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Margaret Ripley Wolfe

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MARGARET RIPLEY WOLFE is the Senior Research Professor in History at East Tennessee State University. She is the author of numerous publications, including Daughters of Canaan: A Saga of Southern Women, and serves as the general editor of "Women in Southern Culture," a series published by The University Press of Kentucky. Currently she is completing a biography of Harry M. Caudill.
In 1787 the Northwest Ordinance decreed that neither slavery nor involuntary servitude could exist in the territories it created. However, the French, who originally settled Randolph County in southern Illinois, held slaves long before the Ordinance went into effect. At first, they held Indian slaves, but later brought African Americans into the area. Authorities differ on exactly how many black slaves they introduced into the Illinois Country. One speculation is that in 1719 Philippe Francois Renault "brought 500 negro slaves to Illinois, landing them at the site of the 'ancient village of St. Philip.'" Others claim that while Renault brought the first black slaves into southern Illinois, he owned only twenty-two.

Regardless of how many slaves the French settlers held in southern Illinois, Randolph County attracted many settlers from the Deep South because of its lenient attitude towards slavery. Southerners could immigrate into Illinois and still keep their "property" because officials ignored the Northwest Ordinance and called the slaves "indentured servants."

Such proslavery champions sought to legalize slavery throughout Illinois between 1822-24 when they proposed a Constitutional Convention that would, in effect, legalize and expand slavery in the state. The "convention crisis" during these years brought arguments from both sides of the slavery question, and while slave owners were in the minority statewide, the state's residents elected governmental leaders who were, for the most part, slave owners or who held sympathetic views to the cause of slavery. Randolph County, which had supplied the state's first governor, lieutenant governor, and secretary of state - all slave owners - was particularly sympathetic to pro-Constitution sentiment. Not all Randolph County settlers, though, were proslavery even though they lived in a county where many viewed slavery through sympathetic eyes. Many originally from northern states were abolitionists who began forming antislavery societies in the 1830s. Their work eventually shifted from trying to introduce legislation abolishing slavery to taking an active part in winning freedom for African Americans. Abolitionists such as these made up a majority of those who served as "conductors" on the Underground Railroad.

The web of secrecy and intrigue known as the Underground Railroad criss-
crossed the country prior to the Civil War. Many names associated with this “railroad” (neither a railroad nor underground) are well known to students of antebellum America. Students and scholars alike study about Harriet Tubman, Levi Coffin, and Owen Lovejoy — all of whom were abolitionists who put their beliefs into action by becoming conductors on the Underground Railroad.

Historians, however, have generally focused on the most famous and infamous and have commonly ignored the many unknown heroes who tirelessly worked to free slaves in bondage. Among these was William Hayes, a conductor who worked in Randolph County, located in southwestern Illinois. Hayes was a small-time dairy farmer and sometime land speculator who had moved to the Illinois Country from upstate New York in 1832, settling first in Peoria before moving in 1833 to Randolph County, near Sparta.

Approximately two hundred letters written to Hayes from the early 1820s to 1849 document his work in the Underground Railroad. Hidden until 1989 in an antique walnut writing desk owned by the Hayes descendants, the letters had long been a Hayes family treasure kept private because some older members of the clan were embarrassed that their ancestor had been a lawbreaker. Included in the box was an 1844 court record from a civil suit brought by slave owner Andrew Borders, another Randolph County resident, who claimed that Hayes had “Unlawfully wrongfully & unjustly aided and assisted... the servants of the said plaintiff [Borders]... [who] absented themselves from the service of the said master.”

Letters written in 1841 from family members in upstate New York indicate that William Hayes was engaged in something out of the ordinary. Not all were supportive. A brother, James Hayes, wrote in April that he had “heard you had trouble for helping the Blacks with a Ride... I should think it would be more pleasure and as much profit to wait on your own Family and let the Concerns of others Especially the Blacks go to others for help. I am opposed to Slavery but think free states better not interfere with the Laws of the States Where Slavery Exists no further than to exert a
good moral influence." Other family members admired his work with escaping slaves. His brother-in-law, Michael Johnston, wrote in October 1841 from his home in Albany to "express my approbation of the course you have pursued in regard to the slaves that providence cast in your way."

Hayes undoubtedly had been active for more than a year when five slaves belonging to Andrew Borders came to him for help. Borders was a slave owner originally from Georgia who had settled outside the present-day city of Sparta in 1816, two years before Illinois qualified for statehood. With him came his wife, Martha, a young daughter, and four slaves, among them five-year-old Sukey. At the time, the slaves comprised his entire assets, for he arrived with only fifty cents in his pocket. Like many southerners who flocked to the area, Borders may have decided to put down roots in Randolph County because he could continue holding his slaves while public officials turned a blind eye to the situation. Exactly why he decided to emigrate from Georgia, where slavery was legal, is unknown. Over the years, Borders accumulated enough land, wealth, and additional slaves to make him the largest and most powerful landowner in Randolph and surrounding counties.

Among the slaves Borders held in 1842 was Susan Borders (called "Sukey or Suky") and Hannah Morrison, a "young woman [who] had been detained in the service of Borders 18 months over her time." The others he held were Sukey's young children: Jarrot, Anderson, and Harrison. Borders had indentured Anderson and Harrison on March 24, 1841. At that time, Anderson was some "two years and two months old" while Harrison was "Six months old." When Borders drew up Jarrot's indenture papers on September 2, 1839, he likely was eight or nine years old. Each of the children was indentured to the age of twenty-one.

William Hayes immigrated to Randolph County much later than Borders. After an unsuccessful stint in land speculating in central Illinois in 1832, he moved his wife and family to Randolph County in 1833 to be near some old friends who had settled there in the late 1820s. William Hayes and his family were devout members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, a group who called themselves "Covenanters." Because of Covenanter doctrine, William Hayes was able, with a clear conscience, to break laws that protected slave owners like Borders.

Hayes belonged to the Covenanter church in Eden, a small settlement east of Sparta that had been settled by immigrants from North Carolina in 1821. These southerners had left their native state because they wanted to live in a "free" part of the country. Unfortunately, while Randolph County held far fewer slaves than did North Carolina, its populace nevertheless included many slaves held by former residents of the southern states.

Covenanters adhered to a strict interpretation of the Bible and held several
views contrary to the beliefs of most other Protestant denominations, even other branches of Presbyterianism. For example, Covenanters held no allegiance to either state or federal governments because their constitutions did not recognize Jesus as head of the State. Covenanters were encouraged to challenge any law the church considered not in keeping with God's laws. Because of this particular belief, Covenanters challenged governmental authority at every opportunity. Indeed, the Covenanter church did not recognize state government and "looked upon it [state and federal government] as 'an heathen and unbaptized government' which denies Christ; for which reason they have constantly refused to work the roads under the laws, serve on juries, hold any office, or do any other act showing that they recognize the government."

Covenanters voted only once in any election before the 1960s. They voted in 1824 only because an election was held to change the Illinois State Constitution. In essence, the outcome of that election would decide whether Illinois would be slave or free. Devout Covenanters wholeheartedly believed that the state should be free of a system that held other people in bondage. At the time, they made their voices heard by means of the ballot when they voted unanimously against slavery. Despite their efforts, and though statewide, voters rejected the idea of actively embracing slavery in Illinois, approximately fifty-five percent of Randolph County residents voted to retain a system of indenture within the state.

Covenanters energetically supported abolitionism. They refused communion to slaveholders in 1801, one of the first denominations to do so. Well before the Civil War, they opened their churches to abolitionist speakers, participated in antislavery societies, and worked in the Underground Railroad. In addition, according to a map drawn by Wilbur Henry Siebert, "the pioneer student of the Underground Railroad," known Underground Railroad stations in Illinois corresponded closely to places where Covenanters settled.

The Bethel Church in Eden, to which William Hayes and his family belonged, may have been more outspoken than most on the subject of slavery. Theodore Pease, in writing his history of Illinois, mentions "the little Reformed Presbyterian group at Sparta and Eden who on occasion went so far as to pronounce the dissolution of a union tainted with slavery as not the worst misfortune that might befall." As a devout Covenanter, Hayes's beliefs allowed him to live the articles of his Christian faith. He was free, even encouraged, to defy public laws that he believed were contrary to those ordained by God.

Andrew Borders's moral and political views were completely opposite those of Hayes. Although he too was a religious man who belonged to a more mainstream branch of Presbyterianism, his church apparently ignored his slave holdings. During his early years, his ambition and hard work added to his
collection of African American servants.

Among the slaves acquired by Borders after his arrival in Randolph County were Hannah and her mother, Sarah, whom he purchased in 1825. Borders was notorious for his inhumane treatment of his slaves, so much so that their condition aroused "the sympathy of the whole neighborhood." In 1841 Borders beat Sarah so severely that she escaped and hid at the home of a Randolph County sympathizer, possibly Matthew Chambers, a young shoemaker, whom Borders accused of "harboring" her on April 18, 1842. Chambers lost that case on April 26, 1842, when a jury found him guilty and fined him twenty dollars. Eventually he succeeded in establishing his innocence, as the Illinois State Supreme Court reversed the judgment in December 1843.

Also in 1842 the Friends of Rational Liberty, a group of Randolph County abolitionists, sued Borders in Sarah's name for assault and battery and past wages. As he was to do in subsequent court cases, Andrew Borders won the suit against him in the circuit court at Kaskaskia. When his appealed case reached the Illinois State Supreme Court in order to test the legality of owning slaves in Illinois, the Court affirmed the lower court's decision.

When Sarah fled the Borders farm, she left her teenage daughter Hannah behind, along with Sukey and her three sons. Before the Illinois Supreme Court reached a decision on Sarah's case in 1843, however, the other five slaves had also escaped. An argument between one of Sukey's children, probably Jarrot, and those of the Borders family precipitated their flight. The squabble escalated to the extent that Sukey intervened, an act that so enraged Martha Borders that she demanded that her husband beat Sukey for insubordination. This he refused to do, but he agreed to tie her up in the barn so that Martha could mete out the punishment. He also threatened to sell the little boys down South, the ultimate threat for a young mother. Rather than face a thrashing and the possibility of losing her sons, Sukey escaped "betwixt two suns" on August 31, 1842. Taking Jarrot, Anderson, Harrison, and Hannah with her, Sukey sought the aid of William Hayes. No one knows exactly how they reached the Hayes farmhouse, nor is it known how they knew Hayes would be a ready and willing helper. Possibly his work in the Underground Railroad was well known in the area. Hayes's property lay about eight miles east of the Borders farm, so the trip could have
taken most of the night. They may have followed a narrow, nameless creek that flows back of the Borders property, then exited at some point into the fields to follow a road north, eventually turning east.

Unlike most conductors on the Underground Railroad, Hayes did not take the women and children to the next sympathetic farmhouse. According to depositions given at his trial, he took the five fugitives on a steamboat northward on the Illinois River. Wherever and however they boarded the steamboat, they debarked at the heavily wooded "mouth of Copperas Creek," and they reached Farmington, in Fulton County, on September 5, 1842. Hayes stayed in northwestern Illinois for several weeks. At Hayes's trial, James McDowell testified that Hayes "has frequently been in the habit of going North ever since he lived in Randolph County" and that he picked up Hayes in St. Louis and brought him home in "sept or Oct 1842."27

The Western Citizen, a popular antislavery newspaper published in Chicago, carried the first account of the slaves' escape in an unsigned article on September 16, 1842. According to the account, on Monday, September 5, the two slave women and three children arrived at the house of an unnamed abolitionist resident who lived near Farmington, "on their way to a land of liberty. The negroes said they belonged in the southern part of the State, that they were free by the laws of the State, but were claimed by a man who had threatened to sell them out of the State to go down the river." The incident stirred enough interest among the antislavery locals that they "subscribed about $500 to defend their liberty in a court of justice; but as their would-be master threatened to sell them out of the State, and put his threat into execution upon two other negroes — they were advised by their friends to follow the North star." Later that afternoon, Hayes and several other men took the slaves to the home of an acquaintance, the Reverend John Cross, living at French Creek, in Peoria County, just north of the Knox County line. A Justice of the Peace of that county, Jacob Knightlinger, knowing that the fugitive slaves had passed that way, "collected a gang together, who armed themselves and went in pursuit. They overtook the man returning, whom they endeavored to stop by threatening to shoot him, and other acts of violence." Knightlinger's posse then hastened to Cross's home, arrested the fugitives, and took them back to the Knoxville jail. During their return, Rev. Cross attempted to stop them from kidnapping the slaves, only to be "assaulted, and stopped, knocking down one of his horses." The following day, a committee of Farmington residents who sought to free the fugitives retained legal counsel to "see that justice was done to these defenceless women and children." On Wednesday, September 7, "the reputed Justice and some of his gang, were arraigned before Nehemiah West Esq., upon complaint of Mr. Cross and the Farmington abolitionists, and the Justice with one of his associates, were fined fifty dollars each."29
At the time, Knoxville was the county seat of Knox County. The jail, a dreary affair with few amenities, stood across the street from the Knox County Courthouse. Twenty feet square and two stories high, this glorified log cabin’s only source of heat was a small fire in the center of the room. The two women and the children were confined to the jail, “waiting for the arrival of the evidence of their freedom” that the appointed Knox County committee sought. A subcommittee soon formed to “see them supplied with all the necessaries and comforts which a miserable jail will permit.” Meanwhile, Sheriff Peter Frans advertised their imprisonment and tried to find their owner.

In late September, Andrew Borders learned of his slaves’ whereabouts. With his son, James J. Borders, he traveled to west-central Illinois to claim his property. When he arrived, he admitted that Hannah had served her indenture, but he claimed Sukey and the boys. To his dismay, he had failed to bring their indenture papers and he went home empty-handed. The abolitionists hoped they had seen the last of him.

The Western Citizen kept its readers apprised of new developments in the case. By October 7, it reported that the fugitives were “now out of jail and living with families in Knoxville.” A letter written to the paper on November 29, signed by “H. H. K.” (likely Hiram Huntington Kellogg, president of Knox College) indicates that the sheriff had offered the women and children for sale on the courthouse steps. Though largely attended, most came simply for the spectacle of it, and the sale proved a failure, the sheriff having received only two bids and these each for only fifty cents.

For a time, life for the fugitives looked brighter. Hannah went to Galesburg to live, where she endeavored to learn to read and write. After staying a brief time with abolitionists in Knoxville, Sukey eventually rented a house of her own. She worked as a laundress for various families in Knoxville while Jarrot found employment in the fields near town. Sukey left the little boys at the local hotel (possibly Gum’s Hotel) while she worked.

Their taste of freedom didn’t last long. On October 24, Borders again thundered into town, this time with the proper papers proving he was their “owner.” Sheriff Frans helped him capture the little boys at the hotel and kidnapped Jarrot from the field where he was working, all before Sukey could
warn them. Frans threw all three boys into the Knox County Jail, this time without their mother.38

At this point, the History of Knox County picks up the story. Sukey had been doing laundry at the home of a Rev. Cole, a Presbyterian minister, when she heard the news of her sons’ arrest.39 Naturally, she was frantic and attempted to go to her boys. Cooler heads prevailed, however, and the abolitionists persuaded her to don a disguise using Mrs. Cole’s clothes. They then took her by sleigh into Galesburg, about two miles away. Borders hatched the plan that “if I can get the children I am not afraid but what the old one will follow.”40

In the meantime, the committee formed to oversee the women and children sprang into action. They brought two suits against Borders and his son — one for trespass and the other for false imprisonment of the children. The local magistrate found the Borders men guilty of the latter charge and fined them $500, a sum that Sheriff Frans paid. When Borders appeared in court a second time, he produced papers proving that he owned the children.41

he committee, however, found fault with the indenture papers. A large perforation located conveniently on Jarrot’s papers where his age should have been, as well as other erasures that the probate judge of Randolph County had not certified, suggested fraud. Thus, the Borders men again heard themselves pronounced guilty and received the additional fine of $400. When they refused to pay, they landed in the very jail that held Sukey’s children. In addition, the judge ordered them to appear at the next session of the circuit court. The accommodations at the jail, however, proved “too uncomfortable a place to spend the night,” so the sheriff and others again supplied their bail and they were released.42 That day Borders and his son somehow secretly sent the children back to Randolph County.43

In February 1843, Nehemiah West, a native New Yorker sometimes described as an “Old Line Abolitionist” who was the secretary of the first anti-slavery convention in that part of Illinois and whose home served as a station on the Underground Railroad, wrote to Hayes: “Mr. [George Washington] Gale Recd. Your letter which was the bearer of great Satisfaction to Susan [Sukey] as it allayed her fears about her Children being Sold into slavery.”44
With the knowledge that Sukey’s sons were still in Illinois, the abolitionists in Galesburg remained hopeful that the family would be reunited. In his letter, West asked Hayes to search for proof that Sukey gave her consent for the boys’ indenture, as required by the Act Concerning Apprentices. Consequently, he asked Hayes to search the records of the Probate Office in Randolph County “to ascertain when and where those indentures and by whom they were written.” West also wrote that Hannah “is with me going to School and wishes to send to her mother [Sarah] that she is well.”

Meanwhile, Hayes had his own legal difficulties. On February 8, Borders sued him in the Randolph County Circuit Court for $2,500 and he filed for a deposition from Sheriff Frans. Defendant Hayes asked for depositions from Gale, Frans, and West. How Borders knew of Hayes’s involvement in the affair is unknown. Likely he had heard local rumors that implicated him.

While embroiled in the legal controversy with Borders, Hayes apparently continued his work with the Underground Railroad. A February 27 letter from one T. A. Jones informed Hayes of the known routes along which to transport slaves to northern Illinois. “There is a line,” Jones wrote, “from Quincy running through Canton And I expect to go north in the Spring and will do all I can to get one firmly established from your place to meet it either at Canton or above... If you can find any way to get the poor traveller to Capt. Breath’s [A. Breath, a representative for the Western Citizen] near Marine. They will Send them up to Mr. McCords, Wafer’s, or Douglass’es. ... Send on all you can Get to any one of those men and they will be carried safely on.”

Hayes may also have completed the search for the indenture records that West had requested in February. The Western Citizen reported on April 6, 1843, that “a gentleman to whom the committee had written for information arrived from Randolph Co., with a certificate from the acting clerk of Randolph Co.,” by which it appeared that none of the persons whom Borders claimed was registered except the children’s mother.

A flurry of legal papers crisscrossed Randolph County as Borders and Hayes prepared for the trial. Borders chose William H. Bissell, a Monroe County attorney and future governor of Illinois, and Gustave P. Koerner, a St. Clair County lawyer and future lieutenant governor, as his representatives. Hayes hired Lyman Trumbull, a rising legal star and the current Illinois secretary of state, and William H. Underwood, both from nearby Belleville, to serve as his legal counsel. On April 28, 1843, the defendant’s attorneys asked for a change of venue because “the minds of the inhabitants of said County are prejudiced [against] him.” The following day, the judge ordered the case moved to Pinckneyville, in Perry County some twenty miles east of Randolph County. Throughout the spring and summer of 1843 both plaintiff and defendant gathered depositions from parties in Knox County and prepared
for the trial in April 1844.

However, Borders had other legal matters on his mind. On May 9, 1843, Frans delivered a summons to Borders to appear in the Knox County Circuit Court to answer to "Hannah (a woman of color,) Of a plea of trespass on the case on promise to the damage the sum of Five hundred dollars." That case soon moved from Knox County to Warren County where the presiding judge dismissed it in November.

Borders's other Knox County cases also came up in May, and the Western Citizen kept its readers informed of the developments: "Care had evidently been taken in selecting the jurymen, both petit and grand, to exclude every man who was known to have any sympathy for the slave."

Regardless of the nature of the jury, the antislavery faction was doomed to lose the skirmish. The Western Citizen reported on July 6, 1843, that Borders had arrived at the Knox County Courthouse with a barrel of peach brandy for "his old friend the Sheriff," and virtually everyone involved in the case, from the jury to the lawyers, imbibed freely. Only the judge refrained from the alcoholic bribe. As was customary in legal proceedings to which Borders was a part, he won this one, and "the petit jury brought in a verdict of 30 dollars damages against the Justice [West] who tried Borders in a suit for detaining his papers from Saturday night till Monday morning." In addition, the "grand jury not only found bills of indictment against those who had given food and shelter and clothing to the mother who had been robbed of her clothing, as well as children, by Borders, but whom the sheriff had not even demanded after he sent her off to shift for herself; but they seemed resolved to indict every man who could be indicted under any pretence." Back in Randolph County, Hayes prepared for his trial.

Borders v. Hayes began on April 15, 1844, in Pinckneyville, located twenty miles east of the Hayes home, with James Shields, soon to be elected to the Illinois supreme court, presiding. The verdict would come three days later. The plaintiff's lawyers presented a strong circumstantial case and because Illinois had a long history of oppression toward African Americans, the outcome seemed certain. Hayes's lawyers did little to push his case forward, except to object to the legality of the case. Hayes never took the witness stand in his own defense. Over the objections of Hayes' lawyers, Shields allowed depositions from several Galesburg residents into the plaintiff's case.

Sheriff Peter Frans testified that he knew both Borders and Hayes from the time he held Sukey and the others in custody. "In conversation," he stated, "the said Hays[sic] told me that he had brought the negroes away that he was paid for it that he was not an abolitionist." In another deposition, Frans related a conversation on the Knoxville Courthouse steps between Hayes, Nathan O. Farris, and himself. In that deposition, Frans again stated that Hayes had said he was not an abolitionist.
Sally Newman, in whose house Sukey had lived for a while after her release from jail, implicated Hayes in her deposition. Hayes had visited her, she said, sometime after the sheriff had released Sukey from jail. She said that Hayes reported that “he had brought her up to the mouth of Coperas[ sic] Creek” and that when Sukey and Hayes met at her house, “They both appeared glad to see each other and Suky[ sic] inquired about the health of his family.”

Nehemiah West’s testimony proved the turning point in the trial. In answer to “how did they say they [the women and children] got here,” West stated: “They said they ran away from Mr. Borders and came part of the way in a wagon – part of the way in a steam boat & part of the way afoot.” The final questions proved most damning to the Hayes case. The interrogator asked: “Did they say who fetched them on the wagon?” West dodged this by saying, “I should think they named a number of Individuals.” The plaintiff’s lawyer pressed further and asked, “Did they say that Mr Hays[ sic] fetched them on the wagon”? West could hedge no longer: “I think they said they rode in Mr Hays’ wagon part of the way.”

Several Randolph County residents also testified at the trial, but none put William Hayes in a more favorable light. Hayes’s neighbor, John Finley, gave testimony that placed the fugitives at William Hayes’s home. Early on the morning of September 1, he had seen a black woman about thirty years old walking with two children past the lot where he was working. Later in the day, he saw her again, this time at Hayes’s house. Sam McClinton, apparently a good friend of Hayes, corroborated the latter’s involvement in the affair when he said “sometime after [the] negroes went away... [Hayes] tried to procure certificates in the neighbourhood that the negroes in question were free.”

On April 18, 1844, the jury reached a verdict; it found in favor of Andrew Borders. However, they refused to grant him the entire $2,500 that he had asked for. Instead they fined Hayes three hundred dollars, approximately the amount Borders had spent in recovering his slaves. The defendant’s lawyers vowed to appeal the case to the Illinois Supreme Court.

The Illinois Supreme Court heard William Hay[e]s v. Andrew Borders in December 1844. William Underwood, a lawyer from Belleville who joined the appeal, was optimistic about the eventual outcome. On New Year’s Day 1845 he wrote to Hayes: “I returned from Springfield a few days ago. Before I left your case against Borders was argued in the Supreme Court by Baker [David Jewett Baker, Sr., also on Borders’s legal team] and Koerner for Borders and by Trumbull and myself in your behalf. We had a long and desperate struggle, but I am very confident that we will reverse the judgment below.” The reasons he gave for such confidence rested largely on a technicality. “On a careful examination,” Underwood reasoned, “we found that the old Court of Common pleas was abolished four years before the time Sukey was registered, and her registry was of course a nullity. We had also decisions that the indentures of the children
were not binding on them and that they are void also. We produced law in a
case like this, that the master of Sukey could not recover the value of her whole
term of service before it expired. Judge Shields instructed the jury [at
Pinckneyville]... [to] the contrary.”72

Trumbull’s confidence in the highest court in Illinois was misplaced. The
court affirmed the judgment of the Perry County Circuit Court, with only Justice Samuel D. Lockwood dissenting.73

Hayes lost the case and, tragically, Sukey never saw her sons again. About a
year after Borders kidnapped them, one of the boys [probably Jarrot] was killed
in a horse mill accident on the Borders farm. The fate of her other sons remains
a mystery.74

The defeat in the Illinois courts did not deter William Hayes from participating
in the Underground Railroad. In the spring of 1845, A. S. Bergen of Galesburg
encouraged him in his antislavery efforts. “[H]op[e] You will be more Successful
in this case than we wer,” Bergen wrote, “or than You wer in the case of
Susan, That decision of the Supreem Court against You was an outrage against comon Sense, & in violation of the other decision in case of French Slaves... Our Rail Road in this part of the State is doing but little busines this Season – I am glad Yours is so prosperous.” The letter closed with news about Sukey and Hannah: “Susan is Well. Hannah also & is improving in Education quite fast. don’ t You think Susans little boys are in danger of being run off by the vile hands laid upon those two men lately reported from Your County – cant Something be done to Secure them.”75

Moreover, Hayes took part in other legal battles involving escaped
slaves. On April 7, 1846, The People v. William Hayes & Daniel
Morrison took place in Clinton County. This case, criminal rather
than civil (as Borders v. Hayes had been), and thus carrying with it the possibility of Hayes serving jail time, followed from the two men’s arrest and indictment for “HARBORING A SLAVE.”76 The jury found Hayes and Morrison guilty, and the judge denied a motion for a new trial for Hayes but granted one for Morrison.77 The second case was dismissed for costs in May 1849 when “one of the defendants [Hayes] since the last term of this court had died.”78

Hayes died intestate in April 1849, leaving his widow an estate valued at just
$182.80. Among his effects were dozens of antislavery books and pamphlets,
mute evidence that the abolitionist cause remained close to his heart until his
death.79 In contrast, when Andrew Borders died in 1864, he left an estate of
approximately $56,155.80 Ironically, of all the players in this drama, only Sukey
and Hannah lived lengthy lives. Both were living in 1878 when local historians
published the Knox County History. Sukey remained in Galesburg, where she
built a new life for herself, while Hannah relocated to New York City.81 Records
indicate that Sukey received her certificate of freedom on May 1, 1845.82

Thus, more than 150 years ago, the curtain rang down on a well-publicized
case that has remained part of the folklore of the Galesburg area. For the first time, though, the southern portion of the story has revealed itself to those other than the descendants of William Hayes. His story remains as one of many stories of those innumerable and invisible men and women who worked for the freedom of slaves, not only in Illinois but throughout the northern and southern states.


4. The letters are part of the William Hayes Collection held by Mr. and Mrs. James V. Hayes, Sparta, Ill. (hereinafter cited as Hayes Collection). The author’s 1989 transcription of the letters is located in the William Hayes Papers, Sparta Public Library, Sparta, Ill. and the Knox College Library, Galesburg, Ill. (hereinafter cited as Hayes Papers).

5. Andrews v. William Hayes, Perry County Circuit Court, Trial Transcript, April 18, 1844, 2. This handwritten, forty-five-page document held by Mr. and Mrs. James V. Hayes is the only record known to exist. The Perry County Courthouse in Pekinville has no extant copy of the official court record. A transcript is in the Hayes Papers.


7. Western Citizen (Chicago), July 6, 1843.

8. Borders v. Hayes, 21-25. The indentures of Borders’ servants were entered into the trial transcript.

9. Thomas Ford, A History of Illinois, from Its Commencement as a State in 1818 to 1847. (Chicago: S.C. Griggs & Co., 1854), 25. Many of the Covenanters’ beliefs about voting persisted into the twentieth century. Covenanters refused to vote because they believed that voting would cause them to “profess allegiance” to a Constitution that was “in hostility to the kingdom of Christ, the head of the church, and the prince of the kings of the earth.” In 1963 the Synod “decided that an oath to the constitution did not necessarily commit the oath-taker to an unChristian position and it no longer forbade members to vote for a person publicly committed to Christian principles. The practical result of this was that most members of the denomination now felt free to vote for candidates whose platform they approved.” Reformation Principles Exhibited (Philadelphia: The Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Isaac Ashmead, printer), ch. 29, sect. 2, 252. According to the Minutes of Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, “[i]n qualifying for any civil position or office, whether by appointment, political election or employment, the Christian may properly take an oath of allegiance to civil authority only if the church by orderly processes in her courts has determined that he is promising no more than due submission in the Lord, and that he is not directly or indirectly accepting any unChristian principle of civil government. When participating in political elections, the Christian should support and vote only for such men as are publicly committed to scriptural principles of civil government. Should the Christian seek civil office by public election he must openly inform those whose support he seeks of his adherence to Christian principles of civil government.” Minutes of Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church (Pittsburgh: Church Headquarters, 1963), 58. The author wishes to thank Rev. Robert Morrow of Sparta, Ill., and Dr. David M. Carson of Beaver Falls, Penn., for their information and explanation of the Covenanters beliefs.


18. Born in Ireland, Chambers was thirty-seven years old in 1850. He and his wife, Nancy, lived in Randolph County (see Index to the 1850 Census, Randolph County, Illinois (Yakima, Wash.: Yakima Genealogical Society, 1976), 1. Another Matthew Chambers lived in Knox County, where he was the Anti-Slavery Society’s first president in the winter of 1838-1839. Because the suit originated in Randolph County, the Randolph County Matthew Chambers is likely the one referred to in the suit (see Muelde, Fighters for Freedom, 68, 74n, 100n, 136, 142, 166, 167n, 380; Matthew Chambers v. The People of the State of Illinois, in
Scammon, Reports of Cases in the Supreme Court of Illinois, v. 4, 364-72 [hereinafter cited as Scammon v. The People].

19. The People v. Matthew Chambers, Randolph County Circuit Court, Record Book B, 97, Randolph County Courthouse, Chester, Ill.

20. Ibid., 133.


24. History of Knox County, 204.


26. Ibid., 19-21; Western Citizen, September 16, 1842. J. M. Peck states that Copperas Creek “rises near Canton, runs a southeastern course, and enters the Illinois river in six north, five east. Much of it is timbered tract; some good prairie, and a large settlement.” J. M. Peck, A Gazetteer of Illinois, in Three Parts (Philadelphia: Grigg & Elliot, 1837), 184.

27. Borders v. Hayes, 42.

28. Western Citizen, September 16, 23, 1842.

29. Ibid., September 16, 1842.

30. A brick building constructed in 1845 replaced the old log jail. History of Knox County, 140, 145.

31. Western Citizen, September 23, 1842.

32. Ibid., April 6, 1843.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., October 7, 1842.

35. Ibid., December 23, 1842.

36. History of Knox County, 203.

37. Western Citizen, December 23, 1842.

38. History of Knox County, 462.

39. Ibid., 206; Muelder, Fighters for Freedom, 211.

40. History of Knox County, 206.

41. Western Citizen, April 6, 1843; Muelder, Fighters for Freedom, 211-12.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.


45. West to Hayes, February 10, 1843, Hayes Collection.


47. Ibid., 11.

48. Hayes to Hayes, February 27, 1843, Hayes Collection.

49. Western Citizen, April 6, 1843.


51. Trumbull served in the Illinois House of Representatives from 1840 to 1842, as secretary of state of Illinois from 1841 to 1843, as justice of the Illinois Supreme Court from 1848 to 1853, and as a United States senator from 1855 to 1873. Underwood served in both houses of the Illinois General Assembly from 1857 to 1872. Ibid., 101, 215, 221-23, 229.


53. Ibid., 12; Randolph County Circuit Court, Record Book B., 160, Randolph County Courthouse, Chester, Ill.

54. Hannah (a Woman of Color) v. Andrew Borders, Case No. 191, November 9, 1843, Warren County Circuit Court Records, Box 7, Warren County Courthouse, Monmouth, Ill.

55. Ibid.

56. Western Citizen, July 6, 1843.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid.

59. Hayes to Anna Hayes, n.d. [ca. spring 1844], Hayes Collection.

60. Borders v. Hayes, 1. Shields was appointed to the Illinois Supreme Court in 1843. He later served in the U.S. Senate from three states, Illinois, Minnesota, and Missouri, the only man ever to do so. Clayton, Illinois Fact Book and Historical Almanac, 101.


62. Illinois’s 1819 “Black Code” protected slave owners by law and virtually assured the continuance of slavery in the state. Before 1840 free blacks did not have the right to own property, vote, serve as witnesses, hold public office, or attend school. Harris, History of Negro Servitude in Illinois, 9-10; Combined History of Randolph, Monroe, and Perry Counties, 120; Ford, History of Illinois, 32-34.


64. Ibid., 28-31.

65. Ibid., 19-21.

66. Ibid., 32-35.

67. Ibid., 42.

68. Ibid., 43.

69. Ibid., 44-45.

70. Ibid.


72. Underwood to Hayes, January 1, 1845, Hayes Collection.


74. Western Citizen, April 25, 1844.

75. Bergen to Hayes, April 7, 1845, Hayes Collection.

76. The People v. William Hayes and Daniel Morrison, Clinton County Circuit Court, Record Book C, 182, 212, 242, 271, 308, 318, Clinton County Courthouse, Carlyle, Ill.

77. Ibid., 182.

78. Ibid., 318.

79. Randolph County Circuit Court Records, box 46, Randolph County Courthouse, Chester, Ill.

80. Ibid., box 9.


82. In the Matter of Susan’s application for certificate of freedom, Sukey is listed as “Susan” in the Randolph County Circuit Clerk, Record Book B, 316. On that same day, one “Matilda Morrison” (previously recorded as “Sarah Morrison” and who may have been Hannah’s mother), received her freedom. In the Matter of Matilda Morrison, application for Certificate of Freedom, ibid., 315.)
"Notorious Home of Harlotry":
Regulating Prostitution in the
Ohio Valley, 1850-1860

ANITA ASHENDEL

O
n March 4, 1860, Julia Dean's brothel—located in Louisville's first ward and home to Dean and six other women—teemed with customers even though it was a Sunday night. A prostitute from another house, seventeen-year-old Ann Clarkson, and her customer, Frank Holmes, attempted to enter the brothel, but when no one answered their knock at the door, Clarkson tapped on a window and caught the attention of Elizabeth French. Ann Clarkson asked to be admitted, but French explained that the parlor was full and therefore she and Holmes would have to go elsewhere. Clarkson then feigned a need to visit the backyard—perhaps to visit the privy—so Dean instructed French to admit them.¹

According to her statement given to the police, Elizabeth French had noticed that Clarkson carried a gun under her apron. Fearing that the drunken Holmes might take the gun and "do some harm," she warned the other prostitute to keep it away from him. But Clarkson responded oddly, saying that she would be "sorry if he didn't," and that should have alerted French to impending trouble. Entering the house from the backyard, Holmes—who by now had the gun in his possession—"tried to raise a quarrel" with a "cross-eyed" man, and succeeded in scaring him out of the parlor. He then shook hands with several other men before sitting on a sofa next to Alice McDonald, a nineteen-year-old prostitute. At that point, Holmes "put his left hand on her left shoulder, put the pistol in her side, and fired," wounding her. In the commotion that followed, Clarkson hid the weapon under a table. At the trial that followed, two men testified that Holmes did not intentionally shoot McDonald, but that the gun had been fired by mistake. The outcome of this trial remains unknown.²

Historian Joel Best has argued that the study of prostitution can reveal much about the "limited choices available to women in patriarchal society," as well as the culture of bachelorhood that flourished in early nineteenth century America and "the more general threat of urban disorder" in any time period. For the Ohio Valley between 1850 and 1860, an examination of the lives of Julia Dean, Ann Clarkson, Elizabeth French, and other prostitutes makes it possible to see Best's themes work themselves out in specific examples. For instance, historians have extensively documented what Best has
described as a culture of bachelorhood—or “sporting male culture”—for New York City before the Civil War. This same culture appeared in the growing commercial centers of the Ohio Valley, carried there by the large number of male clerks who kept both western businesses and western brothels in operation. A look at the lives of prostitutes in Louisville and Cincinnati also demonstrates, as Best has suggested, the ways in which citizens attempted to ease “urban disorder” by regulating the place of prostitutes in local society. Prostitutes, though not necessarily a “civilizing” influence on these growing towns as has been suggested for the trans-Mississippi West, did inspire middle class and upper class efforts to regulate their presence. By the 1850s, these persistent citizens wanted to move their towns beyond mere commercial growth and to establish their values—self-control and domesticity especially—as dominant in the towns of the Ohio Valley. In other words, the commercial focus of the towns had been settled, and the question that now took priority focused on how exactly people would live their lives amidst commercial success.

In the 1850s, this question arose in Cincinnati and Louisville especially because they had grown rapidly in population during the previous two decades, attracting large numbers of both native-born and foreign-born immigrants. Cincinnati’s population, for example, reached 46,388 in 1840; 115,435 in 1850; and 161,044 in 1860. And Louisville grew at the same pace, from 21,210 citizens in 1840 to 43,194 in 1850, and to 69,750 by 1860. Riots between native born citizens and German immigrants in Louisville and Cincinnati in the 1850s serve as evidence of the tumultuous characters of two cities which had grown so quickly. Even more than tensions between ethnic groups, however, the presence of women who openly violated prevailing gender roles in Cincinnati and Louisville seemed to middle class citizens to demonstrate a lack of individual self control among some local residents. Specifically, prostitutes had to be brought under control and, if not put out of business, then at least eliminated from public view so that they did not openly flaunt the values—purity, domesticity, and self-control—of the new middle class based social order. According to historians Andrew R.L. Cayton and Peter Onuf, the story of the Middle West is the story of “a vigor-
ous, enterprising middle class.” This look at prostitution will show just one part of the efforts of those middle class citizens to shape all parts of society in the Ohio Valley in their own image.5

Ohio Valley census takers routinely noted the presence of any “house of ill-fame,” “assignation house,” or “brothel” as they surveyed their towns in 1850 and 1860. In general, a house of ill-fame was a brothel, but the owner of an assignation house rented rooms overnight or by the hour to prostitutes or illicit lovers. Some madams or “mistresses” of these houses owned property worth thousands of dollars—presumably the house from which they worked. Most census takers labeled the inmates of these houses as prostitutes although they also used a variety of euphemisms including “woman of the town,” “seraglia,” “courtesan,” “sporting lady,” or even “doubtful.”6 A simple “counting” of prostitutes taken in Cincinnati in 1858 found that most houses of prostitution were clustered in the fourteenth and sixth wards and that 823 prostitutes lived in 57 different “houses of ill-fame” and 67 “houses of assignation.” The report estimated that 200 prostitutes had not been accounted for, bringing the total to 1023 in a city of “at least 225,000 inhabitants,” although it is quite possible that the total population was exaggerated since the 1850 census reported only 115,435 inhabitants in Cincinnati. Similarly in 1856, the Chief of Police in Louisville reported seventy-nine “Houses of Prostitution” operating in that city, along with thirty-nine “Houses of Assignation,” 214 “public prostitutes,” ninety-three “Private Prostitutes,” and sixty “kept mistresses.” And this in a city with an estimated population of 70,000 citizens (again higher than census figures).7

Julia Dean’s brothel provides a look inside one of those houses of ill-fame in Louisville. Although owned by only a moderately affluent prostitute, Dean’s house was unusual in Louisville because it housed an especially large number of prostitutes, six in all, and those prostitutes were particularly young, mostly fifteen to twenty years of age. Dean herself was only twenty-five years old. Other brothels in the neighborhood sheltered fewer prostitutes who ranged in age from their early to middle twenties. All of these women gave the immediate geographic area as their place of birth. Dean also possessed more property—both real and personal—than other local brothel owners. Her house, located in a neighborhood where brothels mixed with the homes of mostly German-born merchants and artisans, was valued at $2,000 in the 1860 census—almost twice that of any other brothel in the area and nearly as much as nearby family homes. With $600 of personal property—three to four times that reported for other brothel owners—Dean’s parlor was probably outfitted with sofas, parlor tables, and other fine furniture.8

Unfortunately, no guidebook to antebellum Louisville brothels existed to assist potential customers as was the case in New York City. Still, it is likely that Dean’s house drew a large clientele because of the youth of the prostitutes
who lived there and the more refined environment it provided to customers, an oblique but telling indicator of the growing wealth of Louisville's male citizens. Moreover, the fact that the prostitutes in Dean's house entertained men in a parlor, in addition to their rooms, indicates a certain level of sophistication not shared by competing brothels. Ordinarily, men and women engaged in conversation and had drinks with each other, while other men socialized among themselves and perhaps talked business. The crowded parlor on the Sunday night when Alice McDonald was wounded lends further credibility to Dean's probable position as a prostitute of a "better sort," one that did a great deal of business with a wealthy and prominent local clientele and one that probably turned a larger profit than others. In short, both locals and men from out of town not only transacted a certain business with the women in Dean's brothel, they also conducted legitimate transactions with other men in the parlors of well known brothels. Bustling commercial centers in the Ohio Valley were open to both kinds of business.

But Frank Holmes and Ann Clarkson appear to have been out of their element at Dean's brothel. Holmes is listed in the 1860 census as a watchman, an occupation not usually associated with the clients of an upper tier brothel. Yet his presence in Dean's brothel perhaps should not be entirely surprising. According to the census, he lived with his father who was the "keeper of the workhouse," a place where the younger man would certainly be able to form associations with prostitutes on a regular basis. And Clarkson is listed as living with another prostitute who was in a financial situation a good deal less affluent than Dean's. Dean apparently did not want Holmes and Clarkson in the house, perhaps because she associated them with a lower class of people in Louisville who might disrupt the normally quiet operations of her brothel.

Dean's apparent fears were not unreasonable. Ohio Valley towns experienced high levels of violence during this decade, as did most rapidly growing urban areas in mid-nineteenth century America. Contemporaries often blamed the violence on transients or on various ethnic groups, as in the 1850s riots in Louisville and Cincinnati where Know Nothings attacked German immigrants. The cause for violence in brothels, however, was more likely due to loose social controls over the towns' young, male inhabitants, including those in the middle and upper classes such as those who patronized Julia Dean's establishment. Men who moved west to pursue their dreams in nineteenth century America often acted on impulse and without regard for social or moral constraints. Without the oversight of a father or a paternalistic employer, they sometimes engaged after working hours in activities that were either criminal or at least morally questionable. It was just this lack of control, for example, that fueled revivals in Rochester, New York, in the 1820s and 1830s as the Erie Canal led many young and ungovernable men to the west.
Wheeling, up river from Louisville and Cincinnati, also acquired a reputation for chaos for similar reasons.

In 1850, Louisville was home to 724 male clerks. These men, seventy-five per cent native born and mostly in their mid-twenties, lived near each other in the business district of the city, usually at their places of business. And according to historian Alexander Burckin, they were gaining wealth by 1860. Consequently, they had more money to spend at brothels and taverns, both meeting places for men after working hours. These young men actively engaged in a sporting male culture which has been described by historian Timothy Gilfoyle as one that accepted or perhaps encouraged "male sexual aggressiveness and promiscuity" as well as violent games such as boxing and other "blood sports." Gilfoyle theorizes that this culture was constructed in part in opposition to the feminine controlled and newly created middle class world of home and hearth. As marriage to a "respectable" woman was delayed and bachelorhood became an alternative way of life, men from all backgrounds forged a new way of interacting within and beyond their places of business. Gilfoyle argues that a "large, transient male population," economic forces that led to marriage for "economic reasons" rather than love, new "courtship habits and customs," and the "enhanced power of women within marriage" led to the development of this new culture. These factors were, of course, all present in the Ohio Valley. References to many a "sporting man" and "sporting lady" in the Indianapolis census indicate that the lifestyle was present and well known by such names in the West by mid-century.

According to middle-class opinion, prostitutes themselves invited violence and crime by their very existence, and without them, young men would not find themselves in such predicaments. Consider, for example, the death of Cincinnati prostitute, Kate Beareau. Beareau, who had a husband and child in New Orleans, originally had worked as a servant in a local brothel but then turned to prostitution for larger financial rewards. In 1858, Beareau was stabbed to death by Charles Cook at Caroline Davis's brothel on Lodge Street. Cook's friend, William Seiter, had been in an argument with Beareau when Cook stepped into the fray and stabbed her. (She had apparently refused to accept one of the men as a client and suggested that

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The Cincinnat Home for the Friendless and Female Guardian Society was projected in 1854 by a few ladies who felt the need for some plan of reform for fallen women. Cincinnati Historical Society Library, Cincinnati Museum Center.
he visit his sister instead!) Many other people in the house witnessed the altercation including William Swift, a companion of the other two men. According to a newspaper report, all three men were either the sons of Cincinnati merchants or employed by them. And a city directory indicates all three lived in boardinghouses in Cincinnati. These were young men who apparently had parents nearby and supposedly had reason to act with self-control, but who still engaged in violent acts despite any social constraints imposed by the local community. In another such incident, Abraham Seigel stole women’s clothing, jewelry, and other items from wholesalers by saying he was employed by A&I Wolf and Co., although he had been fired from the store nearly two months earlier. A newspaper report suggested that he took the clothing to pay prostitutes for their services and blamed the “influence of these depraved women” for his “lapse from honesty.” But the most dangerous sporting man also could be a prostitute’s husband. Joseph Beitler’s wife, a prostitute who kept a room at a “doggery” on Fourth Street in Cincinnati, was allegedly beaten by her husband for not bringing in enough money. For this, he had to give a bond of $1000 for a year of good behavior.

Other scattered reports of violence toward prostitutes in the Ohio Valley suggest that they made easy targets for men outside the confines of a brothel. One man, for example, shot a Lexington prostitute because she had “cohabited” with a black man the previous evening. The husband of a Cincinnati prostitute beat her one evening because she had not brought in enough money that day. And another Cincinnati man who attempted to “cowhide” a prostitute was fined thirty-six dollars and costs, but the court fined the woman two hundred dollars for “provoxing a breach of the peace.” Finally, David Moore shot “Frances Horrocks alias Frances Williams alias Susan Losy” on Cincinnati’s Fourth Street for reasons unknown. The prostitute, who the Cincinnati Gazette noted had been in the trade...
since the age of fifteen, was expected to recover.\textsuperscript{38}

Prostitutes, however, also sometimes attacked each other, much of the violence probably originating in competition for customers. In 1860, for example, Julia Dean and Elizabeth French were again in the Louisville news, having been “arraigned for drunkenness and disorderly conduct” on June 5. The previous night they had used “very profane language” during a fight on Market Street at the home of their washerwoman, and during the course of the fight French cut Dean with a knife. Dean then grabbed an ax and went after French. Somehow, the washerwoman’s son kept Dean out of the house while French cowered inside. Other historians have noted similar, if less potentially lethal, arguments between prostitutes over articles of clothing. Since the altercation between Dean and French took place at the washerwoman’s home, it is possible that clothing, an essential aspect of attracting customers, was the trouble. That certainly was the case when another Louisville prostitute, Mary Davis, damaged the clothing of Mary Keech (presumably another prostitute) at the home of their washerwoman, Maria Knight. Similarly, an altercation between Margaret Edwards and Rose Stewart, also in Louisville, resulted in a torn dress apparently because Edwards “blackguarded” Stewart on the street. Other altercations between washerwomen and prostitutes and between prostitutes in other cities also involved damage to clothing.\textsuperscript{19} Finally, although Julia Dean did not harm French during her ax attack, other prostitutes staged successful attacks against their peers. Mary Frick stabbed Elizabeth Johnson with a Spanish dirk at the National Theatre in Cincinnati. Philopena Potts stabbed Ann Finnigan because of a reportedly slanderous statement. Alice Nice and Mary Fuller used a bowie knife to stab Elizabeth Irwin, who later died of the wound, in the abdomen. And Cincinnati prostitutes Sophy Irvin, Catherine Sparks, Elizabeth Palmer, and Margaret Brashears entertained theatergoers in the third tier by “engaging in a ‘free fight.’”\textsuperscript{20}

Newspapers also told of prostitutes who attacked customers, as when a prostitute described as “former friend” of Robert Glenn stabbed him after he grabbed her on Cincinnati’s Fifth Street. Similarly, Frederick Richards was attacked and robbed when he spent the night at a Louisville brothel with either Elizabeth Stewart, Elizabeth French (perhaps the same Elizabeth French), or Julie Standford. Around eleven that night, one of the three women, his companion for the evening, let the other two women into the room where they threatened his naked body with a hot poker and tried to throw his pants into the fire. In the process, they lifted eighty-six dollars from him, perhaps an attempt to collect an “extra” fee.\textsuperscript{21} Finally, Ohio Valley newspapers recounted how prostitution itself often began with an act of violence in the process of seducing girls into the trade. The Louisville Daily Courier, for example, told the story of how Henry McKinney persuaded a New Albany girl to move across the river to Louisville by promising
that his sister would train her as a milliner. In reality, the sister was a prostitute, and McKinney raped the girl to prevent her from returning to New Albany and thereby condemned her to a life of prostitution. Women in Cincinnati also were accused of luring girls as young as twelve into the life. There a woman was sent to prison for hiring girls supposedly to do housework and then “inducing them to indulge in the worst of conduct.”

The violence and disarray in the lives of Ohio Valley prostitutes would eventually be brought under some control merely by exposure in the newspapers. An 1849 issue of the Indianapolis Locomotive, for example, reported a “general melee and riot” at Mrs. Tucker’s brothel, including many particulars of the conflict but failing to mention the names of the men involved. Indeed the editor stated that the “prosecutor deserves credit for the delicacy with which he handles these cases, as he prevents exposures that would be unpleasant.” Nonetheless, the activities of the men did come under some scrutiny by the local prosecutor as a result of the press reports. In the late 1850s, however, at least one Ohio Valley newspaper adopted a different approach to reporting on the sex trade by publicly disclosing the names of prostitutes’ clients. In 1857, the Cincinnati Daily Gazette published the names of men found at a particularly “notorious home of harlotry whose inmates have for a long time outraged the neighborhood by their daily rioting.” The purpose of such exposure was not only to shame the men but also to prevent them from returning to the brothel and, hopefully, to close the house after the madam’s profits declined.

By the time the Gazette began its crusade, Cincinnati had devised a criminal code that attempted to limit the local sex trade to a confined district and to punish madams and prostitutes for pursuing their line of business. This crackdown on brothels came not coincidentally at the same time that an increasing number of single women lived in boarding houses, and when female boarding schools opened for business. The Daily Cincinnati Gazette even suggested that the owners of houses of prostitution ought to be prosecuted so that “respectable” businesses would not be mistaken for brothels. Two years earlier, a house “occupied by females of questionable reputation was attacked by a crowd of men, and completely riddled with stones and other missiles.” Perhaps this attack led “respectable” establishments to worry about the safety and well being of the women who lived there. The new regulations for sex traders included larger fines and longer prison sentences for women who owned houses where prostitutes plying their trade than for the prostitutes who lived in such houses. Madams—who it seems irritated respectable middle class citizens most of all—formed the entrepreneurial arm of prostitution without whose encouragement some women might not have entered the profession and also without whom those who had become prostitutes would have a more difficult time conducting their activities.
It is also probable that the financial success of some madams created resentment among other citizens. After all, some few owners of brothels in Cincinnati and Louisville possessed real estate worth as much as $8,000, and almost all of them owned tangible goods worth at least a few hundred dollars. These women therefore made good money, more than many middle class professionals, while flaunting middle class ideals of women’s superior morality. In fact, the Cincinnati “census” of prostitutes taken in 1858 estimated that $250,000 had been invested in property used for prostitution. According to middle class thinking, madams ought to have served as warnings of the tragic consequences of women’s public activities, not as examples of financial independence.14

The new code covering prostitution allowed judges to punish prostitutes and madams harshly. Women convicted of keeping a house of ill-fame, for example, could be fined from fifty to three hundred dollars, sent to jail, and fed a diet of bread and water. Indeed, brothel owner Emma Wheeler was fined $100 for the crime, and when she was convicted on the same charge eighteen months later her fine was increased to $200. In another case, the court seized a brothel operated by Biddy Fury and William Swift near the Miami Canal and sold the couple’s furniture to pay fines of $100 and court costs. The prostitutes in the brothel, on the other hand, were “discharged after admonition from the Court.” The new laws governing prostitution, however, did have some loopholes. Early in the 1850s, for example, the Cincinnati courts had to decide whether married women who kept brothels could be prosecuted, indicating perhaps that this was not an uncommon phenomenon. The court ruled that “when married women, living with their husbands, conducted a house for the purpose of prostitution it would be presumed, unless the contrary were proved, that they acted under the coercion of their husbands and consequently were not amenable for the crime.”

Sometimes owners of brothels used legal means to keep themselves out of prison. This was possible because, as the courts attempted to
regulate the sex trade, jurisdiction over the new laws could be confusing. A conflict in jurisdiction in Cincinnati between the police court that prosecuted prostitutes and the Court of Common Pleas that handled brothel owners, set one owner free when the police court mistakenly sentenced her. To add more confusion to the laws, the legal terms or words used in court cases, as opposed to the facts or substance of a case, could determine the crime and the punishment both. For example, in contrast to the punishment given to the actual owners of brothels, women and men charged only with “harboring lewd women” usually paid a small fine and court costs. In July 1854, Mary Johnston, listed as “colored” by the press, was fined $5 and costs for “harboring lewd women,” both white and “colored.” Since Johnston apparently did not own the house, her fine was small. 27

In 1858 in the area of Cincinnati known to locals as “Bucktown” where most of the free blacks in town lived, the arrest of brothel owners provides a clue to the class basis of the enforcement of local laws. In this case, “four persons were yesterday arrested charged with renting buildings in ‘Bucktown’ to be used as houses of ill fame.” The paper did not argue against these charges, but stated that “some of the more genteel establishments within five minutes of the City Buildings” should be investigated as well. The implication, of course, was that houses which served clients who could pay high prices or more prominent members of the community or which were operated by whites would not be prosecuted. Similarly, a white man found at the house Mary Johnston mentioned above was arrested along with Johnston’s black patrons, but he did not appear before the court, even though the press questioned the omission implying that the court had given special treatment to Johnston’s middle class white customers. In short, while progress had been made in devising laws to prosecute owners, the courts and police enforced laws selectively and economic status determined the probability of prosecution. This was not unusual. Historians Patricia Cline Cohen and Gilfoyle have noted selective enforcement in New York City where some middle class property owners rented to madams who operated expensive brothels and consequently made considerable income from those rentals but without being charged or going to jail. 28

Prostitutes, however, who merely worked in a house they did not own themselves, were seldom charged with serious crimes and received lower fines for their conduct than did owners or renters of the buildings. Specifically, their behavior was often described as drunkenness or “bad language” rather than prostitution, and they were charged and prosecuted accordingly. When, for example, Cin-
cincinnati police arrested the owner of a confectionery for keeping a disorderly house, they also arrested Melinda Thompson, a “cyprian,” and her customer for using bad language, fining her five dollars plus costs. Women who walked the streets at night were also subject to a five-dollar fine and sometimes a stint in jail. Indeed, the Cincinnati city council labeled as misdemeanors several different offenses such as two or more prostitutes walking together at night, “lewd” and “immoral acts,” indecent “exhibition,” “obscene language,” and “disorderly conduct.” Like the Cincinnati courts, courts in Louisville fined prostitutes for a variety of public behaviors and handed out small fines and short jail sentences. In June 1859, Catherine Mathews was sent to the workhouse after she informed Louisville police as well as the court that her reasons for walking along the streets at one in the morning simply did not concern them. Five other Louisville women received time in the workhouse for their activities in a “shanty” frequented by “youths of a tender age” where a “witness” claimed to have seen “two boys in bed with one girl, and two girls in bed with one boy.” In these cases, city officials did not so much try to eliminate prostitution as to regulate it.

In the end, prostitutes in the Ohio Valley led a hard life during the nineteenth century. Although some prostitutes like Julia Dean lived comfortably, most prostitutes lived in poverty and suffered from periodic arrest, fines, and imprisonment. A look at the life of Indianapolis prostitute Mary Boden demonstrates the limits within which prostitutes who were not financially prosperous worked and lived. In April 1855, Boden and Sarah Childers, “two cyprians of some little notoriety” according to an Indianapolis newspaper, were “severely fined” twenty dollars plus costs for “vice and immorality.” Since neither could pay her fine, they were jailed. Unfortunately for Mary, she had just been released from jail the previous day “for the same offense.” A man with the two women, Austin Webb, “was fined $10 and costs, which he paid and went on his way rejoicing.” Then in January 1856, Boden’s clothing caught fire during what was described as a “drunken frolic.” A man, perhaps Webb or another customer, then moved her from the Poor House—probably the only institution which would house an injured and out of work prostitute—to a “hut” where she was lived “in a state of horrible destitution during the late severe weather.” She died, according to the newspaper, from “exposure and want.” Editors, of course, did not print such stories to arouse sympathy for prostitutes, but rather to warn the public of the horrors of the profession and the need to remove at least these most unfortunate women from society.

When newspapers in the Ohio Valley reported on prostitution in the middle of the nineteenth century, they gave historians a rare look at the institution, one of the few economic choices outside of marriage for young women of small means in a rough and tumble market society. In Cincinnati and Louis-
ville, the trade had flourished under the influence of the male sporting life in which prostitutes provided an essential service. But as city officials and other influential citizens molded the two cities to fit their middle class views, prostitutes faced new restrictions, laws and regulations that did not seek to eliminate the sex trade, but rather to remove it from public view. Prostitutes who transacted their business out of the public eye still violated public morals, but did not openly contradict the middle class ideal of protected, domestic womanhood and thereby expose it as a myth for some women in the Ohio Valley. As historian Christine Stansell discovered in her study of New York City, for women, prostitution was “an economic and a social option, a means of self-support and a way to bargain with men in a situation where a living wage was hard to come by and holding one’s own in heterosexual relations was difficult.” Prostitutes became standards by which other women measured their own adherence to the pious, pure, submissive, and domestic lives they believed they must live. Prostitutes, the most “public” of working women, also reinforced worries about the fate of all women who did not adhere to society’s standards. Women who traded sex for cash put the lie to the pretension that all women had male providers to protect them and thereby exposed the fact that the “triumph of commercial capitalism and the rise of a midwestern bourgeoisie” in the Ohio Valley did not produce a complete success for all persons, least of all for poor women. 

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1. Louisville Daily Courier, March 6 and 27, 1860. Julia Dean’s brothel is found in the 1860 Federal Population Census, Jefferson County, Louisville, Kentucky, First Ward, pp. 195-96. McDonald survived as she is listed living in Dean’s brothel in that census which was taken in June 1860. Information about Clarkson is found in the 1860 Federal Population Census, Jefferson County, Louisville, Kentucky, First Ward, p. 114.


11. Holmes is found in the 1860 Federal Population Census.


8. 1860 Federal Population Census, Jefferson County, Kentucky, First Ward, City of Louisville, pp. 195-196. Caution must be used when using census data but it remains the best information we have concerning the personal lives of prostitutes.


14. The most memorable example of this footloose, young antebellum businessman is Richard Robinson who is the most likely murderer of celebrated New York City prostitute Helen Jewett. This murder is the basis for Cohen, *Murder of Helen Jewett*. Gilfoyle, *City of Eros*, 92-116, describes the “sporting man” culture that developed in the 1830s. Violence in general in western towns is described in Richard C. Wade, *The Urban Frontier: The Rise of Western Cities, 1790-1830* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 120-24 and in R. Carlyle Buley, *The Old Northwest: Pioneer Period, 1815-1840*, vol. 1 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1950), 437-44. Both of these works focus on transient workers as sources of violence and not on the mercantile clerks or other young men who are the source of violence in my Ohio Valley examples. In the case of Julia Dean, census information does not reveal the ages of the men involved. Still, their behavior fits the pattern established at an earlier period in the east and one that can also be seen in Cincinnati.

15. *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, November 1 and 2, 1858. (The name of the Cincinnati newspaper changes over the years between *Cincinnati Daily Gazette* and *Daily Cincinnati Gazette*. It is the same paper.) There were several Charles Cooks and William Swifts listed in the 1861 city directory and none in the 1860 census. Williams’ *Cincinnati Directory*, City Guide and Business Mirror (Cincinnati: C.S. Williams, 1861), 112, 332.


17. Ibid., April 5, 1865.


24. *Daily Cincinnati Gazette*, July 27, 1853. The attack was

25. *Daily Cincinnati Gazette*, March 24, 1852; August 22, 1853; August 24, 1853.
26. *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, May 27, 1852 for the court decision; April 5, 1856 for the Betthers.
27. For court problems: *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, October 12, 1857. For examples of charges against owners see: *Daily Cincinnati Gazette*, March 1, 1853; May 24, 1853; June 15, 1853; August 15, 1853; August 22, 1853; August 24, 1853; November 1, 1853; July 18, 1856; July 25, 1856; October 5, 1857; October 12, 1857; April 1, 1858; July 7, 1859. For examples of harboring charges: *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, March 22, 1854; March 27, 1854; March 29, 1854; May 31, 1854. Mary Johnston is found in *Daily Cincinnati Gazette*, July 22, 1854.
29. Examples include: *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, December 28, 1853; March 29, 1854; April 8, 1854; April 21, 1854; May 1, 1854; September 4, 1856; *Indianapolis Daily Journal*, April 19, 1855; Louisville Daily Courier, June 1859; July 30, 1859. For other areas of the country see: Cohen, *Murder of Helen Jewett*, 74-5; Butler, *Daughters of Joy*, 55.
31. Ibid., January 29, 1856.
Eastern Kentucky and the War on Poverty:
Grass-roots Activism, Regional Politics, and Creative Federalism in the Appalachian South during the 1960s

MARGARET RIPLEY WOLFE

During the 1960s, Appalachia became one of the principal theaters in America’s War on Poverty and eastern Kentucky became a major battleground. For approximately a decade, commencing with the United Mine Workers of America (UMW) general strike of 1959 and continuing through the Lyndon B. Johnson administration to 1969, rugged eastern Kentucky attracted national and international attention. Journalists embraced the plight of downtrodden mountaineers and contributed to yet another of Appalachia’s several “rediscoveries.”

Newspaper and magazine articles and television and radio news reports that dealt with poverty, out-migration, strip mining, and the broad-form deed evoked emotional responses in America and abroad. Indigenous voices articulated the peculiar problems of the Cumberlands, elected officials rallied their forces, and troops of volunteers and college and university students signed on for the poverty tour. The often-conflicting dynamics of grass-roots activism, creative federalism, and courthouse politics joined in eastern Kentucky.

The sixties sustained a national milieu that sometimes spawned and often fostered social activism. During that decade, circumstances brought the attention of print and broadcast journalists to bear on a multiplicity of existing problems. The literature of expose, intrinsic to the American reform tradition, again had its day, garnering the attention of the concerned citizenry and shaping the thinking of politicians and scholars. In classic American muckraking tradition, Michael Harrington’s The Other America: Poverty in the United States, for example, published in 1962, turned a spotlight on the underprivileged and proved to be highly influential with policymakers. Some reformers of these years seemed to assume that poverty equaled purity. Involving the untainted poor therefore held the potential to expand democracy, render government more responsive, and, in turn, elevate the political process. This underlying if unspoken assumption, in part, gave rise to one of the key strategies of the poverty
warriors: maximum feasible participation.³

Although Appalachia has never possessed a monopoly on the American poor, the region possessed more than its fair share of poverty when John F. Kennedy took the presidential oath. Indeed, historical accounts have failed to record a golden age when mountain life was easy and harsh circumstances predated the advent of the mining industry. That notwithstanding, the coal camps and coal towns almost never achieved the high standards touted by promoters; the culture engendered by the industry brought its own peculiar hardships.⁴ The coal industry had held eastern Kentucky in its grip for decades, and miners had come to depend on union representation. For laborers and their families, “before unionization” and “after unionization” held a significance not so unlike that of B.C. and A.D. in the annals of Christianity.

During the fifties and sixties, the UMW failed many of those who had pinned their hopes to it. “What turned out to be the most damaging to the miners in the long run,” according to Kentucky historians Lowell H. Harrison and James C. Klotter, “was mechanization of the coalfields.”⁵ UMW President John L. Lewis had signed a wage agreement after a work stoppage in 1950 that essentially freed companies to reduce costs through mechanization at the expense of the labor force. Lewis claimed at the time that it was “better to have half a million men working in the industry at good wages, high standards of living, than it is to have a million men working in the industry in poverty and degradation.” By the early 1960s, however, only some 160,000 miners worked in the coal industry in the entire United States, many of them reduced to abysmal circumstances.⁶ In Kentucky, jobs in underground mining decreased by seventy percent during the fifteen years following the 1950 agreement. Surface (or strip) mining, which had produced only two percent of Kentucky’s coal in 1940, accounted for thirty-three percent in 1960.⁷

When some of the big Kentucky coal operators refused to sign the national contract won by the UMW in 1959 that guaranteed a wage increase of two dollars a day, John L. Lewis called for a general strike to commence on March 9 of that same year.⁸ The UMW also had a quarrel with the numerous small operators and their truck mines (those without direct rail access). Although the union scale had been established at $24.25 for a day’s work, they paid their employees, many of them card-carrying union members, as little as ten or twelve dollars. It was not uncommon for UMW-contract operators to buy coal from non-union mines and to sell it as their own or to lease non-union mines to meet production needs. The failure of the truck mines to pay the forty-cent royalty to the UMW Welfare and Retirement Fund on

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Coal team mining for domestic ore at Muddy Branch, Johnson County, Kentucky. The Filson Historical Society.
each ton of coal also galled the union. In 1961, an estimated seventy to eighty percent of the truck mines in Kentucky paid no royalties. Union officials readily admitted that probably half of those in eastern Kentucky would have to shut down if forced to comply with the union contract.9

Frustrated by their inability to force the small operators to pay the royalty, the UMW leadership turned on its own members. In 1960 trustees of the UMW Welfare and Retirement Fund had taken away free hospital and medical care for union members who had been continuously unemployed for a year. In February 1961, the same officials cut the pensions of retired miners from one hundred to seventy-five dollars per month. In August 1962, they announced the withdrawal of medical care and all other welfare benefits, effective September 1, for some four thousand miners in the Appalachian fields who worked for companies that failed to make full royalty payments to the fund. Toward the end of 1962, they had decided to dispose of four small UMW hospitals at Middlesboro, Hazard, Whitesburg, and McDowell; the other six, scattered about in coal towns of Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia, remained in jeopardy.10

Historically speaking, the labor movement in the mountains, in large part, had arisen in response to local conditions. It had not only depended upon but had also been nurtured by grass-roots organizing at the community level. Subsequently, a strong allegiance to the UMW developed. Even when the national leadership chose to abandon significant numbers of mountain miners, some of them retained a commitment to social justice and a sense of community that sustained activism. From this base emerged the “roving picket” movement. Unauthorized by union leadership who tried without success to stop it, this grass-roots protest was essentially spontaneous in origin. Disenchanted miners, acting in concert, shut down mines and pressured operators to sign union contracts.11

“The lid blew off,” Kentucky journalist John Ed Pearce wrote, “when, in the last week of August, hundreds of miners received letters from the UMW Welfare and Retirement Fund revoking their cherished welfare cards.” These cards had entitled miners and their families to free treatment at the union hospitals. Desperate men responded with walkouts at non-union mines. The “roving picket” movement, so-called because it targeted different dog-hole mines each day in seemingly random fashion, had begun. According to Pearce, “unidentified men” stormed the mine of a nonpaying operator near the Harlan County line, chased off the crew, and dynamited the mine machinery.” Then, on October 12, when the welfare fund officials announced their intention to sell four of its hospitals, the movement gained momentum. “Overnight,” Pearce observed, “the small band of pickets grew to caravans of a hundred, a hundred and fifty, and two hundred cars which moved through the area, closing mines by a show of force.” Shootings and beatings, burning, and dynamiting became increasingly common as the numbers of pickets increased and emotions intensified.
The renegade miners blocked roads, wrecked trucks, and overturned cars. By December the caravan of pickets had grown to as many as five hundred men. Small contingents of state police stood between the “roving pickets” and the operators’ gun-toting guards. 12

Such developments in the coal communities of eastern Kentucky did not escape the attention of the national media. Inspired to a considerable degree by the 1963 publication of Kentucky native Harry M. Caudill’s monumental Night Comes to the Cumberlands: A Biography of a Depressed Area, reporters and photographers began to make their way into the mountains. 13 One of those who responded to the Whitesburg attorney’s invitation to come and see for himself was Homer Bigart of the New York Times. His report, “Kentucky Miners: A Grim Winter,” appeared on October 20, 1963. Invoking “the pinched faces of hungry children” and providing a gut-wrenching description of circumstances confronting “tens of thousands of miners and subsistence farmers” as well as their families, Bigart’s article proved to be pivotal in launching the War on Poverty. 14

The White House soon felt the repercussions. Heretofore, President John F. Kennedy, along with his aides and cabinet members, had neither been unmindful of poverty nor unresponsive. 15 Indeed, Kennedy, acting on the advice of governors from key southern mountain states, had already created the President’s Appalachian Regional Commission (PARC) to study prevailing problems and to make recommendations to alleviate them. One can trace the establishment of PARC and, in turn, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), to the efforts of Kentucky governor Bert T. Combs and “Project 60,” an ambitious development plan for eastern Kentucky spearheaded by Combs’s man, John D. Whisman. 16 Nevertheless, the story that Bigart told inspired a commitment and concentration that had not yet materialized.

Theodore (Ted) C. Sorensen, who served as special counsel to the president, recollected that Kennedy had “read an article in the New York Times which called attention to the deplorable conditions in parts of Kentucky and asked [him] to see what could be done about it.” Then, the former White House aide reminisced, “after some conversations, he [the president] decided on a crash program to help the worst areas in eastern Kentucky and possibly some in West Virginia through the winter.” “After considerable groundwork had been laid,” Sorensen continued, Kennedy “called a meeting with the outgoing governor [Bert T. Combs] and representatives of the incoming governor, [Edward T., Jr.] Breathitt, immediately after the Kentucky election, planned just such a program, and contemplated touring those areas himself once the program was under way.” 17 Before President Kennedy’s fateful trip to Dallas, he had mobilized his cabinet members and other high-ranking federal officials to focus on the plight of eastern Kentucky’s poor during the winter of 1963-1964. 18
Although the concept of “a war on poverty” had originated during the Kennedy administration and some implementation had begun with the “New Frontier,” President Lyndon B. Johnson made “the War on Poverty” along with civil rights the cornerstones of his “Great Society.” Within the Kennedy White House, various aides and cabinet members had continued to debate how best to shape and implement a full-fledged antipoverty program. After Kennedy’s assassination, LBJ responded favorably to what heretofore had been a somewhat tentative undertaking, insisting that his advisors move quickly to formulate the specifics for a legislative package.

When LBJ delivered his State of the Union address on January 8, 1964, he told Congress and the nation that “here and now” his administration declared “unconditional war on poverty in America.” The president kept up the pressure on all fronts, and by August 20, 1964, the Economic Opportunity Act became law. In the meantime, he persuaded Sargent Shriver, brother-in-law of the slain president, not only to become director of the War on Poverty Task Force but also to continue his work with the Peace Corps; later Shriver headed the Office of Economic Opportunity. LBJ also promised in his State of the Union message to “launch a special effort in the chronically distressed areas of Appalachia.”

Already the “crash program” for eastern Kentucky had committed 16.5 million federal dollars to the winter-relief program. By April 1964, Johnson seemed ready to act on his January commitment. With the report of the PARC in hand, LBJ made what was described as “a sudden and dramatic visit to Eastern Kentucky and other Appalachian poverty states.” During the two-day trip, on April 24-25, President Johnson began to speak of a domestic “Marshall Plan.” “Deeply moved by the grinding poverty he saw yesterday in Eastern Kentucky,” the Louisville Courier-Journal reported in its Sunday edition, the president “will ask Congress next week to appropriate $250 million to launch a ‘Marshall plan’ for Appalachia.” Over five years, the proposed program was expected to cost four billion dollars. Although administration efforts to secure passage of the Appalachian bill failed in 1964, revised legislation passed both houses of Congress the next year and Johnson signed the Appalachian Regional Development Act on March 9, 1965.

The rhetoric of self-help and community involvement emanating from Washington, D.C., suggested the possibility of a departure from politics as usual. The spectacle of LBJ’s visit to the mountains, his public statements to the na-
tion, and signals that both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations had sent already excited veteran activists and won new converts to social change. The hullabaloo also raised the expectations of the downtrodden and energized people who had previously been excluded from public policymaking. History has hardly accused LBJ of political naivete, but his social program bordered on being quixotic. Even so, commitment to the expansion of participatory democracy fell well within the realm of American ideology. For the first three years or so of the War on Poverty, the Johnson presidency attempted to transmit that dream to forgotten Americans and to guarantee a place for the poor in antipoverty policymaking.

The official papers of the Johnson presidency demonstrate clearly that LBJ kept his finger on the pulse of the poverty program, its historical significance, and his legacy. He was directly responsible for the preparation of administrative histories including that of the OEO. According to that official account, the War on Poverty had compressed “into a brief span, an entire social revolution... a ‘quiet revolution’... carried out in meeting halls and classrooms; town halls and neighborhood centers.” It had “offered self-help as a substitute for welfare and participation as a substitute for acceptance [of the status quo]” across America “in a thousand communities, in every state, in almost every county.”

Nevertheless, in theoretical planning as well as attempted implementation, the Johnson administration clearly had not completely reckoned with the remarkable resilience of the urban machines and courthouse gangs. Five months after LBJ signed the antipoverty legislation, OEO Director Shriver warned that some politicians felt “threatened by a new force being given prominence by our insistence on wide community representation”; the poor, meanwhile, “upset about the formation of these local poverty boards, feeling they are excluded [all of which is] complicated by splits between militant and less-militant minority leaders.”

During the fall of 1966, Douglass Cater, special assistant to the president, cautioned that the failure of local governments to function effectively might endanger “the whole concept of creative federalism.” Writing to OEO Director Shriver, Cater outlined three major concerns of the White House: local administrative conditions that might handicap aid programs, how the federal government might improve those conditions to make sure that citizens received the full benefits of the programs, and what the federal government might do to encourage reform at the local levels. The president expected Shriver to study these matters and make recommendations by December 1, 1966. Creative federalism notwithstanding, the party system remained well-entrenched. Patronage may have flowed “from the top down” but votes counted “from the bottom up.” State politicians remained especially attentive to local powerbrokers; those at the federal level had hardly achieved autonomy.

Realities in eastern Kentucky combined with creative federalism to
produce a fleeting interlude of grassroots activism. Poor people whom politicians had heretofore valued largely as pawns possessing votes they could buy now embraced participatory democracy. They attended community meetings, created citizens’ organizations, published newsletters, organized demonstrations, and staged protests. Their concerns included unemployment, local education, environmental destruction, and political corruption. Not surprisingly, the desperate unemployed men of eastern Kentucky looked to the nation’s capital.

“The roving pickets” phenomenon had been a reality in the mountains since late 1962. Jobless miners had kept the movement alive for more than a year despite considerable economic and political opposition at both the state and local levels. Neither the miners nor their enemies were strangers to violence and intimidation. Unknown parties had dynamited the homes of “roving pickets” along with houses and churches of those who rendered support to the miners. “Roving pickets” in Letcher County had faced charges of assault with intent to kill, and a federal grand jury had indicted one of their principal leaders, Berman Gibson, and seven others for attempting to dynamite a railroad bridge; four of them had supposedly signed confessions while in jail. To defend “roving pickets” facing criminal charges and to assist with other litigation, trade unionists and liberal activists in New York City had founded the Committee for Miners during July 1963. The following January, the organization chartered a bus and representatives of the “roving pickets” took their troubles to Washington, D.C.

When LBJ declared war on poverty, “roving pickets” were on the scene. For three intensive days, January 7-9, they staged rallies and press conferences and met with officials of the Johnson administration, congressmen, and university students as well as religious and civic groups. Perhaps the most meaningful outcome of the trip came when presidential aide George Reedy suggested that the miners go home to Kentucky and get ready to assist the government with the War on Poverty. Caught up in the heady experience of the trip and the euphoria that carried them back to the hills, the leaders of the “roving pickets” transformed the movement into the Appalachian Committee for Full Employment (ACFE) later that same month.

The unemployed miners believed that becoming a legitimate organization qualified them for federal funds, not a far-fetched assumption given the rhetoric of the Johnson administration and the OEO’s later sponsorship of Community Action Agencies (CAAs) and Community Action Programs (CAPs). Nevertheless, as Berea College’s Loyal Jones observed, “Government will not long finance or fund an insurrection against itself.”

An alliance of local politicians and powerbrokers in eastern Kentucky joined forces against the ACFE. Although similar conflicts occurred in neighboring counties, Perry County provided the backdrop for the most publicized fight. There, a panoply of unemployed miners, students, outside agitators, and other
malcontents took on the establishment of businessmen, coal operators, publishers of the *Hazard Herald*, and assorted officeholders and law-enforcement agencies. In truth, the ACFE made a good faith effort to operate within the framework of the federal antipoverty program. Members drafted an unsuccessful proposal for federal funding and failed to secure CAA status. They tried desperately and with very limited and short-lived success to place representatives on legally constituted CAA boards in eastern Kentucky. "We were sold out," one of the "roving pickets" later observed, "not down the line, up the line." Nevertheless, for several years they published a newsletter, put themselves forward for elective offices in the primaries, and ran their own aid program for needy families. Make-work projects for unemployed fathers—"Happy Pappies" as they became known—constituted the most concrete aid that came the way of the jobless miners. Yet it, too, proved extremely limited and highly susceptible to political machinations.\(^{35}\)

**E**
ven though the disaffected miners had attempted to legitimize themselves, some of them continued to think and speak in revolutionary terms. "They won't have to go to Vietnam to fight their guerrilla warfare—it'll be right here in eastern Kentucky," warned Everette Tharp, one of the most articulate of the old "roving pickets" and the secretary for ACFE. "These mountains is a good place for guerrilla warfare—they've got it dug full of holes already."\(^{36}\)

Any evidence of radicalism had played into the hands of the ACFE's opponents, who had already proved all too willing to portray the unemployed miners and their supporters as bomb-throwing, dynamite-wielding radicals influenced by "outsiders." In 1964, a three-day Easter weekend rally at the Allais Union Hall, sponsored by the ACFE and attended by representatives of the New-York based Committee for Miners, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), and the Progressive Miners League, fueled the "outsider" allegation. Hamish Sinclair, for example, a Scottish-born trade unionist and a field representative of the Committee for Miners, was not an American citizen.\(^{37}\) As for the reaction to the influx of college and university students, writer Gurney Norman, who had been a reporter for the *Hazard Herald* during the early sixties, recalled that he had been told by a local civic leader: "Watch 'em honey! A lot of 'em are art majors."\(^{38}\)

When confronted with the "roving pickets" phenomenon and later with the ACFE, the establishment organized law and order leagues, denied the miners and their sympathizers the use of public buildings, called for activation of the National Guard, and encouraged law-enforcement officers to harass dissidents. The establishment had also turned to the time-tested American tradition of red-baiting. "Communism Comes to the Mountains of East Kentucky" proclaimed the bold headlines of the *Hazard Herald* in 1963. Publishers of the newspaper sounded the alarm after having reportedly uncovered in the Hazard vicinity a
New York “pink sheet,” Progressive Labor, whose editors were avowed Communists dedicated to the overthrow of the United States government. The paper’s southern correspondent supposedly had written “half-truths” and “uncomplimentary remarks” about the local newspaper. Furthermore, he reported that a class war raged in the Kentucky coalfields and that the local boss system robbed the poor and rewarded the rich. Many of the pickets, the Hazard Herald feared, had been “caught unawares in this Communist espionage movement [and its attempt] to get a foothold in this part of the country.”39 One of the “roving pickets,” Charles “Buck” Maggard, probably said it best: “Just made them [the establishment] look that much more foolish. Can’t you just see the Communists taking over Hazard? What in the hell would they have done with it?”40

The Communist bugaboo came to bear on yet another grassroots organization in eastern Kentucky: the Appalachian Volunteers (AVs). In tandem with the initiatives launched from Washington, D.C., during late 1963, federal officials began to cast about for indigenous support and to forge alliances with volunteers and established organizations in the mountains.41 By late November 1963, the Council of the Southern Mountains (CSM) based at Berea College had agreed to coordinate private voluntary efforts in the Kentucky mountains and to enlist faculty and students from institutions of higher learning in the eastern portion of the state.42 By early 1964, CSM, with a $50,000 grant from the Area Development Administration of the Department of Commerce, had begun to harness the youthful enthusiasm of college students.43

From the AV’s inception during that harsh mountain winter of 1963-1964 until the split with CSM in 1966, the emphasis had been “helping people help themselves.” For the staid old CSM, led by Perley Ayer, that meant mutual cooperation; for the increasingly radicalized AVs, it meant confrontation. Change in the mountains, the young reformers came to realize, might mean circumventing county governments and school superintendents. How best to approach and achieve reform in the mountains posed the most significant disagreement between the Council and the AVs, but lesser controversies also plagued the parent organization and its offspring. It all came to a head on May 2, 1966, when Perley Ayer fired the two top-ranking individuals...
of the AVs, Milton Ogle and Daniel Fox. Thirteen staff members resigned in protest and on May 3, Ogle, Fox, and the others incorporated in Kentucky as the Appalachian Volunteers, a free-standing, nonprofit organization.44

As long as they had concerned themselves only with “painting and fixing up schoolhouses,” the county politicians received them well enough. As one school superintendent put it: “I like you fixing up schools, but if you go out and take pictures of those not fixed up, I’ll pull away your federal tit.” Over the course of a couple of years, the AVs had staffed up, secured various grants, and moved into more communities. Naturally, they talked with the local people about such concerns, as why their roads were not repaired, why there were no hot-lunch programs for their children’s schools, how the political patronage system worked, how the exchange of half-pints and money affected election results, and why their streams were filled with silt from strip mining. As Milton Ogle, director of the AVs, pointed out, “The questions were already there... hope was not there.” “Issue organizing” according to Ogle, “came more out of the communities than from the AVs per se.” Nevertheless, when the young workers began to nurture grassroots activism, particularly targeting the coal industry, they ran into trouble.45

Some residents of Pike County, Kentucky, equated opposition to strip mining with sedition which led to the arrest and trial of Joe Mulloy and Alan and Margaret McSurely.46 The sheriff’s department raided Mulloy’s home and claimed to have found a “communist library.” Although the books in Mulloy’s collection also included the Bible and Senator Barry Goldwater’s Conscience of a Conservative, a Pike County grand jury returned a true bill against Carl and Anne Braden of the Southern Conference Education Fund as well as Mulloy and the McSurely’s. The indictment claimed that they had taught or advocated criminal syndicalism against the state, although the statute on which local authorities based the charge had been found wanting in an 1956 case. Specifically, the defendants’ offense amounted to sedition against the county where, according to the Grand Jury, “a well organized and well financed effort [was] being made to promote and spread the communistic theory of the violent and forceful overthrow of the government of Pike County.”47

In truth, the arrests represented a set attack on the AVs by the coal operators and local officials who wanted to rid themselves of the young reformers by creating a political furor and jeopardizing their OEO funding. As if circumstances were not bizarre enough, the Kentucky Un-American Activities Committee (KUAC, pronounced “Quack” by pundits) decided to hold hearings in Pikeville during October 1968 that specifically targeted the AVs. The organization had alienated not only those it had sought to help but also those who provided its funding and by 1970 was dead.48 Whatever the flaws of the AVs—and flaws there were—the organization had not created the opposition to strip mining in Kentucky. Much of that could be attributed to the arrogance of the coal operators themselves.

No matter how reform-oriented a Kentucky officeholder might have been, he
or she knew the strength of the coal interests in the state; any attempt to change the status quo represented a tight-wire act. Federal funds pouring into eastern Kentucky posed no particular political risks for Congressman Carl D. Perkins, a native of Hindman who represented the mountainous Seventh District, or other politicians among their respective constituencies. Who administered the funds at the county level, however, and how they were spent among the locals presented a minefield. Moreover, being a federal employee offered little immunity from the ire of the coal interests and their allies. Gordon A. Ebersole, for example, of the Department of the Interior, went into eastern Kentucky to work with the Area Development Administration. When his views on strip-mine control and public utility districts put him at odds with the power structure, he felt the consequences. He blamed John Whisman, "whose salary came from the state government of Kentucky [and who] was indebted to the private power companies and the Chamber of Commerce," for preventing the publication and distribution of a twelve-county report that had been completed.49

Ebersole also ran afoul of Congressman Perkins. "Carl and I were good friends, or I thought we were," he explained, "but he had a lot of pressure on him... I was told that I was not to take any more trips into Appalachia, and my responsibilities were changed." Relieved of duties with the Area Development Administration and briefly reassigned to the Job Corps, Ebersole spent the last eight months before his retirement in Sargent Shriver's office. "I blame Carl Perkins for that," he said.50

By 1967, even President Lyndon B. Johnson seemed to be wavering. In his State of the Union message, he observed that the War on Poverty was just as difficult as the war in Vietnam; "the enemy,... difficult to perceive, to isolate, to destroy." Later, in his economic message to Congress, LBJ cautioned that the poverty fight would "be a long and continuing struggle, which will challenge our imagination, our patience, our knowledge, and our resources for years to come."51

In fact, 1967, "the year of the bosses and the boll weevils," proved to be climactic for Community Action Agencies. Most of those familiar with the events of 1967 believe that the so-called Green Amendment sponsored by U. S. representative Edith Green, an Oregon Democrat, actually saved CAA's as well as OEO's authorization. The Green Amendment required that CAAs be entities of state or local government or that they be nonprofit organizations designated as CAAs by those governments. This legislative adjustment made community action palatable for congressmen from both the rural South and the urban North. In turn, it thwarted a Republican effort to force the spin-off of OEO programs to the established executive departments. It also meant, in effect, the demise of maximum feasible participation. "What a tragedy it would be," Mrs. Green lamented on the floor of the U. S. House, "if community action against poverty becomes perverted to an attack on local government—as though it were the cause or even held the cure for the problem."52 Green seemed neither to
understand nor care that well-entrenched local politicians in places like eastern Kentucky found the perpetuation of poverty essential to their own survival as powerbrokers.

When Senator Robert F. Kennedy visited eastern Kentucky in February 1968 and held subcommittee hearings at Neon, he found an abundance of poverty. Eastern Kentucky wags observed that "we had a war on poverty and poverty won." Even well-intentioned experts from Washington, D.C., failed to escape the biting humor of some educated regional residents who observed that the policy wonks had "gone to Harvard, turned left, and found themselves in Appalachia." Many years later, Loyal Jones of Berea College and the CSM pointed out that white liberals involved with civil rights were left wanting when African Americans had taken over the movement. Appalachia, at the time, seemed ripe for the picking. Displaced activists came looking for something to occupy themselves in the southern mountains and took as their cause the plight of the region's poor. An indigenous reformer of that era described Appalachia somewhat jadedly as "a land of convenience... recognize it when you want to, ignore it and get away with it." Yet the words of one of the "roving pickets," Charles "Buck" Maggard, offered a more hopeful interpretation. "If nothing else really lasting came out of the 1960s," he observed, "[at least] it's not like it was in the '50s, when everybody was scared to death to open their mouth[s] about anything."
8. Wakefield, “In Hazard,” 209-17. Particularly helpful in understanding the labor chaos in eastern Kentucky from the late 1950s to the mid-1960s are the clipping files contained in the Everette Tharp Collection, Special Collections, Margaret I. King Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington (hereinafter cited as Tharp Collection, King Library, UK).
9. Tharp Collection, files 7 and 8, King Library, UK; see also transcript of oral history interview with Charles “Chuck” Maggard, conducted by Kate Black assisted by Bill Cooper, Hazard, Kentucky, July 6, 1978, passim (hereinafter cited as Maggard interview), tape in King Library, UK; Anne Lewis Johnson with Buck Maggard, “Roving Pickets, 1961-1965,” [1991], Appalshop Film, Appalshop, Inc., Whitesburg, Kentucky.
11. Tharp Collection, files 7 and 8, King Library, UK; see also transcript of oral history interview with Charles “Chuck” Maggard, conducted by Kate Black assisted by Bill Cooper, Hazard, Kentucky, July 6, 1978, passim (hereinafter cited as Maggard interview), tape in King Library, UK; Anne Lewis Johnson with Buck Maggard, “Roving Pickets, 1961-1965,” [1991], Appalshop Film, Appalshop, Inc., Whitesburg, Kentucky.
16. A comprehensive history of the Appalachian Regional Commission remains to be written. Essential to such an undertaking is the voluminous Appalachian Regional Commission Collection, King Library, UK. Although it is limited in scope, Michael J. Bradshaw, The Appalachian Regional Commission: Twenty-five Years of Government Policy (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1992), is somewhat helpful. See interview with Loyal Jones, Berea College, Berea, Kentucky, March 15, 1991, conducted by Thomas J. Kiffmeyer for the University of Kentucky Campaign on Poverty Oral History Project (hereinafter cited as Jones interview), tapes in King Library, UK.
17. Sorensen interview, JFK, 169.
18. Memorandum, Theodore C. Sorensen to Under Secretary Murphy, Secretary Wirz, Secretary Celebreze, Under Secretary Roosevelt, Director Gordon, Chairman Hether, Administrator Batt, Mr. Lee White, and Mr. Richard Donahue, October 28, 1963, Poverty (Eastern Kentucky), October 15-30, 1963, Subject Files, 1961-1964, Theodore C. Sorensen Papers, box 37, JFK Library (hereinafter cited as Sorensen Papers, JFK); see also Office of the White House Press Secretary, Statement by the President, November 13, 1963, Subject Files, 1961-1964, Sorensen Papers, box 37, JFK.
23. Lyndon B. Johnson: Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President, 114.
27. Bradshaw, Appalachian Regional Commission, 33; transcript of oral history interview with John L. Sweeney, conducted by David G. McComb, November 14, 1968, Washington, D.C., 15-18, LBJ.
28. In a memorandum to Bob Kitter, November 24, 1966, LBJ noted that he wanted “to see what John Kennedy has said about a war on poverty in any of his speeches. Get all the quotes—ask Panzer to do it. Anything he said on a programmed war on poverty.” See memorandum to Jake Jacobsen from Fred Panzer, November 26, 1966. Both of these documents are contained in Poverty Program, LBJ Papers, box 28, LBJ.
29. “The Office of Economic Opportunity during the Administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson,” in passim.
31. Douglass Cater to Sargent Shriver, October 3, 1966, White House Correspondence (1965-67), Community Services Administration, Community Action Program Office, Executive Correspondence, 1964-69, box 14, folder 2, Office of Economic Opportunity, Record Group 381, NACP.
33. Tharp, “The History, Goals, and Objectives of the Appalachian Committee for Full Employment,” 1-3; appointment schedule of miners delegation, January 7-9, 1964; and Appalachian Committee for Full Employment By-Laws [draft, January 1964]; all contained in Tharp Collection, file 3, King Library, UK.
34. Interview with Loyal Jones, conducted by Thomas J. Kiffmeyer for the University of Kentucky Library War on Poverty Oral History Project, Berea, Kentucky, November 19, 1990, tapes in King Library, UK.
35. Evidence of ACFE activities and clippings pertaining to the “Happy Pappies” can be found in the Tharp Collection, King Library, UK; quotation from Anne Lewis Johnson with Buck Maggard, “Roving Pickets, 1961-1965,” [1991], Appalshop Film, Appalshop, Inc., Whitesburg, Kentucky.
37. Tharp Collection, files 9, King Library, UK; Courier-Journal, November 15, 1964.
38. “The Roving Pickets,” [Appalshop Film].
40. Maggard interview, King Library, UK.
42. James N. Adler to Lee C. White, November 29, 1963, and Office of the White House Press Secretary, Statement by the President [Lyndon B. Johnson], n.d. [1963], Subject Files, 1961-1964, Sorensen Papers, box 37, JFK.
45. Ogle interview, King Library, UK.
46. Ibid.
48. Ibid., 369-403.
49. Interview with Gordon K. Ebersole, conducted by author, Bowie, Maryland, May 29, 1996; tape and transcript in author’s possession (hereinafter cited as Ebersole interview). A valuable set of documents relative to Ebersole’s work in Appalachia can be found in the Congress for Appalachian Development/Gordon Ebersole Collection, Archives of Appalachia, Sherrod Library, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City; some of the papers in this collection are restricted.
50. Ebersole interview.
51. Quotations from “The Office of Economic Opportunity during the Administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson,” 561-62.
52. Gillette, Launching the War on Poverty, 189-213; “The Office of Economic Opportunity during the Administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson,” 544-607, Green’s quotation from 603. After the Green Amendment, Community Action Programs and those who worked in them either conformed to local political expectations or ceased to exist. See Huey Perry, They’ll Cut Off Your Project: A Mingo County Chronicle (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972).
53. Legislative Subject File, Appalachia: Kentucky Hearings, Robert F. Kennedy Senate Papers, box 7, JFK.
55. Ibid.
56. Ogle interview, King Library, UK.
57. Maggard interview, King Library, UK.
Reviews


The second volume of this biographical project will certainly be welcomed by historians, genealogists, and others with a serious interest in Virginia history. Published three years after the first volume, it meets the same high standard established by its predecessor and will leave its users hoping that future volumes arrive at a more rapid pace. Containing 452 entries written by 247 contributors, Volume Two clearly reflects the editorial determination that the DVB will be comprehensive in its coverage of those Virginians who, regardless of race, gender, or occupation, made a significant impact upon the state, region, or nation. Beginning with Anna Bennett Bland, an interesting and significant seventeenth-century woman involved in the legal battle which resulted in the Virginia General Assembly losing its status as the final court of appeals in the colony, to James Cannon, a Methodist leader important in the battle for temperance and in other religious and political issues at the beginning of the twentieth century, Volume Two of the DVB includes Virginians from politics, religion, science, the arts, education, sports and entertainment, and virtually any other field in which an individual can influence the society in which he or she lives. To merit inclusion the individual must have lived a “significant portion of his or her life in Virginia,” which is defined to include both Kentucky and West Virginia prior to the creation of those states.

Any abbreviated list of individuals included will probably describe the interests or idiosyncrasies of the reviewer as much as it reflects the comprehensive nature of the volume. Such names as Daniel Boone, Harry F. Byrd and his many important ancestors, the numerous Burwells and Cabells of note, and Norborne Berkeley, Baron de Botetourt, will already be at least generally familiar to most students of Virginia history even without consulting the DVB. These historical figures certainly warrant and receive substantial treatment. But one cannot appreciate the richness of the DVB, as well as its usefulness, merely by looking for the entries devoted to such well-known figures. Only by examining, for example, the entries for Robert J. Boland, who was born a slave in 1850 but later became a prominent physician and leader in the African American community, and James Albert Bonsack whose invention of the “cigarette-rolling” machine made the modern tobacco industry possible, and the numerous women “civic leaders” such as Mary Alexander Whitworth Calcott, who worked for racial harmony and education for all, do we fully understand the DVB’s value as a tool for use by serious students of Virginia history. A classified index of biographies is available online at the Library of Virginia website, permitting users to sort biographical entries in a number of useful ways, such as by chronology, by race, and by gender.

A project of this magnitude depends heavily upon the dedication and competence of the editor and assistant editors as well as the resources and determination of the organization responsible for producing and publishing it. Clearly the DVB is in good hands, as one cannot help being impressed with the second volume’s overall quality and of the many entries written by the assistant editors. Adequate funding and good fortune permitting, the
Library of Virginia will continue to sponsor publication of this invaluable historical and genealogical aid and researchers will hope it can do so in the future at an accelerated pace.

Raymond C. Bailey
Northern Virginia Community College


Most Americans, perhaps from such sources as Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, think of a "filibuster" as a parliamentary tactic to impede the legislative process. The term, however, had a different meaning when it first appeared in vocabulary of Americans in the decades before the Civil War. "During that period," explains historian Robert E. May in this book, "the word generally referred to American adventurers who raised or participated in private military forces that either invaded or planned to invade foreign countries with which the United States was formally at peace." In 1850 and 1851, for example, Narcisco Lopez unsuccessfully attempted to overthrow Spanish rule in Cuba. And in 1856, William Walker, perhaps the best known of the filibusters, invaded Nicaragua and set up his own government only to see it overthrown the next year. American filibusters also invaded Mexico and targeted Canada, Hawaii, and Ireland as well. Yet antebellum filibustering was a failure. After returning to Central America several more times, Walker was finally shot by a Honduran firing squad in 1860. More than fifty of Lopez's men were captured and executed as pirates. And Henry Crabb, who led a filibustering army into Sonora country, met a more grisly end. He was beheaded by Mexican authorities, who preserved his head in an earthen jar of vinegar.

Historians have long recognized the role of the filibusterers in the coming of the Civil War, but May adds a valuable qualification to the conventional wisdom that explains filibustering in terms of the desire of many southern slaveholders for territorial expansion. May argues that the filibusterers did not have disunionist intentions, although he acknowledges the proslavery bent of filibusterers like John Quitman of Mississippi and the Knights of the Golden Circle. He is less inclined to see the Democratic administration of President Franklin Pierce as enabling the filibusterers. Although Pierce formally recognized Walker's regime in Nicaragua, his government made many sincere attempts to stop filibustering expeditions. May also explores the diplomatic consequences of filibustering. With compelling evidence carefully weighed, he suggests that filibustering efforts brought the United States and Spain to the brink of war and strained Anglo-American diplomacy that dealt with the isthmus of Panama. May also argues that by both arousing European suspicions and Central American nationalist stirrings, filibusterers ironically may have impeded the very process of territorial expansion they sought to inspire.

The most interesting parts of this book move beyond the traditional concerns of historians—the political and sectional implications of filibustering—to the social and cultural context of this activity in mid-nineteenth century America. Americans in the 1850s, for example, seemed fascinated by Walker and his associates. News-
papers gave filibusters extended coverage and theatrical performances celebrated filibustering, like the 1850 Philadelphia production of “The Invasion of Cuba” as well as songs such as “The Filibuster Polka.” Most intriguingly, May suggests that filibusterers constituted “a distinct, if often overlooked, antebellum American subculture” (111). Correcting the conventional association made by historians between filibustering and the South, May demonstrates its strong roots in northern cities. Filibusterers recruited from an urban male underclass created by the rise of industrialization in the cities. And May shows the similarities between filibustering and other forms of urban male culture of like boxing, gambling, and volunteer fire companies. Future students of filibustering might probe further into the links between filibustering and the urban class formation in the North, especially regarding the construction of racial identities.

Though May makes a creative and convincing case for the pervasiveness of filibustering in America during the 1850s, the author is less clear on its importance. The numbers of people involved in filibustering, even including those on its margins, seem small. Similarly, even if the State Department spent an “inordinate amount of time” (216) on filibustering, as May says, what was its weight relative to other diplomatic issues? Finally, even if filibustering was discussed during the secession crisis, how critical did it prove to be in the deliberations of Republicans, secessionists or moderates at the time? Nonetheless, Manifest Destiny’s Underworld is a very good and important book—strongly researched, creatively approached, and carefully argued. It should deservedly become the standard work on antebellum American filibustering.

Mitchell Snay
Denison University


Struggle for the Heartland is part of the “Great Campaigns of the Civil War Series” being published by the University of Nebraska Press. Like the other volumes in this series, this book provides a synthesis of recent scholarship and attempts to place military campaigns within a larger political and social context. Stephen Engle, author of biographies of Franz Sigel and Don Carlos Buell, focuses on the campaigns in 1862 that began with the Union advance against Forts Henry and Donelson and ended in late May 1862 with the seizure of the important rail juncture of Corinth, Mississippi.

The winter and spring campaigns of 1862, Engle argues, reflect the inability of the Union high command in the western theater to work together effectively. Major Generals Henry W. Halleck and Don Carlos Buell “failed to encourage productive relationships,” states Engle, “which precluded them from effectively harnessing the strengths of their forces and seizing important strategic opportunities sooner.” (xviii) While these principal Union commanders repeatedly refused to cooperate, subordinates such as Ulysses S. Grant took the initiative to engage the Confederates and seize key points. Grant succeeded in part because Jefferson Davis did not recognize the significance of the vast region between the Appalachians and the Mississippi River. The Confederate president therefore failed to give General Albert Sidney Johnston the resources needed to defend the region and Johnston in turn left the defense of important points to incompetent subordinates. Johnston’s abandonment of middle Tennessee after the disasters at Forts Henry and Donelson demoralized the region’s populace and dealt a serious blow to Confederate logistics, but the southern army managed to regroup and attack at Shiloh.
The withdrawal of the Confederate Army after Shiloh to Corinth offered Halleck an opportunity to pursue and inflict more damage on the southerners. Halleck believed that the next big battle in the western theater after Shiloh would be at Corinth, but his glacial advance against the town allowed the Confederate forces to effect a withdrawal. In the process of evacuating Corinth, the Confederates surrendered a significant southern railroad (the Memphis and Charleston) and all of western Tennessee. In the wake of the Union Army's stunning seizure of vast stretches of the Confederate heartland, Engle writes that the struggle in the region “became more accurately a people's war” (xx). The frustrating efforts of federal troops to deal with recalcitrant southern civilians and guerillas challenged northern beliefs in a limited war. Union generals and common soldiers realized that a policy of conciliation would have to end and that their armies could be used as instruments of civil policy. The actions of these soldiers helped usher in an acceptance by the Lincoln administration of harsher policies, including confiscation and emancipation.

Readers looking for detailed tactical studies of the battles of Forts Henry and Donelson or Shiloh will probably be disappointed in this book. They should turn instead, as Engle suggests, to recent works by Benjamin F. Cooling or Larry Daniel. Anyone looking for an introduction to these important campaigns that examines the decisions and actions of high-level Union and Confederate generals and politicians can find no better place to start than Struggle for the Heartland.

Keith S. Bohannon
State University of West Georgia


Earl J. Hess, the author of several well-received books on the Civil War including a study of Union soldiers in combat and another on the Battle of Pea Ridge, now takes on one of the best known and thoroughly described incidents in the War. Although a number of recent books have taken new and innovative approaches to analyzing Pickett's Charge, Hess has chosen to pursue a traditional approach in his research and presentation. He explicitly says that the book is grounded in the “old military history” rather than the new, a stance that takes more than a little courage for an author to advertise these days. Some might ask: Is there a need for one more book on Pickett's Charge? Hasn't that been done? But in the mind of this reviewer Hess has provided a book well worth reading, even if one is familiar with Gettysburg and Pickett's Charge. Indeed, Hess demonstrates in this book the value of a traditional approach to military history for producing a compelling narrative of a grand event that captures its inherent drama.

Hess has succeeded in producing a narrative that draws the reader into a dramatic historical moment. By turning to a large body of primary materials that were not used by previous scholars of Pickett’s Charge and by broadening his focus to include the Union troops who repelled the assault, Hess offers a reconstruction of the attack that is both new and compelling. Further, he cuts through accretions of myth and legend to present a highly credible narrative of what actually happened that July day, achiev-
ing one of the traditional goals of the historian—to determine what happened and why. The several maps and photographs help in following the action, but if there is a weakness in the book it is here. More and larger maps would have made it easier to keep pace with events as they unfolded. But this is a small criticism of a book that succeeds admirably in providing a compelling account of an event only we thought we knew. Hess’s research in previously neglected sources has uncovered a depth of detail about Pickett’s Charge that makes this the definitive study of the event. The book is not only a tribute to the continuing power and relevance of the “old military history,” but reminds us that new or neglected sources can change the way we understand even the most thoroughly researched areas of our history.

William H. Mulligan, Jr.
Murray State University


In the seventeen years since the authors contracted to write this book, probably twenty works have been published on Jefferson Davis’s life, his discordant administration, and the last days of the Confederacy. Now, at the pinnacle of their careers and narrative powers, Herman Hattaway and Richard E. Beringer, both distinguished Civil War historians, have produced not a biography of Jefferson Davis but a biography of Davis’s administration. Dramatically, they intertwine the life and death of the Confederate government with that of Jefferson Davis, its first and only president. Thoroughly familiar with the extensive number of manuscripts and documents of the period dealing with Davis and the Confederacy, Hattaway and Beringer also spice their work with ample quotations from recently printed secondary works they admire, including William C. Davis’s five books on Davis and his administration, William Cooper, Jr.’s, Jefferson Davis: American (2000), and Felicity Allen’s Unconquerable Heart: Life of Jefferson Davis (2000).

Hattaway and Beringer found the classifications of leadership made famous in James David Barber’s The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House (4th ed., 1992) a useful tool in their analysis of Davis, whom they view as an “American president.” (xviii) Davis, they maintain, typically demonstrated Barber’s “active-negative” leadership qualities, portraying him as a perfectionist unable to achieve his impossible goals. A States’ Rights advocate who typically deferred to constitutional restraints, Davis as Confederate president readily yielded to revolutionary necessities, but he failed to inspire similar compromises in his fellow southerners, even those needed to achieve victory. Great intelligence, general likeability, and lessons learned through experience were all qualities that should have made Davis an effective President. But they seemed useless to the beleaguered Confederate leader in crisis after crisis throughout the war. Davis’s well-known failures resulted from his micromanaging all departments that led to widespread disorganization in the Confederate government, a characterization that Hattaway and Beringer’s make perhaps most clearly in their chapters detailing Confederate military defeat. Loyalty, a characteristic that subordinates surely admire in leaders, became a grievous fault when Davis evaluated his generals. His support for Leonidas Polk, despite numerous military blunders on battlefields west of the Appalachians, ended only with Polk’s death. Similarly, Davis’s support for the incompetent Braxton Bragg was as tenacious as was his loathing for the eminently more talented P. G. T. Beauregard.

Like most historians who have evaluated Jefferson Davis, Hattaway and Beringer see him as a tragic, almost heroic figure and they doubt that anyone could have forged a successful Confederate
government. But at war’s end, generals and politicians, scrambling to deflect criticisms from their own failures in judgment, quickly placed blame for the collapse of the Confederate government on Davis’s shoulders. Denunciations, however, only energized Davis to rise from the ashes of his Civil War reputation to become the embodiment in the “Lost Cause.” An unabashed conservative to the end, Davis never asked if support for slavery and secession had been wise nor whether commencing a war that laid the South low for generations had been a mistake. Instead, he proclaimed in a speech shortly before his death that, given the chance, “he would do it all over again.” (443)

Marion B. Lucas
Western Kentucky University


No person receives more unqualified commendation among Baptists of all stripes than the mythically paradigmatic missionary from Virginia, Charlotte Digges Moon. This book now allows every person the chance to decide for oneself whether the aura surrounding her name should be considered hype or justified. With the help of several sympathetic historians and archivists, Harper has collected over three hundred letters dating from 1870 to 1912 that he has divided into four categories: the “Tupper Years, 1873-1893” (1-169), “Foreign Mission Journal Entries” (171-262), “The R. J. Willingham Letters, 1893-1912” (263-384), and “Letters to Family and Friends.” The last eleven pages of text contain letters from those who were near the events surrounding the last weeks of her life. One helpful bibliographical feature is a notation following those letters that were printed in the Foreign Mission Journal. A brief introduction at the beginning of the book plus short introductions to each section help the reader establish context for each group of letters. The content of the primary sources is rich indeed and has implications for the study of sociology, anthropology, ethics, theology, missiology, cross-cultural communications and other disciplines. In short, this collection of letters will be a valuable source of inspiration and scholarly study for many years to come.

While the editor makes clear that not all letters collected could not be included in this edition, perhaps a second edition could contain some of the material that Moon wrote prior to the Civil War. Her essay, for example, on “Grecian Literature” written for C. H. Toy at the Albemarle Female Institute, certainly would be interesting to readers as evidence of an obviously talented writer too much committed to a florid style in her student days. Also letters currently archived at the University of Virginia that she wrote before and during the Civil War would help complete a picture the development of Lottie Moon’s character. A few editorial additions, much easier to suggest than to execute, also might enhance a second edition. The index should be enlarged. For example, no entry for C. H. Toy appears in the index though he is referred to several times in the letters, even if not by name. And Ida Taylor, a missionary who greatly aided the ministry of Miss Moon, appears several times in letters and has no entry in the index. Also identification of several persons, events, and ideas in footnotes would increase the usefulness of the volume. In an autobiographical letter to a niece, for example, Moon refers to the influence of the views of Alexander Campbell, who was an important figure in many Baptist controversies in Virginia, but probably not a familiar figure to the average reader. (434). And when Moon writes, “A Boxer proclamation was put up on Mr. Stephen’s door recently saying that his house was to be burned” (306), an editorial note concerning the Boxer Rebellion might be helpful. Finally, in letters concerning T. P. Crawford, an editorial intervention describing the
Gospel Mission Movement would provide historical context and significance. Despite these limitations, this volume well executed, valuable to researchers as well as to general readers, and hints at tantalizing possibilities for expanded usefulness should another edition emerge in the future.

Tom J. Netttles
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary


*Close Harmony* is an entertaining, colorful, cogent, well-researched, and scholarly examination of the development of the most influential form of American gospel music. This book is also a labor of love, as the author grew up in and was shaped by this culture. Labeling southern gospel “the best-kept secret in America,” Goff convincingly shows how this musical style “both borrowed from and contributed to the larger musical culture of America.” (xii). He clearly documents the cross pollinization of southern gospel with both country music and black gospel.

The story of southern gospel begins with shape-note music, a form of notation that used seven distinct symbols for do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, and ti. This style took hold in the rural South in the second half of the nineteenth century and, employing shape-note “singing schools,” whole generations learned to sing gospel songs. The efforts of James David Vaughn and Virgil Stamps at the turn of the century turned shape-note music into an industry. They put together quartets that toured the region, promoting the shape-note songbooks of their respective publishers. With the advent of radio, television, record albums (78s, 45s, and 33 1/3s), and non-participatory concerts, professional quartets arose that were not tied to publishers and whose members wrote and performed their own music. In the 1960s, the importance of ministry replaced the growing emphasis on entertainment as a number of quartets began to hold concerts in local churches. The Couriers, in particular, added preaching and personal testimony to their singing and had altar calls at the end of each concert.

By the 1980s, questions had begun to arise over the construction of a Gospel Hall of Fame and over how far gospel music could change in terms of style and dress and still be considered legitimate gospel. These questions in turn led many older performers who had begun their careers in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s to create their own distinct branch of gospel music and to organize themselves into the Southern Gospel Music Association. Moreover, the annual National Quartet Convention as well as the Bill Gaither Homecoming series aided the growth in popularity of southern gospel music. The SGMA tied itself to conservative churches as well as a conservative social and political agenda. For conservative evangelicals, southern gospel “spoke to their fears and reassured their faith” and what many once considered entertainment now stood for evangelism. (281) But throughout the development of southern gospel, criticism was ever present, including charges that groups sought to entertain rather than minister, sang watered-down lyrics, dressed inappropriately, employed secular instruments (drums, electric guitar, and bass), used jazz/boogie or rock musical styles, and gave into worldly temptations (drugs and alcohol). As Goff points out, the dress, lyrics, and musical sound of many gospel performers was a major reason that the industry’s founders split off and created the SGMA.

For those familiar with the gospel quartet tradition, the short biographies included in this book of many groups and influential performers will make for fascinating reading. The reader can follow the careers of the Stamp, Lefever, Speer, Carter, Blackwood, and Goodman families as well as the exploits of prominent quartets like the Statesmen, Oak Ridge Boys, Jordanaires, and Plainsmen. How-
ever, for non-aficionados, the scores of names and the constant lineup changes in the quartets can become confusing. The book's only major flaw involves the section on Christian rock. Goff overlooks the two most influential critics of this musical genre, Jimmy Swaggart (among the Pentecostal-charismatic wing of evangelicals) and Bill Gothard (among Fundamentalist and conservative believers). And while the author rightly notes that one-time critic Bob Larson "had mellowed his views with respect to at least some forms of contemporary Christian music" by the late 1970s, Larson went much further in the early 1990s. (366-67) In 1992, he issued a video entitled The Metal Connection, in which he interviewed the lead singers of a number of Christian speed and thrash metal bands and then included several of their musical videos. In spite of this minor problem, Goff's book is a welcomed addition to a growing literature on the influence and development of gospel music in America.

W. Terry Lindley
Union University


"Ticks and bed bugs; fleas and rattlesnakes! This is a hard region," wrote a Methodist Sunday school teacher traveling through North Carolina after the Civil War. Indeed, setting up sabbath schools was a difficult task and historians have often overlooked it and how these schools affected the people of the past. But Sally McMillen's study of the rise of white and black Sunday schools in the South during the fifty years after the Civil War goes a long way in correcting such neglect. Wading through an enormous amount of primary material, including religious journals, newspapers, diaries, and personal letters, McMillen discovered that Sunday schools were more than an hour of moral education; they were institutions of hope that reflected changes in southern views of children, female educators, northerners, and bureaucratic management. To their proponents, Sunday schools could uplift a region devastated by total war and inspire sectional pride in a people defeated; they could nourish a generation of children distraught by mass fatherlessness; and they could assuage the denominational and racial animosities that wrenched the South.

McMillen begins her study with the collapse of the Confederacy. The end of the war meant catastrophe for southern whites and triumph for northern whites and African Americans. The northern invasion of the South, however, did not end with the war. Yankee missionaries flooded Dixie hoping to organize schools and orphanages. Groups like the American Sunday School Union sought to build a new South, one of sectional, racial, and religious peace. But much like northern efforts to politically reconstruct the South, Yankee control of sabbath education was temporary. As a way to redeem their section, southerners took the moral education of their children into their own hands. They formed new schools and organized their own publishing houses that they used to market a curriculum, chalkboards, magazines, and other religious paraphernalia. At the end of the century, these Sunday schools joined the growing tide of modernization in which "efficiency" and scientific management became universal gospels. Age-based, graded classes replaced classrooms comprising various ages; prizes and medals supplanted pats on the back; seminaries offered courses in Sunday school pedagogy and theology; and conferences and retreats taught Sunday school instructors the best methods to train their pupils.

Yet for all Sunday schools accomplished, they did not overcome racial animosities. As McMillen clearly shows, whites and blacks emphasized dif-
ferent material in their classrooms. White teachers focused on temperance, respect for parents, and general morality and by and large kept quiet on issues of race and racism, at least in their published teaching material. Black teachers, however, were not silent. They taught young African Americans to be proud of their race and they assailed white supremacy while denouncing segregation and lynching. Southern African Americans saw control over their Sunday schools and publishing houses as a means of social, political, and religious elevation. In the end, sadly, Sunday schools did not quell racial hostilities. By 1900, products of white southern Sunday schools like Thomas Dixon, Jr., and Theodore Bilbo espoused a virulent form of racism that encouraged violence against African Americans.

McMillen is at her best when connecting the rise of Sunday schools to broader trends in postwar society. For instance, she notes that many northerners believed that Sunday schools and religious faith could help reunite the region. This point fits in well with a newly rekindled historical debate among scholars like Gardiner Shattuck, W. Scott Poole, Kent McConnell, and myself regarding the complex influence of religion on national reconciliation and sectional distinctiveness. Furthermore, McMillen demonstrates that Sunday schools—like common schools and benevolent societies—offered middle-class women a socially acceptable venue for their energies. Indeed, women fundamentally drove and shaped much of nineteenth-century religion and education.

This reviewer disagrees with only one point in McMillen’s analysis. She suggests that historians have over-emphasized southern animosity toward northerners and Yankee schoolteachers immediately following the war. “Certainly they encountered some resistance,” McMillen writes, but for the most part, southern whites initially accepted northern teachers. (38) This is a highly questionable reading of the postwar atmosphere. Any reading of missionary letters shows that northern teachers received hostile responses all over the South from the very moments they entered the region. Southerners cursed at, pelted with rocks, fired at with revolvers, and generally despised northern schoolteachers. In one case, a group of assailants kidnapped and beat a Yankee teacher then shaved half of his head while painting much of his face black. Some resistance, indeed. Nevertheless, McMillen’s study is a good one and should interest students of religious education and the post-Civil War South.

Edward J. Blum
University of Kentucky


On June 24, 1946, D. Lawrence Groner, chief justice of the United States Court of Appeals, swore in his former colleague and long-time friend, Fred M. Vinson, as the nation’s thirteenth chief justice of the United States. President Harry S. Truman joked that Vinson’s appointment was “lucky for the U.S. and lucky for Vinson.” (156) Observers of the Supreme Court then, and scholars of the Court since, would disagree, arguing that Chief Justice Vinson was not lucky for the Court or the country. Since Vinson’s unexpected death on September 8, 1953, and the rise of the Warren Court to almost
mythical proportions, Vinson and his Court have almost disappeared from sight. Professors James E. St. Clair, an associate professor of journalism, and Linda C. Gugin, a professor of political science, both at Indiana University Southeast, have enriched the literature of Supreme Court history with this work and, in the process, have rescued Vinson from his clouded historical reputation. Neither a vindication of Vinson as chief justice nor an apology for Vinson’s weaknesses, this volume provides the general public and scholars the best assessment now available of Vinson in the context of his entire public career.

Vinson arose from the hardscrabble hills of eastern Kentucky and was driven by a need to succeed both in the classroom and the athletic field. Indeed, he played shortstop in high school and at Centre College and flirted with the idea of playing professional baseball rather than pursuing a legal education. Blessed with a powerful memory, he completed his undergraduate and legal studies at Centre College and returned home in 1911 to Louisa, Kentucky, to practice law. After establishing himself in his community, the political bug bit him in 1921 and he ran for the position of Commonwealth Attorney for the 32nd District. He won. And in the next few years he served two terms in Congress as a Democrat, but losing his seat in the 1928 election but regaining it in 1930. He then threw himself whole-heartedly into the policies of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal. As a congressman, Vinson gained a reputation for his ability to mediate between feuding persons, his interest in tax law and tax policies (he worked on the Social Security Act of 1935), and his loyalty to FDR. In fact, it was Vinson who introduced into the House of Representatives FDR’s 1937 plan to reorganize the federal judiciary, which was correctly perceived as a “court-packing” plan. In 1938, as a reward for his services, FDR appointed Vinson to the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. Many lawyers/politicians would have found the federal bench much to their liking, but Vinson missed the camaraderie of the rough and tumble world of daily politics. As a result, when in 1943 Roosevelt asked him to leave the bench and become the head of the Office of Economic Stabilization (OES), Vinson readily agreed. In 1945, “Available Vinson,” as he was sometimes called, became Director of War Mobilization and Reconversion and, later that year, his good friend President Harry Truman appointed the Kentuckian to be the secretary of the treasury. Noted for his ability to calm troubled waters and his willingness to serve the president, as well as for having the confidence of Truman (the Trumans and the Vinsons vacationed together regularly), Vinson was Truman's choice when the chief justiceship of the Supreme Court became available on April 22, 1946, after the sudden death of Harlan Fiske Stone.

Had Vinson's career ended as secretary of the treasury, his reputation as one of the United States' most talented and dedicated civil servants would have been secure. But his tenure as chief justice was not as smooth and “lucky” as either Vinson or Truman expected. FDR's appointees, especially Associate Justice Felix Frankfurter, considered Vinson a political crony, unworthy of the high bench. In one conference, the haughty Frankfurter so enraged Vinson with his attitude and condescension that the chief justice had to be restrained from assaulting his colleague. Also, in a time of social and cultural change, Vinson's judicial instinct and traditions limited his and his Court's responses to the changing world. His jurisprudence emphasized
"judicial restraint and adherence to precedent" (277), hampering the Court in dealing with the rising number and complexity of due process cases, especially in the field of race relations. As a result, instead of uniting a disparate Court as Truman had expected, Vinson's appointment to the Supreme Court divided the justices and set them to feuding.

In presenting this story, St. Clair and Gugin have produced a notable work in the field of judicial biography that neither glorifies Vinson nor allows him off the hook for his shortcomings. This work will stand as the definitive work on Vinson for a long time, and it is recommended for general readers, scholars of the twentieth century, and undergraduate and graduate libraries.

Thomas C. Mackey
University of Louisville


Robert Armstead, an African American coal miner who labored in various locations throughout West Virginia, tells journalist S. L. Gardner a compelling story detailing his life and how he worked his way up from general mine laborer to foreman. Along the way he overcame prejudice and discrimination, witnessed mechanization of the mining industry, experienced several episodes of unemployment, saw women enter a traditional male occupation, and was one of the first African American miners to move into the ranks of management before his retirement in 1987. Readers in general will find Black Days, Black Dust: The Memories of an African American Coal Miner fascinating because the story is told by a common laborer pursuing and eventually achieving the American Dream of steady employment, a decent income, job stability, home ownership, and a sufficient retirement. The occasional setback, including divorce, job loss, and prejudice the author experienced makes his life story more meaningful to the average American who has endured under similar experiences.

Scholars will find much within this book to aid their research and study. Black Days, Black Dust represents grass roots history. It is the story of coal during the middle decades of the twentieth century (1927-1987) told by a participant personally affected by technology, management styles, safety rules, unionization, and other changes that transpired during these years. To read about the various changes that occurred in the mining industry in a book written by a university professor who probably never spent a single day digging coal underground is one thing, but it is quite another to receive much of the same kind of information from an individual who lived through these events. Equally fascinating is Armstead's recollection of life both as a child and adult in various company towns throughout West Virginia. Especially insightful is the author's perspective on prejudice and discrimination. Yet, despite the hardships, Armstead and countless other African Americans endured, ignoring prejudice in order to make a better life for themselves. Readers can almost feel the strong emotions that Armstead and other African Americans experienced when they cheered black sports heroes like boxer Joe Louis, track star Jesse Owens, and baseball player Jackie Robinson when they broke down the color barrier prevalent in American society.

Missing from the book, however, is detailed information about the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s from the perspective of African American miners in West Virginia. And indeed readers are left wondering if African American coal miners participated in this monumental twentieth century struggle. A chapter about the reaction of the author (and of black Appalachians in general) to the accomplishments of Dr. Martin Luther King,
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Jr., and others as they dismantled Jim Crow segregation throughout the South would have been a welcome supplement to Armstead’s story. A list of suggested resources contains only a few books and journal articles on the coal industry in general and African American miners in particular when literally hundreds and perhaps thousands of sources are available. Inclusion of a more comprehensive bibliography would have aided readers engaged in research. But the glossary of mining terms included thoughtfully in the book is a wonderful addition. Such words, used commonly within the mining industry but unknown by the general public, are defined and this feature will prove particularly valuable to readers who are unfamiliar with the mining industry.

Overall, this book adds to the knowledge of coal mining and will supplement works on African American miners such as Joe William Trotter’s Coal, Class, and Color: Blacks in southern West Virginia, 1915-32 and Ronald L. Lewis’s Black Coal Miners in America: Race, Class, and Community Conflict, 1780-1980. While not academic in the traditional meaning of academic, Black Days, Black Dust: The Memories of an African American Coal Miner provides a look at the mining industry from the perspective of a common insider. It is to be highly recommended to readers interested in Appalachia, its people, and the coal industry.

Doug Cantrell
Elizabethtown [Kentucky] Community College


Between 1991 and 1993, a weekly drama starring the actors Sam Waterston and Regina Taylor appeared on NBC. I’ ll Fly Away, set in a small town in Georgia, chronicled the contradictions and confusions of the early 1960s southern landscape by focusing on the lives of Forrest Bedford (Could he have been named for Nathan Bedford Forrest, founder of the Ku Klux Klan?), local district attorney, his three children, and their housekeeper, Lilly. This series, critically acclaimed but not surprisingly short-lived, featured finely drawn characters, intelligent dialogue, and story lines that reflected the depth of human relationships set against the backdrop of a changing South. We saw complex southerners, sometimes tortured by the past, but also facing universal fears and concerns—about race certainly, but also class, gender, and generational issues. The protagonists, not perfect by the standards of the 1990s or the 1960s, wrestled week after week with the concerns of everyday life and with the ethical dimensions of that time and that place. It was wonderful television and after two seasons, it was over. For the first time in a long time I was reminded of I’ ll Fly Away when I picked up Allison Graham’s Framing the South. She helped to put my favorite television series into a context that is as contradictory and complex as the society it sought to portray, and thereby unravel the many stereotypes of southern character presented on film and television in the twentieth century. This is a huge task that the author undertakes with authority, a breadth of cultural knowledge, and imaginative scholarship.

From America’s first southern film, D. W. Griffith’s The Birth of a Nation, that opened in 1915 to the 1994 commercial blockbuster Forrest Gump, the South has been a mainstay of Hollywood storytelling, a land of “mammies, mobs, mockingbirds, and miscegenation.” In the mid-1950s, television invaded the movie industry’s territory, and thereafter advertisers fearing the backlash of southern consumers shied away from programs depicting a biracial South and instead concentrated on exploiting the image of the “good hillbilly.” One of the most popular and commercially successful television programs to focus on likable, kind and
simple southern yokels was, of course, *The Andy Griffith Show*. It originally ran on CBS from 1960 to 1968 and has been in syndication in the decades since. Griffith, a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, began his career as a comedian in the 1950s, performing on the nightclub circuit. There he posed as a naive hillbilly encountering culture—both high and low—outside his southern home and community for the first time. Discussing Hamlet with his audience, the son of the Tarheel state observed: "It's a pretty good show and the moral of it is, though, I reckon, if you was to ever kill a fella' and then marry his wife, I'd be extra careful not to tell my stepson."

(100) According to Graham, Griffith was an expert at depicting the "normal hillbilly" but his "canny manipulation of mainstream prejudices often eluded critics." (101) It was also impossible to reconcile his "natural" acting ability with his masterful portrayal of the demented demagogue Lonesome Rhodes in Elia Kazan's 1957 film *A Face in the Crowd*. But in 1960 the premier of *The Andy Griffith Show* and Griffith's familiar, easygoing sheriff character, Andy Taylor, assured audiences once more that the southern hillbilly remained as harmless as they had thought. Graham devotes quite a bit of space to Andy Griffith and his fictional world of Mayberry, loosely based on Griffith's hometown of Mt. Airy, North Carolina, understandable given that the author interviewed him extensively along with a number of other media figures of the 1950s and 1960s.

This is a fascinating book, a product of varied and prodigious research that never fails to invoke a memory, and often a question, in the reader's mind. Most important, it raises the timely issue of media influence on popular opinion. Graham contends that the media has as big a role in creating and shaping an image as in documenting it. *Framing the South* confronts that issue in a creative, thought provoking, and ultimately successful way. In an episode of *I'll Fly Away*, a stalwart older attorney assures the up and coming local district attorney, Forrest Bedford: "What people really desire in a changing world is not freedom but security." Allison Graham shows us that even as the media may have provided us with comfortable images of small-town Mayberry, the specter of civil rights injustice and violence was not far behind.

*Margaret A. Spratt*
*California University of Pennsylvania*
To the Editors:

I read with interest your article on the Cincinnati Union Terminal in the Fall 2002 issue of Ohio Valley History. However, there are two significant omissions in it.

The Save the Terminal committee, which was formed by Mayor Ted Berry, did far more than raise the funds to remove and transport the murals to Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Airport. It staved off threats to completely demolish the building and replace it with other proposed venues, including modern office buildings. It also tried to prevent the destruction of the concourse. In that respect, architects George Roth and Carl Strauss and I flew to Atlanta to meet with upper management of the Southern Railroad in an effort to convince them to lower the grade of the new piggyback facility rather than demolish the concourse. Unfortunately, the values of history and of the ability of CUT to be more capable of adaptive reuse with the large rectangular building remaining a part of it did not prevail, and the concourse was destroyed.

After that, the committee raised the funds to at least save the murals, except for the large one at the end of the building. It is fortunate that we at least saved these works of art, but like the Albee’s facade tacked onto the side of the convention center, they are not really history because they are no longer part of their original environment.

The other omission concerns the City’s acquisition of the building in 1975. The City acquired the CUT, I believe with federal Transit funds, for the purpose of placing a new operating division for SORTA (Queen City Metro) in it with a new major maintenance facility on the adjacent property north of the terminal. The Urban Mass Transportation Administration (today’s FTA) provided a $10 million grant for this purpose. At that time, Amtrak was still operating passenger service from CUT.

The program called for converting the ground-floor garage into a 300-bus operating division and using concrete aprons on the north and south sides of the building for moving buses into, out of and through the garage. The operating division offices and driver facilities as well as the bulk of QCM’s admin-
istrative offices would be located on the mezzanine level where all the old locker rooms had been. Top management offices and the board room would have been placed on the concourse level, utilizing the historic CUT President’s office, CUT boardroom and adjacent offices. All historic attributes of the building would have been retained but there were no federal funds in the grant to address the needs of these historic areas. Amtrak would have been retained in CUT. The feasibility analysis and preliminary design began in late 1975 and continued into 1976.

However, during this time, City Council introduced a new actor into the process when it mandated the inclusion of the School for Creative and Performing Arts in the study. The preliminary planning process continued with the three functions in the building, but Amtrak was the first to go, relocating to a little structure under the viaducts on West River Road. As the effort continued, endeavoring to provide for all fire and safety requirements of two dissimilar activities while retaining the historic authenticity of the building, the cost estimate went from $10 to approximately $14 million. UMTA advised the City and SORTA that we could do as we want but that no additional federal funding would be available for the extra costs. As SORTA’s Director of Engineering, it became my sad task to recommend that the project was no longer feasible in the CUT and should be moved. The project was relocated to the abandoned Railway Express Agency site north of the old mail handling building and resulted in the Queensgate Operating Division and major maintenance facility that now operate from there.

Only then did the City turn its attention to other developers.

While I recognize that your history was relatively short, I believe that these two items should have been included because of their significance. Moreover, there are a large number of people in this community who were a part of the events and who will note their absence in your history.

Very truly yours,

John C. Niehaus
Cincinnati, Ohio
Upcoming Events

Filson on Main

New Exhibit to Open on Main Street in Louisville, Kentucky, May 2003

The Filson Historical Society announces the creation of a new exhibit, “Lewis and Clark: The Exploration of the American West,” to open May 2003 at 626 West Main Street in Louisville, Kentucky. The exhibit will feature The Filson’s nationally recognized Lewis and Clark Collection and will tell the story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition through portraits, artifacts, letters, diaries, documents, books, maps, newspapers, and photographs.

Louisville, Kentucky, played an important role in the legendary journey west that took place between 1803 and 1806. William Clark, expedition co-leader, lived in Louisville with other members of his family. Meriwether Lewis came to Louisville to meet Clark on October 14, 1803, thus forming one of the most famous partnerships in American history.

For more information about the exhibit, call The Filson at 502-635-5083.

Sixth Annual Distinguished Historian Lecture

Thursday, May 8, 2003, at 7:30 pm
Dr. David Blight, Yale University
The Problem of Slavery and the Civil War in American Memory

Dr. Blight’s talk is based on his 2001 book, Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory that has won seven major awards including the $50,000 Lincoln Prize, the $25,000 Frederick Douglass Prize and the Bancroft Prize from Columbia University.

The lecture, free and open to the public, is presented by the Cincinnati History Advisory Board, Cincinnati Museum Center.

The Filson Historical Society Gertrude Polk Brown Lecture Series presents


Thursday, June 5 at 6:30 p.m.
The Fine Arts Center at Ballard High School
6000 Brownsboro Road, Louisville, Kentucky

The Filson welcomes the next lecturer in the Gertrude Polk Brown Lecture Series, Pulitzer Prize winner Rick Atkinson. Atkinson will discuss the first volume of his monumental trilogy about the liberation of Europe in WWII. This volume tells the riveting story of the war in North Africa. Atkinson is a former staff writer and assistant managing editor at The Washington Post and the bestselling author of The Long Gray Line.

Tickets are $10, free for members of The Filson Historical Society. Send ticket requests and payment with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: GPBL Tickets, The Filson Historical Society, 1310 S. Third Street, Louisville, KY, 40208.
The Filson Institute for the Advanced Study of the Ohio Valley and the Upper South invites you to attend the

Spring 2003 Academic Conference, May 16-17

"Constructing and Reconstructing a Region: 21st Century Approaches to the Ohio Valley's History"

The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky

Conference Convener: Christine Heyrman, University of Delaware

The Filson Institute for the Advanced Study of the Ohio Valley and the Upper South will host a two-day academic conference to examine the ways the region has been historically viewed over time, from the seventeenth century to the present. The conference will also look at new historical approaches that can change our thinking of the region's past.

Nine sessions, with two papers presented per session, will explore a variety of topics including the exploration and settlement of the Ohio Valley; the Civil War and the Lost Cause; emancipation and the migration of African Americans; race and the 1960s in Louisville; gender roles; religion; and regional identity. Presentations of particular interest will be those that fill in gaps in the region's current scholarship.

The Institute defines the Ohio Valley region through the exploration of key themes rather than geographical definitions. At the center of the region's identity problem is the valley's role in history as a borderland between native groups of people and trans-Atlantic migrants, as well as between the East and West, and the North and South.

Admission is free. For registration information, please call The Filson Historical Society at (502) 635-5083.

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