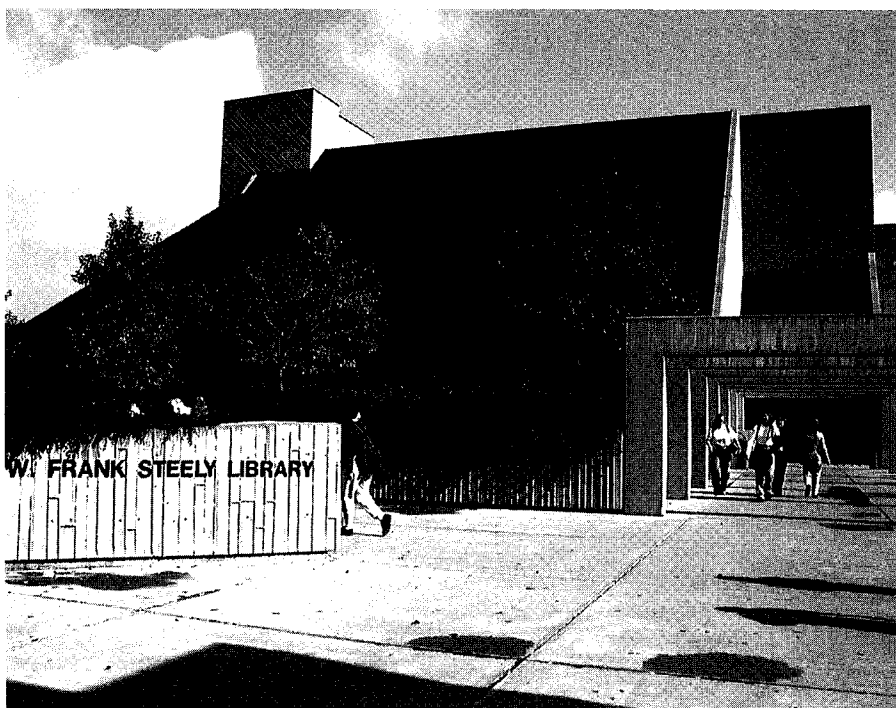


Perspectives in HISTORY



ALPHA BETA PHI *CHAPTER* *PHI ALPHA THETA*

VOL. XVI

2000-2001

JOURNAL OF THE ALPHA BETA PHI
CHAPTER OF PHI ALPHA THETA

**Perspectives
in
HISTORY**

EDITOR

Mary Beth Patterson

ASSISTANT EDITORS

Mark E. Garbett, Jr.

Theresa D. Geisen

Terry A. Leap II

ADVISOR

James A. Ramage

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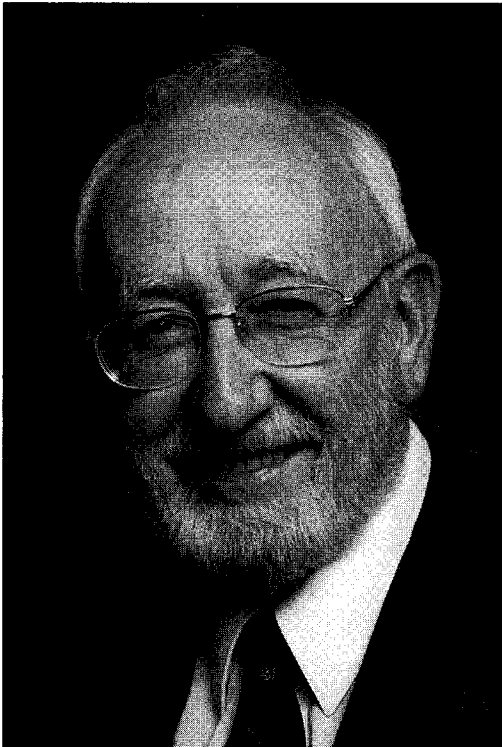
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*Volume XVI of Perspectives in History is
dedicated to
Dr. W. Frank Steely,
Northern Kentucky University's First President
President Emeritus,
Professor of History Emeritus,
and faithful member,
Alpha Beta Phi Chapter, Phi Alpha Theta*

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to this year's edition of *Perspectives in History*. I am confident that this year's journal will be pleasing to readers who enjoy reading and interpreting history. A great deal of hard work went into the production of the journal this year, and the lion's share of credit should be attributed to Dr. James Ramage and Editor Mary Beth Patterson. The journal recognizes the scholarly achievement of writers who have given a great deal of time in research and writing, and I congratulate each contributor. We are honored to dedicate this volume to Dr. W. Frank Steely, Northern Kentucky University's first president, scholarly mentor, and dedicated member of Alpha Beta Phi Chapter.

This year was truly a majestic experience for me. When I first got involved in Alpha Beta Phi Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta I could never have expected how rewarding the hard work would be. Together our members explored Fort Boonesborough, St. Walburg Monastery, and Villa Madonna Academy, helped needy people in our community, co-sponsored the Military History Lecture Series and Cornelius Suijk's lecture, sponsored Jenny Plemen's lecture, sponsored the annual student-faculty-staff picnic at the Honors House, presented one of the programs in the annual Regents Professors Fortnight, hosted the annual Phi Alpha Theta Regional Conference, initiated nineteen new members, and elected and installed next year's officers. Thank you Terry Leap, Rachel Noll, and Misty Spinner for presenting papers at the Regional and Ann Reckers, Ami Van De Ryt, Steven Watkins, Brian Puddy, Sarah Holland, Greg Perkins, and Sandra Seidman for chairing sessions.

For last year's work, the Chapter won the national Best Chapter Award for the eighth time in the last nine years, and *Perspectives in History* won the national Gerald D. Nash History Journal Award, for the third time. Congratulations to last year's President Brian Puddy, Editor Mary Beth Patterson, and to all the officers, members, and supporters of the Chapter. For our work this year, at the annual Student Organization Celebration on April 18, 2001, the Chapter won two highly competitive and coveted awards. We won the Recognition Award as the student organization that has received the most national, regional, and local recognition and acclaim and brought positive attention to Northern Kentucky University. When this award was announced, the presenter pointed out that our Chapter sponsored or was involved in twenty-six programs or events in 2000-2001. And for the fourth straight year, we won the Merit Award as one of the top ten student organizations on campus, with excellence in all programming and development areas. Thank you to everyone who participated this year.

I would like to thank all of the faculty members of the History and Geography Department for your support of our used book sale, canned food drives, and all of our projects. Your generosity and participation makes it a pleasure working with Phi Alpha Theta. Northern Kentucky University is blessed to have such an outstanding

group of professors who care about students and are truly visionary in their approach to teaching. I would like to extend special gratitude to the following for making an impact in my life. Dr. James Claypool mentored and taught me the history of Kentucky, gave me an appreciation for the grandeur and beauty of horse racing, re-inspired my love for literature, and counseled me about life in general. Dr. Robert Rhode taught me to think more creatively and to search beyond the facts readily available in front of me. Dr. Michael Ryan encouraged me to shape some of my more distant ideas into day-to-day works in progress and with his sense of humor, was always able to put a smile on my face. Dr. Jonathan Reynolds made me realize that a vast body of history remains yet to be uncovered and that one can be a scholar without losing individuality and creativity. Dr. Francois Le Roy has had an integral role in focusing my ideas on nineteenth century France and gave me fresh insight into the world of graduate school.

Professor Bonnie May made me realize that being a history major was not something I could merely drift through, and that instead I would have to research deeply, write accurately, and interpret soundly. This year Professor May volunteered to serve as Assistant Faculty Advisor of our Chapter, and in this role she has been of great help in organizing, handling details, and encouraging and inspiring everyone to give their best. Last year she organized the NKU Share project and this year expanded it so that we collected over 3,000 cans of food for Be Concerned, The Free Store, Hosea House, and Fairhaven Rescue Mission. As Coordinator of the Military History Lecture Series Ms. May has greatly extended our reach into the community, and the audiences this year were the largest ever. Finally, I am grateful to our Faculty Advisor, Dr. James Ramage, my friend and mentor. He is not only a great teacher with profound insight, but also an incredible leader and centerpiece of our Chapter. I have never met an individual who is as positive and up-beat as Dr. Ramage, and I know he will continue to guide our Chapter for many years to come.

Thank you Jan Rachford, Tonya Skelton, and Tara Higgins for helping us with work-orders, mailing the newsletter, and countless other ways, and thank you for your cheerful and helpful attitude. Thank you Dr. Robert Vitz for your enthusiastic support for five years as Chair of the Department of History and Geography, and thank you for being so available and helpful to students. Thank you Dr. Michael Adams for directing the Military History Lecture Series, for delivering the luncheon address at the Regional, and for supporting the Chapter in many ways. Thank you Dr. Jonathan Reynolds for posting the journal on our web site and for your support all year. Thank you Dr. Gail Wells, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, for supporting Phi Alpha Theta in general, and especially for financial support and participation in the Regional. Thank you Dean of Students Kent Kelso for financially supporting our canned food drive and attending the banquet. Thank you Dr. Rogers Redding, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost, and Dr. Jim Votruba, President, for your strong support of Phi Alpha Theta and all student honor societies and for participating in our banquet. Thank you Kathy Dawn, Bonnie Smith, Jo Ann Fincken, and others in University Printing for your creativity, high

quality production, and friendly helpfulness.

I want to express gratitude to Dr. Graydon A. Tunstall Jr., Executive Director of Phi Alpha Theta, for traveling from Tampa to participate in our Regional. Your presence encouraged everyone and made it a special meeting. Thank you professors and alumni for your professional work in judging the papers for the Regional, and Dr. John Cimprich for speaking at our banquet. I thank my fellow Chapter officers: Vice-President and Assistant Editor Theresa Geisen, Secretary Misty Spinner, Treasurer Anna Webb, Historian and Assistant Editor Terry Leap II, Editor Mary Beth Patterson, and Assistant Editor Mark Garbett, Jr. Thank you members and everyone who participated in our activities.

This year the Chapter donated to the Perryville Battlefield Preservation Association and Behringer-Crawford Museum and subscribed to *Northern Kentucky Heritage* published by the Kenton County Historical Society. Organizations such as this preserve and interpret history and unite professional historians with people from all walks of life. Thanks to Brian Puddy who demonstrated what a real leader is like as last year's President, and to President-elect Deborah Bogel for accepting the challenge of leading next year. Keep sounding those bells for our Chapter, our University, and our past, present and future.

*Far, far off the daybreak call—hark! how loud and clear I
hear it wind,
Swift! to the head of the army!—swift! spring to your
places,
Pioneers! O pioneers!*
—Walt Whitman

John A. Hodge
President

FOREWORD

For the second year in a row, I have the privilege of addressing you as the editor of the journal *Perspectives in History*. This has been one of the most educational and edifying experiences of my life and it is with some sadness that I hand over the reins. However, I leave without any trepidation. The members of the Alpha Beta Phi chapter of Phi Alpha Theta just keep getting better and better, and I know that I leave the privilege of editing this journal in very capable hands. There are so many people to be thankful to for the past year's experience, but time and space limiting, I will try to keep the list brief.

To John Hodge, President of the NKU chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, thank you for your professional attitude and your concern for each member. To all of the members, past and present, who contributed writings to this journal, and to the writers who contributed without membership, thank you for the opportunity to read such fascinating material. To the Assistant Editors of *Perspectives in History*—Terry Leap II, Theresa Geisen, and Mark Garbett, Jr.—and to all of the other active members of Phi Alpha Theta I want to say thank you for your support, your input and your presence. It is an honor to be associated with such a great group of people.

To Professor Jonathan Reynolds, Assistant Professor of History and Phi Alpha Theta's "Internet Guru" — thanks for giving me my "15 seconds of fame" each time someone logs into our online journal and Website. And thank you for the humor and respect that you show to each and every one who crosses your path. You are a blessing to our chapter and to our University.

To Dr. Robert Vitz, Chair of the History and Geography Department—you have given us your unceasing support in finance, in supplying us with the facilities and resources with which to conduct our business and in so many other ways. But most of all, you have shown us great moral support, lending us your presence on myriad occasions, and for this we are very grateful.

To Dr. Michael C.C. Adams, Regents Professor of History and Director of the Military History Lecture Series, we owe so much. The lectures that you bring to the University have allowed us to spread the word about our society, but more pointedly, they have opened our eyes to so many new subjects and views in history itself. I owe to you special thanks, as well. Your humor, your love of teaching, and your rapport with your students have all been gifts to me. You supported and encouraged me when I wasn't always sure of what I was headed for and I am forever grateful for your belief in me and in my abilities.

To Professor Bonnie May, Assistant Faculty Advisor to Phi Alpha Theta and Coordinator of the Military History and Lecture Series—what can I say? Your energy, your enthusiasm, your positive attitude and, of course, your southern charm in the face of adversity have shown me what it is to be a professional in the face of unequal odds. Your love for and belief in your students is an inspiration. You are a teacher who makes a difference!

To Dr. Rogers Redding, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost, to Dr. Gail Wells, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and to Dr. Jim Votruba, University President—you have graced us not only with your presence at banquets and other functions, but also with your unfailing support in every aspect. You didn't have to be there, but you always have been. We owe to you all a great debt of gratitude.

To Kathy Stewart and University Communications, Kathy Dawn and University Printing Services and Joe Ruh, University Photographer, we owe a great deal of thanks. Without your talents, your professionalism and your polish, we simply could not have turned out the award winning publications that we have. You are award winners.

To Jan Rachford, Tonya Skelton and Tara Higgins—you are three very special ladies. Your cheerfulness, your helpfulness, your graciousness are often the only things keeping it all together. You are marvels and—even though you may not always see it—your value to the professors, the students and the department is beyond measure. Thank you.

To the faculty of the History and Geography Department—I have said it many times before, but it bears repeating. I have truly been blessed to have access to so many great minds, to so many great teachers. Far too often those who have the knowledge can not effectively communicate it. Fortunately, this is not the case here. My mind has been opened and expanded by the diversity of fact and opinion that you have allowed me to share with you. I may not always agree with you, but please know that you have my deepest respect and admiration. Thank you for sharing yourselves, your knowledge and your wisdom.

The first year that I was a part of this journal was a genuine learning experience for me and I can say in all honesty that this year was the same. It could hardly be less, under the tutelage of our esteemed chapter advisor, Dr. James Ramage, Regents Professor of History and Faculty Advisor of Phi Alpha Theta. Dr. Ramage, you have been a teacher, an advisor, a mentor and, most importantly, a friend. I owe you a debt of gratitude so deep that I know I cannot pay it in full. You have been by me through many hard times in my student career, standing firmly beside my decisions even if you might not have made them yourself. You have given me the opportunity to discover a gift and a talent that I did not know I had, by allowing me to work beside you on these past two journals. Most of all, though, you simply believed in me. You always let me know that you had no doubts about what I could do, even if I did. Thank you.

The articles and reviews in this edition of *Perspectives in History* cover a wide variety of time and subject. From frontiersmen, to Civil War regiments and prisons, to feminist beginnings, to the highways and byways of our country, and so much more. There is something to interest everyone between the covers of this publication. I am proud and grateful to have been a part of the team that gets to present it to you the reader. Please—sit back, relax, enter into the past with us—and enjoy the ride!

Mary Beth Patterson
Editor

W. Frank Steely: The Making of a Great University President

by
James A. Ramage

The first time that Frank Steely excelled in competition was on the junior high debate team—he was known as the very best public speaker at Hazel School. He was very small—the smallest student in his class—and this brought more than his share of teasing, but he scored the highest on examinations and at the podium he was self-confident, calm and aggressive. One cause of the teasing was that he walked in many mornings in a bright rain coat and wearing galoshes, even if there was not a cloud in the sky. He was bothered by the taunting and would have preferred to get wet, but his overly protective mother insisted. One day when the teacher was out of the room, a few of his classmates grabbed him and thrust him out the second-story window, head first, holding him by his feet. They expected him to scream at the top of his lungs, but in total calm he declared: “I dare you to keep me here two more minutes.” Dangling upside down, he had seen a teacher approaching, and if she saw what was happening, they would be in deep trouble. They quickly pulled him in and realized what Frank’s political opponents learned when he was University President—bullying Frank Steely was impossible.

Frank was born April 9, 1925 in a small white house on a tobacco farm near Hazel, a small town in Kentucky near the Tennessee border in Calloway County. The house had no indoor plumbing and no electricity. His parents, Thomas Munsey Steely and Michie (Vaughan) Steely, were well along in years when he was born, and since he was their only child Munsey joined Michie in giving him a great deal of attention. “They tended to hover over me,” he said. From the hour he was born, they spoke to him only with adult conversation, and they emphasized that he must always speak clearly. He recalls watching his father reading the Bible in the evenings with a kerosene lamp. Munsey was a Methodist, but since Michie was a strong Baptist, he deferred, and they took Frank to Hazel Baptist Church.

Frank recalls that his mother would get up before dawn, measure flour from the flour barrel in one corner of the kitchen, and make biscuits for breakfast. “And they were the best biscuits in the world,” he said. Michie was from nearby Graves County, and when she was young, she had taught in a one-room public school. She had grades one through eight in the same room, but there was never any doubt who was in charge, for she enforced strict discipline and high academic standards. One year she missed several times from illness and her father, Frank Vaughan, for whom Frank is named, taught as a substitute, as did Michie’s sister, Mary. When Michie returned to work, she was reinstituting her brand of discipline on a mischievous

James A. Ramage is Regents Professor of History and Faculty Advisor of Alpha Beta Phi Chapter and *Perspectives in History*.

young man, and he remarked: "You know, I don't like you as much as I do Ms. Mary, and I don't like either of you as much as I do Mr. Frank!"

"My mother was probably the most serene person I ever knew," Frank recalls. "I never remember hearing her walk across the floor, and she never raised her voice to me. I never saw her move in haste. But she was enormously well organized; when she finished cooking a meal, she already had the dishes washed and put away." They had a large garden, and each summer she canned hundreds of jars of vegetables and fruit. They had peanuts and popcorn and fresh milk. "We ate well throughout the depression," he relates.

Munsey and Michie realized that Frank was intelligent, and it was exciting when he left for his first day at Hazel School, a brick building with all twelve grades. "My folks got me all decked out, and I did very well in first grade," he said. But in the second grade, he came down with a childhood illness and had to stay home for a few months. His mother kept him up with the class by tutoring him at home at the dining table by the kerosene lamp. When he returned to school, however, the home teaching continued, and every night she would make certain that his homework was perfect. This became embarrassing, because he was the only student in the class handing in perfect homework, and never making any math mistakes. "You know, mother," he said one night, "I'd really rather you not go over this." She looked at Munsey, and he declared: "Oh yes, let your mother go over it." Frank apparently developed his meticulous nature from his mother, for still today he is very careful about details. He told me that he wanted me as his administrative assistant at Northern because when I was in his undergraduate diplomatic history course at Murray State University, I was the only student who had a perfect research paper.

Frank worked in tobacco and harvested hay, but his passion was reading. Aunt Mary Austin in Miami, Florida, gave him books, serious works such as Charles Dickens novels and Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, which he read one summer in high school. Hazel had some excellent teachers, but there was no speech teacher. Therefore, when Frank was in second grade, his parents arranged private "expression" lessons with Ann Herron who had been to college in Murray. Herron encouraged him to recite the poem "Kris Kringle is Coming to Town" for a Christmas program, and from then on he was "Kris." It seemed strange that a boy named "Will Frank" was called "Kris," he reflected, but "I decided later in life that I was fortunate—one boy was 'Bucket' for 'Bucket-head,' and another was 'Dead Mouse.'"

Frank was valedictorian of the eighth grade and valedictorian of his high school class of twenty students. He was president of the senior class, and for two years, head cheerleader for the basketball team. He taught a class in geometry one year for a teacher who was out with illness. But his favorite activities were speech and debate. In the seventh grade Miss Koska, Mrs. Will Jones, his English teacher, suggested that he enter the state junior high speech contest sponsored by the Kentucky Education Association. He did, and won in the county and won in the district, qualifying him to go to the state competition in Lexington. It was Spring, 1938, and

he had been only twelve years old when he won the district and had just turned thirteen by the state tournament. His parents thought he might be too young, but Munsey decided to ride along in the car and stay with him in Lexington. Once the decision was made, the next problem was appropriate clothing. They had a custom, every fall, of taking Frank to J.E. Littleton Dry Goods in Hazel and buying him a new sweater and pair of trousers for school. This had been done the previous fall, and now, they returned and purchased the matching jacket, which still had not sold.

The assignment from KEA was to write a speech pleading for more money for education in Kentucky. Frank still remembers the last lines of the speech he gave that year. He concluded by saying that support for the schools was an investment, for talent could blossom anywhere. "Genius, genius my friends, flowers in most unexpected places. It is the impetus of the undistinguished host that hurls forth a Diomedes or a Hector." Reciting this recently, he smiled and said: "I didn't have the slightest idea what I was saying, but I won third place in the state contest!" He returned in his sophomore year in the high school contest and won third again. In both his junior and senior years he won first in the state contest.

His seventh grade speech was remarkably prophetic, for who would have imagined that Hazel would produce in Frank's generation so many prominent leaders? When it was in the news that Frank had become president of Northern, Ann Herron was shopping in Murray, and a man on the street said: "Tell me about these Hazel people." She answered by proudly naming the men from tiny Hazel who had gone on to great success in life. Dr. Billy Gray Hurt grew up just around the corner from Frank, and he was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Frankfort. Henry Franklin Paschal, born just across the state line in Tennessee, became pastor of Hazel Baptist Church, First Baptist Church of Nashville, and President of the Southern Baptist Convention. Frank's closest friend, Calvin West, organized a successful auto transmission company in New Orleans. James Lee Harmon became a national trustee of the Woodmen of the World. Across the road from each other lived two families that produced two sons who became medical doctors: Will Mason and Rob Mason and Everett Hicks and Shelby Hicks. During a reunion in Hazel a few years ago, Frank welcomed two distinguished looking gentlemen, and one of them said: "My goodness, its Kris!" The two men were physicians Everett and Shelby Hicks.

Frank's mother never recommended a specific career for him, but his father advised him to become a pharmacist. Miss Koska encouraged him to become a lawyer, and that was his plan. But he graduated from high school in 1943, during World War II, and like millions of others, volunteered for military service. As he considered which branch would best suit his spirit of adventure, he talked about joining the cavalry. But a friend said: "Will Frank, you don't want that—you'll be in a tank!" Finally, he selected the Navy and completed basic training in Corpus Christi, Texas. He worked on the base in the education office for about a year, earning promotions to petty officer third class and petty officer second class. Then he volunteered for Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps at the University of South

Carolina. Upon completion of his bachelor's degree he was to be commissioned as an ensign.

Navy ROTC required courses in naval science that included a great deal of math and science, and he enjoyed the course in terrestrial navigation. "I could take a Bowditch almanac, and plot a course across the Atlantic," he recalled. By the second year, he was required to select a major. He considered literature but selected history because in the University the history professors seemed less eccentric. And, he was probably influenced by his contact with Dr. Forrest Pogue, history professor at Murray State. When Frank competed in debate contests on the Murray campus, seven miles north of Hazel, Pogue was usually one of the judges. Pogue was the first Ph.D. Frank became acquainted with, and he was impressed. "Forrest struck me as undoubtedly the most cultured and distinguished person I had ever met," he wrote in his book *Northern: Birth of a University*. Pogue was a native of Eddyville, graduated from Murray State at eighteen, and from the University of Kentucky with his master's degree at nineteen. He earned his Ph.D. at Clark University and studied international relations on a fellowship at the University of Paris. He enjoyed art, music, and theater and loved teaching. In World War II he was a combat historian and was appointed to write the official history of Dwight D. Eisenhower's command. After the war, he returned to Murray, but left in 1956 to write George C. Marshall's biography and serve as Director of the Marshall Library and Foundation. Pogue became one of the most highly respected historians in the nation. He would often say that he was proud to have known Frank since Frank was in the eighth grade.

In 1946, with one year of study remaining, and disarmament underway, Frank was released from the Navy. He returned to the University of South Carolina as a civilian and finished his degree, Phi Beta Kappa. In the summer of 1947 he enrolled in the masters program in history at the University of Kentucky and studied under a nationally prominent history professor who is a legend today—Dr. Thomas D. Clark. Frank made such an outstanding impression on Clark that Clark invited him the next spring, in 1948, to go with him to Salzburg, Austria, as his teaching assistant in a summer seminar. "Dr. Clark," said Frank, "I meant to finish my masters this summer." Clark answered: "No, you finish it now, this term." And thus, Frank finished his masters degree in one summer and two regular semesters. His parents had not attended his commencement in South Carolina because of the distance, but his mother rode the bus to Lexington to attend his masters graduation. He introduced her to Clark, who was most gracious, as always. She thanked Clark for doing so much for her son, and especially for inviting him to Salzburg. She went home on the bus and Frank headed for Europe, where he joined Clark.

It was a Harvard-sponsored seminar in American Studies, taught by several American and British professors and their assistants for students from western Europe. It was in the castle that later appeared as the Von Trapp mansion in the film "The Sound of Music." Frank had a cot in a large room with ten or twelve other young men, and one night he was getting into bed when he discovered it already

filled with a suit of armor. He knew immediately that it was a practical joke by George Albert "Sam" Shepperson, who became Chair of the History Department at the University of Edinburgh. They are still close friends, and years later Frank taught a semester on sabbatical leave in Sam's department.

When the time came to decide where Frank would go for his Ph.D., Clark said: "Will Frank, you have never lived outside the South, and you are going to teach American history. You ought to have some experience with the North; you will go to the University of Rochester in New York." Frank knew this was sound advice, and went, enjoying everything about Rochester except the winter weather. He wrote his dissertation on antislavery in Kentucky under great historian Glyndon G. Van Deusen, author of *The Life of Henry Clay* and other important books, particularly biographies of outstanding Whig politicians on the national scene. His mentor, however, was Dexter Perkins, dean of American diplomatic historians and author of *A History of the Monroe Doctrine*, and over twenty other books. Frank remembers Perkins taking him and other graduate students in his car across the Genesee River to attend lectures he would give on the women's campus. He drove like mad, talking constantly and yelling "Fathead" at drivers who blocked his way. Perkins had tickets to the symphony for Friday evenings, and invited Frank along, developing his appreciation for classical music.

Frank finished his residency, and on July 8, 1951, married Iosetta Morris of Calloway County, and that fall he and Iosetta moved to Mississippi where he taught and chaired the history department at Blue Mountain College. Frank was teaching and had finished everything for his Ph.D. except the dissertation when one day his father called and said that his mother had died. In 1956, Frank and Iosetta returned to Murray, where he became professor of history and chair of the history department. I first met him at Freshman Orientation in fall 1962. University President Ralph Woods addressed us from the stage of the auditorium, introduced each department chair, and directed us to follow the chair of our major. A handful of us walked with Frank across the lawn to Wilson Hall. There, in a classroom with windows open toward the lawn, Frank advised each of us on what classes we should take our first semester. He took his time with each of us and gave us his full attention. I knew that I had never met a more cultured, graciously-mannered, educated person, and I was most pleased when he said that he would be my permanent advisor. I graduated with my bachelor's degree in 1965, and when I returned to Murray for a master of arts in history in 1967, he had left. But, before he departed, he gave me one of the best recommendations that I ever had—he suggested that I select as my director for my masters Dr. Ivan Lubachko. Ivan was a perfect director; he encouraged me to finish in one year and pressured my committee to approve, and they did. And during that year, Ivan became one of the closest friends that my wife Ann and I ever had.

Frank had left Murray to become Academic Dean of Clinch Valley College of the University of Virginia (named The University of Virginia's College at Wise today). At Murray, he had become a close friend of Dr. Harry Sparks, Chair of the

Education Department. Sparks had been appointed Kentucky's Superintendent of Public Instruction, and in 1967 recommended Frank for the dean's position in Wise. He urged Frank to accept and gain experience in administration in preparation for returning to Kentucky when a position opened in the future.

Less than two years later, when the presidency of Northern was advertised, Sparks recommended Frank, and seldom in history has an individual been so well suited for a significant work. Thomas Carlyle wrote that truly great men realize what the time wants, seize the initiative, and lead people toward the goal. Frank quickly understood the challenge in northern Kentucky. The area was on the verge of decades of solid industrial and commercial expansion and in population was already the second largest urban region in Kentucky. But, it had no four-year state college to enable students to work and attend classes locally. The University of Kentucky offered two year programs at Northern Kentucky Community College in Covington, a school opened in 1948. The area was suffering from its reputation as a center of illegal gambling and prostitution dating from the prohibition era. The Committee of 500 had driven out the crime, but the old, "sin-city" reputation hung over northern Kentucky like a cloud. Business and political leaders were divided in the three counties and dozens of small municipalities. Frank had published an article on Newport in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and he realized that the new university could serve as a unifying force for business and political leaders. This theme he repeated many times in his speeches the first few years.

Arthur L. Schmidt, Republican state senator from Campbell County, understood all of this and campaigned for Republican Governor Louie Nunn in 1967. Nunn was elected, and when he asked Art what he wanted most for northern Kentucky, Art replied: "a four-year state college." A bill passed transferring the community college and creating Northern, and Nunn signed it on March 13, 1968. Nunn realized that the institution would contribute to the economic growth of the state and gave it the highest priority. He quickly appointed a Board of Regents and site selection committee and assigned his Educational Assistant John DeMarcus to assist and guide them. DeMarcus, more than any other person, became responsible for the initial organization of Northern Kentucky State College, and he performed outstanding work. After Frank became president, he appointed John Vice President for Administrative Affairs. John served until 1983 when he joined the history faculty. He was particularly invaluable in dealing with state officials in budgetary and financial matters and overseeing construction of most of the buildings on the new campus.

With Northern created on paper, what was needed was a self-confident, proactive, take-charge president who would cut through red tape and move fast. The people of northern Kentucky were a generation behind the rest of the state in educational opportunity. Recently when Frank was asked to indicate what he considered his greatest achievement, he said: "It was building so quickly a university to serve the area of northern Kentucky. Before NKU, only about one-third of high school graduates in the area went on to college. Now, they are a vast majority. Earlier they could not afford private or out of state tuition, nor could they

go down state, for they had to work to attend college, and jobs were not available at the other state universities.

Frank moved so quickly, heads were spinning all over Frankfort. The other university presidents and state bureaucrats accused him of “trying to make Northern fly before it is ready to walk.” But he loved the challenge; he had found his destiny, his moment in history. In order to appreciate Frank’s contribution, one has to understand that Northern was created in spite of opposition from the other state institutions, whose presidents and political supporters did not want to share state resources. One of my favorite photographs in the history of Northern shows Frank in the state capitol in January, 1970, sitting beside Charles Wiley, first Chair of the Board of Regents, and testifying before the Joint Committee on institutional budgets. A snow storm had blocked the roads through the Appalachian Mountains, but Frank had rented a Jeep to drive from Wise to attend the hearing. The photo shows, behind Frank and Charlie, in the balcony, an overflow crowd of students from the community college, brought in a cavalcade of buses to demonstrate support for Northern’s first budget. “I’m going down there to save our budget!” said Barbara Spare of Covington. “We have to support our college,” Mrs. Gordon Gibson of Wilder told a reporter. In the photo, Frank is leaning forward, his right hand thrusting forward on the desk. He was on the offensive, and even his body language evidenced his indomitable testimony. His father had died by this time, but if he and Frank’s mother had been still living, they would have been proud of their son and satisfied with the education they provided in Hazel.

When Frank became president in December 1969, he established the goals of adding the third year of classes by fall 1971, on the small community college campus in Covington and offering the senior year in fall 1972, on the new campus to be constructed in Highland Heights. Experienced educators warned that state institutions could not possibly move this fast. But Frank said later: “I did not feel there was any reason in the world not to move as fast as possible.” When I came to interview in the fall of 1971, the third year had been added and enrollment had increased from 1,473 at the community college to over 3,000. For classrooms, offices, and the bookstore, he brought in prefabricated, temporary buildings. “It never dawned on me to delay upper level work until facilities were adequate,” he remembered. When I met with him, I was greatly impressed that he gave the best office on campus, on the main floor of the main building, and with a fantastic view of Covington and Cincinnati, to Academic Vice President Ralph Tesseneer. The President’s Office was down the hill and across Dixie Highway in a former hair salon, with a huge mirror covering the back wall. He explained that Ralph needed the office with a view to make a positive impression on candidates for faculty positions, but I realized that Frank’s self-denial was a symbol of his leadership and his slogan, “Northern is no ordinary institution.” When I came on board, January 2, 1972, he had moved onto the hilltop campus into a tiny six by eight foot space walled off at the end of one of the temporary units. DeMarcus had a similar space in the same room, as did several others of us, including Communications Professor Robert Mullen.

One of the hurdles in building the first two buildings on the new campus was State Finance Department regulations requiring that bonds financing construction had to be based on tuition from actual enrollment, not projected enrollment. Frank went to Frankfort for many anxious meetings and pointed out that Northern required an exception, that the fourth year had to be offered before actual enrollment reached the required level. Finally, Deputy Finance Commissioner Larry Forgy agreed and set up a special fund to finance construction until bonds could be sold. The construction itself was a close race. By fall 1972, Nunn Hall was almost completed but a labor strike delayed installation of the elevators. No problem, we walked up and down the stairs for the first few weeks. Over 4,000 enrolled, and in May 1973, Frank's mentor Dexter Perkins spoke at the first commencement with 611 students graduating. "We did it!" Frank wrote.

The atmosphere on the new Highland Heights campus in fall 1972 was more like a movie set or army staging area than a sedate university campus. "Crowded" hardly describes the situation. The Fine Arts Department occupied the renovated Keene farm on Johns Hill Road—the kennel was a music practice room; the barn loft was the theatrical scenery studio; and the photographic laboratory was in an 11 by 15 square foot space in the cellar of the farm house. The student union and bookstore were in a small house near Nunn Hall. Frank remarked: "Never before did so many do so much with so little."

What was behind the rush was Frank's philosophy of putting students first—he wanted to provide an opportunity for students to get an education and move on with their careers. There is no calculating the impact this had on thousands of lives. In Spring 2000, when Frank retired from teaching and Dr. Gail Wells, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, sponsored his retirement dinner on campus, she asked me to edit a booklet of tributes that included statements by students. Dominic E. Ruschman, Class of 1974, wrote a letter to Frank quoted in the booklet. Dominic expressed appreciation to Frank for enabling him to graduate with a chemistry major, enter a career as a chemist at Cardinal Laboratories, and become President of the company. Without Northern, these opportunities would not have opened for him. "The education I received at Northern has improved the quality of my life infinitely from the options available to me without Northern," Dominic wrote. "Please accept my sincere thanks for the great influence and advantage you have brought to my life."

Frank made students first also by designing classrooms requiring small classes. When a visitor asked, "Where are the large 600-seat classrooms?" Frank smiled and explained that students want small classes to have discussion and get to know their professors. When classes filled and closed at registration, he opened new classes; when parking spaces were filled, he built new parking lots. One time we needed a few hundred spaces immediately, and since approval from Frankfort took months, he and DeMarcus ignored the red tape, built a new lot for \$70,000, and informed Frankfort that yes, Northern had violated regulations, but our students could not attend class without parking.

By September 15, 1975, when Frank resigned to become full-time Professor of History, enrollment had increased to 6,041; the annual budget had grown to almost \$11 million; and the faculty had increased from 30 to 198. "We recruited a faculty with the highest percentage of terminal degrees of any other Kentucky state university," he said. Three new buildings had been completed: Louie B. Nunn Hall, Regents Hall, and the first Science Building. Construction had begun on five others: W. Frank Steely Library, Fine Arts Building, Landrum Hall, Maintenance Building, and the Central Power Plant and Electric Substation. Funding had been secured for the University Center, and this brought the total value of capital construction to \$37,021,234. But when he reflects today, he does not consider his greatest challenge construction, or faculty recruiting, or winning approval of the Master of Arts in Education, or other achievements. He believes that his great challenge was the union with Salmon P. Chase College of Law. There was tremendous opposition throughout the state, and the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and other newspapers editorialized against the merger. "I still believe the great virtue of Chase was not so much saving it for the area, which we did. My idea was that lawyers go into politics, and over a period of time you would have Chase graduates from Murray to Morehead, Paducah to Pikeville, in the General Assembly, and this would give Northern the same base of political support that the University of Kentucky enjoys." Today, it is clear that he was correct.

When I came to Northern in January 1972 as Frank's assistant, one of my responsibilities was to supervise the house at the entrance of the campus now designated the Mark R. Herrmann Reception Center. This brought me into close contact with Iosetta, who was a gracious, ideal, and beautiful first lady of the University. She had the great idea to redecorate and furnish the house not with University funds, which were scant, but with money raised by the Community Involvement Committee headed by Ruth McElhinney of Fort Thomas. This gave people in the community an opportunity to get involved and support Northern. We had many dinners and receptions, and I recall Iosetta calling me at the office and saying: "Hello Jim, I know you're busy, but could you take a minute and call 'so-and-so'? They want to make a donation." She was great to work with, always cheerful and positive. At Christmas each year, we invited people to the Reception Center for a gala Holiday Reception. For 1973, on the third floor we exhibited the collection of Pre-Columbian art of Shirley and Ben Bernstein, who had represented the State Department in Latin America. With Iosetta, everything was always elegant and executed with style and imagination. Iosetta and Frank have two children, Dr. William M. Steely, a surgeon in Clarksville, Tennessee, and Lisa Steely, an attorney in Jacksonville, Florida. Along with other family members they attended Frank's retirement dinner and I was honored to recognize their donation of \$50,000 (\$100,000 with matching funds) to Northern, creating the W. Frank Steely Scholarship. This is given in alternate years to a Freshman history major and first-year law student.

Frank and Iosetta have seven grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Bill and his wife, Mary, are parents of Jennifer, Stephanie, Catherine, Dylan, and Michael. Jennifer and her husband, Patrick Hutson, are parents of Taylor and Kaitlyn. Stephanie and her husband, Jess Gibbs, are parents of Katie. Lisa and her husband, Larry Ruckel, are parents of Megan and Garrett. During the retirement dinner, I was honored to recognize Martha Pelfrey, Frank's second wife, for her friendship and support of Northern. Martha has retired from a successful teaching career in the Campbell County Public Schools. Over one hundred people attended, and over a dozen gave brief oral tributes, including Bill and Lisa and Frank's boyhood friend from Hazel, Calvin West; Dr. Clark; University President Jim Votruba; and University Provost Rogers Redding. Dean Wells delivered the final tribute and presented Frank a gift, and Frank responded. I leaned forward in my chair and listened as his gracious and captivating remarks brought the evening to an appropriate climax. He thanked everyone and reflected on how fortunate he has been to spend his professional life on a university campus. He concluded by wishing for Northern what Thomas Jefferson hoped for the University of Virginia: "I am closing the last scenes of life by fashioning and fostering an establishment for the instruction of those who are to come after us. I hope its influence on their virtue, freedom, fame, and happiness, will be salutary and permanent."

Frank is one of the few great men that I have known, and I was greatly honored to serve in his administration and to know him as a friend and colleague through the years. When Tom Brokaw prepared an NBC documentary on the fortieth anniversary of D-Day, he came to the conclusion that Frank's contemporaries were "the greatest generation any society has ever produced." They were united in a common purpose and were motivated "by common values—duty, honor, economy, courage, service, love of family and country, and, above all, responsibility for oneself." Frank exemplifies Brokaw's theme. When future historians record the annals of Northern Kentucky University, no name will stand out more prominently than that of its first president, W. Frank Steely.

**“Decisions of Great Consequence:”
Daniel Boone and the
1778 Siege of Fort Boonesborough
by
Terry A. Leap II**

Though often overlooked, and usually understated, the western theater of the American Revolution was of critical importance to both the Americans and the British.¹ Most historians quickly recognize George Rogers Clark and his campaigns in the Illinois country as being of critical importance, but few give as much attention to the British-led efforts to win the Kentucky country. In 1777 and 1778, the Ohio country Indians, along with their British allies to the north, systematically and continually brought death and destruction to the settlements in the western part of Virginia and into present-day West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio.² One of the pivotal defeats for the British in this theater was their failure to capture Fort Boonesborough in central Kentucky in 1778 and, through their Indian allies, eliminate any threat that the fort and its inhabitants might pose to British interests and domination in the west.

The British/Indian failure to succeed at Boonesborough can be primarily attributed to one legendary figure, Daniel Boone. He has become an American icon, a “Columbus of the West,”³ who is largely associated with romanticized images of coonskin caps and buckskin trousers. However, in order to give a complete historical image of the man as a key player in the American Revolution in the west, the real-life exploits and accomplishments of Boone, both as a pioneer leader and a military officer, must be recognized. In the Revolutionary War-related events which took place on the Kentucky frontier in 1778, Daniel Boone displayed great cunning, resourcefulness, and leadership, resulting in the saving of Fort Boonesborough—an act which helped secure colonial military supremacy in the west, while at the same time forever securing Boone’s reputation as the quintessential American frontiersman.

By 1778, the war for control of the American West had been raging for decades. It began as early as the mid-seventeenth-century when European settlers and traders first began to regularly trickle into the Ohio Valley for the purpose of trade. The native inhabitants of this region west of the Allegheny/Appalachian mountains, north of the Cumberland river system and concentrated around the Ohio River valley, an area collectively known as the Ohio River Valley, took particular

Terry A. Leap II is Assistant Editor of *Perspectives in History*, Volumes 15 and 16, and in 1999-2000 he is Historian of Alpha Beta Phi Chapter and Editor of the Chapter Newsletter. He presented this paper at the Phi Alpha Theta Regional Conference at Northern Kentucky University, March 31, 2001.

exception to the whites invading their sacred hunting grounds. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, many of the Ohio Valley peoples had already been forced to move west by invading Europeans on the Atlantic seacoast.⁴ The Europeans in the eastern colonies had already established a pattern of land acquisition at any cost since their arrival in the New World. Native lands were either taken by violent, superior force or purchased through bogus land contracts and treaties for ridiculous amounts. In any case, Native Americans by the mid eighteenth-century had already witnessed the pattern of land thievery practiced by the whites, resulting in the tribes either being eliminated completely, or being forced to move west and assimilate into other tribes in new lands.

By the mid-eighteenth century, this conflict between Native Americans and competing European factions over control of the Ohio Valley came to blows in what is known as the Seven Years War, or more commonly, The French and Indian War. The victory by allied British, colonial, and even some native forces secured England's control of North America for the next thirteen years. This dominion went uncontested until 1775, when colonial forces rebelled against Britain and the American Revolutionary War began. Once again, control of the Ohio Valley region would be a cause for war as well as a means of victory in the war.

All over North America, but particularly in the Ohio Valley, the British grew adept at enlisting the help of Indian factions against the American cause in the Revolution. The British worked hard at supplying the Indians with goods and convincing them that a victory for the British would mean a victory for the American Indians. The English constantly reminded the Natives of the Proclamation of 1763, which was endorsed by the King of England and ensured the safety, at least temporarily, of their lands. The British successfully convinced the Indians that a victory for England would mean an end to colonial expansion over the Trans-Allegheny mountains, and in most cases, the Indians willingly agreed.⁵ This prospect of hope for the Indians led to a very intense and unique type of warfare in the Ohio Valley. One author makes a special note about the ferocious nature of Indian warfare during the Revolutionary War period, specifically in the relatively unsettled region of Kentucky. She wrote,

During the Revolutionary War the life of those who had come to Kentucky to claim land was miserable in the extreme. The frontier version of the Revolution was an Indian war, and Indians turned out to be a far more terrible enemy than Hessian troops. It was their unpredictability, as well as their barbarity, which made them frightening. They ranged through the woods in small parties, striking first here, then there, almost always without warning.⁶

The British learned well how to play on the Indian hatred of whites and fear of losing their sacred land. John Bradford, founder of Kentucky's first newspaper, notes that from the larger posts of Detroit, Kaskaskia, and Vincennes, together with

other smaller outposts along the Wabash, “the Indians obtained supplies of arms and ammunition, and were thereby enabled to continue their hostilities against the Kentucky settlements.”⁷ In July of 1777 Henry Hamilton, British Governor and Lieutenant Colonel of the outpost at Detroit, supplied and dispatched fifteen well-armed Indian war parties to carry out raids in the Ohio Valley. Within six months, Hamilton was rewarded with 129 scalps and 77 colonial prisoners. Through such activities, Hamilton earned the nickname most hated among colonials, the “Hair-buyer.”⁸ It was in this context that the situation of the small, seemingly insignificant fort of Boonesborough in central Kentucky became significant.

In October of 1777, the British were stunned by the staggering defeat of Burgoyne’s forces at Saratoga, giving them even more initiative to push for a solid victory on at least one front. Thus, the attacks in the western theater did not slow down, but instead increased during the usually dormant winter.⁹ Added to the desires of the British, the fury of the Indians in the Ohio country burned particularly hot due to an unprovoked incident that also took place in October. A Shawanoes (Shawnee) delegation had visited Fort Randolph at Point Pleasant on the upper Ohio to parley about the Indian’s as yet undecided allegiance in the war. The delegation consisted of the esteemed Shawanoes chief Cornstalk, as well as Old Yie, Redhawk, and later on, the son of Cornstalk, Elinipsico. While there, the delegation was detained and, without provocation, brutally assassinated by a group of frontiersmen seeking revenge for a recent Indian attack.¹⁰ As word of this senseless attack reached the Ohio country the Indians were enraged and there was no longer any question as to which side they would support. The incident united them against the Americans on the western frontier.¹¹

In the winter of 1777-1778, according to one count, there were only about 121 able-bodied riflemen out of a total population of no more than 300 in the whole Kentucky region. Only about twenty-two of these riflemen took permanent residence at Boonesborough and approximately 84 of them were located at Harrodsburg to the west.¹² These numbers were subject to constant fluctuation as there were often militiamen and other travelers coming and going, sometimes deciding to stay and sometimes returning east after a taste of pioneer life in the forts. However, from these estimates, it is easy to understand the corresponding weakness of the forts themselves. As the winter of 1777-1778 came the Ohio Indians, normally somewhat subdued during the winter hunting months, began to organize an all-out winter assault on the weak, isolated settlements of Kentucky, beginning with Boonesborough.

Boonesborough was a small settlement located on the south bank of the Kentucky River, which, though started in 1775 by legendary American frontiersman Daniel Boone, was no more than a deteriorating outpost by the winter of 1777-1778. During this winter, Boone was living at the fort with his family when supplies became dangerously scarce. Of particular concern to the settlers was their lack of salt, which was a necessary staple of frontier life. Ted Franklin Belue writes that, “the role of salt in the expansion of Anglo-American settlement can hardly be

overstated.” He continues by saying that “salt preserved meat so that it could be stored for hard times [and] a fort without a store of salted meat was vulnerable in times of siege.”¹³

It was out of concern for the survival of the fort that Boone decided to gather together a party of settlers to travel north to the Lower Blue Licks (on the Licking River) and set about the tedious task of boiling salt in mid-winter.¹⁴ On the eighth of January, as Boone says in his own words, “I went with thirty men¹⁵ to the Blue Licks, on Licking River, to make salt for the different garrisons.”¹⁶ Unknown to Boone, while on this supply mission for the benefit of Boonesborough and other garrisons, Cornstalk’s replacement—Blackfish—had set out at the same time on a mission of his own. He crossed the Ohio into Kentucky in the first week of February, with a justifiably angry group of warriors, determined to destroy Boone’s home at Boonesborough.¹⁷ Very soon, these two warriors would run headlong into each other and the results would be monumental for both men and their respective cultures.

On the morning of February 7th, Boone, out hunting for provisions for his party, was detected and captured by a small group of Blackfish’s Shawanoes scouts. Boone’s first thought was to do the “brave” thing and try to escape, but knowing he was outnumbered and would be shortly overtaken by the much younger braves, he demonstrated a bit of wisdom and cross-cultural understanding that he may have learned from previous experience. Years earlier, in 1769, Boone had experienced the mercy that the Indians were certainly capable of when he had surrendered to a war party led by “Captain” Will Emery, a ‘half-breed’ Cherokee. They captured Boone and his brother-in-law John Stuart, took their supplies and skins, and then allowed them to return to their home back across the mountains having provided the whites with meager supplies for their journey. Emery’s one condition was that the whites never invade sacred Shawanoes hunting grounds again.¹⁸ Obviously, Boone did not heed the warning.

Boone immediately quit running and surrendered. As a sign of his submission, he leaned his rifle against the tree behind which he had hidden so that his pursuers could see that he offered no resistance.¹⁹ The Indians accepted his submission and greeted him with laughter and congratulations to one another on his capture. Though only a minor detail, this action is the first of many actions by Boone which demonstrate a thorough understanding of what he felt he had to do to survive among his enemies. After his capture, the warriors took Boone to the Shawanoes camp where he quickly surmised a few things. First, his party of salt-makers was greatly outnumbered by this large war party (at least 120 warriors were present).²⁰ He knew that his men would not stand a chance against them in a fight.

Secondly, he reasoned that unless this war party could be persuaded otherwise, they were determined to attack Boonesborough. Knowing what he knew about the fort’s weak condition, scarce supplies, and few inhabitants, Boone knew that the inevitable result would be death, destruction, and captivity for the fort and at least a sizable portion of its inhabitants. The course of action that Boone chose at this

point has come under question by many historians of this era, probably more so than any other decision Boone made in his life.

Boone communicated with the chiefs of the war party through the black Shawnee interpreter, Pompey, and ultimately agreed to persuade his men to surrender. He would do this in exchange for the Indians agreeing to abort their attack on the fort. The Indians agreed to postpone their attack until the spring, when Boone would escort them back to the fort and mediate a peaceful surrender of the fort and its inhabitants. This single action would raise questions about Boone's loyalty for the rest of his life. However, Boone later explained his actions at his court-martial, as recorded by witness Daniel Trabue,

Capt. Daniel Boon sayed the reason he give up these men at the blue licks was that the Indeans told him they was going to Boonsbourough to take the fort. Boone said he thought he would use some stratigem. He thought the fort was in bad order and the Indeans would take it easy. He (Boon) said he told the Indians the fort was very strong and too many men for them, that he was friendly to them (an the officers at Detroyt) and he would go and show them some men-to wit, 26- and he would go with them to Detroyt and these men also, and when they come to take Boonsbourough they must have more warriers than they had now had. Boon said he told them all these tails to fool them.²¹

Though many have seen Boone's actions at the Lower Blue Licks as treacherous, cowardly and unforgivable, one need only comprehend the harshness of the frontier and this particular situation to understand Boone's decision. Boone was acting here as a practical realist, understanding that the only other option he and his men faced was a surprise assault leading to the deaths of perhaps all thirty of his companions. This action, just like leaning the rifle against the tree, demonstrated Boone's cunning nature and conformity to the standards of frontier warfare and living, which required in a very Machiavellian way that a person do what they had to do to simply survive.

In a relatively recent and excellent article about this very subject, frontier historian Ted Franklin Belue points out correctly that "the salt-boilers are the best judges of Daniel Boone's actions."²² He then goes on to quote the testimony of men like Benjamin Kelly, William Brooks, William Hancock, John Brown, and Richard Wade, all prisoners that were taken as a result of Boone's decision. The men almost unanimously agree that Boone's decision at that time and in the situation was very wise and resulted in the saving of their lives, and ultimately, the lives of many others.²³

The Indians accepted Boone's capitulation and were more than happy to take Boone and his men back to the Ohio country as captives. After all, Boone had convinced them that the fort was too strong²⁴ and they would need to come back in the spring with a larger force, when Boone would convince his fellow settlers, like

himself, to surrender to the inevitable. As Draper would later understate, "Boone concluded that some finesse under the circumstances would be perfectly justifiable and, therefore, represented to Black Fish that he was very willing to go and live with his red brothers and take all his people there also."²⁵

The Shawanoes were indeed happy with their capture. This was the largest number of prisoners taken alive by the Indians since the defeat of Braddock and his forces in 1755.²⁶ Because of this and the harshness of the winter, they decided after much counsel to abort the attack on Boonesborough and head back across the Ohio River into Shawanoes country. Once there, they would begin the process of adopting some prisoners and selling others to the British authorities in Detroit.

Once they arrived in the Shawanoes towns, many of Boone's men were adopted into different Indian families to replace sons lost in battle, thus cooling the anger of many Indians.²⁷ The adoption and fate of the salt-boilers, particularly Boone and some others who chose to remain Indians, has been the source of much research among frontier historians and for a full account of the individual fate of each of these men, one should consult Belue's article in the January 1994 *Filson Club History Quarterly*. John Mack Faragher correctly notes that, "perhaps nothing else so suggested the differences between the Indian and American worlds as this custom of adopting enemies in the midst of bitter warfare."²⁸ Boone himself had the good fortune of being adopted by Blackfish which some see as an indication of just how highly that the Indians regarded him.²⁹

Boone was given the name "Shel-to-wee," or "Big Turtle" as it would be translated into English. He went through all of the adoption rights and customs that he would later describe to an early Boone biographer, the Reverend John Mason Peck. In his conversations with Peck, he recalled the ceremony as follows,

The hair of the head is plucked out by a tedious and painful operation, leaving a tuft, some three or four inches in diameter, on the crown, for the scalp-lock, which is cut and dressed up with ribbons and feathers. The candidate is then taken into the river in a state of nudity, and there thoroughly washed and rubbed, 'to take all his white blood out'. This ablution is usually performed by females. He is then taken to the council-house, where the chief makes a speech, in which he expatiates upon the distinguished honors conferred on him, and the line of conduct expected from him. His head and face are painted in the most approved and fashionable style, and the ceremony is concluded with a grand feast and smoking.³⁰

From his own words, it can be determined that Boone knew he must submit to this and learn to assimilate into the native way of life, at least temporarily, if he expected to not only survive, but gain the trust and favor of his captors. He wrote:

At Chelicothe I spent my time as comfortably as I could expect; was

adopted, according to their custom, into a family, when I became a son, and had a great share in the affection of my new parents, brothers, sisters and friends. I was exceedingly familiar and friendly with them, always appearing as cheerful and satisfied as possible, and they put great confidence in me. I often went hunting with them, and frequently gained their applause for my activity at our shooting-matches. I was careful not to exceed many of them in shooting; for no people are more envious than they are in this sport.³¹

This passage alone is loaded with hints that Boone knew what he had to do to stay alive. In everything, from his outward appearance to his careful conduct at the shooting matches, Boone knew how to play the role. He did these things carefully and was accepted, trusted and honored among his captors. To see the difference that conformity made in this situation one need only compare this to the captivity experience of other salt-boilers like William Hancock, who because of his stubborn spirit, was forced to sleep naked each night while his captor (Captain Will Emery) slept in front of the door to prevent his escape.³²

There can be no doubt, however, that Boone also seemed very comfortable in his new way of life. He notes that, "The Shawanese King took great notice of me, and treated me with profound respect and entire friendship, often entrusting me to hunt at my liberty. I frequently returned with the spoils of the woods, and as often presented some of what I had taken to him, expressive of duty to my sovereign."³³

Passages like this make one wonder just how much Boone was actually pretending. It seems that his life among his captives presented him with an opportunity to live his life much as he truly wanted; away from all of the land speculation and politics and free to roam the woods and experience all the beauty of the untamed wilderness much as he had eight years earlier in 1770. In his early days in Kentucky, as a long-hunter, he seemed perfectly content. Later in life, when he would recount his journeys in Kentucky to Filson, he would recall those days when, "No populous city, with all the varieties of commerce and stately structures, could afford so much pleasure to my mind, as the beauties of nature I found here."³⁴

His lifestyle among the Indians would indeed seem to be completely satisfying judging from his own words. Nonetheless, one must ask, if he was completely satisfied and not conforming for survival's sake, then why would he feel the necessity to plan an escape and endanger himself to return to the fort? Some of those who have researched this question have concluded that while Boone was indeed content in his lifestyle, he never truly experienced the change of heart that would have instilled in him a desire to abandon his 'white' ways for a truly native way of life. He was indeed playing a role that he knew was necessary for his survival.

Boone's hasty assimilation to native living was convincing enough to deceive his captors. Moreover, there is evidence that this assimilation also proved counter-productive in his relationship with his white co-prisoners, at least initially. His happiness was so convincing that it caused certain other captives to question not

only Boone's motives behind the surrender, but his loyalties as well. Andrew Johnson, one of the captives who would later escape back into Kentucky, reported upon his arrival at Harrodsburg that, "Boone was a Tory, and had surrendered them all up to the British, and taken the oath of allegiance to the British at Detroit."³⁵

William Hancock, who would also later escape and arrive back at Boonesborough at about the same time as Boone, could not understand, "how Boone could be whistling and contented among the dirty Indians while [I] was so meloncholy."³⁶ Boone would later imply to Filson that appearing "as cheerful and satisfied as possible" was all a part of his ruse.³⁷ He was simply assimilating and doing whatever necessary to stay alive. As Faragher notes about Boone's ability to assimilate, he was displaying a trait that had made him such a successful hunter in the woods, his "ability to blend in with his surroundings."³⁸

Boone again displayed great logistical cunning when, on March 10th, the Shawanoes marched to British-held Detroit with their newly adopted kinsmen and some other captives who were to be sold for ransom to Governor Hamilton. While at Detroit, Boone made fast friends with the Governor and noted in his memoirs that he and his men "were treated by Governor Hamilton . . . with great humanity."³⁹ The Governor was so impressed with Boone that he offered the Indians a great deal of sterling silver for Boone's release but they refused, again demonstrating their great admiration and respect for the frontiersman.⁴⁰

While at Detroit, Governor Hamilton requested a private meeting with Boone for the purpose of gathering intelligence about the condition of the frontier in Kentucky. There is also no doubt that the Governor, already impressed with Boone, sought to woo and further an alliance with Boone. The British realized that such alliances would be necessary if they ever planned on controlling the frontier. Once again, Boone used great duplicity and cunning to turn the situation to his advantage. It is said that Boone displayed to the Governor his captain's commission, given him by Lord Dunmore,⁴¹ which he kept handy for this very kind of situation, and that he used this commission to assure the Governor of his pro-British leanings. He further assured the Governor of the surrender of Fort Boonesborough in the spring, thus "very much ingratiating himself in to the Governor's good graces."⁴²

It was in light of all this that Governor Hamilton then sought to purchase Boone from Blackfish. He offered nearly four and a half times the usual amount for a prisoner. He was however, refused by Blackfish, who not only saw Boone now as his adopted son, but also as the key to a great Indian victory in the spring. Finding his efforts to no avail, the Governor saw to it that before Boone left, he was given a new horse, saddle, bridle, blanket, and silver trinkets to use as trade goods among the Indians. All of these items would prove valuable to Boone later.⁴³ Once again, Boone's artful nature and adaptability proved rewarding.

On April 10th, the party left Detroit and began its journey back to the Indian villages at Chillicothe, arriving on April 25, 1778. As it has already been noted, Boone spent his remaining time among his Shawanoes captors very comfortably. He had become a respected son, and though not without some hesitation and distrust

at first, he was eventually given the same trust and freedom that other members of the tribe were given.⁴⁴ His native captors presumably did not suspect that Boone was actually planning an escape. While hunting, he would recover spent balls and hide them in pockets that he had made in the folds of his shirt. He would also take and hide small portions of gunpowder that the Indians had rationed him, which over time, amounted to a sufficient load for a rifle.

Early in June, the Indians mounted a salt-making expedition of their own of which they made Boone a part. The party would go to springs on the Scioto River to make salt. On the way, Boone met a white settler named Jimmy Rogers living peacefully in Indian country, who asked Boone to perform gun repairs for him. Boone took the work along with him to the salt springs, where the Indians watched in amazement as he worked. While there, Boone witnessed the arrival of a large army of Wyandots, Mingoos, and other Shawanoes, who were returning from an unsuccessful expedition against Fort Randolph at Point Pleasant, and Donnelly's Fort on the Greenbriar River.⁴⁵

A large portion of this army intended to join the expedition against Boonesborough. With this knowledge, Boone knew that it was nearing time for him to escape and warn the frontier settlements. On their way back to Chillicothe, Boone returned the finished gun to Rogers. An Indian who was impressed by Boone's work gave him a lock and a barrel to work on in exchange for a few charges of ammunition and a flint.⁴⁶ Other accounts report that the Indians gave Boone many weapons to work on in preparation for their campaign and it was from this supply that Boone obtained gun parts.⁴⁷ Regardless of the means, the crafty frontiersman obtained the necessary elements to build a weapon. With his horse and these supplies in hand, Boone reasoned that as soon as an opportunity arose, he would attempt his escape.

Perhaps no other incident in Boone's career demonstrates his frontier resourcefulness as well as his escape in the summer of 1778. Each of the steps, including the saving of powder, the recovery of spent lead, the gaining of trust, and the barter of service for supplies, demonstrate Boone's preparation and planning for an escape that would take him hundreds of miles through untamed wilderness. He no doubt knew what supplies would be needed and he waited for the most opportune time—a time when he felt he had gathered enough intelligence about the enemy and secured adequate supplies. He later recalled only these details about his escape: "When I returned to Chelicothe, alarmed to see four hundred and fifty Indians, of their choicest warriors, painted and armed in a fearful manner, ready to march against Boonesborough, I determined to escape the first opportunity."⁴⁸ He continued: "On the sixteenth, before sun-rise, I departed in the most secret manner, and arrived at Boonesborough on the twentieth, after a journey of one hundred and sixty miles; during which, I had but one meal."⁴⁹

Boone's rather humble recollection leaves out many details about his escape which show his resourcefulness and knowledge of frontier survival. For example, his escape took place either in early morning or late evening, according to which account one accepts. In either case, these two times were the most opportune,

because they gave him a head start on his pursuers. If one accepts the Draper account (which this author does) then Boone rode his horse literally all night and did not stop until the next morning when he turned his horse loose from exhaustion.

When he reached the Ohio River, he made a small raft of dry poplar saplings and vines, on which he stored all of his supplies and clothing as he swam in the river. He made a gun by attaching his gun parts to a stock that he carved from a sourwood sapling, using nothing but his knife and leather thongs to hold the barrel in place. The gun fired well, and near the Blue Licks, he killed a buffalo with it which he readily feasted on.⁵⁰ As he traveled, he ran through creek-beds and on fallen trees to effectively hide his trail from his pursuers.

All of these details demonstrate great resourcefulness, frontier know-how, and mental and physical endurance. On Saturday, the 20th of June, Boone reached his home at Fort Boonesborough safely. Having survived the surrender and escaped captivity, Boone would now face his greatest challenge yet from his own people at the fort. In his absence, there had been much discussion and speculation about both Boone's actions and loyalty. Aron notes that, "escaped captives had returned with the even more disturbing news that Boone had consorted with the British and joined the Indians."⁵¹ This kind of suspicion would prove an obstacle for Boone as he sought to provide leadership among the inhabitants of the fort even while vehemently denying all charges, insisting that all was done to deceive the enemy.⁵² Nonetheless, Boone would now set about to salvage his reputation through his actions as he immediately began working diligently to bring about the salvation of the fort.

It was undoubtedly Boone's leadership and diplomacy in the late summer of 1778 that prevented the otherwise sure destruction of Fort Boonesborough and the inevitable captivity of its inhabitants.⁵³ Besides the vocal few who questioned Boone's loyalty, the majority of the fort's inhabitants still trusted him. Shortly after his arrival he took the lead in preparing the fort for the attack that he was sure would come. The sorry state of the fort and its inhabitants can be perceived from the first-hand accounts of traveler Daniel Trabue, who lived at Logan's Fort to the west, but had been at Boonesborough in the summer of 1778. He writes, "The people in the fort was remarkable kind and hospitable to us with what they had. But I thought it was hard times- no bred, no salt, no vegetables, no fruit of any kind, no Ardent sperrets, indeed nothing but meet."⁵⁴

Another traveler, Josiah Collins of Halifax County, Virginia, arrived at the fort on March 26th and noted that he found, "a poor, distressed, 1/2 naked, 1/2 starved people, daily surrounded by the savage, which made it so dangerous, the hunters were afraid to go out to get Buffaloe Meat."⁵⁵ Such accounts illustrate the poor condition of both the physical health and the morale of the settlers inside the fort.

The fort itself was another story. It had never been completed and what was finished was now rotting and in disrepair. Boone said: "I found our fortress in a bad state of defence, but we proceeded immediately to repair our flanks, strengthen our gates and posterns, and form double bastions, which we compleated in ten days."⁵⁶

Draper gave a much more detailed account of the poor state of the fort:

Boone, upon his return, found the fort at Boonesborough still in a bad state of defense. The announcement of the speedy approach of a larger Indian army awakened the garrison to the necessity of immediate preparations; and they proceeded at once, animated by the presence and energy of Boone, to repair the palisades enclosing the fort, those on one side of which being almost entirely wanting, to strengthen the gates and posterns, to enlarge the upper end of the fort and form double bastions, as Boone calls them - that is, on the south-east and south-west corners new bastions were built, the second story of which was made as high as a man's head, time not permitting to roof them. The second story of these bastions, as well as Henderson's kitchen and Phelps' house occupying the two river corners, projected several feet outwardly beyond the first story, so as to give the garrison [the] chance to shoot any person who might venture close up to the fort on any side or beneath the bastions as apertures were left for shooting through the projecting floor. All these improvements, by dint of vigorous application, were completed in the course of ten days."⁵⁷

Not only did Boone take over the leadership in repairing the fort; he also readied the inhabitants for a siege. He encouraged them to tend to their crops and to get as much food inside the fort as possible. When the attack was delayed until much later in the summer, he further encouraged them to gather in their fall harvest of corn and store it in the lofts of their cabins, which they did.⁵⁸ Also, in preparation for the coming confrontation, contemporary Peter Houston notes that Boone "summoned all the available help from the other stations."⁵⁹ Trabue reinforces this when he recalls that under Boone's leadership, "the people at Boonsborough immediately sent to our fort [Logan's] and Herrodsborough for some of our men." He goes on to say, "We had about 40 Min [and] We sent about 15 and some went from Herrodsburgh."⁶⁰

Boone had suspected that the Indians would arrive shortly after his return and hence he had hurried the fort's inhabitants in all of these preparations. By mid-July however, there had been no sign of a massive Indian assault and many inside the fort began to believe that Boone's escape had thwarted the attack.⁶¹ Then on July 17th, another escaped salt-boiler, William Hancock, arrived at the fort and brought the news that Boone's escape had not stopped the attack, but had rather caused the Indians to postpone it some three weeks, of which nine days had passed already.⁶²

By the end of August, a full two months had passed since Boone's escape and still there was no attack. Boone and other settlers at the fort became curious about the delay and possible abortion of the Indian plans. Boone proposed a plan to take a party and attack the Paint Creek Town of Scioto in Ohio country with the hope of capturing prisoners, learning the Indian army's position, and taking Indian loot.⁶³ This plan was met with much resistance from Captain Richard Calloway, who

already thought Boone a traitor.⁶⁴ However, plans were made and the party was scheduled to leave before the end of August.

The excursion to the Paint Creek Town shows that in spite of lingering suspicions about his earlier surrender and escape, enough of Boone's reputation remained intact to convince thirty men to leave the fort with him in the face of Indian hostilities. This may demonstrate that the question of his loyalty to the fort was, for most, only an issue in later years, and that his actions and motives were not much in doubt by his contemporaries. On the other side of that argument, one sees that this excursion, timed as it was, might have given already suspicious settlers even more reason to question Boone's loyalties. After all, he was taking a large party of able-bodied men and leaving the fort at a time when Indian threat was inevitable. Furthermore, he was taking these men into country where, earlier that same year, he had surrendered a similar size party without a fight. This expedition would later become a key point in the charges brought against Boone at his court-martial.

Boone's raid was one of the first in a series of attacks by whites on Indian towns in the Ohio country. Up until about 1778, the Indians had felt relatively safe in their territory across the Ohio since it was unusually difficult to pursue them across the river. Very few whites knew the location of the Indian camps and thus it was very difficult to successfully carry war to the enemy.⁶⁵ However, this all began to change, even before this planned raid by Boone, when Andrew Johnson—one of the escaped salt-boilers—successfully led a surprise expedition across the Ohio earlier that year and raided Indian camps. Now "there were a number of Kentucky woodsmen with accurate knowledge of the red-man's territory and an active interest in evening up the score."⁶⁶

After Johnson's raid, Boone safely led the raid against the Paint Creek Town. In the spring of 1779, Colonel Bowman would lead a group of 200 white men into the Ohio country and successfully lay waste Old Chillicothe Town. In this attack, Blackfish received a wound which led to his death.⁶⁷ The most significant of these raids would come in 1780, when George Rogers Clark led a force of almost 1000 men into Ohio country and destroyed Chillicothe and many other Indian towns, erasing the sense of security and inviolability that the Ohio country provided the Indians.⁶⁸ As Aron notes, "In the years after 1778 . . . offensives in to Indian country proved decisive in the conquest of the Ohio Valley."⁶⁹

Thus Boone and his men, whether for revenge, reconnaissance, or reward were taking the fight to the Indians. The expedition left around August 31st and initially consisted of Boone and thirty men. This number however, was reduced when eleven men turned back at the Blue Licks in order to be with their families.⁷⁰ The party crossed the Ohio, painted themselves 'indian-style,' and got into a scuffle with a group of Indians about four miles from Paint Creek Town. In the fight, frontiersman Simon Kenton took a scalp. The party immediately started back towards the fort with their one scalp, three horses, and numerous bits of Indian supplies. There were no injuries among the whites and the raid was considered a success. On their way to Boonesborough, Boone and his men learned that the Indians were indeed

gathering for the attack. The party discovered the Indians camped at Lower Blue Licks and went around them undetected, arriving back at the fort on September 6. Draper notes, "thus the main object Boone had in view was attained - learning the intentions of the enemy."⁷¹

The siege of Boonesborough began on the morning of Monday, September 7. Over the next eleven days Boone not only proved his loyalty, he provided leadership that saved the fort. His courage, fighting skills, encouragement, diplomacy, and expertise in many areas were invaluable. A simple analysis of Daniel Boone's involvement in the activities of the siege, even without getting into the specific details of the eleven day ordeal, demonstrates that his actions and leadership saved the day.

The Indian army was an awesome sight to the inhabitants of the fort. It consisted of approximately 440 men and was made up chiefly of Shawanoes, Wyandots, and Cherokees, in addition to 40 Frenchmen and Canadians. Chief Blackfish, aided by Moluntha, Black Hoof, Black Beard and some lesser chiefs, led the Indians. The whites were led by their commander from Detroit, Antoine Dagneaux DeQuindre, who was assisted by Captain Isadore DeChaine, a Frenchman and interpreter to the Wyandots, Peter Druillier, a British Indian trader, and the 'negro Pompey,' who served as an interpreter to the Shawanoes.⁷² When the Indian forces arrived at Boonesborough, they were still under the impression that Boone's word of surrender would be honored. In one way, Boone's earlier agreement had at least spared the fort the ordeal of going through a surprise attack or raid on the fort. The Indians were certainly more sincere in their intentions than the whites. They never dreamed that the inhabitants of the fort would reject such "generous favorable terms of surrender as they would offer."⁷³ The Indians were scantily equipped, a sure sign that they expected a very short campaign. The warriors carried only their rifles and a buckskin wallet of parched corn and made no effort to conceal themselves or their arrival at the fort, not only because they knew Boonesborough was already warned, but because they genuinely hoped to capture the fort without a fight.⁷⁴ It seems that not even the Indians themselves believed that Shel-to-wee would turn against them.

Inside the fort, Boone and the other leaders had a different plan in mind that did not include surrender. Instead, they would stall for as long as possible in hopes that requested militia reinforcements from Virginia would arrive shortly. If they did not and worst came to worse, it was decided that they would fight to the death. Because of his intimate knowledge of the Shawanoes and their ways, and the respect and understanding that he maintained among both parties, Boone was the natural choice to be the spokesman and diplomat for the settlers in the fort.

At the end of the first day, a meeting was arranged between Boone and Blackfish. Blackfish, as his adopted father, shamed Boone and scolded him for leaving unannounced. He then reminded Boone of his earlier promise of surrender and of the mercy that he had been shown by the Indians because of it. Blackfish presented Boone with papers signed by Governor Hamilton himself insuring the safe passage of all prisoners to Detroit.⁷⁵ For those who still doubt Boone's character and

loyalties, this meeting presents a problem. Boone had the opportunity here, if he were truly a Tory or a traitor, to turn over the fort and join his Indian brothers, who would have gladly welcomed him back. However, he does not do this. Instead, Boone used his wit to convince Blackfish to give him until Wednesday evening, the 9th, to confer with the other leaders inside the fort. Blackfish conceded and a temporary truce was then agreed to. For the next two days, Boone and the settlers used their time further preparing themselves for the inevitable siege by bringing in their cattle and livestock.⁷⁶ Boone's diplomacy and play-acting had bought the fort's inhabitants time, at least for the present.

Before the evening of Wednesday the 9th, Boone gave his answer to Blackfish. He announced that the fort would not surrender but would defend itself to the last man.⁷⁷ By now the Indians understood that Shel-to-wee had been playing them for fools and even Blackfish grew weary of these games. It was now time for some duplicity on their part. The Indians arranged for a formal treaty ceremony to take place on Wednesday afternoon. There they would agree to peaceful terms under which the Indians would march back to Ohio country. As Peter Houston notes, "Boone feared the proposal was treacherous; but concluded to risk it rather than undertake to defend the fort with fifty-two men against near 500 and agreed to accept the terms."⁷⁸ However, Boone was no fool. He sensed danger and insisted that the treaty take place close to the fort so that he could have his men ready to fire on the Indians in case of foul play. As Boone stated, he could "not avoid suspicions of the savages," and wanted to prevent any "breach of honor" by them during the treaty.⁷⁹

Boone's suspicions turned out to be accurate. In the middle of the negotiations, Blackfish gave a signal to his men and they began to struggle with Boone and the other delegates in an effort to detain them.⁸⁰ The cover fire from the fort allowed all of the white delegates to escape back inside the fort, but not without incident. Boone received a nasty wound on the back of his head from a swinging tomahawk, while Major William Bailey Smith also received minor injuries. Squire Boone, Daniel's brother, took a bullet in the shoulder on his withdrawal to the fort.⁸¹ Colonel John Bowman, just weeks after the siege, reported the incident to Colonel George Rogers Clark as follows:

Blackfish made a long speech, then gave the word go, instantly a signal gun fired, the indians fastened on the eight men to take them off, the white people began to dispute the matter though unarmed, and broke loose from the Indians, though there were two or three Indians to one white man. In running the above distance upwards of two hundred guns fired from each side and yet every man escaped but Squire Boone who was badly wounded not mortally; he got safe to the fort.⁸²

Now Boone knew that there would be no turning back—there would be no more peaceful negotiations. Blood had been shed and now a confrontation was certain.

Boone the diplomat had tried to avoid the inevitable conflict with this Indian army, but had failed, and now he could avoid it no longer. Daniel Boone would now have to take on a leadership role inside the fort, among his own people in a time of war. He would again prove more than equal to the task.

Laying siege to a fort was a difficult, yet very common tactic in frontier warfare. An enemy would completely surround and effectively cut off a fort or station from contact with the outside world. With no one able to leave the fort or come in, the strategy was to out-wait the fort's inhabitants in hopes that they would run out of supplies and then either starve or surrender. One of the greatest common weaknesses of forts was their dependence upon an outside source of water. If a fort could be cut off from its water source it would be only a matter of days before its inhabitants were forced to surrender.⁸³ The use of cannon by either party could quickly bring an end to a siege, but there were none on either side at Boonesborough.⁸⁴ To be successful in a siege, the enemy had to be very patient, well supplied, and willing to stay immobile for a long period of time. On the other hand, a fort could withstand a siege for a long time if it were well supplied, bringing the conflict to an impasse. Ideally, outside help would arrive and break the enemy's position.

The Indians did not favor this type of warfare. It required large armies or bands of warriors, and they were more accustomed to small party tactics. An effective siege required vast amounts of supplies and the Indian warriors were used to traveling as light as possible. Last, but certainly not least, the Indians saw no honor or dignity in this type of warfare. Stephen Aron points out that young warriors often lacked the patience and will for a siege. After all, "what glory was there in starving out the enemy?"⁸⁵ Normally, sieges were difficult, especially for Indians, but this time there were factors favoring the attackers. Blackfish had a clearly superior force in numbers, and they were well supplied by the British. It was warm weather, and the people inside Boonesborough did not have an inside source of water.⁸⁶ Even if Boone and his fellow settlers would not surrender, Blackfish must have felt that the fort would fall quickly.

During the siege, Boone again proved invaluable to the inhabitants of the fort in myriad ways. Naturally, he provided great fighting skills and there are stories about Boone's marksmanship leading to the early demise of an unknown number of young braves during the siege.⁸⁷ Beside this, Boone was known to be a great comforter and motivator, constantly keeping up the morale of the people in the fort.⁸⁸ When his brother Squire was shot at the treaty negotiations, it was Daniel Boone who took on the role of a surgeon and cut the bullet out of his flesh.⁸⁹ Moreover, there are numerous other accounts of how Daniel Boone contributed a thorough knowledge of frontier survival and warfare during the siege.

Nonetheless, Daniel Boone was not the sole reason for the survival of the fort. There were other circumstances that contributed to the pioneer victory. One factor that proved very useful, though totally out of the control of the pioneers, was the steady rain that fell during much of the siege. Not only did the rain prevent the fort from burning under the constant barrage of torches and flaming arrows, but it also

provided an important source of fresh water for those inside the fort. Perhaps most importantly, the heavy rains caused the collapse of the tunnel that the Indians were attempting to build to bypass the fort's walls.⁹⁰ A British official later told Simon Kenton that frustration over this episode was the key reason for the Indians withdrawing their forces.⁹¹

Many other valiant individuals contributed to the saving of the fort. One of the two settlers killed defending the fort was a slave named London, who crawled under the walls of the fort with plans to dislodge an Indian who had gotten too comfortable in his position near the fort. As he fired on the Indian, the powder in his pan 'flashed' but did not go off. His position now obvious to the enemy, who could easily see the small ignition in the dark night, he was easily shot and killed. Draper notes that he was a "real soldier" and that "the loss of so good a soldier was a source of unfeigned regret to the whole garrison."⁹² It is important to recognize this contribution to the defense of the fort, because as historian Marion Lucas notes, "slaves were as much a part of the system of defense as were their masters."⁹³ It seems that frontier warfare had a way of obfuscating the normal color barriers.

The women at the fort also played a vital role in its defense. From the outset of the confrontation, women dressed as men and took battle positions masquerading as men so as to make the number appear greater. In defending this, Richard Callaway responded that "it was better for women to die like men than to live as one people with the Indians."⁹⁴ Women also performed the necessary tasks for daily living inside the fort such as cooking, laundry, and tending the livestock, as well as making themselves useful in the production of lead balls and patches, the cleaning of weapons, and the delivery of food and refreshments to the men stationed at guard posts.⁹⁵

There were many other feats of bravery performed by individuals in the defense of the fort. Men like Squire Boone, John Holder, and William Hays for example,⁹⁶ who may not be recognized in most histories of the siege, played vital roles that cannot be overlooked. None, however played as large a role as Daniel Boone. He provided leadership, skillful diplomacy, and a thorough knowledge of the enemy and frontier warfare at a time when the settlement might otherwise have been lost.

Disappointment after disappointment proved to be too much for the Indians and they began to withdraw by the early morning of September 18, giving up on their siege and marching back to the Ohio country. On the previous night, they had thrown the full force of their strength into one last assault effort against the fort, but had failed and were repelled by the pioneer defenders.⁹⁷ The fort had survived with the loss of only two men and a few injured. Such a miracle can only be attributed to Boone's efforts in repairing the garrison, preparing the people, and then providing leadership during a critical period of stress. But, now that this enemy was gone, Boone had to turn his attention toward another enemy, for Richard Callaway still had lingering suspicions about Boone's loyalties as they related to the events of the past year.

Apparently, there was more to Callaway's accusations than just a personal

dislike. During the American Revolution there was a fierce rivalry between Virginians and Carolinians regarding loyalties and attitudes toward the King of England. Virginians were seen as fierce liberals who strongly supported independence and the war effort, while many Carolinians tended to remain loyal to the Crown in England and support the English forces as Tories in America.⁹⁸ Consequently, there was a lot of animosity and resentment between the two. This tension came to a head on the Kentucky frontier in 1778, when large groups of Carolinians began to migrate into Kentucky. North Carolina had forced most of her loyalists to leave, and while many went to England, Nova Scotia, Canada and West Florida, others apparently moved into Kentucky.⁹⁹ A man who came to Kentucky in the winter of 1778-1779 later recalled the crowds of migrants he met that winter. He notes that, "[We] could hardly get along the road for them; and all grand Tories pretty nigh. All from Carolina were Tories. Had been treated so bad there, they had to run off or do worse."¹⁰⁰

Callaway, a native Virginian, was certainly aware that Boone considered himself to be more of a native of North Carolina, where he had spent most of his life, than of Pennsylvania, where he was born. Hence, the resentment between the two may have been intense. After hearing about Boone's surrender earlier in the year, it would only seem natural that a Virginian would question a Carolinian's loyalties. This becomes clearer when one remembers that Boone's in-laws were known to have strong loyalist leanings,¹⁰¹ and that Callaway had two nephews that were surrendered at the Blue Licks, James and Micajah Callaway, neither of whom were seen again for at least three years.¹⁰² Certainly Callaway felt that he had adequate reason to question Boone's actions.

Shortly after the siege, Colonel Richard Callaway did that very thing when he "brought up a complaint against Capt. Daniel Boon."¹⁰³ The court-martial was held at Logan's Fort and the only surviving records known to exist of the proceedings are those of Daniel Trabue, who was an eyewitness to the trial and recorded the events later in his memoirs. Trabue records that Callaway brought charges of treason against Boone, seeking to have Boone's commission revoked.¹⁰⁴ The charges, all based on the events of 1778, read as follows:

1. That Boone voluntarily and unnecessarily surrendered 26 men ¹⁰⁵ at the salt licks in February.
2. That, while a prisoner at Detroit, "he did bargain with the British commander that he would give up all the people at Boonesborough and that they should be protected at Detroit and live under British Jurisdiction."¹⁰⁶
3. That, after returning from captivity, Boone recruited a party of settlers to go with him to Paint Lick Town, thus weakening the fort at a time when the arrival of an Indian attack was expected.
4. That, preceding the attack on the fort, he was willing to take the officers of the fort, on pretense of making peace, to the Indian camp beyond the protection of the guns of the garrison.

Boone vehemently, and at length, defended his actions against all of these charges, and maintained that at all times he had the true interests and safety of the fort and his country in mind. He maintained that he had used deception, strategy, and common sense to keep his men alive and to keep the fort from sure destruction at the hands of a vastly superior force. He said that all of his promises of surrender came about because "he was a trying to fool them [British and Indians]." ¹⁰⁷ He maintained further that the results of his actions should speak for themselves. After all, the fort was still standing, there was a minimal loss of life, the Indian threat was repulsed, and by then, many of the salt-boilers had returned home, either through escape or parole. As Draper maintains, "His escape from Indian captivity, his toilsome expedition to Scioto and bold attack on the Indians there, the wound he received, and sleepless watchfulness and sagacity he had exhibited during the unexampled siege of Boonesborough he thought were sufficient evidences of his devotion to the American cause." ¹⁰⁸

After a full investigation, Boone was acquitted of all charges. In the words of Trabue, "The court Marshel deseded [sic] in Boon's favour and they at that time advanced Boon to a Major." ¹⁰⁹ Boone had not only had his name officially cleared, but he had been rewarded for his service with a promotion. Although he had been cleared of all wrongdoing, Boone never fully recovered from the accusations against his character. Faragher notes that Boone, who was always "hypersensitive to criticism . . . did his best to avoid any discussion of the whole affair for the rest of his life." ¹¹⁰

This appears to be true, for by the mid-nineteenth century none of Boone's descendants even knew of the affair, and Boone himself conveniently left it out of his own biography when he dictated it to Filson in 1784. ¹¹¹ Were it not for Trabue's account, the incident may well have been forgotten. Perhaps most who knew of the situation did not feel it necessary to spoil so fine a reputation over unfounded suspicions and Boone had indeed, albeit in a somewhat Machiavellian fashion, done what was necessary for his own survival and that of his small outpost in the midst of a rugged frontier.

In the winter of 1778, after all the events surrounding the siege and the court-martial were over, Boone returned to the Yadkin Valley in North Carolina. During his captivity, Boone's wife Rebecca, fearing the worst, had retreated there with the rest of Boone's family to be near her kin. ¹¹² He was with his wife and family again by November 9, 1778. However, by the spring of 1779, Boone was recruiting emigrants for a new party that he would lead back into his beloved Kentucky in September 1779. ¹¹³

In conclusion, in 1778 Daniel Boone was presented with many difficult and important decisions regarding not only his own survival, but also the survival of the free settlement of Boonesborough on the Kentucky frontier. The fort had become a pawn to be used by the British and Indians to secure British supremacy in the west during the American Revolution. When the British and Indian allied forces came to take the fort (first in February and then again in September) they were foiled in their

attempts both times by the wit, deception, and resourcefulness of Daniel Boone. His captivity, escape, and leadership during the siege demonstrate his remarkable ability to improvise, assimilate, and overcome regardless of the situation. These events provide the backdrop against which many of the legendary events of Boone's life occurred. Although questions would arise among some about his loyalty, to those who knew him best, there were few questions about his intentions.

The struggle for control of the Kentucky frontier was far from over. There would be many more battles, much more blood shed, and many more attempts to secure this region for the British during the American Revolution. Even after the war ended, the Indians continued their attempt to repulse the trickle of settlement that was quickly becoming a massive river. However, the events of 1778 and the actions of a man named Daniel Boone will always be remembered as among some of the most critical in the taming of the Kentucky frontier. As historian Lyman Draper would romantically write over half a century later, regarding the events of 1778, "To Boone's happy address must be ascribed under God the salvation of the Kentucky settlements."¹¹⁴

Endnotes

1. Richard Dorson, *America Rebels: Personal Narratives of the American Revolution* (New York, 1953), 237-239.
2. John Bakeless, *Daniel Boone* (Harrisburg, 1939), see chapter 9, "Year of the Three Sevens" for more information about Indian warfare.
3. Joseph D. Ketner, "Daniel Boone as Icon: The Columbus of the West," *Publisher's Weekly*, September 14, 1998, 62.
4. For fuller accounts of forced migration west, see Allan W. Eckert, *That Dark and Bloody River: Chronicles of the Ohio River Valley* (New York, 1995), introduction. Also refer to James Wilson, *The Earth Shall Weep: A History of Native America* (New York, 1998), Chapters 1-6.
5. For more information about the French and Indian War and the Proclamation of 1763, see Dale Van Every, *Forth to the Wilderness: The First American Frontier, 1754-1774* (New York, 1961).
6. Patricia Walington, "Discontent in Frontier Kentucky," *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*, (April 1967), 65: 77-93.
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9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., Bakeless, *Boone*, 162.
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12. Lowell H. Harrison and James C. Klotter, *A New History of Kentucky* (Lexington, 1997), 33.
13. Ted Franklin Belue, *The Long Hunt: Death of the Buffalo East of the Mississippi* (Mechanicsburg, 1996), 126.
14. Lyman C. Draper, *The Life of Daniel Boone*, Ted Franklin Belue, ed. (Mechanicsburg, 1998), 459. The term 'salt-boiling' does not mean that salt is literally boiled. It refers instead, to the act of boiling water from natural salt springs. When the water is fully boiled, it leaves a crusty deposit on the side of the pot. This is scraped off and collected for use. It took 840 gallons of water to make one bushel of salt at the Blue Licks. Men were needed not just for the boiling process, but also for cutting wood to keep the fires hot, for general camp keeping, hunting, and delivering the finished salt to the fort.
15. Ted Franklin Belue, "Terror in the Canelands: The Fate of Daniel Boone's Salt-boilers," *The Filson Club History Quarterly* (January 1994), 68: 3-34. There has been much confusion about the actual number of men present. This author stands

by the numbers presented by Belue in his "Terror in the Canelands" article, which places the total number of the party at 34, with 3 couriers, 2 hunters, and 28 boilers besides Boone.

16. Daniel Boone, "Adventures of Colonel Daniel Boone," *Christopher Gist Historical Society Papers*, Northern Kentucky University Library (1957), 79-86.

17. Aron, *How the West Was Lost*, 41,

18. John Mack Faragher, *Daniel Boone: The Life and Legend of an American Pioneer*, (New York, 1992), 80-81

19. Draper, *Boone*, 461

20. Ibid., 462.

21. Daniel Trabue, *Westward into Kentucky: The Narrative of Daniel Trabue* (Lexington, 1981), 63-64.

22. Belue, "Terror," 3-34.

23. Ibid., 33.

24. There is some confusion here as to what Boone meant when he told Blackfish that the fort was too strong to take. Draper notes that Boone openly told Blackfish that the fort was only inhabited by old men, women and children. Draper, *Boone*, 463. He must have convinced Blackfish that the actual fortifications were too strong. However, there remains some confusion as to what Boone actually told Blackfish to deceive him into aborting the attack.

25. Draper, *Boone*, 463.

26. Lofaro, *Boone*, 75.

27. Ibid.

28. Faragher, *Boone*, 164.

29. Lofaro, *Boone*, 75.

30. Bakeless, *Boone*, 177.

31. Boone, "Adventures," 82.

32. Draper, *Boone*, 481-482.

33. Boone, "Adventures," 82.

34. John Filson, *The Discovery and Settlement of Kentucke*, microfilm, (Ann Arbor, 1966), 56.

35. Faragher, *Boone*, 170.

36. Ibid.

37. Boone, "Adventures," 82.

38. Faragher, *Boone*, 170.

39. Filson, *Discovery*, 64.
40. Ibid.
41. George M. Chinn, *Kentucky: Settlement and Statehood, 1750-1800* (Frankfort, 1975), 192.
42. Draper, *Boone*, 472.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid., 475-479. See for individual accounts of Boone's exploits while living among the Shawanoes.
45. Information paraphrased from Draper, *Boone*, 478-479.
46. Ibid., 479.
47. Faragher, *Boone*, 173.
48. Filson, *Discovery*, 66.
49. Ibid. There are different accounts as to when Boone actually left the Shawanoes. His own account records that he left "before sun-rise," while Draper states that he left just before sundown. Draper wrote that Boone escaped from the Indians while they chased wild turkeys. In Draper's account, Boone's adopted mother alerts the other Indians after pleading with him not to leave. The issue is unresolved.
50. Draper, *Boone*, 480.
51. Aron, *How the West Was Lost*, 44.
52. Trabue, *Westward*, 57.
53. For a detailed account of the siege see Draper, *Boone*, 495-532.
54. Trabue, *Westward*, 57.
55. Chester R. Young, Editor's Notes, in Ibid.
56. Filson, *Discovery*, 66.
57. Draper, *Boone*, 495.
58. Ibid., 498.
59. Peter Houston, *A Sketch of the Life and Character of Daniel Boone*, Ted Franklin Belue, ed. (Mechanicsburg, 1997), 14.
60. Trabue, *Westward*, 57.
61. Bakeless, *Boone*, 190.
62. Ibid., 191
63. Draper, *Boone*, 498.
64. Trabue, *Westward*, 57.
65. Bakeless, *Boone*, 175.

66. Ibid., 176.
67. Lofaro, *Boone*, 91
68. Harrison and Klotter, *Kentucky*, 33.
69. Aron, *How the West Was Lost*, 47.
70. Draper, *Boone*, 498.
71. Ibid., 499.
72. Ibid., 500.
73. Bakeless, *Boone*, 205.
74. George W. Ranck, *Boonesborough: Its Founding, Pioneer Struggles, Indian Experiences, Transylvania Days, and Revolutionary Annals* (1901; reprint, Salem, New Hampshire, 1991), 75-77.
75. Draper, *Boone*, 501-502.
76. Boone, "Adventures," 83.
77. Ibid.
78. Houston, *Boone*, 14.
79. Filson, *Discovery*, 69.
80. Draper, *Boone*, 505 lists the other white delegates as Colonel Callaway, Major Smith, Captain William Buchanan, Squire Boone, Flanders Callaway, John Smith Sr., Edward Bradley, and a person named Crabtree.
81. Ibid., 502, 508.
82. Ranck includes thirty primary documents in an appendix. One is a letter by John Bowman to George Rogers Clark a few weeks before the incident, and it provides details on the false peace treaty. Ranck, *Boonesborough*, 25.
83. Harrison and Klotter, *Kentucky*, 29.
84. Ibid.
85. Aron, *How the West Was Lost*, 40.
86. Draper, *Boone*, 495.
87. See Draper, *Boone*, 512-516 for examples of Boone's marksmanship during the siege. For discussion of whether Boone killed Pompey, the African American Shawnee interpreter, see Ted Franklin Belue's excellent article, "Did Daniel Boone kill Pompe, the Black Shawnee, at the 1778 Siege of Boonesborough?" *The Filson Club History Quarterly* (January 1993), 67:5-22.
88. Draper, *Boone*, 509.
89. Ibid.

90. See Draper, *Boone*, 510-518 for an account of how the Indians attempted to bypass the fort's walls by digging a tunnel.
91. Ibid., 513; Faragher, *Boone*, 198.
92. Draper, *Boone*, 512.
93. Marion Lucas, *A History of Blacks in Kentucky, Volume 1, From Slavery to Segregation, 1760-1891* (Frankfort, 1992), xiii. The role of African American slaves on the frontier is often overlooked. However, with the presence of London, Pompey, and other slaves in the fort, their role cannot be taken lightly.
94. Aron, *How the West Was Lost*, 45.
95. Draper, *Boone*, 515.
96. Ibid., 516.
97. Trabue, *Westward*, 59.
98. Watlington, "Discontent," 81-82.
99. Ibid., 83.
100. John D. Shane, "Reverend John D. Shane's Interview with Pioneer William Clinkenbeard," *The Filson Club History Quarterly* (1927-1928), 2: 95-128. This is an excellent primary source that provides insight into the frontier mentality.
101. Faragher, *Boone*, 202-203.
102. Belue, "Terror," 12-15.
103. Trabue, *Westward*, 63. This excellent narrative is the only known surviving account of Boone's court-martial.
104. Draper, *Boone*, 520.
105. As is often the case with frontier documentation, there are conflicting reports as to how many men were taken at the Salt Licks. My contention, based on Belue, "Terror," is that the actual number captured was 29: Boone and 28 boilers.
106. Trabue, *Westward*, 63.
107. Ibid., 64.
108. Draper, *Boone*, 520.
109. Trabue, *Westward*, 64.
110. Faragher, *Boone*, 200-201
111. Faragher, *Boone*, 199.
112. Draper, *Boone*, 521
113. Faragher, *Boone*, 203.
114. Draper, *Boone*, 481.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton: The Road to Seneca Falls

by

Rebecca Billman

Elizabeth Cady Stanton claimed it was by a sense of right and duty that she overcame her diffidence to appear in public to address attendees of the first women's rights convention, in Seneca Falls, New York on July 19, 1848. Because of man's tyranny, "few can nerve themselves to meet the storm, so long has the chain been about her that she knows not there is a remedy" she told her audience that day.¹ It was a combination of unique and universal circumstances in the life of Cady Stanton that enabled her to nerve herself to meet the storm. Indeed, on that day, she created the storm by demanding women's suffrage. It was the first time anyone had dared.

Cady Stanton was uniquely equipped to challenge male domination of women. A woman of affluence and unorthodox upbringing, she had the best education money could buy for a female of the period. Exposure to harsh religious teachings and reformist ideas in her youth enabled her to cast off both religious and societal restraints. And, finally, marriage to a career reformer of small means and being mother to seven children allowed her to experience the burdens of women of lesser circumstance. Each of these factors contributed to putting Cady Stanton on the road to Seneca Falls.

Elizabeth Cady was born on November 12, 1815 in Johnstown, New York,² to a mother who could claim blood ties to Dutch aristocrats and a father who was a judge and state legislator.³ Margaret and Daniel Cady could afford to provide their family the best of everything. The Cady sisters grew up in a fully staffed mansion, freeing them from housework. They enjoyed their own horses, music lessons, holiday treats, and fine clothes. In other words, Cady Stanton grew up firmly entrenched in upper middle class society. This provided her a sense of place and a self-confidence that was rare among women at the time. It also enabled her to shrug off the restrictions that kept women in a subordinate position.

Sadness and tragedy also marred Cady Stanton's life and these shaped her character as much as her family's affluence. The Cadys had eleven children—six daughters and five sons. All of the sons but one, Eleazar, died in childhood. Eleazar, in Cady Stanton's words, "was a fine, manly fellow, the very apple of my father's eye." Two weeks after he graduated from Union College in 1826, Eleazar fell sick and died. He was twenty years old.

Having a son inherit the estate was of utmost importance in the early nineteenth century. The law forbade married women to inherit or hold property and the only way to insure that wealth remained under family control was to pass it to a son. Although he had five surviving daughters, Daniel Cady had no heir. Cady Stanton,

Rebecca Billman, Northern Kentucky University Junior majoring in Journalism with a minor in History, works as staff writer for the *Cincinnati Enquirer*.

who was eleven when her brother died, witnessed her father's grief. In an effort to console him and be consoled, she climbed onto his lap. He sighed, and according to Cady Stanton, said "Oh, my daughter, I wish you were a boy!" In response she threw her arms around him and said, "I will try to be all my brother was." She later wrote, "while my father was kind to all of us, the one son filled a larger place in his affections and future plans than five daughters together."

This event was significant to Cady Stanton's development in two ways. Not only did it make clear to her that girls were deemed inferior to boys, but it precipitated a dramatic change in the Cady household. So keen was the desire to have a son that Margaret Cady, who was more than forty years old and had born no children for seven years, conceived and gave birth to a son the year following Eleazar's death. Named for his older brother, this son also died—before his first birthday. Exhausted physically and emotionally, Mrs. Cady withdrew from family life into invalidism.⁴

With both parents grieving, care of Cady Stanton and her sisters fell to the oldest sister, Tryphena, and her husband Edward Bayard. Whether due to permissiveness or inattention, Cady Stanton enjoyed freedoms and privileges rarely afforded girls. Bayard taught her equestrian arts and philosophy. Allowed to spend as much time as she wanted in her father's law office, she read whatever she chose and debated with the law clerks. She was even allowed to observe court proceedings. Her father encouraged her to perform and compete—masculine behaviors highly unusual for girls to cultivate.⁵ The result was that her naturally keen mind was trained to think analytically and logically.

Cady Stanton set about fulfilling her promise to her father to try to fill her brother's shoes. She asked her neighbor, Reverend Simon Hosack, to teach her Greek. "My father prefers boys to girls," she told Reverend Hosack, "so I intend to be as near like one as possible. I am going to ride horseback and study Greek."⁶ She attended Johnstown Academy where she studied Greek, Latin, and mathematics in a class that included boys. She took the second place prize—a Greek Testament—in Greek. Her father again told her, "My daughter, it's a pity you were not a boy."⁷

It was in her father's office that Cady Stanton gained an awareness of the suffering of women due to inequity in the laws. She witnessed the distress of a woman who consulted Judge Cady because her deceased husband's property went to their son who wasn't providing for her. The woman cried, but there was nothing to be done. Cady Stanton questioned her father about it later.⁸ After he told her that the law forbade him to help the woman, she began to realize that the political process—which begins when power is transferred through the vote—was an important means to achieve desired results.

She graduated from Johnstown Academy in 1830 when she was fifteen years of age. While her male classmates mostly went on to Union College, no four-year university in the country at the time admitted women. The closest approximation was the progressive Troy Female Seminary, founded by Emma Willard in 1821.⁹ Willard's mission was to provide young women an education that rivaled that offered men. It was the best school available to Cady Stanton, and even though

outraged at not being able to attend a university, she entered Troy in 1831.¹⁰

That same year the Great Troy Revival, led by Charles Grandison Finney, swept through the region and many of the students at Troy Academy, including Cady Stanton, attended the meetings. Since the Revolution there had been a movement away from organized religion and these revivals were designed to scare people into returning to church. Cady Stanton had been reared, in gloomy Presbyterian tradition, to believe that God was a punitive being and Finney was highly effective in his fire and brimstone sermons. Young, impressionable and overwhelmed by Finney, Cady Stanton finally confessed her sins and experienced a conversion. But instead of feeling peace and relief, she felt sinful and afraid. Plunged into depression, she became ill and had to go home to Johnstown. "Fear of judgment seized my soul," Cady Stanton said in her autobiography. "Visions of the lost haunted my dreams . . . I often at night roused my father from his slumber to pray for me."¹¹

Her father and brother-in-law took her to Niagara Falls for a few weeks to recover from her conversion experience, which she did. Nonetheless, it left an indelible mark on her personality. She became a lifelong skeptic of religion and generally kept her distance from it. Later, while developing her feminist ideology, this skepticism enabled her to disregard the argument that women were subordinate by divine decree. She never suspended her belief in God, but adhered to a theology in which God was benevolent and created men and women to be equal.¹²

Cady Stanton's coming of age coincided with the beginnings of an ideology called the Cult of True Womanhood. Beginning about 1830, many preachers and ladies' magazines posited the idea that a true woman was more pure and moral than man. The Cult of True Womanhood praised women for their piety and humility and charged them with the guardianship of morality. Many women internalized this idea of moralistic piety and passed it on to their daughters.¹³ It became an excuse to confine women to a separate sphere—one in which their activities were limited and they were denied a place in society¹⁴ Confined to the home, urban middle class women were virtually imprisoned and forced to be dependent on men.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the idea reached such ridiculous heights that the medical profession came up with theories to try to explain away the condition of a woman. English theorist Herbert Spencer, who was widely read and cited, speculated that women were mentally inferior as a result of evolution—because their energy must be expended on the physically draining experience of giving birth. Women were discouraged from seeking an education because they were told that if they tried to increase their mental capacity they would become infertile.¹⁵

The image of the perfect lady became the image of the female as an invalid. A lady was weak, delicate, and perpetually prone to illness.¹⁶ Women's natural functions, pregnancy and menstruation, were regarded as illnesses and being female became a pathological condition.¹⁷ These ideas about women took hold, even though the majority of women—those of the working class, including immigrants and minorities—worked hard to provide economic benefits for their families.

In addition, women were deprived of a legal existence. They could not seek divorce, even from abusive or negligent husbands and had no custodial rights to their children. And, as noted above, women did not speak out in public; it was considered indecent and immodest. During the decade of the 1830s Cady Stanton felt these injustices to women, but did not articulate any feminist ideas.

After graduation from the seminary in 1833,¹⁸ she began visiting her cousin Gerrit Smith in Peterboro, New York. Smith was a wealthy philanthropist and abolitionist. At his home, Cady Stanton was exposed to reform thinking and introduced to many reformers and runaway slaves. Lively debate and enthusiasm for reform causes dominated the atmosphere.¹⁹ It was at Peterboro that she met Henry Brewster Stanton.

Stanton was a hero of the abolitionist movement. As a student at Lane Seminary in Cincinnati, he had been the sole opponent of the Fugitive Slave Law at a debate during the summer of 1832. He, along with Theodore Weld, a Lane professor, led the walkout of the "Lane Rebels." They founded Oberlin College in northern Ohio, which admitted blacks and women. He was a rising star in the abolition movement. The American Anti-slavery Society recruited Stanton as an agent, and in 1835 he became one of the Band of Seventy that crisscrossed the country, facing down angry mobs and converting entire audiences to their cause. An eloquent speaker, lucid writer, and skilled organizer, he distinguished himself, was assigned to Massachusetts, and became secretary of the society. He was tall, handsome and ten years older than Elizabeth Cady.

They met at Smith's home in 1839. She thrilled to his speeches and became a convert to his ideas. He assumed she shared his political beliefs and believed that he could channel her intelligence and energy toward his causes. However, he opposed allowing women in anti-slavery societies to vote for fear of ridicule. To Cady, he was not only handsome and engaging, but offered the excitement of being at the center of the reform movement. She admired the fact that he was committed to a moral cause, and perhaps most importantly, he didn't seem alarmed or put off by her intelligence and other strengths. Still under the guardianship of her father, she looked forward to marriage as an independent state. She didn't believe that she was entering bondage.²⁰

They married on May 10, 1840 in a ceremony in which the word "obey" was expunged. Cady Stanton later claimed, "I refuse to obey anyone with whom I am entering into an equal relationship."²¹ In fact, Stanton's closest friend, Theodore Weld set a precedent by doing the same in his wedding to Angelina Grimke the year before, so it is questionable whether it was really Cady Stanton's idea.²² But all indications show that she entered marriage expecting to be treated as an equal partner.

The newlyweds went to New York and immediately set sail for the World's Anti-slavery Convention in London at which Stanton would be a delegate. Their honeymoon marked the beginning of the feminism of Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Since her graduation from Troy she had mostly been engaged in social pursuits, despite

her education and unusual upbringing. She had displayed no real political bent and made no effort to join the reform causes she had been exposed to even though she enjoyed the intellectual intercourse. But because of her upbringing, she was more free and more outspoken than most women in her social strata. Since childhood she had striven to prove equality to her male peers and believed in her heart that she was equal though she had not articulated a feminist ideology or even shown an interest in working for the cause of abolition. During this new phase of her life the ideology that would lead to the writing of the Declaration of Sentiments and shape her feminist thought for the next sixty years began to form.

In London, in June of 1840, many women delegates showed up to attend the anti-slavery convention, including Lucretia Mott. Mott was a Quaker, abolitionist, and feminist from Pennsylvania. She founded the Philadelphia Female Anti-slavery Society in 1833 and espoused a progressive agenda. Not only were these women at the forefront of the cause, but some represented societies made up solely of women. The women went to considerable expense to travel to London only to be told that they could not be participants. They could attend the sessions—unseen and unheard—seated behind a partition. The convention organizers were aghast that women would misconstrue the invitation, which was addressed to “friends,” to include them.

It must have been exhilarating for Cady Stanton to walk into the ensuing maelstrom. She was present only because she had married Henry Stanton, secretary to the convention, and yet she found herself right in the middle of a debate that was causing great schisms in anti-slavery societies. The women delegates, especially Mott, with whom she discussed women’s rights, fascinated her. Only weeks into her marriage, she began to assert her independence.

The delegates first addressed the question of whether to seat the women, debating the issue while the women listened. The clergy pointed out that women were subordinate by divine decree—it was God’s decision, not theirs. After hours of speeches, the overwhelming majority voted to exclude the women. It is unknown how Stanton voted because it was unrecorded, but at least two people reported that he voted against seating the women. His wife believed that he voted in favor, but during his career as an abolitionist, Stanton rarely supported women’s rights publicly, believing it was not pragmatic. Just the year before, prior to their wedding trip, a rift had occurred in the American Anti-slavery Society when a contingent of New Yorkers, including Stanton, held that allowing women’s participation undermined the cause. Apparently, Cady Stanton had agreed. But the convention episode, coupled with her conversations with Lucretia Mott, planted seeds of doubt about her husband’s stand on the issue.²³

She recalled that she felt “humiliated and chagrined, except as these feelings were outweighed by contempt for the shallow reasoning of the opponents and their comical poses and gestures It was really pitiful to hear narrow-minded bigots, pretending to be teachers and leaders of men, so cruelly remanding their own mothers, with the rest of womankind, to absolute subjection to the ordinary

masculine type of humanity.” Cady Stanton sided against her husband, along with Mott and William Lloyd Garrison, who seated himself with the women in protest. She undertook spending as much time with Mott as possible to the surprise and dismay of Stanton. “Mrs. Mott was to me an entire new revelation of womanhood,” Cady Stanton later wrote. “I sought every opportunity to be at her side, and continually plied her with questions . . . I never heard a woman talk what, as a Scotch Presbyterian, I had scarcely dared to think.”²⁴

Not permitted to be involved in the debates of the convention, the women engaged the men in debate in the evenings at their boarding house. Apparently the discussions became so heated that James Gillespie Birney, an abolitionist and friend of Stanton, moved to other lodgings. Cady Stanton became angered and agitated and proposed to Mott that they organize a convention on women’s rights after their return to the States.²⁵

After the disturbances and revelations of the convention, the remainder of the wedding tour was anti-climactic and Cady Stanton was anxious to return home. Once there, feminism was put on the back burner as the bride turned her attentions toward more immediate considerations. Her husband hadn’t any money of his own and could not rely on a steady income from his abolitionist involvement. As a practical matter, he apprenticed with his father-in-law and the couple lived with her parents in Johnstown for the next two years. At the end of those two years, Stanton moved to Boston to set up his law practice and launch a political career. Cady Stanton followed the next year with their first son Daniel. She was unaccustomed to the insecurities of her husband’s financial situation, but with the advent of two more sons during their Boston years, she had no choice but to attend to her domestic responsibilities and lend support to Stanton’s endeavors.²⁶

But this was Boston—the center of reform activity—and Cady Stanton still found time to study law, theology, and history. She even spoke on temperance in Johnstown in 1842, but lacked the courage and self-confidence to speak out on women’s rights. Moreover, she was absorbed by the goings-on of her household. In a way, these years between the Anti-Slavery Convention and the Women’s Convention in Seneca Falls were years of preparation for Cady Stanton’s future reform career. Tied to her house and children, she nonetheless seized every opportunity to enrich herself by attending lectures, plays, church services, and conventions on temperance, prison, and anti-slavery reform. She corresponded with feminists like Lucretia Mott who chided her for her unwillingness to move forward on the women’s issue. She lobbied on behalf of the New York Married Women’s Property Act by circulating petitions in Johnstown while visiting her parents and talking to legislators in Albany.

In 1847, after four years in Boston, the Stantons moved to Seneca Falls, to a house given to them by Daniel Cady. This move proved crucial in Cady Stanton’s development as a feminist. Her prior exposure to feminism and her years of listening and learning as much as she could about politics and reform were about to be cemented into what would become the foundation for the women’s movement.

Seneca Falls was a small town, devoid of the cultural and reform activities of Boston, and for the first time in her married life, Cady Stanton had no domestic help. The first two years of her marriage she had lived at her parent's house, enjoying a full staff of servants. Even in Boston she had a few servants, but in Seneca Falls, not only was domestic help in short supply, but the Stantons could ill afford it. They were living in a house provided by her father, and Stanton's law practice wasn't terribly lucrative. After the move, Stanton began leaving home for extended business and political trips, leaving his wife in a small town with three small boys and no help. It wasn't long before Cady Stanton tired of her situation. She craved the intellectual stimulation she was accustomed to and the physical work wore her down. For the first time, she was experiencing what most other women accepted as their lot. It was at this time that Cady Stanton began to seriously criticize the plight of women. She became increasingly frustrated with Stanton's absences and his detachment from what was going on at home. She was especially irritated that he was free to come and go as he wished and pursue his own interests while she was bound to the home and hearth. These resentments led her to fulfill her proposition to Mott eight years before to organize a women's rights convention.

In July of 1848, nearly a year after moving to Seneca Falls, Cady Stanton learned that Lucretia Mott would pay a visit to her sister, Martha Wright, in Auburn. Wright invited Cady Stanton to spend the day with friends, including Jane Hunt and Mary McClintock. They talked of affronts to women and Cady Stanton eloquently unleashed her own discontent.²⁷ The group felt compelled to further express their grievances by calling a convention where, according to their advertisement in the newspaper, they would "discuss the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of woman."²⁸

They met the following Sunday to plan the convention. It was Cady Stanton who hit upon the idea to write a Declaration of Sentiments based on the Declaration of Independence and she was the one who wrote it. The list of eighteen grievances included property rights, child custody rights, women's rights to their own earnings, the right to testify against their husbands, unequal pay, and the moral double standard. Three hundred attended including forty men. On the second day Cady Stanton became emboldened, and as she read her Declaration of Sentiments, she added a new resolution: suffrage for women.²⁹ It was indeed a bold move and it electrified the audience. The Quakers opposed it, Mott contending that it would make them appear ridiculous and compromise their cause. The notion was deemed so outrageous that Stanton, having supported his wife up to that point, refused to attend the convention and left town to distance himself from it. Elizabeth Cady Stanton alone had the nerve to ask for it.

Thus was launched one of the most brilliant reform careers of the century. Elizabeth Cady Stanton poured enormous amounts of energy and creativity into the push for women's suffrage. She shrugged off the strictures placed on women of her time to make bold and controversial assertions. She might not have if her life had been different prior to 1848. Her privileged background had provided her with the

self-confidence to assert herself in a time when it was unheard of for women. Likewise, if she hadn't had such a solid social footing, she might not have been so willing to cast it aside. Had Eleazar not died, she might not have felt the need to push herself to develop the physical and mental acuity that contributed to her self-assurance. And perhaps her father would not have permitted her the freedom to do so. Without her harrowing religious experiences, she might not have been able to free herself of the bonds of ecclesiastic authority. And finally, if she had married a man of means, she might have been content to settle into a comfortable life within the woman's sphere as was expected of a matron of her social class.

Endnotes

1. Ellen Carol Dubois, *Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony: Correspondence, Writings, Speeches* (New York, 1981), 28.
2. Elisabeth Griffith, *In Her Own Right: The Life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton* (New York, 1984), 5.
3. *Ibid.*, 3-4.
4. *Ibid.*, 6-7.
5. *Ibid.*, 8.
6. Mary Ann B. Oakley, *Elizabeth Cady Stanton* (Brooklyn, 1972), 17.
7. *Ibid.*, 18.
8. Griffith, *Stanton*, 11.
9. *Ibid.*, 16.
10. *Ibid.*, 17-18.
11. *Ibid.*, 20-21.
12. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *Woman's Bible* (Seattle, 1974), 14.
13. Kathleen Barry, *Susan B. Anthony: A Biography of a Singular Feminist* (New York, 1988), 9.
14. *Ibid.*, 17.
15. Sara Delamonte and Lorna Duffin, *The Nineteenth Century Woman: Her Cultural and Physical World* (New York, 1978), 68.
16. *Ibid.*, 26.
17. *Ibid.*, 32.
18. Griffith, *Stanton*, 22.
19. *Ibid.*, 24.
20. *Ibid.*, 26-29.
21. Oakley, *Stanton*, 29.
22. Griffith, *Stanton*, 33.
23. Lois W. Banner, *Elizabeth Cady Stanton: A Radical for Woman's Rights* (Boston, 1981), 23-24.
24. Griffith, *Stanton*, 36-38.
25. Banner, *Stanton*, 25-26.
26. *Ibid.*, 27.

27. Ibid., 38-39.

28. Paul Buhle and Mari Jo Buhle, eds., *The Concise History of Woman Suffrage* (Urbana, 1978), 67.

29. Banner, *Stanton*, 42.

The Kentucky Orphan Brigade: The Confederacy's Best?

by
John P. Davis

During the American Civil War the First Kentucky Infantry Brigade earned a reputation as one of the best fighting units in the Confederate Army, distinguishing itself at Shiloh, Vicksburg, Baton Rouge, Stones River, Chickamauga and during the Atlanta Campaign. It suffered such catastrophic casualties that, after the culmination of the Atlanta Campaign, survivors were given horses and turned into cavalry. Despite its losses and the separation of its soldiers from their families for more than three years, the Kentuckians maintained an unusually high esprit de corps. They were still fighting two weeks after General Robert E. Lee surrendered, before they were ordered to turn over their rifles and go home.

This paper considers why and how this unit became such a superb fighting outfit. Why was it called the Orphan Brigade? How and when did it form? Did its performance in battle match its reputation? The main theme focuses on factors that made the First Kentucky successful. Its officers displayed excellent leadership and the men had phenomenal fighting spirit and determination. These attributes, and more, made the Orphan Brigade a stubborn, spirited, and skilful foe for its Union opponents.

The First Kentucky Brigade became commonly known as the Orphan Brigade after the war. Captain Ed Porter Thompson, the brigade's historian, did not use the nickname at all when he wrote *History of the First Kentucky Brigade* in 1868, though there was one obscure mention of the name in the book. John S. Jackman, who served as an enlisted soldier in the brigade, referred to the unit in his diary as "the orphans" as early as 1862.¹ By 1898 the name had become so much a part of the unit's identity that Thompson entitled his new 1,104-page book, *History of the Orphan Brigade*.²

Many factors contributed to how this unit received its name. An ill-fated charge made by the brigade at the Battle of Murfreesboro, or Stones River, as it was called in the North, is the most widely known of these reasons. During the attack, well-positioned Federal soldiers and artillerymen slaughtered the Kentucky Brigade and killed its commanding officer, General Roger W. Hanson. Upon seeing the remains of the brigade after this massacre, General John C. Breckinridge, a native Kentuckian and former Vice President of the United States, emotionally exclaimed, "My poor orphan brigade! They have cut it to pieces!"³ According to John Jackman's diary, Breckinridge habitually called the Kentucky Brigade his "orphans."⁴

John P. Davis graduated from Northern Kentucky University in May 1995 with a Bachelor of Arts in Justice Studies. He is now completing a Bachelor of Arts in History.

In the mid-1880s and early 1890s, veterans of the First Kentucky began calling their old outfit the Orphan Brigade. The exclamation by Breckinridge is the origin of the name, but other factors also contributed to it. The Kentuckians earned this title through a variety of adverse circumstances they endured throughout the war. They lost one commander after another through battle casualties and transfer. Also, Kentucky never officially sanctioned the cause for which they fought. Due to northern occupation of their native state, they were isolated from their friends, family and relatives for more than three years. Members of the brigade also suffered a terrible casualty rate. The name came to signify all of this, and these veterans used it with pride; it was a prestigious title symbolizing their reputation as an outstanding unit of the Civil War.⁵

The Orphan Brigade was definitely a hard luck outfit. These Kentuckians were always in the thick of the fighting and seemed to suffer more than their share of casualties. Both commanders of the Army of Tennessee, General Joseph E. Johnston and General Braxton Bragg, reportedly called the Kentuckians their best troops, although in general Bragg disliked Kentuckians.⁶ Soldiers in the Kentucky Brigade always suspected that Bragg ordered the desperate charge at Murfreesboro in retaliation for the state's reluctance to aid his 1862 invasion of the Commonwealth.⁷ Hopes were high that Kentuckians would rally to the Southern Cause, but in many locales, most notably the Eastern, Appalachian region of the state, the Southerners met only hostility.⁸ There are other plausible explanations however, why Bragg may have deployed them in this manner. Perhaps they were positioned where the fighting was the most ferocious due to their reputation as a highly disciplined and well-trained unit. Superior performances in countless drills had earned them this reputation and their performance in early battles verified it.

Another cause for its high losses may be that the brigade's soldiers were simply more prone to becoming engaged in heavy fighting than men in other units. They willingly went into battle with a fighting spirit which, given their losses, seems incredible. The loss of so many comrades, with little or no complaint on their part, made them stand out when compared with other military units.

Did the record of this outfit justify the reputation it enjoys today? A review of statements made by generals, officers and soldiers about the Orphan Brigade confirms that it does. The Kentuckians received much praise regarding their skill in battle and drill. Also, the official number of Orphan Brigade soldiers killed, wounded, or missing in action is a strong testament to their fortitude in battle.

The commanding general of the Confederate Army of Tennessee, Joseph E. Johnston, commented on the brigade's battle skills on several occasions. Johnston once told a high-ranking Confederate officer, there is "no better infantry in the world than the Kentucky Brigade."⁹ Also, in the winter of 1863-1864, General Breckinridge, promoted and transferred to Virginia by President Jefferson Davis, was unhappy that he would be without his Kentuckians. Davis offered Breckinridge an "equivalent brigade," but Johnston told him, "The President has no equivalent for it. It is the best brigade in the Confederate Army."¹⁰ Later, in 1865-1866 while serving as the United States Railroad Commissioner in Washington, D.C., Johnston repeated the

praise to Judge William L. Jett of Frankfort and said the same thing to Judge Emory Speer of Georgia. Jett reminded Johnston of his earlier statement to which Johnston responded, "Yes, the Kentucky Brigade was the finest body of soldiers I ever saw."¹¹

While the brigade's skill in battle was among the best, its fighting spirit and endurance set it apart from its contemporaries. The Kentuckians maintained exceptional, almost mythical morale to the last days of the Civil War despite incredibly high losses. They started the war with more than 4,000 soldiers. By the end of the war, they were down to less than 600, many having sustained several wounds, yet they had far fewer desertions than other units.¹²

After the war scholars noted their performance. During the late nineteenth century, Nathaniel Southgate Shaler, Professor of Geology at Harvard University, studied the endurance of American soldiers during wartime, as compared with those in the Old World. He researched Civil War muster roles for an example of a group of soldiers with predominantly English heritage, whose families had been in America for several generations. Shaler chose the Orphan Brigade and used the Atlanta Campaign as the focal point of his study¹³

Professor Shaler's choice of the Atlanta Campaign was not arbitrary, for during the 120 days it took Sherman's Army to drive the Confederates from Dalton to Jonesboro, the Orphan Brigade compiled a record of heroism and sacrifice that almost defies belief. The brigade started the campaign at Dalton, Georgia in May 1864 with 1,512 soldiers. By September 6, 1864, after the battles were over, they had lost 999 of their number, leaving 513 men present for duty. The brigade suffered 1,860 wounds that resulted in hospitalization or death, resulting in a staggering 123 percent casualty rate! Wounded soldiers returned to the battlefield again and again. Many were wounded several times. Less than fifty soldiers made it through the battles unharmed and fewer than ten deserted¹⁴ Emphasizing that they made their sacrifices far away from their homes in a losing cause, Shaler concluded, "a search into the history of warlike exploits has failed to show me any endurance to the worst trials of war surpassing this."¹⁵

Consideration of the losses of three Confederate brigades during this same period places these numbers in perspective. Francis Cockrell's First Missouri Brigade suffered seventy-four killed, 377 wounded, and eighty missing for a total loss of 531; Matthew Ector's brigade of South Carolinians and Texans lost sixty-four killed, 314 wounded and 114 missing, totaling 492; and Claudius Sears' Mississippi Brigade lost ninety killed, 368 wounded and 285 missing totaling 743. It is noted that these three brigades joined the campaign on May 18, 1864, which is eleven days after General William T. Sherman began advancing his Union army southward.¹⁶ The Kentuckians however, lost seven killed and fifty-four wounded by the twentieth of May, so their total loss of sixty-one during this period, can be subtracted from their overall loss of 999 for a comparable total of 938 killed, wounded or missing.¹⁷

The numbers clearly show that the Orphan Brigade suffered far more casualties than the other three brigades. Also, the number of soldiers missing in the other three

brigades, particularly Sears' Mississippi Brigade, suggests their deserters likely numbered higher than the ten reported by the Kentuckians. This cannot be proved however, for these numbers, as well as the number of cases of hospitalisation in the three brigades, were unavailable for this study. While various control factors such as inconsistent record keeping, loss or gain of soldiers due to sickness, administrative decisions and other reasons may affect the accuracy of such numbers, the Orphan Brigade obviously suffered a high number of casualties in the campaign.

This does not mean that the other three brigades were not good. To the contrary, during a recent study of morale and attrition during the Atlanta Campaign, Steven H. Newton, Professor of History at the University of Delaware, concluded that Cockrell's First Missouri Brigade and Ector's South Carolinians and Texans were "fighting brigades" and added that Cockrell's Missourians comprised "one of the Confederacy's elite brigades."¹⁸

Much of the reason the Orphan Brigade suffered so few desertions was due to the incredible morale of its soldiers. Professor Newton's study concluded that soldiers from the middle states such as Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri, whose native lands were occupied by the Union during the war, along with those from far away states such as Arkansas and Texas, had the best morale in the army.¹⁹

Other factors however, also account for the tremendous morale displayed by the Kentuckians. What other brigade had a former Vice President of the United States as its first leader? The troops loved and idolized John C. Breckinridge. Conrad Wise Chapman, a member of the brigade, later wrote, "he was a splendid man in every respect and we all soon (came) to love him as a father."²⁰ Breckinridge always insisted that his soldiers were gentlemen and he would not tolerate any of his officers abusing them. Once, when he learned that an enlisted man had been put in the guardhouse for refusing to sweep out an officer's tent, he severely admonished the officer, ordered him to set the man free, and threatened to jail the officer if he ever gave another such order.²¹

Other officers followed Breckinridge's lead in exercising much concern for the men. For example, Lieutenant Colonel James Hewitt paid ten thousand dollars of his own money to outfit the men with much needed coats during the first winter.²² The Kentucky Brigade had many fine leaders, men such as Simon Bolivar Buckner, Roger W. Hanson, Benjamin Hardin Helm, Robert Trabue, Joseph H. Lewis and many others. Those who survived dominated Kentucky politics in the years following the war, giving rise to the statement that Kentucky "never seceded until the war was over."²³ The excellent leadership provided by these officers is one of the reasons that the Kentuckians psychologically dealt so well with hardship.

The First Kentucky Brigade developed mostly as a mixture of two different pre-war Kentucky Military units. John Brown's Harpers Ferry Raid in 1859 convinced Kentucky Governor Beriah Magoffin of the need for a militia or state guard. On March 5, 1860, The Kentucky legislature enacted an entirely new military system in the state. They henceforth deemed that all men were members of the state's militia. Those volunteering for active military duty comprised the Kentucky State Guard. Simon Bolivar Buckner, a graduate of West Point and a veteran of the

Mexican War was appointed Inspector General.²⁴

Tensions between pro and anti-Union factions in the state became more volatile in 1860. The sympathies of the newly formed State Guard were decidedly pro-secession. In Lexington, John Hunt Morgan's Lexington Rifles, a volunteer infantry company organized in 1857, was one of the first units to join the State Guard.²⁵ During the period of Kentucky's neutrality Morgan and his men remained in Lexington, but in early July other members of the State Guard moved just south of the Kentucky line into Montgomery County, Tennessee, and bivouacked at Camp Boone.²⁶ Young Daniel Turney, a native of Cynthiana, commented in his journal on July 22, 1861 about the resentment these soldiers met while traveling south, but noted "we were allowed to pass uninterrupted—ever holding our banner."²⁷

William T. "Temp" Withers temporarily commanded the Kentuckians. Jefferson Davis ordered Withers, a Kentuckian who had moved to Mississippi, to recruit in his native state. Colonel Robert Trabue soon established Camp Burnett near Camp Boone and raised the Fourth Kentucky Regiment there. At these two camps, the troops received their training and became familiar with the men with whom they would spend the next four years.²⁸

The first major problem encountered by the leaders of the newly formed brigade was to obtain adequate arms. When Kentucky's neutrality ended and John Hunt Morgan's men left Lexington they raided the Lexington armory, but in general there was a shortage of modern rifles and military weapons. The men were first issued flintlocks, shotguns and other outdated weapons.²⁹ This fact was not lost on the new recruits and negatively affected their morale. Daniel Turney wrote in his diary on September 14, 1861, "much excitement about our flintlock muskets which arrived today and many swear they will not take them."³⁰

When the Kentucky legislature declared for the Union, Buckner issued a call for Kentuckians to defend the state from invasion. Accepting a commission as brigadier general in the Confederate Army, on September 18, 1861, he moved a unified army group consisting of the troops at Camp Boone, along with Tennessee troops from Camp Trousdale north of Nashville, to Bowling Green, Kentucky. Recruits continued arriving at Camp Boone and Camp Burnett, where General Lloyd Tilghman commanded until the arrival of General John C. Breckinridge in November. This marked the beginning of the First Kentucky Brigade's history as an official unit of the Confederate Army of Tennessee.³¹

Buckner's army group in Bowling Green was part of a Confederate defensive line across southern Kentucky. The Army of Tennessee's first commander was General Albert Sidney Johnston, a Kentuckian who had formed this defensive plan. On January 19, 1862, the right wing of Johnston's line collapsed when Confederate forces lost the Battle of Mill Springs. A few days later General Ulysses S. Grant's Union army moved in co-ordination with Admiral Andrew Foote's gunboats against Fort Henry, on the Tennessee River. His troops captured the fort on February 6, 1862.³²

One can hardly blame the surrender at Fort Henry on General Tilghman, who

commanded the fort during the attack by Grant. The Confederacy had planned Fort Henry on low ground. Most of it was underwater during the attack by Foote's gunboats and the only cannon with enough distance and accuracy to battle Foote's guns malfunctioned. A twenty-four-inch gun also exploded. Most of the troops had already left for Fort Donelson and Tilghman commanded a very small bastion.³³ Only nearby Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River remained.

Johnston withdrew the divisions of Generals Floyd and Pillow from the center of the line and moved them south to garrison Fort Donelson. Part of the First Kentucky Brigade, the Second Kentucky Regiment commanded by Colonel Roger W. Hanson, along with Rice Grave's Battery of artillery, also buttressed the fort. The army group arrived at the fort on February 8, 1862 and spent the next couple of days and nights digging rifle pits. They finished on the morning of February 12 and were engaged in active combat just after sundown.³⁴

The following morning the fighting continued. Hanson's soldiers repulsed three Union charges against the rifle pits. The Kentuckians allowed the Union soldiers to reach within 100 yards of their position before firing. None advanced any farther than sixty yards distance from them. The troops, most of whom were in their first engagement, admired the manner in which the Federal soldiers attacked. They noted the discipline their foes exercised by reforming, while within firing range, and waiting for orders from their officers before moving forward again. This did not stop them however from using their old "buck-and-ball muskets" to shoot the brave blueclads.³⁵

Later in the day, the Second Regiment made several such charges. After a confusing order for the Second Kentucky to advance, Hanson led his men, along with Confederate General Nathan B. Forrest's cavalry, against a Federal artillery battery. The regiment advanced over more than 200 yards of exposed territory without firing their weapons until forty yards away. The combined assault force captured the battery and its cannon and prepared to defend it. General Pillow however, called them back. Withdrawing to their former position they noticed Federal troops racing forward to regain their rifle pits. Hanson spent the remainder of the day unsuccessfully attempting to retake the Union trenches.³⁶

No one ever figured out who had issued the order that had cost the Kentuckians their rifle pits. By all accounts however, the Second Kentucky Regiment and Grave's Battery had done well. The regiment resented that Pillow did not allow them to defend the battery they had captured in this most critical battle. Historians such as Robert S. Henry, Bruce Catton and Frank Cooling have cited the Union victories at these two forts, particularly Fort Donelson, as two of the most strategically important battles fought during the war.³⁷

After the fall of Fort Donelson, the Confederate Army of Tennessee withdrew to Corinth, Mississippi to defend the vital railroad junction there. If Corinth were lost, Memphis and subsequently the entire Mississippi River would fall into Union hands. As one might imagine, this retreat resulted in considerable hurt pride in the Army. The Army of Tennessee was spoiling for a fight and soon they had their

wish—they conducted a surprise attack near Pittsburgh Landing, Tennessee that very nearly resulted in the total defeat of the principle Union forces west of the Allegheny Mountains.³⁸

The Battle of Shiloh started at dawn the morning of April 6, 1862 and Kentuckians participated heavily on both sides. Due to the promotion of Breckinridge, the First Kentucky Brigade was placed under the command of Colonel Robert P. Trabue.³⁹ They started in Breckinridge's reserve corps, but were then ordered to support General Hardee's third corps, and this placed them in one of the hottest spots on the field.⁴⁰ There they fought General William T. Sherman's command of Ohio and Iowa soldiers who would be the toughest opponents for the Army of Tennessee that day. The Kentuckians charged ferociously into the Union line. In a prolonged engagement with the Union forces their losses were heavy, but they forged ahead winning the day. A complete victory in the famous Hornet's Nest resulted in the surrender of Union General Benjamin Prentiss' entire command. Capturing Prentiss' force also solved the problem of the inferior armaments originally issued to many of the Kentucky soldiers. They were now issued the Enfield rifles used by Prentiss' troops.⁴¹

Meanwhile, Generals Breckinridge and Johnston had led the reserve corps of Tennessee and Alabama infantry, as well as Morgan's Cavalry, in the famous charge at the Peach Orchard. This attack was made from the opposite side of the Hornet's Nest from where the Orphan Brigade fought, and also helped seal the victory there. Unfortunately, a musket ball struck General Johnston in the leg and he bled to death.⁴²

After Johnston's death, the Army of Tennessee, now under the command of General P.G.T. Beauregard, settled in for the night. Beauregard planned to finish Grant's forces off in the morning, but darkness came at an opportune time for the Union. The break in the fighting allowed Grant to receive the reinforcements he needed to stave off defeat.

On the morning of April 7, the First Kentucky Brigade again bore the brunt of the fighting against the now strengthened Union forces. Forced to withdraw, Beauregard assigned the Kentuckians to cover the rear of the retreat, an extremely important and hazardous duty that would become a standard mission for them.⁴³ Already their commanders were relying on them to fill tough assignments. They held for most of the morning against a numerically superior force. Many officers and soldiers perished that day including Kentucky Confederate Governor George W. Johnson. Colonel Trabue cited the gallantry of Cobb's and Byrne's Batteries—both of which had suffered terrible losses but continued fighting. The Orphan Brigade lost 844 soldiers in the Battle of Shiloh out of a force numbering less than 2,400 at the start of the engagement.⁴⁴

The Kentuckians then retreated with the rest of the Army of Tennessee to Corinth, Mississippi. For reasons unknown, the brigade was split at this time. The Fourth and Fifth Regiments, the Fifth later becoming the Ninth, and an artillery battery were put in a unit alongside two Alabama regiments. The Sixth, Third, and

Seventh, along with another artillery battery, also received an Alabama regiment. These two groups jealously argued over which was the true First Kentucky Brigade.⁴⁵

Both groups stayed with the Army and fought in the Vicksburg Campaign and the Battle of Baton Rouge, distinguishing themselves in these engagements. The Kentuckians continued to lose troops at an unusually high rate, which reflected their eagerness to clash with the enemy. During the Vicksburg Campaign, they shrank from 1822 men to just 1252. After the Battle of Baton Rouge, they had dwindled to 584 soldiers.⁴⁶ On August 5, 1862 at Baton Rouge, the Kentuckians won an infantry battle, but were forced to retreat when artillery shelled them.⁴⁷ During this campaign, Breckinridge proudly commented on the spirit of his division, which included Tennessee, Alabama and Kentucky soldiers:

The enemy were well clothed and their encampments showed the presence of every comfort and even luxury. Our men had little transportation, indifferent food and no shelter. Half of them had no coats, and hundreds of them were without either shoes or socks. Yet no troops ever behaved with greater gallantry and even reckless audacity.⁴⁸

After fighting in Louisiana the Kentuckians moved toward Knoxville to join General Braxton Bragg in his invasion of Kentucky. The troops were overjoyed at this prospect, but again, their hard luck continued as Bragg left before they arrived. All indications are that Bragg did not orchestrate this cruelty intentionally, but it did not endear him to the Kentuckians.⁴⁹ Bragg, Breckinridge, and the Kentuckians would soon clash again.

Just prior to the Knoxville march some good luck finally came their way. In October 1862, the two groups again joined to become the First Kentucky Brigade, along with an Alabama Regiment and both artillery units. The Second Regiment, along with its leader, Roger W. Hanson, returned to service after a period of captivity in Alton, Illinois. Hanson, promoted to Brigadier General, was placed in charge of the brigade, which had been temporarily commanded by Benjamin Hardin Helm. The Kentuckians camped at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, the site of their next great battle.⁵⁰ Stones River, or the Battle of Murfreesboro as it was called in the South, was in many ways a very confusing battle, and historians still debate who emerged victorious. The controversy surrounding the Kentucky Brigade stems from an attack that Bragg compelled Breckinridge to order. General Breckinridge considered the charge, which was made against well-entrenched Union soldiers and heavy artillery, to be a suicide mission. He argued with Bragg, but was forced to order the advance. As a result, hundreds of the Kentuckians died, including their new leader, General Roger W. Hanson.⁵¹

After the Battle of Stones River, the Confederate Command sent the Kentuckians briefly to reinforce Vicksburg, but they arrived too late to be of any help.⁵² Their next major engagement occurred September 20 and 21, 1863 in northern Georgia

near Chickamauga Creek. The Battle of Chickamauga was a major victory for the Army of Tennessee. Reinforced by Longstreet's corps, which had arrived from the Eastern theater by rail, the Confederates pushed the Union Army back into Chattanooga. The Kentucky Brigade played a very important part in this victory. Fighting against a Union force which included the Fifteenth Kentucky Federal Regiment, the Fourth and Sixth Kentucky Confederate Regiments exploited an open flank on their right.⁵³ A rout of the Union forces soon followed as the Orphan Brigade battled their fellow Kentuckians.

Unfortunately for the Orphan Brigade, its new commander General Benjamin Hardin Helm, son of twice Kentucky Governor John Larue Helm, brother-in-law of President Abraham Lincoln, lost his life during the Battle.⁵⁴ Helm represented all the good qualities of the Kentucky officer. He had graduated ninth in his class at West Point at twenty-one years of age. A veteran of the Mexican War, he was the first leader of the First Kentucky Regiment and was only thirty-two years old at the time of his death. Personally attractive and highly congenial, he was an attorney and scholar, having studied at Harvard and earning his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Louisville.⁵⁵

Helm turned down a commission as major in the highly sought paymasters' division of the Union Army. Promotion in rank, particularly given his connections, would have naturally accompanied this position. President Lincoln was extremely fond of Helm, who had voted against him in 1860, and grieved immeasurably upon learning of his death. Lincoln told a friend, "I feel as David of old did when he was told of the death of Absalom."⁵⁶

With the death of their leaders in two successive battles, the soldiers of the Kentucky Brigade must have felt like orphans again. A lesser body of men might have sulked and faltered, but incredibly, their morale was never higher. Even after Grant pushed the Army of Tennessee out of Chattanooga in the Battles of Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, the Orphan Brigade maintained a high spirit. Their discipline also remained high. General Joseph H. Lewis, their new commander, was an iron-fisted disciplinarian who did not tolerate the slightest infraction of the rules. They respected him, but were slow to warm up to him. After they recognized the benefits of Lewis' tough leadership however, they loved him as much as they had their previous commanders.⁵⁷

They didn't have to wait long to see the results. After they fell back to Dalton, Georgia, along with the Army of Tennessee, senior commanders conducted a review of the army including the Orphan Brigade. The brigade highly impressed the inspecting officer, Major General Thomas C. Hindman, who reported, "The Kentucky Brigade is especially deserving and entitled to commendation for soldierly appearance, steadiness of marching, and an almost perfect accuracy in every detail."⁵⁸

The Kentuckians, like all the Army of Tennessee, had a very tough summer of 1864. William Tecumseh Sherman's vast legions began marching against Atlanta, and the Confederates, under the command of General Joseph E. Johnston, mounted

a defensive campaign. The Kentuckians contributed to this effort in many ways. None were as effective however, as a new squad of soldiers who, by a stroke of good fortune, had emerged within the Kentucky Brigade. While they were camped at Dalton, Breckinridge received a gift of eleven Kerr rifles from a friend in England. The rifles were accurate up to a mile or more, but required special handling including being cleaned after every four or five shots. Breckinridge gave these rifles to the Kentucky Brigade and, after they held a competition, eleven men were chosen to be sharpshooters. The men were placed under the command of Lieutenant George Hector Burton, who was both a superb sharpshooter and cool leader.⁵⁹

Hector Burton's sharpshooters served the Army of Tennessee quite well throughout the Georgia battles of 1864. They operated between the lines at distances up to only a quarter mile away from the enemy. When artillery fire bombarded the Confederates, the sharpshooters shot at them, with deadly accuracy that attracted return fire. Their duty was dangerous. Of the original eleven, only Lieutenant Burton made it through the campaign unscathed. The Union soldiers wounded many of them two or three times and volunteers replaced the wounded. About twenty men served and seventeen were wounded or killed in the campaign.⁶⁰

One famous incident concerning the Kentucky sharpshooters occurred on the morning of June 14, 1864 at Pine Mountain, Georgia. As General William Tecumseh Sherman walked along the front line, he observed a group of Confederate soldiers boldly standing in the open near an artillery battery. Sherman did not realize that these soldiers were some of the top brass of the Army of Tennessee who were looking through binoculars at the Union line. Sherman found General Oliver O. Howard, the corps commander in charge of the artillery, pointed out the enemy officers and ordered artillery fire at them. Howard issued the order and three volleys were fired. One shell struck distinguished Confederate General Leonidas Polk, tearing through his arm and chest and killing him instantly.⁶¹

Within thirty minutes after the fatal shot, the Kentucky sharpshooters purposely located the federal artillery battery that had killed General Polk. They brought such devastating fire upon it that it was forced from its position.⁶² John Jackman recalled an offhanded comment made by a captured Union sharpshooter, which sums up the grudging respect the enemy had for Burton's men. Jackman, who gave the Federal snipers their own just due, recalled, "We captured one of them, and he told Gen'l Bate that our sharpshooting is excellent, but that our artillery is not worth a d—n."⁶³

The Kentucky Brigade served throughout the battles of the Atlanta Campaign. Ordered to make another suicidal assault against entrenched forces at Dallas, Georgia, the brigade suffered a loss of almost twenty percent. They fought at most of the other famous battles in Georgia including Resaca, Cassville, Peachtree Creek, Ezra Church and others. Down to 833 men by the Battle of Jonesboro, they continued to resist for two days losing 320 more.⁶⁴

At Jonesboro, fighting alongside the famous Irish General Patrick Cleburne's Arkansas Division in their last battle as an infantry brigade, their luck finally ran out for good. They were attacked from two sides by a tidal wave of blueclad soldiers.

Defending a thin line, most of the brigade was captured, but not before making one last gallant stand. Many chose to fight to the death rather than capitulate. The Kentuckians and Arkansans violently resisted their attackers, engaging them in a brutal fight that included hand to hand combat with bayonets.⁶⁵

In his report on the battle, Union Colonel George P. Estey described the ferocity of the fighting and, while proudly commenting on the performance of his own troops, gave grudging respect to the Orphan Brigade and Cleburne's Arkansas troops. "They fought with the greatest desperation and yielded only to the superior heroism of our men," wrote Colonel Estey, "The troops met were confessedly among the best of the rebel army."⁶⁶ Another Union officer referred to the Kentuckians as "the most infernal set of devils that the Army of the Cumberland had ever caught or ever encountered."⁶⁶ Union General Jefferson C. Davis, commander of a division opposing them, praised their performance and made certain that their survivors were humanely treated.⁶⁷

After the Battle of Jonesboro, commanders of the Army of Tennessee issued horses to the remnant of the Kentucky Brigade and sent them as cavalry with General Joseph "Fighting Joe" Wheeler to harass the flanks of Sherman's Army as it marched to Savannah. With poor horses and few provisions, the Kentuckians nevertheless remained vigilant and prepared to fight at any time. They were actively engaged with the enemy when news came of Lee's surrender.⁶⁸ Regardless, on April 21, 1865, they were preparing to follow orders and begin an assault when they were ordered to withdraw. General Johnston had signed an armistice three days before.⁶⁹ The remaining members of the Orphan Brigade walked to Washington, Georgia, where they surrendered May 6, 1865.⁷⁰

The brigade was not perfect. Like other units they had desertions and cases of insubordination and cowardice. For instance, while marching to Knoxville to unite with Bragg in September 1862, the enlistment term expired for soldiers in the Fifth (later Ninth) Regiment, and they refused to follow orders. Breckinridge handled this uprising with the same finesse that made him a successful politician.⁷¹ Similar incidents occurred, but the Kentucky Brigade seems to have had fewer instances of this than most brigades have. In 1891, Professor Shaler concluded that the Orphan Brigade from the beginning "proved as trustworthy a body of infantry as ever marched or stood in the line of battle."⁷³ Indeed, the Kentucky Brigade's fighting spirit, tenacity, endurance, and reliability made it one of the great military units in history.

Endnotes

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The Ghost That Still Remains: The Tragic Story of Andersonville Prison

**by
Rachel E. Noll**

It was a place of horror and agony. Murder, disease, starvation and lack of sanitation killed thousands. The smell was nauseating; the landscape was bleak. Many of the guards and commanders of the camp added to the misery and the death toll. Newly freed men came out looking like skeletons, mere shells of what were once strong and healthy human beings. Some were too sick to travel and were cared for by liberating forces that could do nothing but try to comfort them, as they died slow and agonizing deaths. To someone born after the 1950's, this description conjures up the Holocaust and the German concentration camps of World War II. But this was 1865, during the Civil War, and the location of this scourge was near the little town of Anderson, Georgia. Whether one supported the South or the North, what happened at the camp called Andersonville cannot be denied and its impact cannot be ignored.

Historians dispute certain aspects of Andersonville. Was it truly the worst prison camp, or was it simply the camp that has attracted the most attention? Did Captain Henry Wirz deserve to die for what happened there or was he merely a scapegoat? Was the Union responsible for the accelerated death rate by its refusal to continue prisoner exchange and parole? Did Confederate officials intentionally starve prisoners to reduce the number of Union soldiers? The answers to these questions may never fully be known, but there is evidence that is helpful in coming up with logical and sound opinions about these and many other questions.

Although known officially as Camp Sumter, the camp was called Andersonville after the nearby town of Anderson. The village had a train depot, a church, a store, a cotton warehouse, and about a dozen houses that were essentially shanties. Why was this place selected over some larger site like Richmond, Virginia?¹ According to R. Randolph Stevenson, a Confederate surgeon who issued a massive report on Andersonville after the war was over, the site was chosen for "humane reasons." These included accessibility to supplies of food, water, and timber (there were conveniently located saw and gristmills) and the warmer climate. Ovid L. Futch agrees that Confederate leaders thought that it would be easier to ship supplies to Andersonville than to Richmond, but he notes several other factors as well. He points out that Robert E. Lee considered that prisoners would be a military liability in case of an attack on Richmond. He further states that the local citizenry feared prison breaks and possible attacks by Union forces, as there was a shortage of prison

Rachel E. Noll, Assistant Editor of *Perspectives in History* for next year, teaches history at Villa Madonna Academy. She presented this paper at the annual Phi Alpha Theta Regional Conference at Northern Kentucky University, March 31, 2001.

guards. Moreover, the Confederate government wanted a camp that was far enough from active battle that the likelihood of enemy raids would be curtailed, making it easier to guard. Furthermore, the area should be one that could more easily be supplied with food—at a cheaper cost—than could be done in Richmond. Andersonville fit all of these criteria.²

Nonetheless, based solely on these factors, a number of places in the South would have sufficed. So how did it come to be Andersonville that was chosen? The decision had a great deal to do with the chain of command. General John C. Winder was in charge of all prisons in Georgia and Alabama for the Confederacy, eventually becoming commander of all Confederate prisons east of the Mississippi River. General Winder was ordered to find a place in Georgia that would be suitable for a prison and he ordered his son, Captain Sidney Winder, to go out and find it. With orders in hand, Sidney set out to select the site.³

Sidney found a location south of Albany that seemed perfect, but President Jefferson Davis expected that this would only invite a Union raid near the Gulf Coast. So, Sidney left for a place south of Macon called Americus. When he got there, he met Uriah Harrold, acting Commissary Department agent. Harrold suggested they visit the town of Bump Head, an old camp meeting ground that could accommodate hundreds of people. The citizens of Bump Head were not fond of the idea of a camp in their town, and pointed out their excessive distance from the railroad. They suggested that the pair look at Anderson, a small town approximately eleven miles northeast of Americus that had more abundant water. Winder and Harrold, believing that the townspeople had made a good point, left to inspect the area and Andersonville was born soon thereafter.⁴

Although Captain Sidney Winder was the first commandant of the camp, the man responsible for bringing Andersonville to life was Captain Richard B. Winder. He was the camp's quartermaster and was in charge of its construction. Captain Winder ran into difficulties at the very first. Because of the remote location of the camp, it was difficult to get supplies from the railroad. He found that the assurances he had received from General Winder that the people of the area would be more than willing to give up their time, labor, and supplies to help the Confederate cause was not a reality. His attempts to get lumber mills to provide lumber were in vain and he was ordered by the Confederate government to impress sawmills that did not have a contract with the railroads. Most of the mills, however, quickly established a contract with the railroads, and Richard was left with a small lot. The few mills that were left would not sell to the government because it paid such a paltry sum in comparison to everyone else. Captain Winder had no choice but to impress blacks, local citizens, and supplies from the surrounding area.⁵

The camp was set up on the high ground, and the hillsides were dry and wooded. The original size of the stockade area was 16 1/2 acres and was expanded twice to make room for prisoners. Eventually, because of the number of prisoners, three walls were placed around the stockade. It was built on Stockade Branch, a system of watercourses that met 1/4 of a mile east of the train depot. Stockade Creek, part

of the water system, met up with Sweetwater Creek and then flowed into the Flint River. Much of the area east of the stockade was a swamp, which caused health problems for the soldiers. The bakery and the cookhouse were placed north, or upstream, from the stockade, contaminating the water supply the soldiers used. The stockade and camp had been placed in the area because of “beautiful, clear, water” but by the end of 1864, the water and the swampy land became a major complaint.⁶

When the camp opened on February 17th of 1864, it was not finished. The original plan for the prison was that it would hold 6,000 captured soldiers, later changing to 10,000.⁷ By this time, Colonel Alexander W. Persons was the commandant. When he arrived, no more than 100 guards were on duty. The stockade was not completely finished, there were no locks for the gates around the camp, no lumber for shelters inside the stockade, none of the guards were heavily armed, cookhouse construction had only begun, and most importantly, there had been no arrangements to feed the prisoners. Colonel Persons faced a task of monumental proportions. Not only was he in charge of getting the camp into shape for the arrival of prisoners, he was responsible for the area surrounding the prison, dealing with local civilians, supervising the guard force, chasing down escaped prisoners, and communicating with Richmond. Richard Winder, who now reported to Persons, had the unenviable duty of feeding, sheltering, and clothing the prisoners.⁸

Of all the commandants of the prison, Colonel Persons was the best liked. He had the best relationship with the prisoners and tried to be kind to them, but Persons also faced difficulties in obtaining supplies. He was forced to transport lumber by train in order to build barracks and other shelters. For that reason, very few were built. In all of his time at Andersonville, he was only able to get about fifty carloads of lumber and most of it was used to build houses outside the camp area while Union prisoners suffered without shelter.⁹ At one point, Persons left his command post on a personal mission to find food and supplies for all the soldiers of the camp. He was disciplined for this action and eventually was fired for it.¹⁰

Captain Richard Winder’s position under Person’s command—charge of the inner stockade—was also short-lived. General John Winder replaced him with Captain Henry Wirz. Many of the prisoners did not like Wirz, commenting on his sinister mien. This was especially true of a man named John McElroy, a soldier in the Third Battalion, Sixteenth Illinois Cavalry, and a prisoner at Andersonville. He described Wirz as having a “mouth that protruded like a rabbit’s” and “bright, little eyes, like those of a squirrel or rat”.¹¹

The prisoners thought Wirz was crazy and as mean as any human being could possibly be. Warren Lee Goss, another Union soldier who was imprisoned at Camp Sumter, described Wirz as a “ferocious, round-shouldered little man.” According to Goss, Wirz once made wild gestures at a group of soldiers, including Goss, and they laughed at him because his “person, gestures, and looks were ridiculous.” Goss recalled later that Wirz raged at them saying, “By Got! You tam Yankees; you won’t laugh ven you gets into the pull pen.”¹²

Wirz was born in Switzerland in 1823. Raised a Calvinist, he converted to

Catholicism and created a rift in his family that never mended. Later, out on his own, he apprenticed as a pharmacist, married and had two children, but the marriage ended in divorce. Times grew tough and he owed a great deal of money to several creditors. Swiss law forbade excessive debt and Wirz was exiled as punishment. Wanting to start over and create a better life for himself, he landed in Boston, Massachusetts, later moving to Cadiz, Kentucky, and marrying Elizabeth Wolf. There, Wirz practiced homeopathic medicine, but competition in the region was tough so he moved to New Orleans.¹³

In Louisiana, he joined the army as a private in the Madison Infantry of the Fourth Louisiana Battalion. He injured his right arm and shoulder in the Battle of Seven Pines, making several sections of bone and muscles useless. The wounds, which later became infected on several occasions, served as a constant reminder of the action. In the army of the twentieth century he would have been discharged, but the Confederacy needed soldiers badly and Wirz was allowed to stay on as military records archivist under General Winder. He was then given command of a prison in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and while he was there no reports of brutality or mistreatment were made against him. He eventually took over command of Andersonville.¹⁴

Wirz took charge of Andersonville when the horror was at its height. When prisoners arrived, two things caught their attention and filled them with dread. One was the general misery of the place and the prisoners, and the other was the “dead line.” Private Isaac Davenport of the Seventh Tennessee Volunteer Cavalry characterized his first impression of Andersonville as a “desperts looking place” and “very gloomy.” Another soldier from Connecticut, Robert Kellogg, said of he and his fellow comrades that the sight of the place froze their blood with terror and made their hearts fail within them.¹⁵ Lieutenant G. E. Sabre of the Second Rhode Island Cavalry wrote that as they passed along the outside of the camp, preparing to go in, he “felt sick at heart” for he saw the stockade, sentinels, and the sentry-boxes, and the places of horror which were the hospital and the graveyard. The place emanated the energy of hell.¹⁶

One of the objects that added to the prisoner’s misery was the sentry box. These were guard shacks where sentinels kept watch over the area commonly referred to as the “dead line.” The dead line was a row of stakes fifteen feet from the stockade on the interior side, driven into the ground with narrow strips of board nailed on top. Anyone who approached the line was instantly fired on by guards in the sentry-boxes on the stockade. Many of the guards took pleasure in using the prisoners for target practice and cared little if they injured or killed them. A rumor circulated among the prisoners that any sentinel who killed a prisoner approaching the dead line would be rewarded with a furlough, but this was mythical. Nevertheless, prisoners would deliberately run out into the line so that they could end their terrible suffering. In any case, the dead line caused a great fear and loathing of the guards.¹⁷

Many of the experiences of prisoners in other camps on both the Union and Confederate sides were similar to the conditions and treatment of prisoners arriving at Camp Sumter. This can be plainly seen by reading the diaries of soldiers taken

captive on both sides. So, what was it that made Andersonville so unique? What happened at this camp that did not happen to the same degree elsewhere? The answer is many-faceted.

One obvious problem was overcrowding. Andersonville was constructed to hold 10,000 men and it soon became inadequate when General Ulysses S. Grant, commander of the Federal Forces, decided to halt the prison exchange system that had been set up earlier, known as the Dix-Hill Cartel. This exchange, forged by Union General John A. Dix and Confederate General Daniel H. Hill, “paroled” prisoners. The soldiers would either automatically be released with the promise not to aid their cause until official notice to do so, or be held in custody until an equal exchange of prisoners could be made. Grant saw this as a way of prolonging the war on both sides and wanted general exchange to end. The result was a build up of the number of men held in prisons.¹⁸

It is estimated that between February of 1864 and April of 1865, approximately 50,000 men came through the camp. Of that total, nearly 13,000 died there. In July of 1864, the prison held 29,998 soldiers within its confines, and in August of the same year, the average number of men on any given day was 32,899.¹⁹ Obviously, approximately forty acres of land was not enough to hold all those men. Dr. Joseph Jones, Surgeon of the Provisional Army of Confederate States and Professor of Medical Chemistry in the Medical College of Georgia, reported that the average number of square feet of ground to each prisoner in August 1864, was 33.7. Jones stated that on this 33.7 square feet, the prisoners were forced to cook, wash, urinate, defecate, exercise, and sleep.²⁰

Most prisoners were forced to use the ground to carry out the daily functions of life since there was an appalling lack of shelter. No outhouses, bunks, or mess halls were available for the soldiers, at least none made out of wood. The most common form of shelter was called a “shebang.” The shebang looked like a tent and was usually made of cloth stretched across poles and raised up several feet off the ground. The more sophisticated ones were made of a clay substance found near the swamp area that was shaped into an adobe-like structure. These were very rare and often caved in on the soldiers sleeping in them. Some prisoners dug holes or tunnels in order to sleep underground, away from the hot Georgia sun, or to try to escape from the prison. Cave-ins happened in these places as well, but those who tried felt it was worth the risk. Eventually, two sets of barracks were built but they were not enough to keep up with the prison population.²¹

One other essential need became a concern as well: where did one go to the bathroom? The answer came in the form of a “sink.” The sink was the place that the prisoners designated as a latrine. The main sink was the swampy area on the eastern half of the camp, because it took up such a large area and could not be used for anything else. Unfortunately, the streams that ran into the mire did not have a current fast enough to carry excess waste and garbage away, so refuse from the cookhouse and bakery upstream, along with the soldier’s own waste, “clogged” the marsh.²²

In the summer of 1864, torrential rains and hot weather made the swamp an ideal

location for mosquitoes and infection. In order to avoid these, most men began relieving themselves whenever and wherever they were. If they were too ill to move, they dug a hole next to where they were lying or simply urinated on themselves in their uniforms.²³ In June of 1864, Warren Goss noted that the smell of the swamp was so bad that they (the commanders of the camp) ordered the necessary digging tools to be given to soldiers to fill the worst half acre of the sink with earth that had been excavated from the hillsides. Finally, in 1865, long after the prison population had reached its height, Dr. H.H. Clayton became chief surgeon of the camp. He ordered the draining of the swamp to get rid of some of the waste and smell that surrounded the area. Although this relieved the situation to some degree, it was too little, too late. Thousands of men had already died from ailments brought on by conditions in the area. Tragically, even this was not the worst of the conditions that prisoners were subjected to at Andersonville.²⁴

Two other factors of significance were food and medical help. When a soldier arrived at camp, he was not issued utensils to eat with—there were none to give. A few came with mess kits but these were confiscated by the guards. Most prisoners had to make do, eating their rations out of canteen halves, old boards, shingles, pieces of twisted tin, or shoes.²⁵

According to official records of the Confederate army, both prisoners and Confederate soldiers should have received a third pound of pork and a one pound serving of beef and a one and one fourth serving of cornmeal. If they were available, sweet potatoes, onions, peas, beans, molasses, or salt could be had. The cornmeal was usually a mixture of corn and the cob ground together. It was hard on the stomach and caused digestive problems. The pork was very fatty and often rancid. It was, however, something to eat and was better than starving to death. Warren Goss said that the rations, which were the best in the first few months, were “miserably inadequate,” and by July of 1864, bacon was nonexistent and when they were given rice or beans, they contained maggots or worms.²⁶

Why was there such a problem getting food? The remote location of the camp was a consideration, but other factors contributed to the problem. One of these was money. Southern farmers in the area could grow enough food to feed all who were stationed at the camp, but they did not want to give up their corn and beef to the Confederate army when the average citizen would pay more for it. They also did not want to grow corn to be eaten when they could make it into whiskey and garner a bigger profit.²⁷

Another factor involved was inefficient transportation. There was a plan to purchase beef cattle in Florida and have the herds “driven” up by “Florida Crackers.” These were skilled cattle drivers called crackers because of the sound their thin, long, rawhide bullwhips made. They were different from most cattle drivers in that they did not ride on a horse, but walked next to the cattle to drive them. During the war, there were not nearly enough of them to drive the necessary amount of cattle back and forth, and the government made the shortage of men worse by conscripting them to serve in the Confederate army. With the failure of this plan,

camp leaders substituted pork for beef.²⁸

When no food rations or other provisions were left, prisoners had to buy them at outrageous prices. Money issued from the Confederate government was inflated and there was an immense sum of it being printed and circulated. The exchange rate in June of 1864 was \$4.50 in Confederate money to \$1.00 in Union currency and the Union soldiers paid the price for it. The prisoners could not afford much at these rates and it promoted a vicious system that starved many men and sent them to their graves.²⁹

An even more vicious system governed the medical care and facilities at Camp Sumter. The hospital shelter was made of all sorts of tents, not wood, and was originally capable of holding 800 men. It grew in size to 1,400, but even that was not enough. Dr. Isaiah White, Chief Surgeon at Andersonville, wrote in a correspondence to the Surgeon General of the Confederate army that by June 26, 1864, there were nearly 3,000 sick men in camp. Of those, only 1,035 could be cared for in the hospital due to a lack of staff and housing for the sick. He requested that 200 tents be sent immediately and that more medical officers should be sent to deal with the increasing numbers of sick. The Confederate army did not have enough tents for their own soldiers, much less for the enemy, but White received more medical attendants and had 300 by August of 1864.³⁰

Over and above the lack of facilities, there was a desperate lack of medicine due to the inefficiency of supply lines. Attendants would wash out dressings or bandages and use them several times over. They had few actual drugs and had to turn to roots or herbs to try to help relieve the men's pain. All three of the doctors who acted as chief surgeon at the camp continually asked for supplies and were frequently turned down.³¹

Overall conditions of the camp only added to the suffering. Men typically had one outfit of clothing to wear, the one that they were captured in. The "vermin-infested" clothing and lack of boiling facilities promoted the growth of lice and maggots, which became a major concern of the medical staff. The food that made men sick and put them in the hospital was served to them again, exacerbating their already existing condition. Due to close quarters and the large population in the camp, diseases such as smallpox, scurvy, and dysentery could not be contained and killed a substantial number of men. Moreover, the water supply was being contaminated inside the prison as it flowed out of the hospital and stockade. The sick and dying were making others ill as well.³²

Everyday, the medical staff went through the ritual of "sick call." It usually started at 8:00 a.m. with twelve doctors lining up at booths outside the South Gate of the prison. The sick would stand in line and be looked over to determine if they could be saved. Terminally ill soldiers would be rejected and left to die a slow and agonizing death. At the peak of overcrowding, only the most treatable were taken and, of those that passed through the "doors" of the hospital, 76% did not make it out alive. Prisoners were dying in large numbers, and those in charge had not a single tool to dig graves for them. These were the conditions when Henry Wirz took

command. Several months later he was able to procure implements to give these soldiers a decent burial.³³

With all of the pain and suffering that occurred at Andersonville, there had to be someone to blame, someone to take responsibility for the horrors that were perpetrated. The Union's most logical answer was Henry Wirz, commandant of the camp for the longest period. Wirz was charged with murdering thirteen prisoners of war and tried as a war criminal. He was found guilty and on November 10, 1865, he was hanged. Was he truly guilty, or was he being used as a scapegoat?

Bruce Catton believes that the latter was the case. He wrote in 1959, "Wirz was a scapegoat, dying for the sins of many people, of whom some lived south of the Potomac River, while others lived north of it." He also expressed the idea that the real problems behind the atrocious conditions of Andersonville were beyond Wirz's control. Catton intimated that the Southern economy failed Wirz and that Southern dreams were too grand for the actuality of what could be accomplished. He mentioned that Camp Sumter was just about as terrible as any place could be, but there also were other prison camps, both Union and Confederate, that had the same type of reputation as Andersonville. If that was true, why single out this one and make Wirz die for it?³⁴

At Wirz's trial, there was a massive amount of testimony both for and against him. Many former inmates testified against him, while other former prisoners defended him. Testimony from both sides was biased, especially from former inmates who only knew the hell they lived through and assumed it was Wirz's fault because he was in charge while they were there. Historians, taking a more objective view, have studied thousands of pages of official records and correspondence to see that Wirz did try, on numerous occasions, to get relief. He wrote the acting Assistant Adjutant-General of the Confederate Army in 1865 to obtain shoes for paroled soldiers who were doing work that the government would have had to pay someone else to do. He was worried about them, for they had shoes that were worn out from "service" to the Confederacy, and he did not want them to go barefooted. Other acts of goodwill on Wirz's part have been documented, such as requesting lumber and tools to erect shelters and more rations for the men. This does not sound like a man who would intentionally murder men.³⁵

Ovid Futch blames the horror of Andersonville on the mismanagement of the Confederate high command. He posits that those in positions to help Alexander Persons or Henry Wirz with the necessary rations, supplies, and soldiers needed to run a decent and humane camp did not do so; people like General Samuel Cooper, General Howell Cobb, and Governor Joseph E. Brown. Despite these and other impassioned arguments, Wirz was used to appease northern citizens who read diaries or accounts of former prisoners and were outraged at the treatment they had received. The Federal government was not going to put Jefferson Davis or Robert E. Lee on trial. And, as long as the public had their thirst for vengeance quenched, people cared nothing about truth and real justice.³⁶

It is said that people study history so that they do not repeat the same mistakes over and over again. And yet, the same lessons are continuously repeated in different places of the world at different times. There are men and women who are literally digging up the past at Andersonville so that people can learn from what went wrong there and see that it never happens again. The hope is that studies such as these will be a guiding light to a generation of children, parents, and grandparents who will understand the value of human life and treasure it.

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Hillbilly Highways: Appalachian Outmigration and the Link between Advocacy and Culture

by
J. Ryan Booth

The mountain areas of eastern Kentucky, southwestern Virginia, southern West Virginia, and northeastern Tennessee comprise the Appalachian Regional Commission's (ARC) Central Subregion. The Appalachian chain runs from New York to Georgia, and its rugged geography breeds an isolation that does not lend itself easily to cultural homogeneity. However, the Central Subregion is more than just an arbitrary political distinction. It is an area with a particular history and particular problems; more than any other ARC subregion, it has a shared past and culture.

The source of this sense of a regional self can be found in the tremendous outmigration the area experienced from 1950 to 1960, and in the political reactions to this outmigration. During this ten year period the region experienced a net population decline of 13.5%.¹ Over 2.5 million mountaineers left their homes for cities outside the region.² This separated the Central Subregion from the mountains as a whole, which during the same decade, experienced a modest population increase. Ironically, only as thousands left the region did it truly develop what William Lynwood Montell called, "a mode of collective thought."³

This outmigration had an obvious and direct impact on the communities of Central Appalachia. Harlan County, Kentucky had a net migration of -47.6%, and a corresponding population decline of 28.8%.⁴ This was typical, and many other mountain towns and counties had similar losses. Perhaps more interesting, however, are the migrants themselves. As these "hillbillies" became "citybillies," they made Appalachian poverty an urban problem as well as a rural one. This helped push Appalachia, and particularly Central Appalachia onto the national political stage.

Those migrating to the city tended to relocate to distinctly Appalachian neighborhoods within cities such as Columbus, Cincinnati, Akron, Chicago, and Detroit.⁵ Those from a particular locale in the mountains also largely migrated to the same area outside the mountains.⁶ The outmigration occurred along familial lines, as family members in the city served as living advertisements for the area and aided newcomers in adjusting to urban life.⁷ Migrants commonly lived with relatives when they initially arrived in the city. This pattern, combined with comparatively low levels of education and job training, kept Appalachians in the inner city from moving to better locations away from their "port of entry" neighborhoods.

Conditions in the mountains became impossible to ignore when migrants

J. Ryan Booth is a Phi Alpha Theta member initiated in Gamma Beta Chapter of Bradley University, where he conducted most of the research for this article. He is currently a graduate student in history at the College of William and Mary.

flooded into midwestern cities, and change in Appalachia became one of the goals of Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. As the national government moved to aid both migrants and mountaineers, the people of Central Appalachia took steps to help themselves. Local advocacy and activism were products of the migration, and began to develop more fully in the decade following the peak of the exodus. Those who worked to help Appalachians and migrants attempted to use methods that were sensitive to mountain culture. The growing political awareness, fostered by the War on Poverty's emphasis on Community Action, was accompanied by a growing cultural revival. Traditional Appalachian folk art and music gained new national attention and achieved commercial viability as popular art and music.

While the federal government had a presence in Appalachia well before the great migration of the 1950s, no organization was exclusively devoted to the area. Prior to the 1960s, the major federal program in Appalachia was the Tennessee Valley Authority. The TVA, however, was not given authority to pursue a regional economic policy, and instead centered its efforts on developing the region's hydroelectric resources.⁸

The most direct example of federal assistance to Appalachia came in the Area Redevelopment Act (also known as the Depressed Areas Act) of 1965. This legislation, which essentially strengthened a similar act from the Kennedy administration, allocated 1.1 billion dollars for the region, and established a new, reinforced organization to coordinate regional policy.⁹ The Appalachian Regional Commission had been created under President Kennedy, but was given broader powers by the Johnson administration.¹⁰

The Area Redevelopment Act's principal aim was to stanch the flow of migrants from the region by improving the region itself. ARC functioned as a badly needed coordinating force, bringing federal, state, and local governments together with a new unity of purpose.¹¹ ARC also cooperated with private charities and labor representatives.¹² Beyond the coordinating efforts of ARC, the Depressed Areas Act sought to improve mountain life by improving transportation. It called for 2,700 miles of new highways and improvements to existing roads.

The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 was also a significant step towards national awareness. Like the Appalachian Regional Commission, the Office of Economic Opportunity focused on local efforts and community involvement. As Sargent Shriver, chairman of Johnson's anti-poverty task force, put it in a 1964 speech, "What will work in Cleveland will not work in Los Angeles, and a program which Chicago might use to fight urban slum poverty will not take root in the rocky soil of Appalachia. That is why the heart of poverty legislation is *local* community action."¹³ The War on Poverty emphasized poverty as a community problem that could only be solved through community action. This local direction in national policy helped make Appalachian migrants aware of their regional identity. ARC stated its goal of preserving Appalachian culture through advocacy: "Care is always taken to nurture Appalachia's uniquely American culture."¹⁴ Before the migration, many had lived in relative isolation; after, they lived in urban neighborhoods in

close proximity to others in the same situation. This physical proximity provided fertile ground for Community Action and cultural awareness.

The Great Society and the War on Poverty created programs designed to increase health care opportunities for the nation's poor. However, while availability of health care is one thing, utilization is quite another. The outlook of migrants, colored by their recent rural experiences, had an impact on their utilization of available services, and new health care programs needed to accommodate the peculiarities of mountain culture. At the same time, increased federal assistance shed new light on the region. This new attention affected the region's health care, improving it considerably. Here again we see the impact of the huge exodus of 1950-1960.

For most migrants, still fairly recent arrivals in the city by the 1960s, health care expectations were determined by their experiences of the sparse rural health services available in the mountains. Stella Oliver migrated from Pennington Gap, Virginia to Cincinnati in 1951.¹⁵ Before her migration to the city, a trip to the hospital meant a journey of thirty miles, from Pennington Gap to Norton, only part of which could be made over paved roads.¹⁶ The remoteness of hospital care led to a reliance on home treatment, and often self-treatment.¹⁷ Mountain isolation made it difficult to get to the hospital, either to receive treatment, or to visit a relative, and thus further contributed to the desire to stay home.¹⁸ What little contact mountain people had with doctors was likely to be in the form of general practitioners.¹⁹ Difficult traveling conditions also forced Appalachian doctors to function as pharmacists, as a pharmacy might well be many miles away.²⁰ Doctors also were apt to treat illnesses in a single visit, if at all possible, as travel made follow-up visits arduous tasks.²¹

The Appalachian health care experience was also markedly deficient in two key areas: preventive care and women's health.²² Despite the charitable efforts of such organizations as the Frontier Nursing Service, few Appalachians took any preventive care measures.²³ Immunizations were virtually unheard of, and as a child in the 1920s, Stella Oliver had actually contracted smallpox.²⁴ Similarly, health education was lacking in these two areas. West Virginia law even prevented any form of sex education.²⁵ John Friedl cites a lack of education as a key inhibitor of adequate health care for Appalachians—46.4% of Columbus, Ohio's migrant population had less than eight years of schooling.²⁶ In obstetric care, this is evidenced by the preference that mountain people showed for more readily available, and often unlicensed and untrained, midwives to assist in childbirth. Indeed, four of Stella Oliver's five children were born by midwife, and none of them were born in a hospital.²⁷

Unfortunately for migrants, many of the same factors that had prevented them from receiving sufficient health care in the rural setting continued to plague them after their arrival in the city. The poverty experienced by many migrants made cost prohibitive.²⁸ In 1970, 17.5% of Appalachian migrants in Columbus, Ohio had no health insurance.²⁹ Beyond sheer poverty, cultural factors often prevented Appala-

chian migrants from utilizing available care options.³⁰ Many migrants, including Stella Oliver, who qualified for public assistance programs such as Medicaid, refused to accept the help, turned off by the bureaucracy associated with such programs.³¹ Social pressures within the very locally oriented Appalachian neighborhoods also prevented health care options available in other areas of the city from being used, and reinforced a male cultural dominance that was distrustful of women's health issues.³² Appalachians were unconvinced of the value of specialists, given their experience with the personal treatment of the general practitioners of mountain areas.³³

In Chicago's Uptown neighborhood, where Appalachian migrants were plentiful, the Chicago Southern Center adapted traditional mountain values to improve its Outreach program.³⁴ The Southern Center strove to create a sense of community among the displaced mountaineers, training migrant "block leaders" to spread awareness about assistance programs including healthcare.³⁵ The Center also used mountain music to draw migrants and expose them to the variety of aid available.³⁶ The Chicago Committee on Urban Opportunity, a War on Poverty program, created a neighborhood center that brought a wide variety of governmental agencies under one roof, making them more accessible and palatable to migrants.³⁷ One important aspect of these efforts was a campaign to warn migrants of the dangers of lead poisoning for children.³⁸ Like many other attempts at local advocacy, much of the success of the Southern Center and the Committee on Urban Opportunity can be attributed to the level of cultural sensitivity they showed toward migrants, as well as their efforts to foster a sense of community. As Father Joseph Dunne, the field director of the Southern Center's Outreach program said, the goal was "to help the migrant maintain his dignity and self-respect, not try to make a Chicagoan out of him."³⁹

In their 1971 essay, "Education as a Cultural Bridge between Appalachian Kentucky and the Great Society," Harry K. Schwarzweller and James S. Brown pointed out that "education functions as a cultural bridge between American society and the Appalachian mountain region in Kentucky."⁴⁰ Schwarzweller and Brown noted the key role the migrant played in this cultural interchange.⁴¹ Unfortunately, the cultural differences between the migrants and their new Midwestern neighbors in formal education techniques and attitudes were often impediments to the process of acculturation, leaving migrants feeling more isolated than ever and making school a difficult and foreign terrain for migrant children. Still, migrants developed strategies that enabled them to adapt the educational system to meet their needs. Migrants used education not only as a means of learning the ways of the dominant, urban culture as Schwarzweller and Brown relate, but also as a way of preserving their mountain heritage.

During the 1960s in Cincinnati, Appalachian migrants dominated eight of the ten neighborhoods with the highest dropout rates.⁴² Students of mountain origin and descent faced regional and economic biases from teachers as well as other students. During an interview, Stella Oliver vividly recounted how her youngest daughters

had great difficulty in adjusting to urban schooling: "They got teased quite a bit. They called 'em 'hillbilly.' They'd both come home in tears."⁴³ Unsurprisingly, like many of their fellow migrants, neither would finish high school in the traditional manner.⁴⁴

Confronted with prejudice in the public school systems, migrants began to organize and to seek out means of education more in step with their mountain values. In Lower Price Hill, a predominantly Appalachian area in Cincinnati, this local, educational activism took the form of the Lower Price Hill Community School, founded in 1972.⁴⁵ Originally located in a Mennonite church and staffed with volunteers, it sought to give migrants an educational opportunity that was tailored to their unique cultural experience.⁴⁶ The School was very informal, lacking mandatory attendance policies, and teachers encouraged students to learn in a comfortable, home-like atmosphere.⁴⁷ Rather than regimented rows of desks, the one-room school used tableclothed kitchen tables, each with a lamp, and permitted smoking and eating during classes.⁴⁸ The School also functioned as a community center, and featured informal seminars on practical matters such as nutrition.⁴⁹ The Lower Price Hill Community School served as a political voice for the neighborhood, working with city government organizations such as the Urban Appalachian Council to protect the rights of migrants.⁵⁰ In its first fifteen years of operation, the School served over 2,500 students, assisting more than 200 in receiving a high school equivalency certificate, and by 1980 had increased the neighborhood's level of education significantly.⁵¹ Most importantly, the school's administration consistently refused funding that could have threatened their autonomy, and the Lower Price Hill Community School served as a model for similar projects in other migrant neighborhoods.⁵²

One important outgrowth of the Appalachian outmigration was an increase in the influence of traditional mountain music and art. While the argument can be made that the 1960s witnessed a commercialization of folk culture, the widespread exposure of Bluegrass music and Appalachian crafts on the national level was an important part of the development of a regional consciousness. In the case of Appalachian handcrafts, the Appalachian Regional Commission played a role in encouraging this newfound popularity. ARC was instrumental in the founding of the Southeastern Regional Arts Council in 1966, a group designed "to provide various liaison and cooperative services, such as arranging for shows and tours, to the arts and humanities on a regional basis."⁵³ This extension of ARC's economic mission into the cultural arena is an important part of the development of a regional, shared cultural awareness. ARC also supported individual craft shops such as the Iron Mountain Stoneware Company in Laurel Bloomery, Tennessee.⁵⁴

The folk revival that brought Bluegrass to the nation's ears was a similarly important development. While even in heavily Appalachian cities like Cincinnati, no radio stations were exclusively dedicated to a Bluegrass format, regional stations such as WCKY did carry Bluegrass programming regularly.⁵⁵ ARC supported the musical arts as well, and published a guide to Bluegrass festivals in 1976.⁵⁶

Appalachian migrants had truly arrived on the national and regional consciousness by 1970, when the rock band the Grateful Dead recorded "Cumberland Blues," a song about the difficulties of mountain life describing the hardships of mine work. The song included a most telling line, one that serves as a fitting description of the migrants' motivation: "make good money, five dollars a day/ made any more I might move away."⁵⁷

While Central Appalachia possessed a unique culture before and after the outmigration, it was the movement of thousands of Appalachians away from their isolated mountain homes to the industrial cities of the Midwest that brought national attention to this culture. The growth in advocacy for and by these displaced mountaineers caused a growing realization of their cultural identity. Today one can attend genealogy fairs and meetings throughout the mountains, and most of those present are first or second generation migrants. The hotels of Central Appalachia are crowded in the summer with family reunions. These urban Appalachians have forged a regional identity that would not have existed without the outmigration and the political and cultural attention that it caused.

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Joe William Trotter, Jr.
River Jordan: African American Urban Life
in the Ohio Valley
(Lexington, 1998)
review by
Amy Jones

The history of African Americans, as perceived by most people, is centralized either on slavery or on the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. For this reason, it is important to recognize a broader range of historical literature—a range that covers the struggle for African American equality throughout United States history. The struggle is manifest in many different ways—sometimes in simply crossing a river to start a new life. In *River Jordan: African American Urban Life in the Ohio Valley*, Joe William Trotter examines the history of African American communities in Louisville, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Evansville from 1790 through World War II, with an epilogue on the 1960s. The four cities are on “River Jordan,” the Ohio River, the way to freedom and a brighter future in the North.

In this extensively researched and well-documented study, Trotter explores the boundaries between slavery and freedom, the division between the Jim Crow South and the urban North in the rise of the industrial age, the role of black workers in urban society, migration of rural southern blacks into Ohio Valley cities, and the development of an African American middle class. There was and still is a constant struggle for equality in politics, education, housing, and economic opportunity. “The late twentieth century would again reveal the search for an elusive ‘River Jordan,’” wrote Trotter (p. 160). Urban African Americans are still attempting to achieve equality, and therefore Trotter attempts to “demonstrate how our current struggles are deeply rooted in the past and remind us that a historical perspective is crucial to our contemporary quest for social changes” (p. 160).

Black families entered the Ohio Valley during the colonial period, and with the rise of a market economy and industrial capitalism before the Civil War, worked in the lowest paid unskilled jobs. There was opportunity in such industries as ironworks and steamboat factories in Pittsburgh, pork processing in Cincinnati, and canal and railroad construction in Louisville, but blacks were excluded from jobs with higher wages. Housing was segregated and there was a general facilitation of “white racial solidarity,” reinforcing “the racial subordination of African Americans” (p. 23). Nevertheless, African American migration steadily increased, and the black communities established prominent churches, civil groups, newspapers, and political organizations. Blacks had “a key role in their own transformation from a

Amy Jones received her Master of Arts in Education at Northern Kentucky University in July 2000.

subordinate proletariat to new workers and citizens” (p. 51).

With the enactment of Jim Crow segregation laws in southern states in the 1890s, migration of southern blacks to the four cities in this study increased. By law blacks had full citizenship, but in practice white workers were hired first and black workers were excluded from labor unions. State law did not enforce segregation, but by 1900 there was de facto segregation in housing, public schools, businesses, and social organizations. African Americans in Ohio responded by creating black businesses and developing a new black middle class that organized politically and pressed for civil rights. “Ohio Valley blacks repeatedly defined their class, cultural, and political interests in racial terms and struggled to build unified black urban communities” (p. 92).

In the industrial expansion of World War I, employers encouraged southern blacks to migrate, and there were greater opportunities, especially for black women. However, wages were discriminatory, and white laborers resented the competition. D.W. Griffith’s racist film *The Birth of a Nation* appeared in 1915 and in the 1920s the Ku Klux Klan was revived and lynchings became frequent. The NAACP campaigned for Kentucky’s 1897 anti-lynch law and protested the failure to enforce it. The Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) encouraged African pride and offered an alternative to a society that limited by “discriminatory practices African Americans’ access to housing, public accommodations, and places of leisure and culture” (p. 121). World War II brought greater employment opportunity, and with rising expectations, Ohio Valley African Americans protested “police brutality, intimidation, and segregation” (p. 143).

When focusing on individual African Americans in the Ohio Valley and writing about their contributions, Trotter’s writing comes to life. One instance of this is in a passage discussing African American barbers. In it he described William Glover and William W. Watson and quoted from William Dabney: “Barber shops were the greatest places to gossip, and the white customers were generally well informed as to the doings of Negro society. The Negro barber, as workman, was an artist” (pp. 39-40). The Jordan River symbol is also powerful, and some readers will be shocked to discover the racism practiced in the Promised Land.

Trotter faced an immense challenge in discussing the African American experience from 1790 to 1945 in the four cities discussed in this book. Perhaps if he had limited his study to Cincinnati and Louisville he would have been able to make a more thorough analysis and could have inquired more deeply into Louisville’s “polite racism” (p. 74), but that would have been a different book. Be that as it may, Trotter should be commended for attacking unfounded assumptions about the North and its treatment of African Americans and for documenting the inequities they experienced in these four Ohio Valley cities.

Deliberate Distortion
A film review of
Enslavement: The True Story of Fanny Kemble
by
Michael C. C. Adams

Frances Anne Kemble was an international celebrity in the early Victorian period of the mid-nineteenth century. A talented English actress, by the mid-1830s her likeness was on souvenirs from tea mugs to lockets. Her story is a dramatic and ultimately tragic one. During an American tour, she met a wealthy gentleman, Pierce Butler. His gracious manners charmed her, her flamboyance engaged him. They were married on June 7, 1834. The Butlers lived near Philadelphia. But what Frances didn't know was that most of Pierce's wealth came from slave plantations on Butler's and St. Simon's islands along the Georgia seacoast.

The young wife, a deep believer in the sanctity of free labor, was shocked to find herself enmeshed in the slave system. Worse followed. In December, 1838, the couple visited the family plantations. Frances, who had earlier kept a journal of her impressions of the United States, now began a second or Georgia journal, which ran from January 1839 until her return north in April. It was not intended for publication but for private perusal by her correspondent, Mrs. Elizabeth Dwight Sedgwick of Lenox, Massachusetts, a teacher and author of children's books.

Mrs. Butler was appalled by the dirty condition of the slaves and the poor state of their quarters. She saw the large gang system, where up to 400 slaves comprised the labor force, mainly treated not as individuals but as work units. She left after four months and never returned. But the exposure to slavery helped to sour her marriage. Other factors included Frances's independent attitude, unusual for the period (*Enslavement*, the movie title, is to be taken as applying to the status of white women in marriage as well as to the bondage of persons of color). Some Americans found Mrs. Butler too outspoken, especially about her marital difficulties. On the other side, Pierce committed adultery and gambled away his fortune. The couple were divorced in September, 1849. Frances's plantation journal would be published during the Civil War to help bolster British support for the Union cause.

There is plenty here for the dramatist to work with. It is the starting point for the movie, *Enslavement: The True Story of Fanny Kemble*, a 1999 product from Two Left Shoe Films, distributed by Hallmark Entertainment. Jane Seymour, another English actress popular with American audiences, stars as Frances Kemble, and Keith Carradine plays Pierce Butler. The script was written by Christopher Lofton and James Keach was the director.

Dr. Michael C.C. Adams, Regents Professor of History and Director of the Military History Lecture Series, delivered the luncheon address for the Phi Alpha Theta Regional Conference at Northern Kentucky University, March 31, 2001.

The film begins well. The charming Pierce and the fiery Frances beguile each other and marry in a rush of attraction. But a breach opens quickly. Frances, as the movie suggests, determined to publish her first journal of initial impressions about America. The film accurately argues that Pierce thought many of Frances's criticisms injudicious and objected to an attack on slavery which could bring violent resentment upon them. This section was removed, but the remaining text was published by Henry Carey of Philadelphia. The film is fair-minded in portraying Pierce as rigid and pompous, Frances as headstrong and indiscreet during the episode.

When the scene shifts to Georgia, the film is still within the recognizable historical record. Frances, shocked by the filth and disease, works with mothers to clean up the shacks. She pays children a penny each to keep clean, hoping this will introduce them to the wage system. This is an accurate picture. Frances was also shocked by the infirmary, where sick people lay in filth, without windows for ventilation. The movie correctly shows Frances working to improve this building. But the script quickly begins to diverge from reality.

At first, this occurs through the distortion of recognizable historical happenings. For example, the technique appears early in the movie when Frances meets ex-President John Quincy Adams. We know from Frances's early journal that, at a dinner in 1833, Adams said to her that he worshipped Shakespeare but found *Romeo and Juliet* childish, *King Lear* ludicrous, and *Othello* "disgusting." What he meant by the latter is unclear. Did he object to Othello's jealousy, the general human sordidness and violence in the play, or the alliance of a black man with a white woman? The movie deliberately places Adams in the worst light, making him say that Desdemona's death is "a very just judgment upon her for marrying a nigger." This is a crude portrait of a man who was an active opponent of slavery and legal counsel for the Africans kidnapped in the *Amistad* case. Presumably, the filmmakers do not trust the audience to understand any but the most blatant depictions of racism amongst antebellum white Americans.

Similar distortions appear in the plantation sequences. Pierce appears to oppose his wife's renovation of the infirmary, which he did not. Frances is shown teaching slaves to write behind her husband's back, whereas she said in fact that she would stop if he disapproved. It is an odd facet of the movie that it suggests that a woman constantly deceiving her spouse is admirable if her convictions demand it. Owen Parker, a fictional overseer, is a caricature of brutality and stupidity. The actual overseers Frances recorded meeting, such as Roswell King and a Mr. Oden, were quite thoughtful. Oden believed the South would be better off with free labor.

From about halfway through the movie, distortion gives way to utter fantasy. Frances objects to the whipping of a female slave, which was true. But she then throws herself across the back of a male slave being flogged and takes the lash for him. Although supposed to show the solidarity of the oppressed of both races, such an occurrence is historically preposterous. An English lady would never have done this and no man would have lashed her. In fact, Frances did not disapprove of the

lash as a punishment for men, only for women. And she never challenged the system publicly. From a class-conscious culture, Frances thought American servants, both black and white, rather shiftless, "ignorant and vulgar." She might try to alleviate their condition, but she didn't identify with them.

The film Frances now becomes involved with helping Butler slaves escape via the Underground Railroad, run by a local physician, Dr. Houston. He is based on Dr. James Holmes of Darien, who attended the Butlers, and who struck Frances as kindly but clearly pro-slavery. In the movie, Frances risks her life and reputation to help the Railroad, even posing as Houston's courtesan to outwit the slave patrol. This is a complete fabrication which exploits the current popular interest in the Underground Railroad.

Back in Philadelphia, the film correctly shows Pierce moving his family into a city house so Frances can be near her friends. But then we have Frances and other women of both races turning the vacant Butler mansion into a refuge for runaway slaves fleeing on the Railroad. This leads Pierce to burn down his house around their ears. In fact, Frances never had any connection with the Underground Railroad. She was a gradual emancipationist, an admirer of the Reverend William Ellery Channing who thought that the planters could be brought to end slavery voluntarily through "moral persuasion." He and Frances opposed radical abolitionism, fearing it would lead to an irreparable breach between the sections. The film suggests that Frances devoted her life to saving runaways after the Georgia visit but, in fact, her only direct contact with slaves lasted for only four months in 1839, and she spent much of the 1840s-1850s in Britain.

The final large distortion is in the film's claim that in 1860 Frances published her second or Georgia journal to stop a British loan to the nascent Confederacy. She does this even though Pierce has threatened to withhold visiting privileges with her young daughters, still minors. The publication of slavery's horror stops the loan and is thus key in saving the Union and ending slavery. In reality, the journal was published in Britain during 1863 and not 1860 to gain support for the Union. This is to Frances's credit, but President Abraham Lincoln's promulgation of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, had already forestalled any chance of British interference in the struggle. As a result, a Confederate loan drive had fizzled before Frances's publication. Also, it is not true that Frances had for years withheld publication of the journal because of Pierce's threat to keep her from their girls; they had come of age as adults in 1856 and 1859. Frances resisted publication for twenty-four years because she thought it wrong to expose her private family intimacy with the Butler farms to the public.

The film is problematic in several respects. First, it slights the power of the pen. Frances Kemble stood up individually in her marriage for the greater rights of women. She also wrote a fine critique of the large plantations in the Georgia sea islands which she later used on behalf of freedom and which is still prized by historians for its descriptions and insights. It is disturbing that this contribution is not enough for the filmmakers, who must reinvent her as a female action figure.

Second, as in previous films, such as 1988's *Mississippi Burning*, the movie manages to place a white person in the forefront of an African-American story, undercutting the message of racial equality that the plot is supposed to impart.

Finally, it has been accepted traditionally that writers may use "dramatic license" to shape history for the purpose of their stories. But the result was mutually understood to be fiction. Increasingly, film claims to present the *The True Story*, accurate history, to be relied upon as such. Film is perhaps the single most powerful popular educational influence in the humanities today. Most people will never know Frances Anne Kemble through any other medium. Consequently, what they will believe about her is profoundly distorted. If moviemakers claim to hold a truthful mirror to historical reality, they should follow, and should be judged by, the same standards of veracity and fairness that govern print history. This is not simply a poor movie: it is intellectually reckless in its assumption that distortion and even outright lying are justified by good intentions in the depiction of the past.

Books by or about Frances Anne Kemble include:

Fanny Kemble Wister, ed., *Fanny: The American Kemble* (Tallahassee, 1972), the first American journal, published by Carey. John Quincy Adams' comment is on p. 118, Frances's view of American servants on p. 155.

John A. Scott, ed., *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation in 1838-1839*, by Frances Anne Kemble (Athens, Georgia, 1984), the journal published in 1863.

Margaret Armstrong, *Fanny Kemble: A Passionate Victorian* (New York, 1938), an older but still valuable biography.

Dorothy Marshall, *Fanny Kemble* (New York, 1977), a more recent biography, which complements rather than conflicts with Armstrong's work.

Saving Private Ryan
(Dreamworks and Paramount Pictures, 1998)
review by
Rick Trump

The theatre in Florence, Kentucky was not filled to capacity the afternoon my wife Jenny and I went to see *Saving Private Ryan*. It was the summer the film was released and I had high expectations on the reactions of the audience. An elderly gentleman sat a few rows in front of us with two teenagers and his son. During the first few violent minutes of the film, I expected to hear remarks from the teens like, "Whoa!" "No way!" and "Awesome!" But instead, I heard nothing. After the landing scene, when the camera panned the beach to show the devastation and bodies of two of the Ryan brothers, one of the teens looked at the older gentleman and asked: "Was it *really* that way Granddad?" I waited for the response, but instead of speaking, he got up and walked out. He returned a few minutes later and remained to the end. When the lights came up and we were leaving I heard him say that his experiences were just like the movie. Another gentleman said: "Now that they have captured what battle is really like on film, maybe we won't have anymore wars."

These comments were typical of what veterans said about Steven Spielberg's film. My own emotions ranged from fear to anger to sadness and back again. I was moved by the reality of the film. My grandfather was at Normandy and landed on Omaha Beach in one of the later waves of the attack. He was wounded and the shrapnel forced him out of the army, causing him great discomfort later in life. I know about his participation in the landing through the citations sent to me by the army after his death. He never talked about it because he said we would not understand. *Saving Private Ryan* helped bring understanding to those of us who have never seen combat.

How historically accurate is the film? The characters in the story did not exist, but some of the events portrayed occurred. For example, as the squad moves out from the beach in search of Private Ryan, one man lights a cigarette. He tells the others that when he was boarding the transport ship someone offered him several cartons. "No thanks," he said, "I don't smoke." "Take 'em. You will." Historian Stephen E. Ambrose interviewed many D-Day veterans and wrote that some men were given cigarettes and smoked them after the fighting.¹

The landing did not occur exactly as portrayed but the scenes are remarkably realistic. Indeed, the landing scenes are violent and bloody, but true to history. The first two waves attempting to land at Omaha Beach were nearly wiped out. The film

Rick Trump, President of Alpha Beta Phi Chapter, 1998-1999, graduated with a History major in December 1998 and taught at Heritage Christian Academy and worked for the National Park Service. He is now Director of New Market Battlefield Military History Museum in New Market, Virginia.

shows the ramp of a landing craft opening, and nearly the entire detachment on board annihilated by German machine gun fire. In reality, German machine gunners aimed their weapons at the ramps of the landing craft and commenced firing when they opened. To counter this, some men jumped over the sides only to be dragged to the bottom and drowned before they could remove their gear.² The film shows a man with an arm missing who reaches down, picks up an arm and tosses it aside, then picks up another arm and walks off with it, apparently assuming that it is his. Tom Hanks said in an interview that while filming the landing he was more frightened than he had ever been in his life. He said:

It was very real. And you could see by the look in the eyes of the men on that beach that they were scared too. Steven did not tell us anything of what to expect. So, when he ran off those boats, the landing craft, and you see those few men go down in the front, and you hear the noise of the explosions, it seemed like we really were charging Omaha Beach. I knew the explosions were just special effects, but with all the noise and confusion going on, I could not keep that in mind. I honestly felt I had to get to that shingle before something happened to me.³

The landing in *Saving Private Ryan* is more realistic than the portrayal of the landing in the classic film *The Longest Day* (1963), but the films both make the climax overly simplistic. In *The Longest Day*, the soldiers are stalled on the beach for quite a while and then a general appears and orders a squad to blow a hole in the wall, and it's over. The men on the beach charge through the opening as if there was no more German fire from the bluff, and as if one opening cleared the beach. In *Saving Private Ryan*, Miller gets his men to blow a hole in the wire, and they destroy a German bunker. The troops on the beach run up the hill, clear the top of the bluff and take a break. This actually happened in some places on the beach, but it was not over. Viewers of both films get the mistaken idea that a hole was opened and the battle came to a glorious end.

In his books *D-Day June 6, 1944: The Climactic Battle of World War II* (New York, 1994) and *Citizen Soldiers: The U.S. Army from the Normandy Beaches to the Bulge to the Surrender of Germany* (New York, 1997), Ambrose describes the actions of junior officers at Normandy and other battles. He reports many incidents when the leadership of lieutenants, captains, and majors had significant roles in winning battles. Ambrose wrote that this was a vital reason that the Allies won over the disciplined German Wehrmacht.⁴ Hanks's character Captain John Miller illustrates this theme by the manner in which he interacts with and relates to the men. For example, as they attempt to reduce the German bunker in the landing, he sends the men out to get an angle of fire. He knows this is probably suicide but he has no choice. He also puts himself at risk by exposing himself to enemy fire.

Perhaps one of the films most realistic themes is the portrayal of the dehumanization that overtakes soldiers in prolonged combat. In the Vietnam War, Rick

Marks, a soldier later killed in action, wrote his family: "This callousness scares me more than being shot at."⁵ In the fictional story of Spielberg's film, Captain Miller's squad of eight men search for Private Ryan, whose brothers have all been killed in combat, and they happen upon the site of a crashed American glider. Taking dog tags from the bodies, Miller's men joke and laugh and seem to forget that the dog tags belong to real people. This callous behavior upsets their medic, and his reaction brings the others back to "reality." Later, when the men threaten to murder a German prisoner of war they have captured, Miller addresses the issue of dehumanization. He tells the men that back home he was an English teacher, but no one would suspect it now. "So I guess I've changed, some. Sometimes I wonder if I've changed so much that my wife will even recognize me whenever it is when I get back to her. And how I will ever be able to tell her about days like today."

The film gives the viewer an opportunity to see what the life and death struggle was like for the World War II soldier. Some people might not approve of the fact that the film does not include the entire D-Day experience as does *The Longest Day*. *Saving Private Ryan* does not go into detail on the airborne landings or what happened on the other beaches of Normandy. But the film is about individuals and their reaction to combat. There are a few inaccuracies and goofs. For example, the same extras appear several times in different places. However, if you focus on these things you will miss the value in what I consider one of the best war films of our time.

Endnotes

1. Stephen E. Ambrose, *D-Day June 6, 1944: The Climactic Battle of World War II* (New York, 1994), 169.
2. Ibid., 400.
3. Interview with Tom Hanks, IMDB.com.
4. Ambrose, *D-Day June 6, 1944*, 579.
5. Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing: Face to Face Killing in 20th Century Warfare* (Great Britain, 1999), 59.

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