MATTHEW C. HULBERT

CHAPTER 4 | GETTING THE BAND BACK TOGETHER

We kept monotonously falling back upon one camp or another, and eating up the farmers and their families. They ought to have shot us; on the contrary, they were as hospitably kind and courteous to us as if we had deserved it.

- Mark Twain, "The Private History of a Campaign that Failed"

Dinner will be served in the Christian church yard here next Friday during the re-union of Up Hays camp of ex-Confederates and Quantrell's men. Everybody is invited to bring a basket of eatables as the old soldiers deserve to be fed.

- Oak Grove *Banner*, 1900

On May 12, 1888, the Saturday edition of the Kansas City *Journal* reported that a "small but select gathering," the likes of which "had not been seen since the days when civil war reigned," had assembled in the neighboring town of Blue Springs, Missouri. For many residents of Blue Springs, the occasion that prompted the meeting must have been as novel as the characters it attracted: Mrs. Caroline C. Quantrill, mother of the famed guerrilla commander with whom she shared a surname, had trekked all the way from her native Ohio to hold court.

Several of William C. Quantrill's former "men-at-arms" received official invitations to appear at the City Hotel in Blue Springs. There, for the first time ever, they could meet the mother of their deceased chieftain and architect of the notorious Lawrence Massacre. According to the paper, fourteen ex-bushwhackers, now sporting clear signs of middle age, "recounted in a friendly way their exploits while with Quantrill"; they spent most of the day talking "with her [Mrs. Quantrill] about her son" and "the parts in the great internecine strife that they had enacted while with him." Mrs. Quantrill, it seems, knew surprisingly little about her son's sordid military resume and wanted to hear the "facts"—graphic as they may have been—from his old comrades.

Those who wondered whether or not Quantrill's men would return to their marauding ways upon reassembly were met with relief or disappointment, depending upon their lingering partisan allegiances. Because despite their reputations for wartime savagery, the *Journal* noted that the guerrillas, whose roster that day in Blue Springs included notables like A. J. Walker, Warren Welch, J. Hicks George, and John Koger, "were an intelligent and well behaved lot of men." And more important, with the war now two decades in rearview, they "did not seem possessed of any of the bloodthirsty characteristics ascribed to them." Whether on the prowl or now as apparently reformed citizens, the old guerrillas could still command attention from the public. In fact, their reuniting "was regarded as such a rare occurrence in this piping time of peace that it was deemed of interest to the public to chronicle what was said and done there."[1]

The meeting also came to the attention of Union veterans of the regular war—and they were less-than-thrilled with the prospect that Quantrill's men might hold such reunions and besmirch the integrity of their own commemorative activities. One response from the *Grand Army Advocate* of Des Moines, Iowa, sneered that the festivities in Blue Springs gave the former guerrillas ample opportunities to discuss "their bloody murders and fiendish crimes without the

[1] "The Days of Civil Strife," 12 May 1888, Kansas City *Journal* from Donald R. Hale, *The William Clarke Quantrill Men Reunions, 1898-1929* (Independence, MO: Blue and Gray Book Shoppe, 2001). (Hale's compendium is hereafter cited as *WCQMR*.)

Here a word on source material is in order. In addition to a few archival artifacts held by the State Historical Society of Missouri in Columbia (the J. B. George Collection), the vast majority of surviving primary information concerning Quantrill reunions comes from newspaper articles and print media. Naturally, a reporter stands as an intermediary—with his/her own agenda and perceptions—between us and the reunion participants, but the arrangement is simply unavoidable. Whenever possible, I have attempted to tip-off readers concerning the biases of particular papers and present mainly the raw facts of articles unless the agenda of the reporter or paper is a point unto itself (I.e., propaganda).

slightest hesitancy." Another reaction, in the form of a letter to the editor penned by a former Union soldier in Kentucky, labeled the event the "most extraordinary reunion of any of the men who took part in the attempt to destroy the country" because it involved "these shriveled up old demons" glorifying "the days when they murdered prisoners, ravished women, and pillaged [sic] towns, with as much delight and seeming honor as any of the brave confederate soldiers who recognized the rules of war, would speak of their battles and service." "That not one man in the blood group should have escaped the gallows," the editorial concluded, "has been overlooked."[2]

Rather unintentionally (and perhaps quite controversially), then, Mrs. Quantrill's reception in Blue Springs struck a chord among the ex-bushwhackers and their onlookers, both curious and outraged; her visit laid the foundation for more formalized reunions—but it would take a decade for veterans of her son's command to build upon those foundations and get Quantrill's band back together.

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In recent years, scholarly attention paid to commemorative ceremonies and other Decoration Day-like events staged by veterans of the regular war has increased dramatically. A host of scholars—among them David Blight, Barbara Gannon, Caroline Janney, Stuart McConnell, and James Marten—have explored the various ways in which northern and southern veterans' organizations employed reunions to welcome or ward off sectional reconciliation, to implement (or re-implement) racial controls on white society, or even to make a statement concerning the war's broadest meanings and legacies for posterity. Given this academic fascination with the Civil War

[2] "A Rebel Reunion," 17 May 1888, *Grand Army Advocate*; "Quantrell's Cutthroats," 17 May 1888, *Grand Army Advocate*.

generation's physical rituals of memory, surprisingly few historians have grappled with the larger implications and significance of guerrilla reunions.[3]

As was the case with many aspects of Missouri's irregular war, Michael Fellman first addressed the subject of guerrilla reunions in 1989's *Inside War*. That said, an unfortunate degree of haste plagues Fellman's treatment of the subject. Toward the end of the book, he contends that in the 1890s, Quantrill's raiders desired to be remembered alongside their Confederate contemporaries and turned to the literary construct of the "noble guerrilla" to justify wartime motive and intent. In other words, Fellman asserts that around the turn of the twentieth century, ex-guerrillas doubled-down on the ideas spearheaded by John Newman Edwards and his "irregular" Lost Cause in the late-1860s and early-1870s—and that the aging bushwhackers did so to ensure that southerners would continue to remember them in the long-term.[4]

In a much more recent essay, Jeremy Neely suggests that annual reunions of Quantrill's men "illuminated the complex ways that memories of the border war served at once to unify and to divide people along the Missouri-Kansas line well into the twentieth century." Neely explains how, on one hand, the intentional exclusion of former guerrillas from Decoration Day ceremonies in Missouri underscored the existence of animosity left over from years of brutal irregular fighting;

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[3] On veterans' organizations, reunions, and Decoration Day ceremonies see David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); Barbara Gannon, *Won Cause: Black and White Comradeship in the Grand Army of the Republic* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Caroline E. Janney, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); James Marten, *Sing Not War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Stuart McConnell, *Glorious Contentment: The Grand Army of the Republic, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

[4] Fellman, *Inside War*, 247-248, 249, 251, 253, 256.

but also how, on the other, the reunions highlighted the fact that many "old-stock" southerners had virtually zero interest in the "narrative of postwar reconciliation" that was winning over countless veterans as it swept over the nation. In short, Neely argues that guerrilla reunions in Missouri served as a comparative lens to two, simultaneous and conflicting developments: gradual reconciliation and diehard sectional loyalty (that is, Union vs. Confederate, North vs. South).[5]

Dealing in very broad terms of observation, Neely's interpretation is correct. However, when Quantrill's men did organize and begin to host official reunions in 1898, they admittedly had much more in mind than marching in partisan parades or assuaging wartime grudges. As evidenced by chapter three, guerrilla memoirists from Cole Younger in 1903 to George Cruzen in 1930 sought to update and ultimately replace the memory narrative popularized by John Newman Edwards. While the political usefulness of Edwards' original "irregular" Lost Cause (and its construct of the "noble guerrilla") dwindled, so too did its value as social and cultural currency to Quantrill's surviving men. In response, ex-bushwhackers capably turned to the medium of print not to strengthen their ties to Edwards, as Fellman suggests, but rather as a way to disconnect themselves from the Edwards narrative and to establish a place for themselves within mainstream southern society.

Not coincidentally, then, reunions of Quantrill's men, which occurred each summer in Missouri from 1898 to 1929, paralleled this thirty-year window of memoir-writing almost exactly and many of the memoirists featured in the previous chapter attended reunions at one time or

[5] Jeremy Neely, "The Quantrill-Men Reunions: The Kansas-Missouri Border War, Fifty Years On" in Jonathan Earle and Diane Mutti-Burke, eds., *Bleeding Missouri: The Long Civil War on the Border* (Lawrence, KA: University of Kansas Press): 245-246, 248, 249.

another—often frequently.[6] The activities involved in these gatherings revolved around many of the same thematic categories explored in guerrilla memoirs: the roles of women in commemoration, the proper racial attitudes and place of African Americans in southern society, and homage paid to veterans of subsequent military conflicts. But while memoirs allowed ex-guerrillas to re-imagine or reboot their identities on paper, reunion activities afforded them the opportunity to *physically* report and act out those scenarios before the news media and to interact much more directly with the regular veterans with whom they desperately sought to "fit in."

Bearing these issues in mind, this chapter will illustrate how and why guerrilla reunions should be understood as both a party to and an extension of the work performed by guerrilla memoirs—as commemorative events designed to mirror the activities of regular veterans' organizations with the overall goal of integrating guerrilla memory into the bounds of conventional southern remembrance and social hierarchy.

THE ENCAMPMENT MODEL

Before exploring the formative elements of a guerrilla reunion, we must first examine the events they were designed to mimic. Reunions of regular army veterans—also called encampments—were commonplace throughout the South into the 1930s and 1940s. Encampments could revolve around different organizational factors: the reunion of a particular army, the coming together of veterans from a particular battle or campaign, the regional or national meeting of a specific organization (like the United Conference Veterans or its Unionist counterpart, the Grand Army of

[6] Guerrilla memoirists who attended Quantrill survivors' reunions included Cole Younger, Harrison Trow, William H. Gregg, John McCorkle, and Andrew Walker.

the Republic), or even the reconciliation of formerly-opposed forces at special "Blue-Gray Reunions."[7] The location, date, and time of these meetings would be broadcast months—if not years—in advance; hotels, restaurants, train companies, photographers, caterers, and taxi services were all contracted to serve the special needs and wants of attending veterans and guests. In this way, reunions also functioned as economic stimuli for their chosen destinations much like the modern day Olympic Games, albeit on a relative (that is, much smaller) scale.

As illustrated by the official program of the October 1919 reunion of the United Conference Veterans in Atlanta, Georgia, the variety of activities planned for attendees over the course of three days was staggering. They included: musical performances, choral concerts, invocations, numerous welcome speeches, organized luncheons, battlefield tours, committee meetings, announcements of the reports of committees, officers' reports, commanders' reports, political speeches, historical presentations, memorial ceremonies, readings of the Honor Roll, dinners, presentations of "Official Ladies," benedictions, grand balls, grand parades, and private receptions at various hotels, mansions, and eateries. Amidst all of these activities, while male commanders and officers were technically "in charge" of their various camps and committees, women played a major role as organizers, official escorts, chaperones, handlers, fundraisers, maids of honor, and speakers.[8]

Political campaigning represented a core component of most regular encampments. Few and far between were the politicians who could resist the chance to stump before a readymade

[7] The most famous of these Blue-Gray reunions took place in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

[8] "Souvenir Book of the United Confederate Veterans Reunion, 1919." United Confederate Veterans. *Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library,* University of Georgia.

audience of thousands—not to mention an audience who so clearly wore their allegiances and sympathies on their (sometimes empty) sleeves. While speeches were common, printed ads were also popular. William D. Upshaw, newly-elected to the Fifth Congressional District in Georgia—but perpetually campaigning—chose the latter option to ingratiate himself with the visiting ex-Rebels at the 1919 meeting.[9] "You are comrades to the immortals" he wrote, welcoming the old men in gray "not only as Congressman from the fortunate district where you are our honored guests, but as the Son of a Confederate Soldier whose 'vocal dust' breathes again upon me under the sacred inspiration of your presence." "I join with all Atlanta," Upshaw continued, "in extending to you that measureless measure of welcome that we cannot measure in words." "God bless you every one," Upshaw concluded dramatically, "the one time knightly soldiers of the STARS AND BARS—and you, the gallant sons and soldiers of the STARS AND STRIPES, blend your heroic efforts for the glory of our COMMON FLAG and the vital victories of our CHRISTIAN civilization." Congressman Upshaw adroitly played to his audience and likely helped solidify the support that kept him in office until 1927.[10]

Like political pitches, presentations concerning the history of the Civil War were also a mainstay at reunions; these speeches often focused on the war's causes and made specific efforts to exclude the presence of slavery from that list. The official souvenir book of the 1895 United

[9] William David Upshaw was a Democrat and fervent prohibitionist who won three successive terms to congress spanning from 1919 to 1927. Upshaw ran unsuccessfully against Franklin Roosevelt as the presidential candidate of the Prohibition Party in 1932 and died in 1952. See the *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*.

[10] "Souvenir Book of the United Confederate Veterans Reunion, 1919." United Confederate Veterans. *Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library,* University of Georgia.

Confederate Veterans reunion in Houston, Texas, decreed the important role of (re)writing history through annual gatherings:

> The prime objects of the United Confederate Veterans' Association are the meeting and intermingling of friends and comrades of the war time and the preservation and promulgation of the true history of the causes leading up to the strife, the manner in which it was carried on through four bloody years, and the salient features of the succeeding period of Reconstruction. The historical part, to the end that succeeding generations of Southrons may know the reasons that animated their ancestors; that they may appreciate their courage upon the tented field, their patriotic devotion in accepting the stern decree of war, and in the face of mountainous obstacles, carrying the commonwealths of their section once again to the front rank of the sisterhood of states.[11]

The grandiose rhetoric of N. E. Harris at a June 1905 reunion of Confederate veterans in Louisville, Kentucky, typified these history-defining speeches:

> For four long years the red tide rolled from sea to mountain, and from mountain to sea again; every soldier became a hero, and every hero of the nation became a soldier in that strife. The struggle dignified the Anglo-Saxon race, and dwarfed every other conflict known to modern history. No such titanic contest was ever waged between peoples or nations of the same blood and interest. It was a war, on the one hand, for civil liberty and national independence, for home and fireside; on the other, for the restoration of the integrity of the Union, for the flag and the Government. The freedom of the slave was a mere incident that grew up from the necessities of the conflict. In the forum of history the great Confederate war will always be regarded and treated as one which involved and settled greater and more far-reaching issues for humanity than any other that was ever waged on this earth.[12]

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[11] William Bledsoe Philpott, ed. *The Sponsor Souvenir Album and History of the United Confederate Veterans' Reunion, 1895* (Houston, TX: Sponsor Souvenir Company, 1895).

[12] N. E. Harris, *The Civil War: Its Results and Losses, An Address Delivered at Louisville, Kentucky to the Confederate Veterans in Reunion* (Macon, GA: The J. W. Burke Company, 1906): 3-4, 6.

At their most fundamental level, talks such as Harris' were geared toward maintaining the underlying righteousness of the failed Confederacy, thereby breathing continuous life into the Lost Cause Movement.

To the extent that their means and abilities allowed, this basic organizational scheme, the "encampment model," is what Quantrill's men sought to mirror at their own reunions in Missouri. As we will soon see, the familiar-looking roster of festivities at a guerrilla reunion—filled with officer elections, business meetings, picnics, political speeches, dances, and female participants—was aimed at achieving more or less the same ends outlined by the UCV at their aforementioned Houston meeting. The main difference in the case of the guerrillas, however, was that preserving and promulgating *their own* "true history" of the war required them to simultaneously convince other "Southrons" that it—along with the guerrillas themselves—was worthy of lasting, wide-scale remembrance.

IRREGULAR ENCAMPMENTS

When Quantrill's command finally organized a reunion in 1898, they pulled out all the stops. According to the Kansas City *Star*, the only downside to the meeting in Blue Springs, Missouri, was the weather. Despite the cold, a wide array of political candidates, both Republican and Democrat, courted the guerrillas' support and the *Star* reported that "There were many among the old soldiers who will vote a mixed ticket this fall unless they change their minds between now and the election." Local candidates debated and United States Senator F. M. Cockrell spoke on the "free coinage of silver and gold at the ratio of 16 to 1 and the east wind was not colder than his

reception." Rebuffed, Cockrell "said he favored independence for the Philippine Islands and sat down."[13]

The Kansas City *World* estimated that at least five-hundred spectators had come out to see the old bushwhackers—and the Jackson *Examiner* reported that a "large number of ex-Confederates" who had "served near the Quantrell men but did not belong to them" were also present." [14] A large picnic dinner was served to guests and the St. Louis *Republic* described how Frank James "rapped on the fence with a light cane" amidst the festivities and "briefly announced that it was his desire to have reunions of the once notorious band at least once a year." "It is the intention of the men," the *Republic* continued, "to make a permanent organization"—a group that "will be unique in the history of social bodies."[15] Thus the guerrillas had adapted the encampment model for their own purposes and the logistical paradigm of the Quantrill men reunions was established: a fair-like atmosphere with large crowds, political speakers, swapping yarns, regular veterans, a basket dinner coordinated by women, and organizational meetings.

At the next gathering, in 1899 at Lee's Summit, Warren Welch (who had been elected captain of the Quantrill Men Survivor's Association at the 1898 meeting) "gave the word to march," the "oldtimers grew lighthearted" and "up the racetrack they swept." When the guerrillas came within reach of the crowd, the band "struck up 'Dixie'" and "the men who ride with Quantrill took off their hats and one or two gave the old familiar yell." The playing of 'John Brown's Body'

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[13] "Quantrell's Men Together," 11 September 1898, The Kansas City *Star* (*WCQMR*).

[14] "Quantrell's Men," 11 September 1898, The Kansas City *World* (*WCQMR*); "Quantrell's Men," 17 September 1898, Jackson *Examiner* (*WCQMR*).

[15] "Frank James and Other Men of Quantrell's Band Come Together for a Talk Over the Past," 2 October 1898, The St. Louis *Republic* (*WCQMR*).

"was received coldly." The Kansas City *Journal* made clear that the second annual reunion of Quantrill's guerrillas was a success—and that 1898 had not been an anomaly. "The Quantrell reunion drew a large crowd to the fair grounds," the paper stated, as "the rings were excellent, and some of the finest Herefords in the country were on exhibition." Overall, it was a "happy crowd" of roughly 3000 people; large enough, it seems "that the stories of the town closed during the afternoon."[16]

The success of the second reunion signified that meetings of the Quantrill men would indeed be annual. As such, members of the Quantrill Men Survivor's Association at each subsequent reunion elected a new committee of officers—a captain (sometimes labeled "commander"), a secretary, and two lieutenants—to select a meeting site and preside over the next year's festivities. From 1898 to 1911, locations rotated among Oak Grove, Sni-A-Bar, Wallace Grove, Independence, and Blue Springs, Missouri. Beginning with the 1912 encampment, however, all reunions were hosted by the family of J. D. Wallace and his sister, Elizabeth C. Wallace, at their homestead called Wallace Grove. The Wallace family had historical connection to the Quantrill command and their property included several acres of greenery, perfect for parades, picnics, and gatherings. Regardless of the meeting venue, the basket dinner always represented the social highpoint of the reunion. "Dinner was served under the trees and there were heaps and heaps of fried chicken, and homemade bread cut in big, thick slices and jelly and big fat cakes," the Kansas City *Post* observed in 1914. The "daughters of the old raiders set the table and watched

[16] "Quantrell's Men," 14 September 1899, The Kansas City *Journal* (*WCQMR*).

over the old people to see that all were served." Old age apparently not an issue, as the ex-guerrillas could "'put away' the 'grub' in a way that might betoken another raid."[17]

Ex-Confederates continued to participate in the Quantrill reunions until the final meeting in 1929. It's virtually impossible to recover what many of these men, who had left home to join the rank-and-file of the Confederate army, truly thought about the guerrillas' savage reputation or their brand of warfare—but on the whole, it appears that relations between the two groups were quite cordial. Frequently the guerrilla reunions were even scheduled to coincide with or run very closely to reunions of the Up Hays Camp of the United Confederate Veterans; some of Quantrill's men also attended these meetings. Beginning around 1900, because of the intermixing, the ex-bushwhackers began sporting ribbons to distinguish themselves from regular Confederate veterans in attendance. Quantrill's command wore red souvenir badges emblazoned with the date and location of the reunion, while other Confederates sported white badges.[18]

Regular vets, typically officers, were invited to address the crowd as official speakers on many occasions. One such presentation given by Captain Tom Todd contended that "we were not rebels, we never were rebels, and we are not now." Todd concluded by remarking that "[Francis] Marion's men of Revolutionary days" compared closely "to the Quantrell band."[19] Another vet,

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[17] "Border Days Lived Over Again in Meet of Quantrell Band," 22 August, 1914, Kansas City *Post* (*WCQMR*).

[18] "Quantrell Men," 26 October 1900, The Independence *Sentinel* (*WCQMR*); 22 August 1902, The Kansas City *Star* (*WCQMR*).

[19] "Quantrell's Men," 24 September 1901, The Kansas City *Journal* (*WCQMR*); Francis Marion (d. 1795) was an American military commander of the Revolutionary era well-known—as the "Swamp Fox"—for his irregular tactics and penchant for guerrilla warfare. See W. W. Boddie, *Traditions of the Swamp Fox: William W. Boddie's Francis Marion* (Reprinted, 2001).

Colonel John T. Crisp, "spoke on the war fought against domestic slavery of the Negro." News outlets failed to note how the crowd reacted to Crisp's remarks on slavery—a topic not usually broached at reunions—but he did preface the speech by confessing that he wasn't "brave enough to be a bushwhacker."[20] In 1910, Colonel Hopkins Hardin represented a very special guest. Hardin was a survivor of Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg and represented the increasing reach and prominence of the Quantrill men and their meetings. (On a similar note, local history articles even allege that future commander-in-chief Harry S. Truman made his political debut on the "front porch of the weathered old J. D. Wallace home" but fail to note whether or not the speech took place during a Quantrill reunion.)[21]

Political speeches and historical presentations did not always go according to plan at Quantrill reunions. Prosecutor Roland Hughes, invited to give the "Speech of the Day" at the 1903 meeting, found this out the hard way. As reported by the Kansas City *Journal*, Hughes spoke before a crowd of nearly fifty ex-guerrillas. He began on a high note. His opening remark, "I do not hesitate to say that you fought for what was right," garnered great applause from the audience. But it was all downhill from there. Shortly thereafter, Hughes "launched into a discussion of the recent criticisms of the supreme court" and "scored the newspapers for criticizing the supreme court." This segment of the speech "touched a keg of powder" and William H. Gregg, then captain of the Association, interrupted him rudely. Hughes continued his speech but was again halted by Gregg. "After this interruption," the paper chronicled, "Prosecutor Hughes drew his speech to an

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[20] 22 August 1902, The Kansas City *Times* (*WCQMR*).

[21] "As They Raided in the '60's," 20 August 1910, Kansas City *Times* (*WCQMR*); "Where Truman's Campaign Trail Began," 7 May 1970, Kansas City *Times* (*WCQMR*).

abrupt halt and left the court room…and the whole room seemed to be in contempt of the supreme court." In the wake of the speaker's retreat, A. J. Liddil came to the rescue and gave a well-received talk on "the troublous times of the 60s, and declared that for the outrages committed on Missourians he would have been glad if Lawrence had suffered more."[22]

As Frank James found out a year later at the 1904 encampment, Quantrill's old command would censor anyone speaking out of line at their reunions—even one of their own. Detailed by the Sarcoxie *Record*, the guerrilla-turned-bandit was invited to address the group and, in the process of doing so, "exploded a political bombshell, which all but disrupted the meeting." James had made no secret of his displeasure with the Missouri State legislature; roughly four years before, in 1900, it had chosen not to elect James as doorman of the Lower House. James's grudge finally boiled over at the reunion: "I have been in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and other states we had learned to hate because they gave birth to the federal troops we hated so well and their people have treated me like a man. But here in Missouri, among my own people, I am unhonored and unsung." These outbursts, according to the paper, "were considered by the grizzled, war-scarred veterans as little less than treason." Some of James's more level-headed comrades "forcibly pushed him from the crowd in the courthouse yard" as tensions rose. Had they not, the paper opined, "it might have been the scene of a conflict recalling border days."[23]

In the arena of memory politics, the Frank James incident was a serious issue for the ex-guerrillas and had to be handled with the care of a full-on scandal. James had publicly called out

[22] "Made a Blunder," 23 August 1903, The Kansas City *Sunday Journal* (*WCQMR*).

[23] 25 August 1904, Sarcoxie *Record* (*WCQMR*).

the Democratic Party and risked estranging the rest of Quantrill's command from the South's dominant political machine and the mainstream southerners who supported it. At the 1905 reunion (to which it is clear James was not welcome) it was made known that "there will be no speech-making and no particular effort will be made to enlist public interest in the meeting."[24] The Kansas City *Star* reported that "quite a breeze was created at the reunion in Independence a year ago when Frank James announced to his old comrades in arms that he had become tired of the Democratic Party and in the future would vote with the Republicans." A. J. Liddil, who had come to the rescue after Roland Hughes' unpopular speech in 1903, was now captain and stated that "we [the Association] are not going to have any politics or politicians this year. We have been bothered too much with them already. We simply want to get together, talk over old times, and have a good time among ourselves."[25] In reality, Liddil astutely recognized that the ex-guerrillas couldn't risk another misstep like James's in back-to-back years; he wisely let the smoke clear and politicians returned to their craft at later meetings.[26]

Frank James didn't attend another Quantrill reunion for several years—but occasional incidents unfolded without the old bandit. These events, however raucous, were generally met with

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[24] The headline of the Kansas City *Times* on 26 August 1905 read "Frank James Was Missing" while the byline stated "Since the Reformed Bandit Renounced Democracy He is in Bad Order With Quantrell's Old Band and Wouldn't Be a Welcome Guest." The sentiment against James was not fleeting. An article from the Kansas City Journal of 21 August 1909 stated that "[Frank] James has not attended any of the reunions since his notes speech made in the Independence court house yard, in which he declared that his friends were in the North and that he was never turned down except by those of the Southland." (*WCQMR*)

[25] "And Proud of Quantrell!," 25 August 1905, Kansas City *Star* (*WCQMR*); "Frank James was Missing," 26 August 1905, Kansas City *Times* (*WCQMR*).

[26] By 1910, reunions had returned to business-as-usual concerning political orations. Congressman William P. Borland was listed as a headline speaker.

apathy and even amusement so long as they did not endanger the ex-guerrillas' political standing or commemorative credibility. Case in point: the Dave Edwards-Jim Cummins feud of 1907. The Kansas City *Post* recalled that in 1863, Edwards and Cummins had "fought side by side under the leadership of the famous Confederate Charles Quantrell." But according to eyewitnesses at the 1907 encampment, when Edwards caught sight of Cummins, he produced a revolver from his hip pocket and "shot deliberately" with a distance of "only about three feet between them." Time had apparently eroded Edwards' fighting prowess as the bullet tore a hole in Cummins' coat before onlookers and a local marshal seized the gun.

The previous October, as the story went, Edwards and Cummins had lived together at Higginsville, a home for Confederate veterans: "While there Dave Edwards owned a pet coon and also some tools. One day the tools and the coon were stolen. Edwards, according to his own statement, accused Jim Cummings of having stolen them." According to Edwards, "Cummings [sic] grew very angry at the accusation and threatened to beat him to death." The raccoon was apparently never recovered, Edwards was taken to jail for the shooting, and Cummins chose not to press charges.

Attempted homicide would certainly seem to outweigh the political miscue committed by Frank James, but the other ex-guerrillas and their guests didn't think so. "Oh, it's nothing! I turned to see who was fighting then went on about my business," announced one female witness. Another women flatly declared that "it didn't amount to anything…the old men just had a quarrel." Even the newspaper noted nonchalantly that the shooting "would have broken up almost any other

picnic. But the veterans of the Quantrell raids, their wives and daughters, forgot all about it in fifteen minutes and resumed their merrymaking."[27]

Most media coverage of the Quantrill Men Survivor's Association lacked the excitement of the Frank James outburst or the Edwards-Cummins feud. In fact, the most recurrent theme in the twentieth century was news of members passing away. In 1915, the Independence *Examiner* announced that "six men have died since the last reunion." The fallen included Frank James, who had returned to grace among the former bushwhackers before his death. The following year, the *Examiner* ran a similar article. "Death has dealt very severely with the Quantrill Association since its last meeting a year ago," the paper noted, as "both leading officers of the Organization have died since the last reunion." Long-time captain Ben Morrow and long-time secretary Warren Welch both died, as did notables Cole Younger and William H. Gregg. In 1917, the *Examiner* again reported sad news. Fletcher Taylor, Dave Hilton, and John Koger were all dead.[28]

Even as their ranks thinned rapidly after 1915, the Quantrill men tried to make the most of their time—however much remained. "In the program yesterday," the Independence *Examiner* reported in 1922, "some men 80 years old joined the square dances with enthusiasm.[29] But while the holdouts could still dance, the Association started losing its ability to function in the 1920s. When Warren Welch—who had served as secretary and de facto group historian for decades—

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[27] "Army Friends," 23 August 1907, The Kansas City *Post* (*WCQMR*); "It Didn't Bother Them," 24 August 1907, The Kansas City *Journal* (*WCQMR*).

[28] "Quantrill Reunion," 23 September 1915, Independence *Examiner* (*WCQMR*); "Quantrill Men Meet," 29 September 1916, Independence *Examiner* (*WCQMR*); 22 August 1917, Kansas City *Star* (*WCQMR*).

[29] "Quantrill Men in Reunion," 9 September 1922, Independence *Examiner* (*WCQMR*).

died, much of his vital records went missing. According to his son, Harrison, Welch kept his roster of the Quantrill command hidden until his death. The problem, then, came after he died: no one could find the hiding spot. Without Welch's meticulously managed roster of which ex-guerrillas remained living and their most recent addresses, letters and other communications concerning the reunions were tapered off significantly. Plus, that the group had been much smaller than most other such organizations only amplified the absence of long-time reunion-goers. The elected officers had trouble contacting survivors and "those who have attended the Quantrill reunions [after Welch's death in 1920] have done so on their own initiative."[30]

Between 1898 and 1917, the average attendance of ex-guerrillas at the Quantrill reunions was in the range of thirty to thirty-five. After 1917, that figure never exceeded fifteen; and, after 1922, it never rose above single-digits. The final five meetings, 1925 to 1929, averaged less than three former bushwhackers per year. The Wallace family, longtime hosts of the old men at their home in Wallace Grove, called off the 1930 meeting due to a death in their family. The next year, only one surviving guerrilla, Frank Smith of Blue Springs, could be verified and the reunion was again cancelled by the Wallace family. Without the duty of planning encampments and too few members living to field even a card game, the Quantrill Men Survivor's Association ceased to exist.

MYTH OF THE BLACK GUERRILLA?

Reunions of men who once hailed from prominent, slaveholding families—and had burned large swaths of Lawrence to the ground to help retain their human property—might seem like a strange

[30] "Roster Lost," 21 August 1927, Kansas City *Journal Post* (WCQMR).

place to find African American visitors. That didn't stop John Noland, William Hunter, Sam Jackson, and Henry Wilson. Though background information is admittedly harder to come by for these men, especially Hunter, Jackson, and Wilson, they all shared a common bond: all three men were born slaves; all three men had a wartime connection to Quantrill's guerrillas; and, all three men attended annual meetings of the Quantrill Men Survivor's Association.

In their memoirs, ex-guerrillas constructed an unmistakable dichotomy that differentiated between "good" and "bad" African American characters during and after the Civil War. This "either/or" relationship tapped elements of both the Lost Cause Movement and the New South Movement. In conjunction with the former, guerrilla memoirs utilized the notion of the happy, loyal slave who had enjoyed enslavement and pined for yesteryear on the plantation; and, by way of the latter, guerrilla writers borrowed the idea that southerners needed to paint a rosy picture of post-war race relations for the sake of economic recovery and saving social face. Thus, in the image of "Rapist vs. Remus," the likes of Jack Mann, the lustful, black rapist was pitted against a cast of loyal and lovable slaves like Rube and Aunt Suse. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the fact that memoirs cherry-picked core concepts from both movements—movements sometimes at odds with each other—points directly to the extent to which they were attempting to fit themselves, by whatever means necessary, within mainstream southern society in the twentieth century.

Encampments constituted the ideal situation for Quantrill men to put this literary construct on public display for spectators and the media. Naturally, the ex-guerrilla did not invite any African Americans who fit the mold of Jack Mann, but they did welcome and pay tribute to former slaves who typified the Uncle Remus paradigm. The first mention of a black man attending a reunion actually came a year after the meeting, in December 1903, when the Oak Grove *Banner* marked

the passing of Sam Jackson. According to the *Banner*, Jackson "was born a slave in this [Jackson] county 65 years ago" and was "quite a character." He had attended the 1902 reunion in Independence and the paper noted that he "shook hands with all the old soldiers and was able to call nearly every one by name." While enjoying his visit with the guerrillas—and potentially even with relatives of his former owners—Jackson allegedly claimed that "these were his people and many a time he had carried provisions to them from the old home when they were hidden in the woods."[31]

Three years after Sam Jackson greeted the Quantrill men in Independence, John Noland appeared at the 1905 encampment there. Contradictory reports of Noland's role within Quantrill's command have abounded since 1863, but none among the reunion-goers questioned his irregular credentials. The Kansas City *Times* made a special note about him: "Another man who received much attention from his old comrades because of his unique position was John Noland." "John is," the paper continued, "the only negro who ever had any connection with Quantrell's band. He is said to have been with the guerrilla chieftain during much of his career, though rather in the position of a servant than as a fighter." The *Times*' hesitancy to state emphatically that Noland wasn't just a servant—he was a slave—may point to the unique nature of his relationship to the bushwhackers.[32] In a war fought almost entirely on the homefront and within the confines of local

[31] 24 December 1903, Oak Grove *Banner* (*WCQMR*).

[32] Before the war, John Noland (sometimes referred to as John Henry Noland) was the property of Francis Asbury Noland. The Slave Census of 1860 for Jackson County, Missouri, notes that Francis Asbury Noland owned two slaves: both boys, ages 23 and 16, the former listed as mulatto and the latter as black. (Francis Asbury Noland likely went by Asbury among friends and family to avoid confusion with his father, Francis Marion Noland, who was still alive in the 1860s.) Francis M. Noland also owned at least one mulatto slave (age 11) in 1860, along with two female slaves roughly old enough to be the boy's mother (ages 46 and 45). Eli Glascock, a member of the

communities and neighborhoods, self-preservation may have prompted Noland (that is, out of mortal necessity) to side with his pro-Confederate half-brothers.[33] As such, the article concluded that "his [Noland] comrades declare, however, that John could fight as hard as any of them when occasion required."[34]

John Noland attended the group's reunion again in 1907, though far fewer details exist following his 1905 debut. A short obituary published by the Independence *Examiner* in August 1908 stated that Noland had not attended the meeting that year because "he died several weeks ago."[35] In 1907, the Kansas City *Post* only noted his presence as "one of old Asbury Noland's slaves, who went across Missouri with Quantrell." William Hunter, also in attendance at the 1907 meeting in Independence, was reportedly "the bodyservant of General Joe Shelby during the war." Given the closeness between Shelby's Iron Brigade (which included John Newman Edwards as adjutant) and many of Quantrill's men—some of whom also served under Shelby or even journeyed with him into Mexican exile after the war—Hunter probably found himself a welcome

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Noland's extended family, also owned at least one mulatto slave in 1860. Given the family's penchant for sleeping with their female slaves, it is quite possible—and seems likely—that John Noland was the son of Asbury Noland. If this were the case, John Noland shared the status of third cousin with noted bushwhackers George M. Noland and George W. Noland, both of whom partook in the Lawrence Massacre. Additionally, John Noland would also have been blood kin to Edward, James, Henry, and William Noland, all of whom rode with Quantrill during the war and accompanied him to Kentucky in 1865 (where James, Henry, and William were killed in action). John Noland is undoubtedly the historical inspiration behind the character "Holt" in Ang Lee's *Ride with the Devil* (1999). See Slave Census Schedule 1860, Jackson County, Missouri. Ancestry.com.

[33] On why John Noland may have chosen to fight as a black Confederate guerrilla, see Beilein, "Household War," 81-84.

[34] "Frank James was Missing," 26 August 1905, Kansas City *Times* (*WCQMR*).

[35] 22 August 1908, Independence *Examiner* (*WCQMR*).

addition to the mix and yet another African American man whose participation helped the guerrillas propagate the Remus model employed in their memoirs.[36]

From 1907 to 1923, rosters kept by the Quantrill Association and newspaper coverage indicate that no African American men attended reunions—or at least none with historical connections to the group or that the papers thought worthy of mention. This changed in 1924 with the arrival of Henry Wilson. Despite what the Kansas City *Times* had published in 1905 about John Noland having been the only black man with any connection to Quantrill, the Pleasant Hill *Times* now declared that Wilson, "an aged negro" from Lawrence, Kansas, had "served as body guard of Quantrell and cook for the bushwhackers when they were on raids." The paper also noted that in 1924, only eight of the "original gang of 300" still lived—but counted Wilson as separate from the eight white guerrillas.[37] By 1929, the year of the final Quantrill men reunion, Wilson's presence was a more valuable commodity. A report by the Independence *Examiner* claimed that now only four former bushwhackers remained alive, along with Wilson, who was the life of the party. "At today's gathering," the story continued, "Henry Wilson was exceedingly loquacious and insists upon telling a good one on George Noland, who he said was captured near Independence during the war and was made to chop down a Confederate flag there with a broadaxe." The veracity of Wilson's story is unknown, but George M. Noland (a white relation of the late John Noland), "seemed to derive little pleasure from the story." [38] So, in a near perfect dose of irony, it appears as though an African American man—the last survivor from an enslaved group that guerrillas had

[36] "Retelling Old Stories," 24 August 1907, The Kansas City *Post* (*WCQMR*).

[37] "Quantrell Men Again," 5 September 1924, Pleasant Hill *Times* (*WCQMR*).

[38] "Quantrill Men Reunion," 30 August 1929, Independence *Examiner* (*WCQMR*).

exploited for their own commemorative gain—got the last laugh at one of the last guerrillas at the very last of the guerrilla reunions.

HONORING "OTHER" VETERANS

Even in the twentieth century, ex-bushwhackers were quite picky regarding who might draw their praise or qualify as worthy of remembrance. In some instances, Quantrill's command would shun one of its own for failing to meet the obligations or criteria of public commemoration. Case in point: "The Kansas City survivors, says Gregg, are Wm. H. Gregg, John C. Hope, George Noland, Tom Maxwell, Ran Venable, Jim Pool, and 'another feller don't want known.'" This "other feller," according to Gregg (by way of the Kansas City *Times* in 1902), "was with us but if he is ashamed or afraid to admit it, we don't want anything to do with him."[39]

Picky as they were, members of the Quantrill Men Survivor's Association often invited veterans of the regular Confederate army to attend their annual reunions. In fact, it's likely that at more than one of the later the meetings held in the 1920s, regular veterans actually outnumbered the guerrillas, whose ranks were devastated by age. In theory, public interaction with ex-Confederates helped whitewash some of the "irregularities" from the reputations of guerrillas, something that couldn't be witnessed physically and broadcast in public via the printed page.

As outlined in Chapter Three, in their memoirs, Quantrill's men paid tribute to the soldiers of the Spanish-American War and of World War I for two reasons: first, because more than three decades after the Civil War doing so constituted a convention of mainstream southern society and

[39] 21 August 1902, The Kansas City *Times* (*WCQMR*).

helped cement the long-term endurance of guerrilla memory; and second, because even though these newer generations of combat soldiers threatened to crowd Civil War veterans out of the singular spotlight they'd enjoyed for years, these veterans of Cuba, the Philippines, and the European trenches were often their sons and grandsons—and most importantly, they granted the aging guerrillas a vehicle through which to re-relate and connect their own wartime experiences to their present surroundings.[40]

In this context, we might read the article of the Kansas City *Journal* published in September 1918 under the headline "Quantrell's Raiders Would Fight Huns" as having been both a patriotic statement and a clever hand of memory politics. It reported that "a Confederate flag swayed here and there in the breeze while American flags were everywhere. The old warriors showed little traces of bitterness over Civil War days." Rather, the reunion-goers "gathered in groups and chatted of old times, but most of them talked of their grandsons and other relatives now serving in France or shortly to go there." According to the *Journal*, "prosperity has come to most of the former fighters and they have Liberty Bonds and contributed to all the Red Cross and other war funds." Not to be outdone, "many of the women present wore service pins" and "Miss E. Wallace, one of the hostesses has six nephews in the army." As Missouri and the rest of the South mobilized to help restrain the hostilities of Kaiser Wilhelm II, so too would ex-bushwhackers donate money

[40] Per Chapter Three, see Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: The Yale University Press, 1998). Also see Bradley S. Keefer, *Conflicting Memories on the "River of Death": The Chickamauga Battlefield and the Spanish-American War, 1863-1933* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2013).

and sport their pins partially in an effort to show, that by 1918, they behaved—and thereby should be remembered—just like everyone else.[41]

Notwithstanding that "none of the veterans in attendance [at the same meeting in 1918] was less than 73," the former bushwhackers harbored no paucity of fighting spirit. Similar to the pronouncements of Harrison Trow in his published memoir, the guerrillas were ready for the trenches. "We only wish we were able to go over with the boys and take a few shots at the Germans," they claimed as a collective. Of course, recalling the ethnic tensions of Chapter One, it didn't hurt that the Germans were German, either: "Of all the troops that did things to cause bitter memories in western Missouri during the Civil War, none left so many monuments of hate as the Germans. We are not surprised at the stories of their depredations, when we remember what happened here in the '60s. We'd like to take a crack at the Germans for that reason. This is our country and we are all willing to do everything we can for it." All at once, then, the former bushwhacker cleverly co-opted their lingering wartime hatred of "the Dutch" into a point of patriotism which, in turn, fueled their own agenda of remembrance.[42]

HOSTESSES OF THE BORDER WAR

Guerrillas paid special attention to women in their memoirs, recognizing them as the gatekeepers and guardians of southern memory—and so it was much the same at guerrilla reunions. Speaking at the 1901 meeting in Oak Grove before twenty-five former bushwhackers and a healthy crowd of spectators, Rev. Mark Rider eulogized "the good women of the war times and of the present

[41] "Quantrell's Raiders Would Fight Huns," 1 September 1918, Kansas City *Journal* (*WCQMR*).

[42] Ibid.

day." "Glory be to God," he praised, "for the good women of our great country." Soon after, Frank James also ascended the podium to make a short speech. According to the Kansas City *Journal*, James "offered a resolution asking that a monument be erected to the noble women who stood by them [Quantrill's guerrillas] in the dark days of the war." And, the paper also noted, James generously began the fundraising effort for such a monument himself by a donation of fifty dollars.[43]

Ten years later, William Gregg penned a letter to Hiram George honoring the crucial role women had played on the frontlines of Missouri's guerrilla war. "The time is growing short with us all we are on the shady side of life," he lamented in 1911. But Gregg had no intention of fading away quietly or of being forgotten—and he paid women their commemorative due in his open letter (which was printed in the Oak Grove *Banner*) like he had in his published memoir. "We must not forget the good women who with their heroism," Gregg commanded, "made it possible for us to live in the midst of so brutal an enemy as that with which we had to contend." More than a generic "shout out," he went a step further and named names: "Such for instance your wife and sisters and sister-in-law, etc. Then there was aunt Betty Bowman and her daughters, God bless them all. The Austins, Webbs, Philpots, Corn, Barnetts, Clarks, Hudsons, and thousands of others too tedious to mention." "O that I were in a position financially," Gregg concluded, "I would build to the memory of these glorious women (heroines) the finest monument ever erected."[44]

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[43] "The Annual Reunion Brought Twenty-Five Survivors Together," 27 September 1901, The Kansas City *Journal* (*WCQMR*).

[44] "Ex-Confederate Writes," 28 April 1911, Oak Grove *Banner* (*WCQMR*).

Guerrillas like Frank James and William Gregg were well aware that the hostess work of women made the Quantrill reunions possible. They also would have recognized a clear link to the past: just as women had operated as irregular quartermasters during the guerrilla war, they resumed many of these duties to make the annual encampments logistically feasible, especially as the guerrillas themselves aged. Women aided their husbands, fathers, and eventually grandfathers with travelling to meetings; women prepared and served the renowned basket dinners; women served as escorts, dance partners, and willing listeners; and, prominent female relations were invited to make official speeches.

Such was the case of Feta Parmer—the daughter of noted bushwhacker Allen Parmer. At the 1907 meeting of the Quantrill Association a collection of forty ex-guerrillas and nearly one-hundred participants was treated to a basket dinner served by the "ladies who were the wives and daughters." As reported by the Independence *Examiner*, Parmer addressed the sizable crowd after dinner and proclaimed that "if it were in her power she would raise a monument to the skies for Quantrell."[45] Eight years later in 1915, the Kansas City *Post* saw fit to remark on the prominence of female commemoration at the annual encampment. "Woman, lovely woman, played her part in the border warfare that is being commemorated today by veteran members of Quantrell's band at St. Clair on the Independence electric line." According to the *Post*, "an unusually large number of women are in attendance at the twentieth annual reunion" and far from simply supervising the serving of dinner they "are as busy repeating told time incidents as the former guerrillas

[45] "Quantrell Men Reunion," 24 August 1907, Independence *Examiner* (*WCQMR*).

themselves."[46] Thus, the feeling of affection between guerrillas and their female relations was a mutual one both during *and* after the war.

On other occasions, members of the Quantrill Association did more than simply recognize the role, however important, women had played on the homefront in the 1860s; as would be the case in multiple published memoirs, ex-guerrillas made distinctions for women who had experienced irregular warfare from the saddle. In 1910, while encamped at Wallace Grove, a crew of 35 ex-bushwhackers bent over backwards to honor two women of this variety. The Kansas City *Post* chronicled that the pair "who received unusual attention were Mrs. W. S. Gregg and Mrs. H. V. Kabrick." "Both of these women," the *Post* declared, "had ridden with their husbands upon forays with Quantrell." Women like Gregg and Kabrick were not simply honored for their work behind the scenes of irregular warfare—they received additional praise for sharing the dangers of the trail and brush with their husbands and Quantrill. In other words, they were—at least temporarily—recognized as guerrillas in the sense that their husbands had been.[47]

Any doubt that attention paid to women at Quantrill men reunions reflected in great part their powerful stake in determining how the guerrillas would and could be commemorated and remembered by southern society is directly countered by the failed "Coup of 1912." As reported by the Kansas City *Journal* that year, "action was taken which marked the passing of the famous Quantrill band" when "24 Confederate officers and soldiers met at the same place and organized

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[46] "Girl of Broken Heart, Quantrell's Fiancée, Grieved Self to Death," 25 September 1915, Kansas City *Post* (*WCQMR*).

[47] "Survivors of Raid on Lawrence Tell of Bloody Battle," 20 August 1910, Kansas City *Post* (*WCQMR*).

as veterans of the 2nd Missouri Confederate Cavalry." This new organization, the *Journal* read, "will meet for the first time at the annual Lone Jack picnic next September and the name of Quantrill's band will pass into history and they will be known as members of the 2nd Missouri Confederate Cavalry." Put another way, guerrillas William Gregg and Cole Younger had struck a deal with regular Confederate veterans to fold Quantrill's old command into the rank-and-file—unfortunately, Gregg and Younger, neither of whom was an elected officer at that point, had failed to run their scheme past the rest of the Quantrill Association before going to the press.[48]

Ben Morrow, the rightfully elected captain of the organization, responded via an open letter in the Independence *Daily News* in which he castigated Gregg for attempting to hijack the group without at least hearing from the men themselves. "I have given Captain Gregg two weeks to deny that he is commander of the Quantrill men," Morrow's letter continued, "Bill, you know as well as I do that it is impossible for you to fill that place unless you get the majority vote of this company." After finishing off his public emasculation of Gregg, Morrow's letter took a different—and on the surface very surprising—course:

> The Quantrill men have been meeting for 17 years. Now do you think we would sit quietly and be taken with [out] having one word to say in the arrangements they [regular veterans] make for us. They ignored our company, also our committee. We were not taken in during the war and we will not be taken in after the war is over.[49]

As the leader of a group that strove to mimic the reunions of regular veterans and to integrate itself into the mainstream Lost Cause, Morrow's rebuttal of the opportunity to be counted officially, albeit retro-actively, among the rank-and-file of the Confederacy seems peculiar, if not backward.

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[48] 9 November 1912, Kansas City *Journal* (*WCQMR*).

[49] 18 July 1913, The Independence *Daily News* (*WCQMR*).

Then again, Morrow's move may have belied the shrewdness of memory politics in post-war Missouri. Quantrill's old command needed to be accepted in the manner and fashion of regular veterans—but to give up their identity as Quantrill's command altogether would be giving up a significant portion of the commemorative limelight. In short, the Quantrill Men Survivor's Association wanted to have its cake and eat it too—because this arrangement allowed for the best odds of being remembered long-term. Also important, though, is the extent to which Morrow's and the organization's refusal to join a regular cavalry company exposed the way the ex-guerrillas used regular veterans as stage props; men they needed to glad-hand and appear with publicly for sake of remembrance, but not men for whom they would give up their wartime identities completely.

Most important of all, however, the rift between Morrow and Gregg and the failed Coup of 1912 revealed the influence women held over the Quantrill reunions—and is symbolic of the power women held over southern memory more broadly. When Ben Morrow, elected captain of the group, required crucial support to suppress Gregg's mutiny, he did not turn first to the other members of the command nor to his elected committee-members. Instead, Morrow looked to the "Wives and Daughters of the Quantrill men." "You," he explained, "and you alone are the whole cause of our meeting. Also Miss Wallace. She is always in the game. She has been a good sister to the Quantrill men and I am sure she will remain the same. She has the good will and good wishes of every man in the command." As we decode Morrow's tribute to the Quantrill women, the message is quite clear: the command can and will only be absorbed by the 2nd Missouri (and thereby destroyed) if the womenfolk allow it. And as Morrow surmised correctly, they didn't, it

wasn't, and the upstart Gregg was put back in his place. The Quantrill reunion of 1913 at Wallace Grove went off without a hitch—the hostesses of the border war had spoken.[50]

HEATED REACTIONS FROM LAWRENCE

Given the front-page coverage of early guerrilla reunions, it was not long before tempers from across the border ran hot. Many of the "old time" residents of Lawrence, Kansas, wore their survival of the 1863 massacre like a badge of honor—not unlike survivors of the Third Reich's "final solution" several decades later. As such, these Kansans were never particularly pleased that annual Quantrill reunions were unfolding less than fifty miles away (from Lawrence) in Independence or Wallace Grove and attempted, whenever possible, to undermine the festivities. With schemes ranging from political propaganda to legal action, results were generally unsuccessful; however, they highlighted that Kansans, and especially those in Lawrence, would not be taken by surprise again—they would not sit idly by while their former tormentors tried to rehabilitate their collective image for posterity.

The first reported incident occurred at the 1902 meeting held in Independence. As noted by the St. Louis *Post Dispatch*, it was then and there that Jim Cummins—whose "unique distinction" was "that he is the only member of the outlawed band of Missourians who was not killed or captured and who has not surrendered"—made his first appearance at a Quantrill reunion. (It should be noted that Cummins did, in fact, *attempt* to surrender himself to authorities at least once with regard to his criminal activities as a post-war member of the James-Younger Gang but law enforcement officials believed him an imposter.) While Cummins and other ex-guerrillas

[50] Ibid.

mingled in the courthouse yard, "a man came up" and "began complaining about having been robbed during the Lawrence raid." The paper quoted Cummins' response: "If you are not satisfied just step out here on the grass and I'll fight it out with you. There is some fight left in me yet, I reckon." The man wisely declined Cummins' invitation to fisticuffs—but this retreat only marked the opening salvo in an ongoing clash between the Quantrill men and Kansans to settle the Lawrence Massacre's proper place in guerrilla memory.[51]

Just a few years later, in 1905, the Jackson *Examiner* declared that the "sensational reports about the reunion of the Quantrell men" had "aroused the old Kansas feelings." The people of Lawrence, according to the paper, had recently discovered that murder indictments levied against William C. Quantrill and his men in the wake of the Lawrence Massacre had never been cancelled or "outlawed." This being the case, a congressman from Kansas wanted "the reunions of the Quantrell men…suppressed by law." The *Examiner* labeled these demands as "sensational and foolish" but also reported that enraged Kansans would likely petition Missouri's governor, Democrat Joseph W. Folk, to extradite surviving veterans of the raid to Kansas to stand trial. In all, the documents filed on November 18, 1863 with the Fourth Judicial District Court (Douglas County) of the State of Kansas included first-degree murder charges for thirty-four men, Quantrill, Bill Anderson, Dick Yeager, and George Todd among them. Multiple surviving witnesses had offered testimony before a grand jury that Quantrill and his men had "unlawfully, feloniously, willfully, deliberately and of their premeditated malice did make an assault" in Lawrence on

[51] "Cummins Still An Outlaw," 24 August 1902, St. Louis *Post Dispatch* (*WCQMR*).

August 21, 1863.[52] Folk, who was a native Tennessean and an attorney himself, never made any effort to forcibly return the ex-guerrillas to Kansas (nor is there conclusive proof that he was ever even asked to do so). In any event, it is clear that wounds leftover from the raid remained raw in Lawrence.

Along with coverage of the potential legal proceedings against the Quantrill reunion attendees, the same article from the *Examiner* also quoted selections of a letter received in 1905 by Judge A. J. Liddil, then chief officer of the Quantrill Men Survivor's Association. The author of the letter, one "W. Jones, Co. C., Seventh Kansas Vol. Cavalry (Jennison's men!)," essentially challenged Liddil and the Quantrill men to open combat:

> I would suggest that you hold your next annual reunion at Lawrence, Kansas, and join with members of the Seventh Kansas Cavalry in celebrating Quantrell's last raid across the Kansas border. I assure you that Jennison's Jayhawkers would be exceedingly glad to meet Quantrell's men over in Kansas and talk over old times with them. If you still have any fight left in you, and desire to settle old scores, we will be perfectly willing to bring our trusty old carbines along and join you in a little match, just to let the natives see how we whipped thunder out of you away back in the sixties. A little scrap of this would be a mighty big drawing card for the reunion and would add considerable ginger to the occasion. The grand-children of those whom Quantrell murdered at Lawrence, would be present, and would no doubt enjoy the fun hugely.

The newspapers ran no reply from Liddil and no violence of note ever stemmed from the invitation. Even if the remnant of Quantrill's old command had been ready and willing to swap lead with whoever had penned the inflammatory letter—and with men like Jim Cummins still spry, virtually anything was possible—crossing the border into Kansas would have constituted a serious legal misstep for anyone associated with Quantrill or the Lawrence Massacre. Exactly who wrote the

[52] "State of Kansas vs. William Quantrell, et al., Filed 18 November 1863," Quantrill (William Clarke) Research Collection, McCain Library and Archives, University of Southern Mississippi.

letter remains a mystery; whether or not the author in question had designs on taunting wanted men back into the jurisdiction of the Fourth Judicial District Court was a pragmatic possibility.[53]

On October 17, 1906, little more than a year after the dust settled from the Jones letter, the Kansas City *Journal* headline read: "As in Days of '63 – Quantrell's Men Plan Descent Upon Lawrence; Wait for Harris' Election." Considering the aforementioned murder indictments and invitations to shed blood, this would seem to have been a strange plan indeed. Nonetheless, the *Journal* contended that members of the "Quantrill organization in this section of Missouri" were keeping anxious track of the gubernatorial race in Kansas. "All of them are hoping that Colonel W. A. Harris will be elected," the paper declared. "For forty years they have dreamed of holding one of their annual reunions in the city of Lawrence, Kas., and they believe that the candidacy of Colonel Harris offers them their only hope of the realization of their dream." Technically, as the article noted, the Quantrill men did not need the governor's permission to encamp in Lawrence—but their unpopular meeting would require protection offered by the Kansas State Militia, which they would request from the Democratic governor. The thigh bones of William C. Quantrill himself, then held by the Kansas Historical Society, the Journal even exclaimed, would be borrowed for the pro-Missouri festivities if Harris won the election.[54]

The reply from pro-Democrat Missourians was swift and condemnatory. The Oak Grove *Banner* reprinted the *Journal's* article under the heading "Fake Quantrell Story" and shot back that the "article which we publish below originated in the brain of some Journal reporter and there is

[53] "Jayhawk VS Quantrell," 1 September 1905, Jackson *Examiner* (*WCQMR*).

[54] "As in Days of '63," 17 October 1906, Kansas City *Journal* (*WCQMR*).

not a word of truth in it. Frank Gregg, who the *Journal* says is one of the movers in the scheme, has been dead several months."[55] Under yet another caption, "The Journal's Peanut Politics," the *Banner* excoriated the Republican-leaning Kansas City paper for resorting to "fake methods" and "mighty poor politics" in attempts to "frighten the voters of the Sunflower State into voting for Hoch." Quantrill's men, the article stated for the record, "do not nor did have the remotest idea of holding a reunion in Lawrence…but the Kansas Republicans are becoming desperate over the way the voters are flocking to the Democratic nominee."[56] Even so, Edward W. Hoch, the Republican candidate in question (who was ironically—and then again, perhaps not—a former newspaper editor himself), won the gubernatorial election of 1907.

From a historical perspective, no evidence, then or now, suggests that any truth laid beneath the Kansas City *Journal's* story about a Quantrill men reunion in Lawrence. As mentioned above, many of Quantrill's former command were still fugitives from justice in Kansas and any event celebrating the 1863 raid would have, in all likelihood, required more protection than even a *willing* Kansas State Militia could have mustered. But the print spat over the 1907 Hoch/Harris race and its electoral ramifications is particularly interesting because it represented the virtual high-water mark of Lawrence's resistance to guerrilla reunions in Missouri. Citizens of Lawrence were never able to effectively halt—or really even hinder—the annual Quantrill meetings. Therefore, using the reunions' own popularity in the press to help ensure the victory of a Republican

[55] "Fake Quantrell Story," 19 October 1906, Oak Grove *Banner* (*WCQMR*).

[56] "The Journal's Peanut Politics," 19 October 1906, Oak Grove *Banner* (*WCQMR*).

sympathetic to the Kansans' own side of the story amounted to a significant victory, albeit a secondary one.

Following the sparring of 1907, direct interaction between the Quantrill reunions and residents of Lawrence tapered off. None of the thirty-four indicted men ever saw the inside of a Kansas courtroom and no ex-guerrillas ever set foot on Kansas soil in attendance of a reunion. For years, however, the annual gatherings served as launching pads for the Missouri side of the Lawrence saga. In 1913, the Kansas City *Post* described one such scene: "Under a tree in front of the Wallace home on Blue Ridge where forty veterans of Quantrell's guerrillas gathered yesterday and Friday for their annual reunion, sat a wiry little man chewing on a cigar stub. His hands rested on a hickory cane and with it he poked the nudged out little pieces of sod." "It was this little old man," the *Post* continued, "who commanded Quantrell's rear guard of sixty men and held back 1,200 federal soldiers on the retreat from Lawrence." The referenced man was Captain William H. Gregg who, the paper claimed, desired to "tell our side [just] once."[57]

For starters, Gregg asserted that a neglectful band of federal troops could have stopped the raid before it ever began; Captain Pike, he alleged, saw Quantrill and his men crossing the border and chose not to intervene. And this decision to attack Kansas, Gregg assured his audience, came only after "the boys" had doggedly pestered a reluctant Quantrill into leading the assault. In the midst of the fighting, Gregg argued that no Missourian had shown as much cruelty as had the townsfolk of Lawrence upon capturing, killing, and dismembering Jim Skaggs; plus, according to

[57] "Lawrence Raid for Revenge," 4 October 1913, Kansas City *Post* (*WCQMR*

Gregg's version of events, the only woman shot down during the raid had died accidentally and of her own fault at that.

Most telling, though, was the motive element for the raid: revenge. Here Gregg's abstract explanation diverged sharply from the outmoded justifications provided by John Newman Edwards in 1877. In *Noted Guerrillas*, Edwards offered that in additional to personal revenge, Lawrence had been a hotbed of abolitionism and a safe-haven for African Americans. By redacting the racial component, Gregg continued the trend detailed in Chapter Three of ex-guerrillas reshaping their racial attitudes publicly to aid the process of reintegrating themselves into mainstream society. "That's the story of the Quantrell raid on Lawrence made by the farmer boys of Missouri in revenge," Gregg concluded, "and not one of us has ever regretted that we were in it. We are proud that we were able to revenge our fathers and mothers and sisters."[58]

In 1925, when asked to discuss the Lawrence Massacre, a few aged guerrillas continued to justify their actions without evoking harsh racial sentiments and now even took exception to the notion that the assault had even been "irregular" in the first place. Much like guerrilla memoirists seeking to "regularize" their wartime records, the Kansas City *Journal* chronicled how "every member of the party took exception to certain references to the Quantrill expedition as a 'raid.'" In fact, as the *Journal* relayed, "some even hinted the damage done in Kansas by the small band was negligible when compared to the havoc wrought by Sherman in Georgia." In other words, now in their mid-to-late 80s, the few remaining members of the Quantrill Men Survivor's Association

[58] Ibid; Additionally, Gregg recalled finding more than $250,000 worth of property stolen from Missourians on the road into Lawrence: "I went ahead with my five men and for a mile before we reached Lawrence we found little shacks built beside the road. They were filled with household goods that had been carried over into Kansas from Missouri.

took great pride in their service records—but also took the opportunity, despite the howls of protest from Lawrence, to extend a final plea for their case. Their service, like that of Sherman's men and the Confederates who opposed the Army of the Tennessee in 1863-1864, the guerrillas argued, should be deemed worthy of inclusion among the annals of legitimate southern history and therefore as part of the collective memory movement designed to commemorate legitimate Confederate soldiers.[59]

FORGETTING MRS. QUANTRILL

On August 30, 1942, the Sunday edition of the Kansas City *Star* ran a feature marking the fifty-fourth anniversary of Caroline Quantrill's visit to Blue Springs. "There has always been a lingering question in the minds of a few citizens of this Missouri town," the story alleged, "as to whether or not it really was Mrs. Caroline Clarke Quantrill, mother of William Clarke Quantrill, the guerrilla leader who visited here in 1888. But to one person in Blue Springs there is no question about it." That person, Miss Narra Lewis, was by 1942 the only female resident of Blue Springs living with firsthand memories of the occasion that began this chapter.

"She [Caroline Quantrill] was dressed in a cheap calico dress," Lewis recalled, "and wore a splint calico sunbonnet, the garments of poverty. At that time a woman considered herself hardly dressed for decent appearance on the public street unless she had at least three starched muslin petticoats. Clothes in those days were definitely to conceal the figure, instead of as now, to reveal it." Accordingly, "feminine backs stiffened" and "feminine noses went up." As for the ex-guerrillas, they were quite upset that the women of Blue Springs dared to snub the mother of

[59] "Raids Retold at Quantrell Meet," 29 August 1925, Kansas City *Journal* (*WCQMR*).

William C. Quantrill and immediately took to raising funds on her behalf; as penance, their snooty wives and sisters were forced to take Mrs. Quantrill on a shopping spree in Independence. Then clad in her new wardrobe, an ice cream social was held in Mrs. Quantrill's honor.[60]

When the *Star* article appeared in 1942, Missouri, the United States, and even the world were very different places than they'd been in 1929—the year of the final Quantrill reunion. America had suffered through a decade-long economic depression and along with much of the globe found itself drawn into another war to end all wars. But even with these powerful excuses in hand, the fact that the Caroline Quantrill affair stood ready to pass into myth after hardly more than a half-century's time pointed to the inherent weaknesses of physical ceremonies as producers of long-term remembrance in the realm of guerrilla memory. As Narra Lewis made evident, eventually, attendees of the Quantrill reunions, and thereby most of their recollections, would also disappear.[61] And while the regular military reunions the guerrillas mimicked might involve thousands upon thousands of men and spectators, thus improving their odds of establishing a lasting memorial impact, Quantrill's command had never numbered more than a few hundred, several of whom failed to even survive the war.

The fate of the Wallace Homestead at Wallace Grove—the site of so many guerrilla reunions—also pointed to gloomy prospects for long-term remembrance. The Wallace family and

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[60] "She Remembers When Quantrill's Mother Came to Blue Springs," 30 August 1942, The Kansas City *Star* (*WCQMR*).

[61] Given their apparent fragility (in both a literal, physical sense and in the context of memory), it is striking to note how dependent historians have become on these oral and local newspaper accounts, without which, almost nothing in the way of substantive archival materials would survive to lend context to the reunions. Minus these testimonies, a few scattered images and an incomplete attendance roster are all that would remain.

local lore told that the Wallaces hosted Quantrill's men because the guerrillas had saved Wallace's father from the hangman's rope during the war.[62] But in 1938, Elizabeth Wallace, by then invalid and blind, died at the home.[63] In 1967, the Kansas City *Times* recollected that "fifty years ago," Wallace's niece, Neil Wallace, "was a brown-haired young belle and the darling of the old warriors who rode with Quantrill." Back in the present, however, Wallace cited a leaking roof and frequent vandalism as the reasons for putting Wallace Grove—the house and eight surrounding acres—up for auction.[64] (The house was torn down in the 1970s.) And by 1980, a column in the Independence *Examiner* stated solemnly that "the tall oak and elm trees that once shaded William Quantrill's band of Confederate guerrillas will soon turn their leaves to shade a school bus parking lot if a rezoning request for Wallace Grove is approved by the Independence City Council." Perhaps most telling of all, the owner of the B. and J. School Bus Company stated that he was totally "unaware of the history that lay in the land."[65] In the East, battlefields served as reunion destinations and lasting sites of Civil War memory throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. But owing to the nature of irregular warfare, Quantrill's men had no formally preserved military parks—and Wallace Grove, where more of their memories had been shared than anywhere else in the state, had been demolished, paved over, and largely forgotten.

So considering that the ex-guerrillas had formed the Quantrill Men Survivor's Association and organized annual meetings from 1898 to 1929 with the purpose of rehabilitating—and thus

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[62] "Quantrill Men Reunion," 20 August 1931, Kansas City *Star* (*WCQMR*).

[63] Elizabeth Wallace Obituary," 7 December 1938, Independence *Examiner* (*WCQMR*).

[64] "House With a History to Go on Block," 20 September 1967, Kansas City *Times* (*WCQMR*).

[65] "Column by Lola Butcher," 29 August 1980, Independence *Examiner* (*WCQMR*).

preserving via "regularization"—their wartime memories, this lack of endurance constituted a significant problem. Many of the same tropes presented effectively in guerrilla memoirs for this same purpose were staged for display at reunions: deference paid to women as gatekeepers of the Lost Cause, protocol concerning southern race relations and African American behavioral standards, and homage paid to veterans of subsequent wars. New strategies also emerged; gathering in the flesh allowed the former bushwhackers to commingle openly with veterans of the regular Confederate Army and style themselves as both similar and equal. But unlike the printed word, such real-time encounters required constant planning, organization, maintenance and, above all else attendance, to keep the cogs of the memory machine turning. For these reasons, guerrilla reunions lacked the longevity and geographic reach of a published memoir—and must ultimately be deemed far less effective instruments of long-horizon memory-shaping.

To end the Quantrill reunion story on this timbre, however, would be selling rather short their broader importance to guerrilla memory in the first thirty years of the twentieth century *and* as a lens to the intersection of memory and identity politics in the post-war South. Even as the meetings alone likely failed to sway much non-local opinion regarding the proper place of Quantrill and his command in the annals of Civil War history and memory, it would be a severe shortcoming to overlook the direct, dialectic relationship between guerrilla reunions and the guerrilla memoirs of Chapter Three. The point here being simple but vitally important: if the major themes of the memoirs were on physical display at reunions, so too must the reunion activities have influenced and informed the printed page—wherein neither would be the same without the

other, and the post-Edwards "caretakers" of guerrilla memory (guerrillas themselves) might have taken an altogether different approach to its evolution and preservation.[66]

Then again, the fact that ex-guerrillas even *believed* that such lengths were necessary to ensure their acceptance in post-war society should raise serious red flags about orthodox understandings of post-war racial attitudes and politics. Eminent accounts of Civil War memory have essentially conceded that to whatever extent sectional reconciliation occurred, it happened at the expense of Emancipation-centric legacies of the war; in effect, that the white side of the "color line," especially in the South, re-solidified after Reconstruction ended and uniformly vested itself in a memorial platform of mutual valor and shared sacrifice. But the motive and intent behind guerrilla memoirs and reunions—however heavily they might have leaned on standard racial tropes of the day like Uncle Remus and his predatory counterparts—shed light on a vastly more complicated and *divided* scenario. As the Quantrill Men and their efforts show, "whiteness" and Confederate sympathies simply weren't enough to guarantee remembrance at a time when one's role in the war—the defining event of a generation—still meant everything.

[66] A note here on the comparative importance and geographic reach of newspapers vs. memoirs is appropriate. On one hand, newspapers certainly kept guerrillas in the public's eye at the local level more efficiently and on a much more regular basis than could a published memoir. On the other hand memoirs at least had the *potential* to reach a much broader audience beyond the geographic circulation of a town paper—but *also* required a much greater degree of literacy to deploy their propaganda. We can state for the record, then, that newspaper coverage undoubtedly aided the endurance of the Association's reunions and that those meetings ultimately helped propel and inform the production of guerrilla memoirs. As a result, while the reunions failed to draw national or even South-wide attention by way of the press, such interaction with the media still played an important role in the broader process of rebooting and mainstreaming guerrilla memory in the twentieth century.