828, Germany	None
Kress George C.	Warren	Vicksburg	Tailor	35	None	\$3,080	1825, France	None
Kuhn, Alex	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	26	None	None	1834, Germany	None
Kuner, Max	Warren	Vicksburg	Jeweller	35	\$5,000	None	1825, Germany	1
Laughlin, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	44	\$500	None	1816, Ireland	None
Lavenburg, Levi M.	Warren	Vicksburg	Clerk	33	None	None	1827, Poland	None
Lehman, Charles	Warren	Vicksburg	Clerk	17	None	None	1843, MS	None
Linn, Jno C.	Warren	Vicksburg	Trader	50	\$600	\$4,000	1810, OH	4

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>
Linnley, James	Warren	Vicksburg	Marble Yard	26	None	None	1834, OH	None
Lip(s)key, Andrew	Warren	Vicksburg	None	28	None	None	1832, Germany	None
Loed/Loyd Fredrick	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	24	None	None	1836, MA	None
Lowenhaupt, J.	Warren	Vicksburg	Merchant	24	None	None	1836, Germany	None
Manning, George L.	Warren	Vicksburg	Farmer	63	None	None	1797, KY	None
Martin, G.H.	Warren	Vicksburg	Printer	24	None	None	1836, PA	None
McCave, Thomas	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	40	None	None	1820, Ireland	None
McManus, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	35	None	None	1825, Ireland	None
Metcalf, Henry	Warren	Vicksburg	Brickmaker	45	\$3,000	\$20,000	1815, KY	None
Meyer, Adam	Madison	Canton	Baker	29	None	None	Germany	None
Miller, Charles	Warren	Vicksburg	Shoemaker	30	None	\$2,000	1830, Germany	None
Miller, Valentine	Warren	Vicksburg	Butcher	22	None	None	1838, Germany	None
Monteath, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Gunwright	47	\$1,500	\$500	1813, PA	None
Moone, Richard C.	Maybe: This Guy	MS	Laborer	28	None	None	1832, MS	None
Morris, Jacob	Warren	Vicksburg	Boarding	46	\$20,000	\$2,000	1814, Belgium	
Mullen, Alex	Warren	Vicksburg	Engineer	28	None	None	1832, Scotland	None
Murphy, Michael	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	50	\$3,000	\$1,500	1810, Ireland	5

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>
Myers, Thomas J.	Warren	Vicksburg	Baker	28	None	None	1832, France	None
Mygatt, Alston	Warren	Vicksburg	Preacher	55	\$6,000	\$3,000	1805, NY	2
Myles, John D.	Warren	Vicksburg	Dentist	30	\$1,500	\$2,000	1830, MS	None
Noah, George	Warren	Vicksburg	Carpenter	27	None	None	1833, OH	None
North, Royal F.	Warren	Vicksburg	Merchant	29	None	\$3,000	1831, IN	None
O'Malley, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Raftsmen	38	\$3,500	\$2,500	1822, Ireland	2
Orris, Adam	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	45	None	None	1815, OH	None
Palmer, Angelo	Warren	Vicksburg	Clerk	45	None	None	1815, Italy	None
Palmer, John B.	Warren	Vicksburg	Grocery	41	None	None	1819, Italy	None
Patrick McClusky	Warren	Vicksburg	Levyng	28	\$3,000	\$100	1832, Ireland	None
Phillips, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Machinist	20	None	None	1840, PA	None
Porterfield, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Merchant	40	\$16,000	\$30,000	1820, Ireland	4
Porterfield, Thomas	Warren	Vicksburg	None	35	None	None	1825, Ireland	None
Pyle, George N.	Warren	Vicksburg	Engineer/Laborer	60	None	None	1800, OH	None
Quincey Sherely	Warren	Vicksburg	None	12	None	None	1848, MS	None
Quinn, Thomas	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	23	None	None	1837, Ireland	None

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>
Rectanus, George S.	Warren	Vicksburg	Music Teacher	53	None	None	1807, Germany	None
Rhobacher, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Merchant	48	None	None	1812, France	None
Richard Dohler	Copiah	NA	Saloon Keeper	34	\$1,000	\$1,000	1826, Germany	None
Rinach, Lewis	Warren	Vicksburg	Physician	29	None	\$500	1831, Germany	None
Rodge, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Coffee House	25	\$4,000	\$2,000	1835, Italy	1
Royal, A.A.	Warren	Vicksburg	Horticulture/Nursery	35	\$2,000	None	1825, TN	None
Royal, Richard D.	Warren	Vicksburg	Book Keeper	25	None	None	1835, TN	None
Ryan, Cornelius	Warren	Vicksburg	Engineer	50	\$8,000	None	1810, Ireland	11
Ryan, John	Warren	Vicksburg	Printer	22	None	None	1838, OH	7
Sanguinetti, N.	Warren	Vicksburg	Grocery	26	None	None	1834, Geneva, Switz.	None
Schroder, Frederick	Warren	Vicksburg	Grocery	53	None	\$1,500	1807, Germany	None
Shannon, M.	Warren	Vicksburg	Painter	33	\$11,000	\$25,000	1827, NJ	11
Shean, Patrick	Warren	Vicksburg	Farmer	30	\$2,000	\$300	1830, Ireland	None
Sheehan, Michael	Warren	Vicksburg	Laborer	32	None	None	1828, Ireland	None
Sherley, James	Warren	Vicksburg	Lawyer	65	\$5,000	\$25,000	1795, MA	14
Shuler, Lewis	Warren	Vicksburg	Grocery	51	\$2,400	\$800	1809, Germany	None

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>
Skillman, Jacob	Warren	Vicksburg	Carpenter	65	None	\$500	1795, MD	None
Smith, Frank A.	Warren	Vicksburg	Shoemaker	26	NA	NA	1834, Germany	None
Smith, George W.	Warren	Vicksburg	Printer	27	\$1,000	None	1833, GA	None
Solomon Rothchild	Warren	Vicksburg	Clerk	21	None	None	1839, Germany	None
Strong, Charles W.	Warren	Vicksburg	Raftsmen	30	\$1,000	None	1830, CT	None
Strong, Seth R.	Warren	Vicksburg	Raftsmen	45	None	None	1815, CT	None
Theobald, Geo. Peter	Warren	Vicksburg	Drayman	27	None	None	1833, Germany	None
Thomas, William E.	Warren	Vicksburg	Corn Merchant	40	None	None	1820, VT	2
Tift, Solomon	Hinds	Jackson	NA	50	\$100,000	\$10,000	1810, NY	1
Tillman, William	Warren	Vicksburg	Saddler	52	\$8,000	\$10,000	1808, Germany	4
Trainer, Owen	Warren	Vicksburg	Carpenter	35	\$1,200	None	1825, Ireland	None
Tucker, Fielding	Warren	Vicksburg	Raftsmen	33	\$1,000	\$1,500	1827, SC	2
Tucker, James	Warren	Vicksburg	Raftsmen	23	None	\$100	1837, AR	None
Vick, John W.	Warren	Vicksburg	Farmer	54	\$125,000	\$15,000	1806, MS	25
Volenger, William	Warren	Vicksburg	Shoemaker	30	None	None	1830, Europe	None
Walker, William B.	Warren	Vicksburg	Brickmaker	32	\$900	None	1828, VA	None
Webb, Thomas B.	Warren	Vicksburg	Gun Wright	46	\$600	None	1814, VA	None

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>
Webster, Isaac	Warren	Vicksburg	Book Keeper	46	None	None	1814, VA	None
Wheeler, William S.	Warren	Vicksburg	Book Keeper	32	None	None	1828, NY	None
Williams, Jonathan	Warren	Vicksburg	Carpenter	29	\$1,100	None	1831, TN	7
Wilson, Victor F.	Warren	Vicksburg	Merchant	45	\$20,000	\$54,000	1815, Ireland	24
Wilson, William D.	Warren	Vicksburg	Overseer	33	None	None	1827, VA	None
Winegar, W.	Warren	Vicksburg	Tailor	30	\$1,000	None	1830, Switzerland	None
Winstin, Abraham	Warren	Vicksburg	Clothing	36	None	None	1824, Poland	None
Wixson, P.H.P.	Warren	Vicksburg	Merchant	22	\$300	None	1838, IN	None

Appendix B: Mississippi Deserters¹

<u>Name¹</u>	<u>Army Service²</u>	<u>County³</u>	<u>City/Town⁴</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Head of Household</u>	<u>Father</u>
William Lewis	Co. E, MS 5 Inf. Rgt	Attala	Tnship 14, Range 7	Pupil (father: Physician)	19	father: \$2500	father: \$8500	1841, MS	6	No	No	No
Thomas B. Hight	NA	Attala	Tnship 15, Range 7	Farmer	41	None	\$50	1819, TN	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
John R. Ware	Co. C, MS 40 Inf. Rgt	Attala	Tnship 13, Range 6	None (father: Farmer)	17	father: None	father: \$500	1843, AL	None	No	No	No
Jeff B. Reynolds	Co. D, MS 11 Cv. Rgt	Attala	Not in census									
James C. Shuler	Co. A, MS 15 Inf. Rgt	Attala	Tnship 14, Range 5	Pupil	17	None	None	1843, MS	None	No	No	No
Thomas H. Presley	Co. E, MS 27 Inf. Rgt	Attala	Tnship 14, Range 8	Farmer	28	\$10,000	\$6,000	1832, SC	5	Yes	Yes	Yes
Charles W. Miller	Co. C, MS 11 Cv. Rgt	Attala	Tnship 14, Range 5	Farmer	40	\$12,000	\$7,650	1820, NC	2	Yes	Yes	Yes
Joseph Burnet	Co. B, MS 4	Attala	Tnship 15, Range 7	Farm Laborer	22	\$400	None	1838, GA	None	No	No	No

¹ Deserters' names came from a variety of different primary and secondary sources. These sources are listed in the end-note on the last page.

² In instances when sources did not give the company and regimental information, I used the U.S. Civil War Soldiers Records and Profiles and other references to match the county in which the individual lived to the respective companies that were raised out of that county. For individuals who did not appear in the census but did appear in the soldiers' listings, I matched their company with the county in which it was raised. All background information is from the 1860 U.S. Census and Slave Schedules, Mississippi, and U.S Civil War Soldiers Records and Profiles, digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com/>); H. Grady Howell, *For Dixie Land I'll Take my Stand!: A Muster Listing of all Known Mississippi Confederate Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines* (Madison, MS: Chickasaw Bayou Press, 1998); Dunbar Rowland, *Military History of Mississippi, 1803-1898: Taken from the Official and Statistical Register of the State of Mississippi, 1908* (Spartanburg, SC: Reprint Co., 1978).

³ Deserters are organized alphabetically by county.

⁴ When the census did not list the city, township or town, I listed the individual's postal location to demonstrate geographic proximities.

<u>Name</u> ¹	<u>Army Service</u> ²	<u>County</u> ³	<u>City/Town</u> ⁴	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Head of Household</u>	<u>Father</u>
	Inf. Rgt											
James Brown	NA	Attala	Tnship 13, Range 9	Farmer	29	\$2,000	\$300	1831, AL	None	Yes	No	No
Wade H. Gordon	Co. G, MS 43 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Erin	Farmer	30	\$400	\$250	1830, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
J. Owens	Co. F, MS 4 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Not in census									
William R. Easley	Co. I, MS 4 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Hopewell	Farm Laborer	19	None	None	1841, MS	None	No	No	No
Isaac J. Gordon	Co. K, MS 17 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Sarepta	Farm Laborer	19	None	None	1841, MS	None	No	No	No
Duclesion L. Downs	Co. D, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Cherry Hill	Merchant	24	\$900	\$2,500	1836, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Micajah Harden	Co. D, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Cherry Hill	Farmer	25	\$800	\$500	1835, AL	None	Yes	Yes	No
Milton A. Brown	Co. D, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Hopewell	Farmer	31	\$2,240	\$7,650	1829, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wesley Gable	NA	Calhoun	Benela	Farmer	37	None	\$800	1823, SC	None	Yes	Yes	No
Clark Smith	Co. D, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Not in census									
Benjamin A. Beasley	Co. C, MS 44 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Cherry Hill	Farm Laborer	19	None	None	1841, AL	None	No	No	No

<u>Name</u> ¹	<u>Army Service</u> ²	<u>County</u> ³	<u>City/Town</u> ⁴	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Head of Household</u>	<u>Father</u>
Julian Beasley	Co. D, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Cherry Hill	Farm Laborer	30	None	None	1830, SC	None	No	No	No
John Beasley	Co. D, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Cherry Hill	Farm Laborer	21	None	None	1839, AL	None	No	No	No
Howard Beasley	Co. D, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Not in census									
Henry Steel	Co. F, MS 42 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Banner	Farmer	28	\$300	\$400	1832, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Thomas J. Cook	Co. F, MS 42 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Cherry Hill	Farm Laborer	24	None	\$150	1836, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
James Cartright	Co. I, MS 4 Inf. Rgt	Calhoun	Hopewell	Farm Laborer	18	None	None	1842 AL	None	No	No	No
John Booth	Co. F, MS 2 Cv. Rgt	Calhoun or Tishomingo	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA			
John Barton	Co. F, MS 2 Cv. Rgt	Calhoun, Tishomingo, Marshall or Yalobusha	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA			
Jerry D. Rutledge	Co. E, MS 21 Inf. Rgt	Catahoula, LA	Black River	(father: E. King Agent)	23	father: \$111,000	father: \$3000	1837, MS	None	No	No	No
James G. Law	Co. G, MS 5 Inf. Rgt	Chickasaw	Division 1	Day Laborer	18	None	None	1842, GA	None	No	No	No
FG. H. Woods	Co. F, MS 10	Chickasaw	Not in census									

<u>Name</u> ¹	<u>Army Service</u> ²	<u>County</u> ³	<u>City/Town</u> ⁴	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Head of Household</u>	<u>Father</u>
	Cv. Rgt											
William Tricky	NA	Chickasaw	Division 2	Farmer	29	None	\$150	1831, SC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
John Watkins	Co. I, MS 12 Cv. Rgt	Chickasaw	Division 1	None (father: Farmer)	18	None (father: : \$4170)	None (father: \$1500)	1842, AL	14	No	No	No
Charles Howell	Co. F, MS 44 Inf. Rgt	Chickasaw	Not in census									
F.M. Gullett	Co. C, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Chickasaw	Not in census									
W.P. Corner	Co. B, MS 2 Cv. Rgt	Chickasaw	Not in census									
F. Mcleod	Co. C, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Chickasaw	Not in Census									
G.D. Byars	Co. E, MS 19 Cv. Rgt	Chickasaw	Not in Census									
Melmoth T. Wofford	Co. H, MS 33 Inf. Rgt	Choctaw	Tnship 21	Farmer	22	None	\$429	1838, SC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jasper Elliott	Co. G, MS 33 Inf. Rgt	Choctaw	Not in census									
John Starnes	Co. D, MS 8 Cv. Rgt	Choctaw	Not in census									
Phillip Starnes	Co. K, MS 15	Choctaw	Tnship 20	Farm Laborer	16	None	None	1844, MS	None	No	No	No

<u>Name</u> ¹	<u>Army Service</u> ²	<u>County</u> ³	<u>City/Town</u> ⁴	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Head of Household</u>	<u>Father</u>
	Inf. Rgt											
M.K. Legget	Co. H, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Choctaw	Not in census									
Samuel Late	Co. H, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Choctaw	Not in census									
Amos Davis	Co. D, MS 15 Inf. Rgt	Choctaw	Tnship 20	Farm Laborer	16	None	None	1844, SC	None	No	No	No
William Bass	Co. H, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Choctaw	Not in census									
Laban B. Self	Co. D, MS 43 Inf. Rgt	Choctaw	Not in census									
B.L. Beuvers	Co. B, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Choctaw	Not in Census									
Peter Hix	Co. A, MS 46 Inf. Rgt	Clarke	Beaver Dam	Farmer	27	None	\$200	1833, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Alex Laxton	Co. A, MS 14 Inf. Rgt	Clarke	Not in census									
Jesse R. Rodgers	Co. A, MS 37 Inf. Rgt	Clarke	De Soto	School Teacher	29	\$2000	\$1000	1831, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
R.W. Langston	Co. G, MS 6 Inf. Rgt	Copiah	Not in census									
J.J. Entriiken	MS Brkhav	Copiah	NA	Farmer	30	\$800	\$400	1830, MS	None	Yes		

<u>Name</u> ¹	<u>Army Service</u> ²	<u>County</u> ³	<u>City/Town</u> ⁴	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Head of Household</u>	<u>Father</u>
	n Lt. Art.										No	Yes
R.W. Lesley	Co. A, MS 4 Cv. Bat	Copiah	Not in census									
Thomas Ates	Co. G, MS 7 Inf. Bat	Covington	Williamsburg	Farmer	32	\$1,000	\$500	1828, LA	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Daniel Reddoch	Co. G, MS 7 Inf. Bat	Covington	Williamsburg	Farmer	28	\$1,200	\$1,500	1832, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Charles McCaa	Co. E, MS 7 Inf. Rgt	Franklin	Meadville	Farm Laborer	16	None	None	1844, MS	None	No	No	No
John W. McDaniel	Co. E, MS 7 Inf. Rgt	Franklin	Veto	None: (father: Farmer)	16	father: \$265	father: \$20,000	1844, MS	None	No	No	No
Rutillius K. Scott	Co. E, MS 7 Inf. Rgt	Franklin	Friendship	None: (mother: Farmer)	17	mother: \$1000	mother: \$2900	1843, MS	1	No	No	No
R.S. Brown	Co. A, MS Wlkn Inf	Franklin	Friendship	Farmer	22	\$5,000	\$2,000	1838, MS	2	Yes	Yes	Yes
Beer Gardner	NA	Franklin	Friendship	Pealing	39	None	\$200	1821, Germany	None	No	No	No
E.J. Wofford	Co. F, MS 3 Inf. Rgt	Hancock	Not in census									
G.W. Hardin	Co. F, MS 3 Inf. Rgt	Hancock	Not in census									

<u>Name</u> ¹	<u>Army Service</u> ²	<u>County</u> ³	<u>City/Town</u> ⁴	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Head of Household</u>	<u>Father</u>
John H. Hastings	NA	Harrison	Biloxi	Not in census								
S.F. Denifson	NA	Harrison	Handsboro	Railroad Worker	Not in census							
D.B. Denifson	NA	Harrison	Handsboro	Railroad Worker	Not in census							
John O. Chisholm	Co. B, MS 1 Inf. Rgt	Itawamba	Smithville	Farm Laborer	20	None	None	1840, MS	None	No	No	No
John Dick	Co. A, MS 43 Inf. Rgt	Itawamba	Mooresville	Steam Mill Laborer	20	None	\$75	1840, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
James Ivy	Co. F, MS 42 Inf. Rgt	Itawamba	Bigby Fork	Farmer	24	None	\$100	1836, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Obediah Parker	NA	Jasper	Not in census	Farmer								
Marian L. Parker	Co. D, MS 3 Inf. Rgt	Jasper	Garlandsville	Farmer	21	None	\$175	1839, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Joseph Byrd	Co. K, MS 37 Inf. Rgt	Jasper	Holts	Mechanic	24	\$600	\$300	1836, MS	None	No	No	No
John R. Cousins	Co. K, MS 37 Inf. Rgt	Jasper	Not in census									
William McNeill	Co. D, MS 37 Inf. Rgt	Jasper	Buckley's Store	Mechanic	33	None	\$500	1827, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newton Knight	Co. F, MS 7 Inf. Bat	Jasper	Turnersville	Farmer	23	\$800	\$500	1837, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jeff M. Collins	Co. F, MS 7	Jasper	Turnersville	Day Laborer	17	None	None	1843, MS	None	No	No	No

<u>Name</u> ¹	<u>Army Service</u> ²	<u>County</u> ³	<u>City/Town</u> ⁴	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Head of Household</u>	<u>Father</u>
	Inf. Bat											
Maddie P. Bush	Co. C, MS 7 Inf. Bat	Jones	Ellisville	Farmer	24	\$200	\$247	1836, GA	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tapley Bynum	Co. F, MS 7 Inf. Bat	Jones	Ellisville	Farmer	23	\$200	\$250	1837, MS	None	Yes	Yes	No
Jasper J. Collins	Co. H, MS 37 Inf. Rgt	Jones	Ellisville	Farmer	33	\$2,000	\$1,120	1827, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Alpheus Knight	Co. B, MS 7 Inf. Bat	Jones	Ellisville	None	17	father: \$3,000	father: \$8450	1843, MS	4	No	No	No
Benjamin F. Knight	Co. B, MS 7 Inf. Bat	Jones	Ellisville	Farmer	23	\$600	\$295	1837, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
James M. Valentine	Co. NA, MS 7 Inf. Bat	Jones	Ellisville	Farmer	19	\$150	\$250	1841, MS	None	No	Yes	No
John H. Harper	Co. F, MS 16 Inf. Rgt	Jones	Ellisville	Farmer	30	\$1,000	\$200	1830, SC	None	No	No	No
Warren Waters	NA	Jones	Not in census									
Allen McCrory	Co.K, MS 43 Inf. Rgt	Kemper	NA	Farmer	20	None	None	1840, MS	None	No	No	No
William Jones	Co. I, MS 5 Inf. Rgt	Kemper	NA	Laborer	28	None	None	1832, GA	None	Yes	Yes	No
John W. Sanderson	Co. I, MS 5 Inf. Rgt	Kemper	NA	Farmer	28	None	None	1832, AL	None	No	No	No

<u>Name</u> ¹	<u>Army Service</u> ²	<u>County</u> ³	<u>City/Town</u> ⁴	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Head of Household</u>	<u>Father</u>
James M. Simmons	Co. A, MS 35 Inf. Rgt	Kemper	NA	Farmer	29	\$2,600	\$11,000	1831, SC	10	Yes	Yes	Yes
William Richardson	Co. K, MS 24 Inf. Rgt	Kemper	NA	Farmer	34	None	None	1826, TN	None	Yes	No	Yes
Jacob A.D. Williams	Co. F, MS 42 Inf. Rgt	Lafayette	Paris	Farmer	31	None	\$200	1829, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
James Colwell	Co. F, MS 42 Inf. Rgt	Lafayette	Paris	Laborer	19	None	None	1841, SC	None	No	No	No
S.P. Dodd	NA	Lafayette	Paris	Farmer	36	None	\$500	1824, AL	None	Yes	Yes	No
L.A. Dixon	Co. C, MS 5 Inf. Rgt MM	Lauderdale	Not in census									
William Gable	NA	Lauderdale	Beat 3	Farmer	27	\$560	\$300	1833, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
John Waits	Co I, MS 37 Inf, Rgt	Lauderdale	Centre Beat	Farmer	43	None	\$300	1817, GA	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
W.G. Davis	Co. C, MS 5 Inf. Rgt	Lauderdale	Beat 3	Farmer	34	\$650	\$350	1826, GA	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
W.T. Moseley	Co. H, MS 8 Inf. Rgt	Lauderdale	Not in census									
T.M. Hart	Co. D, MS 7 Inf. Rgt	Lauderdale	Beat 5	Farmer	25	None	\$1,200	1835, AL	4	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marion	Co. H,	Lawrence	Monticello	mother:	14	mother	mother:	1846,	28	No		

<u>Name</u> ¹	<u>Army Service</u> ²	<u>County</u> ³	<u>City/Town</u> ⁴	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Age in 1860</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Personal Estate</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Head of Household</u>	<u>Father</u>
Pierce	MS 6 Inf. Rgt			Planter		: \$10,000	\$30,000	MS			No	No
Meeke M. Fortinberry	Co. D, MS 26 Inf. Rgt	Lawrence	Monticello	Farmer	34	\$1,500	\$1,500	1826, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
James M. Case	MS Brkhaven Lt. Art.	Lawrence	Monticello	Farmer	25	\$800	\$150	1835, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
John Ray	Co.F, MS 12 Cv. Rgt	Leake	Carthage	father: Farmer	12	father: \$200	father: \$600	1848, MS	None	No	No	No
Joseph C. Newsom	Co. B, MS 40 Inf. Rgt	Leake	Carthage	Farmer	27	\$600	\$500	1833, GA	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Charles R. Waller	Co. D, MS 1 Lt. Art.	Leake	Carthage	Farmer	25	None	\$200	1835, GA	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emmet R. Scott	Co. B, MS 40 Inf. Rgt	Leake	Carthage	father: Farmer	15	father: \$2000	father: \$7500	1845, MS	1	No	No	No
James Fredrick	Co. H, MS 33 Inf. Rgt	Leake	Carthage	Farmer	30	\$500	\$1,800	1830, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
C.W. Mooney	Co. F, MS 33 Inf. Rgt	Leake	Carthage	Farmer	22	None	\$200	1838, AL	None	Yes	Yes	No
Robert Moore	Co.F, MS 33 Inf. Rgt	Leake	Carthage	father: Farmer	15	father: \$800	father: \$369	1845, MS	None	No	No	No
Isham R. Jinning	Co. G, MS 40 Inf. Rgt	Leake or Winston	Not in census									

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Amos Rice	Co. K, MS 14 Inf. Rgt	Lowndes	Not in census									
W.N. Clarke	Co. F, MS 29 Inf. Rgt	Lowndes	Not in census									
Malberry W. Whatley	Co. E, MS 40 Inf. Rgt	Lowndes	Columbus	Overseer	24	None	None	1836, AL	None	No	No	No
John Loftin	Co. D/F, MS 7 Inf. Rt	Marion	Columbia	Farmer	16	None	None	1844, MS	None	No	No	No
T. W. Harris	NA	Marshall	Holly Springs	Not in Census								
Charles F. Smith	Co. H, MS 34 Inf. Rgt	Marshall	Holly Springs	Sawyer	22	None	None	1838, MS	None	No	No	No
Delevan H. Morgan	Co. B, MS 1 Inf. Rgt	Monroe	NA	Farmer	50	\$3,050	\$25,000	1810, NC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
A.W. Parre	Co. K, MS 11 inf. Rgt	Monroe	Not in census									
W.F. English	Co. G, MS 14 Inf. Rgt	Monroe	Eastern Division	Farmer	28	None	\$200	1832, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Thomas Barrett	Co. B, MS 5 Inf. Rgt	Neshoba	Tnship 12, Range 12	Farmer	45	\$200	\$310	1815, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reuban Barrett	Co. F, MS 40 Inf. Rgt	Neshoba	Tnship 11, Range 13	Farmer	32	None	\$100	1828, AL	None	No	Yes	Yes
William G.	Co. A,	Neshoba	Tnship 10,	Farmer	27	None	\$345	1833,	None	Yes		

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Barrett	MS 33 Inf. Rgt		Range 10					AL			Yes	Yes
William R. Waller	Co. G. MS 40 Inf. Rgt	Neshoba	Tnship 12, Range 10	Farmer	15	None	None	1845, GA	None	No	No	No
Theodore G. Coghlan	Co. G, MS 40 Inf. Rgt	Neshoba	Tnship 12, Range 10	Farmer	30	None	\$364	1830, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jasper N. Fielder	Co. I, MS 35 Inf. Rgt	Neshoba	Tnship 12, Range 13	Farmer	24	None	\$250	1836, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
William P. Blount	Co. F, MS 4 Inf. Rgt	Neshoba	Tnship 12, Range 10	Farmer	33	\$800	\$636	1827, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
William Dyer	Co. G, MS 40 Inf. Rgt	Neshoba	Tnship 12, Range 10	Farmer	16	None	None	1844, AL	None	No	No	No
Jackson Breazeale	Co. G, MS 40 Inf. Rgt	Neshoba	Tnship 12, Range 10	Farmer	21	None	None	1839, MS	None	No	No	No
John W. Adcock	Co. G, MS 40 Inf. Rgt	Neshoba	Tnship 12, Range 10	Farmer	22	None	\$100	1838, AL	None	Yes	Yes	No
Samuel Adcock	Co. G, MS 40 Inf. Rgt	Neshoba	Tnship 12, Range 10	Farmer	15	None	None	1845, MS	None	No	No	No
Bart S. Coughran	Co. E, MS 40 Inf. Rgt	Neshoba	Tnship 9, Range 13	Farmer	24	None	None	1836, GA	None	No	No	No
J.S. Seuker	NA	Neshoba	Philadelphia	Not in census								
James C. Harrington	Co. A, MS 4 Cv. Rgt	Newton	Union	Farmer	33	\$720	\$683	1827, NC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes

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J.H. Pingleton	Co. A, MS 19 Inf. Rgt	Noxubee	Not in census									
Ephraim Youngblood	Co. B, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Oktibbeha	Starkville	Overseer	21	None	None	1839, AL	None	Yes	Yes	No
Thomas J. Warren	Co. F, MS 6 Cv. Rgt	Oktibbeha	Starkville	Farmer	32	\$100	\$500	1828, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Francis M. Philpot	Co. D, MS 2 Cv. Rgt	Panola	Not in census									
James H. Ates	Co. G, MS 7 Inf. Bat	Pike	Holmesville	Farmer	27	\$150	\$100	1833, LA	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
William A. Lesley	Co. G, MS 1 P. Rang	Pontotoc	Tallibenela	Farmer	30	\$1,000	\$563	1830, SC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
J.W. Harris	Co. G, MS 2 Inf. Rgt	Pontotoc	Not in census									
Samuel W. Newell	Co. G, MS 2 Cv. Rgt	Pontotoc	Randolph	father: Farmer	15	father: \$2160	father: \$2365	1845, NC	3	No	No	No
James S. Furr	Co. G, MS 2 Cv. Rgt	Pontotoc	Not in census									
Napoleon B. Bolen	Co. F, MS 31 Inf. Rgt	Pontotoc	Birmingham	Farm Laborer	21	None	None	1839, AL	None	No	No	No
Luther A. Privet	NA	Pontotoc	Ellistown	Farmer	32	None	\$380	1828, NC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
John K. Holden	Co. G, MS 1	Rankin	Brandon	Farmer	30	\$2,400	\$540	1830, LA	None	Yes		

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	Inf. Rgt										Yes	Yes
Archibald St. Clair	NA	Rankin	Not in census	Farmer								
J.J. Bannelle	NA	Rankin	Not in census	Teacher								
J.S. Hath	Co. H. MS 20 Inf. Rgt	Scott	Not in census									
Jesse A. Brown	Co. A, MS 39 Inf. Rgt	Simpson	Beat 3	Farmer	30	\$500	\$370	1830, GA	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Amos Davis	NA	Simpson	Beat 4	Farmer	33	\$3,000	\$15,448	1827, GA	13	Yes	Yes	Yes
John W. Gentry	Co. F, MS 14 Inf. Rgt	Smith	NA	Farmer	21	None	\$100	1839, MS	None	No	No	No
John Hawkins	Co. D, MS 6 Inf. Rgt	Smith	NA	Farmer	34	\$1,500	\$1,100	1826, NC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pleasant Q. Hawkins	Co. F, MS 16 Inf. Rgt	Smith	NA	Farmer	30	\$400	\$500	1830, NC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
William E. Hawkins	Co. H. MS 37 Inf. Rgt	Smith	NA	Fireman to Engine	27	None	\$250	1833, NC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
A.E. Hawkins	Co. G, MS 6 Inf. Rgt	Smith	NA	Farmer	26	\$477	\$300	1834, NC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Daniel O. Bankston	Co. D, MS 13 Inf. Rgt	Smith	Smith	Farmer	24	None	\$300	1836, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lafayette Bolen	Co. E, AL 51	St.Clair, AL	Tnships 14, 15	Farmer	27	\$300	\$250	1833, AL	None	Yes	Yes	Yes

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	Cv. Rgt											
Jasper Pettigrew	Co. B, MS 3 Inf. Rgt	Sunflower	Not in census									
John B. Ray	Co. F, MS A.craft Cv.	Tippah	Northern Division	father: Minister	20	None	None	1840, SC	None	No	No	No
John M. Bishop	Co. H, MS 23 Inf. Rgt	Tippah	Not in census									
Will. Harrison Gober	Co. K, MS Hams Cv.	Tippah	Southern Subdivision	Farmer	39	\$500	\$822	1821, GA	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Littleton Wages	Co. D, MS 18 Cv. Bt	Tippah	Southern Subdivision	Farmer	23	\$250	\$458	1837, SC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Samuel L. Allen	Co. H, MS 19 Inf. Rgt	Tippah	Southern Subdivision	Farm Laborer	25	None	\$411	1835, MS-	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
John W. Tate	Co. E, MS 23 Inf. Rgt	Tippah	Southern Subdivision	Farmer	36	\$1,000	\$973	1824, SC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
William W. Ballentine	Co. H, MS 34 Inf. Rgt	Tippah	Southern Subdivision	Farmer	21	\$500	\$435	1839, TN	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Andrew C. Vandiver	Co. E, MS 23 Inf. Rgt	Tippah	Southern Subdivision	Farmer	29	\$500	\$1,000	1831, TN	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
William Lindsey	Co. A, MS 23 Inf. Rgt	Tippah or Tishomingo	Not in census									

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J.B. Hommry	Co. A, MS 23 Inf. Rgt	Tippah or Tishomingo	Not in census									
Richard Simmons	Co. B, MS 26 Inf. Rgt	Tishomingo	Not in census									
Austin Harlin	Co. C, MS 7 Cv. Rgt	Tishomingo	Not in census									
Donald Street	Co. C, MS 26 Inf. Rgt	Tishomingo	Rienzi	Farmer	16	None	None	1844, NC	None	No	No	No
James Jordan	Co. G, MS 24 Inf. Rgt	Warren	Not in census									
Martin C. Parker	Co. E, MS J Davis Cv	Washington, AL	St. Stephens	Farmer	25	None	\$335	1835, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
H. Munzesheimer	Co. E, MS 21 Inf. Rgt	Wilkinson	Woodville	Not in census								
Richard A.J. Corey	Co. E, MS 21 Inf. Rgt	Wilkinson	Woodville	Farmer	20	None	\$5,000	1840, MS	4	No	No	No
David A. Enlow	Co. D, MS 21 Inf. Rgt	Wilkinson	NA	Farmer	28	\$400	\$100	1832, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
William McKinney	Co. E, MS 21 Inf. Rgt	Wilkinson	NA	Farmer	35	\$1,200	\$800	1825, SC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Benjamin C. Bass	Co. E, MS 21 Inf. Rgt	Wilkinson	NA	Farmer	46	\$400	\$200	1814, MS	None	Yes	Yes	Yes

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James Tedder	Co. I, MS 3 Inf. Rgt	Yazoo	Not in census									

⁵ Robert S. Hudson to William H. Mangum, May 24, 1864, in Silver, Ed., "The Breakdown of Morale," 106-107; Charles Clark Correspondence, boxes 949, 950, MDAH; John J. Pettus Correspondence, RG 27, vol. 52, roll 1333, MDAH; "Shooting a Deserter," *Weekly Courier* (Natchez, MS), May 14, 1862; "Thirty Dollars Reward," *Republican* (Woodville, MS), August 27, 1864; Substitution and Desertion Records, Receipts for Deserters from the Army Arrested by the Sheriff of Chickasaw County, 1863-1864, ser. 404, box 8372, MDAH; Glenn Robins, ed., "Inside the Mind of Johnny Reb: The Civil War Letters of John Cato," *Journal of Mississippi History* 64 (Spring, 2002): 33-45; *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 26, pg. 536; ser. 1, vol. 49, Pg. 950; ser. 1, vol. 30, pt. 2, pg. 14; ser. 1, vol. 49, pt. 1, pg. 950; ser. 1, vol. 32, pt. 3, pg. 635; J.A. Bigger Diary, August 12, 1862, #MUM00747, folder 4, box 1976.3, Archives and Special Collections, J.D. Williams Library, The University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi (Hereafter Cited as UMASC); Jason Niles Diary, July 18, October 30, 1863, January 21, 1864, SHC-UNC; Samuel Agnew Diary, January 13, March 13, 14, 15, 16, 1864, *Documenting the American South*; John C. Pemberton Papers, entry P1101-131, folder 2, box 2, NARA; Deserters, Misc. Records, Manuscripts, 1861-65, entry 183, folders 1502, 1507, 1740, 1839, 1990, boxes 15, 17, 18, 20, RG 109, NARA; Lists of Deserters and Refugees at New Orleans, December 22, 24, 26, 1863, UPMF, roll 26, NARA; Bynum, *Free State of Jones*, 99-101; "The Deserters," *Beacon* (Macon, MS), May 13, May 20, 1864; A.H. Clark to Mother, January 18, 1863, Thomas Clark Collection, #MUM01027, fol. 1, box 1984.1, UMASC; J.B. Crawford Letters, 1863-64, in George M. Street Collections, 1914-1982, #MUM00349, box 20, UMASC; Charles B. Allen to Parents, October 29, 1864, James Allen and Charles B. Allen Papers, 1788-1869, microfilm, 01697, roll 1, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.